



The Barnard Bulletin

SEPTEMBER 2023

Vol. XXXVIII No. 9

A VERMONT WRITER

BY MARGARET EDWARDS

This column is an offering of The Danforth Library in Barnard and a chance to introduce Vermont writers who deserve wider renown.

Sarah N. Cleghorn

1876 – 1959



Sarah N. Cleghorn in an undated photo circa 1900

According to an unpublished autobiography by Vermont-er Herbert Congdon, he was out walking with a group of friends one day in 1900 when he saw a partridge. It was altogether natural for him to raise the shotgun he was carrying and shoot. The bird dropped to the ground, and, according to his account, the moment it did, a young woman in the group went berserk. “Sally rushed at me, red in the face, loud of voice, ready to claw me, I thought. As I picked up the bird, she burst into tears and screamed, ‘I hate you! I hate you!’ ”

Anyone who knew Miss Cleghorn even slightly would not have been surprised at her passionate, negative reaction to the killing. Young Mr. Congdon, no doubt priding himself on his marksmanship, dismissed her as “a decidedly peculiar person of very strong beliefs and feelings.” To him, she was no gentle lady to be admired, but a harridan prone to hysterical outbursts and fits of irrational temper. To her, he was an unfeeling wretch whose murderous cruelty was anathema.

Stubbornly opinionated and intractable as an adult, Sarah Norcliffe Cleghorn had spent her more amenable early childhood around Minnesota and Wisconsin. She had been born unexpectedly early in a hotel room in Norfolk, Virginia, where her parents were visiting. Her father was a Scottish immigrant who made an adequate living as an investment broker. When Sarah was nine years old, her mother died; and she and her brother (Carl) were moved to Manchester, Vermont, to be cared for by their mother’s sisters, Julia and Jessie Hawley.

Youthful Sally was scholarly from an early age. She graduated from a local private seminary (Burr and Burton), then studied briefly at Radcliffe College, from 1905 to 1906. She never married and, except for brief stints teaching or traveling, she lived most of her life in Manchester. She began writing in childhood and was prolific throughout her life. Her circle of friends would eventually include such New England luminaries as Dorothy Canfield Fisher and Robert Frost.

Frost was amused, and not the least scandalized, by intellectual women like Cleghorn. In his 1936 introduction to her published autobiography, *Threescore*, he announced that, in his view, the people of Vermont were being “taken care of by three great ladies.” He characterized Dorothy Canfield Fisher as the “wise novelist.” He described Zephine Humphrey as a “mystic essayist.” The third, he declared, was “saintly and a poet”— Sarah Cleghorn. “To a saint and a reformer” such as she, he said, “the great importance is not to get hold of both ends, but of the right end. She has to be partisan.”

Robert Frost himself carefully eschewed being partisan; he preferred to be wily in his advocacy. He made sure he couldn’t be characterized as either liberal or conservative, religious or secular; he delighted in keeping his readers guessing. As to whether humanity could be reformed, he clearly doubted it. (“Some say the world will end in fire, some say in ice,” he wrote, while maintaining that the world’s end might as easily be brought about by human greed as human hatred.)

In contrast, Cleghorn was always caught up in causes— transfixed by labor issues even at the age of sixteen. She joined the Socialist Party at thirty-five. She taught English at various schools, and even for short periods at the prestigious womens’ colleges Wellesley and Vassar. According to biographer Jone Johnson Lewis, Cleghorn was always “known for radical sentiments” and identified herself as “a Christian socialist, a pacifist, an antivivisectionist, [and] a vegetarian.” She worked for women’s suffrage and prison reform, and she marshaled forces against child labor, Jim Crow lynching, and the death penalty. Toward the end of her life, in 1943, she moved to Philadelphia and became a Quaker, avid to promote peace with Russia during the Cold War. She

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Cleghorn - Cont. from previous page

remained an activist in Philadelphia up until her death at eighty-four.

