

Planting a “Community of Gentlemen and Ladies”
on the Cumberland Plateau:
Thomas Hughes and the East Tennessee Rugby

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ABSTRACT

On 5 October 1880, Thomas Hughes gave the “Opening Day” address at the Rugby colony on the Cumberland Plateau in rural East Tennessee. Hughes, a noted English author, philanthropist, and politician, was president of the Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited. This colonization company was formed in London in 1879 to assist the emigration of young well-to-do Britons who could not find suitable employment at home. Hughes envisioned the Board’s colony as a place where classically educated young men might engage in manual labor without losing status. He thought Rugby’s rugged environment would encourage these youth to reject the rampant materialism of the age and to live simply. Sending a stream of fine young Britons to the South was meant to strengthen the region and to heal divisions between the United States and Britain.

Hughes’s fame ensured that he would be identified as the colony’s sole founder in the Rugby “myth” which was created in 1880. However, Hughes was not the colony’s only founder, nor did he play the central role in the colony that his fame or his role as president of the Board led everyone to expect. The Rugby “myth” perpetuated numerous misconceptions about the colony which this dissertation aims to refute.

The Rugby colony never achieved Hughes’s noble goals. Nonetheless, this colonization project remains a visible reminder of intentions to establish a community where leading simple, godly lives would trump self-indulgence and self-promotion.

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Chapter 1, Introduction: The Rugby Myth

Was Tennessee's Rugby colony a utopia or an idyllic rural community? Was the colonization project meant to be an experiment in Christian Socialism or a "naked land speculation"?¹ Was the venture masterminded by a "genial man of letters" or by several self-interested individuals?² Was the colony to provide agricultural employment for young, well-educated English gentlemen, or was it to become the "great watering place of the South"?³ Was the settlement doomed to failure because of its site or could strong, on-site leadership have created a thriving community? The answer to these questions is primarily "None of the above." In particular, the colony was neither a utopia nor an experiment in Christian Socialism. Rugby's story is more complex, more interesting, and more instructive. This dissertation is the first book-length treatment of the birth and childhood of "Tennessee's Victorian Village."⁴ Explaining why the settlement was established and why it failed to become a sturdy community is the purpose of this work.

Colonies have always been a compelling drama, even myth, of the American experience. Perry Miller expressed it well with his title: *Errand into the Wilderness*. The core myth depicts courageous pioneers carrying moral and material resources into the "wilderness" in order to realize personal dreams of leaving behind "Old World corruption" while making an honest fortune by hard work in the "New World." In the process these pioneers were often creating communities that would be superior because founded on moral ideals, be it Pilgrim

¹"Mr. Hughes's Colony," *The New York Times*, 12 July 1881.

²Ibid.

³Franklin W. Smith, *Organization, Objects and Measures[;] Description of the Estate on the Plateau of East Tennessee[;] Geological Section of the Plateau or Tableland* (Boston: The Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, 1880), 16.

⁴Doug and Dawn Brachey, *Tennessee's Victorian Village* (Brentwood, Tennessee: JM Productions, 1987).

Massachusetts, Catholic Maryland, or Cavalier Virginia which might then flourish because of spiritual genius. Rugby, Tennessee fits into this myth. In fact, Rugby generated its own myth, obscuring the real story about its establishment and early years.

The dramatic demographic and geographic changes in the United States in the 1800s are one of the major themes of American history. As the land mass of the new nation expanded from sea to shining sea, the population exploded from five million in 1800 to seventy-six million by the end of the nineteenth century. European immigrants were responsible for much of this dramatic increase. Six million of the ten million Britons who emigrated at this time made the United States their new home. Two centuries earlier, English colonists had successfully established a string of settlements along the eastern coast of North America. By contrast, the nineteenth-century “host of colonies of various kinds that the English attempted to found in the United States...collapsed within a short time.”⁵ A careful study of one of these colonies, Rugby in rural East Tennessee, makes one aware of how much capable leadership, serious planning and hard work, and resilient settlers contributed to the success of a colony.

The majority of nineteenth-century British emigrants were from the working classes of a highly class-conscious society where those of lowly birth were destined to lives of deference and difficulties. However, “as opportunities for gentlemen diminished at home,” upper-class Britons also looked to America, especially to the American west, for employment as well as enjoyment.⁶ Many of these Britons, emigrating as individuals or in nuclear families, took their chances of finding both lucrative employment and supportive communities in fast-growing and rapidly-changing America. Some were as disappointed as Martin Chuzzlewit, the central character in

⁵Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England: Essays on British Emigration in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994), 26.

⁶David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 429.

Charles Dickens's novel, *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*. Unfortunately for Chuzzlewit, his American adventure was a time of peril rather than pleasure. Even limited contacts with Americans convinced Chuzzlewit that they were "universally venal" because of their rapacious greed and determined pursuit of "money or status."⁷ Because Chuzzlewit emigrated from England in hopes of making his fortune, he was a tempting target for land speculators who easily exploited his eagerness to prosper. He purchased property in Eden, a "new settlement on the banks of the Mississippi" that existed only in the imaginative mind, and on the bogus map, of a persuasive real estate agent.⁸ Chuzzlewit was dismayed when he realized that he and his faithful traveling companion had been so decisively duped. Both men hurried home to an England which seemed a "real paradise" after their encounters with "America the hypocritical and avaricious."⁹

Based upon Dickens's own "disillusioning experiences" during his first visit to America in 1842, the novel is merciless in its condemnation of the "pursuit of dollars, the absence of culture and reading habits, American ineptitude for social pleasure and censorship of unpopular ideas."¹⁰ In addition to mining his own unpleasant memories for material with which to construct his savage satire, Dickens also based his novel "extensively on the copious advice literature directed towards poor emigrants seeking a more viable level of subsistence in the United States in the 1830s and 1840s----books like Calvin Colton's *Manual for Emigrants to America* (1832) and *The British Mechanic's and Labourer's Hand Book and True Guide to the*

⁷Patricia Ingham, "Introduction," in *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1999), xviii.

⁸Malcolm Bradbury, *Dangerous Pilgrimages: Trans-Atlantic Mythologies and the Novel* (London; Secker and Warburg, 1995), 109.

⁹Patricia Ingham, "Introduction," in *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*, xxi. The novel was initially serialized in 1843-1844.

¹⁰Nancy Aycock Metz, *The Companion to Martin Chuzzlewit* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001), 3-4.

United States (1840).”¹¹ Moreover, “debate over the emigration of the ‘respectable’ classes, a relatively recent and controversial phenomenon” also added to the mix of ideas from which Dickens constructed his novel.¹² Dickens made Chuzzlewit a member of the “respectable” classes. His disastrous experiences were perhaps a warning to those who were too optimistic about America as Dickens had been before 1842 when he naively asked, “What are the United States for if not for the regeneration of man?”¹³ Extremely disappointed by the reality he encountered in his American tour, Dickens confessed that the United States was “not the Republic of my imagination.”¹⁴

In contrast, the noted author, philanthropist, and politician, Thomas Hughes (1822-1896) was not the least disappointed by his first trip to America in 1870. The “most popular English author to visit the United States since Charles Dickens,” Hughes had closely followed the nation’s conflict over slavery.¹⁵ An ardent abolitionist, Hughes became extremely fond of the anti-slavery poems of James Russell Lowell, whose *Biglow Papers* he edited for publication in England in 1859. Meeting Lowell was the primary purpose of his first American visit although Hughes indicated that he was also interested in scouting opportunities for his own “several long-legged strapping boys.”¹⁶ A member of a prominent Massachusetts family long associated with America’s growing industrial strength, Lowell (1819-1891) was a faculty member at Harvard, his alma mater. He introduced Hughes to many illustrious Americans, including Ralph Waldo Emerson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and showed him some of

¹¹Nancy Aycock Metz, *The Companion to Martin Chuzzlewit*, 7.

¹²*Ibid.*, 8.

¹³*Ibid.*, 299.

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵John Roland DeBruyn, “Letters to Octavius Wilkinson: Thomas Hughes’ Lost Uncle,” *The Princeton University Library Chronicle* XXXIV, no. 1, (Autumn 1972): 33.

¹⁶Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell: A Chapter in Anglo-Americana,” (Dissertation, The University of California at Los Angeles, 1947), 67.

the historic sites in the Boston area in 1870. Writing to his beloved wife Fanny, Hughes noted that there was “no place [he] would so soon live in out of England as in one of these houses looking on to the Boston Common.”¹⁷ Hughes was “feted and lionized by his hosts wherever he went,” including visits to New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Washington, D.C.¹⁸ He traveled as far west as Nebraska in a private railway car as the guest of the president of a major railroad, and described his time in the United States as a “royal progress” in which he was treated as a “spoilt child.”¹⁹ Reluctant to leave, he assured Lowell, “Come back indeed I will.”²⁰

Although Hughes hoped to return in 1876 for the nation’s centennial celebration, he did not travel to America for a second time until August 1880. By then he was involved in a colonization project, aiming he said, to establish a “community of gentlemen and ladies” on the Cumberland Plateau in rural East Tennessee.²¹ Hughes intended the colony to provide employment for classically-educated young men from the upper classes, youth of “fair average abilities, good character...and strong bodies, who are entirely at a loose end, not knowing what in the world to turn their hands to.”²² Visiting the colonization site for the first time in September 1880, Hughes was excited about the beauty of this “enchanted solitude” and about its potential to promote “brave, simple, and godly lives.”²³ The colony’s first town was named “Rugby” in homage to his much-beloved public school, where he had excelled in several sports. Rugby was officially dedicated on 5 October 1880 in a formal ceremony the centerpiece of

¹⁷Thomas Hughes, *Vacation Rambles* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1895), 137.

¹⁸George Worth, *Thomas Hughes* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984), 80.

¹⁹Thomas Hughes, *Vacation Rambles*, 142.

²⁰Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” 88.

²¹Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee, Being Some Account of the Settlement Founded on the Cumberland Plateau by the Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, A Company Incorporated in England, and Authorized to Hold and Deal in Land by Act of the State Legislature of Tennessee* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1881), 106. This statement of intentions was included in Hughes’s “Opening Day” address, given 5 October 1880, at Rugby. His address was also included in *Vacation Rambles* (London: Macmillan Company, 1895), 227.

²²*Ibid.*, 3.

²³*Ibid.*, 43 and 92.

which was an inspiring speech from Hughes, its most idealistic founding father. For several months it seemed as if the colony was off to a good start. However, the settlement soon floundered despite Hughes's intense desire to create a class-free agricultural community where concern for the common good would trump the pursuit of personal profit. Hughes visited the colony a number of times between 1883 and 1887 while his mother lived there. After her death, exactly seven years to the day after the official dedication of Rugby, he was never again in the United States. The parent company of the colony was reorganized in 1892 with Hughes still in his role as president. After his death in 1896, the "Rugby Land Company took over in 1899, and in 1920 the land was sold to a Cincinnati capitalist."²⁴

Although the colony was short-lived, the East Tennessee Rugby never completely disappeared. A few of the original buildings remained, and descendants of several of the original settlers continued to live in the area. Even though the Rugby "colony was launched with a vigor that attracted worldwide attention," by 1952 Hughes's biographers could lament that "this Tennessee venture, though one of the most significant [experiments in community founding] had also been one of the most ignored."²⁵ There has been almost no scholarly attention to the colony. In the mid-1960s, Rugby was "discovered" by a teen-aged Brian Stagg, a resident of one of the neighboring small towns. Stagg made it his mission to preserve the "remaining structures of the English settlement at Rugby" and to produce a "thorough history of the colony..."²⁶ He established the Rugby Restoration Association and labored to get the site listed on the National Register of Historic Places. While Stagg succeeded in having Rugby included in the National Register in 1972, he abandoned plans to produce a "mammoth document" based on collating

²⁴Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes: The Life of the Author of Tom Brown's Schooldays* (London: Edward Benn Limited, 1952), 247.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 281.

²⁶Brian Stagg, *The Distant Eden: Tennessee's Rugby Colony* (Chattanooga, Tennessee: Paylor Publications, 1973), np.

“every significant word ever written about Rugby, all photographs and drawings, with more abstract ideas about Rugby’s significance and concepts about the lifestyles of the colonists.”²⁷

Instead, in 1973 Stagg published a small booklet, *The Distant Eden: Tennessee’s Rugby Colony*, containing a brief, but not totally accurate, history of the colony.²⁸

In fact, Stagg’s *The Distant Eden* was a crystallization of the “Rugby myth” that had begun to take shape even in Hughes’s lifetime. Because of Hughes’s fame as both a “genial man of letters” and an unselfish philanthropist, he had been prominently identified from the first as *the* founder of the settlement.²⁹ In all the early publicity, such as the four lengthy articles in *Harper’s Weekly* in September, October, and November 1880, journalists described the venture as a philanthropic project. Stagg continued to perpetuate the “myth” that Hughes’s project aimed to assist “England’s younger sons” who were victims of the long-established system of primogeniture.³⁰ Numerous writers assumed that Hughes, the author of the “best book ever written for boys,” was “well fitted to head a colonization movement with the United States as the field of operations.”³¹ Hughes’s first biographers attributed the colony’s failure to thrive to the “weaknesses of its members” although they also claimed that the venture “drew to the expanding West men and women with the very qualities needed; qualities like individualism and a sense of freedom.”³²

²⁷Brian Stagg, *The Distant Eden*, np.

²⁸Stagg indicated that because of “ease of readability” and “mental laziness” he did not document the sources of the information he included in *The Distant Eden*. This omission makes it impossible to determine why he did not accurately reconstruct the early history of the colony.

²⁹“Mr. Hughes’s Colony,” *The New York Times*, 12 July 1881.

³⁰Brian Stagg, *The Distant Eden*, 4.

³¹W. S. Passavant to Thomas Hughes, New York, 23 August 1880, in the Rugby Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives; Marguerite Bartlett Hamer, *Cameos of the South* (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1940), 2.

³²Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 281.

Thus, from the colony's inception until well into the twentieth century, a "Rugby myth" was created and perpetuated, distorting the truth about the colony. In the 1920s and 1940s, Marguerite Bartlett Hamer, a faculty member at The University of Tennessee, wrote about the colony based upon her study of some of Hughes's correspondence about the project. Hamer studied just enough of the primary sources related to the colony to provide a few facts about Rugby, liberally mixed with material that perpetuated the myth of Hughes as a "man of letters, statesman, and philanthropist," who became a colonizer to help young Englishmen because "in England, classes were fixed."³³ Hamer argued that Hughes established an "ideal community" which was to be a "complete realization of 'Christian Communism.'"³⁴ She correctly indicated that Hughes did not remain in the colony as its on-site leader after the "Opening Day" in October 1880, but she erred when she attributed his exit to a "meeting of Parliament in the following month."³⁵ Hamer also stated that Rugby's parent company was intent from the first on maximizing the colony's potential to attract tourists. She claimed that the construction of a "hotel in which to accommodate the confidently expected health-seeking, pleasure-seeking guests" proved that the settlement's founders wanted it to become a "health resort."³⁶ In fact, the first hotel could accommodate only fifty guests and was primarily intended to house prospective colonists until they could purchase land and erect houses. Hamer was partially correct to attribute the colony's failure to numerous factors including "mismanagement, the absence from

³³Marguerite Bartlett Hamer, "Thomas Hughes and His American Rugby," in *Comeos of the South* (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1940), 2. It is almost impossible to decipher Hamer's annotations, rendering the work of little value to anyone doing serious scholarship.

³⁴Marguerite Bartlett Hamer, "Thomas Hughes and His American Rugby," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 1928: 203; Hamer, *Comeos of the South*, 33.

³⁵Hamer, *Comeos of the South*, 8. Hughes's Parliamentary career ended in 1874.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 9.

the colony of its chief directors, land difficulties, conflicting titles, overlapping claims, and litigation.”³⁷

Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, Hughes’s first biographers, used Ms. Hamer’s work along with Hughes’s correspondence, his book about the Rugby colony, and numerous newspaper articles to write a partially accurate chapter about the settlement. They too identified Hughes as the colony’s founder, who intended to create a “community, tightly organised to prevent the evils of modern competitive society.”³⁸ They also vastly overestimated the amount of money raised by the colonization group Hughes headed, and were wrong about when the company acquired East Tennessee land, stating that the group “supplied 150,000 pounds worth of capital to buy a 7,000 acre tract at the beginning of 1879.”³⁹ These authors correctly indicated that another Briton, John Boyle, played a significant role in Rugby’s establishment, although they were unaware that Boyle visited the Cumberland Plateau long before Hughes. They also identified the Americans, Franklin W. Smith and Cyrus Clarke, as two men who were intimately involved in the colony’s early life. However, they incorrectly stated that after Thomas Hughes left the colony in early October 1880, Rugby was “to be run by John Boyle with help from Cyrus Clarke, Franklin Smith, Amos Hill, and Hastings Hughes, who had Tom’s power of attorney.”⁴⁰ Boyle was not even in the colony in October 1880. Although Smith attended the “Opening Day” events on 5 October 1880, he left soon afterward, never to return to Tennessee. Neither Cyrus

³⁷Marguerite Bartlett Hamer, *Cameos of the South*, 25. Kathleen Brock Stott was a graduate student in sociology at the University of Missouri at the same time that Hamer was working on reconstructing some of the history of Rugby. Stott chose Rugby as the subject of her master’s thesis which she entitled “Rugby, Tennessee: An Attempted Utopia.” This work, completed in 1937, contains too many errors to be useful to anyone interested in knowing more of the truth about Rugby, Tennessee. A more useful work about Rugby was completed by Ernest I. Miller in 1941. Miller, a graduate student in agriculture at The University of Tennessee, investigated the colony’s failure to thrive and correctly identified the colonizers’ and settlers’ ignorance of agriculture as huge handicaps. Miller’s thesis, “The English Settlement at Rugby, Tennessee,” will be examined more carefully in Chapter 7.

