Robert Jarvenpa

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Native Americans, Eugenics, and the Myth of Nam Hollow

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Series Editors' Introduction

This volume expands the scope and method of this series, Critical Studies in the History of Anthropology, dealing with World War II legacies of race, class, and ethnicity by engaging with Native American materials especially through the work of Franz Boas and Americanist anthropology's critique of scientific racism and eugenics. Estabrook and Davenport's "flawed" eugenic ideology and methodology appeared in 1912, a year after *The Mind of Primitive Man*, Boas's seminal demonstration of plasticity through generational change in head form in immigrants. The unquestioned biases of the eugenicist arguments were powerful at the time and persist today. Jarvenpa provides a counter to the stability of racial types by examining so-called "mixed" races in historic and ethnohistoric detail and showing how the distortions of eugenic science masked the persistence of indigenous identities, a critical issue for indigenous communities today. The Nam peoples of upper New York State provide a case study later taken incorrectly at face value—the revisionist scholarship is highly significant.

Although Boas argued that family line data were crucial to defining racial types, his data were largely quantitative. Jarvenpa, in contrast, creates a narrative based on a particular historical and cultural context in the larger history of America. The perceived dangers of miscegenation underwrote categorizing successive generations in this community as mentally defective and rationalized sterilization as a progressive solution. This narrative showcases how the dire consequences of eugenicists' racial purity arguments confused the distinction between culture and biology and functioned to preserve existing white power structures.

Much contemporary Native American literature on cultural hybridity fails to consider the base of racist arguments in biology. Given recent developments in epigenetics, reexamination is urgently needed, and this volume stands as an exemplary text impelling that process.

Regna Darnell
Stephen O. Murray

Acknowledgments

My initial interest in Native Americans and eugenics was kindled over forty years ago while developing anthropology courses at the University at Albany, SUNY, on historical and contemporary Native American–European relations. Among the students in my first class was Stephen Comer, a Mohican and member of the Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians of Wisconsin. At that time, Steve had recently relocated to his ancestors' original homeland in the Hudson River valley of upstate New York. As my courses evolved in ensuing years he and other Native American students generously shared their knowledge and personal experiences and put a human face on issues sometimes treated abstractly in books and journal articles. I owe a special debt to Steve and to Mary McDonald of the Mohawk Iroquois community at Akwesasne, to Rita Chrisjohn Benson, Oneida Iroquois, to Al Terry of Brothertown ancestry, and to Heidi Nicholls of Algonquin ancestry. I am equally grateful to the non-native students, too numerous to identify here, who fully embraced Native American–European relations as a field of study.

I also owe a large debt to the Chipewyan, Cree, and Métis people of northern Saskatchewan. The Kesyehot'ine Chipewyan of Patuanak and the English River First Nation have sustained me with their friendship and wise counsel for nearly five decades. Early experiences in Métis Cree communities left me with vexing questions about the lives and histories of mixed-race peoples elsewhere in North America. Ultimately, these questions led to the research for the present book. Those pivotal early investigations were generously supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Museums of Canada, and the State University of New York.

I am especially grateful to Hetty Jo Brumbach for many years of stimulating collaborative research in ethnoarchaeology. She is my most valuable critic and was the first to review early drafts of this book. Innumerable discussions with Hetty Jo refined my thinking about mixed-race communities and eugenics. Moreover, as an archaeologist with expertise in the Northeast and ancestral Mohicans, she has special knowledge regarding the pre-contact history of people discussed in this book.

My other colleagues and students in anthropology at the University at Albany have contributed to my intellectual development and, in many respects, to the way I have approached the story of *Declared Defective*. I am particularly thankful to Robert Carmack, who has been a valuable research collaborator, a source of wisdom, and good friend. James Collins, Walter Little, and the late Walter Zenner also have my gratitude for their friendship, intellectual support, and a lively exchange of ideas. Linda Lamouret-Goodman generously provided timely technical assistance. I also wish to thank Richard Alba, formerly of the Department of Sociology at the University at Albany. His invitation to contribute a chapter for his volume on *Ethnicity and Race in the U.S.A.* spurred my interest in mixed-race Native Americans. I also thank the anthropologists at the New York State Museum in Albany for welcoming me as a research associate. Betty Duggan, former curator of ethnology at that institution, offered useful suggestions during the early stages of this project.

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Census records and early newspaper accounts archived in the New York State Library in Albany were invaluable, and I am grateful to the library personnel for their considerable help. I also wish to thank the staff in Manuscripts and Special Collections of the New York State Archives for their kind assistance. I owe special thanks to the generous personnel at the Washington County Historical Society in Fort Edward, New York, and the Hartford Museum in Hartford, New York. Clare Clark and the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Archives also have my gratitude. I am most thankful for a Three Voices Grant from the William L. Reese Emeritus Center, University at Albany, SUNY, for help with production of the present book. Also, I appreciate the staff at Corner Gateway for their technical expertise.

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Like any product of historical and cultural research, *Declared Defective* is subject to revision as new information surfaces. Genealogical investigations by descendants of people discussed in this book will surely augment the picture presented here while opening up new avenues of inquiry. However, I take sole responsibility for the interpretations herein. Care has been taken to preserve the anonymity of individuals who were living subjects of Arthur Estabrook and Charles Davenport's eugenics investigation in 1911–12. Some of the ancestors of these people, from the 1750s to the 1870s, are identified by their actual names in order

to comprehend the complex origins and historical development of the mixed-race outcaste community that became Guilder Hollow, or "Nam Hollow" to the eugenicists.

Declared Defective unearths a chapter in our nation's history of which few are aware and others may wish to forget. However, by understanding the pseudo-scientific persecution of mixed-race Native Americans by the eugenics profession, it is a history we can avoid repeating.

Introduction

The Menace in the Hollow

> From it families have gone to Minnesota and other points in the West and there formed new centers of degeneration. Harlots go forth from there and become prostitutes in our great cities. The tendency to larceny, burglary, arson, assault, and murder have gone, with the wandering bodies in which they are incorporated, throughout the state and to great cities like New York. Nam Hollow is a social pest spot whose virus cannot be confined to its own limits. No state can afford to neglect such a breeding center of feeble-mindedness, alcoholism, sex-immorality, and infanticide as we have here. A rotten apple can infect the whole barrel of fruit.
>
> —ARTHUR ESTABROOK AND CHARLES DAVENPORT, *The Nam Family*

With these alarming words, Arthur H. Estabrook and Charles B. Davenport concluded their 1912 monograph, *The Nam Family: A Study in Cacogenics*. Based upon their investigations of an obscure rural community in upstate New York, the authors were not simply indicting the people of Nam Hollow for their objectionable behaviors. They were going a step further to claim that their alleged indolence, feeblemindedness, sexual promiscuity, drunkenness, and criminality were biologically inherited. Degeneracy, in their view, was a product of "cacogenics," a term they borrowed from E. E. Southard to denote bad genes or, in the parlance of that time, defective "germ plasm."[1] Estabrook and Davenport's sensational language conjured a chilling portrait of depraved people reproducing themselves generation after generation, growing exponentially from a few founding families into hundreds and thousands of mental defectives and criminals. Like a plague of vermin erupting from some dark burrow,

Nam Hollow posed a threat to the larger society. If gone unchecked, such people would become an undue burden upon society as they continued to spread their bad germ plasm into the general population.

A central argument of the present book is that key ancestors of the pseudonymic Nam ("Man" spelled backwards) were Native Americans in eighteenth-century western New England struggling to retain their lands in the face of relentless incursions of European settlers. By the early nineteenth century some of them had fled from the turmoil of that frontier to make a new life in Washington County, New York, where they intermarried with other pioneering families. A century later these people came to the attention of Estabrook and Davenport, who were leading proponents of the fledgling field of eugenics.

This book is an exercise in historical anthropology. Who were the pseudonymic Nam of Nam Hollow? How did they become the object, or target, of eugenics research? Was Nam Hollow really a community of genetic defectives? Or was it an enclave of poor, marginalized mixed-race people making do with scarce resources during an era of tumultuous political and economic change? As criminologist Nicole Rafter notes, the eugenicists of the early 1900s gravitated toward studies of rural pariah enclaves or outcaste communities.[2] Many of these contained families of bi-racial and tri-racial ancestry who were shunned by the surrounding society, thus exacerbating their geographical isolation and enclavement. Nonetheless, their poverty was invariably construed by eugenicists as inbred degeneracy, not marginalization or oppression by others. This interpretation naturalized poverty and the American class structure, providing a comforting biological explanation for why some enjoyed wealth and privilege and others did not. Since Nam Hollow fit the profile of rural isolation, poverty, and mixed racial heritage, it is not surprising that Estabrook and Davenport eventually placed it in the crosshairs of their eugenics agenda.

Included in the evidence these authors presented for Nam backwardness and degeneracy were rude dwellings, hunting and fishing livelihoods, basketmaking, wandering, clannishness, reciprocity, and intermarriage between close relatives, among other things. Rather than products of genetic decay, however, these were more plausibly Native

American cultural patterns, some of which were creatively fused with the knowledge and practices of rural whites among whom they lived and intermarried. What was purported to be criminal, degenerate, and cacogenic behavior, in many instances, was a failure to conform to white middle-class sensibilities of the day. As we will argue, Estabrook and Davenport's genre of eugenics echoed many of the fears and class prejudices of the American public and, perhaps unwittingly, contributed to the further stigmatization of one of the least known sectors of the Native American community: the admixed, or mixed-race, communities of the East.

This is a story with several facets. On the one hand, it is about the fate of Native Americans on the eastern colonial frontier, how they became alienated from their ancestral lands, displaced and dislocated, only to become "hidden" or submerged from public view as they intermarried with European Americans and others. It is also the story of scientific, or pseudoscientific, zealotry. This involved, on the one hand, ignorance or misunderstanding of persisting Native American behaviors and institutions, and on the other, mischaracterization of coping strategies of the rural poor generally as genetic defectiveness. Ultimately it is a story about the convolutions and contradictions of race and class in America. How and why are people judged as fit or unfit, worthy or unworthy, as human beings and citizens? And to what extent will the scientific establishment compromise its integrity in rendering such judgments?

In approaching this research, I have been mindful of the contributions of those scholars who have demonstrated the value of understanding culture as a product of history. This theme has ebbed and flowed in American anthropology since its infancy as a profession. Pioneering figures like Franz Boas, and many of his students, are remembered today as "historical particularists" because they attempted to explain the uniqueness of cultures in terms of their particular pasts.[3] Later critics felt that the emphasis upon idiosyncratic culture histories left little room for cross-cultural comparison or for discovering general cultural processes. By examining the asymmetries of power embedded in relations of race, class, gender, ethnicity, and colonialism, much recent scholarship in historical anthropology strikes a balance between revealing the empirical facts of

history, on the one hand, and interpreting this history in terms of global interconnections and broad social and cultural processes, on the other.

Eric Wolf's 1982 landmark *Europe and the People without History* has been especially influential in this regard.[4] Wolf demonstrates how most of the peoples and societies colonized by the West over the past six centuries were rendered invisible, and therefore of negligible worth, by standard histories that rationalized and mythologized the position of the colonizers and the commercial and industrial elite. Earlier global theories of capitalist history, such as André Gunder Frank's development-underdevelopment framework and Immanuel Wallerstein's world-systems theory, emphasized the European core societies or "developed" sector without examining in depth the myriad tribal and peasant peoples, nascent communities, and new forms of labor constituting the underdeveloped periphery.[5] Heeding Wolf's example, then, there is a need to recapture or reclaim subaltern cultural histories by a more rigorous and critical reading of the colonial documents and tracts and by engaging local people in a collective deciphering of their past lives. In a sense, the Nam may be regarded as a colonized minority within their own country. A key goal of this book is to deconstruct Estabrook and Davenport's narrative, to probe beneath its dehumanizing cant of cacogenics to discover a real people and their actual historical experience.

The arguments and evidence in this book are arranged in the following chapters. Chapter 1 examines the role of Native American communities, particularly mixed-race enclaves, in the rise of the eugenics profession. The discussion begins with some personal history clarifying the circumstances that led me to archival materials on the Nam and a critical reevaluation of Estabrook and Davenport's original study. The complex situations of tri-racial and bi-racial isolates in the eastern United States and particularly in New York are considered as a context for understanding the cultural and historical position of the Nam. At the same time, Estabrook and Davenport's work is situated as an integral part of the eugenics profession and movement that flourished during an era of Progressive politics in the early twentieth century and which targeted poor rural outcaste communities of mixed-race ancestry.

The ethnogenesis of the Nam people is traced in chapter 2 to displaced mixed-race Mohicans, the Van Guilders, from the western Massachu-

setts frontier of the eighteenth century. Historical and ethnohistorical sources reveal that a border war and class war between wealthy manorial landholders in New York and the Stockbridge Mohicans of nearby Massachusetts resulted in loss of lands and out-migration of the indigenous population, including many descendants of John Van Guilder and Mary Karner who eventually found their way northward to Washington County, New York.

Chapter 3 explores the multifaceted economic and cultural milieu of nineteenth-century Washington County, which became the new homeland of the Van Guilders. In the aftermath of the Revolutionary War, the Van Guilders were part of a complex movement of many cultural groups into this region, including refugee Podunk, Tunxis, and Mohegan Indians from southern New England, newly freed African Americans from New York and surrounding states, white settlers from Connecticut and Massachusetts, and emigrants from Scotland. In this burgeoning frontier of agrarian capitalism, some pioneering landholders prospered from successive waves of sheep raising, potato farming, and dairy production, while others, including many Van Guilders, experienced growing poverty and social marginalization throughout the nineteenth century.

The transition from independent farmers and landowners to a landless laboring class paralleled the Van Guilders' ostracism over time as an outcaste community, or what became known as Guilder Hollow. This process is examined in detail in chapter 4. Analysis of agricultural and economic data from the New York State Census reveals that successive generations of Van Guilders scaled down, sold, or otherwise lost former farmland hastening their transformation from self-sufficient farming families in the early 1800s to a community of poorly paid farmhands, day laborers, and mill workers by the early 1900s. Despite their growing poverty, it appears that comparatively few Van Guilders were paupers supported by town or county governments. Rather, they adapted to scarcity by sharing their limited resources with networks of relatives while falling back upon historically and culturally familiar livelihood strategies such as hunting and fishing, small-scale horticulture, plant gathering, basketmaking, and peddling.

Chapter 5 discusses Estabrook and Davenport's background and training and how they made Guilder Hollow, and the Van Guilders, the

target of one of the earliest eugenics family studies, *The Nam Family*. Estabrook's archival papers reveal the seven original Van Guilder siblings who migrated to Washington County as well as key early families with whom they intermarried. Despite Estabrook and Davenport's considerable expertise in constructing genealogies, their research suffered from heavy reliance on indirect hearsay testimony rather than direct observation and assessment of the Van Guilders' behavior. Ultimately, their work was flawed by a relentless, if not reckless, pursuit of a cacogenic explanation for all behaviors deemed objectionable. In effect, their narrative reporting style was lightly veiled condescension or revulsion at the Van Guilders' poverty and lifestyle, not a scientific demonstration of inherited degeneracy.

Chapter 6 provides a more probing analysis or deconstruction of the lexical and rhetorical strategies employed by the eugenicists. These, along with other distortions of evidence, misrepresented and obfuscated the Van Guilders' Native American cultural background. These distortions or elisions become apparent by examining how Estabrook and Davenport treated such issues as hunting and fishing, wandering, basketmaking, dwellings, marriage practices, and shyness. What were, in many cases, indicators of indigenous cultural knowledge and practices, the eugenicists dismissed as a degenerate lifestyle produced by defective genes.

A deconstruction of the eugenicists' language and arguments is extended in chapter 7. If Estabrook and Davenport overlooked the Van Guilders' Mohican ancestry and culture, they also failed to recognize the social and political dynamics of their mixed-race outcaste status. "Bad germ plasm" became the eugenicists' catchall rationalization obscuring what were, in actuality, poverty and social marginality. The troubled situation of Civil War veterans, the struggles of the rural working poor, the economic realities of prostitution, and the role of drinking in Guilder Hollow society were largely social conditions governed by the politics of class and race, not a matter of biology.

The Conclusion draws some lessons from the Nam study regarding the persistent invocation of race and class in America as a means of denying worth to some people while elevating others. There are also lessons about the perils of promoting biologistic explanations of human

behavior in the absence of serious historical and cultural inquiry. No less significant, the Van Guilders may be seen as a microcosm of the myriad outcaste communities throughout the eastern United States. Largely unknown or misunderstood by mainstream society, and obscured by their mixed-race origins and cultural hybridity, these people are the "hidden Native Americans."

I

Native Americans and Eugenics

> They are an obscure people in American life and many of them would prefer to remain unnoticed because they are keepers of secrets.
>
> —B. EUGENE GRIESSMAN, "The American Isolates"

A Trail of Names: From Jukes to Nam

Before looking more closely at the Nam case, it will be useful to review what is known about so-called tri-racial and bi-racial isolates, or mixed-race peoples, in the eastern United States and how they became implicated in early eugenics investigations. It will be useful to share some personal history to explain what initially attracted me to these issues nearly forty years ago.

In 1973, I joined the State University of New York at Albany as a young anthropology professor, having recently completed a year's ethnographic fieldwork among Chipewyan Indian communities in northern Canada. These were Athapaskan- or Dene-speaking people who still made a living hunting, trapping, and fishing over a vast subarctic landscape of boreal forest, muskeg, rivers, and labyrinthine lakes. Although they had been dealing with fur traders and other European agents for nearly two hundred years, there were still very few whites in Chipewyan country. The subarctic had remained a resource extraction frontier for colonial powers, not a place to settle. While most of the communities I worked in were largely Chipewyan, these people had occasional interactions with their Western Woods Cree neighbors to the south.[1]

Another part of the ethnic-cultural mix in this region were the Métis, or Métis Cree, people of mixed ancestry who often derived from unions between Cree women and French Canadian fur-trade workers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Métis became a rather cohesive

rudimentary working class in the fur-trade industry and, thereby, served as a link between Indian hunting bands and the European managerial class.[2] In Canada generally, the Métis developed a distinctive hybrid culture and separate identity, a nonconformist blend of Indian "reticence" and Gallic *joie de vivre*.[3] Under the impact of white agricultural settlement in the mid- to late nineteenth century, the Métis of the Canadian plains coalesced into a nationalistic movement that culminated under the leadership of Louis Riel.[4]

The case of the Canadian Métis is significant because it contrasts sharply with the situation of mixed-race Native peoples in the eastern United States. As I would discover, most mixed-race peoples in the eastern states did not develop distinctive vibrant hybrid cultures and identities. Rather, the Native American or African American component of these admixed peoples often remained hidden or submerged while they suffered the stigma of being miscegenated and, therefore, not "pure" representatives of any group. The contrast between the Canadian and American experience of mixed-race people remained in the back of my mind as I began developing and teaching courses on the history of Indian-European relations in North America.

After moving to Albany, it seemed only fitting to learn something about the Algonquian-speaking Mohican, the indigenous people of the mid–Hudson River valley where I now lived. The word *Mohican*[5] (also rendered as *Mahican*, *Mahikan*, and *Mahikander*) is derived from the ethnonym *Muhheakunnuk*, translating approximately as "river that flows both ways" in reference to the tidal properties of the Hudson River. Hence, *Mohican* also meant "people of the tidal waters."[6] At one time their homeland extended from the southern portion of Lake Champlain in the north to Catskill Creek and the northern edge of the Catskill Mountains to the south. Their lands straddled both sides of the Hudson, extending into the Berkshire highlands and the Housatonic River valley to the east and as far as the Helderberg Mountains and the middle section of Schoharie Creek to the west. Following Henry Hudson's voyage into the region in 1609, the Mohican endured more than two hundred years of turbulent interactions with Dutch, English, and American colonial regimes, violent fur-trade-fueled conflicts with their Mohawk Iroquois neighbors immediately to the west, and relocation

to the mission community of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in the 1730s. Shortly thereafter followed the trauma of the French and Indian War and the American Revolution, a complex series of removals and westward migrations and, ultimately, relocation on the Stockbridge-Munsee Reservation in Wisconsin territory in the mid-nineteenth century.[7]

While I found this history both spellbinding and depressing, a passage in anthropologist Ted Brasser's 1974 monograph, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, caught my attention. His monograph was one of the few, if not only, syntheses of Mohican history and culture available at that time.[8] Brasser noted that after the westward exodus of the Stockbridges (or Stockbridge Mohican) in the early 1780s, few Mohicans remained behind in their original Hudson valley homeland. He noted, however, that some remnant Mohican families generated several "Mestizo groups" (i.e., mixed-race or admixed groups), namely, the Van Guilders, Bushwackers, and Jukes.[9] We will return to the Van Guilders and Bushwackers shortly, but back in the 1970s I was fixated by the name Jukes.

By sheer coincidence, and as part of a side interest in criminology, I had been reading Richard L. Dugdale's classic 1877 study, *"The Jukes": A Study in Crime, Pauperism, Disease, and Heredity*. There was that distinctive name again: Jukes. Dugdale's work is often regarded as the earliest of the eugenics family studies in America and, as such, served as a model and inspiration for other investigations that would flourish between the 1880s and 1920s. Dugdale, a sculptor and avocational sociologist, was also a member of the Prison Association of New York. Building on preliminary findings of the physician Elisha Harris, who had examined inmate records from the county jails, Dugdale noticed blood ties among prisoners from numerous families that could be traced back to a single lineage. These inmates in an Ulster County jail became the focus of his study exploring connections between criminality, pauperism, and heredity. Dugdale's pioneering work was not rigidly hereditarian and left open the possibility of both heredity and environmental influences contributing to the Jukes' criminality.

Recently, the biochemist and cell biologist Elof Axel Carlson has argued that "with a few exceptions, Dugdale claimed that what was inherited was a bad environment rather than a bad physiology."[10] Ironically, this flexibility in thought was not adopted by most of the subsequent

eugenicists, including Oscar McCulloch, whose 1888 study, *The Tribe of Ishmael: A Study in Social Degradation*, was inspired by Dugdale's work.

"Juke" or "Jukes" was presented as a pseudonym by Dugdale, but why had he chosen such an unusual name?[11] Had these inmates derived from one of the Mohican "Mestizo" or mixed-race groups mentioned by Brasser? If so, using their actual surname would not have disguised their identity. Another possibility is that the name Jukes had become a generic derogatory epithet that was floating around in the argot of the day and that Dugdale had picked up on it without appreciating its association with the actual Jukes of partial Mohican ancestry. As we will see, eugenicists were prone to constructing rustic, vaguely shameful-sounding fictitious names for their subjects, such as Dacks, Happy Hickories, Smokey Pilgrims, Yaks, Rasps, and Nats, among others.[12] Whatever the circumstances, Dugdale's choice of the Jukes name is puzzling.

There is also a problem with Ulster County's location just south of traditional Mohican territory on the west side of the Hudson River. This was originally the homeland of the northern Delaware or Munsee, Algonquian-speaking people with whom the Mohican had close political ties. By the nineteenth century most indigenous people in this area had long since lost their lands and migrated westward, while remnants, perhaps, moved about in search of work and to escape adversity. An Ulster County jail in the 1870s might have held mixed-race inmates whose ancestors had originated from any number of tribes in upstate New York and western New England: Munsee, Mohican, Wappinger, Mohawk, Oneida, and Abenaki, among others. Yet, as already noted, if the Jukes of Mohican ancestry were actually part of Dugdale's study, it would have been illogical to use Jukes as a pseudonym. Herein lies the conundrum.

An appended list of geographical locations in Brasser's study presents a further complication.[13] Here the Jukes are identified as a Mestizo group "probably related to Wapping and Scaticook Indians" and living in several localities in Dutchess County, New York from about 1850 to 1957. At first glance, this would seem to contradict his earlier characterization of the Jukes as a mixed-race Mohican group. Dutchess County, New York, lies on the east side of the Hudson River, opposite Ulster County, and was part of the traditional territory of the Wapping

or Wappingers, Algonquian-speaking Indians who were close allies of the Mohicans. The Scaticook Indians, however, were an amalgam of groups, largely Paugusset and Potatuck, but also Wyachtonok and Stockbridges, who had gathered at a Moravian mission community on the Housatonic River in northwestern Connecticut. The fact that Stockbridge Indians were part of the mix at Scaticook may provide a partial resolution to confusion about Jukes identity. That is, while Mohicans were the predominant Indian group at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, that mission community also attracted people from other tribes including the fore-mentioned Wyachtonok and Wappingers, as well as Tunxi and other Connecticut River peoples.[14]

All of this attests to the volatility of the New York–New England frontier throughout the colonial period and up through the American Revolution. Losses of indigenous lands and livelihoods kept the Mohican and other Indian groups in a constant state of flux, uncertainty, movement and retreat.[15] It is possible, then, that the Jukes were a complex mixed-race people descended from European unions with an array of Mohican and allied Hudson River Algonquian groups. Even if this interpretation has merit, it does not clarify why Dugdale selected *Jukes*, of all possibilities, as the pseudonym for his eugenics study. Why not Smith or Jones?

Mixed-Race People and Native American Identity

The identity of most Native American people is anchored in a combination of distinctive cultural traditions, bio-genetic or racial characteristics, and social structural relationships, including membership in legally defined tribes, bands, or First Nation groups. Indeed, the legal aspect of identity is also a structural dilemma for federally recognized or enrolled Indians in both the United States and Canada. That is, their special federal status makes them politically subservient to the state in a way that does not affect the general population or any other racial-cultural minority.[16]

Yet, there are hundreds of thousands of other U.S. and Canadian citizens who have some Native American biological ancestry and a sense of cultural separateness as Indians but who have no federal recognition and whose projected identity is regarded with ambivalence or

hostility by whites and many Native Americans of legal status. Such people have been termed "mixed-blood" or "mixed-race" groups, "tri-racial isolates," "little races," "racial islands," and "marginal peoples" by an earlier generation of social scientists, mostly in reference to eastern U.S. communities which, since colonial times, have derived from real or alleged admixture of Native American, African American, and white or Euro-American populations.[17] These include some relatively large, publicly visible groups such as the Lumbees (formerly known as Croatans) of North Carolina, as well as dozens of small rural enclaves such as the Wesorts (or Brandywines) of Maryland, the Monacans (formerly known as Issues) of Virginia, the Haliwa and Sampson County Indians of North Carolina, and the Brass Ankles and Turks of South Carolina.[18]

Yet other groups of this kind include the Carmel Indians of Ohio, the Pooles of Pennsylvania, the Moors and Nanticokes of Delaware and New Jersey, the Dominickers of Florida, the Red Bones and Sabines of Louisiana, the Cajans and Creoles of Alabama and Mississippi, the Guineas of West Virginia, and the Melungeons (or Ramps) of Tennessee and Kentucky, among others.[19] All told, there are nearly seventy named groups for people living in roughly two hundred tri-racial communities in the eastern United States. Calvin Beale estimated that these people numbered about seventy-five thousand in 1950, and perhaps remained at the same level twenty years later in 1970.[20] The process of ethnic emergence and identity management currently unfolding among these people may well mark an important new chapter in Indian–Euro-American relations.[21]

Mixed-race groups emerged across the eastern colonial frontier in the eighteenth century, proliferated in the nineteenth century, and, in some cases, declined or disintegrated by the mid-twentieth century. Shunned by mainstream society, mixed-race peoples were relegated to less desirable and less fertile lands in the mountainous recesses and hollows of the Appalachians and other upland regions. Their enclavement was reinforced by social ostracism, physical isolation, and, simultaneously, by intermarriage within the community. Tri-racial groups, therefore, were a distinctive "betwixt and between" social by-product of America's birth as a nation of privileged white landowners and power brokers. Held in check for two centuries or more by the stigmata of miscegenation,

pauperization, and outcaste lifestyles, some of these communities would become low-hanging fruit for the eugenics profession in the early 1900s.

A. R. Dunlap and Clinton Weslager characterized the sociolinguistic principles involved in naming the mixed-race groups. In effect, "social pressure forced the adoption of names to distinguish the tri-racial from bi-racial groups on the one hand, and from whites, Indians and Negroes on the other hand."[22] In the early stages of this process, family names were often generalized or extended to encompass related people known by many surnames, as in the case of the numerous and widely occurring Chavises and Goins. Over time, however, more-inclusive terms with derisive associations were often imposed by the socially and economically dominant white community to signal their superiority over the admixed groups. Hence, pejorative group names like Buckheads, Clay-Eaters, and Guineas were born. Such people became aware of themselves as "marginal groups," or isolates, as they became objects of derogatory epithets applied to them by the larger society.[23]

This was driven home to me when I encountered a young man from West Virginia who introduced himself to me not only as Native American but also of the Guinea Nigger tribe or community. Despite the label's pejorative origins, it was ingrained as part of this man's identity. Roger Daniels and Harry Kitano argue that the American "ideology of race" is based on a rigid bi-polar model of white and non-white categories, so that any degree of admixture is perceived as non-white, and any degree of black admixture is perceived as black.[24] Paradoxically, a reverse logic applies to Native American racial identity. Evidence of a significant amount of "Indian blood" or blood quantum is needed to validate one's claims as a Native American, both in legal terms and in public perception.[25] Given the foregoing dynamics, the mixed-race Indian groups generally have been treated as blacks by outsiders, so that their history can be seen as a quest for a dignified image emphasizing descent from esteemed Indian ancestors replete with justifying origin myths. Of relevance here is David Henige's contention that the origin traditions of mixed-race groups like the Guineas, Melungeons, Lumbees, and Ramapos (or Jackson Whites) have been constructed to accentuate Native American and European roots while dismissing or diminishing black ancestral ties. Given the restrictive nature of seg-

regation and miscegenation laws and limited opportunities for social mobility among blacks, especially before the 1850s, such origin traditions have a distinctly pragmatic quality.[26]

The dynamics are well illustrated by the "Monhegan Indians," a pseudonym used by George Hicks and David Kertzer for a group in southern New England. Since their defeat by colonists in the late seventeenth century, these people have intermarried with whites and blacks. Since the 1870s they have had no reservation, and without any distinctive language, dress, or occupations to bound them from the larger society, they have been perceived and treated as blacks. Contemporary Monhegan identity, therefore, has a contingent quality as each individual strives to assert his or her Indianness and have it validated. The most important validation derives from local whites who witness "Indian" performances and activities, such as powwows, and from other Monhegans who can reinforce genealogical claims to Indian ancestry.[27]

Complicating matters is the fact that many mixed-race groups adopted Christianity, English speech, and other external indicators of European culture, including the bestowal of European surnames to children.[28] Pressure from the surrounding society to regard such people as non-Indians, or even fraudulent Indians, can be great, regardless of their complex multicultural histories and often distinctive hybridic traditions.

Identity management in this situation involves an attempt to restructure the rigid bi-polar model of white and non-white categories, to include the third category of "Indian," on the one hand, and to have certain individuals accepted or rejected from the new category, on the other hand.[29] Some large, publicly visible groups, like the Lumbees of North Carolina and the Monacans of Virginia, have achieved, or are close to achieving, official state and federal recognition as tribes after long histories of asserting their indigenous ancestries.[30] Even some smaller, less prominent groups, like the Schaghticoke (also known as Scaticook and Pachgatgoch) of northwestern Connecticut, have come close to attaining federal tribal status in recent years.[31] Yet, numerous other communities and enclaves have not gained such acknowledgment. Many admixed people continue to endure stigmatization by non-Indians as poor whites, Mexicans or Hispanics, people of color, or even as blacks masquerading as Indians.[32]

Whether or not particular admixed peoples should be interpreted as interest groups, revitalizing aboriginal societies, or some other social process may be clarified in the years ahead as more of these communities present legal claims for acknowledgment or recognition before the federal government. "Acknowledgment" itself has to be situated in the political economy of the times. During periods of conservative spending on social programs, any revenues distributed to newly created tribes can be seen by mainstream society, and certainly by the federal government, as a strain on the federal budget or as money taken from already established tribes. Also, there may be fears at the local community level that acknowledgment of new tribes will erode the local tax base or otherwise have a negative impact on access to land, real estate, and other resources for non-Indians.[33]

Mixed-Race Groups in New York

By the mid-twentieth century, dozens of admixed communities or isolates in the eastern United States had been identified by anthropologists, geographers, and sociologists. Many of these were located in the mid-Atlantic states and the Deep South, as illustrated by Edward Price's pioneering geographical study and by William Harlen Gilbert's sociological survey.[34] The sociologist Brewton Berry's 1963 classic, *Almost White*, surveyed many of the same groups and family clusters discussed by Price while providing a perceptive social and political analysis of the phenomenon of mixed-blood groups as a whole.[35] In Berry's view, their very existence belied the pervasive mythology of Native Americans as a "vanishing race." More recently, Virginia DeMarce provides a genealogist's perspective on grappling with the welter of family names associated with tri-racial peoples in the Upper South. In her view, genealogy is a means of understanding migration patterns through time and, hence, the origins and history of the various groups.[36] This is indeed a welcome trend, since much literature on isolate communities lacks robust historical analysis that might reveal both commonalities and differences in their ethnogenesis and subsequent development.

Despite the heavy concentration of mixed-race groups in the South, Price, Berry, Brasser and others identified several such communities in New York State:

1. **Jackson Whites** (also known as Ramapos). In the Ramapo Mountains of Orange and Rockland Counties, New York and adjacent northeastern New Jersey.[37]
2. **Honies**. In Schoharie County, New York.[38]
3. **Slaughters or Sloughters**. In the mountainous area west of Schoharie Creek between Middleburgh and Watsonville, including Slaughter Hill, in Schoharie County, New York, circa 1800–1947. Perhaps derived from the Indians of Wilderhook circa 1730, who were likely Catskill Mahican and/or Esopus.[39]
4. **Clappers**. In the Clapper Hollow area of southwestern Schoharie County, New York.[40]
5. **Arabs**. Near Summit in southwestern Schoharie County, New York.[41]
6. **Bushwackers or Bushwhackers** (also known as Pondshiners and Basketmakers). In the West Taghkanic area of Columbia County, New York.[42]
7. **Jukes**. In the Dover Furnace, Murphy, and Sullivan areas of Dutchess County. Probably related to Wapping and Scaticook.[43]
8. **Van Guilders** (also known as Bonackers). In Washington and Rensselaer Counties, New York, and adjacent Rutland County, Vermont. Appear to have come from western Massachusetts and perhaps related to the Stockbridge Mestizo family Van Gelden. In Rensselaer County circa 1800–1920.[44]

With the exception of the Jackson Whites (or Ramapos), very little is known about the New York mixed-race peoples beyond the brief comments noted above.[45] We have a sense of their locations, the probable Indian groups involved in the admixtures, and, in some cases, a time frame for the occurrence of the communities. However, in the absence of systematic studies, much of this information is speculative. For example, the years 1800 to 1947 provided by Brasser for the existence of the Slaughter enclave are questionable. Descendant Slaughter families persist today in the Line Creek valley southwest of Middleburgh.[46] There may have been other groups of this kind in New York State, but these never endured long enough to be noticed by historians and ethnologists.

As in rural America generally, there was an erosion of the mixed-race communities in New York after World War II when greater freedom of movement prompted migration to cities and increased outmarriage.[47] However, this does not mean that the communities suddenly vanished in 1920 or 1947, as Brasser's abrupt dates for the Van Guilders and Slaughters imply. Even with the out-migration of individuals, some families and kin networks may have retained a presence in long-occupied localities. Moreover, the identities and collective memories of particular admixed peoples may have remained among descendants long after the physical manifestations of former enclave settlements had been altered or erased. In my view, there will be an intellectual payoff for keeping an open mind on these issues.

To narrow the discussion, then, there have been at least four mixed-race isolates in New York with some putative Mohican ancestry: the Slaughters, the Bushwackers, the Jukes, and the Van Guilders. Why the Van Guilders in particular rose to the top of my research agenda is addressed next.

The Nam–Van Guilder Connection

Fast-forward to 1986. Over the previous decade I had been immersed in research projects in Chipewyan and Cree communities in northern Canada and among subarctic farmers in northern Finland. Questions about the Mohicans and Jukes were set aside. Then one day I walked into the M. E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives of the University Library at SUNY–Albany. I was not looking for anything in particular but getting a sense of what the archives held. Scanning across the catalog, my eyes stopped on the title "Collected Papers of Dr. Arthur H. Estabrook." I had not encountered that name before, but on a hunch I asked to see the material.

Several large boxes of folders were delivered to my table. For me, opening those boxes was like finding the Rosetta stone. It quickly became apparent that Estabrook was a prominent early eugenics researcher. Here were numerous papers, handwritten and typed notes, publication drafts, and correspondence pertaining to his work on "racial integrity," intelligence, criminality, sterilization of the mentally defective, venereal

disease campaigns in New York City, crippled children in Buffalo and Erie, and his work with Ivan E. McDougle on the mixed-race "Win tribe" of Virginia.

There was also unpublished material on the Jukes. Estabrook had augmented Dugdale's original data to prepare an updated study, *The Jukes in 1915*. There was an eighty-eight-page listing of people by their actual names, along with vital statistics, places of residence, and character profiles. The names were numerically coded and cross-referenced with a genealogical chart. I quickly scanned the list for any surnames with Mohican or other Native American associations. While nothing stood out, my time in the archives was limited on that day. Among other pressing matters, I was preparing to leave for a year in the anthropology department at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

In subsequent years, the genealogical records in the Estabrook collection grew in significance for researchers. An Ulster County poorhouse graveyard and associated documents were discovered in New Paltz, New York, in 2001. Included among the twenty-three hundred unmarked graves were some attributed to members of the pseudonymic Jukes family. Among the graveyard surnames that could be cross-referenced with Estabrook's Jukes data list were Bank, Bush, Clearwater, DuBois, Miller, Plough, and *Sloughter*.[48]

Sloughter. Here was the surname associated with one of the mixed-race enclaves of Schoharie County, the people Brasser identified as deriving from Catskill Mohicans and/or Esopus Indians, the latter a local band of the Munsee. Arguably, this is the first unambiguous historical evidence that the Jukes of Richard Dugdale's study were a mixed-race people with possible Mohican ancestry. Moreover, the starting point of Dugdale's Jukes family, "Max the founder," has been identified as Max Keyser. Although this man's antecedents are unknown, he may be connected to Dirck Corneliesen Keyser, an early Dutch settler who built the first house in Rosendale, New York, in 1680. Of greater interest is the fact that Max's daughter Ada, born around 1755 and first characterized by Elisha Harris as "Margaret, the Mother of Criminals," was actually named Margaret Robinson Sloughter. Her husband, Lem, therefore, was presumably a Sloughter. The Estabrook data list is circumspect on

the latter point but does note that Lem was reputedly an illegitimate descendant of an unnamed colonial governor of New York.[49]

In this regard, it is worth noting that some local historians from Schoharie County have traced the use of the name "Sloughter" as a pejorative epithet back to a colonial governor of Manhattan under Dutch rule. Allegedly, while drunk, Governor Sloughter accepted a bribe and surrendered Manhattan to the British without resistance. This apocryphal story does not square with historical reality, since Henry Sloughter served briefly in 1691 as the royal governor under British rule, the Dutch having surrendered New York decades earlier in 1664. The preceding British-appointed governor, Jacob Leisler, was condemned to death for having championed popular protest, including the cause of Dutch artisans, against corrupt merchant-landlords and the ruling oligarchy. Sloughter may well have been intoxicated while signing Leisler's death warrant.[50] These facts notwithstanding, according to Schoharie legend Sloughter's behavior was widely abhorred by Dutch settlers throughout New York, and thereby the name "Sloughter" became a generic term of condemnation for individuals of duplicitous, licentious, depraved character, including the proclivity to "miscegenate with negro wenches."[51] Such myth-histories provide clues regarding the outcaste status of the Sloughters while shedding little light on the specific origins and development of this mixed-race enclave. More ethnohistorical research is in order.[52]

For me, the *pièce de résistance* in the Estabrook collection was the material on the Nam family. It was the first time I had heard of these people. There were extensive handwritten notes and typed genealogical lists and codes—in essence, the raw materials for constructing a eugenic analysis. Included in the files was a copy of Estabrook and Davenport's 1912 publication, *The Nam Family: A Study in Cacogenics*. I was hooked by the opening paragraph on the second page:

> In 1760 there lived in the mountains of Massachusetts, a set of people called Nam, descended from the union of a roving Dutchman, who had wandered there from the Hudson Valley, and an Indian princess. These people were wealthy in land, having inherited it from their

> Indian ancestors. They were spoken of in an old history as "vagabonds, half farmers, half fishermen and hunters, and who, on their occasional visits to the settlements, were apt to fall into temptation and rum." Among these people was one named Joseph Nam, who had eight children. Five of these eight children left Massachusetts about 1800 and migrated to New York State. Their departure was due to land troubles and petty quarrels with their neighbors. One of these five bought a farm of 160 acres at the place marked N.H., . . . and that immediate region is still called "Nam Hollow," as his descendants are still living on or near the original tract of land. Another settled at S., a most unproductive part of the mountains. The others were nomads, and they moved as they listed, here and there; but the majority finally settled near Nam Hollow.

As this history unfurled my curiosity only grew:

> As time went on, some, who were industrious, prospered. The descendants of these count among their members many prominent men in the communities nearby. The majority, however, were ignorant, unintelligent, indolent, and alcoholic, and did not improve their circumstances. These were mainly farm laborers or wood-choppers, and as they worked only when the mood o'ertook them, they remained poor. Their children did not attend school, and thereby grew up more ignorant than their parents, and in an environment where intemperance and harlotry were the leading evils. These became more and more separated from the better class of people living in the valleys, while the unproductiveness of their land among the rocky hills aided in their isolation.

Despite passing reference to an "Indian princess" as part of the founding pair of the Nam people and what would appear to be a mixed-race community at Nam Hollow, Estabrook and Davenport were silent on matters of racial categories and identities in the rest of their study. I found this perplexing. Were people suppressing their indigenous identity and "passing" as white? That was certainly a possibility at a time when

mixed-race people of white and Indian ancestry were greeted with scorn as "half-breeds" or "breeds." Or was the story about an Indian princess fanciful?

After searching through the notes and lists accompanying the published report, I encountered a typewritten "Key to the Nam Family," an unpublished roster of the actual names of the individuals in the Nam study. The twenty-seven-page list of single-spaced entries accounted for nearly two thousand individuals spanning eight generations extending back to the late eighteenth century. At the head of the list were a married couple, Joseph Van Guilder and Mary Holly ("Molly") Van Guilder (née Winchell, daughter of David Winchell), who derived from South Egremont, Massachusetts, and settled in what became known as Guilder Hollow in Washington County, New York. Joseph was a direct descendant of the Dutch rover and Indian princess in the foregoing account. But the crucial information was the Van Guilder surname. As noted previously, according to Brasser, "Van Guilder" was a surname associated with one of several Mohican Mestizo or mixed-race groups remaining in the mid–Hudson valley at the end of the eighteenth century.[53]

Research projects in Alaska, Canada, Finland, Costa Rica, and western Siberia kept me occupied for the next two and half decades. However, the Van Guilders and the Nam were never far from my thoughts. When I returned to the Special Collections and Archives in 2012, I picked up the trail where I had left it more than two decades earlier. As I studied these documents, my early impressions seemed to hold water. There was a firm connection between admixed Mohicans and early eugenics researchers. Estabrook and Davenport's Nam people were the Van Guilders. Fictitious Nam Hollow was Guilder Hollow. How did the Van Guilders come to settle in this place, and what kinds of lives did they lead? Were Estabrook and Davenport's characterizations of the community, the people's behaviors, and the causes motivating them valid? Addressing these questions will require a dissection and critical analysis of the *The Nam Family* itself. However, some background and context regarding eugenics as a profession and social movement will be helpful in understanding the two researchers who would create the myth of Nam Hollow.

Fear of the Unfit: Eugenics and Cacogenics

Eugenics was born in England in the 1860s through the investigations of Francis Galton, a cousin of Charles Darwin. His studies of the pedigrees of accomplished men—such as statesmen, judges, poets, and scientists—led him to believe that human abilities were largely inherited. He coined the term "eugenics" in his 1883 book, *Inquiries into Human Faculty*, essentially to mean the improvement of the human race by better breeding.[54] Of course, selective breeding of livestock and cultigens had been practiced by humans for thousands of years. Applying such principles to human affairs, however, ultimately would have devastating political consequences in the twentieth century. As Edwin Black argues in *War against the Weak*, the eugenics movement spread from England and gained steam in America, where "its efforts to create a super Nordic race came to the attention of Adolf Hitler." He continues:

> It [eugenics] was conceived at the onset of the twentieth century and implemented by America's most powerful and learned men against the nation's most vulnerable and helpless. Eugenicists sought to methodically terminate all the racial and ethnic groups, and social classes, they disliked or feared.[55]

In the United States, eugenics research proliferated under the direction of the Eugenics Record Office (ERO) in Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island. Established in 1910, it was funded via the Carnegie Foundation by Mrs. E. H. Harriman, widow of the Union Pacific Railroad magnate.[56] Over the next decade this institution would sponsor a series of influential eugenics family studies. Its director was Charles B. Davenport, the coauthor of the Nam study under scrutiny in this book. Arthur H. Estabrook was one of his young protégés. As Nicole Rafter notes, the ERO inverted eugenics' (literally, of "good-genes") initial emphasis on propagation of desirable qualities or traits into research on "cacogenics" (of "bad-genes"), or prevention of the propagation of undesirable, pathological, or degenerate characteristics.[57] Indeed, *The Nam Family: A Study in Cacogenics* made this explicit in its title.

Most of the eugenics studies were written decades before the molecular basis of inheritance was understood. It was not until 1953 that Francis Crick and James Watson discovered the double-helix structure of DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) molecules, which form genes in the cell nucleus. Since that time genetic research on all life-forms, including humans, has advanced at a meteoric pace. In the early 1900s, however, the biochemical mechanisms of inheritance were unknown. That is why eugenicists referred imprecisely to genes, or more commonly "germ plasm," as presumed or hypothesized cellular elements that transmitted traits from parents to offspring.[58]

Despite these limitations, there was a climate of optimism with the rediscovery of Mendelian laws of heredity at this time.[59] Gregor Mendel's work in the 1860s on "dominating" (or dominant) and "recessive" traits, inherited in predictable ratios by offspring, was based on experimentation with over ten thousand cross-fertilized pea plants. However, Mendel was demonstrating the inheritance of simple unit characteristics like smooth versus wrinkled skin on pea pods. As we will see, there was a serious methodological flaw in eugenics applications of Mendelian logic to human affairs. Thus, while Davenport had done credible early work on the heritability of human eye color, skin color, and hair color, his interest in eugenics would take him into more problematic terrain.[60] Namely, were complex phenomena such as indolence, poverty, and criminality heritable unit traits?

Nicole Rafter provided a valuable service in reprinting eleven of the early eugenics family studies in her 1988 book, *White Trash*. While *The Nam Family* was not among them, Rafter's introductory essay offers a penetrating critique and overview of the logic and assumptions driving the family studies as well as the political and economic climate in which they flourished. Because much of her discussion has relevance for the Nam case, it will be instructive to review some of her key contentions.