Cleghorn left behind a quatrain that seems to function as her chief claim to fame. Often anthologized under the title "The Golf Links," its severe brevity is part of its impact:

*The golf links lie so near the mill
That almost every day
The laboring children can look out
And see the men at play.*

Very evident in its four simple lines is the reason why Robert Frost took an interest in what this "righteous" female poet was writing. In her best poetry, the language she used was natural to common speech. She allowed herself no "poeticized" turns of phrase, no fancy vocabulary. Her quatrain's straight rhyme (*day / play*), as well as its iambic ballad meter and traditional rhyme scheme (abcb), mark it as part of English poetry's grand tradition stretching all the way back to Chaucer. Robert Frost in his poetry was striving for the same effect.

The messages in Sarah Cleghorn's verse aren't subtle. Here is how she countered the argument that, politically, she was butting in where she didn't belong and being a "meddlesome woman."

The Mother Follows

*She follows the children out to play,
And calls and clutches when they stray
The hideous, nameless house too near,
Or in the bright saloon would peer.
When will the foolish creature learn
That these are none of her concern?
"Go home and take care of your children."*

*She follows the young things to the mill,
And rashly seeks to guard them still
From fenceless cogs that whirl and thrust
And fill the air with lint and dust.
The pay is small, the hours are long,
The fire-escapes are none too strong—
Meddlesome woman! Home again!
This is the business of the men.
"Go home and take care of your children."*

*At last she follows the children home,
Up to the dark and airless room,
By noisome hall and lampless stair;
But these are none of her affair;
Nor should she seek to help or kill
Amendments to the Tenement Bill.
Yet now she wears upon her breast
A button with the bold request:
"Let me take care of my children!"*

Cleghorn's feminism is clear. Defying the injunction that social activism is the proper sphere of men only, she justifies her involvement as her embrace of the most distinctive female role: a mother protecting her children.

In another sort of poem, Cleghorn grounds her argument for her activism on behalf of the weak and lowly, the poor and the criminally punished, in the Christian imperative:

Comrade Jesus

*Thanks to St. Matthew, who had been
At mass-meetings in Palestine,
We knew whose side was spoken for
When Comrade Jesus had the floor.*

*"Where sore they toil and hard they lie,
Among the great unwashed, dwell I: --
The tramp, the convict, I am he;
Cold-shoulder him, cold-shoulder me."*

*The Dives' door, with thoughtful eye,
He did tomorrow prophesy: --
"The Kingdom's gate is low and small;
The rich can scarce wedge through at all."*

*"A dangerous man," said Caiaphas,
"An ignorant demagogue, alas!
Friend of low women, it is he
Slanders the upright Pharisee."*

*For law and order, it was plain,
For Holy Church, he must be slain.
The troops were there to awe the crowd
And "violence" was not allowed.*

*Their clumsy force with force to foil
His strong, clean hands he would not soil.
He saw their childishness quite plain
Between the lightnings of his pain.*

*Between the twilights of his end
He made his fellow-felon friend:
With swollen tongue, and blinding eyes,
Invited him to Paradise . . .*

Cleghorn's shows ingenuity in the use of language when she draws such unusual analogies as "the lightnings of his pain" and "the twilights of his end"—and when she leans on alliteration ("fellow-felon friend").

Pulling no punches, Cleghorn blames men for the sorry state of the world—or rather, she blames what she feels is a certain masculine cast of mind that happily divides the world into the haves and have-nots, then announces such injustice is beneficent.