³⁸Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 228.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 229. The London Board raised approximately 25,000 pounds, or about \$125,000 for its colonization venture. Thus, Mack and Armytage’s assertion that they secured about \$750,000 is a gross exaggeration.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 236.

Clarke nor Amos Hill nor Hastings Hughes served as the able administrator who might have prolonged Rugby's life.

In a chapter entitled "Countrymen and Fortune Seekers," historian Roland Tappan Berthoff described Rugby as one of the "havens" for younger sons of British aristocracy and gentry where "they might preserve the amenities of caste though surrounded by republicans."⁴¹ Apparently Berthoff believed that Hughes lived at Rugby. Although he insisted that Hughes "guided the Tennessee settlement," he accused Hughes of being so miserly in sharing the "allowances provided by [the youthful settlers'] parents" that some of these young men "resorted to selling their clothes to the 'natives.'"⁴² Berthoff also overestimated the potential of the colony's location, labeling it "as congenial a retreat as Tennessee could offer."⁴³ He blamed the failure of the colony on the settlers, for "no foreigners were worse adapted for American life and yet more famous than a certain few hundred young British immigrants of the 1870's and 1880's" who resided briefly in places such as Rugby, LeMars, Iowa, and Victoria, Kansas.

The contribution Knoxville attorney Oliver P. Temple made to Rugby was the focus of graduate student Fred Bailey, who studied the colony some twenty years after Mack and Armytage and Berthoff.⁴⁴ Bailey correctly pointed out that Judge Temple served as counsel for the London-based Board of Aid to Land Ownership, entrusted with the important responsibility of vetting titles before the Board purchased any land on the Cumberland Plateau. Unfortunately, Bailey, like Hamer, studied just enough of the primary sources to provide some facts about Temple's involvement in the colonization project, along with quite a lot of fiction. He also

⁴¹Roland Tappan Berthoff, *British Immigrants in Industrial America, 1790-1950* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1968), 114.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 114-115.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 114.

⁴⁴Fred Arthur Bailey, "Legalities, Agriculture, and Immigration: The Role of Oliver Perry Temple in the Rugby Experiment," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* 44 (1972): 90-103.

focused only on Hughes as the colony's founder. Moreover, Bailey misunderstood Temple's role in the colony, indicating that he not only purchased land for the Board but also provided essential agricultural advice to the settlers, assertions that the primary sources do not support.

Two decades later Tennessee historian W. Calvin Dickinson continued to mix fact and fiction in what was meant to be a scholarly article about Rugby's residents. Dickinson described Thomas Hughes as "a socialist with an egalitarian mindset, and a man of means" as well as a "nineteenth-century British visionary imbued with Christian principles."⁴⁵ He argued that the colony was completely Hughes's idea, never mentioning the roles played by such men as John Boyle and Franklin W. Smith in the establishment of the colony, or the involvement of English solicitor Henry Kimber, a major shareholder, who took charge of the colony's business affairs in 1882. Dickinson claimed that "Hughes established a planned experimental community in eastern Tennessee" primarily to benefit "younger sons of England's landed gentry," thus perpetuating the myth that the system of primogeniture was the reason for Rugby.⁴⁶ He also stated that no more than five hundred individuals ever lived in the colony, and after analyzing about one-third of their names, he concluded that the majority of the colony's inhabitants were Americans, rather than Britons.⁴⁷

In "A Castle in the Wilderness: Rugby Colony, Tennessee, 1880-1887," Margaret McGehee also identified Hughes as the colony's sole founder. She argued that Hughes intended

⁴⁵W. Calvin Dickinson, "Whose Sons Settled Rugby? A Study of the Population at Rugby, Tennessee, in the 1880s," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* (52) 1993: 193-194.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 194.

⁴⁷Dickinson did not indicate how he determined that no more than five hundred persons ever resided in the colony. Nor did he explain how he selected the sample he studied to refute the assertions that the colonists were primarily Britons.

the colony to be a place where young Britons could enjoy a “permanent adolescence.”⁴⁸ She also criticized Hughes for not specifically identifying a specific role for women in the colony, ignoring his concern about careers opportunities for public school boys which led him to get involved in colonization.

Scholar Benita J. Howell correctly identified Boston merchant Franklin Webster Smith as the man responsible for selection of the town site that became Rugby, Tennessee. She incorrectly stated that the “London Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Ltd., led by Thomas Hughes” was searching for a colonization site at exactly the same time as the Boston-based Board of Aid, and so Hughes sent John Boyle as the Board’s representative to “inspect the Bostonians’ site.”⁴⁹ While Howell accurately argued that “Rugby’s Boston connection is an important piece of the story,” she overstated Smith’s role, indicating that in the summer of 1880 “he was burdened with the complications of land acquisition,” among other challenges.⁵⁰ In fact, when Boyle came to the colonization site twice between February and June 1880, he worked with Cyrus Clarke to purchase property and to take action on the “road from the depot to the town site, and acquiring the corridor for the road,” tasks Howell believed Smith undertook.⁵¹ She also overestimated the role that the “cooperative principles of Christian Socialism” played in Hughes’s vision for the colony.⁵² Howell, like John Egerton, whom she quoted, erred in

⁴⁸Margaret McGehee, “A Castle in the Wilderness: Rugby Colony, Tennessee, 1880-1887,” *The Journal of East Tennessee History* 70 (1998): 63.

⁴⁹Benita J. Howell, “Rugby, Tennessee’s Master Planner: Franklin Webster Smith of Boston,” *The Journal of East Tennessee History* (73) 2001: 27-28.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 28 and 34. As Smith’s correspondence to Judge Temple proves, he was still involved in land acquisition in June 1880. Before Boyle returned to England in May 1880, he had requested that Smith “act as agent” for the London-based Board (Franklin W. Smith, Boston, to Oliver P. Temple, Tennessee, 3 June 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers). However, Smith had chosen to remain involved in the colonization venture as a paid employee of the London Board, rather than as a decision-making member of the Board. To say that he was “burdened with complications of land acquisition” overstates his role. Moreover, if he thought his involvement was burdensome, why did he continue to work for the Board?

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 34.

⁵²*Ibid.*

attributing the failure of the colony to investors, such as Henry Kimber, who “seemed never to have understood or supported what Hughes hoped to accomplish.”⁵³

Egerton, the grandson of Graham Egerton, one of Rugby’s original settlers, believed that Thomas Hughes “began to dream of establishing a colony” in the United States soon after his 1870 trip.⁵⁴ He also erroneously believed that the “broad consensus on the general facts as they have been told and retold in newspapers, magazines, journals, pamphlets and scholarly studies--- and as they have been related here [in his *Visions of Utopia*]...are supported by the voluminous record of the colony.”⁵⁵ Egerton incorrectly thought that Thomas Hughes met Franklin W. Smith when he was in America in 1870. He therefore concluded that, when improved economic conditions forced Smith to alter or abandon his colonization scheme, Smith, “remembering Hughes’ interest in colonization, re-established contact with his British friend.”⁵⁶ In fact, none of the primary sources support this conclusion. Moreover, the archival evidence proves that Smith was not the “largest American financier of the land company.”⁵⁷ The copious financial records of the colony indicate that Smith never subscribed to the shares of either the Boston Board of Aid or the British Board of Aid. He made no financial contribution in 1881 when Dana Estes was raising money to erect a building to house the thousands of books given to the colony by American publishers in honor of Hughes. He made no financial contribution in 1882 when settlers were soliciting funds to support creation of a canning company. Smith made a partial payment to purchase land in March 1881 only to cancel the contract three months later.⁵⁸

⁵³John Egerton, *Visions of Utopia: Nashoba, Rugby, Ruskin and the ‘New Communities’ in Tennessee’s Past* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1977), 59, quoted in Howell, 37.

⁵⁴John Egerton, *Visions of Utopia*, 39. Archival evidence does not support this conclusion.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 44.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 46.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 55.

⁵⁸Smith initially paid \$500 of the purchase price (\$806) of the land. After he cancelled the sale, he allowed the Board of Aid to retain this money as a “loan.” After Henry Kimber became more involved in the business affairs of

Therefore, it is an egregious error to link the colony's leadership difficulties to "Smith, the largest American financier...[who] pulled out early."⁵⁹ Smith was never "in" financially, and he was never in a leadership role after the formation of the British Board of Aid to Land Ownership in January 1879. Egerton completely misunderstood the roles played by Cyrus Clarke, John Boyle, Hastings Hughes, and Henry Kimber in the colony. For example, he identified John Boyle as Henry Kimber's "resident representative," and he stated that Boyle had picked the site for the town."⁶⁰ He wrongly attributed to Hastings Hughes an interest in the "philosophical" reasons behind the colony, but he accurately understood that Boyle, Clarke, and Hastings Hughes "did not get along with one another personally."⁶¹ Egerton noted that Thomas Hughes said nothing in his "Opening Day" address "about governance of the colony."⁶² He was wrong to indicate that "Rugby was a company town, a benevolent oligarchy in which Hughes and a few others made all the decisions" because these oligarchs did not want Rugby to become a self-governing municipality.⁶³ In fact, Hughes fully expected Rugby's residents to become the "municipal authorities" in their town.⁶⁴ That did not happen because Judge Temple believed it was important for the Board to retain its legal status as a foreign corporation. Egerton was more correct than he no doubt realized in 1977 to acknowledge that "for all the wealth of records that exist and the scholarly and journalistic accounts that have been written, full understanding of the Rugby past is still elusive."⁶⁵

the colony, he insisted that Smith owed the Board money for "contra claims," and this money was never returned to Smith. There will be additional explanation about these financial transactions in Chapter 6 (Board of Aid financial records for March and May 1881, June 1882, June 1888 in the Rugby Papers).

⁵⁹Egerton, *Visions of Utopia*, 55.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid., 52.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid., 37.

When Brian Stagg began to reconstruct Rugby's story, more than four decades ago, he acknowledged that "magazine articles have romanticized the colony beyond all reason."⁶⁶ Both the magazine articles and small books about the colony aimed at general readers have continued to circulate misconceptions about the colony. Lynda Lasswell's *Rugby: A Brave Failure, A Brave Success* is a good example of the kind of misinformation that has been accepted as "truth" about the colony. In preparing this small book, Lasswell "borrowed" from the work of Hamer, Stott, Mack and Armytage, Bailey, and Stagg. In addition to incorporating their errors into her work, she made numerous mistakes of her own. She claimed that Hughes not only became a colonizer in order to help the "unfortunate second sons," but also that the venture was meant to "test the tenets of Christian Socialism."⁶⁷ Lasswell also connected Hughes's interest in colonization to his "encouraging visit to America in 1870" when he made contacts in Boston, notably with Franklin W. Smith, which led to formation of an English-American Board of Aid.⁶⁸ She claimed the group then bought "75,000 acres of land in the Cumberlands," more than double the actual amount of land purchased by the London-based Board.⁶⁹ Moreover, she argued that the "colony at Rugby would be an ideal situation to mold [*sic*] the American and British culture," a development she seemed to think Hughes desired because of his belief in "Anglo-Saxon solidarity."⁷⁰ Lasswell also erred in stating that "Hughes and his associates were careful in the choice of their town site," and in claiming that Rugby's inexperienced young settlers took "part in the apprenticeship program developed by the Board of Aid and Hughes to learn farming and

⁶⁶Brian Stagg, *The Distant Eden*, np.

⁶⁷Lynda J. Lasswell, *Rugby: A Brave Failure, A Brave Success* (Rugby, Tennessee: Rugby Restoration Press, 1975), 2.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, 3.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*

the care of livestock.”⁷¹ Like Mack and Armytage, she blamed the settlers for the colony’s failure, arguing that the “aims of the founders regarding development of industry and agriculture were lost on young men with academic backgrounds and interests.”⁷² She acknowledged that the “soil was only fair and unlike that of England,” totally ignoring the fact that the young Britons who came to Rugby had not previously been farmers and contradicting what she had just stated about their “academic background and interests.”⁷³ It is surprising that the Rugby Restoration Press published a book containing such errors!

More recent “popular” articles continued to perpetuate the “Rugby myth.” Lee Minton claimed that Hughes’s “Utopian community” began to be created in 1870 when he met a group of Boston capitalists who owned thousands of acres of “virgin wilderness.”⁷⁴ He stated that “advertising and promotion [of the colony] was intense in England and America,” implying that, like the successful Canada Company, Rugby’s founders had worked hard to recruit settlers.⁷⁵ In one of the most inaccurate statements about the colony, appearing in any of these accounts, Minton blamed Rugby’s failure to thrive on the London-based Board’s insistence on “materialism and profit.”⁷⁶ Apparently he was totally unaware that Hughes abhorred the materialism of his age and hoped that placing Rugby in an isolated rural area would encourage its residents to live simply. Another writer, Patricia O’Toole, thought of the colony as the “dream of an Englishman who thought he had found the cure for one of the most unpleasant side

⁷¹Lynda J. Lasswell, *Rugby*, 5. The Board of Aid never developed an apprenticeship program although Hughes recommended that youthful settlers should board with an experienced farmer for a year in order to succeed in agriculture. There were very few successful farmers in the Rugby area.

⁷²*Ibid.*, 6.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 2 and 6.

⁷⁴Lee R. Minton, “Rugby Tennessee: Thomas Hughes’s ‘New Jerusalem’,” *Nineteenth Century*, 7, no. 4, (1981): 43-44.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 44.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 45.

effects of primogeniture.”⁷⁷ She claimed that the colony got “off to an impressive start despite...a passel of acts of God--a brutal first winter quickly followed by a drought, a hotel fire, and a typhoid outbreak that claimed seven lives.”⁷⁸ Like so many other writers, she blamed Rugby’s failure to thrive on the settlers who “were not amused by the hard, endless work of farming.”⁷⁹ Moreover, she totally misinterpreted or misunderstood the reasons for the failure of the canning company, arguing that “for some reason (did everyone stand by, thinking everyone *else* had planted tomatoes?), only a few bushels turned up at the cannery, so it closed.”⁸⁰ In truth, it never opened!

Although this survey of the secondary literature about Rugby which has appeared in the past eight decades does not include “every significant word ever written about Rugby,”⁸¹ it does indicate that many, perhaps most, of the accounts of the colony are far more fiction than fact. The noted English author, philanthropist, and politician Thomas Hughes was not *the sole* founder of Rugby. Although he was involved in the colonization venture, he did not provide the strong visionary leadership that enabled men such as Thomas Talbot to successfully create new centers of human life north of Lake Erie in what had been Canadian wilderness in the early 1800s. Moreover, Hughes spent very little time in the colony, arriving for his first visit less than six weeks before the official “Opening Day” on 5 October 1880 and leaving shortly after that event. He did not return to the East Tennessee Rugby until September of 1883. By then Henry Kimber was playing the major role in Rugby’s business affairs. Hughes made an annual visit to the settlement over the next four years, staying with his mother who had emigrated in 1881 in order

⁷⁷Patricia O’Toole, “Empire of the Second Son,” *Preservation* 50, no. 2 (1998): 84. Some proof O’Toole’s writing ability is supplied by her book, *The Five of Hearts: An Intimate Portrait of Henry Adams and His Friends*, which was a “finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in biography” (90).

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 85-86. The evidence refutes her assertion that one can blame God for the typhoid epidemic.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 86.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*

⁸¹Brian Stagg, *The Distant Eden*, np.

to live in the colony. However, “he came and went as a private individual, with no fanfare of welcome or more notice than a one-line item in the local paper.”⁸²

Hughes was well aware that ownership of land was every bit as “important to the nineteenth-century Englishman” as it had been to the “ninth-century Englishman.”⁸³ A great amount of evidence indicates that “to be lord of his own acres---that universal ambition in a country like Britain where land signified rank---was the dream which turned the British countryman, whether laborer, tenant, or younger son of the gentry toward America.”⁸⁴ However, it was not the injustice of the system of primogeniture nor the “lure of cheap land” which led Hughes to become the president of a colonization company.⁸⁵ He “looked to the life of the West to make men” of his sons,⁸⁶ as well as hundreds (perhaps thousands) of other young Britons, by dint of their hard work and simple lives on the land, because he believed materialism was the great curse of his age. Speaking to the young men of Clifton College in October 1879, some nine months after the formation of the London-based Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Hughes lamented the ubiquitous worship of money:

Our race on both sides of the Atlantic has, for generations, got and spent money faster than any other, and this spendthrift habit has had a baleful effect on English life. It has made it more and more feverish and unsatisfying. The standard of expenditure has been increasing by leaps and bounds, and demoralizing trade, society, every industry, and every profession until a false ideal has established itself, and the aim of life is too commonly to *get*, not to *be*, while men are valued more and more for what they *have*, and not for what they *are*.⁸⁷

⁸²Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” 279.