First, in choosing isolated rural enclaves as research sites, this genre of literature developed a "confirmational image," that of degenerate hillbilly families living in impoverished squalor and reproducing more of their kind. Even though the family studies offered a reassuring biological explanation for inequalities and social classes, their general thrust was

not social Darwinist. That is, they were concerned less with survival of the fittest than with fear of the survival of the *unfit*.[61] Indeed, concern about the unfit was part of the intellectual and political climate in the late nineteenth century. The influential zoologist and evolutionist David Starr Jordan viewed parasitism in crabs as analogous to pauperism and criminality in humans. Since these were all thought to be inherited conditions, and hence immutable, public charity for the poor could be rationalized as a wasted effort. As Jordan argued in a 1901 essay: "The survival of the unfittest is the primal cause of the downfall of nations."[62]

Second, traits that appeared in more than one generation, including complex social behaviors such as "harlotry" (or prostitution), were assumed to be inherited. Personal defects, such as alcoholism, were thought to be not only inherited but also the prime cause of social problems rather than the structure of society. From a eugenics perspective, impoverished, criminal, and feebleminded people owed their condition to heredity. A corollary was that genetic worth was equivalent to social worth.[63]

Third, the eugenics movement thrived in a climate of Progressive politics in the early twentieth century. Responding to unprecedented industrialization, urbanization, the rise of agribusiness, and the growth of militant labor unions, Progressivism romanticized the simpler life of the rural past.[64] Progressive reformers included an eclectic mix of politicians, scientists, academics, journalists, settlement-house workers, conservationists, prohibitionists, and birth-control advocates who sought to rectify the problems of society. In this zeitgeist of reform, eugenics emerged as *the* authoritative apparatus for rationalizing efforts to halt reproduction of purportedly unfit, degenerate classes and peoples threatening America. The rural nostalgia of the era appears curiously at odds with the pervasive theme of rural degeneracy in the eugenics family studies. Indeed, given the masses of impoverished immigrants crowding into squalid city neighborhoods at the turn of the century, it seems peculiar that the eugenicists found few research sites among the urban poor. Rather, the preference for rural enclaves had much to do with their manageable size and the potential for constructing genealogies, a methodological centerpiece, from local documents and informants.[65] Another reason for the focus on the rural poor was tied to the rise of

eugenics as a profession of social control. The cities already had social workers, police, courts, settlement houses, and other institutions to manage its less prosperous residents. By establishing expertise on the cacogenic menace in the countryside, the early eugenicists were carving out a niche as accredited professionals, literally creating a new profession that served as a path to middle-class status and respectability by identifying a new category of clients in need of their specialized knowledge.[66]

Fourth, the inferiority of dark-skinned peoples was assumed, whether black, Indian, or foreigners of dark complexion. Regarded as especially reprehensible was miscegenation between Indians, blacks, and whites as exemplified by studies such as Arthur Estabrook and Ivan McDougle's *Mongrel Virginians*.[67]

Fifth, as noted previously, Dugdale's seminal work offered room for both environmental influences and heredity in reproducing a society's poor and criminal underclasses. After Mendelian laws of inheritance were rediscovered in the early twentieth century, however, the eugenicists' interpretations of degenerative behaviors, such as feeblemindedness, became rigidly hereditarian. Ironically, the researchers' definitions of feeblemindedness also became more lax over time.[68]

Finally, as hereditary explanations became increasingly rigid, there was a push for "negative" eugenics programs. To protect society from the burden of dependent, defective people, it was argued that active measures were needed to control their reproduction. This posture reflected the reformist ethos of the Progressive Era, which promoted the cleansing and transforming of society.[69] Aside from Mrs. Harriman, other wealthy patrons of eugenics research included Samuel Fels, the Rockefellers, and the directors of the Carnegie Institution. As Rafter observes, their philanthropy may have been motivated less by a desire to control the poor than to affiliate with the scientific elite and their production of knowledge. As these families had already achieved their wealth, such patronage was also a means of separating themselves from the excesses of the nouveau riche and active robber barons.[70]

We will return to many of the foregoing themes as our examination of the Nam case proceeds. A key point here is that the eugenics profession in America came of age, in part, by studying tri-racial or bi-racial admixed communities with Native American ancestry. While

the Jukes and the Nam were prime examples, other such communities came under the gaze of eugenicists. "The Tribe of Ishmael" refers to an unusually large enclave of paupers and criminals in Indianapolis first studied in the 1880s by the Protestant minister Oscar McCulloch. They were said to derive, in part, from a "half-breed" woman who married a man from Kentucky, John Ishmael (son of founder Ben Ishmael), in the late eighteenth century. In the 1970s, the historian Hugo Leaming reexamined the case of the Ben Ishmael Tribe. He concluded that as many as ten thousand Ishmael descendants deriving from an admixture of Native Americans (possibly Shawnee), African Americans (possibly of Islamic Fulani background), and western Europeans (possibly Scots, Welsh, or Irish Tinkers) formed a tightly knit community of families with itinerant lifestyles based on hunting, scavenging, and trash recycling and who maintained an annual triangular migration between central Indiana and east-central Illinois from about 1810 to 1905.[71]

More recently, the historian Nathaniel Deutsch has vigorously challenged Leaming, particularly the latter's representation of the Ben Ishmael Tribe as an African American Islamic community that influenced the rise of black nationalism in the early twentieth century. While acknowledging that a small minority of the Ishmaelites had African and Native American ancestry, Deutsch contends that these people were primarily poor white Christians from the Upland South who did not arrive in Indianapolis until after the Civil War.[72] Despite their remarkably divergent views, Leaming and Deutsch are in agreement that McCulloch's early portrayal of the Tribe was grotesquely flawed. The latter saw Ishmael poverty and criminality, and even their nomadic behavior, as proof of their biological degeneracy. Indeed, the first compulsory sterilization law in the world, the "Indiana Plan" of 1907, was inspired by McCulloch's work. By the early 1930s, the Indiana Plan had spread to twenty-nine other states and seven other countries, including Nazi Germany.[73]

Other eugenics studies also focused on groups of partial Native American ancestry. The pseudonymic "Happy Hickory" family of Ohio, studied by Mina Sessions, were descendants of a French immigrant and an "Indian Squaw" from Pennsylvania. The "Silvers," one of several impoverished families living in a ravine in Minnesota, studied by A. C.

Rogers and Maud A. Merrill, were the offspring of "Old Moose Silver, the half-breed." Brewton Berry identified the "Pineys" of southern New Jersey as a mixed-race group, although Elizabeth Kite's eugenics study traced their origins to disenfranchised Quakers and outcastes from other religious communities. Moreover, many other eugenics studies alluded to "negro blood," mulattoes, dark or dusky coloring, and other features indicating African American ancestry within mixed-race families.[74]

One of the last eugenics studies, *Mongrel Virginians: The Win Tribe*, published in 1926 by Estabrook and McDougle, focused on a tri-racial community in Amherst County, Virginia. The acronym *Win* was a less-than-subtle way of referring to the admixed background (i.e., White-Indian-Negro) of these people. Despite their complex origins and their self-identification as Monacan Indians, for many decades the surrounding society preferred to classify them as "Issues," a label that was applied to free people of color prior to the Civil War.[75] In effect, "Issue" became derogatory slang for people of mixed-race background and, therefore, regarded as racially impure and of lesser worth. It was hard for Estabrook and McDougle to disguise their revulsion at what they saw as the degenerative effects of miscegenation:

> The whole Win Tribe is below the average, mentally and socially. They are lacking academic ability, industrious to a very limited degree and capable of taking little training.[76]

Walter Plecker, the author of Virginia's notorious 1924 Racial Integrity Law, drew upon some of Estabrook and McDougle's unpublished work in an effort to prevent miscegenation and preserve the integrity of the white race. As the state's director of the Bureau of Vital Statistics, this law gave Plecker the authority to reclassify all Virginia Indians as mongrel or Negro and, thereby, make the task of segregation easier.[77] While the Monacans were his prime target, he also sought to reclassify smaller Indian communities like the Chickahominy, Pamunkey, and Rappahannock.[78] Part of this law, popularly known as the "one-drop rule," prohibited marriages between whites and blacks, harshly penalized individuals for "passing" as white, and officially reclassified as black any white person found to have an African American ancestor, no matter how distant.[79]

Of significance here is that despite a long history of oppression by the larger society, including quasi-legal reclassification as black, the Monacans retained their identity as Native Americans and experienced in recent decades an ethnic resurgence that resulted in receiving state recognition as a legal tribe. In *Monacans and Miners*, Samuel Cook deftly traces the political economic context of these people's marginalization and reemergence.[80]

One of the lessons of the Monacan case for the present study is the reality of Native American ancestry and origins in many of the mixed-race outcaste communities. There has been a tendency, at times, to minimize or overlook this ancestry. Indeed, Rafter's otherwise insightful book about the eugenics family studies, for example, was titled *White Trash*. This captures a certain cognitive reality in that mixed-race people were perceived by the surrounding society, and the eugenicists, not as vibrant hybrid communities but as degenerate whites, or whites who had somehow fallen by indiscriminately mixing with other races.

It is ironic that "hybrid vigor," a principle long recognized by farmers, horticulturalists, and pioneering geneticists for cross-breeding to produce hardier strains of livestock and food plants, was rarely in the mind-set or vocabulary of the eugenicists. In the view of the latter, "race crossing" among humans produced nothing positive, only degeneracy, and especially the degeneration of whites.[81] This outlook was prevalent in the American "cacogenic" variant of eugenics, less so in British "positive eugenics," which emphasized the benefits of wise marriage choices and selective breeding of healthy and intelligent citizens. In the cacogenic worldview, dark-skinned people were already assumed to be, by nature, of lesser ability and worth. Of course, there was no scientific reality behind these assumptions, only the racist folk biology of society at large. As the biologist Garland Allen notes, Harry Laughlin and other eugenicists viewed miscegenation as analogous to "mongrelization" in an animal-breeding context where matings between two breeds of horses, for example, could produce offspring inferior in qualities possessed by either parent.[82] *Mongrel Virginians* explicitly applied this perspective to humans.[83] Ultimately, Laughlin's arguments about the inferiority of Jews, Italians, and central Europeans would influence congressional passage of a highly restrictive immigration law, the Johnson Act of 1924.

Eugenics declined significantly after World War II when its role in Nazi ideology and the Holocaust became painfully apparent.[84] The newly emerging field of human genetics was gaining momentum at that time and quickly eclipsed eugenics as *the* science of heredity. Although the ERO was dismantled in 1939, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory became a vibrant center for research, attracting the leading genetic researchers in the world, including James Watson.[85] The Laboratory enjoys this prominent position today. Like racism itself, however, eugenics philosophy has not vanished from the public imagination or even from academic circles.

While it is important to understand the pseudobiology and myths that allowed eugenics to flourish, it is easy to lose sight of the complex histories and cultural traditions of the very people who created the mixed-race communities. Rather than highlighting vernacular pejoratives like "white trash" and eugenics' preoccupation with degenerate whites, we need a more rigorous understanding of how Native American and African American beliefs and institutions persisted within the social context of admixture. Of particular interest in this book is the possibility that Native American and European knowledge was creatively hybridized in ways that were unrecognized by outsiders and simply dismissed as low-class or degenerate behavior. By probing the ethnogenesis and history of the Nam, or Van Guilders, ensuing chapters will address this issue.

Early Racial Thought as a Context for Eugenics

Estabrook and Davenport's *The Nam Family* was written at the very cusp of important transformations in thought in biology and anthropology. As the anthropologist George Stocking notes, there were several antecedent traditions of racial thinking in the nineteenth century, including ethnological, Lamarckian, polygenist (multiple human origins), and evolutionist variants. Nonetheless, prior to 1900, "race" often referred to an indiscriminate mix of physical and cultural characteristics presumably inherited in the "blood" of a people. There was no clear boundary between biological and social heredity. Thus, observers could refer loosely to the French race, Chinese race, or Navajo race as encompassing physical appearance, speech, manners, and the myriad customs that persisted

over time. In some respects this older usage of "race" resembled what later scholars would call "national character."[86]

With the emergence of modern genetics after 1900, biologists generally rejected the Larmarckian notion of inheritance of acquired characteristics. While this helped clarify the difference between biological and social heredity, it was a distinction often blurred or ignored by eugenicists. During this same period in the early twentieth century the pioneering anthropologist Franz Boas mounted a powerful critique against nineteenth-century ideas about unilinear cultural evolution, polygenist human origins, and racial hierarchies.[87] These procrustean notions had been advanced in varying degree by the earliest founders of institutional anthropology in the United States during the late nineteenth century, including scholars such as Lewis Henry Morgan, John Wesley Powell, Fredric Ward Putnam, and Daniel G. Brinton. The anthropologist Lee Baker characterizes Brinton's influential 1890 work, *Races and Peoples*, as a particularly egregious example of scientific authority supporting racist folk biology, popular stereotypes, and political trends in society at large. Brinton argued that cranial capacity and mental ability, among other things, were part of a racial natural order wherein "the European or white race stands at the head of the list, the African or negro at its foot."[88] Countering this intellectual legacy, Boas insisted on race, language, and culture as fundamentally independent variables and processes. He also established the agenda for the relativist, historical particularist school that dominated American cultural anthropology (or ethnology) for decades.[89]

Even though Boas came to Columbia University in 1896, initially as a physical anthropologist, he had already conducted extensive ethnographic field research among Central Eskimo (or Inuit) on Baffin Island and among the Kwakiutl (or Kwakwaka'wakw) and other indigenous communities of the Northwest Coast. He understood the intricacies and contingencies of other people's lives from a participant observer's perspective. With wide-ranging interests and expertise, Boas established American anthropology as a four-field enterprise encompassing linguistic, cultural, archaeological, and physical anthropological approaches to understanding the human condition. Despite this holistic stance, however, he firmly maintained that the study of human biological difference and processes was to be sharply separated from analysis of cultural

and historical matters. This analytical separation was never embraced by the eugenicists, who indiscriminately commingled biological and social phenomena in a conceptualization of heredity that perpetuated nineteenth-century notions of race.

At the same time in the early 1900s, Charles Davenport was emerging as a pivotal leader in both the nascent field of genetics and in the emerging eugenics movement. Biological anthropologist Jonathan Marks is one of the few to comment on the intellectual tension between Boas and Davenport during this period. He notes that their foundational works in 1911, a year before *The Nam Family* was published, offered divergent views about the relationship between "primitive" and "civilized" people. Boas's *Mind of Primitive Man* maintained that cultural complexity was tied to historical circumstance, whereas Davenport's *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics* posited a Mendelian basis for cultural dominance. Moreover, the latter believed that eugenics offered solutions for vexing social problems.

In this regard, Davenport was influenced by his friend Madison Grant, a New York attorney and socialite, who wrote *The Passing of the Great Race* in 1916. Grant bemoaned the erosion of Nordic America and blamed it on inferior stocks of eastern and southern Europeans inundating the country in the wake of liberal immigration policies. People of inferior biological stock, he argued, were threatening white Anglo-Saxon Protestant life both from within and without. The eugenical implications of his stance were clear. Homegrown poor and degenerate people could be sterilized, for example, whereas inferiors of foreign origin could be barred from entering the country. This message resonated with geneticists like Davenport and his colleagues and with politicians as varied as Theodore Roosevelt and, ultimately, Adolph Hitler.[90] Indeed, Progressive reformers like Roosevelt chided the upper classes for committing "race suicide" by having smaller families, thereby eroding American society via a disproportionate reproduction of purportedly inferior classes and ethnic groups.[91]

The Progressive political climate which nurtured eugenics, therefore, fostered a fear of being overrun by people of defective biological stock. Flowing from and reinforcing this insecurity was the idea of a natural hierarchy of white, black, yellow, brown, and red "races." As the historian Thomas Leonard observes, the new "race scientists invariably located African Americans at the bottom of their pyramids of humanity." At

the same time, this prejudicial color-based notion of race overlapped ambiguously with ethnicity and nationality and with allied concepts such as "people," "type," "group," and "stock." A particularly influential racial taxonomy/hierarchy among the Progressive mind-set was William Ripley's 1899 *The Races of Europe*. An MIT economist and avocational physical anthropologist, Ripley used cephalic index and stature, as well as skin, hair, and eye color, to divide Europeans into Teutonic, Alpine, and Mediterranean "races." If not overtly stated, the superiority of the Teutonic race (blond-haired, pale-skinned, blue-eyed northwestern Europeans) was implied, an assumption welcomed by writers like Madison Grant. Southern and eastern Europeans were regarded as inferior. Hence, when eugenicists lamented the survival of "unfit races," they might be referring to African Americans, French Canadians, Russian Jews, Sicilians, or any number of "swarthy," non-Teutonic peoples perceived as a threat to Anglo-Saxon race integrity.[92] In other words, what were ostensibly objective, anthropometrically defined racial groups were, upon closer examination, socially constructed categories of people regarded as offensive and unwanted by the WASP establishment.[93]

Leonard also notes that the perceived threat could reside in inferior socioeconomic classes rather than "races" or ethnic groups, as exemplified by the "white trash" eugenics family studies, including those on the Jukes, Kallikaks, the Nam, and the Tribe of Ishmael, among others.[94] Indeed, these impoverished rural enclaves of sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-generation Americans became the research targets of choice for the eugenics profession. *Not* the newly arriving immigrants and *not* the urban poor, many of whom were foreign-born. However, a class analysis alone would limit our understanding of these rural communities. As subsequent chapters will demonstrate, at least for the Nam, these were not lower-class or degenerate whites but rather mixed-race Native Americans with a complex history and hybridic culture adapting to the frontiers of European expansion.

Boas was incensed by what he saw as the "Nordic nonsense" promoted by writers like Grant, convinced that there was no empirical evidence for hereditary, racially specific cognitive or behavioral traits in blacks, immigrants, or any other groups.[95] Indeed, in 1917 he wrote a scathing review of the *The Passing of the Great Race* for *The New Republic*. A decade

later he included in his book *Anthropology and Modern Life* a chapter that harshly critiqued eugenics, although by that time scientific support for the movement was beginning to wane. Boas's early and vigorous opposition seemed to have little impact upon Davenport and his colleagues, however. Some of America's most prominent evolutionary scientists were leaders of the eugenics movement. And among these were some well-known physical anthropologists, including Aleš Hrdlička of the United States National Museum (now the Smithsonian Institution) and Earnest Hooten at Harvard. Both served on the American Eugenics Society Advisory Council, which included a mix of scientists, politicians, philanthropists, clergy, and reformers.[96]

Whereas Hooten remained an enthusiastic supporter of eugenics into the 1930s, Hrdlička had become disenchanted with the movement years earlier. Indeed, he came to share many of the reservations expressed by his colleague Boas.[97] As noted by the historian Matthew Bokovoy, Hrdlička's 1925 work, *The Old Americans*, was antithetical, if not lethal, to eugenics doctrine. His study punctured the myth of a "racially pure" old American stock by revealing the complex mixed ancestry of Anglo-Saxons in the United States. Also vexing for eugenicists who abhorred race "mongrelization," Hrdlička maintained that future intermarriage between newly arriving immigrants and existing Americans would be beneficial rather than deleterious.[98]

If fear is a basic motivating factor for magic and religious ritual in all human societies, perhaps we can appreciate eugenics more as a religion than a science. It was born of anxieties among America's elite and privileged classes at the end of the nineteenth century. In a speech titled "Eugenics as a Religion," Davenport himself developed an eleven-point creed that included the following: "I believe that I am the trustee of the germ plasm that I carry."[99] Remaining chapters of this book will shed light on the real people concealed beneath the shroud of fear that Estabrook and Davenport created in *The Nam Family*.

A Cautionary Note on the Meanings of "Mixed-Race"

The use of the terms "race" and "mixed-race" in the present study is not meant to reify or naturalize what are largely social constructions. There are no fixed, static, timeless, or "pure" races, only pervasive gene flows

within and between human populations over time and across space. Early typologies that simplified this biogenetic variability with a few phenotypic markers, such as skin color and head shape, often reflected and reinforced insidious folk biological notions of a natural hierarchy of superior and inferior races. Like many scholars, therefore, I use the term "mixed-race" advisedly to indicate descendants of recent intermarriages between people of different ancestries, in this case, unions between Native Americans and Euro-Americans. "Mixed-race," therefore, is a convenient shorthand for summarizing rather complex historical interactions and mergings of peoples.

The sociologist Chris Anderson, who is Métis, objects to the notion of "mixed-race," or racialized "mixedness," applied to the Métis, largely because it situates these people in a disadvantageous political position. Perceived by others as neither fully Indian nor fully white, rather than as an indigenous people and nation in their own right, the Métis have fared poorly in their legal dealings with the Canadian state.[100] Despite the distinctiveness and vitality of Métis culture, their betwixt-and-between ethno-status position in Canadian society has denied the Métis access to the kinds of resources and benefits granted to most Indians under Canadian Indian treaty law.

Anderson's arguments about juridical mistreatment are compelling. People who are perceived as "mixed" may be dismissed by others as impure, inauthentic, and, therefore not "full" or fully worthy of consideration. Nonetheless, it would be difficult to grasp the Métis experience by ignoring their ethnogenesis in Native-European intermarriages and in early fur-trade labor arrangements. Likewise, it would defy reason to deny Métis "mixedness" in the mind-set and reactions of the larger society. These are undeniable historical and social realities, regardless of their consequences for recent Métis political struggles. Ironically, the very word *Métis*, an overt expression of identity and ethnicity for several hundred thousand Canadian citizens, means "mixed-race," "mixed-blood," or "mixed-breed" in the French language, ultimately deriving from the Latin *miscere*, meaning "to mix."[101] In this sense, a people's own ethnonyms may contradict or confound attempts to mitigate the coercive power of language.

Arguably, there is a distinction to be made between "mixed-race" or "mixed-blood" as ethnonyms or expressions of identity, on the one hand, and the use of such constructs for analysis of particular histories of social interaction, ethnogenesis, and community formation, on the other. It is the latter analytical sense of "mixed-race" that informs the present book. As we will discover, the Nam, or Mohican Van Guilders, confronted very real dilemmas of land alienation, dwindling livelihood opportunities, and ostracism, in part, owing to their ambiguous betwixt-and-between ethnicity. As noted earlier in this chapter, "mixed-race" flourished in the discourse of social scientists and human biologists in the mid-twentieth century to characterize marginalized communities in the eastern United States. Anderson's misgivings notwithstanding, the construct continues to have analytical utility in contemporary scholarship.[102] In part, this is because a parsimonious alternative language for the complex dynamics conveyed by concise terms like "mixed-race," "mixed-blood," and "mixed ancestry" has thus far eluded us.

2

Border Wars and the Origins of the Van Guilders

> We are now in tears, we have lost everything. The Patroon has got all our lands, and we have nothing for them.
>
> —An old Hudson River Mohican to Guy Johnson, April 26, 1767, in PATRICK FRAZIER, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*

Manorial Lords versus Native Americans

The people who would become *The Nam Family*, as presented in Estabrook and Davenport's eugenics study, ultimately derived from the turbulent frontier between colonial New York and Massachusetts in the mid-eighteenth century. This was at the dawn of the French and Indian War. During that seven-year conflict, 1754 to 1761, between New France and the English colonies, upstate New York was convulsed by violence. The Mohican Indians, including many Stockbridge men, fought on the side of the English against the French and their Indian allies in bloody engagements at Lake George and Lake Champlain, among other locales. These events formed the backdrop for James Fenimore Cooper's iconic 1826 novel, *The Last of the Mohicans*.

It was in the midst of this larger political contest that a border war and class war erupted along a disputed New York–Massachusetts boundary that involved the Stockbridge Mohicans and their relatives. On the New York side, much of the land had been granted to wealthy, politically connected families by former colonial governors in the late seventeenth century. These included massive feudal-style manors such as Rensselaerwyck. With over one million acres, the latter embraced most of present-day Albany and Rensselaer Counties. Immediately to the south

was the 160,000-acre Livingston manor, granted in 1686. It extended from the Hudson River eastward into the Taconic Mountains in what is now Columbia and Dutchess Counties.[1] However, deception in the wording of the deeds hid the true extent of these manors from the local Indians. By the 1750s, hundreds of tenant farm families were working on these estates, including in the Taconic uplands, which encroached upon the Mohicans in nearby Stockbridge.[2] The reality of their rapidly shrinking land base was becoming painfully clear to the Mohicans.

During this same period the Massachusetts colony encouraged aggressive settlement of its western frontier by granting new townships in the area. In 1759 the Stockbridge Mohicans were alarmed to find land they had assumed to be theirs along the Housatonic River being surveyed for white settlement.[3] To complicate matters, both New York and Massachusetts laid claim to the region straddling the Taconics and the Berkshire highlands. An official boundary between the two colonies was not surveyed until the late 1760s, leaving questions of jurisdiction and landownership unsettled. To ensure their own future in this precarious climate, the Stockbridge Indians began selling land to both New England settlers and manorial tenants. This had the effect of undermining the New York landlords' claims to property while stirring unrest and rebellion among tenant farmers and squatters. Ultimately, the Stockbridges sold all the land between the western border of present-day Massachusetts and what is now the New York Taconic State Parkway.[4] Since they had relinquished their fertile Hudson valley horticultural lands decades earlier, by the 1750s the Mohicans faced a bleak future with little remaining territory to eke out a livelihood.[5]

As tensions grew between the New England farmers and the New York landlords, there were outbreaks of violence in the disputed area as the landlords enlisted loyal tenants and Albany officials to evict and arrest recalcitrant tenants and squatters. After the killing of a rebel tenant in 1755, the latter's allies countered with raids on loyal tenant farms and properties. This set the stage for a series of violent confrontations on the disputed eastern fringe of the Livingston estate, then under the ownership of Robert Livingston Jr. In *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, Patrick Frazier provides a vivid account of a pivotal encounter:

> On November 25, 1756, the Albany sheriff and another posse, said to be unarmed, again attempted to evict several tenants and destroy their houses. One of the tenants was apparently a good friend of Mohican John Van Guilder, who with two of his sons and another settler soon arrived on horseback at the tenant's place. The Van Guilder party was armed with guns, bayonets, and tomahawks, and Van Guilder threatened to kill some of the posse if they touched the house. The sheriff ordered his men to arrest them, and as the posse approached, the Indians gave a war cry. Van Guilder leveled his gun, shot and killed one of the posse, then fled with his sons and friend. The sheriff's men quickly captured Van Guilder, one of his sons, and the settler, took them to the Albany jail, and put them in irons. It was rumored that Van Guilder's other son vowed to involve the Stockbridge Indians, to capture one of the posse dead or alive, and to burn down Livingston's house.[6]

While the Van Guilders languished in jail for many months, the larger political implications of the confrontation weighed heavily on colonial authorities. Given uncertainty regarding both the British military situation and Indian allegiances in 1757, there was fear of offending the Native community, particularly the Stockbridge Mohicans, who were rumored to be planning a retaliatory raid against the Livingston estate. Sir William Johnson, commissioner of Indian Affairs for New York, became involved in delicate negotiations with the leaders of the Stockbridge community, counseling against vengeful reprisals, on the one hand, and discouraging efforts to have the Van Guilders removed for trial to Massachusetts, on the other. King Ben (Benjamin Kokhkewenaunaunt), the head sachem at Stockbridge, and his grandson Jacob Cheeksaunkun interceded with Johnson on behalf of the Van Guilders. From their perspective, the Van Guilders were not aggressors, only defenders of poor families under brutal attack by Livingston. At the same time, the Mohicans at Otsiningo, a multi-tribal refugee settlement on the Susquehanna River in New York, vigorously pressed the Van Guilders' case with Johnson.[7] By the summer of 1757, John Van Guilder and his son were released without trial.[8]

Unfortunately, the immediate aftermath of the Van Guilders' release did not resolve the conflict in the border country. In May 1758 the Van

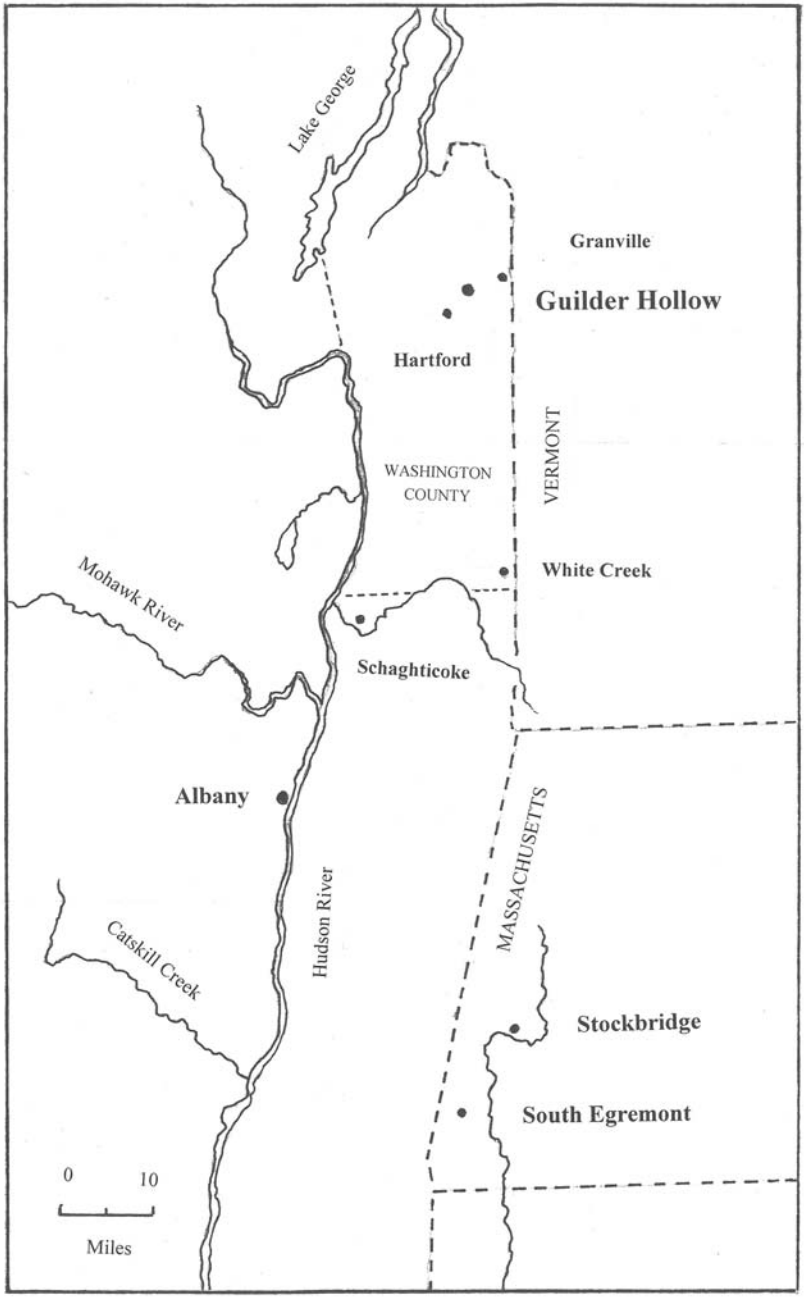
Guilder family and other Stockbridge Mohicans were part of an armed contingent of thirty men who engaged in a gun battle with Livingston and his supporters, including the Albany deputy sheriff and a "small army." This clash was provoked by the Mohicans' recent sale of a large portion of Livingston's purported claim to tenants and squatters in the disputed border zone.[9]

In many ways, the border wars of the 1750s marked the twilight of the Mohican and Stockbridge presence in their original homeland. By the end of the American Revolution, most would be deprived of their lands and face rejection by new waves of white settlers.[10] Thus began their migration in the mid-1780s to live, albeit temporarily, near the Oneida Iroquois in New York. Both the French and Indian War and the American Revolution had exacted a large toll on the Mohicans. Nearly half the male population had succumbed while scouting along the northern borders, accompanying Rogers' Rangers on raids into French Canada, in the Battle of Ticonderoga, in the Montreal Expedition, at Lexington, at the Battle of Bunker Hill, at White Plains, at Barren Hill, and other campaigns. Paradoxically, many notable Stockbridge warrior-leaders who had served with distinction, first for the British and then for the Americans, returned to Stockbridge only to find that the religious strictures of the mission community no longer held much appeal for them.[11] The end of that life was near, in any case.

The Van Guilders, like their Stockbridge relatives, suffered loss of their lands and dislocation in the waning years of the eighteenth century. However, instead of migrating westward to Oneida country and from there to Indiana and Wisconsin, the Van Guilders moved north. They settled in what is now Washington County, New York, and adjacent Rutland County, Vermont (map 1). Subsequent generations, who would become grist for Estabrook and Davenport's eugenics mill, were direct descendants of John Van Guilder.

The Founding Generation

Part of the evidence for a connection between John (or Jan) Van Guilder and the Nam can be found in a brief historical backdrop in *The Nam Family*:



Map 1. Environs of the Van Guilders along the New York–New England borderlands.

> In 1760 there lived in the mountains of western Massachusetts, a set of people called Nam, descended from the union of a roving Dutchman, and an Indian princess. These people were wealthy in land, having inherited it from their Indian ancestor. They were spoken of in an old history as "vagabonds, half farmers, half fishermen and hunters, and who, on their occasional visits to the settlements, were apt to fall into temptation and rum." Among these people, was one named Joseph Nam, who had eight children. Five of these eight children left Massachusetts about 1800, and migrated to New York State. Their departure was due to land troubles and petty quarrels with their neighbors. One of these five bought a farm of 160 acres at the place marked N.H. (see Chart D), and that immediate region is still called "Nam Hollow," as his descendants are still living on or near the original tract of land. Another of the five settled at S., a most unproductive part of the mountains. The others were nomads, and moved as they listed, here and there; but the majority of the family finally settled near Nam Hollow.[12]

Despite the brevity of the foregoing account and its condescending language and imagery (e.g., "vagabonds" and "apt to fall into temptation and rum"), there are some meaningful clues. The Nam are portrayed as people of partial Indian ancestry deriving from western Massachusetts. Their departure is attributed to "land troubles and petty quarrels with their neighbors." While the latter phrasing grossly simplifies and trivializes the embattled situation of the Van Guilders during the border wars, the gist of the statement squares with historical reality. Even the date 1760 corresponds with a time immediately after the Van Guilders' conflicts with Robert Livingston Jr. but prior to the American Revolution and subsequent departure of most Mohicans and Stockbridges from the region.

Further evidence can be found at the very start of Estabrook and Davenport's descriptive genealogy, which constitutes the bulk of their study. Starting with the founding generation and moving down through eight generations of descendants and collateral relatives, each person is profiled in a few sentences. The very first entry is the following:

> Generation I 1 (Chart A) is a man who was born about 1740 in the western part of Massachusetts. He was a Revolutionary soldier. In an old history he is spoken of as "one of a set of vagabonds by the name of Nam who lived in the mountains." He was the grandson of the Indian princess and the Dutch rover mentioned above. He married; and died about 1830. His wife (I 2) bore him eight children.[13]

As noted in chapter 1, I was fortunate to locate the unpublished "Key to the Nam Family" in the Arthur H. Estabrook Papers collection.[14] This key provides the actual surnames and given names for all the individuals identified by numerical codes in *The Nam Family*. The key reveals that Generation I 1 was Joseph Van Guilder of South Egremont, Massachusetts. His wife, I 2, was Molly Van Guilder (née Winchell), also from Massachusetts.

These names are crucial, as they establish a connection to John Van Guilder. The village of South Egremont was about twelve miles southwest of Stockbridge and was precisely the area where John Van Guilder and his relatives lived and owned property. In the 1940s, Joseph Kellogg compiled extensive genealogical information based on deeds, estate settlements, and cemetery records for selected families in the towns of Egremont and Sheffield, Massachusetts. Among these were the Van Guilders (also rendered as Van Gilder, Vangilder, Van Gelder, Vangelder, Van Gelden, and Van Geldern).[15] More recently, Debra Winchell, a descendant of John Van Guilder, utilized Kellogg's information and other archival records to build a vivid portrait of John Van Guilder and his life.[16]

One of John's sons was Joseph Van Guilder, who was the first person (i.e., Generation I 1 above) identified in Estabrook and Davenport's genealogy. Born in 1722, Joseph was the second of nine children of John Van Guilder and his wife, Anna Maria Koerner (or Mary Karner), of German Palatine descent.[17] Another son, Matthew, born in 1728, had been imprisoned with his father after the violent confrontation on the Livingston estate. According to Winchell, John Van Guilder was a farmer who also operated a sawmill with his brother-in-law Andrew Karner on the latter's adjoining property in the area west of Sheffield and just east of the Taconic range near South Egremont, Hampshire County

(known as Berkshire County after 1761). Thus, despite his Mohican background, Van Guilder was Europeanized and Christianized to a certain degree, having a German Palatine wife and in-laws as well as numerous relatives and friends among the Stockbridges.[18] Indeed, his extensive landholdings of some eleven hundred acres had been deeded to him by Mohican friends and relatives over the years.

John Van Guilder is clearly the son of the "roving Dutchman" and "Indian princess" alluded to in Estabrook and Davenport's brief origin story about the Nam family. However, his actual beginnings are murky. Winchell found no baptismal records for John Van Guilder, and apparently there are no records for any Van Guilders (or Van Gelders) living north of Manhattan Island in the 1690s at the time of John's presumed birth.[19] However, Joseph Van Guilder's mother (i.e., Mary Karner) informed him that his father, John, had been baptized in Rhinebeck, and other traditions suggest that he was raised in a Dutch home in that same Hudson valley community.[20]

Other clues suggest that John Van Guilder's original Mohican name was Toanunck (or Tawanaut). He may have derived from the Catskill band of the Mohicans, although he had ties to the Wappingers.[21] He may also have had ties to Mohicans in the Taconic and Shekomeko communities as well.[22] Along with twenty other Mohicans, he had signed a 1724 deed relinquishing a large tract of land in the "Housatonock alias Westenhook" area (the country west of Sheffield and Great Barrington) of western Massachusetts.[23] Although the Mohicans had retained some of that land for themselves as a reservation, that also was relinquished in 1736 when the township of Stockbridge was created as a mission community for the Indians.[24] A year later, the Mohican leaders Konkapot, Poniote, and Skannop deeded land to John Van Guilder so that he could retain his farm within the aforementioned ceded area.[25] In short, John Van Guilder seemed to move comfortably in both Mohican and European circles. However, whether he was of Mohican-Wappinger background, of mixed Mohican-Dutch parentage, or a Mohican boy raised in a Dutch household, among other possibilities, remains unclear. Whatever the particulars, the Mohicans regarded him as one of their own.[26]

In Generation II, with the children of Joseph Van Guilder and Mary Holly (also known as "Molly") Winchell, we find good but not total

correspondence between the genealogies of Kellogg and Estabrook and Davenport. The essential details appear below:

Parents

Joseph Van Guilder Sr. (born in 1722)
Married (1748) Mary Holly ("Molly") Winchell (daughter of David Winchell)

Children (all baptized in Egremont on September 27, 1775)[27]

1. David Van Guilder (born ca. 1770)
2. Martha Van Guilder (born ca. 1770 in Massachusetts) **Line F**
   Married to Elijah ("Cute") Winchell (born in 1740 in Massachusetts, died in 1820)
3. Stephen Van Guilder Sr. (born ca. 1770 in Massachusetts, died in 1846) **Line D**
   Married (name unknown)
4. Daniel Van Guilder Sr. (born in Massachusetts, died in 1840 in Vermont) **Line B**
   Married (name unknown)
5. Solomon Van Guilder (born ca. 1770 in Massachusetts) **Line E**
   Married (name unknown)
6. Bennony Van Guilder (died in 1860 in South Granville, New York)
7. Dana Van Guilder
8. Joseph Van Guilder Jr. (born ca. 1770 in Massachusetts, died in 1830 in South Granville) **Line A**
   Married to Polly (maiden name unknown) (born in Guilder Hollow, Massachusetts, died in 1840)
9. Unidentified male descendant of Joseph Van Guilder Sr. **Line C**
   Married (name unknown)

Kellogg mentions only the first seven children above: David, Martha, Stephen, Daniel, Solomon, Bennony, and Dana. Estabrook and Davenport document the same first six children as Kellogg but do not list the seventh child, Dana Van Guilder. Yet, Estabrook and Davenport account for two additional offspring not mentioned by Kellogg: Joseph Van Guilder Jr. and an "unspecified [male] descendant of Joseph

Van Guilder [Sr.]," possibly a nephew or cousin. Of these nine Van Guilders, at least five, along with their spouses, migrated from western Massachusetts to Washington County, New York, sometime between 1790 and 1810. A sixth, Daniel, and his spouse settled in nearby Rutland County, Vermont.[28] These couples were the founders of six groups of descendants, or what Estabrook and Davenport termed "lines" (noted above in boldface). These genealogical lines formed the core of the Nam community as characterized by their study. Kinship connections between individuals in these founding generations are shown in charts 1–7. As we will see in subsequent chapters, the founding Van Guilders would intermarry with other families to create several other descendant lines.

It is notable that all the migrating Van Guilders except for Martha were male. A seventh Van Guilder, Bennony, also made the move to New York but apparently never married. Bennony, an uncommon given name, is of interest for its associations with the Dutch fur trade and Mohicans earlier in history. As noted by Shirley Dunn, Bennoni Van Corlaer was the illegitimate son of Arent Van Corlaer, a relative and employee of the patroon Kiliaen Van Rensselaer of Rensselaerwyck in the late seventeenth century. Around 1711, Bennoni's son, who was named Arent Van Corlaer after his grandfather, established a fur-trading post at White Creek, in present southeastern Washington County. Here he established amicable relations with the Mohicans, who at that time were using that area primarily for hunting.[29] This association of names raises the intriguing possibility that the Van Guilders were returning northward to lands already known to them or to their Mohican and Stockbridge relatives and ancestors.

Exodus

Several "push factors" were responsible for the Van Guilders' departure from western Massachusetts. First, there was the steady pressure of encroaching white settlement on both sides of the New York–Massachusetts border. Second, the Van Guilders' violent resistance to Livingston earned them a reputation as rebellious troublemakers among New York's power elite. This may have been the beginning of a stigmatization process that, over time, contributed to this family's isolation and enclavement. Third, the westward migration of most of their Stockbridge

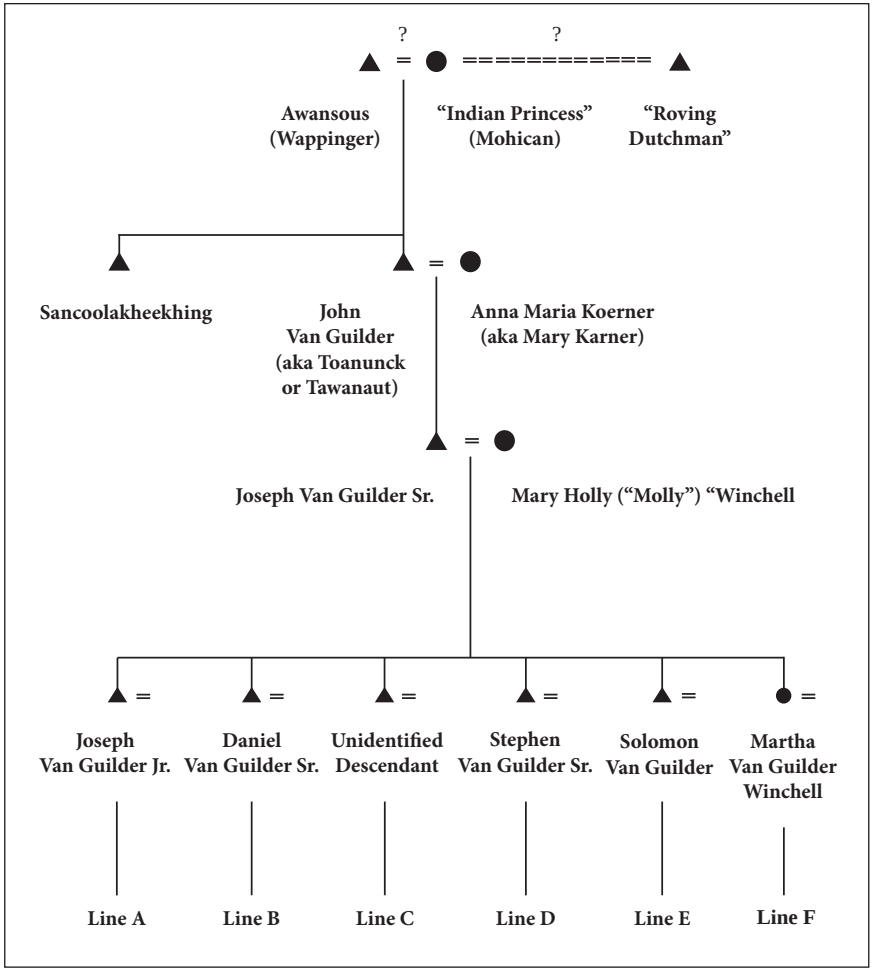


Chart 1. Kinship ties among the founding generations of Van Guilders.

relatives left the Van Guilders without their traditional cultural and political allies. This became painfully apparent after many Van Guilder men returned home from military service in the American Revolution only to find their land diminished and encircled and the Stockbridges gone from the area.[30] Under these traumatic circumstances, there were few options, perhaps, other than selling off their remaining property and moving elsewhere for a fresh beginning.[31]

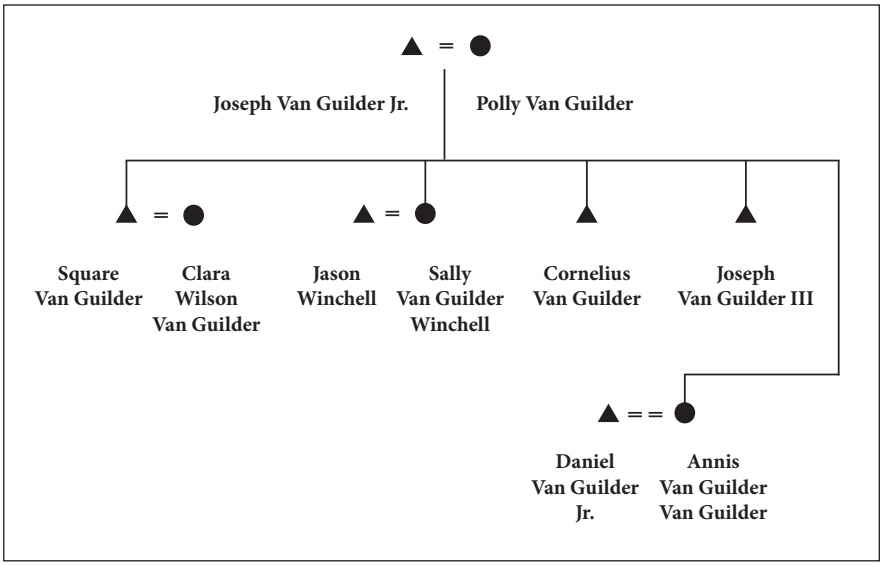


Chart 2. Joseph Van Guilder Jr.'s immediate descendants (Estabrook and Davenport's Line A).

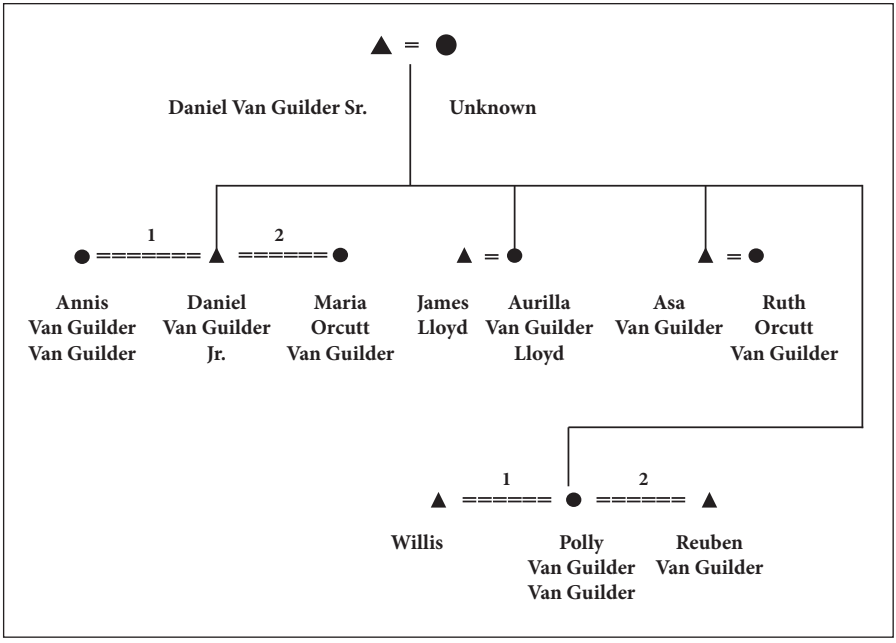


Chart 3. Daniel Van Guilder Sr.'s immediate descendants (Line B).