The Incentive

*I saw a sickly cellar plant
Droop on its feeble stem, for want
Of sun and wind and rain and dew --
Of freedom! -- Then a man came through
The cellar, and I heard him say,
"Poor, foolish plant, by all means stay
Contented here; for -- know you not? --
This stagnant dampness, mold and rot
Are your incentive to grow tall*

Cont. next page - Cleghorn

Cleghorn - Cont. from previous page

*And reach that sunbeam on the wall."
-- Even as he spoke, the sun's one spark
Withdrew, and left the dust more dark.*

Yet not all of Cleghorn's poems are so argumentative. For one thing, like any good Vermont poet, she is capable of eloquently praising her adopted state's harsh, seductive beauty and its people's stoicism, as she does here:

Hemlock Mountain

*By orange grove and palm-tree, we walked the
southern shore,
Each day more still and golden than was the day
before.
That calm and languid sunshine! How faint it made
us grow
To look on Hemlock Mountain when the storm hangs
low!
To see its rocky pastures, its sparse but hardy corn,
The mist roll off its forehead before a harvest morn;
To hear the pine-trees crashing across its gulfs of
snow
Upon a roaring midnight when the whirlwinds blow.
Tell not of lost Atlantis, or fabled Avalon;
The olive, or the vineyard, no winter breathes upon;
Away from Hemlock Mountain we could not well
forego,
For all the summer islands where the gulf tides flow.*

The poet slips out of her natural voice when she writes this Vermont poem, indulging in anthropomorphic turns of phrase throughout; but even so, this poem shows her mastery of a complex rhyme scheme:

Spring in Vermont

*A flash of hail and snow
Drives through the mountains gray
And sweeps the plain below,
And beats the fragile windflower down;
the dead leaf's darling is laid low.
The gusts browbeat the trees
And drive the sap to root;
The beechen buds they freeze,
And lash the blackberry shoot
That clings unto the stalwart brier,
and bends unbroken to its foot.
The melted drifts return
And brim the forest pool,
Engreening moss and fern,
And flooding to the full
The pale Canadian violet,
that loves the rising freshet cool.
In the late afternoon
Returns a Southern swallow;
Then to the woodland soon
Young men and maidens follow,*

*And call across from glen to glen,
"Arbutus in the Windward Hollow!"*

In later, more sophisticated prosody, she pays tribute to Vermont's distinct seasons while creating another rhythmically complex poem:

Vermont

*Wide and shallow in the cowslip marshes
Floods the freshet of the April snow;
Late drifts linger in the hemlock gorges
Through the brakes and mosses trickling slow,
Where the May flower,
Where the painted trillium, leaf and blow.*

*Foliaged deep, the cool midsummer maples
Shade the porches of the long white street;
Trailing wide, Olympian elms lean over
Tiny churches where the crossroads meet:
Fields of fireflies
Wheel all night like stars above the wheat.*

*Blaze the mountains in the windless autumn,
Frost-clear, blue-nooned, apple-ripening days;
Faintly fragrant, in the farther valleys,
Smoke of many bonfires swells the haze:
Fair-bound cattle
Plod with lowing up the meadowy ways.*

*Roaring snows, down-sweeping from the uplands,
Bury the still valleys, drift them deep:
Low along the mountains lake-blue shadows,
Sea-blue shadows, in the snow-drifts sleep.
High above them
Blinding crystal is the sunlit steep.*

Much of Cleghorn's work has been criticized for its sentimentality. Yet even in this somewhat saccharine portrait of a saintly child (perhaps a self portrait?), she aims to create traditional verse that is not far from everyday speech—and her facility with meter and rhyme is superlative.

A Saint's Hours

*In the still cold before the sun
(Her Matins) Her brothers and her sisters small
She woke, and washed and dressed each one.*

*And through the morning hours all
(Prime) Singing above her broom she stood
And swept the house from hall to hall.*

*Then out she ran with tidings good
(Tierce) Across the field and down the lane,
To share them with the neighborhood.*

*Four miles she walked, and home again,
(Sexts) To sit through half the afternoon
And hear a feeble crone complain.*

*But when she saw the frosty moon
(Nones) And lakes of shadow on the hill,
Her maiden dreams grew bright as noon.*

Cont. next page - Cleghorn

Cleghorn - Cont. from previous page

*She threw her pitying apron frill
(Vespers) Over a little trembling mouse
When the sleek cat yawned on the sill.*

*In the late hours and drowsy house,
(Evensong) At last, too tired, beside her bed
She fell asleep -- her prayers half said.*

By the time of her death, Sarah Cleghorn had published three novels, three collections of poems, three lengthy ballads, a sociological study of women prisoners in Vermont, and an autobiography. Her sturdy reputation as an accomplished woman of letters was eroded by later critiques that chided her for stridency. True, her prose sought to instruct and proselytize, and many of her poems were written in the reformer’s spirit, but she had a talent for description and for graceful prosody that occasionally surmounted her urge to kindle outrage.