⁸³Thomas Hughes, *Alfred the Great* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1878), 28.

⁸⁴Roland Tappan Berthoff, *British Immigrants in Industrial America*, 109.

⁸⁵Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England*, 49.

⁸⁶Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 280.

⁸⁷Thomas Hughes, *The Manliness of Christ* (Boston: Houghton, Osgood and Company; Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1880), 147. (Emphasis added)

Hughes encouraged his young audience to “put aside all evil habits, and to live a brave, simple truthful life.”⁸⁸ He acknowledged that they were coming of age in a period of economic depression “more severe than any known for fifty years,” but Hughes could not regret the financial challenges of the era.⁸⁹ Instead, he urged these public school boys to learn the “great lessons of simplicity and self-denial,” almost pleading with them to “foster, each in yourselves, and each in your school, a simple and self-denying life.”⁹⁰ Hughes believed that living in the midst of a “Mammon-ridden generation” made it harder and harder for these young men to practice “true manliness.”⁹¹ Locating the Board’s colony on the extremely rural Cumberland Plateau would encourage development of the “pure and simple virtues” which romantics like Hughes associated with “men in intimate contact with nature.”⁹² It is Hughes’s denunciation of materialism, not an interest in creating an “empire of the second son,”⁹³ which makes a serious scholarly study of the Rugby colony of any relevance to the twenty-first century.

In spite of the misconceptions about Rugby incorporated into all the secondary literature about the settlement, the authors of these works were correct to link Rugby with the closely related phenomena of emigration/migration and colonization. More than at any previous time in history, Europeans, especially Britons, were on the move. While many fled destitution and starvation at home, others, especially the British “remittance men,” were somewhat more fortunate for they “went overseas with promises of ‘remittances’ of money from home” which would keep them alive until they achieved economic success.⁹⁴ Moreover, Americans were on

⁸⁸Thomas Hughes, *The Manliness of Christ*, 143.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 147.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, 153-154.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, 160 and 148.

⁹²Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England*, 45.

⁹³Patricia O’Toole, “Empire of the Second Son.”

⁹⁴Lee Olson, “The British Remittance Men—In Fact and Fiction,” *Journal of the West*, 40, no. 1, (Winter 2001): 36.

the move, especially after 1865, when expansion of the nation's railroad network opened new lands, especially Western lands, to those attracted to economic opportunities in mining, cattle ranching, and farming. Some knowledge of the massive human migration in the 1800s to recently accessible, vacant lands is essential to an understanding of Rugby's story. Especially we must examine the foundation of successful colonies in North America and in the Antipodes, as well as failed attempts, to reconstruct the context in which Rugby, Tennessee emerged.

Chapter 2, Emigration and Colonization

Rugby's story must be placed in its context of nineteenth-century British emigration and colonization. Once we do this, we realize that Rugby's British roots, while important, are not unique. It is useful to distinguish between *emigration* and *colonization* although both phenomena figure in the establishment of Rugby. *Emigration* is appropriately defined as the permanent change of an individual's residence from one country to another. *Colonization* designates a more complex process whereby an individual or a group makes an intentional attempt to establish a new and lasting community. This new community, a viable organism in and of itself, is a deliberate outpost of a larger culture. Colonization ventures, like Rugby, were attempted throughout American history, beginning with the ill-fated Roanoke colony of 1585. The persistent efforts of dedicated individuals, such as Thomas Talbot and Charles Landis, and the work of well-organized groups, such as the Canada Company and the parent company of the Union Colony, prove that nineteenth-century colonization ventures could succeed. By carefully examining the reasons for their success, we can draw conclusions by which to evaluate the Rugby experience. It appears that to flourish, a colony had to have a sustainable economy, pioneers who were both skilled and determined, and strong on-the-site leadership.

The story of nineteenth-century British emigration is primarily, although not solely, one of "pushes" and "pulls," that is, the motivations and dreams of millions of individuals and the attractions at their destinations (pulls). We must remember that relocation was likely to be costly both materially and emotionally, and thus an individual's decision to emigrate was far from trivial. The movement of these emigrants from the British Isles to various foreign lands of the far-flung, wealthy, and powerful British empire has been labeled the "complex mosaic of

migration.”⁹⁵ The carefully constructed mosaics in St. Mark’s, Venice, or at the St. Louis Cathedral, are composed of millions of small pieces (known as *tesserae*) which taken together form a meaningful whole. Like these mosaics, the “big picture” of the migration story is a composite work, based on the experiences of those whose desires and dreams led them to leave their familiar homelands in order to establish new lives in distant lands. Unlike these mosaics, the complex migration story has no master planners whose vision and skills orchestrated the movement of millions of emigrants over many decades. Most of those emigrating from Britain between 1815 and 1914 traveled as individuals or as individuals in families who “went to urban areas where there were relatively few formal institutions to aid their settlement and assimilation.”⁹⁶ However, during this same time, both dedicated individuals, such as Thomas Talbot, and colonization companies, such as the Canada Company, played an important role in creating new communities. They continued the process of peopling North America which had begun two centuries earlier with the creation of Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in North America.

The early history of the Jamestown colony shows us the importance of strong and flexible on-site leadership. Established in 1607, the venture was the work of colonizers and colonists who hoped that rural areas held riches. Like many other Europeans, the London merchants who sponsored the colony knew that early “Spanish settlers in America were interested only in exploiting the American stores of gold and silver, and they were fabulously successful.”⁹⁷ Funded by a company chartered by, but not financed by, the crown, the English colonists

⁹⁵Marjory Harper, “British Migration and the Peopling of the British Empire” in *The Oxford History of the British Empire* Vol. III (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 75.

⁹⁶Dudley Baines, *Migration in a Mature Economy: Emigration and Internal Migration in England and Wales, 1861-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 54.

⁹⁷Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People, Vol. 1: To 1877* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), 11.

acknowledged their allegiance to their monarch, James Stuart, by naming their settlement for him.⁹⁸ Unfortunately, colonists at first focused so completely on the search for gold that they neglected the far more important task of ensuring their survival in a generally inhospitable area. The strong leadership of Captain John Smith forced them to change this focus. In 1612, another English emigrant, John Rolfe, introduced the cultivation of tobacco, a crop which became the colony's "gold mine." One can argue that without Smith's insistence on a strong work ethic, Jamestown, like the ill-fated Roanoke Colony, would have disappeared completely.

The early years of Plymouth Plantation shows how dogged perseverance and complete dedication to a cause could prevail against almost overwhelming odds. Not motivated by materialism, the Pilgrims left England on the *Mayflower* in search of a place where they might freely worship God in simple but devout services. Aiming to land in Virginia in the vicinity of Jamestown, they found themselves on the bleak New England coast in November 1620, too late in the year to move on. Aware that their strong religious commitment was not shared by all of their fellow passengers, thoughtful Pilgrim leaders created the "Mayflower Compact" to establish at least a rudimentary system of law and order for their colony. The document remains a testament to the importance of visionary leaders who can swiftly deal with unforeseen obstacles. Only about half (53 of 102) of those on board the *Mayflower* survived the first year in the New World. But the colonists' determination to create new lives for themselves, along with practical assistance from Native American neighbors, ensured the survival of a remnant. Powered by their religious zeal, the Pilgrims of Plymouth Plantation in the 1620s, like the United Empire Loyalists who fled northward in the 1770s, "broke down the barriers of forests and

⁹⁸According to historian Fred H. Hitchins, the government was "too poor" to subsidize colonization efforts; therefore, monarchs chartered private companies which raised their own funds, primarily from investors hoping to reap the rewards of sponsoring overseas voyages (*The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1931, xi). The colony named for James, the first Stuart monarch, was located in the region named some two decades earlier for his predecessor, Elizabeth Tudor, the "Virgin Queen."

wildernesses which seemed impenetrable, and opened the course for later settlement.”⁹⁹

The colonization experiences of Thomas Talbot also affirm the importance of strong leadership and dedicated perseverance. Talbot was ultimately recognized as “the greatest colonizer of his era” for the work he did in establishing settlements in Upper Canada (today’s Ontario) between 1803 and 1840.¹⁰⁰ Colonel Talbot began with a grant of 5,000 acres, bestowed for his military service rendered before he sold his commission after the Peace of Amiens in 1802. Selecting land immediately north of Lake Erie, “an area which was for climate and fertility probably the best in Upper Canada,” Talbot also became a government agent and was promised an additional “200 acres of land for every settler he placed on 50 acres.”¹⁰¹ (The British government paid the settlers’ transportation costs, while the Canadian government provided free land and probably food for these emigrants, who numbered about 2,000 by 1813.¹⁰²) Talbot personally assigned each settler to a plot and required that he build a house, “clear and sow ten acres within three years, and open a road suitable for traffic fronting on half of his lot” in order to receive the title to any property.¹⁰³ Although Talbot had filled the two original townships he had been allotted by 1820 and created a community of some 40,000 people by 1831, there were numerous complaints about his autocratic rule. Talbot acknowledged that he had been a pioneer in requiring settlers to complete certain duties, including “actual residence on the land located.”¹⁰⁴ Although some thought his actions “most arbitrary,” Talbot’s system was

⁹⁹Stanley Johnson, *A History of Emigration from the United Kingdom to North America, 1763-1912* (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, Bookseller, 1966), 12. It is estimated that in the era of the American Revolution as many as 40,000 United Empire Loyalists fled into British North America in order to remain British subjects. America’s most famous and most prolific inventor, Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931), was the great-grandson of one of these Loyalists.

¹⁰⁰Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration to British North America: The First Hundred Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 116.

¹⁰¹Ibid. Talbot had acquired personal knowledge of this land in 1793 and 1794 while serving as an aide to the lieutenant governor of the new colony of Upper Canada.

¹⁰²Stanley Johnson, *A History of Emigration*, 11. While government support for Talbot’s work makes these settlements something of an imperial project, the role played by Talbot should not be minimized.

¹⁰³Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration*, 116.

appreciated by the successful settlers who were “most grateful” for his strict policies.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, an English visitor to the area in 1838 shared her delight in “the sight of homes, barns, schools, and churches spreading out, at ten-year-old London with its 200 houses and 1,300 people, its architecture...and its five places of worship.”¹⁰⁶ Although some of Talbot’s early work was “carried on entirely at his own expense,” he later requested and received some government funding.¹⁰⁷ And if Talbot had enriched himself over the years by acquiring an estate of some 300,000 acres, he had done it at the cost of spending “thirty years of his life as a log-cabin dictator and [fighting] numerous battles with the local government officials.”¹⁰⁸

Thomas Douglas, the Earl of Selkirk, provides another example of the difference one dedicated, visionary leader could make in the life of a colony. A philanthropist with a genuine interest in aiding Scots with very limited means, Selkirk, shared Talbot’s goal of trying to establish British settlers in British North America rather than in the United States. Having been influenced by the “liberal humanitarian ideas of Adam Smith, Sir Walter Scott, and William Wilberforce” while a student at the University of Edinburgh, Selkirk was deeply disturbed by the problems of the Scottish Highlanders.¹⁰⁹ After touring the Highlands in 1792, he was convinced that the only solution “for the region’s ills was emigration.”¹¹⁰ When he masterminded the migration of hundreds of Highlanders, beginning in 1803, “Selkirk introduced almost every essential of colonization” later identified by such theorists as Edward Gibbon Wakefield as vital to a colony’s success.¹¹¹ These essentials included paying for the emigrants’ transportation

¹⁰⁴William A. Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles: with Special Reference to the Development of the Overseas Dominions* (London: Frank Cass and Company, Limited, 1966), 17.

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

¹⁰⁶Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration*, 117.

¹⁰⁷William A. Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles*, 16.

¹⁰⁸Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration*, 117.

¹⁰⁹George E. Carter, “Lord Selkirk and the Red River Colony,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*, 18, no.1 (Winter 1968), 61.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration*, 118.

and providing “land at reasonable purchase terms, work as labourers for those who needed it, and preparation for settlement by providing surveying, provisions, and shelter.”¹¹² He personally paid for many of these essentials, although the British government “freely placed tracts of land” at the disposal of those whom he sponsored.¹¹³

In 1803 when Selkirk came to Prince Edward Island where some 800 Scottish emigrants whom he had sponsored were busy getting settled, he found them lodged in “temporary wigwams, constructed after the fashion of the Indians.”¹¹⁴ Their colony was on the “site of an old French village, which had been abandoned after the capture of the island by the British forces in 1758.”¹¹⁵ His agent procured food for the settlers whose lots were, according to Selkirk, “concentrated within a moderate space. The lots were laid out in such a manner that there were generally four or five families, and sometimes more, who built their houses in a little knot together.”¹¹⁶ This arrangement facilitated their adjustment to living in a totally unfamiliar land since having close neighbors gave them a sense of security as well as colleagues to help with domestic and agricultural chores. When Selkirk returned to the island in September 1804, exactly one year after his first visit, he found his “plans had been followed up with attention and judgment.”¹¹⁷ In approximately one year after their arrival on the island, the colonists had “made themselves independent of any supply that did not arise from their own labour.”¹¹⁸

Writing to champion emigration as a solution to economic problems of the lower-income Highlanders, Selkirk concluded that “the pride of landed property, a feeling natural to the human

¹¹²Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration*, 118.

¹¹³Stanley Johnson, *A History of Emigration*, 8. According to historian Marjory Harper, Selkirk settled 1,100 Highlanders, “mainly victims of clearance,” in three different parts of Canada, between 1803 and 1815 (“British Migration and the Peopling of the Empire,” 80).

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*, 8-9. Locating the colony on a site that had been previously inhabited made life much easier for these newcomers who were spared the drudgery of clearing the land.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*, 9.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, 10.

breast, and particularly consonant to the antient habits of the Highlanders” had led many of these settlers to improve their homes in numerous ways.¹¹⁹ One has no reason to question Selkirk’s generous motives; “his pecuniary losses were great, and he died young, broken by his labours for his ideals.”¹²⁰ However, one can question whether an innate pride in land ownership had led to the success of this Scottish settlement. No doubt historian Charlotte Erickson was correct to identify “land ownership as a desirable goal,” motivating many to leave the British Isles and then to succeed as settlers.¹²¹ However, Selkirk’s careful planning, which included selection of a favorable site and the presence of a helpful agent, provided a solid foundation upon which determined emigrants could build. His lavish expenditure, paying for transportation and necessities until the settlers were established, gave them the financial help they needed to escape poverty. Many of those Selkirk aided were driven to succeed by memories of destitution, attributable partly to the Highland clearances but also partly to the reality that the “Highland population was overrunning its resources.”¹²²

In the second quarter of the nineteenth century, officials of the Canada Company took advantage of population growth in the British Isles to create colonies on uninhabited lands. Their success indicates what a corporate body could achieve when colonizers planned their work, and then worked their plan. The company, established in 1824, provided benefits to both settlers and shareholders. The company’s prospectus stated its purpose as being “not to encourage or deal with speculators, but to open access to the settlement of lands by a steady,

¹¹⁹William A. Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles*, 11.

¹²⁰Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration*, 118. Although Selkirk succeeded in establishing a Scottish colony on Prince Edward Island, he failed in his attempts to settle Highlanders on 1,200 acres of land he was granted in Upper Canada. A combination of “mismanagement, bad weather, and bad luck” doomed this venture (119). The same three factors contributed to the demise of the Rugby colony in the 1880s.

¹²¹Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England*, 39.

¹²²*Ibid.*, 22.

industrious, agricultural population.”¹²³ Having purchased 2,500,000 acres of land, about half of which was located on the northern shore of Lake Huron, and which was to be paid for by the company over a period of sixteen years, the company then placed agents “in Liverpool, London, Bristol, Hull, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dublin, Londonderry, Cork and Limerick. Similar representatives worked actively in Montreal and Quebec, and in Prescott, Cobourg, Kingston, York and Dundas in Upper Canada.”¹²⁴ In addition to having personnel on the ground in so many places, the company widely publicized its lands by distributing “maps, pamphlets, and advertisements in every city, market town, village, and hamlet of the United Kingdom [in order to make] Canada known as a colony fit not only for the poor but suitable for men ‘of capital,...of education and intelligence.’”¹²⁵ Although there were years of financial challenge, by 1837, the year of the Canadian Rebellion, “the Company had opened more than one hundred miles of roads, spent some 87,000 pounds on improvements, and sold about 100,000 acres of land to occupying settlers” who had obviously entered the country with some money.¹²⁶ The testimony of such satisfied residents as Robert Fisher attracted other settlers. In an 1832 letter, Fisher assured his family that “in this country you may do well; I shall advise you by all means to come out next spring, as the prospects for you are ten to one above what they are in the old country.”¹²⁷ Such positive personal testimonials helped the Company to steadily achieve its goals, and “when two-thirds of the Company’s contract time had elapsed, two-thirds of its purchases had been patented.”¹²⁸ Meanwhile, the Company had returned dividends to its shareholders. By 1860 and the coming of railroads, land values had risen so much “that the Company might have been

¹²³Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration*, 132.