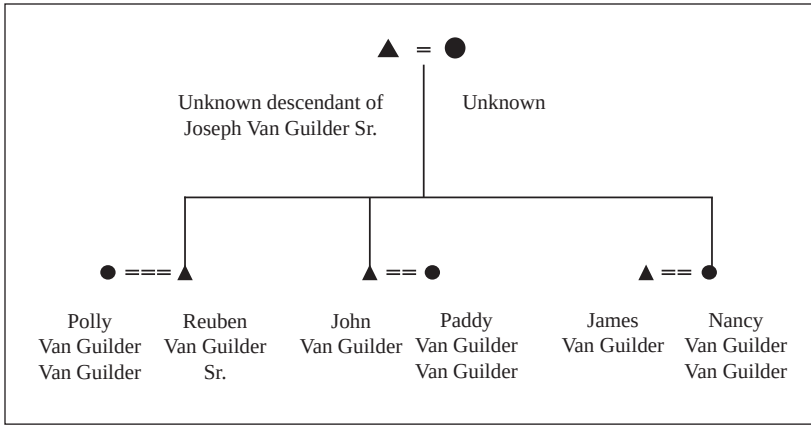


Chart 4. Immediate descendants of an unidentified male descendant of Joseph Van Guilder Sr. (Line C).

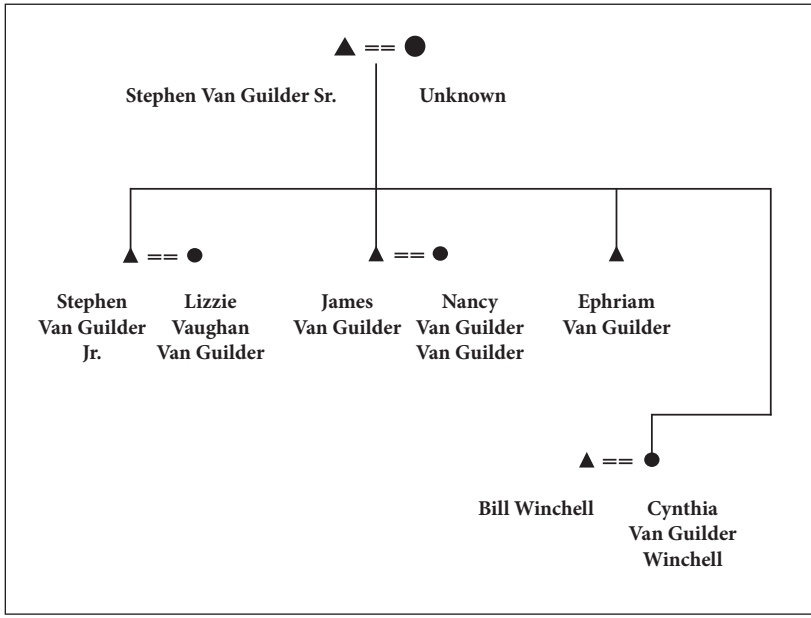


Chart 5. Stephen Van Guilder Sr.'s immediate descendants (Line D).

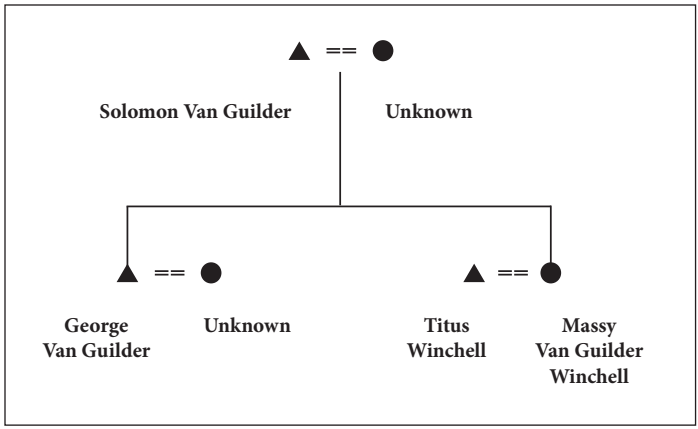


Chart 6. Solomon Van Guilder's immediate descendants (Line E).

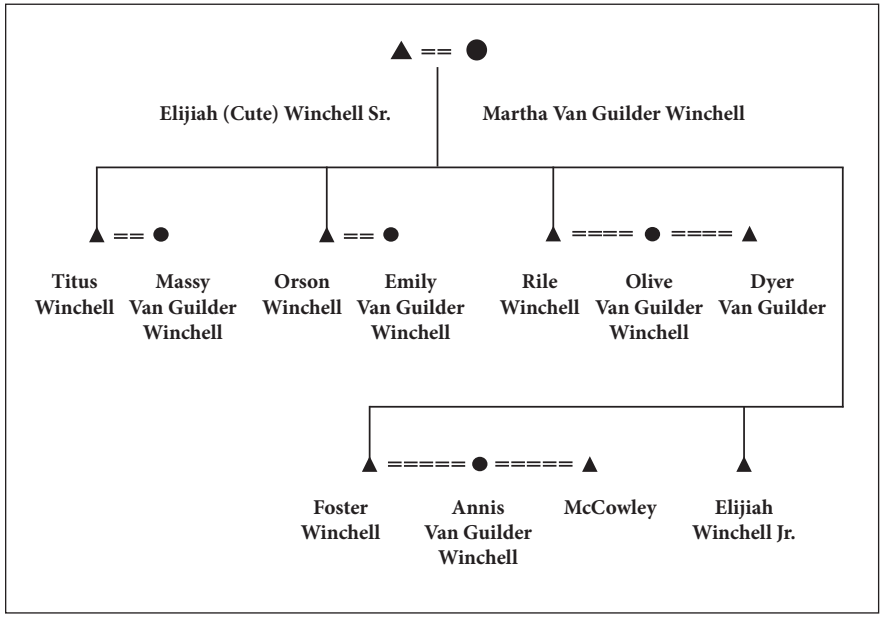


Chart 7. Martha Van Guilder Winchell's immediate descendants (Line F).

In the late eighteenth century, a move of less than one hundred miles may have been enough to leave the past behind and reinvent oneself. Communications were rudimentary and the baggage of a former reputation may not have followed one to new surroundings. At the same time, changing one's social or ethnic identity was a possibility when moving to a new community. Winchell alludes to this strategy when discussing John Van Guilder's son Joseph: "for people of mixed ancestry, it was easier, and sometimes necessary, to choose a side. Joseph Van Gelder seems to have chosen the white path."[32] The former comment applies to the selection of Joseph as a witness in the crown court case regarding the Livingston–Van Guilder conflicts. Although he was literate, and had received some schooling at the Stockbridge Mission, Joseph had been in the thick of the fight against the Livingston forces.

Choosing the "white path," then, requires some deciphering. Such behavior might involve acquiring certain visible markers of European identity such as dress, speech, and manners, or it might mean associating more often with whites than Indians. Whatever the case, it would be Joseph Van Guilder's children who would make the move from western Massachusetts to Washington County, New York.[33] Would they project their identities as Mohicans, Stockbridges, mixed-race people, or would they be "passing" as white? And how would they be seen and received by their new neighbors? Were the Van Guilders emerging as an outcaste or pariah group prior to leaving their embattled Massachusetts homeland, or would circumstances in their new home assign them to a lowly status? These and related issues will be addressed in the following chapters.

3

A "New" Homeland and the Cradle of Guilder Hollow

> The long and deadly struggle of the Revolution, with its accompaniments of invasion, house-burning, and Indian outrage, had naturally developed a very bitter feeling among people, especially on the frontiers, against everything of English name or origin.
>
> —CRISFIELD JOHNSON, *History of Washington County, New York*

Reoccupying Mohican Lands

In 1810, one of Joseph Van Guilder's sons, Stephen Van Guilder, who was a grandson of John Van Guilder, purchased 160 acres of land in Washington County, New York. There he built a dwelling for his family with hopes of getting a fresh start after departing the turbulent frontier in western Massachusetts. By this time, however, he had been in Washington County for nearly thirty years, perhaps accumulating the capital to buy the land. According to Crisfield Johnson's 1878 *History of Washington County, New York*, Van Guilder arrived in the county from New Jersey sometime during the Revolutionary War. He had been drafted into the army but was replaced by a younger brother. Initially, he settled on what later became the Ebenezer Starks farm near Slyborough in the town of Granville. Here Van Guilder planted the first apple orchard in the area.[1] The Starks connection is significant, since Stark (or Starks) is one of several key families with whom the Van Guilders intermarried after settling in New York. Later Van Guilder moved to the town of Hartford, in the same county, and eventually he joined one of his sons, also named Stephen (or Stephan) Van Guilder, on the latter's farm. However, it is the former property in Hartford, settled in 1810, that is of interest here.

Fig. 1. "The Cradle of Guilder Hollow": Stephen Van Guilder Sr.'s homestead near Hartford, New York, ca. 1911–12 (built in 1810). Courtesy of Arthur H. Estabrook Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany, SUNY.

Stephen Van Guilder Sr.'s house was still standing, although in poor repair, a century later when Estabrook and Davenport began their eugenics investigation. The Arthur H. Estabrook Papers collection contains a bleak late-winter (late 1911 or early 1912) photograph of a small dovetailed log structure with a deteriorating wood-shingled roof (fig. 1).[2] The image is stark, and there are no visual cues indicating whether the structure was abandoned or perhaps recycled as a livestock or storage shed. A scrubby overgrown pasture with patches of snow rises up a moderate slope in the background. The photograph is titled "The Cradle of Guilder Hollow, Hartford, N.Y."

Estabrook and Davenport regarded Stephen Van Guilder's pioneer home as the epicenter or "ground zero" of a cacogenic catastrophe that had spread through descendant generations into the far corners of Washington County and into adjacent Vermont. The deteriorating log dwelling was a metaphor for the social decay and inferior "germ plasm" that the eugenicists attributed to this family. In their words, "everyone born in this cabin has been socially inadequate and has helped swell the number of the degenerates who give this place its character."[3] As we will see, the authors' frequent and dismissive use of terms like "hut," "shack," and "hovel" for Guilder Hollow dwellings was far from dispassionate

description. Rather than documenting people's actual struggles and abilities to make do with scarce resources, Estabrook and Davenport consistently revealed their contempt for rudimentary houses and the dwellers in them. While their upper-middle-class sensibilities were offended by the Van Guilders' living conditions, the latter were hardly proof of defective genes.

After spending some years in a transitional phase as nomadic hunter-fishers in the mountains, five of Stephen Sr.'s siblings—Joseph Jr., Solomon, Martha, Bennony, and one unnamed male (perhaps a half brother)—eventually followed him northward and settled nearby.[4] This remote district of northern Washington County straddled the boundary between the towns of Hartford to the west and Granville to the east.[5] The neighborhood came to be known as Guilder Hollow, reproducing the name used earlier for Van Guilder family lands in South Egremont, Massachusetts.[6] Guilder Hollow also became a place-name for a rural locale near Poultney in Rutland County, Vermont, which Estabrook and Davenport described as "a most unproductive part of the mountains."[7] Apparently, this latter area was settled by Stephen's brother Daniel.[8]

Driving north through Washington County today on state highway 40, one traverses a fertile agricultural landscape with vast open croplands, herds of cattle and sheep, pastures, and orchards interrupted occasionally by hedgerows, woodlots, and the forested margins of streams flowing southwestward toward the Hudson River. After passing through Hartford, a tidy village of nineteenth-century white clapboard houses surrounding a massive brick Baptist church, a small unnumbered road forks off northeastward and ascends into hilly country covered by forests of oak, ash, beech, maple, pine, and hemlock. The sudden transition from open sun-drenched farm fields to dark, enclosed woodland is striking. At first glance, the land here appears pristine. A closer look reveals patches of second-growth timber and the remains of stone walls marking former pastures that extended high into the hills, testament to an earlier time when people struggled to eke out a livelihood.

The few families living here today occupy modest homes on the north side of the road. This was the heart of the Guilder Hollow enclave in former years. The road itself is still known as Guilder Hollow Road. Somewhere in these wooded uplands, Stephen Van Guilder Sr.'s family

settled in 1810, followed soon thereafter by his siblings. South of the road the land drops into a marshy stream valley forming a tributary of Big Creek, which flows west and northwest into Wood Creek and, ultimately, into the South Bay of Lake Champlain sixteen miles to the north. Nearby the crests of Pumpkin Hill and Dick Hill loom nearly a thousand feet above the valley bottoms. Eastward the land continues to ascend for several miles over rolling wooded ridges until one encounters the hamlet of Slyboro, little more than a crossroads near a height of land. Beyond, the land descends steeply into a floodplain of open cultivated fields. A few miles eastward, at the confluence of the Indian River and the Mettawee River, lies the village of Granville. From that juncture, the Mettawee drains northward into Lake Champlain.

Why did the Van Guilders choose this remote corner to start a new life? No doubt, there were multiple reasons at play. Washington County was well within the territory originally occupied by the Mohican Indians at the time of European contact in the early 1600s. As people of mixed Mohican-European ancestry, the Van Guilders may have been familiar with that region for occasional hunting and fishing forays while maintaining their farming activities near South Egremont and Stockbridge. Shirley Dunn cites a memoir from Clinton Weslager noting that as late as the mid-1700s "isolated wigwams [longhouses] were standing throughout parts of Washington County for several years after the first white inhabitants arrived." These were utilized as hunting base camps for a few weeks in the fall of the year by Indian families deriving from western Massachusetts.[9] Given the latter location, it is likely that these were Stockbridge Mohicans, including their relatives the Van Guilders.

Until the 1750s there were other Mohicans in Washington County as well, namely, at the multi-tribal Indian settlement of Schaghticoke near the mouth of the Hoosic River in what is now the northwestern corner of Rensselaer County, a few miles south of the Washington County border. A large part of this community was composed of Algonquian peoples from southern New England who had sought refuge among the Mohicans in the aftermath of King Philip's War in the 1670s.[10] Apparently, the Schaghticoke Indians were not utilizing the interior hunting camps mentioned previously. While English colonial authorities in New York were pleased to have these people serve as a buffer between

themselves and the French to the north, most of the Schaghticoke Indians departed the area in 1754, during the French and Indian War, joining the Abenakis at Odanak in Canada.[11]

In 1761 one of the few Schaghticoke Indians who remained in Washington County, a man named Jacob (alias Schenck), sold a five-thousand-acre tract of land to Arent Van Corlaer and his brother-in-law, Nicholas Lake. This large patent was along White Creek, a tributary of the Hoosic River, in the southeastern corner of the county. Although much of the Indian lands in this area had been sold in land grants by this time, and the fur-trade era was waning, the brothers-in-law intended to operate a fur-trading operation. Indeed, Arent Van Corlaer had been involved in fur trading in the White Creek area since 1711 and had developed close ties with the Mohicans in the region. Of interest for the present discussion is the fact that White Creek was accessible to the Stockbridge Mission in Massachusetts. Dunn speculates that Van Corlaer may have been among the Dutch traders who supplied alcohol to the Stockbridge Indians in the 1730s.[12]

An argument can be made that preexisting trading relationships at places like White Creek, combined with the need to find more productive subsistence hunting at a time in the mid-1700s when both game supplies and open, accessible land in western Massachusetts were rapidly diminishing, compelled the Van Guilders and their Stockbridge relatives to make occasional hunting and trading forays into Washington County. At the same time, much of Washington County was an unsettled military frontier during both the French and Indian War and the American Revolution. Since several Van Guilder men served on the American side in the latter conflict, they may have crossed the same terrain in various campaigns and maneuvers. Decades later, this prior knowledge and familiarity with the vast region north of the Hoosic River may well have played a role in Stephen Van Guilder Sr.'s decision, and the decisions of his relatives, to relocate their families along the remote Hartford-Granville town line in northern Washington County.

By this time in 1810 the area had been open to white settlement for only a few decades. By a rather complex and convoluted chain of events it appears that the mixed-blood Van Guilders were simply reoccupying traditional Mohican lands once utilized by their ancestors. This "coming

home" may have been bittersweet. What began as a promising new life in Guilder Hollow seemed to unravel in subsequent years and generations. Deriving from an ethnic subculture with a livelihood based on hunting and fishing, combined with part-time farming and peddling, were the Van Guilders a poor fit for the rapidly evolving commercial agrarian landscape of Washington County? Were they shunned by the surrounding society for their ethnic-cultural otherness? Or, as Estabrook and Davenport contend, was Guilder Hollow doomed from the start by bad genes? These scenarios, among other hypotheses, will be addressed in subsequent chapters.

The Shifting Cultural Mosaic

In order to understand what Estabrook and Davenport observed in Guilder Hollow in 1911–12, at the time of their field research, it will be useful to examine some of the changes that had affected Washington County during the previous century. For much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this region had been a turbulent buffer zone between Albany and the French in Canada and, hence, lay north of and beyond the zone of colonial manors and large land patents in the mid- and lower Hudson valley.[13]

As sales of Indian lands accelerated in the mid- and late 1700s, white settlers gradually moved into the area. In places like Granville and Hartford, many of these people derived from New England while others were emigrants from Scotland. For a few years after the formal organization of Washington County in 1784, it included large portions of northwestern Vermont.[14] In effect, this reflected a political alignment of small Yankee and Scottish landholders with anti-aristocratic Vermonters who regarded New York as a bastion of exploitative feudal landlords.[15] Since memories of the Revolutionary War were painfully fresh in the early 1780s, local residents also felt that they might receive better protection from Vermont than New York.[16] Washington County's present-day boundaries were not established until 1813.

While the Dutch from Albany had established towns like Fort Ann, in 1778, many other Washington County communities were created by settlers who avoided the Hudson River corridor in favor of overland routes from Connecticut and Massachusetts. Apparently, some of these

New Englanders utilized trails already developed by Indians, most likely Mohicans or Stockbridge Mohicans. One of the earliest settlers of Hartford, Stephen Bump, was said to have arrived in the area as a hunter in the company of Indian guides.[17] The existence of Indian trails, or networks of trails, connecting northern Washington County with western New England is, of course, further evidence of landscapes and travel routes that may have been familiar to the Van Guilders prior to their exodus from Massachusetts.

Moreover, there were other settlers arriving in early Washington County via the overland route, adding to the emerging cultural mosaic. These were Native American groups escaping conflict and vanishing land and livelihood in western New England. Of relevance here was a neighborhood of West Fort Ann called Furnace Hollow:

> The southern part of Furnace Hollow was formerly called "Podunk," from a tribe of eastern Indians of that name, who came here in search of a secure retreat and were induced to settle by the ponds and streams abounding with fish, the plentiful supply of game, and the safety of the surrounding mountains. They named the Palmertown range and designated one of the principal peaks Mount Hope, both in memory of the eastern home from which they had come a mere remnant.[18]

Originally, the Podunk were an Algonquian-speaking group from Connecticut. Because their lives were disrupted early in the colonial period, little is known of their cultural traditions. As late as 1761, some Podunk may have been living near Windsor on the Connecticut River. Like many of the southern New England Indians who took refuge among Mohicans at Schaghticoke, the Podunk migrated north and west as their homeland was overrun by English settlers.[19] It is not clear when these people arrived in northern Washington County, although a post-Revolution date seems plausible given the endemic warfare and unsettled conditions in that territory from the 1750s to early 1780s.

Since West Fort Ann was a mere six miles northwest of Hartford village, there is a good possibility that these Podunk were known to the Van Guilders. As we will see in later chapters, there were connections between people in Guilder Hollow and the part of West Fort Ann

known as "Hogtown," in reference to an early practice of woodland foraging of swine herds.[20] Later, this name seemed to acquire unsavory connotations as a poor or disreputable neighborhood. A telling comment on the Native American connections between the two locales derives from Estabrook and Davenport's observations of a Guilder Hollow man whose wife they characterized as "an indolent harlot, who later left her husband to live with the Indians near L." "L" is their numeric code for Hogtown in West Fort Ann.[21]

Then there is the matter of the Hartford Indians. When Hartford was legally incorporated as a town in 1793, the name itself derived from a group of Native Americans who had lived in and regularly traveled through that vicinity for some time. These people were known as the "Hartford Indians" in reference to their origins near Hartford, Connecticut. Since many of the first white settlers in that area were New Englanders from Connecticut, the name Hartford held a special resonance.[22] Here again is a familiar historical pattern of early uprooting of southern New England Algonquian tribes and their search for a new life in northern New York.

Who the Hartford Indians were originally and when they arrived in Washington County remains murky. It is possible that they were Tunxis, an Algonquian-speaking people originally from central Connecticut. After the powerful pan-tribal sachem, Sequassen, sold Tunxis lands to the English in the 1630s, the people were confined to two small reservations near Farmington. Some Tunxis fled the area during King Philip's War, and by 1730 they were joined by other remnant groups from the Connecticut valley. At least some Tunxis settled near Hartford, Connecticut, along with allied groups like the Paugussets. The gathering of refugee populations in that locale may have been the origin of the "Hartford Indians" as an ethnic label and identity. In 1761, as conditions continued to deteriorate, many Tunxis families moved to Stockbridge, Massachusetts, and yet others made their way to Mohawk country in the late 1770s.[23]

It is somewhat ironic that long before the Van Guilders moved out of Massachusetts, southern New England Algonquian peoples had been finding their way northward into the Berkshires, contributing to the cultural and ethnic fabric of that region.[24] These earlier migrations were, in part, a product of the history of complex land alienations that began

in the Paugusset coastal area in the 1630s and spread inland through the early to mid-1700s. Successive waves of land sales prompted some Indian groups to move westward and northward up the Housatonic River where they joined other Native communities.[25] The fact that the Podunk, Tunxis, or Hartford Indians and the Van Guilders all found their way to northern Washington County during the same post-Revolution period is testament to the continuing ripple effect of land alienation and community displacements that began 150 years before.[26]

It is interesting that historians Isabella Brayton and John Norton viewed the Hartford Indians in Washington County as "subjects" of the Mohawks who gave them unfettered access to live and hunt in the region. This association with Mohawk Iroquois squares with the information concerning Tunxis migration to Mohawk territory in the 1770s. Hence, there is a strong probability that the Hartford Indians were Tunxis or of mostly Tunxis origin. Peculiarly, Brayton and Norton's brief overview of the aboriginal inhabitants of Hartford and Washington County makes no mention of the Mohicans. In their view, the Mohawks claimed this region as part of their hunting grounds, and that is where their history begins.[27] Johnson's history of Washington County offers a similar view of the early omnipresence of the Mohawk but does suggest that at some point they may have abandoned the area to the Mohicans of western Massachusetts.[28] Likewise, H. P. Smith and W. S. Rann's history of nearby Rutland County in Vermont makes no mention of an early Mohican presence in the area. In their view, Iroquois and Algonquian-speaking Abenakis were the aboriginal occupants.[29]

It is unlikely, however, that these authors were writing about conditions at the time of initial European contact circa 1609 or 1610, but rather of a time *after* the Mohawk defeat of the Mohicans in fur-trade-fueled warfare that raged between 1624 and 1628. After that conflict the Mohawk gained free access to Dutch traders at Fort Orange (later Albany), and the Mohicans abandoned most of their land west of the Hudson River.[30] The aggressive expansion of the Mohawks with the evolving fur trade, however, is not evidence for their aboriginal occupation of areas east of the Hudson River. Rather, all of the ethnohistorical research of the past few decades indicates that Mohicans were the primary inhabitants of what is now Washington County.[31] This notwithstanding, there may have

been a certain degree of mutually accepted interpenetration of Mohican and Mohawk territories as parties from each group occasionally traveled afar for hunting, fishing, and trading ventures. Likewise, the Mohicans and western Abenakis probably shared overlapping territory along the western slopes of the Green Mountains and northward toward Otter Creek and Lake Champlain in what is now southwestern Vermont.[32]

There was also a small African American presence in Washington County. Some of the early white settlers had slaves, including Daniel Mason of Hartford, whose black servant girl, Peggy, was not freed until Mason's death in 1814. A Hartford town meeting in 1804 was "please to enter on record the birth of a negro child, belonging to Benjamin Townsend, son of his servant girl, Susan. The name of the child is Prince, born October 21, 1803."[33] Did the child "belong" to Townsend as chattel, or was he also his biological son? While the preceding quotation can be interpreted in several ways, there may have been a measure of sexual license taken by white male owners with their female servants. Whatever the case, some towns with strong New England roots, like Granville, had no slaveholders. In other areas of Washington County, like Salem, those families who had slaves tended to have only one or two who were used as household servants rather than farmworkers.[34] Beginning with an abolition law in 1799, slavery was gradually phased out in New York by 1827.[35]

Many newly freed slaves from throughout New York, as well as the bordering states, found their way to Washington County between 1800 and 1820. The genealogist L. Lloyd Stewart refers to this movement as a calculated "relocation migration" as formerly enslaved people sought opportunities as laborers and potential property owners in the emerging post-Revolution agrarian frontier in the North country.[36] Surplus lands were available from confiscated and redistributed Loyalist properties. Accordingly, the number of "free" people of African descent in the county skyrocketed from 144 in 1800 to 2,815 by 1810. This dramatic increase reflected the intentional in-migration of some 45 African American families of free status. However, their numbers were never large in the town of Hartford, which had 185 blacks of free status in 1810 but only 3 by 1820. Granville had 274 free blacks in 1810 but only 20 by 1820.[37] The rapid plummet in the free black population indicates that the

hoped-for opportunities for new lives and livelihoods never came to pass. Their exodus from the area was tied to the Depression of 1807–14 and the War of 1812–15, which adversely affected early commercial agriculture in Washington County based on flax and wool production. The impact was severe enough that the county's overall population declined by nearly 7,500 people in a few years. It is likely that most of the county's free blacks joined thousands of other citizens seeking land and employment in western New York and farther west in the newly opened frontier of the Louisiana Purchase.[38]

Whether the few remaining African Americans formed endogamous enclaves or intermarried with other people in Washington County is of key interest for the present study. As we have seen in other parts of the eastern United States, and particularly in the South, admixed or mixed-race groups often have significant African American as well as Native American and European ancestry. It is noteworthy that the influx of free blacks occurred at the same time that the first generation of Van Guilders was gaining a foothold in Washington County. And like the Van Guilders, many of these black families bore surnames of Dutch origin, such as Schuyler, Scooner, Van Buren, Van Schaick, Van Schuyets, Van Volk, Van Vranken, and Van Woak.[39] At least a couple of the black families shared the surnames Howe and Northrup with white families with whom the Van Guilders intermarried. Did descendants of the early slave community, or the free blacks, intermarry with the Van Guilders? At this time in the early 1800s some blacks lived among and intermarried with relocated Stockbridge Mohicans in Oneida country in New York and later in Wisconsin. Indeed, a neighborhood of their New York reservation was known as "New Guinea."[40] However, available evidence at this point suggests that the Van Guilders were primarily of mixed Mohican Stockbridge and European heritage.[41] More research is needed in this area.

Stewart lists another name among the free blacks of Washington County: Henry Nymham. In 1800 he was the male head of a family of four living in Westfield, at that time the name for Putnam, Dresden, and Fort Ann, immediately to the north of Hartford.[42] Nymham is an intriguing name. It appears to be a variant of Nimham, which, as noted in chapter 2 (endnotes 10 and 21), was a surname among the Wappinger

Indians, as in the case of the leader Daniel Nimham. As the French and Indian War intensified in 1756, many of the Wappingers, including Daniel and Aaron Nimham, joined the Stockbridge community.[43] Undoubtedly, the Nimhams were well acquainted with the Van Guilders. How, then, should we regard the presence of Henry Nymham and the Van Guilders in adjacent towns in Washington County at the dawn of the nineteenth century? Was Nymham somehow connected to the Nimhams of Stockbridge? If so, did the Van Guilders of Washington County have any dealings with or connection to the Henry Nymham family? Genealogical probing in this direction might bear fruit.[44]

The Changing Agrarian Frontier

In the aftermath of the American Revolution, Dutch farmers in southern New York lost much of their economic and political influence. Consequently, the center of agricultural production shifted to newly developing upstate locales like Washington County. In turn, this presaged the nineteenth-century transition from farm production for domestic use and local circulation of bartered goods toward a more capital-intensive production of commodities for commercial sale in both local and distant markets.[45]

As the first white settlers cleared land for fields, logs from felled trees were converted to potash and pearl ash. Potash in particular was an early source of income. The product was hauled to Whitehall and then shipped by boat to merchants in Canada. Horses were a rarity, reflecting the lack of adequate pastures. For many years a variety of livestock grazed or foraged freely on uncleared and unoccupied commons in places like Hartford. After roving stock became a threat to crops, distinctive ear marks were developed for cattle, sheep, and hogs that identified their owners. Other measures included the election of pound-keepers to manage two enclosures or pounds for holding stray stock until they were retrieved by their owners.[46] Orchards of apple and cherry trees were often established as soon as sufficient land was cleared.

What had been a semi-wilderness zone of small pioneer farms hacked out of dense forest was beginning to change around the time that the Van Guilders arrived. Merino sheep were introduced to the area around 1809 and eventually helped to make Washington County a renowned

center of the sheep industry. While less adapted to cold, inclement weather than other breeds, Merinos were cross-bred to produce a hardier animal with high-quality wool valued for making woolen cloth. Until the mid-1820s, much of the wool production was retained within farm family households. This domestic production was reinforced by a sharp decline in prices, competition from imported woolen goods, and the failure of many small textile mills after 1815.[47]

As sheep raising expanded throughout Washington County, other forms of agriculture, such as wheat production, declined. At the same time, the human population plummeted, since sheep farming required relatively small amounts of labor and large tracts of pasture. This was particularly true from 1830 to 1840, when thirteen of the seventeen towns in the county actually lost population. Among these towns were Hartford and Granville, the former losing more than three hundred people and the latter between one hundred and three hundred. This was at a time when each town had over nine thousand sheep, easily outnumbering the human population by more than four to one.[48]

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, much agricultural work was accomplished manually. For example, the sickle was used to reap grain and the scythe to mow hay. Heavy drinking was considered a complement to hard labor, particularly among day laborers, who were given a customary dole of rum.[49] We will return to the issue of alcohol use later, as it assumes a prominent role in Estabrook and Davenport's study. Oxen were the main traction animals, since horses remained comparatively rare. As land was gradually cleared, hillsides were cultivated to their tops with wheat, rye, and oats. Some flax was grown to supply domestic household linen. Sawmills provided lumber for a growing number of frame houses, which gradually replaced earlier log dwellings. Because money was in short supply, much exchange was accomplished by barter. For people in Hartford, the nearest commercial market center was in Lansingburgh, some thirty miles to the south in Rensselaer County. Obtaining supplies from that place required an onerous journey over rough roads, usually in winter when agricultural work was less intense.[50]

Around 1830 common lands and pounds for stray animals faded from use. This corresponded with increases in cleared acreage and the

erection of more stone walls and rail fences for enclosing fields. A few years earlier, in 1825, the Erie and Champlain Canals had been completed, ushering in major transformations in transportation and the rural economy throughout the eastern United States. Lansingburgh and Troy quickly faded as market centers for farmers in Hartford. As the center of wheat production shifted westward in the United States, potatoes began replacing wheat in Hartford and other Washington County towns. Moreover, farmers could now make short trips with their produce to canal depots like Smith's Basin and Dunham's Basin.[51]

Domestic production of wool remained commonplace into the 1840s. However, the establishment of several small woolen mills in Washington County shifted much production to the commercial market by the 1850s. Other wool was sold to New England textile factories through buyers who set up markets in towns like Granville.[52] A historical essay that appeared in the *Granville Sentinel* in 1875 captured the essential transformation from a subsistence to a commercial market orientation in the rural economy of the nineteenth century:

> The early manufactures of this town were what the etymology of the term implies *hand-made*. As soon as a few acres were cleared and a cabin built, the necessities of the settlers compelled them to resort to the growing of flax and wool to clothe their families . . . . The occupations and habits of our citizens have undergone great changes since this early period. Our farmers, instead of keeping a few sheep and raising a little flax to furnish their clothing and wardrobes, now run cheese factories and raise large fields of potatoes and other vegetables the proceeds of which supply them with all the necessaries, comforts, and even the luxuries of life.[53]

During the immediate post–Civil War period, roughly 1865 to 1880, horse teams largely replaced oxen as the main traction animals for agricultural work. While wheat cultivation continued to decline, Indian corn was introduced as a new crop. Sheep and potatoes still dominated the market trade, and dairying expanded considerably at this time with the growth of local markets for milk and factory-made cheese and butter.[54] Potato production in particular flourished throughout the county,

expedited by James M. Northrup, a produce buyer from Hartford who developed a means of shipping potatoes to markets in New Jersey, New York City, and Long Island.[55] Generally speaking, the agricultural economy boomed during the postwar era and provided unprecedented prosperity for many farm families. Yet, the population of towns like Hartford actually declined at this time. The decline was linked to the introduction of new kinds of farm machinery, such as horse-drawn reapers, mowers, and hay spreaders, which lessened the need for farm laborers. At the same time, decreasing dependence on locally manufactured goods of all kinds meant that many craftsmen, workers in cottage industries, and merchants moved away from the rural hamlets to larger villages or to cities outside the region.[56]

One of these larger villages was Granville. For much of the nineteenth century its hinterland rural economy paralleled that of Hartford. After abundant slate deposits were discovered around 1850, a number of quarries and mining companies were opened to provide slate for roofing and other products. The initial quarries of rare red slate were located near the village of Middle Granville. In 1871 other slate firms were established in Granville town center to tap quarries of sea green slate located over the state line near Pawlett, Vermont.[57] Only a few years earlier, in 1852, the first railroads had penetrated the county from the south. While these bypassed Hartford, the Rutland and Washington Railroad, operated by the Delaware and Hudson Canal Company, connected Granville with cities and markets outside the region.[58] This provided a spur to the growth of the slate industry. In turn, boardinghouses, hotels, taverns, and a variety of new businesses and services emerged to accommodate the growing influx of laborers. Granville attracted hundreds of European immigrants. Many were Welshmen with previous experience in the slate mines of Wales. By the late nineteenth century, Granville was a small industrial town with a culturally diverse population and a quasi-urban atmosphere that set it apart from the rest of the township and from neighboring Hartford. As reported in the *Granville Sentinel* in 1877, new vices appeared that offended the sensibilities of longtime residents:

> We are creditably informed that there is a cock-pit in Granville, flourishing in all the disgusting details which characterizes that heathenish

> sport; and that not a few of our citizens who lay claim to the title of "gentleman," are frequenters of that place. . . . There is some excuse for the city cock fighter, who has, from childhood, been educated in sin, and reared in all species of iniquity, and who knows nothing of the wickedness of his sport, except as dealt out by Bergh's bureau of "cruelty to animals." But in the town of Granville, where Christianity predominates, and where every child is reared in the Sunday school, and has had all the advantages of a good, Christian education, there is no excuse—save it be a case of natural depravity.[59]

In the late 1870s there was alarm regarding a large and growing contingent of drunken, unruly men on the streets of Granville. Since licensed liquor dealers had been slowly put out of business through church-organized temperance efforts, there was also concern about the demoralizing impact of an illicit liquor trade. Indeed, liquor sales flourished as part of an underground economy for many years until legal sales were restored in the early 1890s.[60] Alcohol sales and consumption also violated a no-license policy in Hartford for many years until a Law and Order League emerged in 1896 to enforce the law.[61]

The cultural landscape Estabrook and Davenport found in Guilder Hollow in 1911 would be shaped by some other changes in agrarian life and society emerging after the turn of the century. There was a shift from cheese making toward commercial milk production with a concomitant increase in the size of cow herds. Holsteins and Ayrshires replaced older breeds like Durham cattle. At the same time, there was a shift from traditional horse breeds used in all-purpose farming toward heavier draft breeds. Large specialized dairy barns and facilities required significant capital investments, and the year-round, binding nature of milk production left little time for other activities. A local branch of the Dairymen's League was organized to protect the farmers' interests against the cost-cutting actions of the private milk companies.[62]

With the move toward specialized milk production, potato farming declined. Specialization also meant that some tracts of land fell out of production and reverted to overgrown pasture or forest. The need for farm laborers also declined, making rural life more isolative and isolating than in the past. As opportunities to inherit farms or remain in agricul-

ture dwindled, there was an out-migration of younger people from the countryside, in some ways echoing the post–Civil War exodus of people from the rural hamlets. Moreover, many prominent farm families who had accumulated wealth in the late nineteenth century moved off their farmsteads to retire in town centers like Granville and Hudson Falls.[63]

The paradox of burgeoning agrarian capitalism in the midst of declining rural villages also held consequences for those who remained in the countryside without sharing in the prosperity of their neighbors. Over the course of a century, the people of Guilder Hollow lived in close proximity to the large-scale sheepherders, the big potato farmers, and the successful dairymen. Yet, economically and socially they were worlds apart. The Van Guilders had contributed to the birth and growth of Washington County, but their place in society was radically different than their neighbors'. Why this was the case will be addressed in chapter 4.

The Ethos of Progress and the Plight of the Poor

The local histories of towns like Granville and Hartford are justifiably proud of the accomplishments of their citizens. These narratives are also quintessentially American in their fleeting mention of aboriginal inhabitants followed by the saga of early settlers clearing the land and the building up of farms, villages, churches, mills, and commercial enterprises into an ever expanding apotheosis of prosperity and well-being. This was the ethos of progress, an artifact of nineteenth-century evolutionist thought that things were always progressing toward a better state of affairs. Transmuted to American popular and political thought, this became a Babbitt-like drumbeat of advancement toward the bigger and better, a steady inevitable movement from pioneer simplicity toward civilized refinement, from undeveloped to developed, from the rustic yesteryear to the modern here and now.

The collective conscience of the prosperous farming class that emerged toward the end of the nineteenth century is captured by Brayton and Norton:

> The families lived better as a whole than ever before, and now drove about in carriages with fine spans of horses. None would think of stepping into the ordinary farm wagon and sit in a chair to go to

> church. Most of the women folks had much more spare time now, due to the ending of their duties at the spinning wheel and dash churn. The spinning wheel was no doubt laid aside with a sigh of relief, to become a relic. The farmsteads were kept up trim and neat, and with well painted house and barns, almost presented that singularly well groomed appearance which they are pictured to have in the engravings in the County History of that period. Lack of success was considered disgraceful, for due to circumstances it was the sure sign of lack of thrift. The sense of well being and accomplished hopes of the time are somehow expressed in the pictures there engraved.[64]

The phrase "lack of success was considered disgraceful" has a strong tone of disapproval, if not condemnation, of those who did not partake in the growth of the rural economy and display their bounty in well-appointed houses and barns, carriage horses, and other outward signs of success. For every prosperous farm, however, there were many more small and medium-sized operations that simply lacked adequate land and capital to compete with the elite class. Moreover, there were people with little or no land who struggled to make ends meet, often as laborers on large farms or in the mills and factories. These were the working poor.

There was also an underclass of non-working poor. In the early nineteenth century many towns in Washington County developed formal policies to care for these citizens. From 1801 to 1821 in Hartford there are continuous records of arrangements whereby "paupers," often elderly persons or widows and their children, were to be "sold to the highest bidder," that is, cared for by a family who bid for the responsibility and then was reimbursed by the town. In 1806, for example, the widow Phoebe Carpenter was "bidden off" by Isaac W. Clary at 75 cents a week. Others were "bidden off" or "struck off" at a rates of $1.85 to $4.00 per week with varying arrangements for clothing and a doctor's attention as determined by the poormaster and justice of the peace.[65]

The bidding system appeared to be a compassionate solution for protecting the community's most vulnerable citizens. After all, an elderly, destitute, or disabled person might be placed in the home of a family he or she already knew, a neighbor or possibly a kinsman. It is not clear precisely when the practice of bidding off ended. However, as the

population grew, with a concomitant increase in the number of paupers, it is likely that the town governments found their care increasingly burdensome. In any case, a county facility, the Washington County Poorhouse, was established in 1827 near the village of Argyle. By 1856 the facility held 112 people, of whom 20 were classified as "lunatics" and 40 were children. It was common to refer to the residents generally as "inmates." The residents shared in a variety of farming and domestic chores and raised most of their own food from the 240 acres of land surrounding the institution.[66]

Who ended up in the poorhouse were not always the chronically impoverished, poorly educated, alcoholic, or mentally unstable, although people with such histories often spent time there. Others had led productive lives and, then, through some misfortune or chance event lost their savings or livelihood, as shown in the following excerpt from a letter written by a resident of the Washington County Poorhouse in 1862:

> When three score and ten years, of my life have gone by, mostly occupied in school teaching, I found that I had not laid by enough of my wages, to enable me to subsist without labor of some kind, the community generally said I was too old to labor at farming. I asked myself what I must do, and decided that I would try the County House. . . . The crime that brought us here is poverty and I think that the Bible speaks of the poor, as favorable as the rich.[67]

If the Van Guilders and their relatives perpetuated lives of profound poverty and degeneracy over many generations, as Estabrook and Davenport contend, we would expect that some of these people found their way to the poorhouse. While admissions records are not available, Richard Wilson has meticulously examined the death and burial records for residents of the Washington County Poorhouse. He analyzed several kinds of gravestone and burial data for the period spanning 1827 to the early 1950s. Among the more than fourteen hundred names retrieved from these records, however, only two are Van Guilders: a woman who died in 1857 and a man who died in 1929.[68] Eight other deceased residents had surnames from several key families who had intermarried with the Van Guilders beginning in the early 1800s: Orcutt, Seeley, Stark, Turk,

and Winchell. On the face of it, ten residents out of fourteen hundred seems like a very low frequency. Were the eugenicists exaggerating the Van Guilders' impoverishment? Or were these people coping with scarce resources in ways that kept them from the poorhouse and other government services? We will return to this issue later.

During the same period that witnessed the rise of the prosperous farming class in the 1870s, there was growing public concern about "tramps." Individuals who seemed to have no visible means of support, no residence, and no known ties to the community were regarded with suspicion, if not contempt. The itinerant behavior of the tramps, who wandered from one locale to another with no apparent destination or goal in mind other than larceny, was unsettling and menacing to established residents in Hartford and Granville. The following item, titled "Depradations of Tramps," appeared in the *Granville Sentinel* in 1876:

> A number of farmers in different parts of Washington County are just now suffering from the depredations of a class of miserable vagabonds, who nearly every night by some kind of thieving operation make it evident that they are around, but who have as yet evaded apprehension. Recently the barn of a Mr. Hitchcock, who resides about one mile south of Whitehall, was visited by representatives of the above class, who very coolly butchered one of his best cows, dressed it, and leaving the hide upon the barn floor, made off with the beef. The operation was performed within 100 feet of Mr. Hitchcock's residence, while he and his family were asleep, and yet they were ignorant of the whole affair until the following morning. During the same night, a neighbor of Mr. Hitchcock was the victim of the same or a like gang. His entire crop of corn, which had been gathered and placed in the barn, was quietly husked and carried away.[69]

Tramps were common in newspaper reporting well into the 1890s, much as stabbings and shootings dominate local TV news today. Unkempt strangers passing through town or through the countryside were seen as a potential threat to local families and their property. The railroad station platform in Granville was frequently the site of crowds of "idlers and drunken loafers" who mobbed the departing passengers from arriving

trains.[70] The nature of this nearly daily "jostling" suggests that at least some of the tramps and ruffians were engaged in pickpocketing and other criminal activity.[71] Some of the tramping behavior was cyclical or seasonal. A mid-April newspaper column for nearby East Dorset, Vermont, reported an "uncommonly good sugar season" after first noting that "the listers [i.e., tramps] have commenced their annual rounds."[72]

Symbolically, these men threatened the prevailing ethos of agrarian progress and prosperity. A tramp was the antithesis of the hardworking farmer, quarry worker, or merchant: the rootless, impoverished loner versus the stable, provident, community member. In short, tramps represented chaos and the breakdown of respectable society. The increasing number of such individuals toward the end of the nineteenth century was vexing to those who were successful in life. Rather than viewing the unemployed as a by-product of capitalist expansion, however, it was easier for most to dismiss tramps as defective people who lacked a work ethic and progressive spirit. Their own weaknesses forced them to roam the countryside rather than settling down to steady work and a permanent home. Indeed, the very act of roaming or "wandering," which offended the readers of the *Granville Sentinel*, became a near obsession in Estabrook and Davenport's work. As we will see in chapter 6, they internalized the prevailing view of "wandering" as something disreputable and defective and then proceeded to demonize an entire people for allegedly exhibiting such behavior. In this regard, their views mirrored American popular sentiment, which, since the 1870s, had been heavily influenced by editorial campaigns against the "vagrant classes" and had appeared in periodicals like *Scribner's Monthly*.[73]

4

From Pioneers to Outcastes

> Although the general run of people were pretty well provided for and seem to have been contented, the poor were with them.
>
> —ISABELLA BRAYTON and JOHN NORTON, *The Story of Hartford*

Settling the Hollow

If the people of Guilder Hollow were "wanderers," were they tramps in the conventional sense? This is highly improbable given that the Van Guilders were known citizens, not strangers, who had a long presence in Hartford and Granville. When they migrated from western Massachusetts, no doubt they had brought with them traditional economic patterns that combined subsistence hunting, fishing, and horticulture and required an annual round of calculated movements between different parts of the landscape. Ted Brasser's overview of Mohican livelihood at the Stockbridge Mission in the mid-eighteenth century gives a sense of everyday realities with which the Van Guilders would have been familiar:

> Hunting groups were frequently gone for a long time. In late February, most Indians disappeared to make sugar in the maple forests, in May they left to plant corn in their garden plots near the old village sites, and in June most of the men went off to help the Dutch farmers in the harvest.[1]

These patterns persisted in hybridized form even as the mission clergy and English settlers introduced European forms of agriculture, material culture, social behavior, and religion. In addition to traditional cultivation of corn, beans, and squash in howed-up hills, some Stockbridge Indians were farming large plowed and fenced fields with grains

of European origin as well as raising cattle, horses, and hogs. Despite these introduced changes, much of the farming work remained in the hands of women. An exception here was the men's midsummer harvest work on Dutch farms in New York. That was followed by a period of fall hunting for deer, bear, beaver, otter, raccoon, and other animals.[2] Some of this subsistence hunting was combined with a market trade in skins as opposed to furred pelts. Apparently, deerskins and other hides continued to be marketable commodities after beaver became scarce and as the importance of the fur trade in the overall economy of New York and New England declined in the early eighteenth century.[3] Shortly after setting up maple sugaring sites in mid- to late February, Stockbridge women and children conducted most of the actual sugar making over the ensuing six to eight weeks while men hunted moose in their mountainous winter habitat. However, by the 1730s this late-winter moose-hunting pattern may have been on the wane. While there is scant documentary evidence regarding fishing and the gathering of wild plants, no doubt both were important in the Stockbridge subsistence economy. After ginseng plants (*Panax quinquefolium*) were "discovered" in the Berkshire highlands in the early 1750s, Stockbridge people were involved in gathering these for the London market.[4] That short-lived boom lasted only a few years, but it may have resonated with those Mohicans who gathered medicinal plants for traditional curing purposes.