The Danforth Library at present has no book by Sarah N. Cleghorn, but it is hoped that at least one of her three volumes of poetry will become available, along with her autobiography, now on order.

BARNARD ROADS
A WORK IN PROGRESS

Work on the damage done by the July 10, 2023, storm continues in Barnard. A few residents have filed with FEMA for assistance in repairing the damage done by the flood waters. The Town has begun the process of inventorying the damage done and the costs of repair to date. This process will continue through next month and beyond. The repair of roads will continue with those that need the most attention being attended to first, when repairs can be completed by the Town Crew.

Many of the dirt roads in town are still narrow and rough. The northeast end of the Mount Hunger Road suffered a bankside, in the area opposite the transfer station. This part of the road will be one way for the foreseeable future, as repairs are going to require more extensive engineering than the Town can supply. This is one of several jobs that FEMA will be involved in. Single lane signs will be placed at the sight along with notices of weight restrictions on vehicles.

Barnard is still looking for a qualified person to work on the road crew. If you would like to apply, or know someone that might want the job, please visit the Barnard Garage web page, <https://barnardvt.us/garage>. Information links for the road crew position can be found at the bottom of the web page.

BETHEL AREA ROTARY
DRIVEN TO SERVE GOLF TOURNAMENT

The 2023 Driven to Serve Bethel Area Rotary Golf Tournament will be held at 10 am on Saturday, September 30 at Montague Golf Club in Randolph, Vermont. We have room for a few more teams of 4 and are actively seeking hole sponsors.

The Bethel Area Rotary Club is a proud part of our communities and of Rotary International, a global network of more than 1.2 million members. Locally, we support the towns of Barnard, Bethel, Pittsfield, Rochester, Royalton, Stockbridge, and Tunbridge.

Our service projects include:

- International Youth Exchange
- Food Shelf Support
- Community Garden
- Project Happy Holidays
- Wild Woods Halloween Event
- Providing Local Scholarships
- Global Relief Projects

Contact Jenny Hewitt - hewittvt@gmail.com or 802-779-1257 or Jeanne Conde - BethelAreaRotary@gmail.com with questions, to sign up a team, or to make a donation.

**LOCAL ARTIST KATE REEVES AT
MARSHLAND FARMS IN QUECHEE**

Twenty-nine original watercolors, painted by Kate Reeves of Barnard, Vt., are on display at the Quechee Inn at Marshland Farms in Quechee, Vt. ‘Plant stenciling’, a technique using live plant material as the stencil, incorporated into the painting, was used to create some of the watercolors. The show runs thru the end of August and is open and free to the public.

LOCAL CRYPTOGRAM

A cryptogram is a code in which one letter is substituted for another. For example, the word “Church” could be written BWMSBW. The letter B would be the letter C and would be so throughout the entire message. In this message Y = A. The solution is found by trial and error. The CRYPTOGRAM answer is on the last page.

"MO Y CZW DMPR .300 LKLQW
WLYQ, BDYP NFLR DL DYKL PF
EFFV OFQBYQN PF? M YEBYWR
PQMLN PF RPYW YQFZHN .190,
BMPD PDQLL FQ OFZQ QSM. YHN
M PQMLN PF CLP PDLI YEE MH
RLXPLISLQ. PDYP BYW M
YEBYWR DYN RFILPDMHC PF
PYEV YSFZP NZQMHC PDL
BMHPLQ."
-SFS ZLGVLQ

AT THE DANFORTH LIBRARY

Are you a community member or local organization looking for a space to hold group meetings, classes, or a one-time event? If your offering is open to the public (cost free or by donation) and it does not exclude anyone based on membership, we invite you to reserve the Holway Community Room at the Charles B. Danforth Library for your event. Stop by during our open hours to check out the space, or contact Trustee Judy Maynes.