¹²⁴*Ibid.*, 133.

¹²⁵*Ibid.*

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, 134.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*

¹²⁸*Ibid.*, 135.

described as a million-pound corporation” and it continued to “receive many thousands of British emigrants throughout the nineteenth century.”¹²⁹

As the Canada Company began its efforts to populate its property, the Englishman Edward Gibbon Wakefield developed his theory about systematic colonization. He identified “land, labor, and capital” as the three essential elements of all communities and emphasized that keeping “the proper ratio between the three elements” is the biggest challenge for colonizers.¹³⁰ In “A Letter from Sydney,” first made public in 1829, Wakefield strongly opposed the government’s practice of giving away large amounts of land. “Land, he held, should not be given gratuitously, but should be sold and the proceeds used in conveying other emigrants to the colony.”¹³¹ Wakefield also believed that potential emigrants should be screened with “an absolute preference [being] given to young persons, and that no excess of males [should] be conveyed to the colony free of cost.”¹³² He was especially emphatic about the “value to a new colony of women of high character.”¹³³ In the *Art of Colonisation* he wrote:

You may make a colony agreeable to men but not to women; you may make it agreeable to women without being agreeable to men. You may induce some men of the higher class to emigrate without inducing the women; but if you succeed with the women, you are sure not to fail with the men. A colony that is not attractive to women is an unattractive colony: in order to make it attractive to both sexes, you do enough if you take care to make it attractive to women.¹³⁴

¹²⁹Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration*, 135.

¹³⁰Fred H. Hitchens, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, 7. Wakefield developed his colonization theories while serving a prison sentence for abduction of an under-age heiress. This criminal conviction prevented his playing a prominent role in the Colonial Office although his ideas about emigration were influential.

¹³¹Stanley Johnson, *A History of Emigration*, 20. It is stunning to consider how much land was given away by monarchs, especially the Stuart kings, beginning in the early seventeenth century and continuing until 1831. The lavish grant of land given by Charles II to eight Englishmen in 1664 is a notorious example of the way that colonial resources were used to enrich a few of the monarch’s favorites. This grant, including lands which later became the states of North and South Carolina, gave away a valuable imperial possession which should have been “held in trust for the public good” as colonial lands were after 1831 (Hitchens, 48).

¹³²Fred H. Hitchens, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, 8. Although Colonel Talbot did not screen potential emigrants, he assigned lots only to those he deemed trustworthy, and he expelled those who did not complete the “roadwork and settlement duties he believed essential” (Cowan, *British Emigration*, 117).

¹³³William A. Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles*, 139.

¹³⁴*Ibid.*

Wakefield made a significant contribution to colonial policy not only by creating a system for dealing with colonial lands, but also by championing the positive values of colonization. Prior to public awareness of his work, “people had looked upon life in the colonies as socially degrading, and having much in common with penal transportation.”¹³⁵ They gradually realized that colonization allowed some individuals to improve their lives economically while strengthening the “Empire by the foundation of overseas-dominions.”¹³⁶ Since in the 1820s in Australia “convicts outnumbered free settlers by about three to one,” it is no wonder that many people associated migration to the Antipodes [Australia and New Zealand] with criminal misbehavior!¹³⁷ Given this reality about the involuntary nature of much of the early migration to Australia, it is appropriate that Wakefield’s ideas had their first practical trial in the colonization of South Australia after the passage of the South Australia Act in 1834 which “provided that there was to be no transportation of convicts to South Australia.”¹³⁸

Wakefield’s theory of systematic colonization also guided the development of New Zealand, at a time when New Zealand was “the furthest frontier of the British Empire.”¹³⁹ Although parts of the island were explored and claimed for Britain by Captain James Cook, New Zealand became a crown colony in 1840. Four years earlier in his testimony to a parliamentary committee studying management of colonial lands, Wakefield had declared “near to Australia

¹³⁵ Stanley Johnson, *A History of Emigration*, 21.

¹³⁶ Ibid. The publicity associated with the efforts of the Petworth Emigration Committee and the Canadian Company to attract well-educated, well-to-do emigrants provide some proof that Johnson is correct about the negative stereotypes associated with emigration from the British Isles in the early 1800s. Johnson, writing in the early years of the twentieth century, championed emigration which “has helped to build up an Empire, the numerical strength of which, counting only the white inhabitants, makes us one of the first-class Powers of the world” (341). He also noted that “should the need arise, the Colonies would make common cause with England, and an entity so large as the British Empire could not be attacked lightly” (342). The publication of his book in 1913 followed so soon by the Great War makes one think that military rivalry with Germany was one factor leading him to associate Britain’s sprawling empire with national safety and security.

¹³⁷ Marjory Harper, “British Emigration and the Peopling of the Empire,” 78.

¹³⁸ Fred H. Hitchins, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, 30.

¹³⁹ Raewyn Dalziel, “Southern Islands: New Zealand and Polynesia,” in *The Oxford History of the British Empire* Vol.III (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 573.

there is a country which all testimony concurs in describing as the fittest country in the world for colonization; as the most beautiful country, with the finest climate, the most productive soil; I mean New Zealand.”¹⁴⁰ Such descriptions of New Zealand’s “mild climate, fertile land for the taking, and almost certain mineral wealth which created a picture of a southern utopia” renewed British interest in the area although the “first attempt at a planned settlement, sponsored by a group of politicians and businessmen in 1825-1826,” had been a failure.¹⁴¹

The mixed results achieved by the New Zealand Company provide evidence that mixed motives could sabotage the success of a colonization venture. However, since this company was one of two cited by the London-based Board of Aid as proof that assisting emigration could be a “safe and profitable investment,” it is useful to study its story.¹⁴² In 1837 Wakefield and other like-minded colonizers had formed the New Zealand Association which “differed from former colonisation societies in that members had no pecuniary interest in the project they were advancing.”¹⁴³ The Association’s 1837 pamphlet stated that Association members desired “not only to colonise New Zealand, but to preserve and civilise the natives.”¹⁴⁴ Based on Wakefield’s recommendations, land prices were to be uniform, and revenue from land sales was to be used for “local improvements, and the remainder was to form an emigration fund.”¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰William A. Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles*, 124.

¹⁴¹Raewyn Dalziel, “Southern Islands,” 578. Although Dalziel does not explain why the 1825-1826 project was a failure, it is significant that Wakefield’s reforming theories about colonization, including his ideas about the importance of women emigrants, were not made public until 1829. It is highly probable that single male laborers were the only ones involved in the 1825-1826 venture. Colonizers guided by Wakefield’s ideas subsequently achieved success in both Australia and New Zealand, at least partially because they recognized that family groups were more stable colonists than single male laborers who moved frequently in search of more lucrative employment.

¹⁴²*Aid to Ownership of Land* (London: The Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, 1879), 3.

¹⁴³William A. Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles*, 124. While it may be true that members of this group were not primarily focused on making money from the venture, Wakefield had a reputation for being a “fortune-hunter.”

¹⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 125.

¹⁴⁵*Ibid.*

Contrary to what one might expect, it was not opposition from the Maori natives, but from the Church Missionary Society which made it impossible for the New Zealand Association to proceed with its colonization plans. Leaders of the CMS feared that further European settlement would hinder their work. Church authorities initially argued against the Association “because it proposed that the British Legislature should sanction the disposal of portions of a foreign country over which it had no claim to sovereignty.”¹⁴⁶ While some CMS leaders may have been interested in protecting the rights of the Maoris, they argued against the Association’s plans because they wanted New Zealand to remain a “missionary preserve.”¹⁴⁷ Powerful supporters in both Parliament and the Colonial Office accepted the validity of this argument, leading Association members to create the New Zealand Land Company in order to deal directly with New Zealand residents since the British government had recognized New Zealand as an independent state. After Land Company officials raised 100,000 pounds, Wakefield’s brother, Colonel William Wakefield, led an expedition to buy land and to prepare for the arrival of settlers in 1839. A large amount of land was purchased from the Maoris “without a real appreciation of the native system of property, or of the rights of those who had already obtained land from the natives. In one instance Wakefield purchased land which was the property of the Wesleyan Missionary Society.”¹⁴⁸ However, between May 1839 and July 1840, the Company had sponsored “thirteen ships carrying 1350 passengers to New Zealand: 178 of these were first-class passengers, 64 were second, and 1108 were steerage.”¹⁴⁹ Considering that the voyage to New Zealand was a long and arduous journey of about four months in those pre-steamship, pre-Panama canal days, it is remarkable that about 15 per cent of these passengers were traveling

¹⁴⁶William A. Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles*, 127.

¹⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 123.

¹⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 128-129.

¹⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 138.

first class and thus can be assumed to be persons of some means whose decision to leave England was not based upon destitution. Dalziel has argued that the Land Company's ability to persuade "members of gentry families and university-educated lawyers, doctors, and clergymen to purchase land in New Zealand imposed an air of gentility on the colony" although most emigrants, from rural and working-class backgrounds, "were seeking work, decent wages, security, and an independency for their families."¹⁵⁰ His statement emphasizes the truth of one made seven decades earlier by Carrothers who argued that Britain's overseas expansion was "built upon the bent backs of the pioneers. Their toil, their loneliness, their sacrifices, their triumphs have been the foundation."¹⁵¹

Large numbers of these hard-working pioneers came to New Zealand only after it was formally incorporated into the British Empire in 1840, an action that was the culmination of government attempts to respond to the work being done by the New Zealand Land Company as well as growing French interest in colonization of the area. Having decided in 1838 to send out a Consul, British officials expanded his initial mandate from a focus on "areas where British interests were concentrated" to the establishment of British "sovereignty over part or all of the country."¹⁵² An 1840 treaty with Maori leaders was followed later in the year by formal annexation and then by official British attempts to "adjudicate between the various rival claimants to ownership of land."¹⁵³ Among these claimants were not only numerous native tribes, but also various "missionaries, who in some cases claimed the right to extensive tracts of land. There were also between 2000 and 3000 British subjects who had settled in New Zealand

¹⁵⁰Raewyn Dalziel, "Southern Islands," 582.

¹⁵¹William A. Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles*, vii. No doubt poverty motivated many of the men and women who did the donkey work associated with being pioneers.

¹⁵²Raewyn Dalziel, "Southern Islands," 578.

¹⁵³William A. Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles*, 131.

previous to 1840. And lastly, there was the New Zealand Land Company.”¹⁵⁴ For the next five years, officials of the Land Company tried to secure their claims to huge amounts of land, purchased by William Wakefield before New Zealand became Crown property. Meanwhile, the Company continued to send emigrants to the new colony, including 4907 men and 3986 women (a total of 8893 people) in 1844.

In 1845 the land commissioner appointed by the British government to deal with those claiming land ownership reduced the Company’s land holdings from 20,000,000 to 320,000 acres. The Company’s appeal of the decision to Parliament failed for “the Company had wandered far from its original philanthropic intentions, and...had been the victim largely of its own rashness and greed for land.”¹⁵⁵ However, when the Company requested government aid because of its financial difficulties, it was granted a large loan, and from May 1847 until 1850, the Company served as the “agent for disposing of Crown lands.”¹⁵⁶ The Company dispatched “seventeen ships with 2291 settlers between November 1847 and the spring of 1850.”¹⁵⁷ The next year the Company ceased to exist as New Zealand moved closer to being a self-governing dominion. In 1852 New Zealand received a constitution, and its different provinces selected local agents to deal with emigrants. In an 1857 report the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners stated that 3807 emigrants had gone to New Zealand “ ‘but we are unable to state under what conditions these persons went out, or in what manner the expense of their passages was defrayed, the colonial government having furnished us with no information on the

¹⁵⁴William A Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles*, 131.

¹⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 136. Edward Gibbon Wakefield’s tarnished reputation may also have contributed to the official reduction of the company’s land holdings by almost 85 per cent.

¹⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 137. Since Wakefield had apparently received a handsome salary for his involvement with the New Zealand Company, it is surprising that the Company received this loan.

¹⁵⁷Fred H. Hitchins, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, 227.

subject.”¹⁵⁸ Their official statement is evidence of the truth of Harper’s conclusion that “(t)he multifaceted character of migration, as well as its extent and direction, was largely dictated by the diverse circumstances of the migrants.”¹⁵⁹ Since the European population of New Zealand increased from “not much more than 2,000” in 1840 to over 59,000 in 1859, one quickly concludes that migration from the British Isles to New Zealand was indeed a multifaceted phenomenon. And in spite of the fact that the New Zealand Land Company dispatched more than 12,000 emigrants to New Zealand in a relatively short time, the Company experienced numerous problems, partly because its agents had attempted to “grab as much land as possible” and partly because “giving settlers a good title to their land [before 1844] was a serious difficulty.”¹⁶⁰ Company officials created additional problems for themselves because they focused on making money from dispatching individual emigrants rather than creating community among those who relocated to New Zealand. One wonders why the Rugby colony’s parent company cited this venture as proof that assisting emigration of young Englishmen could be a “safe and profitable investment.”

Rugby’s founders would have been on safer ground had they cited the experience of the Canterbury Association which shows us once again the value of strong leadership and thoughtful planning. The Association, “supported by a number of members of Parliament and English peers, including the Archbishop of Canterbury,” created a thriving Anglican colony on the South Island of New Zealand.¹⁶¹ Wakefield’s New Zealand Company was also supportive of the Association (as well as the Presbyterian group which established the Otago colony on the South Island), and both groups purchased their land from Wakefield’s company Association leader

¹⁵⁸Fred H. Hitchins, *The Colonial Land and Emigration Commission*, 228.

¹⁵⁹Marjory Harper, “British Migration and the Peopling of the Empire,” 78.

¹⁶⁰William A. Carrothers, *British Emigration from the British Isles*, 134 and 138.

¹⁶¹<http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/Society/People/G/Godley-John-Robert/>

John Robert Godley (1814-1861), whom Wakefield recruited for the post, guided the early development of the colony, establishing the “strong farming base and prosperity Canterbury has always relied on.”¹⁶² Godley and his wife arrived in New Zealand in April 1850, after Captain Joseph Thomas had been dispatched to the South Island to select a site for the Anglican colony and to purchase land from the New Zealand Company. In December 1850 four shiploads of English settlers landed in Port Lyttelton where they were welcomed by Godley. Over the next two years the colony’s capital of Christchurch was established, and Godley worked to strengthen the agricultural focus of the colony, changing the terms of the “pastoral leases (land in the surrounding countryside leased for farming)” so that the settlement would continue to be attractive to more well-to-do English emigrants.¹⁶³

Samuel Butler’s New Zealand experience is proof that a determined young Englishman could reinvent himself by immigrating to an attractive colony. Since Butler is precisely the kind of well-educated public school “boy” whom the Rugby colony hoped to attract, his story is relevant to understanding Rugby’s failure to thrive. Butler succeeded by dint of extraordinary determination, flexibility, and stamina. He also wrote about his experiences, enabling us to identify the specific elements which led to his success. Butler (1835-1902) left England for Canterbury in 1859, determined to make good on his own. Financed by his father, whom he did not wish to follow in a career as an Anglican priest, he succeeded in raising sheep, on the South Island, the “gentleman’s colony.” Because he was willing to work very hard, he made his emigration a “safe and profitable investment,” offering proof that a classically educated young man, such as some of those who immigrated to Rugby, could earn his living with his own hands.

¹⁶²<http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/Society/People/G/Godley-John-Robert/>

¹⁶³Ibid. The region’s capital city is named for Godley’s Oxford college. Godley had been educated at Harrow, one of England’s leading public schools before going to Christ Church, Oxford. Thus, the Canterbury region was “gentrified” from its birth.

The grandfather for whom Butler was named was a graduate of the Rugby School, who after “an undergraduate career of exceptional distinction” at St. John’s College, Cambridge, had become headmaster of the Shrewsbury School. Dr. Butler (1774-1839) served as the school’s headmaster for thirty-eight years,” transforming the school into an institution of “such distinction that, in due course, it would be included among the nine schools [as was Rugby School] investigated by the Clarendon Commission as being the leading public schools of England.”¹⁶⁴ Butler later became the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield. The younger Samuel was, of course, a Shrewsbury graduate, who then followed both his grandfather and father to St. John’s, Cambridge, graduating in 1858 with first-class honors in Classics. Like Tom Hughes, Butler was an active athlete, having been “a leading cross-country runner at Shrewsbury, the school which pioneered the sport, a coxswain and coach at Cambridge, and a strenuous alpine walker.”¹⁶⁵

Butler considered going to Canada but decided to immigrate to New Zealand’s South Island, “where solid Scottish and English foundations had been laid by the Free Church of Scotland and Anglican settlements respectively from 1840 and 1850.”¹⁶⁶ Boarding the ship on 30 September 1859, Butler finally reached Port Lyttelton on 27 January 1860, after a voyage of almost four months, described so vividly in his book that one wonders how anyone survived sailing from England to New Zealand. However, Butler not only survived, he thrived! Having commented very briefly on the “horrible seasickness” of almost everyone but himself, Butler confessed, “My time has passed very pleasantly: I have read a good deal; I have nearly finished Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, am studying Liebig’s *Agricultural Chemistry*,

¹⁶⁴“Samuel Butler” in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. 9, 212.