While the Van Guilders adopted some of the agrarian practices of the Karners, their German Palatine affinal relatives,[5] these were probably integrated with older forms of seasonal nomadism between summer garden plots, autumn hunting grounds, and late-winter sugaring sites. However, acculturation is rarely a one-way street. Some of the indigenous knowledge and values that the Van Guilders retained from the Mohican or Stockbridge side of their family were undoubtedly passed along to their Euro-American spouses and, ultimately, to their children. Viewed in this light, the non-Native partner or spouse may have experienced a resocialization into a Native American or mixed-race subculture with a concomitant internalization of new indigenous norms and meanings.[6]

As noted in the previous chapter, Indian corn was not widely cultivated by Washington County farmers until after the Civil War. However, there is every reason to believe that the Van Guilders had imported

their knowledge of Indian corn—if not actual seed stock—and other indigenous cultigens like beans and squash at least sixty years earlier. In this way, there was a potential for a continuous exchange of knowledge and experience between the Van Guilders and their neighbors, and hence a multi-directional flow of cultural influences from the earliest days of settling Guilder Hollow.

It is plausible that the Van Guilders retained elements of a seasonal nomadic cycle after migrating to New York. Indeed, this kind of flexibility in movements and resource options may have facilitated their migration northward in the first place. Thus, when Estabrook and Davenport attributed the Van Guilders' origins to "vagabonds, half-farmers, and half fishermen and hunters," they were, perhaps unwittingly, acknowledging these people's indigenous traditions as mixed horticulturalist/hunter-gatherers.[7] However, their use of the term "vagabond" in this context casts a pejorative shadow on the Van Guilders' behavior. "Vagabond," like their use of "wanderer" and "rover," connotes aimlessness, disorganization, and irresponsibility, qualities that contrast unfavorably with people who are settled, organized, and civilized.[8] In subsequent chapters we will see how the eugenicists employed lexical and rhetorical strategies—namely, the use of emotionally loaded words and expressions—to literally write the Van Guilders into degeneracy.

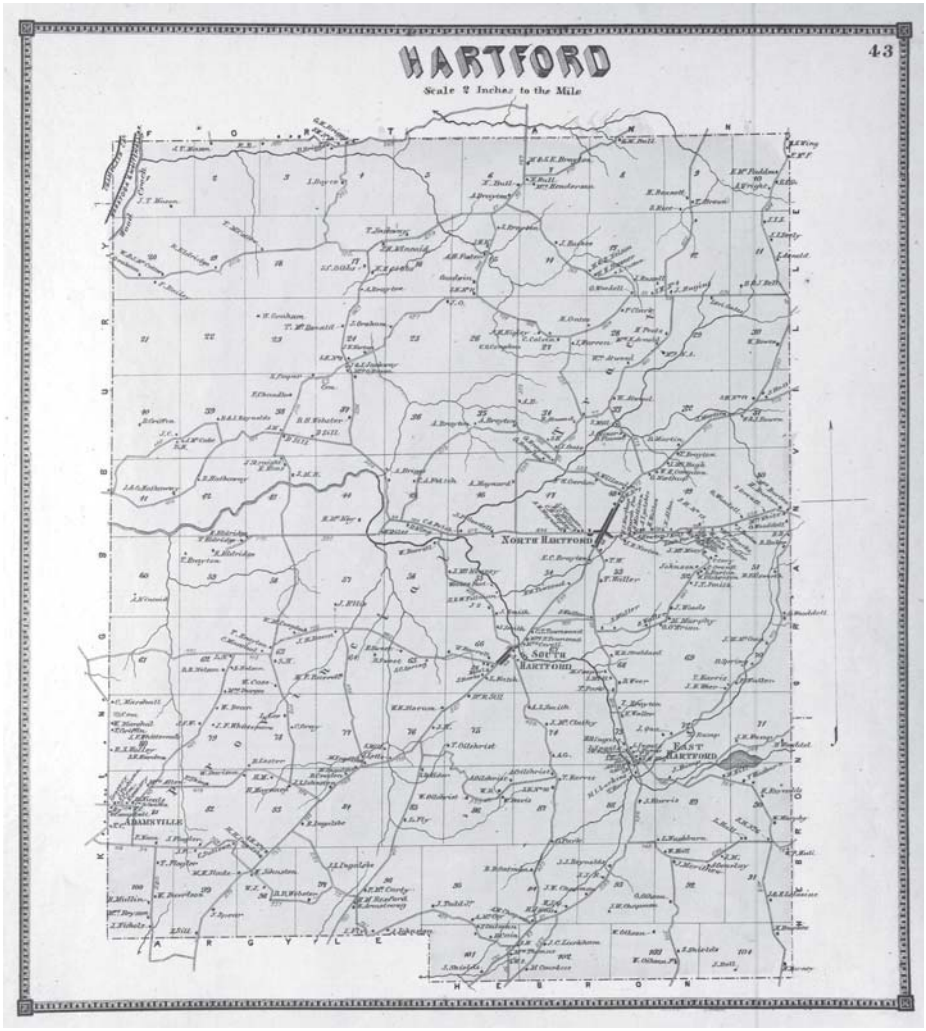
After the Van Guilders gained a foothold in their new surroundings, what became of them? How did they survive, and what was their position in the evolving rural class structure? While local written histories and newspapers rarely mention these people, a few existing accounts offer clues. Consider the following excerpt from Crisfield Johnson's overview of Granville:

> The Guilder neighborhood is so called from the ancient families of Van Guilders, located there many years ago. One side of their family tree is said to branch off to the aborigines of Stockbridge, and some of the later families claim land in Berkshire Co., Mass. through Indian title; and many of those have become leading citizens of wealth and prominence. Slyborough is another name applied to the same neighborhood.[9]

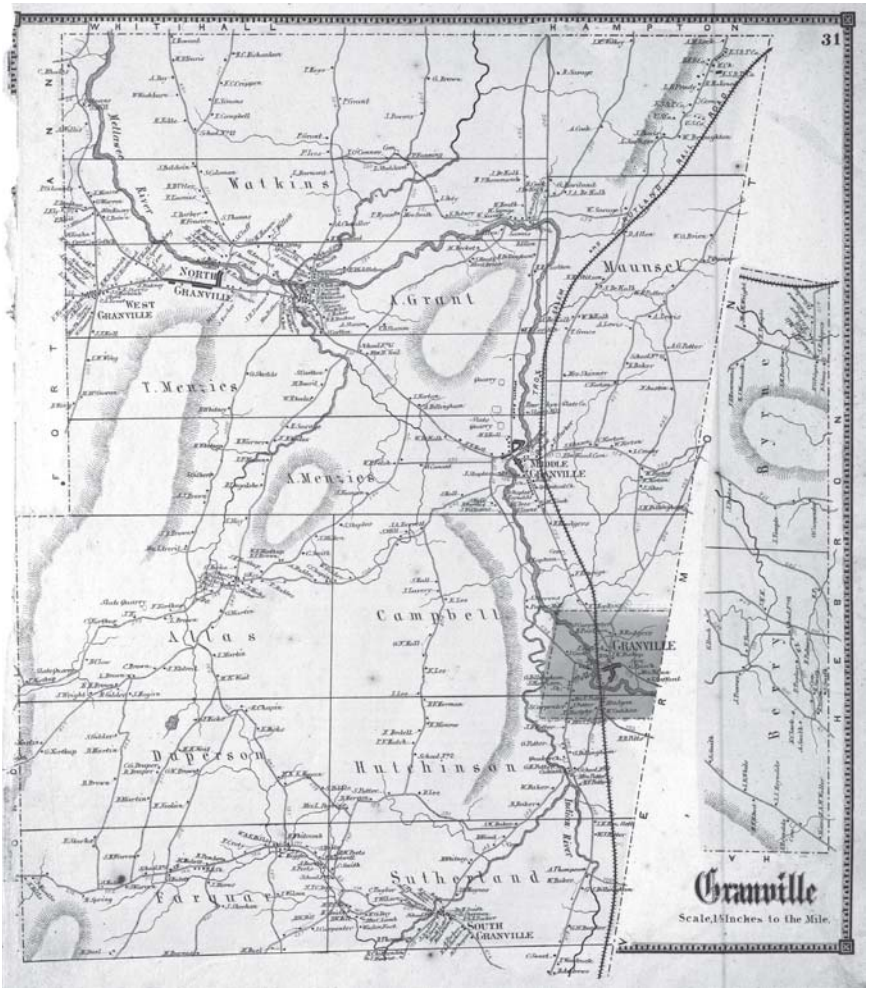
Several significant points emerge from this brief passage. First, there was no ambiguity about the Van Guilders' Indian ancestry and identity and their origins among the Stockbridge Mohicans. If they were "passing" as white or were perceived as white after moving to New York, there would be little reason for Johnson or others to acknowledge their Native American background. Second, many of the Van Guilders had achieved respectability as community members of "wealth and prominence." This assessment was offered in the late 1870s, only a few decades before Estabrook and Davenport conducted their study. In other words, the Van Guilders had attained a measure of success and status in the eyes of the surrounding society. Moreover, there is no hint or suggestion that they were hindered by their Indian or mixed-race background. Finally, it appears that the "Guilder neighborhood" included Slyborough (or Slyboro).

A closer reading of Estabrook and Davenport reveals that Guilder Hollow was the main part of the "Guilder neighborhood" alluded to above by Johnson (maps 2 and 3). The eugenicists characterized it disparagingly as a "settlement of ten huts and hovels, and the burnt ruins of three more." They described the other part of the Guilder neighborhood, Slyborough, as a "collection of six hovels." Together these sixteen dwellings housed a key group of descendants of the original Van Guilder siblings who migrated from Massachusetts a century earlier.[10] At least one of these homes was occupied by as many as thirty-two individuals, suggesting that extended-family or multi-family households were common among the Van Guilders. Several miles to the southwest near the rocky crest of Dick Hill was yet another purported "collection of hovels." The latter were occupied by descendants of the Orcutts, one of the main families with whom the Van Guilders intermarried at an early date (see chapter 5). Descendants of other early in-marrying families were living in the vicinity of Fort Ann and the West Fort Ann neighborhood known as "Hogtown."[11]

Thus, the "Guilder neighborhood" was a network of early Van Guilder homesteads scattered through the hills from Guilder Hollow near the Hartford-Granville town line, at one end, and extending northeastward to Slyborough, on the other end (fig. 2). As the Van Guilders



Maps 2 and 3. The Guilder Hollow neighborhood along the Hartford-Granville town line, Washington County, New York, in the 1860s. From southwest to northeast note farmsteads or properties of W. Van Gilder, S. Gilder, R. Gilder, N. Gilder, and W. Gilder. From Stone and Stewart 1866. Courtesy of Manuscripts and Special Collections, New York State Archives.



multiplied and intermarried with other families, they gradually settled in areas beyond the Hollow. By the time Arthur Estabrook arrived on the scene in 1911, they lived in or near other Washington County localities, including Comstock, Dewey's Bridge, Dick Hill, Fort Ann, Granville, Hartford, Hatch Hill, Hogtown, Middle Granville, North Granville, North Hebron, Sandy Hill, South Granville, West Fort Ann, and Whitehall. To the east in Rutland County, Vermont, they lived in or near Danby, East Poultney, Middle (or Middletown) Springs, Pawlett,

Fig. 2. Hilly terrain near Guilder Hollow, ca. 1911–12. Courtesy of Arthur H. Estabrook Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany, SUNY.

Poultney, and Wells. And to the west in Warren County, New York, they were living in Glens Falls.[12]

Spiritual Ferment

A specific reference to Stephen Van Guilder is unflattering or, at least, open to interpretation. According to Brayton and Norton's history of Hartford: "In 1827 Stephen Van Guilder and Jesse Wood, who made his peace with the church, and Harry Shepard, who also had a modern weakness for fishing on Sunday, were expelled."[13] These men were removed from the Baptist church in Hartford by the pastor, George Witherell. Apparently, a number of young men were challenging the authority of the church at that time. It was a tense period in any case, because Witherell had adopted a strong position against Masonry. This led to a crisis and community schism. Eighty Freemasons, who had been formally condemned by the church, broke away in 1830 along with sympathizers to form the South Baptist Church. However, by 1845 there was a reconciliation and merging of the two congregations into a reorganized Hartford Baptist Church.[14]

The early settlers of Washington County had imported their Baptist and Congregational religious traditions from New England. These would have been familiar to the Van Guilders, who had been exposed to the Puritan Protestantism of missionaries at Stockbridge.[15] By the 1820s at least some of the Van Guilders were members of the Baptist congregation in Hartford. It is not clear from Brayton and Norton's comments whether or not Stephen Van Guilder was a Freemason and had been censured or expelled for that reason. More likely, he was among a group of younger men in the community who were testing the limits of church authority by engaging in card playing, dancing, and other frivolities during the Sabbath or otherwise shirking religious duties. If so, the man in question was probably the younger Stephen Van Guilder, who would have been in his late twenties at the time. His father, the elder Stephen Van Guilder, who would have been approaching sixty years of age, seems a less likely candidate for these events.

The factional disputes in the Baptist church in Hartford occurred in the larger context of the Great Awakening, a time of widespread spiritual renewal in America. Evangelical forms of Protestantism, communal societies, and utopian movements thrived in places like upstate New York and the Midwest from the late eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth. The atmosphere of revival was often coupled with temperance campaigns and the abolition movement. Class dynamics were at play as well, since those caught up in the fervor were often the rural working poor breaking away from the strictures of established church authority.

About the time the Van Guilders were settling in Hartford and Granville, a few miles to the east near Middleton (present-day Middleton Springs), Vermont, some citizens were captivated by a charismatic, controversial figure who, by some accounts, would influence religious history in America and beyond. A key event was the excommunication of Nathaniel Wood from the Congregational Church in 1789. Apparently, Wood's keen desire to serve as a preacher in that church, and his strong personality, had alienated many parishioners. Thus, he formed his own congregation and by 1800 had attracted a large following.[16] At this time the Wood family crossed paths with a man who referred to himself as "Winchell" and sometimes as "Wingate."[17] The man was an alleged counterfeiter and fugitive from justice from Orange County, Vermont.

Winchell was also a self-proclaimed expert at using a witch hazel rod to locate buried treasure. This is significant, because a belief in spirits guarding buried treasure was deeply ingrained in the rural folk culture of Vermont and upstate New York at that time.[18] Winchell's influence with the Wood family led to a mutually exploitative relationship whereby Nathaniel Wood used the ritual of the rod to galvanize his flock by conjuring revelations and prophecies, including the prediction of an apocalyptic earthquake in 1801. This ignited a mania for "money-digging" by "rods-men" who scoured the countryside for treasure that would prevent the final destruction of the world. For his part, Winchell remained in the background, using the magic rod hysteria as a cover for bilking real money from followers eager to learn the arcane secrets of treasure hunting.

Ultimately, the earthquake never materialized. In an almost classic trajectory for a doomsday religion, the fledgling movement collapsed. Shortly thereafter the Wood family moved to Ellisburg, New York. However, the events in Middleton may have had larger ramifications. According to H. P. Smith and W. S. Rann's historical account, Joseph Smith Sr., father of the future founder of the Mormon Church, lived in nearby Poultney, Vermont and had been involved in the Wood affair. After the demise of the movement, Winchell moved from Vermont to Palmyra, New York, the very locale where Joseph Smith Jr. had the revelations that gave rise to Mormonism. Moreover, a man named Cowdry (or Cowdery) had joined Winchell in Palmyra where they continued their money-digging schemes with witch hazel rods. When Winchell had first arrived in Middleton some years earlier, it was Cowdry who had provided him a place to live.[19] Cowdry's son, Oliver Cowdry, later became a prominent Mormon and associate of Joseph Smith Jr. before being excommunicated from the church in the late 1830s.[20]

What should we make of the intriguing intersection of Wood, Winchell, Smith, and Cowdry at the dawn of the nineteenth century? Was Nathaniel Wood's religious movement a catalyst for the rise of Mormonism? This interpretation may or may not square with historical reality.[21] However, it is noteworthy that the historians of Rutland County, Smith and Rann, favor this view and, thus, may be reflecting widely shared perceptions and prejudices, or the cognitive reality of people in

that time and place. They were writing only a few generations after the remarkable events in Middleton, and they utilized the detailed written accounts of Rev. Laban Clark who had witnessed much that had transpired.[22] No doubt, the spiritual ferment of the Great Awakening gave birth to both religious movements. All of that yearning and experimentation, not to mention a generous measure of chicanery, were unfolding a few miles from Guilder Hollow and were part of the social and ideological environment defining the Van Guilders' new home.

From Independent Farmers to Farm Laborers

Other indicators of the Van Guilders' socioeconomic position may be gleaned from the New York State Census, which began in 1805 and often included detailed agricultural information as well as demographic data.[23] Inexplicably, some individuals and entire families are missing for certain years for the towns of Granville and Hartford. Some of the elegant cursive handwritten entries are illegible in available microfilm records. Also, the format of the census schedules changed over time, making longitudinal comparisons difficult. Despite these caveats, some interesting patterns are discernible.

One of the earliest relevant records derives from the 1825 census and lists the family of Hezekiah Winchell, one of Stephen Van Guilder Sr.'s first cousins, with a farm of twenty-eight "improved acres," one cow, six sheep, and six hogs. However, the marginal nature of their operation is indicated by a lack of horses and the production of no homespun textiles.

By 1835, Stephen Van Guilder Sr. and his family occupied a farm with only eighteen "improved acres," that is, land under cultivation or used as pastures for grazing stock. They owned four cows, four horses, one sheep, and six hogs. Over the preceding year, his family had produced thirty-seven yards of fulled cloth, twelve yards of flannel, and twenty yards of linen or thin cloth, all by domestic household techniques. Eighteen improved acres seems rather modest given that Van Guilder had begun with an acquisition of 160 acres, possibly all uncleared forest, in 1810. However, several other Van Guilder families in 1835 had comparably small holdings, with improved land in the range of thirteen to twenty-seven acres and with similar numbers of livestock and yards of homespun textiles. However, these other families were headed by younger couples,

namely, John and Paddy Van Guilder, Reuben and Polly Van Guilder, and James and Nancy Van Guilder.[24] James was one of Stephen Sr.'s sons. Reuben and John were Stephen's nephews. Also, Reuben Van Guilder Jr. owned a farm of similar size and characteristics. These families were in the early stages of farm development, whereas Stephen Van Guilder Sr. already had invested twenty-five years in his enterprise.

What accounts for the modest scope of Stephen Van Guilder Sr.'s farm after a lifetime of hard work? One possibility is that he had sold his original plot and started over on another property. A more likely scenario is that he had subdivided the 160 acres and sold or bequeathed pieces to his children while retaining a small parcel for himself in his advancing years. Some support for this derives from the sheer size of Stephen Van Guilder Jr.'s farm in 1835. He had seventy acres of improved land, twenty-four head of cattle, seven horses, one sheep, and seven hogs. Even so, his domestic textile production was no greater than that of the other families.[25] It is quite possible that Stephen Jr. and his wife, Lizzie, by whatever means, acquired a sizable share of Stephen Sr.'s original holdings, including substantial acreage already under cultivation and in pasture.[26]

Yet, other younger Van Guilders of Stephen Jr.'s generation were prospering as farmers in 1835. Asa Van Guilder and his wife, Ruth (neé Orcutt), also maintained a farm with seventy acres of improved land, four head of cattle, seven horses, three sheep, and twelve hogs. Moreover, they produced twelve yards of fulled cloth, thirty-five yards of flannel, and an impressive seventy-five yards of linen. Asa was the son of Daniel Van Guilder Sr., one of Stephen Van Guilder Sr.'s many brothers. At the other end of the spectrum, there were some Van Guilders who held no improved acreage or livestock and who produced no textile goods, such as the families headed by David Van Guilder Sr. and David Van Guilder Jr. Either these people were landless or they held small plots not visible to the agricultural census.

A key point is that in the 1830s when Washington County was experiencing a sheep raising boom while losing human population, many Van Guilders seemed to be holding their own as independent land owning farmers of at least modest means. Twenty years later, in 1855, however, the picture was beginning to change. For example, Reuben Van Guilder's family, which once had twenty-seven acres of improved land, now

had none. They still managed to plant one-half acre in potatoes which yielded ten bushels. Perhaps this small plot was rented or share-cropped from a neighbor. They also maintained two cows, one for meat and one for butter, as well as two hogs. But they now had no horses or sheep.[27]

A similar scaling down was evident for Stephen Van Guilder Jr.'s family which experienced a decline from seventy to forty acres of improved land. A more complex census format in 1855 also revealed thirty-eight acres of "unimproved" farmland for this family, underscoring the fact that virtually half of the land in cultivation or pasture twenty years previously had fallen out of production, perhaps through further partitions or sales. Of the improved land, ten acres had been plowed, fifteen acres were pasture, and eight acres were maintained as meadow, which produced an annual hay yield of eight tons. There were now only three horses (down from seven), reflecting a reduced need for traction animals. However, there were eleven hogs and twenty head of cattle, including two oxen and three cows providing milk and butter. The land yielded 30 bushels of corn, 120 bushels of potatoes, 6 bushels of beans, 100 bushels of apples, and 10 pounds of maple sugar. We also learn that the farm, livestock, and equipment were valued at $2,000, $165, and $15, respectively. There was also an annual production of eggs valued at $15. The family occupied a log dwelling with an estimated value of $25.[28] Conceivably, this was the very same log house built by Stephen Van Guilder Sr. in 1810 and subsequently portrayed in an unflattering light by Estabrook and Davenport.

Another pattern emerges at this point. Stephen Van Guilder Jr.'s household was extended to include the family of Asa Van Guilder, Stephen's cousin. Twenty years earlier Asa's family had operated their own farm. By 1855, they had either lost or sold their land and had been taken in by Stephen's family. As an older couple in their sixties, Asa and Ruth's children presumably were grown and living elsewhere. However, by this time sixty-five-year-old Stephen had acquired another wife, Almin, thirty-five years his junior, and they had four children. No doubt, the modest log home was cramped with four adults and four young children, but such living arrangements were not uncommon at a time when large families supplied the labor required for arduous farmwork. Regarding their trade or occupation, both Stephen and Asa were classified in the census as "farmers."[29]

Most adult women at that time were not given any occupational designation, the assumption being that they labored beside their husbands as all-purpose farmwives, homemakers, and child tenders (fig. 3). However, Almin Van Guilder was described as a "basketmaker." Such individuals were highly skilled artisans who had mastered the complex hand production of wooden splint gathering baskets that were peddled to rural families throughout the countryside. As we will discover, basketmaking was a tradition and economic specialization among many Van Guilder families, no doubt passed along from Stockbridge and Mohican ancestors over many generations. We will also see how Estabrook and Davenport were able to interpret basketmaking not as a creative skill but as something almost shameful, an outward sign of inner decay. Like "wandering," basketmaking for them was an atavistic trait reflecting degeneration.

In 1855, others were coping with more meager resources. For example, the family of David Van Guilder Sr., age forty, his twenty-four-year-old wife, Margaret, and their two children were subsisting on a mere four acres of land. Only three-quarters of an acre was "improved," largely for potato cultivation, which yielded an annual crop of thirty bushels. The family owned one cow, which produced one hundred pounds of butter. This small farm was valued at $120, while their house made of "slab"—possibly a combination of fieldstone, earth, and sod—had an estimated value of one dollar. However, David was not classified as a farmer by the census takers but rather as a basketmaker.[30]

A similar pattern emerges for the family of Israel Van Guilder, age twenty-eight, his wife, Charlotte, age eighteen, and one child. They had no farmland but lived in a wood-frame house valued at $200. Israel's occupation was "shoe making." It is apparent that by the mid-nineteenth century, those Van Guilder families who had little or no farmland were gravitating toward niche markets based on specialized forms of craft production. Among these, basketmaking was the most prominent and had significant historical and cultural meanings for this community.

By the 1870s, families with the Van Guilder surname no longer appeared in the agricultural section of the New York State Census for Granville and Hartford, suggesting that these families had lost their farms, moved out of farming, or no longer had properties of sufficient

Fig. 3. A Guilder Hollow woman, ca. 1911–12, a great-granddaughter of Daniel Van Guilder Sr. Courtesy of Arthur H. Estabrook Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany, SUNY.

size or economic output of interest for this portion of the census. This is borne out by the population section of the 1875 state census. Although he died later that year, eighty-one-year-old Stephen Van Guilder Jr. was now listed as a "farm laborer" rather than a farmer even at this advanced age. He and his fifty-year-old wife, Annie, and one child now lived in an extended family along with their married son Chester Van Guilder and his wife, Churohire. They occupied a wood-frame house valued at $200, suggesting that they had either upgraded from their former log dwelling or had moved off their former farm altogether.[31] Given the foregoing changes, it is ironic that Crisfield Johnson observed in 1878 that "an orchard planted by the elder Stephen Van Guilder [i.e., Stephen Jr.'s father] is still bearing."[32]

Eleven other Van Guilder families appeared in the 1875 census records. Of these, only three had male household heads classified as "farmers," namely, Clifton Van Guilder, age fifty-six, Allen Van Guilder, age thirty-one, and Richard Van Guilder, age thirty. The latter two had wood-frame houses valued at $1,200 each, by far the most expensive houses among this group of Van Guilders. It seems that while most families were dropping out of an independent farming livelihood, a few were prospering enough to invest some of their assets in substantial houses. Among the remaining eight families, all of the male heads, ranging from twenty-four to fifty years of age, were listed as "farm laborers" or, in a couple cases, "hired hands" who worked by the month.[33]

The same trends observed in the 1870s continued into the 1890s. For example, in 1892, among fourteen family households headed by Van Guilders, only four males, ranging from thirty-nine to forty-seven years of age, were classified as "farmers." Unfortunately, there was no separate agricultural survey providing details on farming activity for such families. Among the remaining ten Van Guilder families, with male heads ranging from twenty-two to sixty-two years of age, there were four "farm laborers," two "laborers" (possibly workers in mills), and four "basketmakers." In addition, one seventeen-year-old boy living with his parents was classified as a "laborer," and a fifteen-year-old boy living with his parents was a "basketmaker."[34]

The movement from self-sufficient farming to a laboring class among the Van Guilders appears to coincide with the post–Civil War agricul-

Fig. 4. A young male Van Guilder farm laborer with horse team near Slyboro, ca. 1911–12. He was a great-great-grandson of the siblings Joseph Van Guilder Jr. and Martha Winchell (née Van Guilder). Courtesy of Arthur H. Estabrook Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany, SUNY.

tural boom in Washington County when large-scale commercial potato production and new forms of farming technology emerged. As mixed farming on smaller plots, particularly in the less fertile hilly areas like Guilder Hollow, became increasingly inefficient, the transformation from farmer to farm laborer accelerated (fig. 4). Yet other Van Guilders, who had learned the traditions from their kinsmen, gravitated increasingly toward basketmaking as an economic strategy.

By 1905 the transformation to a laboring class was virtually complete. Among the eleven Van Guilder family households identifiable in Granville and Hartford, there were no male heads classified as "farmers." Rather there were four "farm laborers," three "day laborers," and one "basketmaker." Three of the households were headed by women, perhaps widows, whose occupation was identified as "housework," no doubt a simplification of their complex and varied roles. Many of the older children in these families were also contributing to the household income with five boys working as day laborers, one boy as a farm laborer, and two boys as basketmakers. Two older girls were identified as houseworkers.[35]

All of the Van Guilders working as farm laborers, rather than day laborers, were young single men, age fourteen to nineteen, who boarded with the farm families for whom they worked. The latter were headed by middle-aged and older men, age thirty-eight to sixty-four, who operated large farms on the periphery of Guilder Hollow. None of these were Van Guilders or families with whom the Van Guilders intermarried. In addition to listing occupation, the 1905 census included the elusive, if not contentious, category "class." Without exception, all of the Van Guilder men were tagged with a "W," indicating a working-class status. However, the farmers who employed and boarded Van Guilder men were all characterized as "Ent" or "Emp" to denote their position in the entrepreneurial or employer class.[36] Worker and Entrepreneur: the phrase aptly sums up the evolving social stratification in Washington County society at the dawn of the twentieth century.

While the Van Guilders appeared to be growing poorer with each passing generation, they were not necessarily a pauperized group. It is worth noting that census records in the early 1800s included information on the number of family members classified as "paupers" and, therefore, receiving town or county assistance of the kind described in the previous chapter. None of the Van Guilder family members discussed here were categorized in this way. After the mid-1800s this census item was eliminated, making it difficult to discern trends in pauperization. Arguably, the social distance between the Van Guilders and their neighbors had widened considerably since the days of the egalitarian agrarian frontier in the early nineteenth century. This was the scene that awaited Estabrook and Davenport as they made their way north from Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island.

The Burden of Illiteracy

Several new patterns appeared in the census data in the early 1900s. First, there were a few notations for younger children being "at school." While most children age sixteen and older were working as day laborers, basketmakers, or houseworkers, those fifteen and younger were attending school. There is very little evidence for school attendance by Van Guilder children prior to this time. In the early nineteenth century formal education was a rarity, offered intermittently by clergy or private

tutors. The South Hartford Academy was established in 1865 with the support of prominent citizens in the Hartford area, but this would have been accessible only to wealthier families.[37] It is likely that the need for extra hands on even the smallest farms and those households involved in basketmaking or other economic pursuits kept Van Guilder children at home and, thus, away from schooling for much of the nineteenth century. No doubt, this began to change after state-mandated compulsory education in 1874 and greater accessibility to rural public schoolhouses and teachers.

The schooling issue is important because it is tied directly to a second pattern emerging in the census data: literacy. Estabrook and Davenport's study placed heavy emphasis on feeblemindeness among the people of Guilder Hollow and its alleged genetic cause. Later chapters of this book will argue that they often misinterpreted illiteracy, and even shyness or reserved temperament, as evidence of mental defectiveness. They were guilty of the fallacy of *affirming the consequent*, that is, seeing in their data what they already assumed to be true. In other words, they were so committed to their hypothesis of cacogenics or bad germ plasm that everything they observed in Guilder Hollow, including illiteracy, primitive housing, wandering, and even basketmaking, was readily accepted as proof that bad genes produced defective people. Surely, illiteracy was a prevalent condition among the rural population for much of the 1800s, but this was not confined to the Van Guilders and their relatives. In a revealing comment, Brayton and Norton situated illiteracy in early Hartford within a socioeconomic class context:

> It must also be remembered that there was an illiterate class owning perhaps some land, but in those days somewhat in subjection to their "betters."[38]

The 1855 New York State Census classified Stephen Van Guilder Jr. as "Illit.," or illiterate. Likewise, his cousin Asa Van Guilder as well as David Van Guilder Sr. were illiterate. However, Stephen's much younger wife, Almin, had reading ability. The fact that Stephen was illiterate raises intriguing questions about opportunities won and lost as the colonial frontier displaced families and peoples. We will recall from

the previous chapter that Stephen's paternal grandfather, Joseph Van Guilder Sr., was literate, having had some schooling at the Stockbridge Mission. It is unclear if a similar formal education was obtained by Joseph's children who eventually migrated to New York. If Stephen Van Guilder Sr. was literate when he arrived in Guilder Hollow, somehow this knowledge was not passed on to his son Stephen Jr. This may have been one of the costs of moving and starting life over in those turbulent years. By 1875, there were still many middle-aged and older Van Guilders classified as illiterate, but most of their children and younger relatives now had both reading and writing ability. Indeed, the ratio of illiterate to literate was about 1:1. Nonetheless, any lag in literacy behind the general population would have put the Van Guilders at a competitive disadvantage for employment opportunities and, thereby, reinforced their isolation in the Hollow.

The Ambiguities of Race and Ethnicity

Finally, there is the thorny matter of race, or "color," as noted in the census records. In the early nineteenth century a survey question asked for "the whole number of persons in the same family, who are persons of color, not taxed," or alternatively, "who are taxed." In later censuses the wording was modified and simplified, so that the category "Color" channeled responses to "whether black or mulatto." This was problematic for Native Americans or people of admixed background other than African American. Later the relevant category morphed to "Color" with choices specified as "White, Black, Mulatto or Ind'n." By the 1890s the category was reduced to simply "Color," with a blank space to be filled in by the census taker. And later still, the phrasing changed to "Color or Race."

In some years this kind of information was never recorded, leaving us to ponder if page after page of blank spaces were a kind of default for "white" or if the census takers regarded the issue as too sensitive or of little interest. In any case, for those years when race or color information was recorded, such as 1875 and 1905, the Van Guilders were consistently classified as "white." This might seem like an odd designation, particularly when a local history of that era regarded the Van Guilders as descendants of the "aborigines of Stockbridge" and claimants to Massachusetts lands "through Indian title."[39] Moreover,

it is unclear how their ancestors were officially categorized earlier in the nineteenth century. Was it "Ind'n"? If so, were the Van Guilders somehow deracinated by the census apparatus over time? As mixed-race people, were the Van Guilders shedding their Indianness, or was their ethnicity malleable according to context? As noted previously, by the end of the nineteenth century the Van Guilders had intermarried with several white families. These complications raise questions about how the Van Guilders projected, presented, and performed their identities and how they were regarded by their neighbors.

Of relevance here is historian David Silverman's insightful analysis of race and racial thinking as applied to the Brothertown and Stockbridge Indians who were displaced from Oneida territory to Wisconsin in the early nineteenth century. Ironically, their adoption of Christianity and Euro-American lifestyles and their early acceptance of U.S. citizenship were part of an intentional strategy of "becoming white" in order to maintain their independence and survival as Indian communities. Even in these circumstances, however, the surrounding white society continued to perceive and judge these people racially as "red" or Indian and, therefore, as justifiable targets for continued mistreatment and exploitation of their lands and resources.[40] The mixed-race Van Guilders also adapted to the dominant society by adopting many Euro-American customs and by developing a hybridic subculture. Yet, they had no relationship with Indian Affairs agents or government agencies that might have formalized their identity as "Indian." Compared to the Wisconsin Brothertown and Stockbridge people, the Van Guilders' racial identity was regarded more ambiguously by the surrounding society. No doubt, this ambiguity only intensified as their situation deteriorated.

With the loss of their farms and lands, the Van Guilders suffered significant downward social mobility in the nineteenth century. At a time when Washington County was experiencing unprecedented growth in its agricultural economy, Guilder Hollow was in decline. As the Van Guilders became a convenient labor pool on the farms of their prosperous neighbors, the stigma of Guilder Hollow may have been born. What was once an egalitarian frontier was now a landscape of winners and losers. The entrepreneurial farmers may have looked with some condescension upon those they employed. After all, the people

in Guilder Hollow were poor, clannish, and culturally different. Maybe their otherness *made* them poor, some may have reasoned. Increasingly isolated by intolerant attitudes and limited resources, Guilder Hollow over time became an outcaste or pariah community. Simply living in the Hollow or bearing the Van Guilder surname carried a stigma, like a proof of lesser worth. Eventually, some individuals would change their names to avoid the social ostracism.[41]

By the early twentieth century, eugenicists had become adept at sniffing out pockets of rural poverty with outcaste characteristics. It would only be a matter of time before Estabrook and Davenport discovered Guilder Hollow.

5
The Eugenicists Arrive

Three generations of imbeciles are enough.

—JUSTICE OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, 1925

Targeting Guilder Hollow

How did Arthur Estabrook and Charles Davenport come to specifically target Guilder Hollow for their research? Their publication, *The Nam Family*, is silent on this issue. The correspondence and other documents in the Arthur H. Estabrook Papers collection offer no clues. Clearly, they were inspired by *The Jukes*, but unlike Richard Dugdale, whose prison work led him to his subjects, there appeared to be no obvious prior knowledge of the Van Guilder family that led the researchers to Washington County.

A partial clue derives from the kinds of alleged hereditary traits or conditions deemed worthy of study. Since the Jukes were known for their criminality, the Ishmaelites of Indiana for their pauperism, the "Zeroes" of Switzerland for their vagrancy, and yet others for prostitution, Estabrook and Davenport would set their sights on people burdened "by alcoholism and lack of ambition."[1] Ultimately, they would expand this to a larger list of maladies, but their initial focus on alcoholism and indolence seemed to provide a rationale for distinguishing their work from other early eugenics family studies. Yet this does not explain why they selected the Guilder Hollow community in particular. If inherited alcoholism and indolence were their main interests, surely there were opportunities for fieldwork in the poorer neighborhoods of New York City, a mere twenty-five miles from their offices in Cold Spring Harbor.

However, as noted in chapter 2, the eugenicists were biased toward pockets of rural poverty where populations seemed more circumscribed

and where genealogies might be more readily constructed. This still begs the question: why Guilder Hollow? Why Washington County? An answer may be contained in an obscure newspaper item in the January 17, 1892, issue of the *Granville Sentinel:* "E. Estabrook, representative of the Excelsior Granite Company, was in town a part of last week."[2] Estabrook is not a common surname. It is possible that Arthur Estabrook had a brother, uncle, or some other relative who was an executive in the granite industry and whose travels regularly took him to Granville, a business hub for overseeing quarrying operations in Vermont. If so, he may have been privy to stories circulating about peculiar people in the nearby hills and passed them along to Arthur. Until additional information emerges, this seems a plausible scenario.

Once the decision was made to base the work in Guilder Hollow, the research began. *The Nam Family* is virtually devoid of any discussion of methodology except to note that Estabrook alone conducted the actual fieldwork from which he developed descriptive profiles of individuals and genealogical charts, while Davenport utilized the resulting data to write most of the book. This may have been a common division of labor at the time. As the first resident director of the Eugenics Record Office, Davenport, a biologist with a PhD from Harvard University, had introduced the biostatistical approach of Sir Francis Galton and Karl Pearson to American scholars. The ERO was associated with the larger Station for the Experimental Study of Evolution (SEE), which Davenport also directed. Harry Hamilton Laughlin, a biologist with an interest in agricultural genetics who was a staunch proponent of involuntary sterilization, served as the ERO's superintendent.[3] Together, Davenport and Laughlin ran a summer school to train eugenics field-workers in principles of heredity and procedures for collecting family histories (fig. 5). The trainees took field trips to visit reputedly defective families in their home environments and in asylums and other institutions.[4] In 1910 Estabrook was twenty-five years old and had just received a PhD in biology from Johns Hopkins University. As a junior colleague and trainee in Davenport's program, Estabrook drew the field assignment that sent him north to Washington County.[5]

We know virtually nothing of Estabrook's field experiences among the Van Guilders except that he "went in and out among these people

Fig. 5. Eugenics Record Office, Field Workers Conference, 1912. Arthur Estabrook is seated on the far left; Charles Davenport is seated second from the right. Courtesy of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Archives.

daily" for a period of "many months" during the winter and spring of 1911–12.[6] One can imagine him arriving by train in Granville in the depth of winter. As automobiles were still a novelty, he may have hired a horse team and driver to take him over the rough roads to Guilder Hollow. Or he may have taken a train to Fort Edward and approached from the west via Hartford. What was Estabrook's persona and demeanor? How did he interact with locals, and how did he explain the nature of his work? Did his subjects comprehend what he was doing? Where did he live? We may never know the answers to these crucial questions, but this was many decades before the development of codes of ethics governing informed consent and confidentiality, and even longer before the advent of human subjects review boards. To their credit, Estabrook and Davenport consistently employed pseudonyms and numerical codes to protect the identities of communities and individuals.

Genealogical Centerpiece

In order to support their argument that bad germ plasm had produced feeblemindedness, indolence, alcoholism, and licentiousness over many generations, Estabrook and Davenport needed detailed genealogical information showing who was related to whom through biological descent and through ties of marriage. In this regard, they had honed their craft and become masters at constructing genealogical charts. In many respects, "Chart A, Genealogical Tree of the Nam Family," is the centerpiece of their entire study.[7] Starting with a founding pair in Generation I, the chart spreads from a central point and ramifies outward across eight generations to reveal the connections between 1,795 individuals.[8] This is not a conventional family tree diagram. Rather, the chart resembles a complex bicycle wheel with jagged spokes, an elaborate pinwheel, or a fantastic micro-organism with innumerable delicate spines or tendrils (chart 8). The image is stunning in its intricacy and elegance. It bespeaks virtuosity and scientific rigor, and maybe that was the authors' intention.[9] However, as Nicole Rafter suggests, the very elaborateness of eugenics studies could not conceal the fact that evidence often did not support the researchers' conclusions.[10]

Any social anthropologist who has constructed kinship diagrams in the field will appreciate the sheer scale of Estabrook and Davenport's genealogy.[11] Granted, Estabrook presumably had access to vital records in local churches and town halls to supplement the testimony of informants, but Chart A is still impressive. This notwithstanding, genealogies only depict *potential* pathways of inheritance, not actual genetic transmission of particular behaviors or conditions. This distinction was blurred in the eugenicists' arguments so that the genealogical chart became *ipso facto* a map of all things heritable.

The Lines of Descent

In order to demonstrate their cacogenic theory, Estabrook and Davenport arranged brief descriptive profiles or life histories of the nearly two thousand individuals contained in their massive genealogy into a manageable narrative. This was an organizational feat in itself. The very existence of these profiles, however, raises numerous methodological questions. How

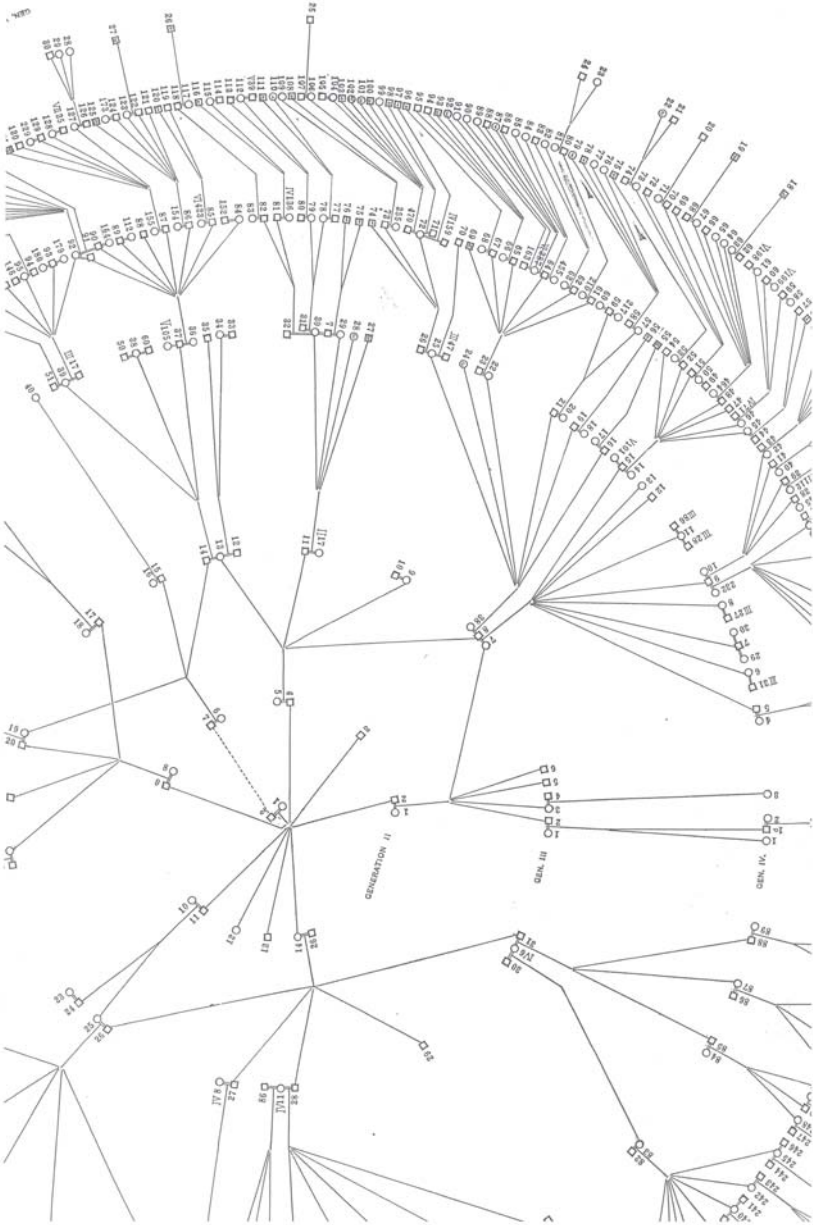


Chart 8. A portion of Estabrook and Davenport's "Chart A" genealogy of the Nam family (Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*). Courtesy of Cold Spring Harbor Labratory Archives.

was Estabrook able to compile detailed sketches for that many people in only a few months of fieldwork? Indeed, how was he able to reconstruct behaviors for hundreds of Van Guilder ancestors living in the early or mid-nineteenth century? Were the memories of living informants in 1911–12 reliable guides to the lives of relatives long deceased?[12] And since so many of the traits Estabrook emphasized were highly unflattering, such as drunkenness and licentiousness, were these likely to be self-reported behaviors or the secondhand accounts of people outside the community?

Moreover, if Estabrook relied on outsider accounts or hearsay to any extent, how did he control for the bias and antipathy often expressed by neighbors toward outcaste communities? Rafter notes that eugenical researchers routinely depended on public records and interviews with doctors, schoolteachers, police officers, and neighbors of the target families.[13] One can imagine how the families themselves may have been neglected in favor of outsiders willing to vent their opinions. Clearly, this was not immersive participant observation–style ethnography of the kind being pioneered by cultural anthropologists during the same period in the early 1900s.

According to the biologist Garland Allen, as early as 1910 Davenport had developed a complex analytical index called *The Trait Book*, which was a system for classifying and compiling measurements and observations of a large number of physical, physiological, mental, personality, and social "traits" retrieved by eugenics field-workers. Hence, a researcher might record the stature of a subject as a physical trait while noting "rebelliousness" as a feature of the same subject's personality. Ultimately, the coded information was transferred to three-by-five cards organized somewhat like the Dewey Decimal System.[14] By 1918 the various ERO studies had generated over 500,000 cards.[15] In view of this elaborate framework, Davenport and Estabrook's silence on methods in the Nam study is baffling. Their omission may reflect the fact that the elegance of the ERO's research design was not matched by rigor in collecting data.

Of relevance here is Garland Allen's assessment of Anna Wendt Finlayson's (1916) ERO-sponsored study, *The Dack Family*, which examined descendants of two Irish immigrants in western Pennsylvania. Apparently, objectifiable measures such as stature did not entail actual measurements of subjects' height but rather guesses, especially for deceased individuals and those not present. Even more problematic is that the bulk of

Finlayson's data consisted of "community reactions," a euphemism for common gossip. In turn, this unreliable hearsay information was used to construct pedigrees illustrating hereditary feeblemindedness in the Dack family, even though Finlayson did no formal mental testing of subjects in the field.[16]

Given the remarkable deficiencies in fieldwork noted above, the evidence presented in the *The Nam Family* should be regarded with healthy skepticism. For example, the authors made only one passing reference to the "Binet test," which indicated retardation of three years and five years for two girls. Otherwise, their evidence for feeblemindedness among the Nam rested overwhelmingly upon vague characterizations of people as "slow," "unable to learn at school," "incapable of learning," and similar assertions, not rigorous assessments.[17] Estabrook and Davenport's strategy for summarizing the behavior of Van Guilder family members over eight generations, from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth centuries, was to develop a chronological narrative arranged by family "lines" or lineages. As noted in chapter 2, six of these lines of descent began with a group of Van Guilder siblings, children of Joseph Van Guilder Sr. and Mary Holly ("Molly") Van Guilder (née Winchell), all of whom moved to New York in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries:

The Nam Family

Line A

Joseph Van Guilder Jr. (born ca. 1770 in Massachusetts, died in South Granville in 1830)

Married to Polly (surname unknown) (born in Guilder Hollow, Mass., died in 1840)

Line B

Daniel Van Guilder Sr. (born in Massachusetts, died in Vermont in 1840)

Married (name unknown)

Line C

Unidentified descendant of Joseph Van Guilder Sr.