Regular hours:

Monday 3-5pm (notary public service available)

Wednesday 3-5pm

Thursday 3-5pm (notary public service available)

Saturday 10am-noon

Wi-Fi is available

And a reminder that the Library orders new books every month and is happy to consider recommendations from patrons.

Below are the books received in August's book order.



The trustees have also have pulled some of their favorite books off the shelves and have put them on display with a blurb about there connections to the books and the reasons that they love them.

Charles B. Danforth Library, 6208 VT Route 12, P.O.

Box 204, Barnard, VT 05031, Phone: 802-234-9408

Email: charlesdanforthlibrary@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/charlesdanforthlibrary/>

Trustees: Berna Donlon, Margaret Edwards, Judy Maynes, Susan McNulty, and Kassie Tibbott.

GLAD RAGS FALL SALE

Friday, September 22, 2:00PM - 6:00PM

Saturday, September 23, 9:00AM - 2:00PM

Sunday, September 24, 10:00AM - 1:00PM
(Everything is half price on Sunday)

The Sale is located at the Masonic Lodge, 30 Pleasant St, Woodstock, VT 05091

For more information visit <https://www.gladrags.org> or <https://www.facebook.com/groups/145529065206>.

BARNARTS EVENTS SCHEDULE

Barnard Street Dance

Saturday, August 26, 3:00-10:00pm

In & around the Barnard Town Hall

Free and open to all!

Schedule of events:

- Games with Barnard Rec & Arts Bus at 3pm
- Route 5 Jive (roots bop dance) at 3pm
- Contra Dance starts at 4:30pm with music by Blind Squirrel and Kevin Donohue calling
- Potluck from 5:30-7pm
- Ben Kogan Band (jammy roots rock) at 6:30pm
- Sabouyouma (afro-funk) at 8:30pm
- Boat Race (provided by Silver Lake Association) TBA

Support the sustainability of the Barnard Street Dance by donating to the Street Dance Fund or become a business sponsor! Personal donations: <https://givebutter.com/barnardstreetdance23>. Business sponsorship: <https://barnarts.ludus.com/200440503>.

Sponsors who would prefer to send a check or need an invoice, please contact us directly! BarnArts is a 501c3 non-profit, and all donations & sponsorships are fully tax deductible.

We also need volunteers! Please contact Linda at info@barnarts.org for more information on volunteering or any support details.

Haunted Village Theater

Oct 21, Barnard Village and Barnard Town Hall

Holiday Cabaret - Dec 9 Wassail Weekend

Winter Carols - Dec 15

First Universalist Church of Barnard

BarnArts Center for the Arts info@barnarts.org

PO Box 41

802-234-1645

Barnard, VT 05031

www.barnarts.org

FEAST & FIELD MUSIC SERIES

2023 SEASON CALENDAR

August 24: Pointe Noir Cajun Band Cajun

August 31: Billy Wylder rock/world

Sept. 7: Spencer Lewis and the New Old Vermonters folk

September 14: TBA

September 21: Jenni & the Jazz Junketeers jazz/swing/soul

September 28: DJ dance Party

Feast and Field is located at 1525 Royalton Turnpike, Barnard, VT.

More information at <https://barnarts.org/mainstage/music-on-the-farm/>

The Barnard Bulletin is digitaly published around the twentieth of each month at BarnardBulletin.news.

ARTISTREE'S GARDEN GALA SILENT AUCTION AND LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

Amazing auction items in celebration of our 20th anniversary!

If you are unable to attend our event, simply create a free auction account at: <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/artistreecommunityartscenterauction/register/> and scroll down to "Registration for Silent Auction ONLY".