¹⁶⁵Roger Robinson, “Butler, Samuel-Biography,” in the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara-the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. URL:<http://TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/1b55/1>.

¹⁶⁶Marjory Harper, “British Emigration and the Peopling of the Empire,” 79.

and learning the concertina on the instrument of one of my fellow-passengers. Besides this, I have had the getting up and management of our choir.”¹⁶⁷ Prior to leaving the ship, he took time to give written advice to “anyone about to take a long sea-voyage,” mentioning what one had to have in order to be even partially comfortable and emphasizing the importance of going first class, for “(n)o one in his right mind will go second class if he can, by any hook or crook, raise money enough to go first.”¹⁶⁸ (Apparently Butler’s father had given him a very generous allowance of approximately 4000 pounds with which he was to make his fortune.)

Although Wakefield had initially encouraged those settling in New Zealand to focus on arable farming, sheep became the dominant focus on the South Island.¹⁶⁹ Almost a decade before Butler bought his land and sheep, James FitzGerald (an early and influential settler) had written “the only way to make money here is by sheep farming. Money may be literally coined in that trade. And it is eminently the profession of a gentleman.”¹⁷⁰ Although Butler stated that he “should be loth to advise any gentleman to come out here, unless he have either money and an average share of good sense, or else a large amount of proper self-respect and strength of purpose,” he devoted an exceedingly lengthy paragraph in one letter to the whole subject of the emigration of upper-class men like himself, giving detailed advice about what the emigrant would encounter and the work required for success.¹⁷¹ Since the young men to whom his candid guidance was addressed are precisely the type for which the Rugby colony was supposed to provide opportunities, I think it is useful to quote much of Butler’s statement about exactly how

¹⁶⁷Samuel Butler, *A First Year in Canterbury Settlement* (1863. Reprint. Auckland and Hamilton: Blackwood and Janet Paul, 1964), 17 and 26.

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 31-32.

¹⁶⁹Raewyn Dalziel, “Southern Islands,” 588. Apparently the domestic market was too small and the labor supply was too limited to make arable farming profitable.

¹⁷⁰*Ibid.* FitzGerald’s 1851 statement may have been known to Butler who from the first seemed to be inclined to invest the money his father had given him in purchasing sheep and a sheep run. After Butler settled on the South Island, Fitzgerald, one of the colony’s most prominent citizens, became one of his close friends.

¹⁷¹Samuel Butler, *A First Year*, 68.

difficult it might be for an emigrant to succeed in an entirely new place:

You may ask, What is the opening here for young men of good birth and breeding, who have nothing but health and strength and energy for their capital? I would answer, Nothing very brilliant; still they may be pretty sure of getting a shepherd's billet somewhere up-country, if they are known to be trustworthy. If they sustain this character, they will soon make friends, and find no great difficulty, after the lapse of a year or two in getting an overseer's place, with from 100 to 200 pounds a year, and their board and lodging...In fact, they are quite sure to do well in time; but time is necessary here, as well as in other places. True, less time may do here, and true also that there are more openings; but it may be questioned whether good, safe, ready-witted men will not fetch nearly as high a price in England as in any other part of the world. So that, if a young and friendless lad lands here, and makes his way and does well, the chances are that he would have done well also had he remained at home. If he has money, the case is entirely changed; he can invest it far more profitably here than in England. Any merchant will give him 10 per cent. for it...For young men, however, sons of gentlemen and gentlemen themselves, sheep or cattle are the most obvious and best investment. They can buy, and put out upon terms, as I have already described. They can also buy land, and let it with a purchasing clause, by which they can make first-rate interest... Beyond sheep, cattle, and land, there are few if any investments here for gentlemen who come out with little practical experience in any business or profession, but others would turn up with time.¹⁷²

Butler emphasized that his advice was directed to a very specific audience, "to good men.

There are many such who find the conventionalities of English life distasteful to them, who want to breathe a freer atmosphere, and yet have no unsteadiness of character or purpose to prevent them from doing well---men whose health and strength and good sense are more fully developed than delicately organized---who find headwork irksome and distressing, but who would be ready to do a good hard day's work at some physical laborious employment. If they are in earnest, they are certain to do well; if not, they had better be idle at home than here."¹⁷³

By the time he penned this advice, Butler had been in the "extreme back country" with another Englishman who was looking for additional land.¹⁷⁴ Butler and his companion stayed overnight at the Lake Coleridge station homestead which he described as being "*bona fide*

¹⁷²Samuel Butler, *A First Year*, 67-68.

¹⁷³Ibid., 68. Butler was, no doubt, thinking of his own distaste for the "conventionalities of English life," as well as his own desire for the freedom to pursue a non-conventional career, when he directed this advice to those who might consider emigrating from Victorian England to New Zealand. In his work, *The Gentleman Emigrant*, William Stamer cited a man's ability to "live as he 'durned pleases'" as one of the advantages of living in New York rather than England where a man was a "slave to appearances" (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1874, 78).

¹⁷⁴Samuel Butler, *A First Year*, 11. Butler's letters to his family in England were published in 1863 as *A First Year in Canterbury Settlement* because "friends of the writer" believed that "unbiased impressions of colonial life, as they feel freshly on a young mind" would be of general interest to English readers.

beyond the pale of civilization; no boarded floors, no chairs, nor any similar luxuries.” The four inhabitants of the station were “all gentlemen and sons of gentlemen,” whose lives were “a kind of mixture of that of a dog and that of an emperor.” One of them was, like Butler, a Cambridge man who, from time to time, took a break from his sheep-ranching duties to serve as “a great gun at the college in Christ Church [the major city of the South Island], examining the boys; he then returns to his shepherding, cooking, bullock-driving, etc., etc, as the case may be...Under his bed I found Tennyson’s *Idylls of the King*.” Finding this volume reminded Butler of an entertaining story he had heard “of an Oxford man shepherding in Otago. Some one [*sic*] came into his hut, and taking up a book, found it in a strange tongue, and enquired what it was. The Oxonian (who was baking at the time) answered that it was *Machiavellian Discourses upon the first decade of Livy*. The wonder-stricken visitor laid down the book and took up another, which was at any rate written in English. This was found to be Bishop Butler’s *Analogy*. Putting it down speedily as something not in his line, he laid hands upon a third. This proved to be *Patrum Apostolicorum Opera*, on which he saddled his horse and went right away, leaving the Oxonian to his baking.” Butler, however, thought this well-educated settler who continued his studies even in New Zealand an exception to the general pattern, for “people here are busy making money; that is the inducement which led them to come in the first instance, and they show their sense by devoting their energies to the work.”¹⁷⁵

Butler’s personality was very positively open to the potential wisdom of those with more agricultural experience if less formal education. He displayed much less class prejudice than might have been expected in conventional circles in England. Butler genuinely liked the individualism of the men he met in New Zealand, and he was also keen to listen to their experiences in order to learn from them. From the moment of his arrival in “Christ Church on

¹⁷⁵Samuel Butler, *A First Year*, 48-50.

the little river Avon” (the English *will* insist on naming everything everywhere for something at home), he noticed that the men were “shaggy, clear-complexioned, brown, and healthy-looking, and wear exceedingly rowdy hats.”¹⁷⁶ Butler strongly approved of these men who proved to be “as shrewd and sensible, as alive to the humorous, and as hard-headed” as any he had known in England. Moreover, he was delighted to find “little conventionalism, little formality, and much liberality of sentiment, very little sectarianism, and, as a general rule, a healthy sensible tone in conversation, which I like much. But it does not do to speak about John Sebastian Bach’s ‘Fugues’ or pre-Raphaelite pictures.”¹⁷⁷ These two subjects were no doubt of great interest to him since he was both a musician and an artist. However, since Butler was well aware that he had much to learn if he were to achieve any agricultural success as an emigrant, he wisely listened to the conversations of his new colleagues. “The all-engrossing topics seemed to be sheep, horses, dogs, cattle, English grasses, paddocks, bush, and so forth.”¹⁷⁸

Butler also proved that he could overcome extreme physical challenges. By April of 1860 Butler had applied for a sheep run of some 10,000 acres. By October of 1860, he had bought “a run adjoining my previous one; subsequently to that I purchased another---also adjoining---and stocked with sheep...and I moved to a spot about ten miles nearer to civilization.”¹⁷⁹ Being closer to civilization did not mean that life was any the less challenging, and Butler’s experiences indicate just how essential physical stamina and personal determination were if one were to survive, much less thrive in an essentially strange land. On one occasion as he and his men returned from purchasing more than a ton of supplies (such necessities as tea, flour, “sugar, tools, household utensils few and rough, a plough and harrows, doors, windows,

¹⁷⁶Samuel Butler, *A First Year*, 35.

¹⁷⁷*Ibid.*, 49-50.

¹⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 76.

oats and potatoes for seed, and all the usual denizens of a kitchen garden” plus a few personal items, and a keg of vinegar and a keg of brandy, all of which had to be transported in a wagon drawn by six bullocks), the weather changed abruptly, and from “feeling as if no place could be too cool to please me,” Butler realized that a winter storm was coming; during the night it began to snow, and by the next night “the snow was fully two feet thick everywhere, and in the drifts five and six feet.”¹⁸⁰ It was experiences such as this that led Butler to warn prospective settlers of the physical hardships:

You must remember that you will have a rough life at first; there will be a good deal of cold and exposure; a good deal of tent work; possible a fever or two; to say nothing of the seeds of rheumatism which will give you something to mediate upon hereafter.¹⁸¹

Butler also thought it necessary to inform prospective gentlemen emigrants that upper-class English condescension would be worse than useless in dealing with their workers in a land where strong workers had more choices than their employer:

You and your men will have to be on a rather different footing from that on which you stood in England. There, if your servant were in any respect what you did not wish, you were certain of getting plenty of others to take his place. Here, if a man does not find you quite what he wishes, he is certain of getting plenty of others to employ him. In fact, he is at a premium, and soon finds this out...When you have good men, however, you must recognise the different position in which you stand toward them as compared with that which subsisted at home. The fact is, they are more your equals and more independent of you.¹⁸²

Not only was one forced to recognize and adjust to different physical and social conditions, but one also had to acknowledge the economic reality that one’s animals mattered more than anything else. For example, the site of one’s homestead was based strictly upon selecting “a situation as will be most convenient for working the sheep. They are the real masters of the

¹⁸⁰Butler, *A First Year*, 76, 91-92.

¹⁸¹*Ibid.*, 115.

¹⁸²*Ibid.*, 116.

place---the run is theirs, not yours...All considerations of pleasantness of site must succumb to this.”¹⁸³

As Butler’s years in New Zealand proved, if you were willing to “rough it” at first while taking the time to thoroughly understand what was required to make money, and if you worked hard and had “tolerably good fortune, in a very short time, you will be a rich man.”¹⁸⁴ Butler’s “Mesopotamia station eventually comprised about 55,000 acres and employed seven men. Despite inexperience Butler established and supervised it competently enough to double his capital (to 8000 pounds) in four years.”¹⁸⁵ Relevant lessons for those establishing Rugby include the importance of recruiting highly motivated, adaptable, and resourceful young men with a genuine interest in earning their living on the land. Butler’s experience also proves the importance of having knowledgeable leaders in place to provide practical guidance to classically educated young men who know nothing about agriculture.

The successful establishment of the Union Colony in Colorado is also relevant to Rugby’s story, both in its similarities and its contrasts with Rugby’s history. Moreover, those establishing the colony also identified pastoral farming as one of the ways that migrants going West might make money, for “all the country west of the Missouri river is one vast pasture...where sheep, horses and cattle can be raised with only the cost of herding.”¹⁸⁶ This colony is another one of the examples cited by Franklin W. Smith in his 1877 work (and in subsequent Board of Aid publications) as evidence that “agricultural lands are the most secure investment of capital.”¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³Samuel Butler, *A First Year*, 118.

¹⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 125-126.

¹⁸⁵Robinson, *Te Ara*-the Encyclopedia of New Zealand.

¹⁸⁶William E. Pabor, *First annual report of the Union Colony of Colorado: including a history of the town of Greeley, from its date of settlement to the present time* (New York: George W. Southwick, 1871), 19.

¹⁸⁷Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times: Agricultural Development the True Remedy* (Boston: J. R. Osgood and Company, 1877), 29. Smith stated that his information about the establishment of Greeley had come from the

Horace Greeley, owner and editor of the New York *Daily Tribune*, served as the primary sponsor of the colony. Greeley (1811-1872) is probably best known for constantly advising, “Go West young man, go West,” to the youth who sought his vocational guidance. His counsel was no doubt based upon his personal travels, especially in the Colorado Territory in 1859, which led him to consider the area ideal for colonization. In 1869 Greeley selected his employee Nathan C. Meeker, who had been the agricultural editor for the *Tribune*, to be the director of his colonization project.

Meeker soon published detailed practical plans for the colony and invited prospective settlers to apply. On 14 December 1869 the *Tribune* published his article, announcing plans for establishment of a “Colony in Colorado Territory,” which would be open to men supporting temperance, and “ambitious to establish a good society.”¹⁸⁸ Meeker obviously used the term *men* in a generic way here for the colony contained women from the first. Whether or not Greeley and Meeker were aware of the colonization theories of Wakefield, they well knew that women were essential to a colony’s success and that family units played an important role in a settlement’s stability. Families, hundreds of them, began to arrive in the colony in its first month.

Meeker’s plans for the colony were comprehensive; he stated that “settlement would be almost wholly in a village” so that colonists could have “access to schools and public places,

national agricultural report for 1870 which obviously contained only a brief summary of the history of the colony. It seems doubtful that Hughes or any other members of the London Board even knew about this settlement, much less of details related to its establishment and/or initial success, although Hughes may have met Greeley when he was in the United States in 1870. Hughes certainly met Whitelaw Reid, a member of the *Tribune* staff.

¹⁸⁸William E. Pabor, *First annual report of the Union Colony of Colorado*, 3. According to Pabor, the first settler camped on the colony’s property on April 18, and the very next day, “Mrs. Agnes A. G. Benson, the first lady member of the Colony, arrived” (12). The first family arrived from Mt. Kisco, New York at the end of April, and there were initially some “six hundred families with a promise of four hundred more” (8).

meetings, lectures, and the like, and society can be had at once.”¹⁸⁹ Prospective settlers were warned that they would definitely be “pioneers, for houses, mills, and mechanic shops are to be built,” and farmers as well as “nurserymen, florists, and almost all kinds of mechanics” were needed, but he welcomed those of other occupations and professions who were willing to work to create “an intelligent, educated and thrifty community.”¹⁹⁰ Within a few weeks, Meeker had received over 800 letters, “their writers represented all trades, professions and pursuits; many educated; the *majority* farmers, and fully one-half church members.”¹⁹¹

The organizational meeting was a mixture of idealism and practicality. Greeley, presiding over the meeting held in New York City in late December, proclaimed that there should be a “thousand colonies---there were multitudes of men working for wages who ought to emigrate” so that they could work “for themselves.”¹⁹² Meeker spoke next, emphasizing the importance of locating the colony (which was meant to inspire the formation of hundreds of others) in a healthy place with “a varied and rich soil; timber; coal; iron ore; adaptation to fruit; water-power; beauty of scenery.”¹⁹³ (His list of the desirable qualities of the colony’s location in order of their importance is very similar to the list given by Rugby’s Board of Aid in one of its first 1880 publications, a publication no doubt written primarily by Smith. However, Smith and/or the London-based Board rated the beautiful scenery of the Cumberland Plateau rather too highly and seemed to be ambivalent about whether the colonization venture should focus on agriculture or tourism.) Also speaking at the organizational meeting was General Robert A. Cameron, who had “gone to Indiana when it was a wilderness and to Chicago when it was a

¹⁸⁹William E. Pabor, *First annual report of the Union Colony of Colorado*, 3.

¹⁹⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁹¹*Ibid.*, 4. I have italicized the word *farmers* as a reminder that most of the men in the Union Colony had some personal knowledge of agriculture. Had this been the case with the Rugby colony, its history might have been vastly different although its location made successful farming an enormous challenge.