Married (name unknown)

Line D

Stephen Van Guilder Sr. (born ca. 1770 in Massachusetts, died in 1846)

Married (name unknown)

Line E

Solomon Van Guilder (born ca. 1770 in Massachusetts)
Married (name unknown)

Line F

Martha Van Guilder (born ca. 1770 in Massachusetts)
Married to Elijah ("Cute") Winchell (born in 1740 in Massachusetts, died in 1820)

In-Marrying Families

The foregoing six lines of Van Guilders constituted *the* Nam family in Estabrook and Davenport's study. It is apparent that the authors used a rough estimate of 1770 for the birth date of many of the Van Guilder siblings rather than precise dates. Four additional lines intermarried with the Nam or Nams, and these were given different fictive names. The Nap family, or Naps, were descendants of a married couple named Orcutt (first names unknown), apparently from eastern Massachusetts. Two of their children moved to New York, founding descent lines G and H. The remaining two lines were called the "Nars" and the "Nats," once again evoking insectile or animal imagery.

The Nap Family

Line G

David Orcutt (born in 1770, lived at Dick Hill, Hartford, New York)
Married Polly Orcutt (née Gear) (born in 1780 in New York, died in 1860)

Line H

Betsy Orcutt (born in 1800 in New York, lived at Hatch Hill, Whitehall, New York)
Married Jacob Turk (born in 1807)

The Nar Family

Janes Seeley (born in 1818 in Vermont; lived at Hatch Hill and Dick Hill, New York; died in 1896)
Married Martha Seeley (née Waters) (born in 1820 in Vermont, died in 1906)

The Nats Family

Joseph Stark
Married Susan Stark (née Ingallsbee) (Hartford)
Isaac Stark (Fort Ann)
Married Betsy Stark (née Winchell) (born in 1811 in Granville)

Except for Martha Van Guilder, who married Elijah ("Cute") Winchell from Egremont, Massachusetts, there is no information regarding names of spouses of the various Van Guilder brothers. It is possible that some of these were also Winchells and related to both Elijah and Hezekiah Winchell. The founders of the Naps, Nars, and Nats, however, throw some new surnames into the mix of people who formed the Guilder Hollow community, namely, Gear, Ingallsbee, Orcutt, Seeley, Stark, and Turk. Due to paternal transmission of surnames, Gear and Ingallsbee disappear from Estabrook and Davenport's genealogy after the second generation. However, the other surnames persist through time.[18] At this point, there is no firm information regarding the ancestors, origins or ethnicities of these other founding families. Were any of these people Native American or of admixed Indian–Euro-American background like the Van Guilders? While further genealogical research is needed to address this question, what follows are suggestions for some potential collateral relatives, if not direct ancestors, for the Orcutts, Starks, Seeleys, and Turks who intermarried with the Van Guilders:

Orcutt. People with the Orcutt surname are present in nearby Rutland County, Vermont, by the first decade of the nineteenth century, including Erasmus Orcutt and Bildad Orcutt, who served in the regular army during the War of 1812.[19] Simeon Parmalee, who had a sixty-acre farm near Pittsford, Vermont, was the son of Hezekiah Parmalee, "a native of Stockbridge, Mass., and Miriam Orcutt."[20] "Native" in this context is somewhat ambiguous, but the association of the Orcutt name with Stockbridge is suggestive of Native American, and possibly Mohican, ancestry. Finally, there is Samuel Orcutt, cited in chapter 3 (endnote 23), who wrote the 1882 volume *The Indians of the Housatonic and Naugatuck Valleys*. The latter includes information on the Tunxis and other tribes who temporarily settled near Hartford, Connecticut, some of whom

later became the "Hartford Indians" of Washington County. It would be an intriguing connection if Samuel Orcutt was related to the Orcutts who became part of the Guilder Hollow community.

Stark/Starks. The Stark surname appears in the region as early as the French and Indian War. In 1759 Captain John Stark supervised the construction of a military road for transport of troops and gear between Charlestown, New Hampshire, and Crown Point on Lake Champlain. By 1770 he had settled in the Pawlett area of Rutland County, Vermont.[21] Also, as mentioned in chapter 3, Stephen Van Guilder Sr. initially settled on what later became the Ebenezer Starks farm in Granville.

Seeley. A man named Benjamin Seelye (perhaps a variant spelling of Seeley) was one of twenty-three associates, mostly from Connecticut, who were granted the Kingsbury patent in 1763.[22] That land patent later became the town of Kingsbury, located immediately west of Hartford. Sometime prior to 1770 an Ephraim Seeley built a log dwelling near Tinmouth in Rutland County, Vermont. A century later, another Seeley (first name unknown) was one of several Welshmen who opened slate quarries on the farm of Asa Rogers in the same county.[23] Jordan Seeley settled in Hartford, Washington County, New York, around 1822, and his son John Seeley became a noted justice in that area.[24]

Turk. According to Brayton and Norton, a man named Jake Turk (possibly the same as Jacob Turk who married Betsy Orcutt; see above) was once the most prominent inhabitant of a small hamlet known as Jaketown. This was in an area of East Hartford that had reverted to forest by the 1920s, leaving behind cellar holes of small dwellings and a structure "of most primitive construction and was called the 'bough house' from the material of which it was made."[25] The latter description is evocative of bent sapling wigwams, although it seems unlikely that early Mohican dwellings would have survived until the 1920s.

Narratives of Degeneration

The bulk of Estabrook and Davenport's study follows each line of descent, from founding ancestors to contemporary descendants, as of 1911–12, noting the behavioral characteristics, personalities, socioeconomic circumstances, and sometimes health conditions for most of the individuals in their massive genealogical chart. Their dry, perfunctory

style of reporting has a veneer of objectivity, but their tone and choice of words reveal an underlying revulsion at what they see as moral and social decay wrought by the inbreeding of genetically defective people. Excerpts from their withering person-by-person accounts are offered here.[26] For example, they began their discussion of Line B as follows:

> We start with the descendants of II 4, the old Revolutionary soldier and his unknown wife. They had four children III 8, 9, 11, and 13. About III 9 nothing is known except that she married.
>
> III 8 has already been described under Line A as the husband of III 7 and the father of her children which showed, in general, slowness of movement, alcoholism, and lack of ambition. III 8 is himself, it may be remembered, lazy, unambitious, irascible, and alcoholic. His second wife was III 38, born about 1800 at G. She was a harlot, was without ambition, and was epileptic. Before she married III 8 she had an illegitimate male child, IV 12, who subsequently became the sire of an illegitimate child. By III 8 she had eight children. They lived in a hut in the woods near N.H., and received occasional outdoor aid. She was admitted to the county house in 1879, where she died in 1882. Her fraternity gives an instructive picture. An unambitious and alcoholic brother had "spells in which he acted queer." Another brother was ingenious and industrious, alert and polite. A sister was hypochondriac and became a pauper. The mother of all these, II 15, was regarded as "crazy," and the father was indolent, unambitious, inefficient, and a pauper. Such is the blood of the mother's side of the house.[27]

Several pages and hundreds of descendants later, the authors close their analysis of Line B with the following observations:

> IV 30 had, moreover, by a slow, quiet, unambitious, and illiterate basket-maker, two boys, V 81, 82. The former, born in 1841 in Vermont, was an indolent, unambitious, disorderly basket-maker, like his father, a pauper, and in his youth licentious. He married an alert, ambitious girl, IV 136, who, always faithful to him, has become slack, slovenly and listless. She lives in a shack in the hills near R. and has

three children. Of these the younger daughter is a slow moving, lazy prostitute who makes her home in her father's hovel. The two sons are slow and industrious, unambitious, alcoholic, licentious and illiterate. The younger served a term in the State Prison for stealing (while intoxicated). The other boy though irascible is much more ambitious and industrious than his brother. He married his cousin, V 83, and lives on a farm in Vermont, where they have a bright, industrious son.

Finally, we must consider the numerous descendants of III 13, born about 1800. We know that she was unambitious, alcoholic, ignorant, and doubtless mentally deficient. Cohabiting with III 12, of whom we know nothing, she had a daughter, IV 34, who disappeared, and a son, IV 35, of the Nam type who after much licentious behavior also disappeared. III 13 next married III 14, of Line "C," an incapable, who served a term in State Prison for breaking into a store. He was a pauper, lived in a hovel, and died of old age at about seventy years. His father, II 7, was related to I 1, but the relationship is not known. He had three children, IV 37, 38, and 39, who are described under Line "C."

In this line so many out-marriages have occurred that new traits have been brought in such as music, conceit, and the ambition to go west, and in these outcrosses many weaknesses disappear in the children. The nervous disorders that are striking in the germ-plasm of III 38 reappear as abusiveness in IV 21, epilepsy in VI 76, garrulousness in VI 84, and criminality in the descendants of IV 25.[28]

In order to gain a fuller sense of Estabrook and Davenport's narrative style, consider their opening discussion of Line D:

Through the original Nam and his self-respecting but unambitious son II 9 (who settled Nam Hollow), and the latter's unknown wife came four children, the founders of the branches of D Line, III 17, 20, 21, and 22. The first is a lazy, unproductive, unambitious, alcoholic man, who inherited his father's farm and supported his family by gradually selling the property. He married, first, III 18, born at D. about 1800, a chaste, self-respecting woman by whom he had two children, IV 41, 44. One of them received a common school education, was chaste, married and had a child who died young. The other, born at N.H.

about 1820, had a common school education and became a church member. She was orderly and chaste, but degenerated after marrying her lazy, shiftless, alcoholic, licentious, illiterate, depauperate husband, and became slow, disorderly, and indifferent to self and circumstances. Environment plays a part here, but she must have been lacking to have married such a man. She had seven children, V 101, 105, 106, 108, 109, 110, 112, most of whom have grown up and exhibit the typical Nam traits. Thus V 101 was industrious but licentious. By an alcoholic man, with whom she lived as house-keeper, she had an illegitimate daughter, V 161, a typical Nam, who has lived a wild sexual life and has a dishonest, stubborn, licentious, illegitimate son of seventeen years. By an unknown sire V 101 had another illegitimate child who was of a much better type, and moved away from A. She married IV 15, who is the unambitious, alcoholic son, whose less degenerate offspring from his fairly good wife have already been described; and eventually she died a paralytic in the County House.

The next daughter (V 105) is deficient in causation, and is promiscuous in her sex-relations. By one ignorant and indolent consort, V 104, she had an industrious but unambitious son, VI 168, who is an indigent farm laborer near A., and who has by the fairly active, chaste woman, VI 167 (of a mostly feeble-minded fraternity, revealing chorea, strabismus, and speech defects), an irritable son of four years and other, younger, children. Another consort of V 105 was III 4, an illegitimate son of an illegitimate mother of little intelligence. From this temporary union proceeded VI 170, an illiterate licentious vagrant now in the United States Army. Still another consort was the lazy, alcoholic IV 37, who fathered an unambitious, industrious girl, whose two illegitimate children were destroyed at birth.[29]

After numerous additional life histories, the authors finish Line D with the following comments:

V 150 was indolent, alcoholic, wholly illiterate, and a harlot. By her cousin, V 96, she had six children, VI 221–224, and with him was run into by a railroad train while intoxicated. V 96 was, as we have seen (page 23), a typical Nam.

Their eldest daughter, born in 1885, is an indolent, disorderly, alcoholic, untruthful vagrant and harlot, although not without capacity for house-work. She has served two terms in the county jail, and was twice in the House of Correction for drunkenness and disorderly conduct. She contracted gonorrhea, and married a cousin, VI 138, but does not live with him. Her brother, VI 222, born in 1889, was indolent, vicious, and licentious. He was admitted to the Orphan Asylum in 1897, but ran away in 1902 and returned to Nam Hollow, where he drowned himself in 1908. His brother, VI 222b, was a typical Nam. He injured his head in 1897 in a railway accident, and was in the Orphan Asylum from 1897 to 1902. He has since been placed out to the Children's Aid Society. The youngest child, VI 223, born in 1896, was adopted at two years and her subsequent history is unknown. VI 224, born in 1880, is the indolent, alcoholic, untrainable harlot described earlier (page 20) as the wife of the lazy sot, V 85, and the mother of his incorrigible ten-year old son.

Finally, V 151, born at N.H. in 1862, was alcoholic, and licentious, and cohabited with many men. By a lazy sot of a cousin, V 97, she had an illegitimate child, a criminalistic son. She died of exhaustion at the age of twenty-eight.

This ends the description of Line D. In one branch lack of sex-control with alcoholism is striking; in another branch there are several cases of criminality, eccentricity in manners, suicide, and untruthfulness, suggesting a more highly developed mentality of the second case than the first.[30]

The Nam Family continues in this narrative life-history vein for more than forty pages. This is followed by twenty pages summarizing each person's key characteristics by abbreviated codes: A = alcoholic, C = criminalistic, F = feebleminded, O = orderly, Sh = shiftless, W = vagrant, wanderer, and so forth. Considering the sheer scale of misfortune and human suffering across so many generations, reading this material can be a mind-numbing, emotionally exhausting experience.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the very existence of the life-history profiles raises numerous methodological questions. How did Estabrook compile detailed sketches for 1,795 people in a few months of fieldwork?

Reliance on hearsay, rumors, or secondhand accounts from non-Nam neighbors, rather than direct observation and interviews with the Nam themselves, would cast doubt upon the quality and credibility of the data.

At the same time, as we have seen, Estabrook and Davenport's dispassionate style of reporting was occasionally broken by outbursts of emotional, prejudicial language whereby people were referred to as "slatterns," "alcoholic rakes," "licentious drunkards," "sots," or "of low stock," among other degrading things. Consider the following examples:

> By V 470, born in 1841, a sedentary, indolent, unambitious, careless, impractical, disorderly, talkative, illiterate man with bestial tendencies, a Civil War veteran who receives an annual pension of one hundred and forty-four dollars, V 72 had eleven children including two miscarriages and two infant deaths. . . . All will, doubtless, soon be reproducing their kind unless society does its duty.[31]

> V 146 later married the lazy slattern VI 135, and by her had three slow children.[32]

> VI 230 is a suspicious alcoholic, licentious, untruthful thief, who married a cousin with whom he lives in filthy surroundings.[33]

> Of the four children of V 194 and V 308, the first VI 299, is Nam-like, filthy, disorderly, and alcoholic. When young she was in a house of prostitution in the city of C. Later she married a cousin, VI 231, a lazy, surly, vicious alcoholic belonging to a typical Nam fraternity. VI 300 is a lazy and vicious wanderer.[34]

By today's standards, such discourse is shocking for its crudeness and undisguised bias. It tends to undermine the tone of scientific neutrality created by the genealogical charts and the otherwise mechanical, drone-like reporting style. Was it possible that every woman was a harlot, if not a prostitute, and that every man was an irascible, vicious alcoholic? As they moved through their lengthy roster of descriptive profiles, Estabrook and Davenport became comfortable using the phrase "Nam-like" or "typical Nam" as shorthand for ascribing clusters of attributes to

particular people or even groups of related people. Early in the study, they noted that "'Nam-like' means: slow in movements, unindustrious, and unambitious; it does not include the trait of alcoholism."[35] This statement contradicts their initial focus on "alcoholism and lack of ambition" as a way of distinguishing their work from other eugenics studies.[36] Whatever their intentions, by the end of their work "Nam-like" implied a larger suite of genetic maladies. Simply referring to people as "Nam-like" suggested that feeblemindedness, indolence, alcoholism, licentiousness, and criminality were present, even without reporting their occurrence. This tendency to use generalizing language in lieu of specific data also raises questions about the quality of the original field observations and interviews.

Calculating Costs of the Cacogenic Menace

One of the foregoing excerpts warned that the Nam "will soon be reproducing their kind unless society does its duty." This was a clear reference to "social prophylaxis," that is, the prevention of future genetic defectives through intervention, presumably government intervention. In building their book's concluding arguments, Estabrook and Davenport followed Dugdale, who had calculated the cost to the state and society of maintaining the Jukes in prisons and other institutions. In this regard, they employed remarkably convoluted logic. First, they noted that the Nam had far fewer residents in the county poorhouse than the Jukes, eleven compared to fifty-three. However, they believed these figures did not really reflect the Nam's relative mental capacity, because "the Nam population is so far removed from social influences that they get along with very little, depend upon each other, and rarely appeal to the overseer of the poor."[37] Indeed, their observations tend to confirm our arguments in chapters 3 and 4 that the Van Guilders, while becoming poorer in the nineteenth century, were rarely paupers.

Remarkably, the Nam's ability to make do with limited resources and to engage in sharing and reciprocity were not regarded as admirable assets. In the eugenicists' view, the adaptability that kept the Nam away from the poorhouse somehow disguised the true levels of degeneracy and pauperization in the population. Thus, when calculating a total cost to society for maintaining the Nam over a seventy-five-year period,

Estabrook and Davenport found that the direct expenditure of public funds was only $89,026, quite low compared to the $1,308,000 in estimated costs for supporting the Jukes. They neglected to mention that the disparity was much greater on a per capita basis, since the Nam study population included 1,795 individuals against the 709 Jukes. This translates to about $50 per capita for the Nam compared to $1,845 for the Jukes. Omitting these details is hard to fathom for biologists who were considered statistically sophisticated for their time. In their view, the Nam's dependence on such monies was kept low "owing to the fact that they are largely outside public ken and public control."[38]

The relative independence and hardiness of the Nam, then, presented a problem for Estabrook and Davenport. They needed a means of adjusting the cost to the state or society upward to a level that was comparable with the Jukes'. Again following Dugdale's lead, they itemized such things as property destroyed in arson, capital tied up in brothels, property destroyed in brawls, costs of maintaining prostitutes, and other items for a total of $272,650. Yet, this was still well below the costs incurred by the Jukes. As alleged genetic defectives and a scourge upon society, the Nam were not a costly enough burden in the eyes of Estabrook and Davenport.

Accordingly, they concocted the "drink bill." By calculating a cost of $50 per person per year over 30 years for 700 reputed alcoholics (partly paid for by $107,400 of U.S. pension money) Estabrook and Davenport found an additional $1,050,000 of expenditures or losses to the state. It is interesting that Dugdale did *not* include such an expenditure for the Jukes. Yet, by creating this item for the Nam, Estabrook and Davenport were able to inflate their total estimate of public expenditures on the Nam to $1,411,676.[39] Miraculously, this figure was very close to the total cost estimate of $1,308,000 for maintaining the Jukes! The authors neglected to disclose that these consumer habits, if accurately portrayed, would have supported liquor retailers and distributors and suppliers of sugar, yeast, and other ingredients for home brewing, a significant input into the local economy and, therefore, not a simple drag upon the resources of the state.

In an early book review of *The Nam Family* in the journal *The Eugenics Review*, Edgar Schuster, a British researcher and the first Eugenics Fellow at University College London, expressed skepticism regarding

Estabrook and Davenport's elaborate accounting of the Nam's cost to the state. While offering no specific rebuttal to their presentation of data, he found the prevailing tone or attitude of the authors troubling:

> Sociological studies such as are comprised in these memoirs are of great value in as helping to indicate the manner in which a population may be derived, but in reading these particular studies one cannot avoid the criticism that their value would have been greater if the authors had written with more sympathy for their unfortunate subjects.[40]

A lack of sympathy, if not condescension, is indeed apparent in much of Estabrook and Davenport's writing. However, Schuster's praise that their work reveals how the Nam population was "derived" seems oddly amiss. Rather, it was the eugenicists' neglect and/or ignorance of the historical and cultural derivation of Nam Hollow people that led to many of their unfounded assertions about inherited degeneracy.

Despite the influence of the Jukes study, Estabrook and Davenport did not share Dugdale's enlightened views on the possible role of environmental influences, as well as genetics, in shaping the lives of poor, marginalized people. Surely, it was not a coincidence that the 1880 closing of a cement plant that that had supported many Jukes families in the nineteenth century marked the onset of further poverty and misery for some of these people while prompting others to disperse in search of new opportunities.[41] The Jukes had lived around a chain of small lakes nestled in the rugged crags and steep outcrops near Rosendale, Ulster County, an area with abundant formations of high-quality dolostone or limestone used for making natural cement. Beginning in 1825, Rosendale quickly emerged as the national center of that industry. Numerous companies operated mines and at least five natural cement manufacturing plants in the area. However, after Portland cement was introduced in the 1870s, much production shifted to Pennsylvania. Demand for natural cement plummeted forcing the closure of the aforementioned plant.[42] This was a matter of economic change, not bad germ plasm. Likewise, the capitalization of agriculture in Washington County pushed the Van Guilders into a smallholder and landless laborer class. The loss of

a cement plant, or the loss of land and livelihood, has little to do with genetics. Yet, Estabrook and Davenport remained fully committed to their cacogenic agenda.

Toward the end of their book, Estabrook and Davenport make a brief nod to the environmentalist position by considering the fate of several Nams, or Van Guilders, who departed Guilder Hollow after the Civil War to start new lives in Minnesota. Would better surroundings improve the offspring of the migrants, or would the Van Guilder children simply "resemble their parents and show the characteristics of the blood?"[43] After reviewing the observations of colleagues in Minnesota, Estabrook and Davenport concluded:

> The data in regard to these who were born and reared in an entirely different environment from that in which their parents were born, seem to show that it is inherent mental traits present in the germplasm which plays a dominant part in determining the behavior and reactions of the individual.[44]

In other words, the Nam (or Van Guilders) were doomed by their "blood." After dismissing the influence of environment, and therefore of all learning and culture, the authors moved quickly to outline measures needed to contain or prevent an alleged cacogenic menace like the Nam. In their view, public sentiment at that time would not support a program of "asexualization," otherwise known as sterilization. Rather, they recommended what they felt was a more palatable, if expensive, alternative of isolating the children and youth of degenerate families throughout their reproductive years so that "they would leave no progeny and so the worst of the strain would, by the end of 35 or 40 years, be brought to a virtual end."[45]

It is hard to imagine that either sterilization or isolation colonies would have been palatable solutions, particularly for the targeted families. While such policies were not implemented in Guilder Hollow, years later Arthur Estabrook played a role in promoting sterilization of the feebleminded in a well-publicized legal battle in Virginia. Under that state's new law, Carrie Buck, a young woman with an alleged mental age

of nine years, was selected for its first sterilization case in 1925. Estabrook and fellow eugenicist Harry Laughlin testified in the Circuit Court of Amherst County that Carrie's feeblemindedness and immorality were inherited. In fact, Estabrook claimed that feeblemindedness was a simple Mendelian recessive. Ultimately, the order for sterilization was upheld by the United States Supreme Court, where Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes famously concluded:

"Three generations of imbeciles are enough."[46]

6

Deconstructing the Nam and the Hidden Native Americans

> Where emptiness marries emptiness, the product is emptiness.
>
> —ARTHUR ESTABROOK AND CHARLES DAVENPORT, *The Nam Family*

Except for their passing comment on a "roving Dutchman and an Indian princess" as the ancestral founding couple of the Nam, Estabrook and Davenport did not recognize or acknowledge Native American traditions or knowledge among the descendants. Indeed, their analysis was devoid of cultural and sociological context that might have presented their subjects as complete human beings with complex histories and identities, struggles, choices, and aspirations. Instead, the authors produced a narrative of degeneration that reduced the Nam, or Van Guilders, to one-dimensional specimens in a petri dish. In their tautological narrative, bad germ plasm reproduced itself through the medium of defective people generation after generation ad infinitum.

The purpose of this chapter is to probe beneath the surface of Estabrook and Davenport's cagogenic rhetoric to retrieve clues or "tells" regarding the Van Guilders as multi-dimensional human actors, and particularly as mixed-race Native Americans, who had become a rudimentary working class in the agricultural economy of nineteenth-century upstate New York. In this regard, revealing words, phrases, and figures of speech recurred repeatedly in their study, constituting tropes or trope-like indicators of indigenous cultural knowledge and practices and the emergence of a poor laboring class. As we have seen, however, the authors were neither inclined nor prepared to appreciate these ethnic and class subtleties. Their gaze was firmly focused on unfit, unworthy people.

"Half Fishermen and Hunters"

Estabrook and Davenport characterized the early Van Guilders collectively as "vagabonds, half farmers, half fishermen and hunters."[1] Many others, particularly from the first and second generations, were described by phrases such as "a hunter and fishermen," "a hunter and fisher," or a "a woodsman." As noted in chapter 3, such livelihoods were consistent with the mixed subsistence practices common among the Mohicans and Stockbridge Indians from whom the Van Guilders derived.

However, these were not flattering or even neutral characterizations. The eugenicists linked hunting and fishing with a host of negative traits, as in the following assertion: "He was lazy, unambitious, and ignorant; a hunter and fisherman."[2] In other words, hunting and fishing were regarded as backward and primitive, the province of defective people who could not advance to a more progressive level of existence. Rafter notes that the eugenicists as a whole expressed "extraordinary indignation" at the abilities of the rural poor to scratch out a livelihood from limited resources. They were also alarmed at these people's self-reliance and relative indifference to material possessions.[3]

"The Wandering Impulse"

By its very nature, a hunting-fishing livelihood required mobility and seasonal movements to intercept resources when and where they were available. However, Estabrook and Davenport did not regard mobility as adaptive but rather as a behavioral defect born of faulty germ plasm. That is why they applied the pejorative term "vagabonds" to the early Van Guilders. A variety of other expressions, such as "rovers," "roamers," "nomads," "migrants," and "vagrants," were employed to connote something unseemly or unsavory, that is, idle or shiftless people who would not settle down to a respectable life. At least thirty-seven individuals, spanning generations one through six, were explicitly characterized in this manner.

However, Estabrook and Davenport's favorite expression was "wanderer." In their view, many Van Guilders were afflicted with the "wandering impulse." Thus, they reported that a woman "was a harlot with a wandering impulse that led her to tramp the roads," or that a man "was

an indolent, careless, disorderly, lawless, dishonest wanderer, a maker of baskets," or that another man was "a lazy and vicious wanderer," or that yet another was "an unambitious, lazy, inefficient wanderer."[4] Inexplicably, the authors ignored any relationship between mobility, or "wandering," and livelihood strategies. Conceivably, a basketmaker would have peddled his or her wares by traveling to various households, farmsteads, and rural hamlets. A day laborer would have searched out opportunities by visiting farms, and so forth. By necessity, the marginalized poor eke out an existence by seeking resources and opportunities through movements and itinerancy.

Perhaps the Van Guilders' poverty was the sore point. People who "tramped the roads" may have offended the upper-middle-class sensibilities of scientists like Estabrook and Davenport. Guilder Hollow residents suffered by comparison with the prosperous farmers around them who displayed their wealth in elegant homes and well-appointed barns. Apparently, the latter did not "tramp" or "wander," but they certainly moved about with teams of fine carriage horses. Davenport in particular was already committed to an intellectual position that viewed wandering as a hereditary condition. Shortly after the Nam study, he wrote a paper titled *The Feebly Inhibited: Nomadism, or the Wandering Impulse, with Special Reference to Heredity*.[5] In a curious misuse of historical and ethnographic information, Davenport concluded that because "racial groups" like the Huns, Gypsies, and Comanches were nomadic, it followed that the wandering impulse was biologically inherited. Moreover, he surmised that it was a male, sex-linked, recessive trait, passing from mothers to half of their sons.[6]

Backward Basketmakers

Some of the Van Guilders were talented basketmakers. No doubt they had retained the knowledge and skills for constructing splint baskets from their Mohican and Stockbridge ancestors and adapted them to conditions in their new surroundings. Basketmaking is an extraordinarily complex activity, requiring judgment in selecting appropriate ash or oak trees for carving and preparing thin wooden splints, and manual dexterity and mathematical precision for assembling the splint pieces into a tightly constructed, symmetrical container capable of holding

berries, bird down, pemmican, corn, beans, apples, potatoes, and other products. The level of artistry involved demands a lengthy apprenticeship, and it is not surprising that basketmakers tend to cluster within certain families and within particular lines or lineages of relatives. This was true for the Van Guilders, among whom various combinations of father-son, mother-daughter, husband-wife, and even brother-brother teams of basketmakers were common in the fourth, fifth, and sixth generations of Estabrook and Davenport's genealogy.

Yet the eugenicists were not impressed by these displays of indigenous knowledge. They regarded basketmaking, like hunting and fishing, as a primitive, retrograde activity. They associated it with other behaviors that suggested feeblemindness and degeneracy. Thus, one man was characterized as "a slow, quiet, unambitious, and illiterate basket-maker," and his son "an indolent, unambitious, disorderly basket-maker." A woman was described as "living on a widow's pension of twelve dollars monthly, assisted by town aid and basket-making," while one of her daughters was allegedly a "slow, lazy, disorderly, alcoholic, entirely lacking in causation, licentious in youth and deaf" and who did "washing and basket-making." Another man was referred to as "an indolent, careless, disorderly, lawless, dishonest wanderer, a maker of baskets."[7]

By bundling basketmaking with a plethora of purported maladies and deficiencies, the eugenicists were able to make a creative, artistic enterprise seem like something shameful, another outward sign of inner decay. Anyone who has attempted to make a functional splint basket may wonder how professional basketmakers could be regarded as indolent, unambitious, or disorderly. The organizational skills, clarity of thought, hand-eye coordination, and perseverance over long hours of exacting work required to fashion one basket would, by conventional standards, demonstrate considerable industry and ambition. Also of relevance is the entrepreneurial savvy needed to sell a basket. However, in their narrative strategy, Estabrook and Davenport converted "basket-making" into a code or index for backwardness and degeneracy, just as they used "wandering" and "hunting and fishing" as codes for a disreputable life. In the socioeconomic hierarchy of nineteenth-century Washington County, these may not have been lucrative, high-status activities, but surely they were not evidence of genetic decay.

There is a compelling association of itinerancy—or "wandering," as Estabrook and Davenport prefer—and basketmaking that deserves further discussion. In commenting upon changes in Mohican life during the Stockbridge Mission period (ca. 1734–86), Brasser made the following observation:

> Indian women roamed the countryside, selling splint baskets, brooms, wooden bowls, and moccasins, while their husbands made dugouts to order, and assisted the colonists in the annual harvest. Maple sugar, ginseng, and other herbs were collected, and Indian herb-doctors were welcomed at many farms.[8]

The importance of this kind of itinerant craft trade was certainly known to the Mohicans living in the refugee settlement of Otsiningo, New York. With dwindling opportunities for hunting and fishing, in 1756 they requested to join the Stockbridge community so that they could secure a livelihood by making baskets and brooms.[9] In turn, for many years after the Stockbridge Mohicans relocated among the Oneidas on their lands in west-central New York in 1784, according to Frazier, thirty or forty of these people would return to the Stockbridge area for the winter to build wigwams, visit ancestral graves, and "make brooms and baskets to sell."[10]

Here then is a direct precedent for peddling of splint baskets and other handmade wares to Euro-American farm families by relatives of the Van Guilders during a time just prior to the latter's move from Massachusetts to New York.[11] "Roaming the countryside" was a strategy for carrying out such trade, and it is likely that the Van Guilders perpetuated this pattern of itinerancy, along with a knowledge of basketmaking, and mixed hunting-fishing-farming in their new surroundings. Indeed, a peripatetic existence peddling baskets, brooms, bowls, and herbal remedies was a rational, adaptive response to land alienation and dislocation experienced by many Native American groups in the Hudson valley throughout the colonial period.[12]

The splint basket itself appears to be a fairly recent phenomenon among Native Americans in the northeastern woodlands. Brasser, who has investigated this issue in depth, notes that Indians in the Northeast

traditionally fashioned a variety of twisted plant fiber and twig bags and containers but that splint basketry was unknown prior to European contact. Steel technology, such as scorers and planers needed to mark and carve wood splints of uniform thinness, became available from early Swedish colonists in the lower Delaware River as early as 1640, although Indian-made splint baskets did not appear in that area until the early 1700s. Gradually, Swedish, and possibly Rhineland German and Flemish, styles of woven splint basketry were adopted and modified by many Indian peoples. By the late 1740s this knowledge had spread northward, via German-speaking Moravian missionaries, to the Mohican and related groups on the Hudson and Housatonic Rivers. Eventually, Stockbridge people learned the craft.[13]

From their very inception, Indian-made splint baskets were essentially a product for the colonial market trade, and it is likely that their significance as a commodity only increased as European settlement and dispossession of indigenous lands made older forms of subsistence farming and hunting increasingly precarious.[14] By the time the Van Guilders left Massachusetts for New York, they were no doubt well acquainted with the practice of peddling baskets, brooms and wooden bowls to white households and farmsteads. When their descendants suffered from downsizing and loss of farmlands in the mid-nineteenth century, basketmaking and peddling assumed even greater importance as economic strategies for some Van Guilder families.

The Hartford Museum in Hartford, New York, has one example of a splint apple gathering basket made by people in Guilder Hollow. While its specific maker is not known, the basket may have been crafted sometime in the late 1800s or early 1900s. It is possible that Estabrook himself sat beside this very basket as he visited one of the Van Guilder families, likely unaware of its economic and cultural significance. As seen in figure 6, this is a sturdy cylindrical ash splint gathering basket with a carved wooden swing handle. It measures seven inches high, nine inches in diameter at the base, flaring outward to eleven inches in diameter at the top. The generous handle is twelve and a half inches across at its widest point. Twenty-three rows of horizontal splints are plaited or woven into vertical support splints to create a twilled weave body. The rim is constructed of a thick double-splint held together with

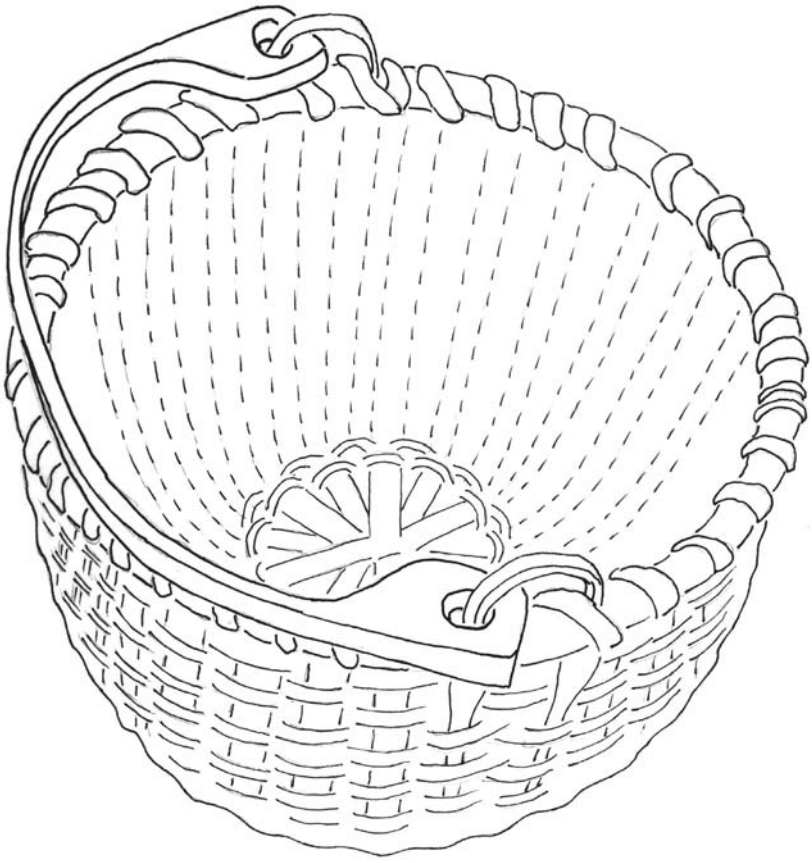


Fig. 6. A wooden splint apple-gathering basket made in Guilder Hollow. Author's drawing based on a specimen from the Hartford Museum, Hartford, New York.

spiral splint lashing. Carved wooden "ears" lashed into the rim serve as anchor points for the handle which contains holes through blocking sections at both ends. Given that this basket hauled many bushels of apples out of local orchards over years, and perhaps decades, it is in remarkably good condition.

There is a strong resemblance between the Guilder Hollow specimen and Taghkanic baskets produced in the West Taghkanic area of Columbia County, New York as recently as the 1970s.[15] Like Guilder Hollow, West Taghkanic was the locale of an admixed or mixed-race Mohican-

European community beginning around 1850 and known variously as Bushwackers, Pondshiners, and even Basketmakers.[16] Unlike Mohican splint baskets of the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries, which were large rectangular and cylindrical lidded storage containers often decorated with stamped or painted motifs, both the Guilder Hollow and Taghkanic baskets were unadorned utilitarian containers.[17] Nonetheless, the Taghkanic baskets were widely marketed by peddling, often by men walking the roads with long poles of baskets over their shoulders, and through merchants in Hudson, New York, and in Connecticut.[18] In recent times they have become highly desired by collectors.

A key difference between Guilder Hollow and Taghkanic basketry is the refinement of the latter. Whereas the Guilder Hollow specimen has twenty-three horizontal splints, a comparably sized Taghkanic basket might have close to fifty. Also, the bottoms of round Taghkanic baskets are deeply inverted, adding tensile strength for carrying loads, while the Guilder Hollow basket's bottom has a shallower inversion. Finally, there is a distinction in the manner of attaching the swing handle. On the Guilder Hollow example the "ears" are lashed parallel to the rim, whereas they are typically perpendicular to the rim in Taghkanic baskets. Moreover, the handle ends on the Guilder Hollow basket have relatively large rectangular blocks that swing upon the ears, while the Taghkanic baskets have only a subtle widening of the handle ends, sometimes with a knife kerf above the blocking.[19] Despite these distinctions, there is enough similarity between these two forms to hint at a common origin or at least at common experiences in Mohican-European relations. For example, the need to produce serviceable carrying baskets for orchard work or vegetable farming may account for a convergence of form and style over time in widely separated mixed-race communities.[20] This is an area where additional ethnohistorical research utilizing museum and private collections might yield useful results.

Disgraceful Dwellings

As they fabricated their portrait of feebleminded, wandering woodsmen and indolent basketmakers, Estabrook and Davenport found another flaw in the Van Guilders' lifestyle that apparently condemned them as cacogenic defectives, namely, their housing. As we have seen, the

eugenicists were often incapable of using neutral language. Hence, the Van Guilders did not reside in houses or dwellings but rather in an assortment of "huts," "hovels," "dugouts," "shacks," "shacks in the mountains," "shacks in the woods," and the like. Among the ten houses composing the Guilder Hollow settlement, they acknowledged that "four of these can boast of clapboards and shingles, although the last coat of paint was applied many years ago."[21] Apparently, one of these had a slate roof. Remarkably, Estabrook and Davenport characterized all ten houses as "huts and hovels." The overall impression imparted was that of an animalistic existence, as if the Van Guilders were subhumans holed up in dens or lairs.

Accordingly, the authors inform us of a man who "married a low grade woman, lives with her as a pauper in a shack in the mountains," while another man "is a lazy alcoholic vagrant who lives in a hut in the mountains." A woman was said to live "in a shack in the hills near R and has three children. Of these the youngest daughter is a slow moving, lazy prostitute who makes her home in her father's hovel." Another woman was described as follows: "She does washing and basket-making and lives in squalor in a hovel." Yet another man was said to live "in a filthy hovel where he has brought five children into the world." There was also a man described as "an industrious but unambitious alcoholic who lived in a hut in the woods."[22]

The rhetorical strategy was guilt by association. That is, people who were assumed to be genetically damaged, and therefore displayed the telltale symptoms of feeblemindedness, indolence, licentiousness, and so forth, were almost by nature destined to live in squalid quarters. Whenever the authors made explicit references to people's dwellings, some thirty-four instances, it was invariably with highly unflattering language. Thus, "hovel" and "shack," like the expression "wanderer," became a code or index for the unseemly and disreputable and, ultimately, the genetically defective.

While many Van Guilders may have occupied small dwellings in poor repair, Estabrook and Davenport made no attempt to link rudimentary housing with poverty. Neither did they express any appreciation for or understanding of abilities to cope with limited capital and resources. For example, a small log dwelling would have lacked the prestige value

of a Victorian farmhouse, but it would have been more efficient to heat in the winter. The rural poor often collect and recycle parts of former dwellings, outbuildings, secondhand goods, and castoff machinery as a means of making repairs and generally making ends meet (fig. 7). What may appear to be squalor, "junk," or "trash" to an outsider, and especially to neighbors with middle-class standards of propriety and tidiness, is often a strategy of temporary storage whereby parts and materials are kept at the ready until needed.[23]

The adaptability of the poor was a concept that ran contrary to the cacogenic perspective cultivated by Estabrook and Davenport. As the on-site field-worker, Estabrook in particular may have been repulsed by the housing conditions he encountered in Guilder Hollow. Evidence for this derives from a 1929 issue of the *New York Times* in which an unnamed writer directly quoted Estabrook's then current article in *Eugenics Magazine*. Recalling his work with the Nam seventeen years earlier, he observed:

> A number of families were found where none of the members had a mental level above that of an 8-year old child. The homes of this group were mostly mere shacks. One was actually but a little larger than two piano boxes placed end to end, with a dirt floor, a door and two windows. The furnishings consisted of a cook stove, a table, a few chairs, while the beds were made by spreading on the floor a lot of old quilts, gunny sacks and rugs. Here lived a man, his wife and three small children. The man had a criminal record of assault. The whole family was mentally defective.[24]

While some may have admired the ingenuity of this family in providing shelter and a home in a situation of scarcity, Estabrook erased any notion of accomplishment or respectability with the devaluing term "shack." Like the impulse to wander, the Van Guilders' homes were made to seem like shameful extensions of their bad germ plasm. Since housing is publicly visible, it is likely that this aspect of social life was particularly prone to invidious comparison and class prejudice.[25] The more prosperous farmers of Hartford and Granville may have looked askance at their poorer neighbors' dwellings and lifestyles in Guilder

Fig. 7. A Guilder Hollow man near his henhouse and horse and cow stable, ca. 1911–12. Courtesy of Arthur H. Estabrook Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany, SUNY.

Hollow. Moreover, if Estabrook depended on elites in the community either as gatekeepers or confidants while conducting his study, was he able to resist internalizing their attitudes toward the poor?

Cousin Marriage: "Where Emptiness Marries Emptiness"

Marriage between cousins, and particularly between first cousins, has become an almost clichéd sign of hillbilly backwardness in American society. However, the legality of such unions is regulated by state law. Currently, twenty-five states prohibit first-cousin marriages, six permit first-cousin marriages under certain circumstances, and the remaining states, including New York and Massachusetts, permit marriages between more distant cousins.

Despite recent fears and prejudices regarding cousin marriage, for most of human history people lived in small hunting bands and tribal communities where virtually everyone was related to each other through ties of blood and marriage. Unions between cousins, close or distant, were commonplace. In some societies, marriage between certain types of first cousins is preferred. For example, cross-cousins, who are the children of opposite-sex siblings, have been the culturally preferred

marriage partners in many societies that have strong descent systems with lineages and clans. In a society with strong matrilineal descent, where people are born into the lineages and clans of their mothers, a man might be expected to marry one of his mother's brother's daughters (MBD). In effect, the bride would be marrying her father's sister's son (FZS). Such an arrangement is exogamous, since both are marrying someone outside their own lineages and clans.

By marrying a cross-cousin in this fashion, the new husband can expect to remain close to men who hold power within his mother's lineage, namely, his mother's brother or maternal uncle (i.e., his new father-in-law). This particular advantage is not replicated for the new bride, since she is necessarily a member of a different lineage, that of *her* mother. However, if matrilocal residence is also practiced, whereby the young couple lives with or near the bride's parents or relatives, then she will enjoy the social and political advantages of that proximity. Both cross-cousin marriage and residence rules are cultural norms or preferences that are followed loosely rather than rigidly, and there are always variations and departures from the preferred patterns.

The relevance of the foregoing for the present chapter has to do with the Van Guilders' descent from Mohican ancestors who, at least at the time of early European contact, had a social system based on matrilineal kinship principles. Brasser contends that the early-seventeenth-century Mohicans had matrilineal descent, exogamous marriages, matrilocality, and matrilineages that controlled access to garden-lands. The matrilineages were grouped into three larger matrilineal clans named Bear, Wolf, and Turtle.[26] More recently, William Starna has questioned this interpretation, arguing that Brasser and others have misread the early Dutch primary documents and, perhaps, have uncritically ascribed Mohawk and Oneida Iroquois social features to Mohican society.[27] However, this view requires casting doubt upon the Mohican captain Hendrick Aupaumut's circa 1790 written history of his own people wherein he refers to the Bear-Wolf-Turtle clan structure:

> Our Nation was divided into three clans or tribes, as Bear Tribe, Wolf Tribe, and Turtle Tribe. Our ancestors had particular opinion for each tribe to which they belonged. The Bear Tribe formerly considered as

> the head of the other tribes, and claims the title of hereditary office of Sachem. Yet they ever united as one family.[28]

Moreover, Aupaumut's discussion of succession to political leadership clearly indicates principles of matrilineal descent:

> They had Wi-gow-wauw, or Chief Sachem, successively, as well as other nations had, chosen by the nation, whom they looked upon as conductor and promoter of their general welfare, and rendered him obedience as long as he behaved himself agreeable to the office of a Sachem. And this office was hereditary by the lineage of a female's offspring, but not on a man's line, but on a woman's part. That is—when Wi-gow-wauw is fallen by death, one of his Nephews (if he has any) will be appointed to succeed his Uncle as a Sachem, and not any of his sons.[29]

Granted, Aupaumut was writing after nearly two centuries of turbulent changes and relocation of the Stockbridge Mohican to Oneida country. However, a blanket dismissal of Aupaumut and other sources, while cautious, renders the early Mohicans as a featureless society, a kind of "null" people.[30]

An alternative approach to this issue is to consider the neighboring Munsee, an Algonquian-speaking people with whom the Mohican had close political ties. Metaphorically, the Mohican regarded the Munsee as their "grandfathers."[31] The Munsee had a matrilineal social structure of the kind Brasser and others have suggested for the early Mohicans. Robert Grumet's scrupulous analysis of the early colonial records for the Munsee indicates a social system based on principles of matrilineality, matrilocality, and exogamous marriage whereby localized matrilineages were grouped into larger matri-phratries identified as Turkey, Wolf, and Turtle. Apparently, cross-cousin marriages were common, and these were often strategically arranged as a means for particular lineages within each phratry to exert control and influence over multiple generations of relatives.[32] It is this latter point, the existence of cross-cousin marriage in the context of matrilineal descent groups, that is of prime interest here. It is plausible that the early Mohicans had similar kinship arrangements.

Even though these features would have withered or been transformed by profound demographic and economic changes since the early 1600s, it will be instructive to examine patterns of cousin marriage for the Van Guilders. These patterns can be deciphered from Estabrook and Davenport's genealogical data.

In summarizing what they termed "consanguinity in marriage"—unions between close blood relatives—among the Van Guilders, Estabrook and Davenport reported that there were sixteen marriages between first cousins, eleven between second cousins, twenty-one between third cousins, and three between fourth cousins, for a total of fifty-one cases of cousin marriage. They also reported one union between an uncle and niece, three between fathers and daughters, and four between brothers and sisters. Nearly a quarter of all marriages were consanguineous, with particularly high concentrations in the third and fourth generations. Estabrook and Davenport found this state of affairs "appalling" and speculated that a tendency toward inmarriage was initially reinforced by the Van Guilders' isolated mountain valley in Massachusetts. After their migration to New York, the eugenicists reasoned, a combination of "clannishness" and the Van Guilders' "unsavory reputation among their neighbors" increased the frequency of consanguineal marriages until after the fourth generation, when more out-matings occurred.[33]

By examining Estabrook and Davenport's genealogical charts and descriptive profiles, it is possible to classify eleven of the first-cousin marriages into several distinctive types familiar to social anthropologists.[34] These types appear in table 1. As noted previously, first-cousin marriages, particularly of the cross-cousin variety, are associated with unilineal kinship systems where efforts are made to keep relatives from the same lineages close to the resources and rights they have inherited.