See all silent auction items here:

<https://secure.qgiv.com/event/artistreecommunityartscenterauction/items/>

Learn more about the 20 years of Artistree here: <https://artistreevt.org/garden-gala>

Artistree Collaborative Theatre is presenting "Little Shop of Horrors"

Overall Dates: September 25th, - October 29th, 2023
Performance Dates: October 19th - 22nd and 26th - 29th

Calling all ACTORS and ACTRESSES!! Artistree Collaborative Theatre (ACT) is officially accepting digital audition submissions for Little Shop of Horrors!

More information can be found at <https://artistreevt.org/audition-calls>.

Submissions will be accepted until September 1st, 2023.

Artistree Community Arts Center & Gallery
2095 Pomfret Road - PO Box 158
South Pomfret, VT 05067
802.457.3500 ext. 111

Support Artistree at: www.artistreevt.org or
<https://artistreecommunityartscenter-bloom.kindful.com/>

CRYPTOGRAM ANSWER

"If a guy hits .300 every year, what does he have to look forward to? I always tried to stay around .190, with three or four RBI. And I tried to get them all in September. That way I always had something to talk about during the winter."

- Bob Uecker

BARNARD ENERGY COMMITTEE

HOME ENERGY UPGRADE UPDATE

The Energy Committee is assisting Barnard residents to improve the efficiency of their homes through the Home Energy Upgrade campaign. Additional funds have recently been made available and in addition to the \$500 rebate for a qualified audit, the Barnard Bonus offers up to \$2,000 to qualified middle income residents once they have completed the work required by the audit. You can pick up a print copy of the handout at the Town Clerk's office (open Monday and Tuesday) or contact us and we'll mail one to you: BarnardBonus@icloud.com

THE PLANNING COMMISSION meets on the Monday prior to the first Wednesday of every month at 7 PM in the Town Office.

BARNARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION meets the second Monday of the month, 7:00pm, Town Hall.

BEES MEETINGS are held at 6:30pm on the 2nd Thursday of each month in the library at the school.

DANFORTH LIBRARY HOURS: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 3:00 - 5:00 pm, Saturdays 10:00 am to Noon. ECFiber Wi-Fi. Contact us: phone: 802-234-9408. Email: charlesdanforthlibrary@gmail.com.

SELECTBOARD meets the first and third Wednesday of the month at the Town offices at 7:00pm.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, Rob Ramrath, selectboard@barnardvt.us, 234-2911 x 2, Cell 603-762-5280. By phone at any time, in person by appointment.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR, Rob Ramrath, zoning@barnardvt.us, 234-2911 x 2, Cell 603-762-5280. By phone at any time, in person by appointment.

TOWN CLERK office hours are Monday and Tuesday, 8:00am—3:30pm. Public access is restricted. Call 234-9211 for an appointment.

THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:00pm at the Barnard Town Hall as necessary.

THE BARNARD ENERGY COMMITTEE meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm at the Town Hall

BARNARD GENERAL STORE, Monday-Saturday: 7am-7pm, Sundays: 8am-6pm.
<https://www.facebook.com/barnardgeneralstore>

BARNARD LISTSERV: to subscribe please send an email to: barnard-subscribe@lists.vitalcommunities.org

RECYCLING Click [here](#) for Hours and Regulations

THE BARNARD INN is running a "Feeding Neighbors & Sustaining Community" campaign. Purchase an e-Gift Card and in turn the chefs will feed neighbors. Whole chicken dinners (serves 4-6) and individual sized meals to help feed Vermonters in need. Thank you and please stay safe. E-Gift Cards are available at www.barnardinn.com.

ECFIBER Governing Board meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7pm via. Zoom. Contact the clerk of the District. secretary@ecfiber.net, for meeting information or visit <https://www.ecfiber.net/virtual-meetings/>

HISTORICAL SOCIETY Programs to be announced. Questions? Email: historicalbarnard1761@gmail.com

DELECTABLE MOUNTAIN QUILTERS (DMQ) meet the 1st Tuesday of every month at the Bethel Library from 1-3pm. Contact: Mary Croft 802-763-7074