¹⁹²*Ibid.*

¹⁹³*Ibid.*, 12.

mud-hole, and now he wanted to go to Colorado, for no where in the globe is there such another country as the West.”¹⁹⁴

The site of the Union Colony was selected for its economic viability because the selection committee was composed of practical men who knew the territory well. Meeker, Cameron, and H. T. West were men eminently qualified for their task because they had collectively seventy years of experience of living in the West, and “during these periods had visited every Western State from Canada to the Gulf.”¹⁹⁵ After two months of traveling, they announced “Union Colony, No. 1, N. C. Meeker, President, and Horace Greeley, Treasurer, located in Colorado Territory” on a delta formed by the junction of two rivers and specifically “on the Denver Pacific Railway, midway between Denver, Colorado and Cheyenne, Wyoming.”¹⁹⁶ Since the Denver Pacific connected to both the Kansas Pacific and the Union Pacific, settlers could have “ready and prompt communication with all points,” a clear advantage over the location chosen for the town site of the Rugby colony which was some seven miles from the Cincinnati-Southern Railway line which connected Cincinnati and Chattanooga.¹⁹⁷ That those selecting the Union Colony’s site were so knowledgeable about Western land and its rail networks and so aware of choosing carefully is one reason for the success of their venture. Cowan had cited “lack of local experience” in both executives and settlers as one reason for the difficulties experienced by both the British American Land Company and the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Land Company.¹⁹⁸ Unfortunately, none of the founding fathers of the Rugby colony had any

¹⁹⁴William E. Pabor, *First annual report of the Union Colony of Colorado*, 5.

¹⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁹⁶*Ibid.*, 8. The colony was located some 52 miles north of Denver and some 54 miles south of Cheyenne.

¹⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 36. The Rugby colony was 221 miles from Cincinnati and 114 miles from Chattanooga, the only two urban areas with which there were any rail connections, and there were few good roads in the area, thus making the settlement rather isolated.

¹⁹⁸Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration*, 143.

knowledge of, much less personal experience of, life in East Tennessee, and they also seriously underestimated how essential direct rail connections would be to the success of their settlement.

The Union Colony's founders not only selected the site for their new community very carefully, but they also created a constitution and bylaws to provide a legal framework for their venture. Interestingly enough, on this point of creating community, the organizers of the Union Colony, deemed it necessary to disassociate themselves from such ventures as the Oneida community and to declare that their venture contained "no element of communism," a declaration that Thomas Hughes also thought necessary when, a decade later, he addressed the audience on Rugby's opening day in 1880.¹⁹⁹ The founders of the Union Colony were determined to purchase inexpensive lands, with 640 acres "to be located centrally, and divided into business and residence lots; grounds to be reserved for a plaza, schools, churches, and other public institutions."²⁰⁰ Although company officials purchased almost 2,600 acres of land from two individuals, they wisely purchased the bulk of their land from the Denver Pacific Railway (approximately 9,400 acres), and they paid only \$930 in preliminary fees for the "occupation of 60,000 acres of Government land."²⁰¹ The National Land Company which handled land sales for the Railway facilitated travel to the Union Colony's site, and the "attentions and courtesies of [its] officers and agents... from its active and efficient President down to its lowest agent" made the relocation of hundreds of people and their possessions much easier than it might otherwise have been.²⁰² They also realized the critical importance of irrigation and planned for it, so that their portion of the "Great American Desert" could be made to blossom.

¹⁹⁹William E. Pabor, *First annual report of the Union Colony of Colorado*, 6.

²⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 6-7.

²⁰¹*Ibid.*, 11.

²⁰²*Ibid.*

Only six weeks after the arrival of the first colonists, Ditch No. 3, “capable of irrigating five thousand acres, including the town site” was completed on 10 June 1870.²⁰³ The early development of irrigation networks is a testament to the careful planning of those who guided the establishment of Greeley. Moreover, although Meeker had gone back to New York to handle details of travel for the colonists, General Cameron, vice-president and trustee of the venture, was constantly in the colony, “looking after the welfare of the colonists.”²⁰⁴ The presence of someone in the Colorado colony who understood the challenges of creating a new center of human life where none had existed made an enormous difference since, as one might expect, there were those who were both disappointed and discontented, including some 150 prospective settlers who arrived without bringing “provisions, tents, blankets, or any necessaries of life,” apparently “forgetting that it was the work of a colony to *create* a city.”²⁰⁵ William Pabor, one of the earliest settlers (who later became an official in the Colony) acknowledged that there were “some discouragements, it is true, for many and varied were the difficulties to be contended with” in spite of the careful site selection and detailed planning which had preceded the colony’s establishment.²⁰⁶

As was to be true in the Rugby venture, the colony’s leaders were sharply criticized early on and accused of deceit and fraud by those exasperated by what they encountered when they came to the infant colony. These disgruntled migrants were not wise enough to acknowledge that “the experiment was but at its beginning, and that success lay at its ending.”²⁰⁷ These criticisms prove the truth of Carrothers’s statement about how incredibly difficult it was for a

²⁰³William E. Pabor, *First annual report of the Union Colony of Colorado*, 15 and 12.

²⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 13.

²⁰⁵*Ibid.*, 13-14.

²⁰⁶*Ibid.*, 13. William Edgar Pabor became the secretary of the colony’s Bureau of Statistics and Information.

²⁰⁷*Ibid.*, 14.

colonization company to create new centers of human life, human nature being what it is, for

(t)he power of quick adaptability to new conditions is rare. On removal to a new country the advantages of the old are apt to acquire a new and greater value and importance. Homesickness leads to irritability and a tendency to find fault. Little inconveniences assume large proportions. In this way, discontent arises, and the self-considered unfortunate individual looks around for someone to blame. In these circumstances a colonisation society or the government is a very convenient scapegoat. Often the presence of something to lean on is a distinct disadvantage. It in these conditions the character of the settler is revealed.²⁰⁸

Obviously the Union Colony settlers possessed the traits necessary to pioneers, and their patience and perseverance along with the knowledge, skills, and stamina of the company's leaders, triumphed over all initial obstacles. Within eighteen months of the colony's establishment, all of the business lots had been claimed. Moreover, there were built, "or in the process of building, in the town and immediate vicinity, three hundred and fifty-two houses, from one-story adobe, or humble frame, to the more pretentious cottage or mansion."²⁰⁹ A bank and numerous stores had been established, and almost ten million pounds of freight had been delivered to a community which had both a "town market at home, and quick railroad communication both east and west," making the newly irrigated farm land even more attractive to prospective settlers.²¹⁰ Within a few years, the Union Colony centered around the new town of Greeley, was not only surviving, it was thriving. The colony's early history, written by Pabor, contains an impressive list of churches and civic organizations which, combined with the commercial successes of the settlers, ensured that this new center of human life would not soon disappear. Today, Greeley has a population of 95,000, making it the twelfth most populous city in Colorado. It is the county seat of Weld County, and the headquarters of Swift and Company, the largest meat-packing company in the world. Its location directly on a major railroad is no

²⁰⁸William A. Carrothers, *Emigration from the British Isles*, 239.

²⁰⁹William E. Pabor, *First annual report of the Union Colony of Colorado*, 35.

²¹⁰*Ibid.*, 34.

doubt one of the reasons for its initial success as well as its appeal to current residents and to a well-known international firm.

Like Greeley, Colorado, the site selected for the town that became Vineland, New Jersey was directly on a railroad line. However, unlike Greeley, the successful establishment of Vineland, New Jersey was primarily the work of one man, who, on the eve of the War Between the States, dreamed of creating “a place which, to the greatest possible extent, might be the abode of happy prosperous, and beautiful homes.”²¹¹ Charles K. Landis (1833-1900), originally a Philadelphia lawyer, became the successful co-creator of a new agricultural community in New Jersey in 1857. In 1861 he purchased 20,000 acres of land along a railroad that would directly connect his new colony with Philadelphia. Like the successful colonizer Thomas Talbot in Canada in the years between 1803 and 1840, Landis required specific accomplishments of those purchasing property from him. These new residents were to build houses on the property they bought within twelve months of their purchase. They were also required to clear at least two acres of the heavily-wooded land each year, and then to actively farm this land. Landis also prohibited the sale of intoxicating beverages in his new settlement.

Having learned that the soil was eminently suitable for growing grapes, as reflected in the name he selected, Landis persuaded Italian immigrants to become farmers in his new community. The first houses were built in 1862, and “train service was established to Philadelphia and New York City, with the population reaching 5,500 by 1865.”²¹² After the physician Thomas Bramwell Welch created an appealing alternative to the wine that would have been used for Holy Communion (had not Landis prohibited the sale of liquor in Vineland), and purchased grapes for his fermented juice from local growers, the population continued to grow.

²¹¹“Friends of Historic Vineland,” <http://friendsofvineland.org/>

²¹²Ibid.

As Welch's grape juice became more well-known, and a company was established to produce this product, Vineland prospered. Landis later established Sea Isle City, New Jersey, but he is buried in Vineland, whose existence proves the importance of careful planning and personal supervision in creating a successful colony.

These examples of successful emigration and colonization in such disparate locations as Canada and Colorado, and New Zealand and New Jersey, have several characteristics in common. Whether the work of one man, as in the case of Talbot and Landis, or of a group of individuals, such as the Canada Company, the Canterbury Association, and the Union Colony, a successful colony was very well planned. Someone, or perhaps some two or three or more, clearly understood that the prospect of economic improvement motivated most of those who moved. Therefore, new settlements had to provide attractive employment opportunities if they were to grow and thrive. Successful colonizers paid attention to tedious details and were generally knowledgeable about the essentials required to succeed in a new area. Moreover, they had to be realistic, rather than romantic, about what might be achieved, even with extremely hard physical work, in a new settlement. The successful "founding fathers" were active participants, personally present to guide colonists in the work of creating a community. One should never underestimate "the value of the stability provided by leaders like Talbot," especially his single-minded determination to "establish his own rules" and then remain in place to enforce these rules, as was true of Meeker and Cameron and Landis.²¹³

The active participation of knowledgeable and capable leaders was perhaps the most crucial element in the success of these colonies. But men who were able administrators well

²¹³Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration*, 143. Talbot, Godley, Landis, Meeker, and Cameron obviously understood that a colonizer must make a strong personal commitment to his project. He must be physically present, investing his energy and time in guiding an infant community.

knew how important site selection was. Numerous features (such as fertility of the soil, quality of the water, healthfulness of the climate, availability of transportation) were essential. It was never a matter of purchasing land simply because it was unoccupied and inexpensive. These colonizers knew that only if the site could become a “centre of travel and point of distribution” was there a real possibility of creating a thriving community in a generally unpopulated area.²¹⁴ There was *no* substitute for personal knowledge of the lands being considered as the site selection experiences of Talbot, Landis, Meeker, and Cameron prove.

Rugby’s Board of Aid cited the success of several of these colonizers and colonization companies in its publications as precedents for what it hoped to achieve. Did Rugby’s founders understand the crucial characteristics that had made their success a reality? Did the men who established Rugby realize how important leadership, design, and resources were in the creation of a viable colony? How carefully did they plan their rural Tennessee colony? Why did they select a generally inaccessible site about which they knew so little? Why did they do such little to recruit skilled, resilient settlers who were willing to do the donkey work required of pioneers? A focus on Rugby’s general plan as well as its site selection is the subject of our next chapter.

²¹⁴William E. Pabor, *First annual report of the Union Colony of Colorado*, 9.

Significant events in the creation of the Boards of Aid to Land Ownership

- 1877, the “Great Railroad Strike” was characterized by numerous violent episodes as railroad workers in several U. S. cities battled with law enforcement personnel and federal troops.
- November 1877, Franklin W. Smith proposed a solution for the problem of unemployed workers in four lengthy papers published in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, and almost immediately re-published as *The Hard Times: Agricultural Development the True Remedy*.
- December 1877, a Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership was formed with Smith as its president.
- Late 1877-early 1878, Smith then led a site selection committee on two tours of lands west of the Mississippi River to select land suitable for an agricultural settlement.
- May-June 1878, on its third tour the committee visited the table land of the Cumberland Plateau in East Tennessee and was favorably impressed with the large tracts of land available there.
- Summer 1878, on its fourth tour the committee explored western North Carolina and then returned to the Cumberland Plateau to further investigate available lands.
- July-September 1878, the Boston Board selected a colonization site in rural East Tennessee and published *Bulletin #1* and *Bulletin #2* about its colonization plans. The New England economy began to improve, reducing interest in and financial support of Smith’s plans for the Plateau lands.
- November 1878, Smith persuaded British barrister John Boyle to visit this site on the Cumberland Plateau.
- December 1878, Boyle returned to England and wrote a letter to the Boston Board of Aid, praising the proposed colonization site. This letter was quickly published by Smith, who then went to England to meet with Boyle and Thomas Hughes.
- January 1879, the London-based Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, was formed and registered on January 22.

How did the American Rugby come into being? The colony began as a “safety-valve”

social engineering scheme in the mind of Boston businessman Franklin W. Smith. Smith

believed that major Eastern cities would continue to experience economic and social turmoil unless unemployed workers were relocated to open lands in the West. In four lengthy papers, published in the autumn of 1877, he proposed the creation of Boards of Aid to Land Ownership, which would facilitate the migration of idle laborers to these fertile Western lands. A Boston Board of Aid was created, and then a London-based Board of Aid, which included the well-known English author, politician, and philanthropist Thomas Hughes. Smith and several members of the London-based Board were the most important agents in the creation of the Rugby colony. In order to understand the gestation and birth of the Rugby colony, one must be well-acquainted with Smith's colonization scheme.

By late 1877, four years of dire economic crisis, unemployment, and violent conflict created growing alarm for Smith and other Eastern capitalists. That alarm came to center on the question: "What shall be done with the idle?"²¹⁵ In the 1870s, a dazzling economic boom had been followed by an equally spectacular "bust," as has been the case more recently with our "Great Recession." The boom of the early 1870s was closely connected to the easy credit which fueled a "railroad bubble," just as our recent "housing bubble" was created by a lowering of credit standards and interest rates. Unfortunately, both episodes are examples of the "speculative euphoria" which, according to economist John Kenneth Galbraith, inevitably ends with a bang rather than a whimper.²¹⁶

A surprising bang occurred in September 1873 when the nation's top investment banker, Jay Cooke and Company, suddenly collapsed. This banking house had been prominently involved in financing railroad construction, so almost immediately there was serious damage to

²¹⁵Franklin Webster Smith, *The Hard Times: Agricultural Development the True Remedy* (Boston: J. R. Osgood and Company, 1877), 27. Smith used the word *idle* to call attention to the plight of unemployed workers.

²¹⁶John Kenneth Galbraith, *A Brief History of Financial Euphoria* (New York: Whittle Publications, 1981), 70.

the entire American economy. Stock prices plummeted, “closing hundreds of banks over the next three years.”²¹⁷ (Once again, one is reminded of the ripple effect of the collapse of Bear Stearns early in 2008 which led to panic selling in stock markets in the United States and abroad.) Between 1873 and 1875 over 18,000 businesses disappeared while more than 20 per cent of the nation’s railroads went into bankruptcy. By 1876, as the nation observed its centennial, the unemployment rate had reached 14 per cent, and “tens of thousands of workers---many former Civil War soldiers---became transients.”²¹⁸ Widespread strikes revealed the frustration and resistance of workers whose wages had been cut by as much as 45 per cent in some cases.

An even more alarming cataclysm occurred in the summer of 1877: the national railway strike, the “most spectacular and widespread strike in American history.”²¹⁹ The “Great Upheaval of 1877” in Martinsburg, West Virginia, on July 16, when railroad workers walked off the job to protest a second round of wage cuts within eight months.²²⁰ Twenty-four hours later one worker and one of the state’s militiamen were dead. The strike soon spread to Maryland, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Missouri, as railroad workers halted both freight and passenger services. The strike generated extremely violent clashes between workers and police and militia. Pittsburgh, “the heart of industrial America,” became the focus of national attention when “radicals proclaimed open warfare between capital and labor.”²²¹ After several hours of fierce fighting between the strikers and militia units from Philadelphia, the city was “in the hands of a

²¹⁷Scott Reynolds Nelson, “The Real Great Depression,” <http://chronicle.com> Section: The Chronicle Review, Vol. 55, Issue 8, B98, 17 October 2008.

²¹⁸Ibid.

²¹⁹Paul A. Gilje, *Rioting in America* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996), 117.

²²⁰Jeremy Breecher, *Strike* (Greenwich, Connecticut: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1974), 20.

²²¹Paul A. Gilje, *Rioting in America*, 118.

mob.”²²² Twenty-five men were killed in the “city of Brotherly Love” in this episode, and five million dollars of Pennsylvania Railroad property was destroyed. In St. Louis, workers from numerous other industries joined the striking railroad workers, advocating a ban on child labor and a shorter working day, and creating the first general strike in American history. Bloodshed ended only when President Rutherford B. Hayes dispatched thousands of federal troops who overcame and then dispersed the protestors in various large cities. Millions of dollars of property had been destroyed, and about 100 workers had been killed by the time the violence ended.

Franklin W. Smith, like other New England businessmen, was alarmed by these violent confrontations although Massachusetts was not directly affected by these strikes. However, back in the winter of 1873-1874 many of the unemployed had demonstrated in Boston to demand public employment.²²³ Such critical economic and social problems demanded that one determine their causes and then propose solutions. This is precisely what Smith did in 1877 in *The Hard Times: Agricultural Development the True Remedy*, which combined his four lengthy papers, first published in the *Boston Daily Advertiser* in November 1877. We are going to reconstruct the colonization venture Smith intended to launch by using his deliberate manifesto as presented in *The Hard Times*.