Table 1. Types of first-cousin marriage among the Van Guilders

Parallel-cousin marriages		*Cross-cousin marriages*	
FBS/FBD	MZS/MZD	MBD/FZS	MBS/FZD
8	0	2	1

Given the Van Guilders' Mohican and Stockbridge ancestry, we might expect some tendency toward cross-cousin marriage, particularly of the kind where a mother's brother's daughter marries her father's sister's son (MBD/FZS). However, as seen above, among the eleven cases of first-cousin marriage, only three, or 27 percent, were between cross-cousins, although two of these were of the anticipated MBD/FZS type. The third was of the MBS/FZD type, in which a mother's brother's son marries his father's sister's daughter.

Far more common among the Van Guilders was parallel-cousin marriage, with eight cases (about 73 percent). This is an intriguing, if unexpected, pattern. Parallel cousins are children of same-sexed siblings. A man would marry his father's brother's daughter (FBD) or his mother's sister's daughter (MZD), for example. Cross-culturally, parallel-cousin marriage is uncommon and rarely institutionalized as a preferred form. In most kinship terminologies, parallel cousins are lumped with siblings, placing them in an incestuous category and, therefore, ineligible or culturally taboo as marriage partners.

The few cases of prescribed parallel-cousin marriage are in nomadic pastoralist societies of the Middle East involving unions between children of brothers. This meant that people were marrying endogamously within their own patrilineage. When practiced regularly over many generations, parallel-cousin marriage was a means of maintaining the continuity of property, such as animal herds, within a line of descendants related through male ties. There are biblical references, to Numbers 36, for example, to lineage endogamy among generations of Hebrew patriarchs, including the five daughters of Zelophedad who married their father's brother's sons.[35]

The fact that all eight cases of parallel-cousin marriage among the Van Guilders were between children of brothers is revealing. Most of these marriages clustered in the third and fourth generations, which spanned much of the 1800s. It will be recalled that the second generation of Van Guilders, the people who made the actual move from Massachusetts to New York, was composed almost entirely of a large group of brothers and their spouses. From the very founding of Guilder Hollow, then, there was a demographic bias at play that favored alliances of brothers

and descent through male lines. Hence, in the third generation, cousins who were looking for potential marriage partners would inevitably have encountered people related to them through their fathers' brothers. In turn, this pattern was repeated in the fourth generation.

Considered as a whole, the information on first-cousin marriages demonstrates that the Van Guilders remained a cohesive group of co-ethnics throughout the nineteenth century. The few cases of cross-cousin marriage were, perhaps, a faint reflection of an indigenous Mohican matrilineal social organization that was already disintegrating when the Van Guilders departed western Massachusetts. By contrast, the preponderance of parallel-cousin marriages probably had no connection to native kinship patterns. Rather, those marriages were an expedient response to a pioneering situation, reflecting a need to maintain small-group solidarity within a network of families headed by male siblings during a time of stressful migration and adaptation to a new land (fig. 8). By ignoring the larger cultural and historical context within which marriage and kinship dynamics played out, Estabrook and Davenport were able to lament the "appalling" frequency of cousin marriage, which they believed perpetuated the dreaded "Nam-like" suite of cagogenic traits. As they put it: "Where emptiness marries emptiness, the product is emptiness."[36]

The Shamefully Shy

Another trait that Estabrook and Davenport attributed to defective germ plasm was shyness. Their narrative is packed with characterizations of Nam individuals as "slow and bashful," "quiet, shy, taciturn," "lazy, untidy, and shy," and the like. Children were especially prone to be labeled in this way. For example, three siblings age six, five, and three years were described as "shy and slow." Another group of four siblings, the oldest at eight years of age, was diagnosed as "slow acting and shy."[37] The implication was that shy people were feebleminded.

Estabrook and Davenport viewed shyness as biologically inherited rather than a product of socialization or cultural background. They believed they could trace this cacogenic inheritance back to a particular male progenitor in the second generation of the Nam lineage, a man who was remembered by longtime residents of Nam Hollow as having had a

Fig. 8. A Guilder Hollow family, ca. 1911–12. The woman was a great-granddaughter of Daniel Van Guilder Sr. Courtesy of Arthur H. Estabrook Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany, SUNY.

"shy disposition."[38] By following the descendants of this man through subsequent generations, the eugenicists claimed they could identify a high frequency of shy offspring born of parents who were both shy. Since shy offspring outnumbered those of an outgoing or "forward" disposition, they concluded that this defective behavior was the result of inbreeding facilitated by Nam Hollow's isolation. Unlike indolence or laziness which appeared in every generation and was regarded as a dominant trait, Estabrook and Davenport viewed shyness as recessive. Likewise, they saw alcoholism as a recessive trait, and licentiousness, while strongly hereditary, of uncertain Mendelian properties.[39]

However, a complex behavior like shyness or forwardness is not a heritable unit trait like eye color. Personality, temperament, or disposition is a product of many influences tied to child rearing, social class, ethnicity, cultural background, formal education, and variable life experiences. One might grow up shy and retiring only to become assertive with later career opportunities. Conversely, one might start life as a cheerful extrovert and then become reclusive and less communicative in the face of adversity. Estabrook and Davenport did not recognize the contingency or malleability of disposition, because they were committed

to their cacogenic worldview. Shyness was a genetic defect plain and simple. Shy people begat shy people.

The shyness issue presented glaring methodological problems. How did one measure "shyness" or identify shy people in the field? Indeed, how could one confidently recognize shy ancestors several generations in the past? In the latter case, Estabrook was completely dependent on hearsay and anecdotes (also see critique of methodology in chapter 5). Because he was silent regarding methods, there is no way of knowing if his visits to families in Guilder Hollow involved any kind of clinical assessment of shyness. More likely he developed impressions of people based on fleeting encounters rather than prolonged interactions over time. After all, he was in Guilder Hollow for only a few months. One can easily imagine the reticence, if not outright fear, of small children in the presence of an urbane stranger from Long Island, perhaps dressed in formal attire and brandishing notebooks and other unfamiliar paraphernalia. It would have been reasonable for adults to present a cautious front in Estabrook's presence, especially given the Hollow's reputation as an outcaste community. Was he savvy enough as a field researcher to distinguish between situational reserve of this kind and the pathological shyness he assumed was afflicting the community? It seems highly unlikely.

There is also the matter of culturally informed dispositions, values, and worldviews. Without catering to ethnic stereotypes, and without ignoring the notable differences between various tribal cultures, many scholars, and Native American people themselves, have noted the reserve of Native Americans compared to mainstream Euro-Americans, and especially in the presence of the latter. For example, the anthropologist Nancy Lurie, renowned for her research among the Winnebago and Dogrib Indians, has identified a cluster of widely occurring pan-Indian core values and behaviors that provide Native American peoples of varying backgrounds with a commonality of outlook. Among other characteristics, these include (1) relaxed patience for reaching decisions by consensus, (2) generosity and institutionalized sharing as a means of community survival, (3) lack of emotional attachment to personal possessions, (4) preference for indirection in interpersonal relations or in attempting to control the behavior of others, (5) comfortable acceptance

of long silences in allowing others to absorb information or to withdraw into private thought, (6) tolerance of individual idiosyncrasies, and (7) withdrawal from situations fraught with anxiety.[40]

Lurie notes that the foregoing are too widespread and predictable to have developed recently or only as a response to similar interactions with non-Indians.[41] As people of mixed Mohican-European background, the Van Guilders likely retained some of these pan-Indian values and behaviors. As noted in chapter 5, sharing and reciprocity among families in the Hollow were commonplace and, no doubt, intensified as their economic situation declined in the late nineteenth century. Since the eugenicists had little interest in or appreciation of cultural differences, it is not implausible that what Estabrook saw as genetically defective shy subjects were actually people engaged in respectful periods of quiet reflection both for themselves and their guest. In other cases, people may have been withdrawing from what they regarded as an anxiety-producing intrusion into their lives.

A Parallel "Menace" in Vermont

As we have seen, the Van Guilders settled in both Washington County, New York, and in neighboring Rutland County, Vermont. However, there were other people in Vermont of Native American ancestry and mixed-race background who would capture the attention of a later wave of eugenics researchers. The historian Kevin Dann deftly probes the political atmosphere in Vermont in the 1920s when a stagnant economy fueled fears that the "old Vermont stock" of prosperous valley farmers was being overwhelmed and degraded by increasing numbers of poor hill farmers and others of alleged degenerate biological "stock." Accordingly, Henry F. Perkins, a zoology professor at the University of Vermont, established and directed the Eugenics Survey of Vermont (ESV). Utilizing advice obtained from Charles Davenport, Perkins ran the survey from 1925 to 1936 in an effort to identify and rid the state of reputedly degenerate families.[42]

The eugenics researchers in Vermont targeted several groups of people concentrated largely in the Lake Champlain valley immediately north of Rutland County in the northwestern part of the state. These were identified by disparaging epithets such as "pirates" and "gypsies." As with the

Nam or Van Guilders, the very presence of the Vermont groups seemed to offend and irritate the eugenicists. These were hardy, independent people who lived outside the normal strictures of society. For example, the "pirates" were highly mobile families who lived on canal barge-houseboats and traveled freely across the vast expanses of Lake Champlain. The ESV characterized these people as living "in the utmost squalor and destitution," as "the terror of the people . . . because of their thieving habits" and who "parented diseased and feebleminded children."[43]

Likewise, the "gypsies" were portrayed as "thieves" who were "looked upon with wholesome terror." These families were primarily of Abenaki Indian and French Canadian ancestry who moved regularly across large portions of the state.[44] Herein lies an interesting parallel with Estabrook and Davenport's characterization of the nearby Nam or Van Guilders. Both cases involved Native American or mixed-race Native American communities viewed with loathing or fear by outsiders, and whose mobility or itinerancy was regarded by eugenicists not as a livelihood strategy but as a sign of hereditary degeneracy. Arguably, the real rub was the fact that the Abenakis' mobile lifestyle and the Van Guilders' "wandering" ways placed these people outside of the mainstream economy, beyond the surveillance and control of state institutions, and at odds with middle-class expectations of a settled, respectable life.

In 1931 Vermont became the twenty-fifth state to pass a law permitting sterilization. However, by the 1930s, as enthusiasm for eugenics began to wane across the country, the ESV shifted from its punitive cacogenic stance toward a more reform-oriented position that emphasized improvement of the general biological "stock" by attracting new people to the state rather than sterilizing its existing citizens. Thus began a campaign to promote tourism, to draw educated summer visitors who might stay and put down roots—a movement that continues to this day.[45]

7
Demonizing the Marginalized Poor

> An entire sociopolitical movement can hardly be put on the analyst's couch, but the attention given eroticism, the denunciation of feminism, and the genital attack implicit in sterilization all suggest the possibility that mainline eugenics was driven in part by the psychic energy of a repressed discomfort with sexuality.
>
> —DANIEL KEVLES, *In the Name of Eugenics*

The previous chapter deconstructed Estabrook and Davenport's narrative to reveal aspects of the Van Guilders' mixed-race Native American cultural heritage that were overlooked or misconstrued as genetic degeneration. The present chapter will extend this line of analysis to consider how "bad germ plasm" became a catchall rationalization obscuring what were, in actuality, poverty and marginalization. The latter were social conditions governed by the politics of race and class, not a matter of biology.

The Horrors of War

We have already seen how many Van Guilder men and their Stockbridge relatives served in the American military forces during the Revolutionary War. At least one of these, Daniel Van Guilder Sr., moved from Massachusetts to Vermont after the war and received a $90 annual federal pension for his service. However, the Civil War would have a larger impact upon the male population of Washington County and the people who came under Estabrook and Davenport's gaze. The towns of Granville and Hartford sent 220 and 103 men, respectively, to serve in the conflict. Many were in infantry regiments like the 123rd of the New York State Volunteers, which cut a wide swath through the South,

fighting at Gettysburg, Chancellorsville, and other engagements.[1] Many were killed in battle or died shortly thereafter from untreatable wounds and disease. Others returned home maimed, disfigured, and, no doubt, traumatized.

At least eighteen men from Estabrook and Davenport's Nam study were Civil War veterans, nearly 6 percent of all the volunteers from Granville and Hartford. Two of these were killed in the war, and many of the remainder returned to Guilder Hollow.[2] Many had been born prior to 1840 and would have been in their seventies at the time of the Nam study. One of these, Alvin Van Guilder, had been wounded in battle at Spotsylvania and was receiving a $360 annual war veteran's pension. More common was a pension of $12 per month, sometimes given as a $144 annual payment. Yet others received unspecified amounts.

The Civil War veteran's pension would have been a significant source of income for a rural working-class family at the turn of the last century when a farm laborer's annual salary was a few hundred dollars.[3] Since the veterans were an aging group, afflicted with war-related injuries and disabilities that limited their capacity for work, any extra funds were sorely needed. In some cases, deceased veterans' widows and children were supported by these payments.

Estabrook and Davenport dispassionately reported the barest facts of Civil War service, as one might note a subject's age or place of birth. Apparently, they recognized no connection between the horrors of wartime experience and the behavior of the men in Guilder Hollow. These were veterans who had survived the worst carnage in American military history, including the loss of 600,000 combatants, only to return to an uncertain future in an impoverished outcaste community. No doubt suffering from amputated limbs, shrapnel wounds, chronic pain, and nightmarish flashbacks, it would not be surprising if such men self-medicated with alcohol. In fairness, there was no clinical recognition of post-traumatic stress disorder in those days. Even so, Estabrook and Davenport had a remarkable capacity for ignoring calamitous life experiences in shaping human behavior. Since they believed that virtually all objectionable traits, whether alcoholism or indolence, were produced by defective genes, they could blithely report the following:

> V 106 was born at N.H. in 1839, is an unambitious, placid, listless, submissive, licentious alcoholic. He is a veteran of the Civil War and receives a pension of thirty dollars monthly, besides town aid. He lived in a hovel, and married a degenerate, V 107, whose one illegitimate and three legitimate daughters all, fortunately, died young.[4]

And the following:

> By V 470, born in 1841, a sedentary, indolent, unambitious, careless, impractical, disorderly, talkative, illiterate man with bestial tendencies, a Civil War veteran who receives an annual pension of one hundred and forty four dollars, V 72 had eleven children including two miscarriages and two infant deaths. The eldest girl is a feeble-minded harlot with a slow stubborn child of three years.[5]

These men would have been seventy-one and sixty-nine years old, respectively. Given the cumulative impact of war-related injuries and stress over time, it would not be surprising if some aging Civil War veterans in Guilder Hollow were "listless," "indolent," "placid," and "unambitious." Age and war take a toll on people. To deny these realities further undermines the credibility of Estabrook and Davenport's "bad germ plasm" hypothesis.

The Working Poor

While providing behavioral profiles on hundreds of individuals, Estabrook and Davenport also recorded their livelihoods or occupations. This is valuable information that can be cross-checked against census data and other sources in understanding the socioeconomic situation in Guilder Hollow. Specific trades or forms of monetary support were indicated for 97 men and 66 women spanning the second through sixth generations.[6] While these data apply to only 9 percent of the 1,795 individuals tracked in Estabrook and Davenport's genealogy, they provide a revealing glimpse at the variety of livelihood strategies adopted by the Van Guilders, as summarized in table 2.

Table 2. Livelihood strategies in Guilder Hollow, ca. 1840–1910

MEN		WOMEN	
Occupation/source of income	*Number*	*Occupation/source of income*	*Number*
Farm laborer	19	Prostitute	31
Farmer	15	Pauper	5
Pickpocket/thief	7	Washing	4
Pauper	6	Domestic work/prostitute	3
Business/merchant (unspecified)	6	Steady worker (unspecified)	3
Hunter-fisher	4	Schoolteacher	3
Woodchopper	4	Dress maker	2
Worker (unspecified)	4	Store worker	2
Blacksmith	4	Housework	2
Mason	3	Basketmaker	2
Basketmaker	3	Paper mill worker	2
Machinist	2	Worker (unspecified)	2
Odd jobs	2	Farm work	2
Country store keeper	2	Domestic servant	1
U.S. Army	2	Washing/ basketmaking	1
Procurer (pimp)	2	Hotel worker	1
Day laborer (unspecified)	2		
Stage driver	1		
Harness maker	1		
Carpenter	1		
Painter	1		
Chair caner	1		
Root digger	1		
Horse jockey	1		

MEN		WOMEN	
Occupation/source of income	*Number*	*Occupation/source of income*	*Number*
Printer	1		
Gambler	1		
Sharper	1		
Total	97	Total	66

Source: Extracted and collated from Arthur H. Estabrook and Charles B. Davenport, The Nam Family: A Study in Cacogenics (Eugenics Records Office–Memoir No. 2. Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island NY, 1912), 3–65.

More than one-third of the men were involved in agricultural pursuits, either as self-employed farmers or, more commonly, as farm laborers. This supports the picture derived from state census data as reported in chapter 4. Moreover, many of the men classified as farmers, that is, self-employed farm owners, were early fifth-generation Van Guilders, born roughly between 1840 and 1860, making them fifty to seventy years of age at the time of the Nam study. The more numerous farm laborers were mostly late-fifth-generation or sixth-generation Van Guilders born roughly between 1870 and 1890, making them twenty to forty years of age. A growing gap over time between older farmers and younger farm laborers reflected the post–Civil War transition from self-sufficient small-scale farmers to a landless laboring class among many Van Guilders and their kin.

One-sixth of the men were involved in rural-oriented trades or forms of production such as hunting and fishing, root digging, woodchopping, basketmaking, blacksmithing, and harness making. Yet others were merchants, storekeepers, masons, machinists, carpenters, and painters. And a few found uncommon or exotic work as horse jockey, stage driver, and printer. In other words, Estabrook and Davenport's own data demonstrate that the majority of Nam or Van Guilder men were engaged in respectable work.[7] No doubt their earnings were meager, but they were

working poor. Such evidence tends to discredit the eugenicists' insistence that these people were hobbled by innate indolence and lack of ambition.

While they characterized the majority of the Nam as lazy or indolent, Estabrook and Davenport described others as simultaneously "industrious" and "unambitious." This seeming contradiction reflects the eugenicists' upper-middle-class sensibilities and patronizing attitude toward the working poor. Thus, a hired hand who worked twelve-hour days bringing in a neighbor's hay crop was industrious but, in Estabrook and Davenport's judgment, "unambitious," because he did not own the farm or practice a more respectable trade. Likewise, a woman who took in washing and spent long days stooped over a scrub board was industrious but unambitious for pursuing such lowly work. By concocting this catch-22, the eugenicists were able to find virtually any work or work habits wanting. For them, indolence was a product of bad germ plasm, yet people who worked hard at low-status jobs were unambitious, another sign of innate degeneracy. In a similar vein, Deutsch notes that Oscar McCulloch did not regard the Ishmaelites' itinerant trash collecting as *work*, or at least not respectable work, despite the independence and mobility required for such a livelihood.[8]

Leaving the issue of ambition aside, there are other reasons to question the eugenicists' characterizations of widespread indolence among the Nam. The Estabrook Papers contain a series of unpublished photographs taken in Guilder Hollow in the late winter or spring of 1912.[9] Most of these show individuals or family groups posed formally in front of or near their homes or outbuildings. Several shots in particular caught my attention. These reveal the home environment and family of a fifty-one-year-old man, his younger wife, and their four young children. They lived in a modest two-room house covered with planks and rough-sawed boards, shored up around its base by boulders and flagstones. Inside one room was a substantial cast-iron cooking and heating stove with a large iron kettle on one of the burners. Near this stove stood a vertical ceiling support column fashioned from a tree that had been stripped of its bark. A large wooden barrel, perhaps containing water or flour, hugged a back wall. Nearby the wife sat at a table with two of her children. While the image is out of focus, she may have been engaged in food processing, sewing, or some other work. In another view, this woman

Fig. 9. A Guilder Hollow mother and children, ca. 1911–12. The woman was a great-great-granddaughter of Daniel Van Guilder Sr. Courtesy of Arthur H. Estabrook Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany, SUNY.

stood in the doorway of the house attired in a dark ankle-length skirt and a neat white blouse fastened high on the neck. Her thin, angular face was framed by hair swept back in Gibson-girl style (fig. 9). This was a woman whom Estabrook and Davenport described as "indolent, disorderly, deficient in causation."[10]

Another revealing photograph shows this woman's husband standing outside. He wore a heavy woolen coat and a Kromer-style cap. His round, heavy face was ruddy and weathered and covered by a short white stubble of beard. Over one shoulder he held a large whipsaw or crosscut saw. Apparently, he was coming from or going to work in the nearby woods or at a site for sawing rough-cut lumber (fig. 10). Estabrook and Davenport characterized this man as "an indolent, careless, disorderly, lawless, dishonest wanderer, a maker of baskets."[11] Indeed, both the husband and wife were basketmakers. Intentionally or otherwise, the photographs captured aspects of this family's work routines, which included securing wood for basket splints. Whatever failings this couple possessed, indolence did not seem to be one of them.[12]

None of the Nam men were identified as miners, suggesting that the Van Guilders were not part of the slate-mining workforce in Granville. It is possible that the recruitment of experienced Welsh miners had shut out many locals from this labor market. Then, too, the Hollow's growing notoriety as an outcaste community may have given some employers pause.

Other men gravitated toward criminal pursuits. Slightly more than 10 percent of the ninety-seven adult males in the above-mentioned sample formed an underworld of pickpockets, petty thieves, pimps, and "sharpers" (confidence men). Over time, the steady loss of farms and the limited economic opportunities in Guilder Hollow created a climate conducive for such activities. Some of these men may have been among the "idlers and drunken loafers" who picked pockets at the Granville train station or stole crops and livestock in the dead of night (see chapter 3).[13] Even a small cadre of such operators would have contributed to the unsavory reputation of Guilder Hollow.

The Oldest Profession

Even though Nam women performed such varied labor as farming, school teaching, dress making, laundering (i.e., "washing"), basketmaking, and

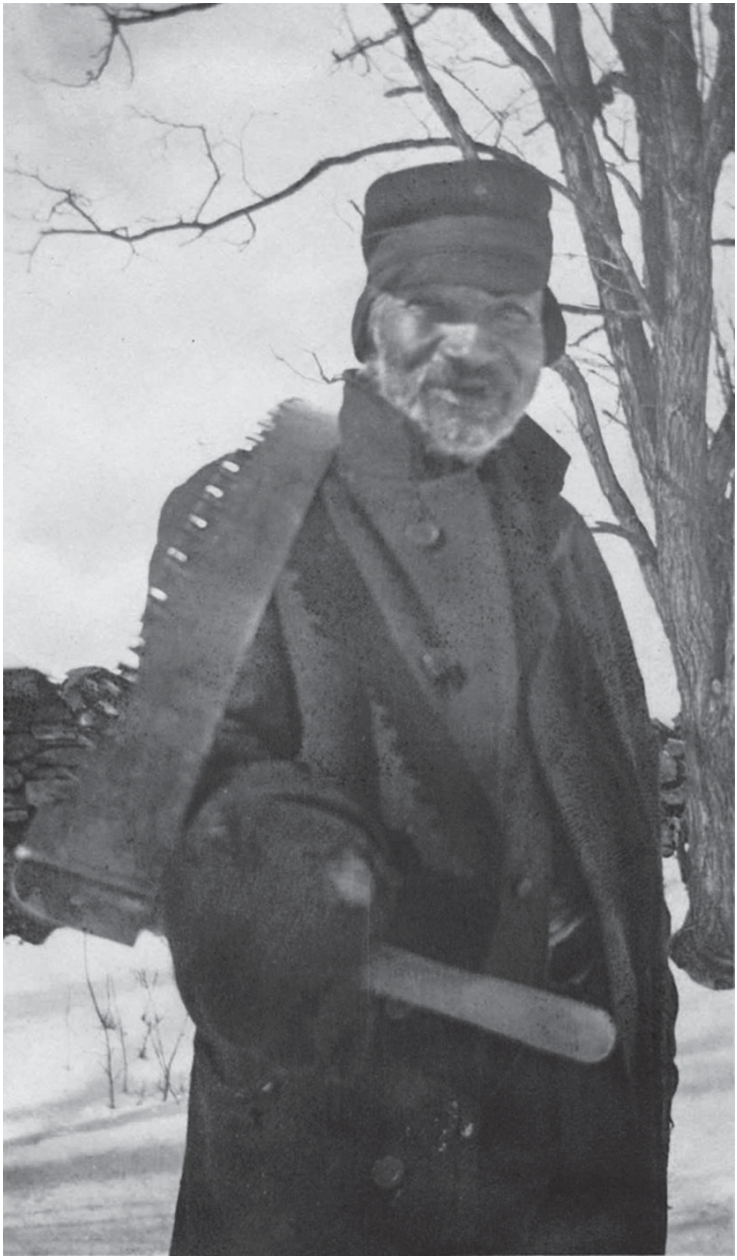


Fig. 10. A Guilder Hollow man with whipsaw, ca. 1911–12, a great-grandson of Stephen Van Guilder Sr. Courtesy of Arthur H. Estabrook Papers, Special Collections and Archives, University at Albany, SUNY.

mill work, their heavy involvement in prostitution is hard to ignore. Thirty-one women, or 47 percent of the females for whom Estabrook and Davenport specified employment, were identified as prostitutes. Perhaps more than any other social fact, prostitution is a barometer of poverty. When opportunities for socially approved employment are unavailable, some women gravitate toward, or are coerced into, the demimonde of the sex trade.[14] Indeed, the shift from farming to a landless laboring class in the late nineteenth century exerted greater pressure on family resources in Guilder Hollow. As men struggled on day laborers' wages to pay for food and other products that had once derived from their own farms, some women scrambled for scarce resources by selling their bodies. No doubt, lack of access to schooling and alternative sources of income were serious constraints that pushed many women in this direction.

Estabrook and Davenport did not recognize prostitution primarily as an economic strategy, however. For them, prostitution was unbridled sexual licentiousness and a certain indicator of bad genes.[15] They regarded licentiousness as a failure to maintain the "ideals of marriage and chastity" and as the primary antisocial behavior afflicting Guilder Hollow.[16] From their perspective, licentiousness was rampant in the community. They even developed a scale to capture its gradations:

Sx_1 has cohabited with three or more consorts
Sx_2 licentious male or harlot female
Sx_3 prostitute
Sx_4 erotomaniac

It was hard for the eugenicists to disguise their repugnance at what they saw as a veritable Sodom, even if people's sexual behavior was thought to be the consequence of bad germ plasm. As in the case of shyness (see chapter 6), they charted particular family lines to demonstrate how sexually promiscuous parents begat licentious offspring. Yet they had no means of distinguishing the impact of the social environment versus biological inheritance in perpetuating such behavior. Moreover, there was a misogynistic tone in much of their writing. Occasionally, they referred to women as "slatterns." As noted above, Sx_2 males were characterized as simply "licentious," whereas Sx_2 females were labeled by the pejorative "harlot."[17] The latter was hardly a technical or scientific

term. In the vernacular of the day, "harlot" was essentially a synonym for prostitute. If so, why make a distinction between the two?

We can only surmise that the eugenicists regarded harlotry as a stepping-stone to further depravity. After all, they remarked: "Harlots go forth from there [Nam Hollow] and become prostitutes in our great cities."[18] Elsewhere they characterized "prostitutes," as women who had "left for the city" or who were working in "houses of assignation." Judging from the Estabrook Papers, however, many of these brothels were not in "great cities" but in the larger towns of Washington County. Minimally, these included Sandy Hill (present-day Hudson Falls), Granville, North Granville, and Glens Fall (in adjacent Warren County), places that had sufficient male clientele to support such establishments.[19] Harlots, by this logic, were promiscuous women who stayed closer to home and, perhaps, earned little if any money from their affairs. Whatever the reality, Estabrook and Davenport saw Guilder Hollow as a community teeming with harlots. They characterized a remarkable number of women in this manner, as in the following:

> V 121 married his cousin and died in the Civil War. She was a feeble-minded harlot with a lazy brother, and had an active, industrious, but vicious, alcoholic, licentious son, V 198, who married a fourteen year old harlot, and then VI 61, as already described (page 6), producing offspring of whom three were licentious and one more self-controlled.[20]

And the following:

> He was derived from an honest father and a slattern woman of low stock. The progeny, which will be described in Line E, were all typical Nams, indolent and unable to learn at school, the men alcoholic, and the women harlots.[21]

The fact that prostitutes were women who left the Hollow to engage in trade in nearby towns supports the economic argument presented earlier in this discussion. Prostitution was a livelihood strategy for weathering a time of increasing poverty in Guilder Hollow in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was not inherited licentiousness. If

these woman were genetically damaged, as Estabrook and Davenport contended, how should we judge the men who used their services? Arguably, these men were mostly "outsiders," not of the Guilder Hollow community. If not wealthy, at least they had discretionary funds to spend in brothels. These men were willing partners in the lascivious and, in many cases, adulterous services provided. In other words, if prostitutes were products of bad germ plasm, why not their johns? Estabrook and Davenport's hypocritical silence on this issue reflects an implicit gender and class bias that undermines their cacogenic argument.

The Omnipresence of Drink

Large numbers of Guilder Hollow residents, especially men, were characterized by Estabrook and Davenport as alcoholics or heavy drinkers.[22] Just as women were disparaged as "slatterns," some men were dismissed as "sots."[23] Indeed, alcoholism was alleged to be one of the community's diagnostic genetic flaws, along with feeblemindedness and licentiousness. In chapter 5 we saw how the eugenicists provided a questionable estimate of the cost to the state of maintaining seven hundred alcoholics over a thirty-year period.[24] Even so, their observations on the potential heritability of alcoholism had some validity and were prescient of research findings decades later.[25] They noted that matings of two alcoholic parents produced children who all became alcoholics. Moreover, they observed that among such couples nearly 40 percent of the children were "imbeciles" or "epilectic."

While Estabrook and Davenport seemed disinterested in understanding how social and environmental factors could reproduce the conditions favorable for heavy alcohol consumption, we know now that in many societies there is a strong correlation between unemployment and heavy drinking or problem drinking, for example.[26] During times of stressful economic change, individuals may use drinking and drunken comportment as a kind of forum for resolving status and identity issues. As the anthropologist Richard Robbins observed among Naskapi Indians near a recently developed iron mine along the Quebec-Labrador border, some people adopted an amiable drinking posture to claim an elevated status based on access to new wages and resources, while others

presented an assertive or aggressive drinking style to defend an existing identity threatened by their lack of access to new opportunities.[27]

We can only speculate about the sociocultural context of drinking in Guilder Hollow. Oppressed and impoverished people may drink to drown their sorrows and escape the grim realities of their lives. This has been all too common on many Indian reservations with chronically high unemployment.[28] However, as Nancy Lurie cautions, the historical and cultural contexts of alcohol use among Native Americans have been too variable to reduce to simple stereotypes. Drinking can be as much an expression of protest and opposition to the dominant society as it is a sign of despair.[29] No doubt excessive drinking among Mohicans, which had troubled missionaries in eighteenth-century Stockbridge, signaled a combination of despair, rage, and defiance at the bewildering changes and loss of autonomy wrought by colonial subjugation.[30] It is significant that the Van Guilders' own ancestors had shared in that historical experience.

Genetics may affect how ethanol is metabolized by the body after it is ingested and, thereby, influence tolerance of the intoxicant by individuals but not necessarily by entire populations. Some medical research has found no significant differences in rates of alcohol metabolism between Native Americans and whites, suggesting that the proclivity to drink is not determined by biogenetic or racial variations but by socioeconomic conditions.[31] There is no gene controlling the production of home brew, the buying and selling of liquor, or the social and ceremonial settings in which people drink. These are products of historical experience, cultural tradition, and personal predilection. Of course, these facts were unknown at the time of the Nam study.[32]

Regardless of the causes of alcohol consumption, we have no information on the scale of the problem. Were the people in Guilder Hollow drinking significantly more than the general population? This is difficult to discern from the Nam study. After all, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were a time when heavy drinking was commonplace in American society. Brayton and Norton's comments about early Hartford are pertinent: "Alcoholic stimulants, a seeming necessity to the early settlers, were in those days consumed in amounts that would

astonish the modern 'wet,' who would make us think that hard drinking is something new since the days of Volstead."[33]

After the Civil War, temperance emerged as the most potent women's social and political movement.[34] It arose out of desperation to safeguard women and children from the poverty and abuse accompanying alcohol consumption, largely by men.[35] In many cities, weak beer was regarded as a healthy alternative to an unsafe water supply. Brewers in the 1890s provided Manhattan with 460,000 quarter kegs (about 3.68 million gallons) of beer per week, which translates to a weekly consumption of about twenty pints for every person over the age of sixteen. In poorer neighborhoods it was a common Sunday ritual to "rush the growler," that is, send family members, including children, to nearby saloons to fetch beer in makeshift containers so that workingmen could drink at home on their only day off.[36] As the historian W. J. Rorabaugh notes, American men bonded over beer and constructed their masculinity through overindulgence in distilled spirits and rituals of hospitality that had their origins in sixteenth-century Europe.[37]

It is likely that prodigious amounts of alcohol were consumed by people of diverse backgrounds in rural areas like Washington County, not just by mixed-race outcastes. As noted in chapter 3, organized temperance efforts in both Granville and Hartford arose at various times in the late nineteenth century to confront the scourge of public intoxication by enforcing no-license policies and putting liquor dealers out of business. The success of church-aligned temperance efforts in Hartford ultimately led to a tragic retaliatory burning of that community's old Baptist Meeting House in 1890.[38] During periods of temperance zeal, liquor sales flourished as part of a clandestine underground trade. Presumably, home-brewing operations also expanded during those times. Some apple growers, for example, may have diverted more of their production to hard cider. Public concern about drinking was such that neighboring communities blamed each other for encouraging excess, as in the following item from the *Granville Sentinel* in 1892: "The *Whitehall Times* accuses Granville with being a whiskey town, but the *Sentinel* retorts by saying that in a month one hundred bums had been arrested in Whitehall. And the latter fact must be true for the *Times* itself has said it."[39]

More research is needed in this area, and we can only speculate on the supply and distribution channels for alcohol among people in Guilder Hollow. In a cash-poor community, regular purchases from liquor dealers could have easily reinforced a pernicious cycle of drinking, indebtedness, and poverty. Home brewing would have been a cheaper alternative with the potential for sharing and sales to neighbors. Perhaps the actual state of affairs was a combination of these arrangements. Ultimately, we are left with more questions than answers about alcohol use and abuse in the Hollow.[40] Estabrook and Davenport's portrait of a community of genetically flawed "sots" is unsatisfying given the culture of heavy drinking in mainstream society at that time. More likely, their *style* of drinking, or drunken comportment, was regarded as declassé by outsiders, including the eugenicists.

It is suggested here that the drinking culture in the Hollow developed as an escape and palliative, and perhaps as a form of protest, accelerating with the community's descent into poverty and outcaste marginality. No doubt drinking was also a form of sociality and a ritualized "time out" from everyday concerns. The seeds for this drinking culture were planted deeply in the historical experience of the people's Mohican and Stockbridge ancestors.

Conclusion

The Myth Unravels

> Eugenics is not a panacea that will cure human ills, it is rather a dangerous sword that may turn its edge against those who rely on its strengths.
>
> —FRANZ BOAS, "Eugenics"

In the final analysis, *The Nam Family* was more a literary than a scientific achievement. Estabrook and Davenport invented rather than discovered a community of genetic defectives. In this regard I share the perspective of Nathaniel Deutsch, who revealed how a succession of investigators, from Oscar McCulloch to Hugo Leaming, took considerable license in constructing visions of the Tribe of Ishmael suited to their personal agendas and the political climate of their respective times.[1] McCulloch's inaugural report in 1888 misconstrued the Ishmaelites as inbred degenerates to explain what were actually socially marginalized yet highly mobile, independent, and resourceful people.

Likewise, two decades later Estabrook and Davenport's reach exceeded their grasp in promoting cacogenics as an explanatory framework for the Nam. Virtually all of the unpleasant realities of life in Guilder Hollow were the consequences of historical and political economic factors, not of biological inheritance. These realities began with the exodus of the Van Guilders from their shrinking indigenous homeland and continued as subsequent generations struggled with loss of farmland as ghettoized, rural, mixed-race outcastes.

Garland Allen contends that "Estabrook and others like him knew at the time that they were doing wrong, but they did it anyway, because they were caught up in the movement of their day."[2] Whether or not

they knowingly practiced bad science, Estabrook and Davenport were certainly products of their time and place. Eugenics came of age in the Progressive Era with its reformist ethos for cleansing and transforming society. This was also a time when America opened its doors to unprecedented waves of immigrants from Europe. As millions of new naturalized citizens provided a source of cheap labor for factories, farms, mines, and small businesses, an unsympathetic gaze was cast upon those who were not partaking in these opportunities. Davenport in particular was aghast at the large government expenditures, about one hundred million dollars annually, for supporting mentally handicapped individuals, paupers, and prisoners. As Daniel Kevles aptly concluded, Davenport's "negative eugenics simply expressed in biological language the native white Protestant's hostility to immigrants and the conservative's bile over taxes and welfare."[3]

American society can be cruel in using difference as a way of defining some people as deserving and others as unworthy. The eugenicists, imbued with American progressive values, were frankly repulsed by the racially admixed, culturally hybrid peoples they encountered in the rural backwaters of the East. Unsophisticated in social analysis and unwilling to confront their own class prejudices, investigators like Estabrook and Davenport saw the Nam as innately unfit, even when their own data indicated otherwise. From that vantage point, it was a small step toward envisioning schemes to rid the world of people like the Nam or, at least, prevent the reproduction of their kind. At the same time, the researchers' zeal reflected their preoccupation with establishing eugenics as a respectable new profession of social control of the rural poor, a profession in search of funding and public support.[4]

As noted in chapter 1, the Métis, a mixed-race people of Canada, developed a distinctive and vibrant hybrid society and culture separate from both their Indian and French Canadian ancestors. Why did the Van Guilders and other admixed people in the eastern United States not follow a similar historical path? In part, the answer has to do with different demographic and political economic conditions in the two regions. The anthropologists Jerry Hanson and Donald Kurtz persuasively argue that Métis ethnogenesis was tied to the expansion of the French and British empires, and a mercantile capitalist mode of production,

into the northern frontier of North America. Conflict and competition between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to dominate the fur trade created an occupational niche for a mixed-race working class with a new ethnic identity and hybrid culture.[5] Despite international market transformations generated by World War I, much of northern Canada remained a postcolonial fur-trading frontier well into the early twentieth century, a place where few Europeans permanently settled, populations remained low, and the Métis occupied a valued role as fur-trade laborers and intermediaries between Indian hunters and Euro-Canadian fur-post managers.[6]

By contrast, Dutch, British, and American settlers inundated the eastern United States in large numbers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and appropriated vast tracts of fertile Native land for permanent colonial settlement. Violent frontier wars and introduced diseases exacted a large toll on the indigenous population.[7] Following the federal Indian Removal Act of 1830, many surviving Native Americans in the East were forcibly removed to "Indian Territory" west of the Mississippi River or otherwise displaced beyond the frontiers of white settlement.[8] Simultaneously, Native Americans of mixed-race background were steadily pushed into upland pockets of undesirable land in the Appalachians and adjacent areas. While the East was an expanding frontier of agrarian capitalism and early industry, in contradistinction to the experience of the Métis, no large-scale firm or mercantile institution integrated the mixed-race isolates, including the Van Guilders, into a vital laboring class qua emergent cultural group. In a sense, the Métis flourished as a mixed-race hybrid culture *because* of the European presence, whereas the Van Guilders and other mixed-race enclaves simply survived and persisted *despite* the European presence. These peoples' deprivation, isolation, and outcaste status grew hand-in-hand with ostracism by the surrounding society, a rejection fueled by an almost obsessive loathing of miscegenation. Untold thousands of such people have lived under a cloud of suspicion and ambiguous identity for two centuries or more. With rare exceptions, they have not been acknowledged officially as Indians by state and federal governments or by census records. These were and are the "hidden" Native Americans.[9]

What became of the Nam after Estabrook returned to Cold Spring Harbor? Addressing this question will require another volume, perhaps best written by descendants of the Nam. Indeed, this is already happening. As noted in chapter 2, Debra Winchell has been conducting genealogical and biographical studies of the John Van Guilder family for some time.[10] Present-day descendants of the eighteenth-century Mohican Van Gilders (or Van Guilders), including Winchell and Dan Blattner, have started a Y-DNA Surname Project. Genetic testing via Y-DNA has already established matches between widely scattered male Van Gilders in West Virginia, Maryland, and Missouri, who, in turn, share the same Y-DNA with Ricky VanGuilder, a documented descendant of John Van Guilder, living in Granville, New York.[11] Ricky VanGuilder has also served as the assistant chief of the Hudson River Band of Mahican. While not federally recognized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in 2003 the Hudson River Band filed an injunction to prevent casino development on 175 square miles of land in parts of the Taconic and Catskill Mountains, territory they claim was granted to their ancestors by a 1724 treaty with the British Crown.[12]

Particularly salient for the present study is how the Hudson River Band of Mahican interprets their history in contradistinction to the fate of other Mohican (or Mahican) peoples. While most of the latter were departing the Hudson Valley and Stockbridge for Oneida country, and eventually for Indiana Territory and Wisconsin, Ricky VanGuilder's ancestors were moving to the headwaters of the Mettawee River near present-day Granville, New York, arriving around 1800. Part of a legal brief prepared for the Hudson River Band presents their subsequent experience as one of strategic survival: "The Hudson River Band itself avoided being removed from the territory by hiding in the Granville region where it maintained its quasi-independence by passing itself off as an inbreeding hillbilly community."[13] This statement dovetails with a key argument in chapter 3, namely, that the Van Guilders were Mohicans who had adapted to the traumatic upheavals of colonial land dispossession by resettling a remote corner of their own aboriginal homeland. But the legal brief goes a step further by asserting that these people were "hiding" or masquerading as "hillbillies." By portraying Guilder Hollow as a calculated subterfuge, the descendants have shifted

the narrative of their historical experience from victimhood to agency, from degeneracy to resistance movement opposing the forces of Indian removal and genocide. Whatever the Van Guilders' initial motivations were in the late eighteenth century, with the passage of time their Mohican background and identity were obscured, at least from outsiders, by intermarrying with other families and by their evolving status as poor mixed-race outcastes.

Today Guilder Hollow is a quiet rural neighborhood where some descendants of the original Van Guilder settlers still live. Other descendants have long since dispersed to other areas of New York and beyond, intermarrying and blending with the general population. The same process of merging with the surrounding population occurred with the Jukes. Metaphorically, if not literally, today the Jukes are everywhere. The Jukes are us.

The process of migration and outmarriage was already under way at the time of Estabrook and Davenport's study. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the Van Guilders had intermarried primarily with five other families, namely, the Orcutts, Seeleys, Starks, Turks, and Winchells. By the early twentieth century, judging from the coded lists in the Estabrook Papers, these founding families had, in turn, intermarried with people bearing at least 187 additional surnames.[14] Of the 1,795 individuals tracked in the genealogical charts, 852, or 47.5 percent, were thought to be descended from the six original founding Van Guilder siblings. The remaining 943 individuals, or 52.5 percent, were descended from unions between Van Guilders and other families. However, the rate of outmarriage was clearly increasing over time, particularly during the third through fifth generations, when the proportion of direct Van Guilder descendants varied between 27 and 33 percent.[15]

The sheer amount of outmarriage, or "outcrossing," presented another methodological weakness common in the eugenics studies generally. That is, tracking heritable traits through pedigrees or family lines became extraordinarily unwieldy, if not impossible, when the "family" was a huge, loosely defined amalgam of consanguines, affines, adoptees, half siblings, stepchildren, and out-of-wedlock children (estimated at 20 percent of all births), many of whom could not be traced back to a founding ancestor.[16] In any case, as the original Van Guilder family

lines intermarried with others, some descendants moved farther afield to hamlets and town throughout Washington and Rutland Counties. By 1910, others were in such distant locales as Canajoharie, Gloversville, Warrensburg, Luzerne, Syracuse, Schenectady, and Schuylerville in upstate New York. Yet others had moved to Philadelphia, Cleveland, and places farther west.

With few exceptions, Estabrook and Davenport looked favorably upon those who moved the farthest from Guilder Hollow. If someone "went West," for example, to a midwestern state, they regarded this as a worthy achievement. Thus, a Dick Hill resident who "went West" was characterized as an "ambitious man." Likewise, a woman from Hartford who "moved away to Pennsylvania," in their view, showed "an unusual exhibition of ambition." The implication was that those individuals who had the fortitude to move away had not inherited bad germ plasm. Tautologically, people who remained in the Hollow were "unambitious" and genetically defective.

As we saw in chapter 5, however, some Guilder Hollow residents who moved to Minnesota after the Civil War ended up resembling their parents and showing "characteristics of the blood."[17] According to the eugenicists' convoluted argument, these were genetically defective people who should *not* have had the ambition to leave the Hollow. Inexplicably, they moved out or "went West" anyway. Rather than thriving in the new environment, allegedly they reverted to their indolent, degenerate ways due to defective genes. Apparently, it did not occur to Estabrook and Davenport that poor people could remain locked in a cycle of poverty regardless of the number of times they moved.

Perhaps the most flagrant contradiction in Estabrook and Davenport's conception of moving away and starting over is their silence regarding the Van Guilders' original migration out of Massachusetts. If people who escaped the depravity of the Hollow were regarded as ambitious and admirable for "going West," why would this not apply to the original Van Guilders, the children of Joseph and Molly Van Guilder who had escaped colonial oppression and a turbulent frontier a century earlier? The eugenicists' silence on this matter stems from a commitment to their cacogenic narrative. Rather than viewing the early Van Guilders

as pioneers or as active seekers of new opportunities and new lives, they were characterized as primitive, backwoods reprobates. Rather than appreciating the Van Guilders' hybridic culture, they were diagnosed as innately flawed. The Van Guilders were damned from the very start, it seemed. It was as if Estabrook and Davenport had reinvented original sin thinly disguised by biological rhetoric.

As much as the eugenicists were creatures of their time and place, the Van Guilders might be seen as victims of their time and place. Or victims of the Progressive Era. In his book *Victims of Progress*, the anthropologist John Bodley developed a theoretical framework to explain how the world's tribal and peasant societies have suffered devastating environmental dislocations, social disintegration, and cultural loss in recent history due to the expansion of global industrial and commercial development combined with increased control by nation-states over formerly autonomous lands and peoples. In other words, victimhood is an historical process with identifiable political and economic causes.

The anthropologist Joseph Jorgensen's "metropolis-satellite political economy" model offers a similar view of the underdeveloped socioeconomic conditions in many Native American communities. Simply put, the "metropolis" represents a process involving concentration of economic and political power and political influence by exploiting labor in "satellite" areas, thereby generating a downward spiral in population displacements, impoverishment, and dependency for both urban and rural minorities.[18] Influenced by the work of André Gunder Frank, Jorgensen applied this framework convincingly to the historical experience of the Utes of northeastern Utah from 1850 to recent times.[19] After a century of frontier warfare, disease, starvation, relocation to agriculturally marginal lands, and alienation of most of their reservation property through allotment, the Utes have become largely consumers in the local economy rather than active wage earners. Since 1951 they have been heavily dependent on unearned income, but royalties from mineral leases and government welfare payments have underwritten a low standard of living while insulating Utes from any direct control over local resources.[20]

The metropolis-satellite model is a powerful critique of the well-worn acculturation paradigm. From Jorgensen's perspective, Native American

underdevelopment has been caused by the development of the white-controlled national economy. Moreover, the socioeconomic conditions of Native Americans are not improving or progressing along a linear path toward full acculturation, according to this interpretation, because most Native American communities have been fully integrated into the national political economy for 150 years or more.

With some adjustments, Jorgensen's framework can be applied to mixed-race Native American communities as well. Land alienation and displacement were foundational events in the Van Guilders' ethnogenesis as an admixed group. The subsequent expansion of white-dominated agricultural capitalism further marginalized the Van Guilders as they became smallholders on unproductive land and landless workers on the prospering farms of others. As their poverty worsened, so did their social ostracism by the surrounding society. Accordingly, the name Van Guilder became a pejorative epithet, even though many Van Guilders had become respected citizens of rural Washington County.[21] Then, at a pivotal moment in the Van Guilders' history, Estabrook and Davenport arrived. As representatives of the educated elite and the nation's centers of wealth and power, they judged the Van Guilders as genetically unfit and a threat to the wellbeing of the country. Although the tactics were different, both eugenics and the reservation system evolved as part of the state's apparatus for managing cultural minorities and underclasses.

The foregoing analysis is not meant to slight the power of resistance or individual agency in coping with colonial oppression and marginalization. Indeed, the Van Guilders exhibited extraordinary fortitude and resilience in forging a new life in the rapidly changing frontier of nineteenth-century upstate New York. Less hardy people may have withered. However, underdevelopment theories and political economic analyses are useful for highlighting the historical conditions—burgeoning agrarian capitalism, loss of land and loss of farm ownership, exploitative wage labor, shunning of the miscegenated—that gave rise to the outcaste communities. Applying Eric Wolf's perspective, these are the conditions that made the Van Guilders a "people without history."

Many of the pioneers of eugenics, including Charles Davenport, passed away in the 1930s and 1940s, but by that time the movement

had lost most of its appeal and support.[22] Ironically, toward the ends of their lives some of these men suffered from conditions that they had ascribed to "degenerate" populations. Harry Laughlin was afflicted with epilepsy, and Henry F. Perkins, who had directed the Eugenics Survey of Vermont, died of alcoholism-induced liver failure.[23] In 1973, at eighty-eight years of age, Arthur Estabrook died in Chatham Center, New York, about sixteen miles southeast of Albany. I had moved to Albany only a few months earlier, but at that time was largely unaware of the eugenics movement and Estabrook's role in it. In hindsight I had missed a valuable opportunity. If he had granted me an interview, what insights would he have shared? Did he still believe in eugenics? Or had his views changed after the dismantling of the Eugenics Record Office in 1939 and the horrors of the Third Reich? Did he ever return to Guilder Hollow? If so, what did he find there?

While the answers to these questions may never be known, in 1917, a mere five years after *The Nam Family* was published, Estabrook engaged in thoughtful correspondence with Ethel R. Evans, the supervisor of the State Charities Aid Association in New York City, which operated a Child Placing Agency. Evans had previously contacted Estabrook on behalf of foster parents who were hoping to adopt a young girl who derived from the Nam community.[24] The following is an excerpt from one of Evans's letters:

> The people who have Flora [pseudonym] are very anxious to know all they can about her history. They know it is a bad one and they are not deterred by it from rushing to adopt her. They are quite sure she is a perfectly normal child and will develop as such, though she is not quite nine as yet.
>
> You promised us once to indicate the part of the Nam history which deals with Flora's father and mother. . . . If it is not too much trouble I hope you will do so so that we can satisfy the intelligent interest of Flora's foster mother.[25]

Estabrook feared that supplying such information would prejudice the foster parents against the child. Only after Evans agreed to keep the

details of Flora's family history confidential within her agency did Estabrook comply with the request and provide the following measured reply:

> You will have to use your judgement about giving the facts of Flora's inheritance to the foster mother. I think the mother perhaps should know the possible inheritance of eroticism which may appear in Flora at the time of adolescence. Further than that the child should get along very well it seems to me in her new home although as you say the child will never be very intellectual.[26]

The phrase "should get along very well" offered a glimmer of hope that Estabrook recognized the significance of a new home environment in shaping Flora's future life. He clearly had compassion for this girl and her adoptive parents. Yet, his cautions about inherited eroticism and limited intellect invoked the well-worn cacogenic paradigm.

The case of Flora is reminiscent of a section of the Nam study where Estabrook and Davenport considered the long-term effects of removing children from their disadvantaged home environments in Nam Hollow, either through adoption or acceptance by orphanages. They concluded that "placing out in better families and asylum life gives a veneer of culture and tends to strengthen the sex impulses [i.e., improve control over such impulses] but that the effect is uncertain and frequently discouragingly slight." In other words, like the Nam families who migrated to Minnesota, it was thought that Nam children raised in foster or adoptive homes eventually would revert to their degenerate ways and "show characteristics of the blood." With no sense of irony, Estabrook and Davenport found the situation of adopted Nam children analogous to the "effect of Indian School training on Indian girls."[27] Presumably, they were implying that an Indian boarding school might impart a veneer of white manners and English speech to students who retained their native cultural knowledge and identity at a deeper level.

Estabrook was active in his profession throughout the 1920s. As noted in chapter 1, he coauthored perhaps the last major eugenics study, *Mongrel Virginians: The Win Tribe*, in 1926. Estabrook was president of the Eugenics Research Association in 1925–26. For their thirteenth annual

meeting in 1925 he presented a paper titled "Geographical Features of a Southern Mountain County in Relation to the Types of People Inhabiting the Various Areas." A few years later in 1929 an article by Estabrook in *Eugenics Magazine* was quoted extensively by the *New York Times* with an attention-grabbing headline: "Terms Country Slums a Social Liability: Dr. Estabrook, in Eugenics Magazine, Says They Contain Dregs of Old Populations." An excerpt of Estabrook's observations reveal that his perspective on inherited degeneracy had not changed in the seventeen years since the Nam study:

> It is apparent that the slum conditions of the country is due to definite factors of biological conditions, namely, that the more capable and energetic have migrated, leaving the less capable behind. Thus in the older settled portions of the United States the people in the more unproductive regions have a lower average intellectual level than the population of the more favored spots. Some are merely on a low average, or merely sub-normal; others are feeble-minded. Definitely they are a social and economic liability to the country not merely on the basis of poor environment and its resulting lower economic level but because genetically they are of low intellectual and ability level. Even though their environment could be bettered and their economic opportunities increased, their low intellectual level precludes these people could be trained into citizens of social and genetic value to the nation.[28]

Eugenics Magazine was not widely read outside of professional circles, but *New York Times* coverage arguably had a prejudicial impact on public attitudes. Readers were told in authoritative terms that people in rural hollows and backwaters had no "social and genetic value to the nation." In short, they were unworthy and, therefore, discardable. This echoes Estabrook and Davenport's early appraisal of Nam Hollow as a "social pest spot." The Nam were rendered as human equivalents of varmints or vermin, something to be eradicated, not assisted, educated, or rehabilitated.

The human capacity for judgment of others is seemingly without limits and is the basis for racist ideology of all kinds. Such judgment

is particularly pernicious when cloaked in the mantle of science. A century ago the anthropologist Franz Boas warned against the illusion of self-perfection eugenicists were promoting:

> It is perfectly safe to say that no amount of eugenic selection will overcome those social conditions by means of which we have raised a poverty and disease-stricken proletariat, which will be reborn from even the best stock, so long as the social conditions persist that remorselessly push human beings into helpless and hopeless misery.[29]

Boas's concerns are no less valid today. Advances in molecular genetics notwithstanding, innatist arguments about minorities and poor, dispossessed people will no doubt continue to find a receptive audience. Currently, there is a widespread notion that developments in genetic biotechnology will root out and eliminate a plethora of human imperfections. However, Garland Allen argues that the false promise of a technological fix for problems that actually lie in the structure of society is, in effect, a new form of eugenics.[30] In a similar vein, the Indian studies scholar M. Annette Jaimes, who is Yaqui and Juaneño, characterizes the Human Genome Diversity Project as a form of scientific racism for classifying and controlling Native Americans and other indigenous peoples whose lands, resources, and intellectual property are increasingly vulnerable to corporate development.[31]

Moreover, the Jukes have reemerged in recent years as whipping boys for Internet evangelists. As the legal scholar Paul Lombardo notes, dozens of websites and several books present the Jukes as the quintessentially "bad family" whose divinely, if not genetically, ordained legacy resulted from the sins of their founding father.[32] The evangelists' tone of contempt for the poor and dependent resurrects the eugenicists' flawed worldview from a century earlier. Some of the cyber preachers contrast the Jukes with the model Christian family of Jonathan Edwards, a strict Puritan leader of the spiritual Great Awakening that emerged in New England in the early eighteenth century.[33] No small irony here is the fact that Edwards served as missionary to the Stockbridge Indians in the 1750s, precisely the period when their Van Guilder relatives were

embroiled with the Livingston manor and, thus, beginning their long, ill-fated journey toward eugenics infamy.[34]

Lest we suffer repeated incarnations of eugenics, all hereditarian ideas and policies should be greeted with healthy skepticism and rigorous historical and cultural research. Perhaps the ultimate refutation of Estabrook and Davenport's work is the dispersal and blending of the Nam with the general population. As with the Jukes, today the Nam are everywhere. The Nam are us.

Notes

Introduction

1. Southard, "Notes on the Geographical Distribution of Insanity."
2. Rafter, *White Trash*, 2–6.
3. Boas, "The Methods of Ethnology."
4. Studies of specific Native American societies that have influenced my own approach and thinking about ethnohistory or historical anthropology include Hickerson, *The Chippewa and Their Neighbors*; Clifton, *The Prairie People*; Trigger, *The Children of Aataentsic*; and Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca*. I have been inspired also by Wallace's *St. Clair*. The latter is a model for capturing the social history, class conflicts, and ethos of small-town America, in this case coal-belt Pennsylvania. Its story unfolds mostly in the mid- to late 1800s, also a critical time in the ethnogenesis of Nam Hollow, or Guilder Hollow, several hundred miles to the northeast.
5. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment*; Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*.

1. Native Americans and Eugenics

1. Jarvenpa, *The Trappers of Patuanak*; Jarvenpa, *Northern Passage*.
2. Brown, "A Demographic Transition"; Devine, *The People Who Own Themselves*; Jarvenpa and Brumbach, "Occupational Status, Ethnicity and Ecology"; Jarvenpa and Brumbach, "The Chipewyan-Cree-Métis Interaction Sphere"; Macdougall, *One of the Family*; Peterson and Brown, *The New Peoples*; Slobodin, *The Metis of the Mackenzie District*; Slobodin, "Subarctic Métis."
3. Douaud, "Canadian Métis Identity," 72; Harrison, *Metis*. There are also Métis who derive from Indian unions with English and Scottish ancestors. Some scholars use the uncapitalized *métis* to denote any individuals or groups of mixed Native American–European ancestry. By this logic, capitalized *Métis* refers only to people of mixed ancestry with a distinct ethnic identity and sense of cultural separateness from both Indians and Europeans; see Devine, *The People Who Own Themselves*, xviii. An even narrower view defines Métis identity as people of mixed ancestry with family-kinship

ties to the old Selkirk or Red River colony, an agricultural settlement, fur-trading center, and key player in the far-flung buffalo-pemmican trade during the nineteenth century; see Anderson, "*Métis*," 109–30.

4. Giraud, *The Métis in the Canadian West*; Patterson, *The Canadian Indian*, 130–35.
5. The Mohican should not be confused with the Mohegan, an Algonquian-speaking people associated with the Pequot in southeastern Connecticut.
6. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 1.
7. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 40–45; Starna, *From Homeland to New Land*, 186–88.
8. Earlier sources include anthropologist Alanson Skinner's *Notes on Mahikan Ethnology*, largely a survey of traditional material culture and technology. Appended at the end of Skinner's work are excerpts from a historical and cultural sketch written by Captain Hendrick, a Mohican chief, in the late 1700s. The historian DeCost Smith's *Martyrs of the Oblong and Little Nine* focuses on the Mohicans who gathered at the Moravian mission at Shekomeko in Dutchess County, New York, and their ultimate departure and westward migrations. Anthropologist Philip Colee examines the early years of the Mohican experience at the Stockbridge mission, while historian Patrick Frazier surveys that same community from inception to dissolution. More recently, the historian Shirley Dunn has written a series of works on the Mohicans utilizing early land deeds, among other documents, to understand their changing land use and relations with Europeans over time. Anthropologist William Starna's recent syntheses of Mohican culture and history span the period from 1600 to 1830.
9. The Spanish-derived "Mestizo" is a term used by Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 38, and the sociologist Brewton Berry, *Almost White*, for groups of mixed Native American, European, and/or African American ancestry. This book will employ the words "mixed-race," "admixed," or "tri-racial isolate" for the same phenomena.
10. Carlson, *The Unfit*, 168.
11. Carlson, *The Unfit*, 535. Carlson cites Winship, *Jukes-Edwards*, 8–9, who contends that the Jukes pseudonym was taken from the slang verb *to juke*, meaning the tendency of birds to roost in any convenient location. It is interesting that the root word *juke*, as in *jukebox* and *juke joint*, is a southern Gullah term meaning "disorderly." Ultimately, it is of West African origin, akin to the Bambara word *dzugu*, for "wicked" (see *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*).
12. Rafter, *White Trash*, 26. While verbal imagery was the primary means of constructing an unsavory image for the outcaste communities and families, some eugenicists manipulated visual cues in an alarming way. Stephen Jay Gould's

The Mismeasure of Man,171, revealed how photographs of particular family members in Henry H. Goddard's *The Kallikak Family: A Study in the Heredity of Feeble-Mindedness* were doctored to give them a leering, sinister appearance.

13. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 73.
14. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 33.
15. Relevant to the history of disenfranchised peoples in the Northeast is Kenneth Feder's *A Village of Outcastes*, a creative historical archaeological study of Lighthouse village, a mixed-race community that existed in northwestern Connecticut in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The founding ancestors were a Narragansett Indian man and his white wife.
16. With the post-1970s rise of gaming and casino development on at least 150 Indian reservations in 29 states, the historical isolation and inequities of legal special status are being converted into powerful economic and political opportunities, at least for some Indian communities; see Darian-Smith, *New Capitalists*, 52–69.
17. Beale, "American Triracial Isolates"; Beale, "An Overview of the Phenomenon of Mixed Racial Isolates"; Pollitzer, "Physical Anthropology and Genetics"; Shapiro, "The Mixed-Blood Indian"; Thompson, "The Little Races."
18. Blu, *The Lumbee Problem*; Harper, "A Statistical Study of the Croatans"; Harper, "The Most Prolific Group"; G. B. Johnson, "Personality in a White-Indian-Negro Community"; Gilbert, "The Wesorts"; Harte, "Trends in Mate Selection"; Harte, "Social Origins of the Brandywine"; Dane and Griessmann, "The Collective Identity of Marginal Peoples"; Berry, "The Mestizos of South Carolina"; Kaye, "The Turks."
19. Price, "The Mixed-Blood Racial Strain"; Speck, *The Nanticoke Community*; Foster, "Negro-Indian Relationships"; Weslager, *Delaware's Forgotten Folk*; Parenton and Pellegrin, "The 'Sabines'"; Gilbert, "Mixed Bloods of the Upper Monongahela"; McElwain, *Our Kind of People*; Kennedy and Kennedy, *The Melungeons*; Pollitzer and Brown, "Survey of the Demography"; Price, "The Melungeons." Also, see Alther, *Kinfolks*, for a poignant personal account of her efforts to document Melungeon ancestors in her own family.
20. Beale, "An Overview of the Phenomenon of Mixed Racial Isolates." Beale's estimate is somewhat misleading, since many small tri-racial isolates declined or disappeared in the mid-twentieth century. An increase in numbers among larger groups like the Lumbees accounts for the appearance of population stability as a whole.
21. Numerous people of partial Native American ancestry belong to neither legally recognized tribes nor admixed communities. Rather, they live as individuals within mainstream society and express their "Indianness" largely on a personal or private level of emotion, memory, and sentiment.

See Comer and Jarvenpa's "The Primordial, the Political, or the Personal?" for a study of how such people in western New England rely upon an interplay of family traditions, iconic imagery, artisanship, and genealogy to maintain self-identities as Native Americans.

22. Dunlap and Weslager, "Trends in the Naming of Tri-Racial Mixed Bloods," 87. Also see Pekkala et al., "Some Words and Terms."
23. See Thompson, "The Little Races."
24. R. Daniels and Kitano, *American Racism*.
25. See Forbes, "The Manipulation of Race"; Garroutte, *Real Indians*, 47–48; Strong and Van Winkle, "'Indian Blood.'" The majority of federally recognized tribes in the United States have a minimum blood quantum provision among their criteria for legal enrollment and citizenship. One-quarter blood is the most common membership specification, meaning that at least one grandparent must be of full Indian ancestry. In certain tribes, that ancestor must be traced strictly through paternal or maternal lines in keeping with the patrilineal or matrilineal social structure of the community. Other tribes require no minimum blood quantum but may specify direct descent from at least one other tribal member. Yet other tribes ignore blood quantum in favor of reservation residency, community participation, and other factors in determining enrollment. These variable tribal definitions of citizenship do not always mesh with the federal government's own legal definitions of Indian identity, which affect the distribution of various economic resources and social services. While legal enrollment can enhance one's status and relationships vis-à-vis other enrollees, it may have little bearing on one's Indianness in a cultural sense, that is, growing up and living in an Indian community and having knowledge of an indigenous language and traditions. See Garroutte, *Real Indians*,15–16, 29–43. Also see McMullen, "Blood and Culture," for an analysis of how people in some southeastern New England tribes negotiate their Indianness by emphasizing either "blood" or "culture" as meaningful ethnic symbols. Phenotypic appearances of people in these communities may vary widely, reflecting different admixtures of Indian, African, and European ancestors. In this context, individuals within a group are judged and valued mainly by their tribally specific *cultural* expertise and practice. However, those individuals who value "blood" (or blood quantum) as a marker of their identities are less likely to be active members of tribal communities and, perhaps, more involved in intertribal pan-Indian activities.
26. Henige, "Origin Traditions of American Racial Isolates."
27. Hicks and Kertzer, "Making a Middle Way."
28. Walton-Raji, *Black Indian Genealogy Research*.

29. Hicks and Kertzer, "Making a Middle Way"; Hicks, "The Same North and South," 88; McMullen, "Blood and Culture."
30. Blu, *The Lumbee Problem*; Sider, *Lumbee Indian Histories*; Cook, *Monacans and Miners*.
31. See Dally-Starna and Starna, "Picturing Pachgatgoch," for historical context on this community. Although the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation appeared to win federal acknowledgment from the Bureau of Indian Affairs on January 29, 2004, an agency appeal panel overturned the BIA's decision. The Department of the Interior upheld this reversal on October 12, 2005. Subsequently, the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation has been pursuing efforts to have its federal acknowledgment reinstated. On September 24, 2007, the tribe filed a motion of summary judgment asserting that its loss of federal status resulted from illegal political influence by prominent politicians and a White House–connected lobbyist. See Schaghticoke Tribal Nation, *Media Information*, October 5, 2007, http://www.schaghticoke.com.
32. Welburn, "A Most Secret Identity."
33. See Campisi, *The Mashpee Indians*, for a penetrating analysis of the history and recent legal battles of the Mashpee Wampanoag Indians of Cape Cod. Despite 350 years of occupation of ancestral lands, intimate social relations as a community, and a cultural identity as a distinctive tribe, they lost a jury trial in 1977, as well as subsequent appeals, seeking federal recognition of their status as a tribe under the Indian Trade and Intercourse Acts. A key structural underpinning in this case was the rapidly increasing value of land for residential and commercial development by non-Indians in this part of Cape Cod.
34. Price, "A Geographic Analysis"; Gilbert, "Memorandum Concerning the Characteristics."
35. Berry, *Almost White*.
36. DeMarce, "'Verry Slitly Mixt.'" Also see Walton-Raji, *Black Indian Genealogy Research*.
37. Berry, *Almost White*, 23–27; Chanler, "The Jackson Whites"; Cohen, *The Ramapo Mountain People*; Greene, "The Tobacco Road of the North"; Price, "A Geographic Analysis," 147.
38. Berry, *Almost White*, 23; Gardner, "Folklore from Schoharie County," 305; Gardner, *Folklore from the Schoharie Hills*, 42–43. Emelyn Gardner's early work focused on the oral folklore of families of Dutch, German Palatine, and English ancestry who mostly occupied the fertile bottomlands of Schoharie Creek. In passing, she mentioned several "mixed blood" (Indian/European) groups, the Sloughters, Clappers, and Honies, who had been pushed into the less desirable uplands. With startling condescension,

Gardner judged these hill people to be morally inferior to their neighbors. She even dismissed their folktales as a degenerated form of lore "unfit for repetition." In Gardner's later work, however, her attitude changed. Her expanded focus now embraced the "hill folk" in the southern part of Schoharie County, which included the various "mixed blood" or "mongrel" groups noted above, plus the "Arabs," a similar group near Summit: "They are the kind of people who everywhere preserve old-time customs and beliefs. And it is from the lips of these and of others who, in one way or another have been associated with them, that much of the material in the present collection was obtained" (*Folklore from the Schoharie Hills*, 42). Even though she now valued their contributions to folklore, Gardner still recognized the hill people's outcaste status and characteristics and their similarity "in every way" to groups like the Jukes and the Nam.

39. Berry, *Almost White*, 23; Gardner, "Folkore from Schoharie County," 305; Gardner, *Folklore from the Schoharie Hills*, 42–43; Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 72; Price, "A Geographic Analysis," 139. In the early historic period the lower or northern portion of Schoharie Creek was Mohawk territory, with one of their castles or villages located near present-day Middleburgh. Even though the Mohicans had established a village nearby in the early 1700s at the invitation of the Mohawks, the land in the upper reaches or southern portion of Schoharie Creek, from Vroman's Nose southward to its confluence with the Batavia Kill apparently was claimed by both groups. See Dunn, "Indian Owners in and around the Catskills," 86–90, for a discussion of how land sales to Europeans by Mohicans within this contested area in 1734 drew angry protests from the Mohawks. Given the overlapping range of Mohicans and Mohawks in Schoharie country, it is possible that both peoples figured in the ancestry of the Sloughter mixed-race community that arose near Vroman's Nose.
40. Berry, *Almost White*, 23; Gardner, "Folkore from Schoharie County," 305; Gardner, *Folklore from the Schoharie Hills*, 42–43.
41. Berry, *Almost White*, 23; Gardner, *Folklore from the Schoharie Hills*, 42–43.
42. Berry, *Almost White*, 23; Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 38, 73; Price, "A Geographic Analysis," 139; Van de Water, *Grey Riders*; Wetherbee and Taylor, *The Legend of the Bushwacker Basket*, 14–19.
43. Berry, *Almost White*, 23; Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 38, 73.
44. Berry, *Almost White*, 23; Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 38, 72. As we will see in subsequent chapters, Brasser's conjecture that the Van Gelden (a variant of Van Guilder) family of New York had ties to the Stockbridge Mohicans of Massachusetts was correct.

45. See Cohen, *The Ramapo Mountain People*. Cohen traces the origins of the Ramapo (or Jackson Whites) primarily to several families of free blacks and mulattoes of Dutch African ancestry in seventeenth-century Manhattan who acquired landholdings in New Jersey. They gradually moved north and west toward the Ramapo Mountains, particularly after 1830, in search of opportunities in the iron mines in that area. However, the Ramapo people view themselves as descendants of Tuscarora and Delaware Indians who intermarried with defecting Hessian mercenaries during the Revolutionary War.
46. While "Slaughter" or "Sloughter" has faded out as a surname among these families, the name survives in local lore and legends. For some, the name has acquired a generic meaning akin to "hillbilly," but not always in a pejorative sense. See Chris Hedges, "Schoharie Journal: Despised Small Band Remains in Its Valley," *New York Times*, July 18, 1991; and Norman R. Brown, "Schoharie County 'Sloughter,'" 2010, http://brownwheelerfamilyhistory4.wordpress.com/2010/04/04/19-s. Bumper stickers reading "Kiss Me! I'm a Sloughter!" and "Last Sloughter Out of Middleburgh Turn Out the Lights!" may be seen on vehicles in Middleburgh, New York.
47. Berry, *Almost White*, 172–90.
48. Scott Christianson, "Bad Seed or Bad Science?" *New York Times*, February 8, 2003.
49. Christianson, "Bad Seed or Bad Science?"
50. Ellis et al., *A Short History of New York State*, 34–35; Grumet, *The Munsee Indians*, 186.
51. Van Valkenburgh, "The Word 'Sloughter.'" Also see Roscoe, *History of Schoharie County*, 60.
52. It is worth noting that a group of men led by a Samuel Slaughter attacked an encampment of Indians on the Wallkill in Ulster County on March 2, 1756. Several Indians, presumably Esopus Munsees, were killed. Apparently, this misguided assault coincided with the onset of the French and Indian War and a desire by New York authorities to move local Indians to the safety of larger settlements; see Starna, *From Homeland to New Land*, 185. It is not known if Samuel Slaughter had any connection to the colonial governor Henry Sloughter, to Margaret Robinson Sloughter of the Jukes family, or to the Sloughter mixed-race enclave of Schoharie County.
53. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 38, 72–73.
54. Haller, *Eugenics*, 10.
55. Black, *War against the Weak*, 7.
56. In the very first sentence of *The Nam Family*, Estabrook and Davenport thank Mrs. Harriman for generously funding their study.

57. Rafter, *White Trash*, 1.
58. In 1885 the concept of "germ plasm" was developed by the German biologist August Weismann to differentiate the cells of reproductive tissues from cells of body tissues ("somatoplasm") as a means of understanding mechanisms of inheritance and countering Lamarckian views of acquired characteristics; see Carlson, *The Unfit*, 148–53.
59. Black, *War against the Weak*, 25–26; Haller, *Eugenics*, 12–13.
60. Carlson, *The Unfit*, 236; Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 51.
61. Rafter, *White Trash*, 2–5.
62. Jordan, "The Blood of the Nation," 95.
63. Rafter, *White Trash*, 7.
64. Allen, "Is a New Eugenics Afoot?" 61.
65. Leonard, *Illiberal Reformers*, 7; Lantzer, "The Indiana Way of Eugenics," 27–28; Rafter, *White Trash*, 7. An exception to the focus on rural communities was Oscar McCulloch's early work among itinerant Ishmael families who lived, at least for part of the year, in or near downtown Indianapolis; see Kramer, "Recasting the Tribe of Ishmael," 44.
66. Rafter, *White Trash*, 13–14. Also see J. D. Smith, *Minds Made Feeble*, 35–47. The latter argues that the rise and proliferation of eugenics research in the early 1900s was driven by a burgeoning class of mental health managers and bureaucrats who sought to justify and rationalize their activities as well as the government appropriations and facilities that would bolster their professional livelihood and status.
67. Rafter, *White Trash*, 8.
68. Rafter, *White Trash*, 9–10; also see Haller, *Eugenics*, 106–8.
69. Rafter, *White Trash*, 11–12.
70. Rafter, *White Trash*, 16.
71. Leaming, "The Ben Ishmael Tribe."
72. Deutsch, *Inventing America's "Worst" Family*, 11–13. Deutsch also makes the provocative claim that Leaming's portrayal of the Ben Ishmael Tribe as a tri-racial community was a distortion linked to his own self-invention as a tri-racial person (170–71). Purportedly raised as a white middle-class Unitarian in Virginia, in later years Leaming became a member of a Black Muslim temple and assumed a new identity as a person of mixed Chickahominy Indian, African American, and Anglo-Saxon ancestry.
73. Leaming, "The Ben Ishmael Tribe," 131–32. Also see Kramer, "Recasting the Tribe of Ishmael," for a compelling analysis of Estabrook's revisions and reworkings of McCulloch's original notes on Ishmael families with an eye toward bolstering anti-miscegenation and compulsory sterilization legislation after World War I.

74. Sessions, *The Feeble-Minded in a Rural County*; Rogers and Merrill, *Dwellers in the Vale of Siddem*; Berry, *Almost White*, 23; Kite, "The 'Pineys'"; Finlayson, *The Dack Family*.
75. Cook, *Monacans and Miners*, 68–69.
76. Estabrook and McDougle, *Mongrel Virginians*, 199.
77. See J. D. Smith, *The Eugenic Assault on America*, 83–88, for a fascinating discussion of the pressure that Plecker exerted on Estabrook to reveal the real names of individuals in the *Mongrel Virginians* study. Apparently, there was precedent for such machinations in Virginia. See DeMarce, "'Verry Slitly Mixt,'" 6, who notes that the Gingaskin tribe was legally terminated by the State of Virginia in 1811 after neighboring whites claimed the Gingaskins were of half African American descent. A similar fate awaited the Nottoway tribe in 1824.
78. See Black, *War against the Weak*, 176–82; Cook, *Monacans and Miners*, 104–12; and J. D. Smith, *The Eugenic Assault on America*, 71–82. The convolutions of the southern racial-caste system are also captured in life histories. See, for example, Donald Smith's *Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance*, a riveting biography of Sylvester Long. Although Long's father and mother derived from mixed Indian (Cherokee and Lumbee, respectively) and white ancestry, they were born into slavery in western North Carolina. In the plantation social hierarchy they were labeled and treated as "coloreds." After emancipation the Long family continued to be regarded as blacks by mainstream society. As a young man, however, Sylvester began reconstructing his identity by attending Carlisle Indian Residential School. Subsequently as a newspaper journalist in the Canadian Plains, he reinvented himself as a Blood Indian: Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance.
79. Deutsch, *Inventing America's "Worst" Family*, 9, 129.
80. Also see Whitlock, *The Monacan Indian Nation of Virginia*, for personal accounts of the far-reaching impact of Plecker's policies on the lives of Monacans.
81. Some mainstream biologists of that era did not subscribe to the mongrelization argument. For example, see Castle, *Genetics and Eugenics*, 265–66; and H. S. Jennings, *The Biological Basis of Human Evolution*, 284–85. Both asserted that interracial matings could produce vigorous new genetic combinations, whereas "degeneracy" was often the result of unions between socially marginalized people, not of a flawed biological process.
82. Allen, "The Eugenics Record Office," 248.
83. Similar views were expressed by Davenport and Steggerda, *Race Crossing in Jamaica*, 468–73. The authors argued that the mixed-race "Browns" had a lower mental capacity than their "pure" European and Negro progenitors.

As they crudely concluded, a larger proportion of the Browns were "muddled and wuzzle-headed."

84. J. D. Smith, *Minds Made Feeble*, 169–70.
85. Black, *War against the Weak*, 411–26.
86. Stocking, "The Turn-of-the-Century Concept of Race," 6–7.
87. Stocking, "The Turn-of-the-Century Concept of Race."
88. Baker, *From Savage to Negro*, 11–14, 31–53; Brinton, *Races and Peoples*, 47–48.
89. Stocking, "The Turn-of-the-Century Concept of Race," 16.
90. Marks, "Race across the Physical-Cultural Divide," 242–43. In fairness, the term "eugenics" has acquired a variety of meanings and connotations over the years, so that caution is needed in assuming a connection between anything "eugenical" and the rise of the Third Reich; see Lombardo, *A Century of Eugenics in America*, 1.
91. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 74–75.
92. Leonard, *Illiberal Reformers*, 71–72, 119.
93. The development of racial hierarchies for eastern and southern Europeans appeared to gain traction at a point in history when the legal and institutional subjugation of people of color within the United States was virtually complete. This coincided with shifting patterns of immigration. In the four last decades of the nineteenth century most immigrants to the United States derived from western and northern Europe. By 1900, however, about 70 percent of the immigrant population originated from eastern and southern Europe; see Baker, *From Savage to Negro*, 88.
94. Leonard, *Illiberal Reformers*, 123
95. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*,134–35.
96. Marks, "Races across the Physical-Cultural Divide," 243–44.
97. Scarce research funds for physical anthropology in the early twentieth century created some strained and unlikely relationships. Despite his aversion to eugenics, in 1913 Boas approached Davenport and the ERO as a potential sponsor for funding twenty thousand anthropometric measurements; see Bokovoy, *The San Diego World's Fairs*, 102–3. As late as 1919 both Boas and Hrdlička sought financial support from the Galton Society of New York, founded by Davenport. Apparently, that attempt was unsuccessful because neither man would accept Madison Grant as a Galton Society representative on the editorial board of the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, a journal that Hrdlička had recently established; see Stocking, *Race, Culture, and Evolution*, 290–91.
98. Bokovoy, *The San Diego World's Fairs*, 101–3. Also see Bokovoy's fascinating discussion of Hrdlička's "The Races of Man," an innovative worldwide racial classification chart prepared for the Panama-California Exposition

of 1915–16. Unlike earlier racial typologies devised by Brinton, Ripley, and others, Hrdlička's scheme implied no hierarchy of greater or lesser worth. Rather, it suggested commonalities and evolutionary-historical relationships between roughly forty major ethnic groups or types by lumping these into sub-races and, in turn, grouping the sub-races into three major races based on the phenotypical criterion of skin color: white, yellow-brown, and black. Many of Hrdlička's types and sub-races violated the boundaries of what were thought to be "white," "black," and "yellow" races in earlier racial taxonomies and in popular thought. For example, his white race included such disparate ethnic types as Anglo-Saxons, Jews, and Lybians. If eugenicists were aware of this sophisticated classification, no doubt, it held little appeal for them; Bokovoy, *The San Diego World's Fairs*, 93–94.

99. Leonard, *Illiberal Reformers*, 113.
100. Anderson, "*Métis*." Also see H. W. Daniels, *A Declaration of Métis and Indian Rights*, who argues that many Métis see themselves as the "true natives" of Canada while regarding Indians and whites as immigrants differing in their time of arrival.
101. Harrison, *Metis*, 11.
102. The rubric "mixed race" has also been used by scholars in philosophy and literary studies to theorize about race and racial identity. For example, see Zack, *American Mixed Race*.

2. Border Wars

1. Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York*, 30–40.
2. Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 146.
3. Scholars hold somewhat divergent views regarding the aboriginal and early historic occupants of the upper Housatonic valley. For example, Shirley Dunn, in *The Mohicans and Their Land*, 60–62, 232–33, and in *The Mohican World*, 55–56, regards this region of western Massachusetts as part of Mohican territory. Her analysis of deeds and transactions indicates Mohican occupation of this region by the early eighteenth century, but it is likely that several Mohican villages had existed in the Berkshire area in the seventeenth century or earlier. Brasser, in *Riding on the Frontier's Crest* and in "Mahican," indicates "Housatonic Indians" as the early inhabitants of the Berkshires, apparently a separate, albeit closely-related, tribe or society. Philip Colee, in the "The Housatonic-Stockbridge Indians," 123–34, makes a similar distinction between the Housatonic and the Mohicans or "River Indians" of the Hudson River valley. However, he (172) also notes the existence by 1734 of two Mohican communities, Whahktukook (or Wnahktukuk) and Skatehook (or Skatekook), in the Housatonic valley.

In 1739 most of these people moved to the mission at Stockbridge, known as Wnoghquetookoke in the Mohican language, where two of the prominent Mohican leaders, John Konkapot and Umpachenee, were alleged to have been born on the Hudson River; see Edwards, *Observations on the Language of the Muhhekaneew Indians*, 40. Late Woodland (AD 1000–1500) archaeology in the region suggests that the upper reaches of the Housatonic River were occupied by people with a close "social affiliation with the ancestral Mohicans of the Hudson Valley"; see Binzen, "Native American Settlement," 35. For archaeological research on ancestral Mohicans in the upper Hudson River valley see Brumbach, "Algonquian and Iroquoian Ceramics," and Brumbach and Bender, "Woodland Period Settlement and Subsistence." Utilizing the work of the linguist Ives Goddard, "Notes on Mahican," William Starna, in *From Homeland to New Land*, 74–75, notes that the Mohican language had two major dialects, a western form spoken in the Hudson valley and an eastern variant, also known as Stockbridge Mohican, spoken in the upper Housatonic valley. Such dialectic divergence suggests some degree of social separation over time. Yet, it is unclear if any of these east-west distinctions represented sociopolitically separate societies or tribes. It is possible that the Housatonic (also known as Housatunnuk) were a local group of the Mohicans, for example, analogous to the Catskill band of the Mohicans, or to the Esopus as a local group of the Munsee; see I. Goddard, "Delaware," 213; and Grumet, *The Munsee Indians*, 32. This is compatible with the view of Dunn in *The Mohican World*, 41. Her discussion of Mohican war preparations against the Mohawks concludes that: "The Indians listed in the war group of 1663, the Mahicanders, the Catskills, and the Indians between Fort Orange and Hartford [i.e., Housatonics] were not three separate nations but three groups of Mohicans."

4. Frazier, *The Stockbridge Mohicans*, 146–48.
5. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 29–30, estimates that the Mohican population had declined from around 4,000–4,500 in 1600 to only 500 by 1700, the result of European-introduced diseases, frontier warfare, and depletion of fur sources in the Hudson valley. By the mid-1700s, steady land encroachment by colonists, abusive practices of traders, migration to Christian missions like Stockbridge, and an intentional policy of relocation of Indian communities by Sir William Johnson had removed many of the remaining Mohicans and other "River Indian" tribes, including the Munsees and Wappingers, from their Hudson valley homeland; see Hauptman, "The Dispersal of the River Indians."
6. Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 149. Also see Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York*, 337–41; and Winchell, "The Impact of John

Van Gelder," 136–41, for useful overviews of the Van Guilder–Livingston conflict. Kim indicates that John Van Guilder and his son Lewis, along with the settler Benjamin Franklin, were apprehended and imprisoned in Albany. However, Winchell, as well as Dunn (see note 21 below), identify John's imprisoned son as Matthew rather than Lewis. This difference may stem from discrepancies in the early sources pertaining to these events: see untitled item regarding John Van Guilder's imprisonment in the *New York Mercury*, 1756, precise date unknown; and Governor Hardy to the Lords of Trade, December 22, 1756, in O'Callaghan, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History*, 7:206–8. However, see Kellogg, *Karner–Van Guilder and Allied Families*; the latter's genealogy does not mention a Van Guilder son named Lewis, leaving Matthew as the likely imprisoned son in the foregoing account. The settler Franklin died of smallpox while in prison.

7. It was during this same period in 1757 that the Mohicans at Otsiningo found themselves in an impoverished situation unable to support themselves by hunting. They appealed to their Stockbridge relatives to take them in so that they could make a living by making brooms and baskets. See Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*,116; and Dunn, *The River Indians*, 99.
8. Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 149–51.
9. Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 151–52.
10. A depressingly similar history was unfolding among the Wappinger Indians immediately to the south of the Mohicans. They would ultimately lose their battles with the Philipse Upper (or Highland) Patent, a large landed estate in Dutchess County. The estate occupied lands claimed by the Wappingers, and by the 1760s it was also home to numerous Connecticut farmers and squatters who joined forces with Wappinger sachem Daniel Nimham to prosecute a legal claim against the Philipse landlords. Some years earlier, during the French and Indian War, Nimham had moved some of his tribe to Stockbridge where he was a friend of the Van Guilders. It was during this period, when Nimham was away fighting beside British forces against the French, that the Philipse landlords had aggressively extended their claims while evicting the Connecticut settlers and installing new tenants. While the Wappinger's case eventually was heard by the king's ministers in London, in 1765 it was referred back to Lieutenant Governor Cadwallader Colden in Albany, who rejected it, thereby upholding the legality of the Philipse estate's deed. Since the political apparatus of colonial New York was dominated by large landholders and their allies, this was not a surprising outcome. See Handlin and Mark, "Chief Daniel Nimham v. Roger Morris"; and Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 155–59.
11. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 36.

12. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 2. The "Chart D" to which reference is made is a deliberately distorted map of northern Washington County wherein various localities (coded by letters) are inaccurately situated.
13. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 3.
14. Unpublished "Key to the Nam Family," in series 13, box 4, folder 10, Arthur H. Estabrook Papers, M. E. Grenander Department of Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University at Albany, State University of New York. Hereafter cited as Estabrook Papers. In the 1960s, Arthur Estabrook donated many of his professional papers to the Special Collections. These materials fill two cubic feet of archival space organized into fourteen series of documents held in four large boxes containing dozens of folders. The manuscripts, notes, correspondence, photographs, press clippings, and other materials directly concerning the Nam family, and examined for the present book, are contained in series 1, box 1, folder 1; in series 5, box 2, folders 1 and 2; and in series 13, box 4, folder 10.
15. Perhaps the earliest rendering of John Van Guilder's name was *Jan van Gelder*, as recorded in his 1719 marriage to Anna Maria Carnaar (or Mary Karner) at the Dutch Reformed Church in Kingston, New York; see Kellogg, *Karner–Van Guilder and Allied Families*, 3. Other surname variants, including Van Gelder, Van Gelden, Van Gilder and Van Guilder, appeared almost interchangeably in vital records, deeds, tax lists, and other public documents regarding this family during the eighteenth century. By the nineteenth century, however, *Van Guilder* had become the preferred nomenclature among many descendants appearing in census records and other accounts. *Van Guilder* was also the prevailing usage at the time of Estabrook and Davenport's 1912 study, although a few descendants were known by the abbreviated *Guilder*. In Dutch, *guilder* refers to the unit of currency used in the Netherlands from the seventeenth century until 2002 when replaced by the euro. *Gilder* is a variant of *guilder*, and both words appear to derive from the Middle Dutch adjective *gulden*, meaning "golden." *Gulden* also refers to the Dutch unit of currency as well as to the Dutch florin, an early type of gold coin. While the root word *gild* or *gilde* translates as "guild," "corporation," or "craft," *geld* refers to "money," and the plural, *gelden*, means "monies." Thus, the variant spellings of Van Guilder translate approximately as "of money" or "of currency," an ironic surname for people who became an impoverished outcaste community. An exception is *gelder*, which refers to a person from the Dutch province of Gelderland. Thus, a Geldersman is a native of Gelderland or Guelderland; see Van Wely, *Van Goor's English-Dutch*, 420, 428; and Gerritsen, Osselton, and Wekker, *Wolter's Handwoordenboek*, 285–86, 329. Also see Winchell, "The Origin of the Van Guilders,"

who suggests that John Van Gelder's surname may reflect his early association with Dutch settlers in the Catskill area west of the Hudson River. Apparently, many of those settlers had emigrated from Gelderland.

16. Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder."
17. Kellogg, *Karner–Van Guilder and Allied Families*, 43, provides a birth date of 1722 for Joseph Van Guilder derived from church baptismal records. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 3, indicate a 1740 birth date for this same man, clearly an inaccurate estimate.
18. Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder," 132–35.
19. Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder," 128–29.
20. Dunn, *The Mohican World*, 169.
21. Dunn, *The Mohican World*, 187. Dunn speculates that Nock Namos, a Mohican woman originally from the Housatonic area, may have been John Van Guilder's mother. Also see Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder," 128, who notes that this same woman, whether John's mother or some other relative, had ties to the Fishkill area in Wappinger Indian country to the south. Whatever the relationship, Nock Namos had granted all her rights to reservation land in the Sheffield area to John Van Guilder after his imprisonment with his son Matthew in 1756; see Dunn, *The Mohican World*, 360; and Wright, *Indian Deeds of Hampden County*, 155–57. Shortly thereafter in 1756 and 1757, John Van Guilder and his children Jacob, Catherine, Nicholas, Joseph, John Jr., Matthew, Hendrick, and Andrew were granted additional lands in two separate deeds by Indian friends from Stockbridge (Wright, *Indian Deeds of Hampden County*, 161–64, 168–69). More recent investigations by Winchell cite a 1762 report from Attorney General John Tabor Kempe to Governor Moncton indicating that the Wappinger man Awansous bequeathed a large tract of land on the east side of the Hudson River to his two sons Tawanaut (aka John Van Gilder or Van Guilder) and Sancoolakheekhing. Since the latter died without heirs, Kempe noted that the Wappingers conferred the land to John Van Guilder, who later transferred it to his Wappinger friend Daniel Nimham. Collectively, these strands of evidence suggest that John Van Guilder was of Mohican-Wappinger heritage; see Winchell, "The Origin of the Van Guilders." In all likelihood, the "roving Dutchman" of Estabrook and Davenport's genealogy was not John's biological father but a step-father or family friend who had bequeathed his surname. Despite his complicated background, it is plausible that John Van Guilder was raised largely in the Mohican cultural milieu of his maternal relatives.
22. Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder," 129–31. Taconic (or Tachkanick) was a community of Mohicans just to the west of the mountain

range of the same name in Columbia County, New York. Their land was sold to the Livingston manor in the late 1680s. Farther south in Dutchess County was Shekomeko, a Mohican community that became the site of a short-lived Moravian mission in the 1740s. When Moravian activities were banned in New York, many of the converted Mohicans joined other mission villages which were spreading through Pennsylvania into Ohio during the French and Indian War. In a tragic episode during the American Revolution, ninety Moravian Mohicans were massacred by American militia at Gnadenhütten, Ohio, in 1782; see Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 35.

23. Wright, *Indian Deeds of Hampden County*, 116–19.
24. Kellogg, *Karner–Van Guilder and Allied Families*, 31–32; Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder," 129–31.
25. Dunn, *The Mohican World*, 187; Wright, *Indian Deeds of Hampden County*, 141–42.
26. Winchell, "The Origin of the Van Guilders."
27. Kellogg, *Karner–Van Guilder and Allied Families*, 27.
28. Kellogg, *Karner–Van Guilder and Allied Families*, 38. Kellogg concludes his discussion with the brief comment that "most of the Van Gilder descendants moved to Granville, N.Y." A similar statement about the Van Guilders' departure was made sixty years earlier by Hamilton Child, *Gazetteer of Berkshire County*, 140. Granville, in Washington County, New York, is precisely where most of the Van Guilders of Estabrook and Davenport's Nam study were residing. In effect, Kellogg and Child confirm that the Van Guilders of Massachusetts became the Nam.
29. Dunn, *The River Indians*, 75–77. It is interesting that the eldest son of the Mohegan Christian minister Samson Occum was named Benoni (a variant of Bennoni or Bennony). Occum was a key founder of the multi-tribal Brothertown community of coastal New England Indians who relocated near the Oneida Iroquois between the early 1780s and early 1790s. Nearby was another multi-tribal community, New Stockbridge, formed during the same period by Mohicans and others emigrating from the Stockbridge mission in Massachusetts; see Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 107, 120–24.
30. Several sons of John Van Guilder served in American regiments during the Revolution, including Nicholas, John (Jr.), Jacob, Matthew, Andrew, and Joseph. In turn, several of Joseph's sons (i.e., John Van Guilder's grandsons) served in the same capacity, including David, Stephen (Sr.), and Daniel (Sr.). At least twenty men from the Van Guilder and Winchell families combined served in the Revolutionary forces; see Winchell, "The Origin of the Van Guilders." Physical descriptions portray some of the Van Guilder soldiers as being five feet eight inches tall with dark complexions,

dark hair, and dark eyes, features consistent with their Mohican ancestry; see Kellogg, *Karner–Van Guilder and Allied Families*, 35–36.

31. John Van Guilder died in 1758, little more than a year after his release from jail. His land, dwelling, barn, and movable property were inherited by his wife Mary. His will also provided five shillings for each of his children and one grandson. By 1760 the widowed Mary Van Guilder starting selling some of her land to people outside her family. Between 1762 and 1778 she divided her remaining estate among her various children and grandchildren, often 40 or 50 acre parcels in "the so-called Indian land west of Sheffield." The largest plot, some 150 acres, went to her son Andrew (or Andrias); Kellogg, *Karner–Van Guilder and Allied Families*, 20–23; Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder," 142. Apparently, there was no such inheritance for her son Joseph. Lacking land and other resources, Joseph Van Guilder, and particularly his children, may have had a strong motivation to leave western Massachusetts and start a new life elsewhere. Even for those who remained, however, life was challenging. Eliakim Winchell was the last known grandchild of John Van Guilder to retain land in Berkshire County, and that was auctioned off after he died in debt in 1818; see Winchell, "Van Gilder and Winchell Family Line." Perhaps the last Van Guilder descendant remaining in Egremont, Reuben Winchell, died as a pauper in 1850; see Child, *Gazetteer of Berkshire County*, 140.
32. Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder," 136.
33. Despite inheriting substantial land, Joseph Van Guilder's brother, Andrew (or Andrias), also departed Massachusetts. Rather than joining his numerous nephews and niece in New York State, however, he settled in the town of Georgia in far northwestern Vermont. In 1819 he sold one-third of his remaining land in Massachusetts; see Kellogg, *Karner–Van Guilder and Allied Families*, 31.