In his first paper of *The Hard Times* Smith noted that a “thoughtful man cannot pass over the Boston Common at this, the best working season of the year, without alarm as well as well as intense sympathy, to see the paths lined with unhappy, idle men,” and he noted that “the fury of the recent labor outbreak was startling.”²²⁴ Perhaps to dramatically emphasize the serious economic consequences of the recent labor violence to the businessmen reading his work, Smith

²²²Paul A. Gilje, *Rioting in America*, 118.

²²³Scott Reynolds Nelson, “The Real Great Depression.”

²²⁴Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 20-21.

included a lengthy quote from the *Journal des Debats* which stated that the recent strike had made America “very dangerous for European capital...It is not only the material loss of capital which is to be regretted...what has a greater and more durable importance is the commotion--- industrial, political and social---which results from a disturbance so profound.”²²⁵

Smith went on to blame the crash chiefly on feverish speculation. Specifically he blamed the nation’s economic woes on the “*fiction of paper money representing an imaginary worth and stimulating reckless speculation.*”²²⁶ He surmised that the massive spending associated with the Civil War and the “avalanche of bonded liability, set afloat for all imaginable schemes,” had led to the collapse of Cooke’s Northern Pacific Railroad.²²⁷ Numerous bankruptcies had followed, and in three years business “failures in the United States had aggregated \$650,000,000.”²²⁸ Revealing himself to be a “hard-money” man, Smith identified the “rash, unreasoning mania for speculation during the decade from ’63 to ’73...stimulated by a redundant, unsound currency,” as the major reason for the widespread “disappointment, vanished hopes, heavy burdens, struggle, days of care, foreboding, fruitless expedients, sleepless nights, or harrowing dreams” experienced by many who had been affluent.²²⁹ Smith seemed pleased that the drastic decline in prices connected with the economic troubles had ended the rampant inflation occurring between 1860 and 1873. Yet, people at all socio-economic levels experienced financial stress.

²²⁵Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 33. The *Journal des Debats* was one of several conservative publications from which Smith quoted in these lengthy papers.

²²⁶*Ibid.*, 9. (Italics in the original text.)

²²⁷*Ibid.*

²²⁸*Ibid.*, 10. Nelson argues that the roots of the Panic of 1873 were in Europe where a boom in residential and municipal construction, especially in Vienna, Paris, and Berlin, led to dangerously high levels of borrowing. When American farmers began to flood European markets with less expensive food and fuel, European agriculture was undermined, and the region’s economic growth was seriously damaged. The European banking crisis that followed in May 1873 quickly began to affect the American economy, ending the era of “easy credit” so intimately connected to railroad expansion.

²²⁹*Ibid.*, 12 and 5.

Smith also blamed the nation's economic crisis on "*overproduction of merchandise*."²³⁰ He seemed certain that there were too many manufacturing facilities employing too many workers. These workers had migrated from agricultural areas to the cities after 1865, turning from "industrious labor on the soil to congregate in cities, to enter upon the race for fortune, and the pursuit of pleasure."²³¹ It is stunning how frequently Smith blamed the contrast between a "fancied ease and luxury of city life, compared with the quiet labor of rural pursuits" for the imbalance in the numbers of workers involved in manufacturing rather than agriculture.²³² Making liberal use of statistics, often from unidentified sources, Smith claimed that the number of workers involved in manufacturing increased 60 per cent in the decade after 1860 while the number of farmers rose by only 23 per cent.²³³ Since Smith believed that technological innovation was decreasing the need for industrial workers, he thought far more men should be farmers. An expanding railroad network that was opening vast new lands, especially Western lands, for cultivation also seemed evidence that more men should be earning their living on the land. The open lands of America were a "heritage of riches" where generations of workers could become "satisfied, self-supporting farmers."²³⁴ Identifying "migration and the subjection of

²³⁰Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 15.

²³¹*Ibid.*, 16.

²³²*Ibid.*, 21. Since there were few sophisticated machines to help with agricultural work at that time, it was probably a lot quieter on the nation's farms. However, the "quiet labor of rural pursuits" would have been physically very demanding, and at times almost drudgery, which led some to leave the land for urban work.

²³³*Ibid.*, 15-16. Smith made a mathematical error that led him to overstate the increase in the number of acres involved in farming from 1860 to 1870 by some 3,000,000 acres. In fact, if his statistics are correct, there was a 16% increase rather than a 25% increase in the amount of land that began to be cultivated. His error obscured the reality that the 23% increase in the number of workers involved in farming was, no doubt, more than equal to the number required by a 16% increase in land being farmed.

²³⁴*Ibid.*, 28. Smith stated that wise use of the nation's vacant lands could make amends for losses from "war and illegitimate adventure." Does his reference to "illegitimate adventure" indicate that he thought greedy and reckless bankers were as much to blame for the nation's financial woes as the "fiction of paper money"? The two are connected, of course, but Smith never directly identified the banking community as a cause of economic trouble.

waste territory to civilized development” as the “special genius” of the American people, Smith argued that the solution to the nation’s economic woes lay in emulating the citizens of France.²³⁵

Although France had experienced both economic and social stress as a result of its recent defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, its agriculture had been a source of wealth and stability, according to Smith. He estimated that about 60 per cent of the French people were farmers and that a high percentage, perhaps “seventy-five per cent of the agricultural laborers,” owned land.²³⁶ There is little evidence for this claim.²³⁷ Smith had no doubt that the “best cultivation is by [these] peasant proprietors” whose “solid wealth” had made it possible for France to pay the large indemnity demanded by the Prussians at the conclusion of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871.²³⁸ There is no reason to think that Smith, a non-farmer, knew much about the quality of these peasant proprietors’ farming. Moreover, Smith appreciated the peasants’ political conservatism. Claiming that “French people are generally regarded of volatile temperament,” Smith praised the peasants who as “rural proprietors became conservators of law which protected their property; enemies of the Commune; the counterpoise of radicalism; guarantors of tranquility” during the violence which followed the swift French defeat in the short Franco-Prussian War.²³⁹ Obviously Smith believed that he and other businessmen should do what they could to encourage such political conservatism among American workers in 1877 for “(o)ne of the most ominous dangers of the [current] hard times is that of penury made ferocious; of

²³⁵Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 65.

²³⁶*Ibid.*, 31. Smith does not cite any authoritative evidence to support his assertion that most French peasants owned the land they farmed.

²³⁷Roger Price concluded that in the 1800s a “majority of peasants depended upon access to resources or opportunities for employment controlled by others” (*A Social History of Nineteenth-Century France*, 149).

²³⁸Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 32.

²³⁹*Ibid.*, 38 and 32.

agrarian riots, not from reason or logical conviction, but the pressure of want and imminent starvation.”²⁴⁰

Smith then argued that the solution to American problems (economic, political, and social) was the “redistribution of labor; its diversion from trade and manufacture, where in surplus, to tillage of the earth, the basis of all industries and the primary source of wealth.”²⁴¹ Since, according to Smith, only one tenth of the land of the United States was devoted to agriculture, compared with 54 per cent of the land in France, and since much of the American land was so fertile “as to render the region unsurpassed for agricultural production by any on the globe,” it seemed obvious that millions of unemployed urban workers should become farmers.²⁴²

In these papers, Smith painted a romantic, and completely unrealistic, picture of life in rural America, giving one a very good sense of the shape the colonization venture was to take in his mind:

At this harvest time, when the people engaged in rural occupations gather to hear the prose and poetry of country life set forth in eloquent verse, it is needless to dwell at length upon its utility or charms. That agricultural lands are the most secure investment of capital; that they offer the most steady opportunity for useful industry and thereby the greatest assurance of ‘health, peace, and competence,’ of personal independence, freedom from vicious stimulus or contact, a sense of individual manliness in the consciousness of possession, and, according to the degree of education and the amount of leisure to be afforded, facilities for mental recreation and improvement---these are

²⁴⁰Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 33. Since Smith thought those living in rural areas were quite content, his use of the word *agrarian* must be a reference to riots caused by hunger. It might seem obvious that the “pressure of want and imminent starvation” was a truly good reason for riots, but the point was apparently lost on most of Smith’s urban readers as their response to his papers proved.

²⁴¹This quote was subsequently used in the letterhead of the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership. In order to emphasize the importance of agriculture, the phrase “tillage of the earth,---the basis of all industries and the source of all wealth” was capitalized in the letterhead.

²⁴²Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 30-31. Although Smith does not indicate why he concluded that only 10% of American land was being farmed in 1877, it is highly probable that he seriously underestimated the extent to which the United States was, and continued to be, an agricultural nation even after the so-called industrial revolution of the 1840s and 1850s. Especially in southern and mid-western states, most residents continued to be farmers until well into the twentieth century. Agriculture remains the most important source of income for Tennesseans, and every worker on the nation’s farms supports “two or three other jobs in the sales, marketing, and transportation sectors” (*Tennessee Cooperator*, June 2013, 11).

propositions generally accepted as axioms, from acquaintance with those whose life occupation has demonstrated their truthfulness; or from associations, in fascinating remembrance, with the charms of nature.

Yet, it is a marvelous anomaly, that with these truths, intelligently accepted by the American people, and their usual prompt and practical action for their interests, they should allow lands to lie waste which, as sources of wealth, independence and happiness are coveted by all older civilizations. The explanation has been [once again], the attractions of the apparent luxury and ease, the exciting dissipations and hope of greater gain, in city life. But now, when the pressure of want, the stern demands for means whereby not to enjoy but to live, press upon thousands of unhappy, impoverished population, they are ready to return to that primitive occupation, Divinely appointed as man's resource for subsistence.²⁴³

Never mind that Smith was probably not correct about his so-called truths being “intelligently accepted by the American people.” In this passage, he praised country life in terms that Thomas Hughes might have used in 1877, and did use as president of the London-based Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, to encourage young men who knew nothing about agriculture to become farmers. Both men seemed certain that earning one's living on the land was relatively easy. Moreover, rural areas provided what Smith praised as “freedom from vicious stimulant or contact” and which Hughes described as offering one the opportunity to live a “brave, simple, honorable life” in the manner of King Alfred, the ninth-century Saxon monarch he so admired.²⁴⁴ It was Smith who stated that “(r)ural life, it cannot be doubted, yields fully the average of pleasure,” but it could have been Hughes, for both men seemed to believe that the agricultural life was as productive of personal contentment and personal prosperity as of physical plenty while it protected one from the temptations of “the metropolis.”²⁴⁵

²⁴³Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 28-30. Smith was obviously completely unaware that farmers are too busy gathering their crops during the harvest season to “gather to hear the prose and poetry of country life set forth in eloquent verse.” In fact, the harvest season is the “make or break” period of the agricultural year, and especially in that era having a successful harvest would have meant the difference between prosperity and poverty for many who earned their living from the land.

²⁴⁴Ibid., 29, and Thomas Hughes, *King Alfred the Great* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1878), 3 and 6.

²⁴⁵Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 41.

It is not surprising that Smith and Hughes had such impractical and unrealistic ideas about agriculture. Indeed their bucolic romanticism prefigured the vision they projected for Rugby. Historian Charlotte Erickson has stated that praising agriculture for its economic importance and insisting on the “virtues of the country dweller as contrasted with the city dweller were classical themes rediscovered during the Renaissance.”²⁴⁶ Both Smith and Hughes had been classically educated and neither had ever farmed so the drudgery often associated with farm work did not disturb their vision.

The creation of “boards of aid to land ownership” was Smith’s solution to these pressing social and economic problems. He identified poverty and fear as the primary obstacles that prevented urban workers from becoming rural farmers. Therefore, boards of aid to land ownership in the nation’s largest cities (where unemployment was highest and idle workers most militant) would help to “transfer idle [=unemployed] but willing labor to the field ready to return its harvest of food for support, and a surplus beside.”²⁴⁷ Such boards would become “beneficent agencies in our chief cities and factors for national prosperity.”²⁴⁸ They would provide both “counsel and capital” to transform urban residents into “cultivators of the soil.”²⁴⁹ They would work specifically with “honest, capable, and industrious unemployed” who could then make the transition “to independent ownership and culture of homesteads on fertile land.”²⁵⁰ Smith had developed a very ambitious agenda for these boards. In addition to purchasing land in large quantities, the boards were to have other functions:

They should compile information from authentic sources concerning localities advantageous for settlement; the conditions of purchase from government, by railroad

²⁴⁶Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England*, 36.

²⁴⁷Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 26.

²⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 47-48.

²⁴⁹*Ibid.*, 47.

²⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 65.

warrants or from private parties. They should obtain *data upon the fertility, adaptation to special products, prevalent diseases, meteorology, facilities for transportation, materials for building, supply of tools, means of sustenance until harvest, proximity to markets, etc., etc.*, of the regions recommended to emigration. They should devise plans for the settlement of extensive tracts, under superintendence, by numbers sufficient for mutual aid and protection; the use of labor-saving machinery, the co-operation of railroad companies,---all on sufficient scale to attract population of future towns and cities, centres of trade and mechanic arts, ensuring, not only greater gains by division of labor, but facilities for education, social and religious culture, which develop proportionally with population.²⁵¹

Hence it is all the more remarkable that when Smith created such a board, it carried out almost none of these duties.

Smith cited the emigration/migration of Mormons, as well as colonization ventures in Anaheim, California; Greeley, Colorado, and Vineland, New Jersey, as proof that assisting the relocation of “hundreds of care-worn men, filled with dread of the future” could be a safe and profitable investment.²⁵² He identified the “Mormons (preposterous people though they are!)” as the group that pioneered the method he was adapting for his colonization scheme.²⁵³ Smith cited the successful emigration of “four companies” of some 2,000 European Mormons in 1877 as proof of the advantages of associate migration by which people who might be “penniless, but are surely fit for work” could be re-located, “conveyed some two thousand miles inland and added to that wealth-producing sect” of fellow Mormons settled in the Utah Territory.²⁵⁴

Describing their plan of movement, he noted:

They are transferred from England or Norway to Utah, assigned a portion of land, bonded on credit; all expenses of travel incurred, all charges meanwhile for support and supplies, with the value of the land, being debited to the individual. When this indebtedness with interest is liquidated by harvests, they become owners of their land, are advanced to a

²⁵¹Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 48. (Italics added to emphasize the features which those selecting the Rugby site failed to take seriously enough.)

²⁵²*Ibid.*, 49.

²⁵³*Ibid.*, 52.

²⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 52-53.

place in creation they had never imagined, and henceforth believe in the revelations of a good farm and the prophet...The success of their utilitarian measures demonstrates not only their wisdom, but the substantial basis of security for advances made across the Atlantic; namely, *lands to be improved by labor transferred thereto by capital.*²⁵⁵

Since Smith believed that this method of promoting migration had been proven practical, he did not hesitate to assure his readers that “capital is most secure upon land improved by labor. So far as it is divorced from land, it is endangered.”²⁵⁶ Smith dwelt in great detail upon this point, and it became a key feature of his colonization scheme. He argued that owning land gave one “permanent security and [a] perpetual resource.”²⁵⁷ He contrasted this “permanent security” with the diminished value of urban residences, warehouses, and “factories with their thousands of spindles [which] are today worthless as a gift” as a result of the financial hard times.²⁵⁸ However, he seemed certain that the nation’s farms, “God’s food factories, for which He supplies power and raw material, asking man only to combine them” had remained valuable in spite of four years of economic turmoil.²⁵⁹

Once again, it is obvious that this Boston businessman held unrealistic attitudes about agricultural life, blending romanticism and religion in his statements about farming in the papers that made up *The Hard Times*. Although he never attempted to earn a living on the land, he considered farming to be “that primitive occupation, Divinely appointed as man’s resource for

²⁵⁵Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 52-53. (Italics in the original text). In his article about Rugby, Tennessee, which was published in *The Christian Science Monitor* in 1941, journalist Richard Markham also cited the agricultural successes of the Mormons in the deserts of Utah as proof that those who came to Rugby in the 1880s might have made a living as farmers on the mountain lands if they had been more determined to do so. Historian Charlotte Erickson cited Mormons as “the most outstanding case whereby people without contacts could emigrate in a remarkably organized network” (*Leaving England*, 26). Perhaps Erickson considered the Mormons remarkable because they moved large numbers of people over long distances without having any official government involvement in their work or any financial assistance from outsiders.

²⁵⁶Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 53-54.

²⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 54.

²⁵⁸*Ibid.*, 55.

²⁵⁹*Ibid.*

subsistence.”²⁶⁰ Shortly thereafter in his second paper, he judged it to be the “beneficent design of Providence” that the United States had such ample “agricultural resources” as to make it the “land of plenty for a great people.”²⁶¹ In concluding his fourth and final paper, he admonished the people to “obey His law, and they shall reap in fruition His promise: ‘Blessed shall be the fruit of thy ground, the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.’”²⁶² One can easily understand why Smith’s personal visit with Hughes in England in late 1878 or early 1879 led to the formation of a London-based Board of Aid to Land Ownership. Hughes’s ideas about farming were as much a blend of romanticism and religion as Smith’s, and neither man had any realistic conception of what establishing one’s self as a farmer entailed since neither had ever been a working farmer. Both men could therefore propose establishing an agricultural colony in an area that was not noted for agricultural prosperity.