3. A "New" Homeland

1. C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 199; also see Washington County Planning Board, *Introduction to Historic Resources*, 54.
2. Accompanying photographs and key to the Nam Family, series 13, box 4, folder 10, Estabrook Papers.
3. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 3.
4. At least one of Stephen's cousins, Hezekiah Winchell, also made the move to Washington County. He appeared in the 1825 New York State Census for the town of Hartford, but he probably arrived in the area many years earlier. This man's father, Hezekiah Winchell Sr., had married one

of Joseph Van Guilder Sr.'s sisters, Catharine Van Guilder, in Massachusetts. While there is no evidence that the elder Hezekiah Winchell was of Native American background, he may have been regarded as part of the Mohican community simply by marrying into the Van Guilder family; see Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder," 129.

5. "Towns" in upstate New York are official administrative districts comprising counties. The towns of Granville and Hartford each exceed forty square miles in territory and contain a number of hamlets and villages. To confuse matters, one of the settlements within the town of Granville is also called Granville. Likewise, one of the villages within the town of Hartford is also named Hartford. Unless stated otherwise, discussion of events occurring in Granville and Hartford refer to the larger town districts.
6. Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder," 134. Guilder Hollow in Massachusetts was located along Fenton Brook and the northern flank of a steep mountain known as Jug End, part of the Taconic range.
7. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 2.
8. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 3. Among the seven Van Guilder siblings who departed Massachusetts, Daniel is the only one explicitly mentioned as dying in Vermont. This makes him a likely founder of the Guilder Hollow community near Poultney. However, it is possible that Daniel also lived in the Granville, New York area for a time. See C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 199.
9. Dunn, *The River Indians*, 79–80.
10. European terms such as "River Indians" and "Loups" (from the French for "wolf"), which once referred to the Mohican proper, were also extended to the other Indian groups at Schaghticoke; see Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 24; and Day, *The Mot Loups of Father Mathevet*. The latter Schaghticoke should not be confused with the community on the lower Housatonic River in Connecticut, also known as Schaghticoke (and as Scaticook and Pachgatgoch). This was a multi-tribal community that became the site of a Moravian mission in the mid-1700s; see Dally-Starna and Starna, *Gideon's People*, 1:2–20. After 1734, "River Indians" also referred to Mohicans who had moved from the Hudson River valley to the Housatonic drainage in Massachusetts and to Mohicans in multi-tribal refugee communities on the Susquehanna River; see Dunn, *The River Indians*, 7, 90–98.
11. See Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 24, 65–66. As recently as 2012, the Abenakis commemorated their connection to Schaghticoke with a festival at that site honoring those ancestors who had lived in that community from the 1670s to 1750s; see Denise L. Watso, "Honoring Our Ancestors at the Branch of the River," 2012, http://abenakinews.blogspot

.com. The western Abenaki originally occupied most of what is now Vermont, New Hampshire, and parts of adjacent Quebec. However, after the Civil War and into the 1960s, the ash splint basketry trade and guiding of sport hunters and fishermen drew many Abenakis to the resort areas of the Northeast, including the Adirondacks; see Day, "Western Abenaki," 148–52. Today, many Abenakis live in the upper Hudson valley and the Capital District of New York.

12. Dunn, *The River Indians*, 75–81.
13. One exception here was the large Saratoga Patent of some 150,000 acres granted in 1684. This non-manorial patent was owned by seven individuals and straddled both sides of the Hudson River, including part of present-day southwestern Washington County; see Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York*, 40.
14. Prior to that time, the area was known as Charlotte County. The latter was formed in 1772 in honor of Queen Charlotte, wife of the despised King George III, and included what later became all or parts of thirteen counties in northeastern New York and northwestern Vermont; see Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 6. Also see Mead, "The Changing Boundaries of Washington County," for a detailed discussion of the complex political boundary changes in this region.
15. Hon H. Hollister, "Early History of Granville," *Granville Sentinel*, September 17, 1875, 2.
16. C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 194. Historian Theodore C. Corbett, in "Granville in Turmoil," examines the devastating impact of the War for Independence on borderland settlements like Granville, which suffered heavily from British incursions whereby farms were destroyed, local men imprisoned, families broken up, and heavy debts incurred. Under such duress, and feeling abandoned by rebel leaders in Albany, in 1781 Granville and other northern border towns petitioned the independent republic of Vermont for protection.
17. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 6. Although the first New England settlers arrived after the Revolution, the territory that later became Hartford was originally part of the 26,000-acre Provincial Patent granted in 1764 to twenty-six officers of the New York infantry. The patent was surveyed into 104 parcels, each of 250 acres, but given the instability of that frontier some never claimed their lands. Squatters moved onto many of the parcels; see C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 372. Also see Patton, *Hartford, New York*, for a detailed analysis of deeds, mortgages, wills and other legal documents pertaining to the Provincial Patent and the early founders of the Town of Hartford.

18. C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 302–3.
19. Salwen, "Indians of Southern New England," 169; Conkey, Boissevain, and Goddard, "Indians of Southern New England," 184, 188.
20. C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 303.
21. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 26. There were other Native Americans nearby in Lake George village. By the 1870s, as that place became a destination for travelers and early tourists, several Abenaki families from Caldwell spent their summers at Lake George, where they sold baskets, beadwork whimseys, and craft items to visitors. In 1877 one of the Abenakis was one-hundred-year-old Louis Ododoson, also known as Watso and Little Mountain; see "Lake George," *Granville Sentinel*, April 13, 1877, 2–3. Other Indian families, perhaps both Mohawk Iroquois and Abenakis, gathered in nearby Glens Falls and Saratoga Springs during the summer to sell craft souvenirs. And not far to the south in Hoosick Falls, Onondaga Iroquois were hired to attract travelers to Ehlmer's Estate as late as the 1920s; see Biron, *A Cherished Curiosity*, 32.
22. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 17.
23. De Forest, *History of the Indians of Connecticut*, 54–89, 263, 370–75; Orcutt, *The Indians of the Housatonic*, 30–48.
24. Comer and Jarvenpa, "The Primordial, the Political, or the Personal?" 67, 79.
25. Weinstein and Heme, "Oh Wither Weantinock," 61; Crone-Morange and Lavin, "The Schaghticoke Tribe and the English Law," 139.
26. Apparently, there were also early Mohegan (not be confused with Mohican) Indian settlers in the Dresden area of northern Washington County. Originally from the Thames River area of Connecticut, some Mohegans were spurred by land sales and conflicts to move northward and westward in 1775 under the leadership of Mohegan minister Samson Occum; see Conkey, Boissevain, and Goddard, "Indians of Southern New England," 181–82. While their destination was Brothertown in Oneida Indian country, it is likely that some of these migrants made their way to Washington County. An archival file in the Washington County Historical Society in Fort Edward, New York, contains information on descendants of Samson Occum in Dresden, compiled by town historian Agnes Peterson.
27. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 3–4.
28. C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 10–13.
29. H. P. Smith and Rann, *History of Rutland County*.
30. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 13–16.
31. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*; Brasser, "Mahican"; Dunn, *The Mohicans and Their Land*; Dunn, *The Mohican World*; Dunn, *The River Indians*; Starna, *From Homeland to New Land*.

32. Calloway, *The Western Abenakis of Vermont*, 15–16, 106; Day, "Abenaki Place-Names," 261.
33. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 9–10.
34. Corbett, "A Granville Farmstead," 24.
35. Nearby Vermont's state constitution had abolished slavery in 1777. However, small numbers of slaves were owned, bought, and sold, and were pursued as escapees in that state until 1810; see Whitfield, *The Problem of Slavery in Early Vermont*.
36. Stewart, *The Mysterious Black Migration*, 48.
37. Stewart, *The Mysterious Black Migration*, 50.
38. Stewart, *The Mysterious Black Migration*, 141–44.
39. Stewart, *The Mysterious Black Migration*, 53–55.
40. There were forty blacks living among the Stockbridges in Massachusetts on the eve of their westward relocation in 1783, at least one of whom married a Stockbridge woman and qualified for Indian land; see Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 238. The Stockbridge people generally seemed to be more accepting of blacks and offspring of Afro-Indian unions than the Brothertown Indians. The latter were relocated Christian Indians from coastal New England who lived near the Stockbridges in New York and later in Wisconsin; see Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 200, and note 26 above.
41. Estabrook and Davenport rarely mentioned African Americans among the Nam, and then in a highly unflattering light. One of their few references noted a Guilder Hollow woman who had "two mulatto sons" by a "lazy alcoholic negro." The two boys had been placed in an orphan asylum during childhood and then became troubled young men: "the elder one remains at C, unable to learn, lazy, licentious and alcoholic; the younger one, who had developed vicious traits, ran away at the age of fourteen, and has not been heard from since. They had a mulatto sister, burned to death in a brush fire"; see Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 18.
42. Stewart, *The Mysterious Black Migration*, 53.
43. Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 112.
44. See Grumet, "The Nimhams of the Colonial Hudson Valley." He has traced the Nimham surname and its variants in colonial records back to 1667 in Long Island. From there the name spread with descendants westward and northward as displaced Munsee- and Mahican-speaking Indians, including Wappingers like Daniel Nimham, struggled to maintain a marginal existence in the mountainous borderlands between colonial New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. By the late 1700s many of these people had married or had children by settlers of European and African heritage. Despite his black identity, it is plausible that Henry Nymham of

Washington County derived from mixed Indian-African parentage. Eventually, many Nimhams moved to Oneida country in New York and to the Stockbridge-Munsee Reservation in Wisconsin, where Nimham remains a prominent surname today. Also see Silverman, *Red Brethren*, 161, who notes that a Stockbridge Indian named Henry Nimham was among those making preparations in 1817 to move westward to the White River area of Indiana. At this point it is unclear if Henry Nimham and Henry Nymham were relatives or possibly the same person.

45. Stewart, *The Mysterious Black Migration*, 47, 109–11.
46. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 14–16.
47. Ellis, *Landlords and Farmers*, 145–49.
48. Ellis, *Landlords and Farmers*, 159–66; Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 68.
49. Farmhands were paid about eight to ten dollars per month in 1816, the same pay received by schoolmasters or male schoolteachers. Female schoolteachers received only three to four dollars per month. Domestic workers received two to three dollars a month. However, ordinary mechanics (i.e., operators and repairers of machinery) earned seventy-five cents to one dollar per day; see Hon. H. Hollister, "Sixty Years Ago," *Granville Sentinel*, March 31, 1876, 2. For a discussion of early American currencies and exchange rates, see Andrews, "McMaster on Our Early Money."
50. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 23, 31–33.
51. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 41, 69.
52. Ellis, *Landlords and Farmers*, 198–99.
53. Hon. H. Hollister, "Early History of Granville," *Granville Sentinel*, December 10, 1875, 2.
54. By the mid-1870s Granville was a particularly vital center of cheese processing in small factories that eventually phased out household production in that area. See Corbett, "A Granville Farmstead," for a revealing portrait of nineteenth-century agricultural practices, labor, and social life on a prosperous Granville farm.
55. "Hartford," *Granville Sentinel*, May 18, 1877, 3.
56. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 100–102.
57. C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 217–18.
58. Ellis, *Landlords and Farmers*, 173–75; Hon. H. Hollister, "Topography of Granville," *Granville Sentinel*, March 17, 1876, 2; C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 87.
59. "Cock Fighting in Granville," *Granville Sentinel*, January 26, 1877, 3.
60. "The Liquor Traffic in Granville," *Granville Sentinel*, March 28, 1877, 3; "Middle Granville," *Granville Sentinel*, January 17, 1892, 2.

61. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 119.
62. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 121–25.
63. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 121.
64. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 102–3.
65. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 43.
66. See Wilson, *Deaths at the Washington County Poorhouse*, 2–5. In 1856 the cost of supporting each resident of the Washington County Poorhouse was calculated at 67.5 cents per week. Since this was appreciably less than the rates paid by the towns earlier in the century, the transition to a county facility for the poor was understandable in economic terms.
67. Wilson, *Deaths at the Washington County Poorhouse*, 4.
68. Wilson, *Deaths at the Washington County Poorhouse*. The total number of poorhouse residents over the years would have far exceeded fourteen hundred, since some people were admitted for short periods or did not live their final days in the institution.
69. "Depradations of Tramps," *Granville Sentinel*, October 18, 1876, 3.
70. Item on liquor licensing, *Granville Sentinel*, February 12, 1892, 2.
71. The attitude toward tramps in Hartford was more lenient, perhaps due to a smaller volume of strangers traveling through that town. In the mid-1890s, the Overseers of the Poor for Hartford had the authority to send such individuals to hotel owners like John Brayton, who was then reimbursed at a rate of "fifty cents each for every tramp thus fed and lodged by him"; see Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 116. Yet other towns, like nearby Rupert, Vermont, had begun sending "installments of tramps" to the county jail to relieve residents from the "invasion of these unendurable pests"; see "Rupert," *Granville Sentinel*, April 13, 1877, 2.
72. "East Dorset," *Granville Sentinel*, April 13, 1877, 2.
73. Carlson, *The Unfit*, 57–60.

4. From Pioneers to Outcastes

1. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 33.
2. See Colee, "The Housatonic-Stockbridge Indians," 144–55.
3. Norton, *The Fur Trade in Colonial New York*, 120.
4. Colee, "The Housatonic-Stockbridge Indians," 149–50, 154.
5. Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder," 132–33.
6. I have adapted this perspective from the work of C. Hoy Steele, "Urban Indian Identity." Steele analyzed American Indian adaptations to urban environments in Kansas, including the mutual flow of cultural ideas between partners in mixed Indian/non-Indian marriages.
7. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 2.

8. The contrast between nomadic and settled people as an index of "primitive" versus "civilized" society has a long history in Western thought and became part of cultural evolutionary schema developed by pioneering anthropologists in the nineteenth century; see Lewis Henry Morgan's *Ancient Society*.
9. C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 208.
10. A rough sense of the extent of the Guilder Hollow neighborhood in the 1860s is indicated by farmstead or property owners' names on maps 2 and 3. The families of R. Gilder and S. Gilder lived in the heart of Guilder Hollow, while N. Gilder was located a couple miles to the northeast near Slyborough. W. Van Gilder and W. Gilder lived on the periphery near North Hartford and Middle Granville, respectively.
11. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 2–3.
12. This information is derived from a typewritten list, "Key Index to the Places in Guilder Hollow Pedigree," in series 5, box 2, folder 1, Estabrook Papers.
13. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 56.
14. C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 376–77.
15. See Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 35; and Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 18–19.
16. See H. P. Smith and Rann, *History of Rutland County*, 654–60.
17. Since "Winchell" may have been an alias, it is unlikely that this man had any connection to the Winchells of South Egremont, Massachusetts, who intermarried with the Van Guilders.
18. Bushman, *Joseph Smith*, 51.
19. H. P. Smith and Rann, *History of Rutland County*, 660.
20. Bushman, *Joseph Smith*, 347–49.
21. See historian Richard Lyman Bushman's *Joseph Smith: A Rolling Stone*, 50. This meticulous biography of Joseph Smith Jr. briefly discusses the Wood-Winchell affair, acknowledging the possible involvement of Oliver Cowdery's father. However, Joseph Smith Sr. is not mentioned as a participant in these activities or as having lived in the vicinity of Middleton or Poultney, Vermont. Rather, his family lived in east-central Vermont, near Tunbridge, Royalton, and Sharon, and in adjacent New Hampshire prior to moving to Palmyra in western New York in 1816 (18–19). Yet, Royalton and Poultney were only forty miles apart, not far enough to rule out visits to the latter community by Joseph Smith Sr. Oddly, Bushman does not cite Smith and Rann regarding the Wood-Winchell affair, leaving the reader to ponder whether this was an intentional omission or unfamiliarity with the source.
22. H. P. Smith and Rann, *History of Rutland County*, 657.

23. New York State Census records were examined in the New York State Library microfilm collections in Albany, New York. Families are listed by year, town, and election district. The latter increased in number, and their boundaries were redrawn over time. In the early 1800s most families with the Van Guilder (or Guilder) surname were located in Granville. By the mid-1800s they were clustered in Granville's first election district. In 1875 they were in Granville's first, second, and third election districts. In 1892 there were Van Guilder families in Granville's fourth, fifth, and sixth election districts as well as Hartford's second district. By 1905 they were mostly in Granville's sixth district and Hartford's second district. Despite these zoning shifts, the families had remained in the same rural locale on the eastern fringe of Hartford and the western side of Granville.
24. New York State Census, 1835.
25. New York State Census, 1835.
26. Confirmation for this scenario comes from the eugenicists' observation that one of Stephen Van Guilder Sr.'s sons, presumably Stephen Van Guilder Jr., inherited his father's farm and "supported his family by gradually selling the property." See Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 25.
27. New York State Census, 1855.
28. NewYork State Census, 1855.
29. New York State Census, 1855.
30. New York State Census, 1855.
31. New York State Census, 1875.
32. C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 199.
33. New York State Census, 1875.
34. New York State Census, 1892.
35. New York State Census, 1905.
36. New York State Census, 1905.
37. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 103.
38. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 12–13.
39. C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 208.
40. Silverman, *Red Brethren*.
41. For example, a man who was known as "industrious, ambitious, and effective in business" changed his family name from Van Guilder "to escape the disgrace attached to it"; see Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 7.

5. The Eugenicists Arrive

1. Jörger, "Die Familie Zero"; Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 1.
2. "Middle Granville," *Granville Sentinel*, January 17, 1892, 2.

3. See Allen, "The Eugenics Record Office," 226; and Carlson, *The Unfit*, 240–43.
4. Allen, "The Eugenics Record Office," 226; Haller, *Eugenics*, 65–66.
5. One of Estabrook's classmates in 1910 was Florence Danielson, who coauthored the family study *The Hill Folk* with Davenport. Of the more than 250 eugenics field-workers trained by the ERO between 1910 and 1924, about three-quarters were women, who were thought to be more adept at observation and more skilled at gaining rapport and personal information from subjects; see Rafter, *White Trash*, 20–21.
6. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 1.
7. Two smaller genealogical charts in *The Nam Family* depict families who began intermarrying with the Van Guilders at an early date, namely, the Orcutts (Chart B) and the Winchells (Chart C).
8. Estabrook and Davenport's unpublished "Key to the Nam Family" actually lists 1,816 individuals. It is possible that some of the younger children from later generations were excluded from the study, yielding the 1,795 subjects reported in their published work. In any case, some pages are missing from the key for generations six and seven. It is found in series 13, box 4, folder 10, Estabrook Papers.
9. Similarly elaborate wheel charts appeared in Danielson and Davenport's 1912 publication, *The Hill Folk*, a eugenics family study of a rural Massachusetts community that appeared in the same volume as *The Nam Family*.
10. Rafter, *White Trash*, 81.
11. Among the earliest works demonstrating the usefulness of genealogies in social anthropology was W. H. R. Rivers's 1910 "The Genealogical Method." Such methods revealed relationships between cultural norms and actual behavior, especially kin-based behavior. Since Rivers came to anthropology from medicine, psychiatry, and experimental psychology, it is possible that he and Davenport had been exposed to similar intellectual influences. Ultimately, their genealogical methods were used for very different purposes. For eugenicists, a genealogy was a road map of biological inheritance. Anthropologists have studied kinship (or genealogy) in order to understand how people's connections and relationships in families and communities are an expression of cultural norms and practices and, ultimately, a particular worldview. Both of the former approaches differ from the work of professional genealogists, who establish documentary links between present and past generations in order to reconstruct the lives of particular individuals, not necessarily how these individuals relate to societal or cultural contexts; see Macdougall, "Speaking of Metis."
12. Of relevance here are the views of psychiatrist Abraham Myerson, an early critic of eugenics research methods, who observed: "The work has

largely been done by field workers who have passed judgement rather too glibly and surely on people dead three, four or five generations, concerning whom no real authentic information could be obtained"; see Myerson, *Eugenical Sterilization*, 117.

13. Rafter, *White Trash*, 19–20.
14. Allen, "The Eugenics Record Office," 239; also see Haller, *Eugenics*, 66–67. The first edition of *The Trait Book* and *The Nam Family* were both published in 1912 by the ERO. While this simultaneity in publishing might explain why Estabrook and Davenport did not explicitly cite or refer to the former in their Nam study, the index of traits had surely guided their work. The original edition was a "logical and alphabetical listing" of traits within seventeen major categories, including the Nervous System, Criminality, Mental Traits, and the Circulatory System, among others. In turn, these were divided and subdivided into nearly twelve hundred traits as disparate as the navicular fossa of the external ear (trait 2915), wanderlust (trait 3185), and inadventuresomeness (trait 4732). It was one thing to list hundreds of traits, but quite another matter to demonstrate their heritability. Indeed, to even remember such an extraordinary number of conditions and behaviors, let alone recognize and accurately record their manifestations among hundreds of subjects during brief field trips, created a methodological dilemma which, no doubt, drove many investigators to substitute vague impressions, gossip, and hearsay for empirical observations and measures. An expanded, second edition of the *The Trait Book* appeared in 1919. Another ERO bulletin, Davenport and Laughlin's *How to Make a Eugenical Family Study*, a guide for constructing family pedigree charts and filling out individual analysis cards, was published in 1915.
15. In 1948 the raw field data and index cards from the various ERO-sponsored studies were archived at the Dight Institute for Human Genetics at the University of Minnesota; see Haller, *Eugenics*, 185. In a telling statement, a former director of the Dight Institute, Sheldon Reed, judged most of the ERO field materials as "worthless" from a genetic standpoint; see Allen, "The Eugenics Record Office, 242–43.
16. Allen, "The Eugenics Record Office," 243. The problematic use of "considerable hearsay evidence" in Finlayson's Dack study was recognized by earlier critics; see Bogardus, "Review of *The Dack Family*," 852. In an even earlier book review, in 1913, Robert Yerkes had assessed Florence Danielson and Charles Davenport's *The Hill Folk*, the very first family eugenics study published by the ERO. *The Nam Family*, ERO's second monograph, followed the same methodological protocol. Yerkes questioned the researchers' dependence on indirect sources of information (such as interviews with

physicians, town officials, and neighbors) and concluded that "the analysis of the results for purposes of solving problems of human heredity is not highly profitable"; see Yerkes, "Review of *The Hill Folk*," 261.

17. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 31. In 1911 Henry Goddard had developed a revised version of Alfred Binet and Théodore Simon's test for measuring intelligence in children. His revision included a scale for classifying the feebleminded by mental age equivalents as "idiots," "imbeciles," and "morons." There is no evidence that Davenport and Estabrook used this instrument, at least with any rigor, in the Nam study. In any case, there were enormous difficulties in administering such tests consistently, in separating putative innate intelligence from the effects of learning and cultural experience, and in determining the boundaries between normalcy and feeblemindedness; see Haller, *Eugenics*, 97–99; and Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 77–79. Estabrook's disregard for IQ testing continued in his later work. In an unpublished restudy of the Tribe of Ishmael, he considered antisocial behavior as sufficient evidence of feeblemindedness; see Deutsch, *Inventing America's "Worst" Family*.
18. By the fourth or fifth generation, families with many other surnames were intermarrying with the Van Guilders. Among the most common were Bemis, Benway, Bushee, Chapin, Gould, and Rock.
19. H. P. Smith and Rann, *History of Rutland County*, 647, 749.
20. H. P. Smith and Rann, *History of Rutland County*, 946.
21. H. P. Smith and Rann, *History of Rutland County*, 49, 708.
22. C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 421.
23. H. P. Smith and Rann, *History of Rutland County*, 193–94, 833.
24. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 41; C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 375.
25. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 98.
26. In previous chapters of this book it was necessary to use the actual names of some individuals in order to comprehend the origins and early development of the Guilder Hollow community. However, from this point forward the anonymity of all individuals will be preserved.
27. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 15.
28. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 19.
29. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 25–26.
30. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 28.
31. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 18.
32. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 27.
33. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 29.
34. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 35.

35. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 7.
36. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 1.
37. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 65.
38. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 65.
39. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 66.
40. Schuster, "Reviews of Recent Books," 173. *Eugenics Review* was published by the Eugenics Education Society in Great Britain from 1909 to 1968. In the United States, a comparable journal, *American Breeders Magazine*, was published by the American Breeders Association beginning in 1905. After the latter became the American Genetics Association in 1912, its publication was renamed the *Journal of Heredity*, a series that continues today.
41. Estabrook, who restudied the Jukes in 1915, was aware of the cement plant closing and the subsequent dispersal of families from a locale that had provided many of them with laboring jobs for nearly a century. Indeed, he described a former Jukes laborer as having "many pieces of cement rock embedded in the flesh of his face, neck and shoulders, as the result of an explosion while thus employed"; see Estabrook, *The Jukes in 1915*, 2. For Estabrook, these circumstances were an inert backdrop that seemed to have little relationship, positive or negative, to the Jukes' struggles or impoverishment. Rather, the Jukes, like the Nam, were thought to be doomed by bad germ plasm. As Nathaniel Deutsch notes, however, Davenport was displeased with early findings in Estabrook's restudy suggesting that at least some of the Jukes were less isolated, more intelligent, and more worldly than their ancestors in Dugdale's time during the 1870s. Such evidence of improvement contradicted the strict hereditarian gospel that Davenport was promoting at the ERO. This potential rift between supervisor and junior colleague was resolved by Davenport's withdrawal as a coauthor of the study while Estabrook's published monograph omitted the offending information regarding environmental change and improved behavior; see Deutsch, *Inventing America's "Worst" Family*, 104–5. Years later Estabrook also conducted an extensive follow-up study of the Tribe of Ishmael, the people originally described by Oscar McCulloch. Except for a brief summary report, inexplicably, Estabrook's lengthy manuscript was never published, and crucial pages of the surviving document are missing. Deutsch has speculated that Estabrook had discovered that later generations of the Ishmaels displayed less degenerative behavior than their ancestors and that this heretical finding disturbed influential eugenicists at the ERO who quashed publication of the work; Deutsch, *Inventing America's "Worst" Family*, 125–27. If true, eugenics was operating more like an orthodox religion than a scientific enterprise.

42. See Boscoe, "Cement Industry"; and Werner and Burmeister, "An Overview of the History and Economic Geology," for historical perspectives on the natural cement industry in Rosendale, New York.
43. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 83.
44. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 83–84.
45. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 84.
46. Haller, *Eugenics*, 138–39.

6. Deconstructing the Nam

1. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 2.
2. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 3.
3. Rafter, *White Trash*, 17.
4. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 17–18, 27, 35, 41.
5. Davenport, *The Feebly Inhibited*. The eugenicists' contempt for itinerancy is also reflected in the ERO's index, *The Trait Book*, where "hucksters and peddlers" are classified together as trait 0961 under occupations.
6. Haller, *Eugenics*, 68.
7. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 18–19, 22–23.
8. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 40.
9. Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 116.
10. Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 244.
11. Stockbridge splint basketry may not have been common until after the American Revolution, when the sale of these products helped fill a void created by the loss of soldiers' salaries in that community; see Brasser, *A Basketful of Indian Culture Change*, 21.
12. Grumet, "The Nimhams of the Colonial Hudson Valley," 82.
13. Brasser, *A Basketful of Indian Culture Change*, 8–13.
14. By the 1750s Indian people in the lower Housatonic valley, like the Paugusset, Potatuck, and others gathering at Scaticook (or Pachgatgoch), were also making splint baskets, wooden pails, troughs, brooms, and canoes for sale to white settlers throughout eastern New York and western Connecticut; see McMullen, "Tribal Style in Woodsplint Basketry," 2.
15. See Wetherbee and Taylor, *The Legend of the Bushwacker Basket*, 4–19.
16. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 38, 73; Brasser, *A Basketful of Indian Culture Change*, 21.
17. Brasser, *A Basketful of Indian Culture Change*, 21. A few remnant Mohican families in the Hudson valley produced splint baskets as late as 1860. Also, see McMullen, "Woodsplint Basketry of the Eastern Algonkian," and Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, *Indian Baskets*, 110–33, for examples of early basketry among related Algonquian-speaking groups in the Northeast.

18. Wetherbee and Taylor, *The Legend of the Bushwacker Basket*, 19–24.
19. Wetherbee and Taylor, *The Legend of the Bushwacker Basket*, 30–31.
20. Although the cylindrical swing-handled basket was a common form, Taghkanic baskets included both round and rectangular types with fixed handles, among other variations.
21. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 2.
22. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 15–19.
23. For comparative perspective on the issue of recycling and adaptive reuse of discards, see Brumbach and Jarvenpa, *Ethnoarchaeological and Cultural Frontiers*, 177–81; and Lomnitz, "Survival and Reciprocity."
24. "Terms Country Slums a Social Liability: Dr. A. H. Estabrook in Eugenics Magazine, Says They Contain Dregs of Old Populations," *New York Times*, July 7, 1929.
25. Ishmaelite winter houses were ingeniously built upon skids so that they could be pulled or floated during spring flooding on the mud flats of the White River in Indiana. Nonetheless, these were the types of midwestern rural dwellings that might appear in architecture journals as examples of "American bad taste"; see Leaming, "The Ben Ishmael Tribe," 109–11.
26. Brasser, *Riding on the Frontier's Crest*, 6–9.
27. Starna, *From Homeland to New Land*, 72–74.
28. Quoted in E. F. Jones, *Stockbridge, Past and Present*, 22.
29. E. F. Jones, *Stockbridge, Past and Present*, 20.
30. It is worth noting that the present-day Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians in Wisconsin prominently displays the historical matrilineal clan symbols of bear, wolf, and turtle on its official tribal seal. A fourth symbol, that of the turkey, represents of one of the original matrilineal phratries of the Munsee. See www.mohican-nsn.gov.
31. The idiom of kinship was employed to express other intersocietal relationships as well. According to Aupaumut, the Mohicans regarded the Shawnees and Oneidas as their "younger brothers," the Miami and Ottawas as their "grandchildren," and the Mohawks and Onondagas as their "uncles." See E. F. Jones, *Stockbridge, Past and Present*, 16–17.
32. Grumet, *The Munsee Indians*, 17–23.
33. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 71–72.
34. In reviewing Estabrook and Davenport's data, I found sixty-six cases of cousin marriage, of which eleven were between first cousins, rather than fifty-one and sixteen, as they reported. There is no obvious way to account for this discrepancy, unless the authors were using information not completely represented in their charts.

35. Also see Korotayev, "Parallel Cousin (FBD) Marriage," for an interesting argument that parallel cousin marriage of the FBD/FBS (father's brother's daughter marries her father's brother's son) form was widely adopted when Islamization and Arabization occurred together in the eighth-century Arab-Islamic Khalifate.
36. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 73.
37. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 20–23, 71.
38. The unpublished "Key to the Nam Family" in the Estabrook Papers (series 13, box 4, folder 10) reveals that this man was Elijah ("Cute") Winchell, who married Martha Van Guilder, one of Joseph Van Guilder Sr.'s children and perhaps the only female Van Guilder who migrated from Massachusetts to Washington County, New York.
39. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 66–68.
40. Lurie, "The Contemporary American Indian Scene," 443–48.
41. Lurie, "The Contemporary American Indian Scene," 448.
42. Dann, "From Degeneration to Regeneration."
43. Dann, "From Degeneration to Regeneration," 14.
44. Dann, "From Degeneration to Regeneration," 14–15. A strong anti-French Canadian bias permeated the Eugenics Survey of Vermont. Moreover, there has been some degree of intermarriage between French Canadians and the western Abenakis who have had a presence in southern Quebec since the late seventeenth century; see Day, "Western Abenaki," 150. It is likely, therefore, that the ESV's prejudicial attitudes applied to both peoples. See Mariella Squire-Hakey's "Yankee Imperialism and Imperialist Nostalgia" for a poignant, personal account of her discovery of her own "gypsy" or mixed-race Abenaki background and how this identity was hidden by her family as a consequence of Vermont's eugenics program. Abenaki oral traditions indicate that several hundred Indian children were abducted from parents judged unfit by the eugenicists. For an in-depth history of the ESV, see Gallagher, *Breeding Better Vermonters*.
45. Dann, "From Degeneration to Regeneration," 18.

7. Demonizing the Marginalized Poor

1. See C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 220–22, 379–80; and J. H. Jones, *Marching to Save a Nation*. Also, the Hartford Museum in Hartford, New York, maintains a display of local letters, diaries, and other materials pertaining to the 123rd Regiment.
2. Estabrook and Davenport's information does not square precisely with the muster-in rolls of New York State reported in the Washington County

town histories published by Crisfield Johnson. Several individuals identified as Civil War veterans by the former do not appear in the latter. While Johnson used lists prepared by the town clerks from state records, he acknowledged that "corrections" might be needed; C. Johnson, *History of Washington County*, 220.

3. In 1910 farm laborers across the country earned an average of $27.50 per month (without board) or $330 per year, $400 per year with adjustments; see Mitchell, *Income in the United States*, 290.
4. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 26.
5. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 18.
6. The first or founding generation, Joseph and Molly Van Guilder, remained in Massachusetts. The seventh and eighth generations were largely children not yet of working age.
7. As discussed in chapter 5, Estabrook and Davenport concluded that the relatively few paupers in Guilder Hollow reflected the people's isolation, frugality, and tendency to share among families. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 65.
8. Deutsch, *Inventing America's "Worst" Family*.
9. Accompanying photographs, series 13, box 4, folder 10, Estabrook Papers.
10. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 22–23.
11. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 22–23.
12. Other photographs from the Estabrook Papers (series 13, box 4, folder 10) document Guilder Hollow residents clearly engaged in work. One of these shows a younger man of fairly dark complexion with a tall and slender build attired in bib overalls and a broad-brimmed hat. He was hitching up a team of two large, white draft horses in preparation for late spring plowing (see fig. 4 in chapter 4). This man was listed as a nineteen-year-old "farm laborer" in the 1905 New York State Census. In the background of the photograph stood a large, well-constructed Slyboro farmhouse, "Town's place," possibly the home of the family for whom the young man was working. Estabrook and Davenport observed that while this man had "mechanical ability," he lacked "training" and was "quiet, shy, taciturn, and licentious" (*The Nam Family*, 22).
13. See Gilfoyle, *A Pickpocket's Tale*, for an absorbing account of a nineteenth-century pickpocket, George Appo, who grew up in the Five Points area of New York City and traveled widely during his criminal career. Pickpockets formed a distinctive underworld fraternity with their own arcane argot and specialties. Some were known to work certain types of events or crowds, such as *railroad stations*, churches, and markets, among others.

14. Coercion is suggested in a least once case where a man was described as "living off the earnings of his prostitute daughter"; Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 39.
15. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 68–70. Also see Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 52–53, who notes that Davenport regarded prostitution as unrelated to economic circumstances. Rather, he saw it simply as "innate eroticism" determined by a dominant Mendelian factor. He also believed that erotically charged individuals were prone to violent outbursts and other afflictions making them "feebly-inhibited," a condition allegedly different from but analogous to feeble-mindedness. No doubt, Davenport's views about sexuality were colored by his Puritan upbringing and personality. By all accounts, he was a lonely and insecure man who craved approval, coveted power, was sensitive to criticism, and was uncomfortable with expressing joy or levity; see Carlson, *The Unfit*, 236, 346; and Haller, *Eugenics*, 63. Also see Kramer, "Recasting the Tribe of Ishmael," 61–62, who notes that Estabrook interpreted prostitution among Ishmael women not as a survival tactic but rather as simple licentiousness. *The Trait Book* offers further evidence of the eugenicists' bias. Both the 1912 and 1919 editions classified "prostitution" as trait 3516, a type of criminal behavior, and the later edition also classified it as trait 31743, a nervous system disorder. However, prostitution was *not* listed as an occupation in either edition. Curiously, some of men's less seemly livelihood strategies, specifically, pickpocket, pimp, and sharper, received no mention in *The Trait Book*.
16. See Durst, "Eugenics Family Studies," for an interesting argument that Estabrook and Davenport were influenced by King James biblical terminology in employing the word "licentiousness," shifting its original usage from a moral consideration of sexual sin to a purportedly scientific discussion of degenerate behavior. The use of such language seems consistent with Davenport's Puritan outlook (see note 15 above).
17. Misogynistic attitudes plagued many of the eugenics studies, despite a preponderance of female field-workers. ESV researchers subscribed fully to the stereotype of the "bad woman." By this view, sexually aberrant women begat immoral children and were perceived as a major threat to societal wellbeing. In turn, this gender bias influenced implementation of sterilization laws whereby female victims far outnumbered males. In some states, like Connecticut, the ratio was nearly twenty sterilized women for every sterilized man; see Dann, "From Degeneration to Regeneration,"13.
18. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 84.
19. In 1892 the *Granville Sentinel* reported a precedent-setting court case whereby a local prostitute was released from a five-year sentence to the

"house of refuge for fallen women." A judge upheld an argument that "there was no law making a common prostitute a criminal or making prostitution a crime." It was anticipated that the ruling would make one hundred additional women in that facility eligible for release; "Prostitution Not a Crime," *Granville Sentinel*, March 17, 1892,1.

20. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 24.
21. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 20.
22. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 67–68.
23. As noted by Rafter in *White Trash*, 24, the use of slurs was the most common type of evidentiary distortion employed by authors of the various eugenics family studies. In many instances, Estabrook and Davenport's inflammatory rhetoric seemed to contradict their own data. Thus, whereas comparable proportions of Nam men and Nam women (90 percent vs. 88 percent) were reported as "given to drinking in excess," the eugenicists were prone to characterizing only the men as "sots" and "vicious alcoholics"; Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 65.
24. Estabrook and Davenport classified 173 people as alcoholics, or just under 10 percent of the 1,795 individuals in their study. Yet nearly 90 percent of the population was classified as "excessive drinkers" (see note 23 above). How these assessments were made was not specified, and there was no indication of the prevalence of alcoholism in the general population.
25. In passing, Estabrook and Davenport noted a number of other physical and neurological maladies among the Nam, including apoplexy, ataxia, blindness, Bright's disease, dementia praecox (an earlier term for schizophrenia), cancer, cataracts, chorea, deafness, epilepsy, hydrocephaly, macrocephaly, nasal catarrh, nephritis, neuropathy, rheumatism, spina bifida, and strabismus ("squint eye"). No doubt there was a genetic basis for many of the illnesses they observed. Davenport had a particular interest in the inheritance of epilepsy and had already published on that issue; see Davenport and Weeks, *A First Study of Inheritance in Epilepsy*. However, the authors attempted no formal or systematic tracing of cases for these other conditions through ancestral lines of the Nam; nor did they compare frequencies of their occurrence with the general population.
26. See Singer, "Toward a Political-Economy of Alcoholism"; and Singer et al., "Why Does Juan García Have a Drinking Problem?"
27. Robbins, "Alcohol and the Identity Struggle."
28. Oswalt and Neely, *This Land Was Theirs*, 65–66.
29. Lurie, "The World's Oldest On-Going Protest Demonstration."
30. Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 45–52.
31. Bennion and Li, "Alcohol Metabolism in American Indians."

32. Also unknown in those days was the connection between heavy drinking during pregnancy and fetal alcohol syndrome, producing severe cognitive impairment among offspring. It is possible that some of the children whom Estabrook and Davenport identified as "imbeciles" or idiots" were physiologically damaged in this way.
33. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 23.
34. Coodley, *Upton Sinclair*, 6–7.
35. Beals, *Cyclone Carry*.
36. Zacks, *Island of Vice*, 108–21.
37. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic*.
38. Brayton and Norton, *The Story of Hartford*, 111–12.
39. *Granville Sentinel*, February 22, 1892, 2.
40. There may be other ways of interpreting excessive drinking. Bipolar disorders, more commonly called manic-depressive illness prior to the mid-1990s, are strongly associated, or "comorbid," with substance abuse. Some psychiatric studies have shown increased alcohol consumption among patients during both the depressed and manic phases of bipolar illnesses. In part, this may reflect a need to find relief from the agitation, restlessness, and irritability accompanying mania. Moreover, there is a pattern of family clustering of these disorders, or a high incidence among "first-degree relatives," but the genetic etiology is complex and not fully understood. In addition to comorbidity with alcohol abuse, bipolar individuals may exhibit hypersexuality, hostility, anxiety, explosive violence, irritability, distractability, social withdrawal, fatigue, racing thoughts, and pychomotor agitation, among other behaviors. This list of symptoms bears an intriguing resemblance to the widespread drunkenness, licentiousness, irascibility, feeblemindedness, shyness, and indolence that Estabrook and Davenport claimed for the Nam. Is it possible that what the eugenicists characterized disparagingly as depravity or degeneracy were, in part, uncontrollable neurophysiological mood episodes? Affliction with this serious medical condition would not invalidate the historical, cultural, and political economic interpretation of the Van Guilders' origins, migration and decline detailed in this book. Rather, the added burden of a bipolar disorder, if prevalent in the community, would have exacerbated the poverty and outcaste marginality these people were already suffering. In the absence of clinical psychiatric evaluations, this issue is difficult to address. While "manic-depressive insanity" appeared as trait 3164 in the ERO's massive index, *The Trait Book*, Estabrook and Davenport did not report this condition among the Nam. If the eugenicists lacked sophistication in biomedically based psychiatry, a specialization dominated by European researchers in those days, they

may not have recognized cases of manic-depressive illness in the field, or would have confused them with schizophrenia or other behaviors. While this subject is beyond the scope of this book, future archival research might pursue early hospital and asylum records for any evidence of the disorder among people from Guilder Hollow. If such diagnoses exist, however, there would remain a statistical problem of showing a prevalence significantly higher among the Van Guilders and their relatives than for the general population. The latter has been estimated at about 1.0 to 1.5 percent for bipolar-I disorder and 3.0 to 8.3 percent for the full spectrum of bipolar disorders. I am grateful to Matthew Bokovoy for alerting me to this line of inquiry. For background on this subject see Goodwin and Jamison, *Manic-Depressive Illness*, 7–8, 185, 229–31, 415–30; and Healy, *Mania*, 145–51.

Conclusion

1. Deutsch, *Inventing America's "Worst" Family*.
2. Quoted in Scott Christianson, "Bad Seed or Bad Science?" *New York Times*, February 8, 2003.
3. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 51.
4. Rafter, *White Trash*, 13–14; J. D. Smith, *Minds Made Feeble*.
5. See Hanson and Kurtz, "Ethnogenesis, Imperial Acculturation on the Frontiers." They contrast the experience of the Métis with that of the Genízaro, a mixed-race people of Spanish and Indian ancestry who emerged as a distinctive ethnic-cultural group in the northern frontier of New Spain in the seventeenth century. They were involved in a tributary mode of production characterized by slavery, the enforced-labor encomienda system, herding, and trading. For a time the Genízaro served as buffer communities between Spanish settlements in New Mexico and nomadic groups of Comanche and Ute raiders with whom they had established trading relationships. Unlike the Métis, who persist as an ethnic-cultural group today, the Genízaro were assimilated into Hispanic society by the early nineteenth century.
6. Ray, *The Canadian Fur Trade*.
7. For example, see F. Jennings, *The Invasion of America*, for a masterful history of the Puritan assault on Indian communities in seventeenth-century New England.
8. Gibson, *The American Indian*, 307–29.
9. As of July 1, 2007, the U.S. Bureau of the Census estimated that 4.5 million people were American Indians and Alaskan Natives, including those of more than one race. Of these, however, only 1,978,099 were members of the 561 federally recognized tribes. Thus, at least 2.5 million Native Amer-

icans, and perhaps many more, have no official legal status. See https://www.bia.gov/FAQs/index.htm.

10. Winchell, "The Impact of John Van Gelder."
11. See Winchell, "The Origin of the Van Guilders; Winchell, "Van Gilder Y-DNA Project"; and Blattner, "DNA Testing."
12. Gretta Nemcek, "Granville Tribe Files Injunction," *The Post Star*, May 17, 2003. It is unclear if this legal challenge was heard and ruled upon. According to Bureau of Indian Affairs case records updated to November 2016, the Hudson River Band of Mahican had not applied for acknowledgment as a federally recognized tribe; see https://www.bia.gov/FAQs/index.htm.
13. Nemcek, "Granville Tribe Files Injunction."
14. There may have been other in-marrying families. As noted in chapter 5, the unpublished "Key to the Nam Family" has some missing pages for generations six and seven.
15. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 65.
16. Rafter, *White Trash*, 18–19.
17. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 83–84.
18. Jorgenson, "Indians and the Metropolis."
19. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment*.
20. Jorgensen, "Indians and the Metropolis," 99–109.
21. Some of Dugdale's interpretations of the Jukes as an underclass of poorly paid laborers in Ulster County's industrial economy resonate with the ideas of underdevelopment theorists a century later. In his view, quarrying, cement burning and other forms of "common labor" called for "muscle-workers, who because they are muscle-workers, do not organize intellectual functions and therefore do not transmit them. The population that aspires to skilled or professional work must seek it abroad, and they immigrate. The rude laborers who are needed remain and multiply, and so a preponderance of that grade of population accumulates. The per capita wealth of the county is thus reduced by a double process,–the scattering of the enterprising members of the population; the concentration of those who have neither the disposition, the habit, or the power of saving." Over time, as this underclass of "muscle-workers" married their own kind, they were socially ostracized by others who used the family name of the "Jukes" as a generic term of reproach. See Dugdale, "Hereditary Pauperism," 92–95.
22. Haller, *Eugenics*, 179. While eugenics was losing credibility in the U.S. scientific community by the early 1930s, it was actually gaining strength as a popular cultural movement in that decade which witnessed record numbers of compulsory sterilizations; see Currell, Introduction, 2–3. Also see Currell

and Cogden's edited volume, *Popular Eugenics*, on the myriad ways that eugenics beliefs permeated American media and consciousness in the 1930s.

23. Dann, "From Degeneration to Regeneration," 26.
24. At that time Estabrook's address was c/o Dr. Amos Butler, State Board of Charities in Indianapolis, Indiana, where he was working on his follow-up study of the Tribe of Ishmael.
25. Ethel R. Evans to Dr. Estabrook, January 31 and February 14, 1917, series 1, box 1, folder 1, Estabrook Papers.
26. Dr. Estabrook to Ethel R. Evans, February 17, 1917, series 1, box 1, folder 1, Estabrook Papers.
27. Estabrook and Davenport, *The Nam Family*, 81.
28. Special to the *New York Times*, July 7, 1929, series 13, box 4, folder 10, Estabrook Papers.
29. Boas, "Eugenics," 477. Although Boas was an early, outspoken critic of eugenics, his views were not shared by everyone in his profession. As noted in chapter 1, a few prominent physical anthropologists, including Earnest A. Hooten of Harvard University, Harry L. Shapiro of the American Museum of Natural History, and Aleš Hrdlička of the National Museum of Anthropology assumed leadership positions in eugenics organizations and publication series, although Hrdlička eventually withdrew from the movement; see Haller, *Eugenics*, 73–74, 174, 188; and Rafter, "Apes, Men and Teeth."
30. Allen, "Is a New Eugenics Afoot?" Also see McCabe and McCabe, "Are We Entering a 'Perfect Storm' for a Resurgence of Eugenics?" The latter argue that racialization of the artificial reproduction technology (ART) market, among other factors, is setting the stage for a return to eugenics.
31. Jaimes, "Some Kind of Indian," 140–45.
32. Lombardo, "Return of the Jukes."
33. An invidious comparison of the Jukes and Edwards families first appeared in 1900 in a eugenics study by A. E. Winship, *Jukes-Edwards*.
34. Frazier, *The Mohicans of Stockbridge*, 15.

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