By 1877 there were many who could have enlightened Smith and Hughes about the life of an American farmer. Between 1865 and 1875, “thousands of settlers, taking advantage of the offer of free land contained in the Homestead Act [of 1862] and of the opportunities offered by the new railroads,” had moved onto the Great Plains, increasing agricultural production enormously.²⁶³ Obviously many of these settlers worked very hard, for Smith noted that “despite cheap labor and low interest abroad, American farmers are heavy exporters.”²⁶⁴ He was especially impressed with the transformation that had occurred in Kansas between 1860 and 1875, as the population of the state increased from 8,600 to 531,156 while the number of acres being cultivated rose from 405,468 to 4,343,433, proving that lands yet to be settled were an

²⁶⁰Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 29-30.

²⁶¹*Ibid.*, 30. Interestingly enough, Smith did not consider it to be providential that the Mormons were successful as emigrants and migrants because they were “able-bodied men.” This he judged to be a “fortuitous coincidence,” revealing a lot about his religious beliefs and his religious prejudices (Smith, 53).

²⁶²*Ibid.*, 93.

²⁶³Malcolm Keir, *The March of Commerce* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927), 282.

²⁶⁴Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 56.

“empire in promise.”²⁶⁵ Moreover, as evidence for his assertion that “America is to be the granary, pasture and orchard, for the supply of the deficiencies of Europe,” he devoted several pages to statistics about agricultural exports, and included details about “the increasing importance of the fruit production of the United States, both as a luxury of home consumption, and a staple product of export.”²⁶⁶

In the fourth and final paper of *The Hard Times*, Smith gave the details of his seven-step colonization plan. Boards of Aid would assist both those of “small means, and uncertain income from liability to lose employment, ...[and] also able-bodied young men who eke out a pinched living on petty salaries” to migrate to rural areas where working as farmers, they could “with industry, ensure them a competence.”²⁶⁷ However, before sharing the seven steps of his colonization scheme, Smith briefly reviewed the history of European colonization in America (beginning as one might expect a Bostonian to do with the Puritans, rather than with those establishing the Jamestown colony in 1607, more than a decade earlier than the arrival of the Pilgrims). Ignoring both the Pilgrim colony and John Winthrop and the Mayflower Compact, he noted that much of this migration had been “without method; the force of individual self-reliance and energy.”²⁶⁸ If so, did he need to write at such length about a method for promoting migration? Moreover, he seemed to believe that migrating in the late 1870s to “Arkansas or California, with populations equal to that of Massachusetts in 1820, with State governments, railroads, telegraph, postal facilities, and all essentials of comfort available” would be no challenge compared to what earlier pioneers had achieved, while he claimed that New England

²⁶⁵Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 62. Smith indicated that this data about Kansas came from a publication issued by state officials in celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the statehood of Kansas.

²⁶⁶*Ibid.*, quotes from pages 57 and 58, statistics from pages 56-60. Smith thought fruit production was one of the occupations which would yield rich rewards for those relocating to rural East Tennessee lands on the Plateau.

²⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 82.

²⁶⁸*Ibid.*, 67.

workers who could benefit by relocation required “counsel to induce them to better themselves.”²⁶⁹ However, if generations of migrants had successfully moved west because of their “individual self-reliance and energy,” and if the unemployed in New England were “capable and industrious,” why were boards of aid necessary to relocate “honest mechanics, operatives and laborers...apprehending an approaching winter with dread inquiries, What shall we and our children eat? Wherewithal shall we be clothed?”²⁷⁰ Less than ten years earlier in her novel, *An Old-Fashioned Girl*, first published in 1870, Massachusetts novelist Louisa May Alcott, had indicated that Ned Milton, the less studious brother of the novel’s central character, had “gone out West [alone], and will make his own way anywhere.”²⁷¹ Was this not almost always the case with those who were truly “capable and industrious,” since additional colonies, especially west of the Mississippi, provided places where one might begin life anew?

Surely any thoughtful man reading these papers in the late autumn of 1877 would have spotted what seem to be fallacies in Smith’s presentation. Surely any careful reader would have asked if “capable and industrious” men needed assistance from a board of aid if other regions offered opportunities by which they might earn enough to feed and clothe themselves and their families. Apparently this was not the case, for in a subsequent paper published in the *Advertiser* in 1880, Smith stated that hundreds had responded favorably to his suggestions about using “capital, safely and profitably employed, [to ensure] the gradual development of communities, with their social and educational advantages.”²⁷² Was it widespread fear created by the “most violent strikes in American history” which generated support for Smith’s colonization

²⁶⁹Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 68.

²⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 27.

²⁷¹Louisa May Alcott, *An Old-Fashioned Girl* (1870. Reprint. Ravenel, New Jersey: Random House Publishing Company, 1998), 120.

²⁷²Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 9.

scheme?²⁷³ Or ignorant and inappropriate paternalism? Or did readers respond favorably to Smith's colonization scheme boards because he presented several examples of successful colonization?

There were at this time several well-known examples of strong, prosperous colonies. Smith knew about some of these settlements and commented on them in his text. His presentation, however superficial, may have convinced some readers that his ideas about colonization were more practical than they actually were. Smith specifically cited the experiences of Anaheim, California; Greeley, Colorado, and Vineland, New Jersey as examples of "successful colonization upon definite plans from the outset."²⁷⁴ There is certainly no doubt that the establishment of these disparate settlements in California, Colorado, and New Jersey offered proof that capable and energetic men could and would take advantage of the opportunities to purchase inexpensive land where, as a result of careful planning and collective hard work, they might create prosperous new communities. From the details he knew and included in his "sketches of [these] three successful colonizations," Smith surmised that what "has been done may now be better and more speedily done; for they reveal no advantages not now available, while...the pressure of the times compel many to a new departure for a subsistence or any hope of future competence."²⁷⁵

²⁷³Scott Reynolds Nelson, "The Real Great Depression." When the German nobleman Francis Grund visited Boston in the late 1830s, one very successful merchant told him that "our people, you must know, are accustomed to do everything from fear; nothing from love" (*Aristocracy in America: From the Sketch-Book of a German Nobleman*, 156). So perhaps one can safely conclude that much of the response to Smith's papers was motivated by fear.

²⁷⁴Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 80. Although Smith indicated the success of these colonies was connected with their leaders having "definite plans from the outset," he did not seem to realize the crucial role detailed plans played in colonization.

²⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 70. Smith began this section on "associate migration" with a short description of a Swiss colony which had been established in East Tennessee. What impressed him about the achievements of the settlers, as reported in the *Constitutionalist* of Atlanta, Georgia, was the fact that "115 families, about 700 people, purchased 10,000 acres of mountain land at \$1 per acre" and four years later were said to be living in Gruetli in comfortable homes,

If one begins, as Smith did, with a focus on Anaheim, California, one is struck by the fact that its successful establishment was in no way related to anything like a Board of Aid to Land Ownership. In fact, the “fifty poor men appropriating a portion of their wages to agricultural investment” in the area that became Anaheim, were men already working in California at the time they decided to purchase “1,165 acres of land in Los Angeles County at \$2 per acre.”²⁷⁶ These men apparently formed some type of corporation or cooperative for Smith later referred to the sale of “effects of the company” when they moved to live and work on their own land.²⁷⁷ In the meantime they had had the good sense to employ “a competent overseer of their project,” and he in turn “employed Spaniards and Indians to fence, plant and irrigate the land, digging a ditch seven miles long to the Santa Ana River...On each farm he planted 8,000 vines, covering eight acres [of each twenty acre lot]; also fruit trees and willow trees for fencing.”²⁷⁸ These men continued to work as “mechanics, employed in San Francisco in divers trades” for three years after the purchase of the Los Angeles County land, paying a total of “about \$1,200 saved from wages” or from help provided by friends, and when they took possession of their property, their grapevines were beginning to be productive.²⁷⁹ Smith seemed particularly impressed by the fact that in 1872 there were “no poor. Their gardens yield vegetables and small fruits year round. The vineyards clear an annual income of \$600 to \$700 each over all expenses of living. Property

surrounded by their orchards and gardens. “They have splendid herds of cattle, and their barns are built as carefully as their houses.” While Smith stated that they were “prospering finely,” the history of Gruetli reveals that the colonists, who were farmers, worked very hard to achieve agricultural success in America because the Grundy County soil was poor. Some of the original settlers were very disappointed in the quality of the soil, and many of their descendants either moved away or chose other occupations (Frances Helen Jackson, *The Swiss Colony at Gruetli*, Grundy County Swiss Historical Society, 2010). The town remained small, and Grundy County was, and is, sparsely populated. (According to the 2010 US census, the town’s population was 1,813, almost one-fourth of whom lived below the poverty line.)

²⁷⁶Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 70-71. Smith indicated that his information about this settlement came from an 1872 work by a Mr. Nordhoff, who was obviously one of these fifty men because he recalled that “though we were very poor, I look back on those days as the happiest in my life” (72).

²⁷⁷Ibid., 72.

²⁷⁸Ibid., 71.

²⁷⁹Ibid.

which cost \$1,080 is worth from \$5,000 to \$10,000. There is no drunkenness among them, and they live in plenty.”²⁸⁰

Unlike the establishment of Anaheim which was definitely a group project, the creation of Vineland, New Jersey, (as was shown in Chapter 2) was initially the work of one man, Charles K. Landis. The 1869 national report on agriculture had offered effusive praise for what Landis had achieved:

There can be no question that this colony of 10,000 people, gathered within ten years, as a settlement purely agricultural, has furnished an example of colonization which should not be ignored. It affords a striking example of the effect of population, of educational and social advantages, of associated improvement, in enhancing the values of real estate, and creating a market even amid a community of producers nearly homogeneous.²⁸¹

While it is obvious that Smith was impressed by this praise, it is obvious that he did not fully appreciate how crucial careful site selection was to the success of Vineland. The area that became Vineland was “a wilderness” before the West Jersey Railroad made it accessible.²⁸² However, the site was not merely accessible; Landis chose land along the railroad that connected the site directly with Philadelphia, and later there was also direct train service to New York from Vineland. Landis purchased two large tracts of land, first 16,000 and then another 14,000 acres, and was guided in the development of his colony by six “principles of settlement” which included “stipulations of immediate improvements” on all land sold; creation of small farms, ranging in size from “twenty to sixty acres, with convenient access to roads; and the

²⁸⁰Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 72. The fact that the land had increased in value so substantially was much to the point with Smith who wanted to assure prospective investors that investing idle capital in land was in no way dangerous. Smith also quoted from an unidentified text which stated that a twenty-acre tract of California “cactus and sage-brush” which had cost \$40 had been sold for \$6,000 in 1876 (73).

²⁸¹Ibid.

²⁸²Ibid.

encouragement of fruit-growing in connection with general farming.”²⁸³ Landis restricted the size of the farms in order to create “a dense population, from which follows the highest development of social, mental and religious culture.”²⁸⁴ The “establishment in the centre of the tract of a business city” also ensured that there would be churches and schools as well as a market for surplus farm produce. To ensure that the “money, health, and industry of the people were conserved,” Landis prohibited the sale of all intoxicating beverages.²⁸⁵

Just as land ownership in Anaheim had been a profitable investment, land values in Vineland also increased substantially. According to Landis, “lots that were sold for \$150 have been resold for from \$500 to \$1,500, exclusive of improvements. Land that was sold at \$25 per acre has been resold at from \$200 to \$500 per acre.”²⁸⁶ To make his point even more dramatically, Landis had stated that the price of land “which in 1860 could not have been sold for \$4 per acre” had increased to about \$150 per acre, making a 50,000 acre tract worth approximately \$7,500,000 by 1872, only eleven years after Landis had begun to create his new community in New Jersey.²⁸⁷ While Smith had earlier condemned those who had opted for “sudden accumulation” rather than “old time slow and steady gain” in the early 1870s, such dramatic increases in the price of land were probably not lost on the Boston businessman.²⁸⁸ Moreover, Landis’s six principles to guide settlement were adopted by Smith for a Board of Aid’s colonization project. The principles are also reproduced in Bulletins No. 3 and No. 4, which Smith produced for the British Board of Aid in 1880.

²⁸³Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 75.

²⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 75-76.

²⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 75 and 77. Landis told the New Jersey legislature that the prohibition of alcohol was the “foundation-stone of the prosperity of the settlement” (77). A similar ban was put in place in Rugby from its inception.

²⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 77.

²⁸⁷*Ibid.*

²⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 7.

The establishment of a colony in Colorado, centered on the town of Greeley, seemed to provide additional evidence that “security and prospective larger return” were inherent in the colonization process.²⁸⁹ The national agricultural report of 1870 described the rapid growth of the colony in the nine months after its establishment. On an open site, “between Denver and Cheyenne,” almost “450 houses, twenty stores, mechanics of all kinds, a weekly newspaper, and a population of at least one thousand souls” had been assembled in less than a year.²⁹⁰ As was the practice in Vineland, no liquor was allowed, “nor [was] there a gambling establishment.”²⁹¹ A text written by a visitor in 1872 praised the new town as a “really wonderful place,” leading Smith to conclude that it was built on a “purely agricultural basis, with an inexhaustible capital of intelligence, energy, economy and industry” which helped it go from strength to strength “with no leaps of speculation or fever-heats of ambition and greed.”²⁹²

Smith knew just enough about the success of Anaheim, Vineland, and Greeley to convince himself that colonization could be a profitable venture. However, none of these colonies was established by anything like a Board of Aid to Land Ownership. The men who created Anaheim were hard workers who invested their money, and then their energy and time, to establish a prosperous and thriving community. Charles Landis financed his venture with his own money, and he provided on-site leadership in Vineland. The men who established the Union Colony of Colorado were capable administrators who carefully screened prospective settlers and then used their money to purchase the colony’s land. Smith seemed to be aware of

²⁸⁹Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 86.

²⁹⁰*Ibid.*, 78-79.

²⁹¹*Ibid.*, 79.

²⁹²*Ibid.*, 80. These lines come from a lengthy quote taken from *New Life in New Lands: Notes of Travel* (New York, 1873) written by one Grace Greenwood who was careful to note that the colonists were “good, solid, earnest men and women, and stalwart lads and blooming girls” whose appearance proved that both the “great New York journal” and the “Harper’s Bazaar” were widely read, even out West. Historian Eugene H. Berwanger recently identified Greeley as “Colorado’s most successful colony town” (*The Rise of the Centennial State: Colorado Territory, 1861-1876*, 86).

this for he attributed Greeley's remarkable growth to the fact that the colonists, rather than speculators, received the profits that resulted from their investments of energy, money, and time. However, his subsequent actions reveal that instead of taking practical lessons from what he knew about these colonies, Smith thought they confirmed his theory that "MIND, CAPITAL and LABOR, *growers and graziers*, are now a partnership to which all other industrial interests are attendant and subsidiary."²⁹³ He therefore continued to promote the creation of boards of aid to land ownership to assist those wanting to relocate in order to earn their living on the land.

As further evidence of the rich rewards available to anyone investing in his colonization plan, Smith included a letter written by a "prominent gentleman of Pittsburg, Penn." which described the way he had assisted "poor, worthy men" to become landowners while at the same time reaping a handsome personal profit.²⁹⁴ Since Pittsburgh had been the scene of the most violent clashes between striking railroad workers and law enforcement personnel in 1877, it is not surprising that a "prominent gentleman" of the "city of brotherly love" decided to devote some of his surplus capital to reducing the number of impoverished workers there. The correspondent stated that he had purchased land in both Indiana and Iowa which he subsequently divided into 80 or 160-acre tracts before selling to "men, who had little or no means..., dividing the payments into ten annual installments, with ten per cent annual interest."²⁹⁵ The fact that all of these men prospered, becoming "independent and useful citizens" in their respective communities, while he made money, led him to encourage others to follow his example, for he claimed:

A more safe and useful investment cannot be made by those having money to invest, if care is taken in the location and selection of land purchased, and in selling to men of

²⁹³Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 92. (Emphasis and italics in the original)

²⁹⁴Ibid., 81. The letter had originally been published in *The Advertiser* only three months earlier.

²⁹⁵Ibid.

industry and frugality. To have money invested where you get ten per cent. interest paid to you annually, and ten per cent. of the principal in addition, free of all taxation, is a desirable investment, when secure from loss by fire, bankruptcy or embezzlement, and aiding poor men to rise to independence. Large amounts of money can be invested in this way with *perfect security*...I have seen, in good locations, millions of acres of good land that can be had at a low price.²⁹⁶

Immediately after this final “sales pitch” (which seemed to promise that one could do well while doing good), Smith presented the seven specific measures by which boards of aid would “organize an investment of labor lying waste, that shall earn its dividend in fertile lands.”²⁹⁷

Primarily taking what Landis had done in New Jersey as his model, Smith set the first task for the proposed boards as being the purchase of large tracts of land, “with due reference to its fertility, water, neighboring population, markets, transportation, etc., etc.”²⁹⁸ It should surprise no one that he could quickly assure the readers of his fourth and final paper that he had received “offers of land in various States, with such special inducements as show the ability of the board to buy 10,000 to 50,000 acres of land upon credit, and at prices impossible to private parties.”²⁹⁹ Since Smith had already stated that he had difficulty obtaining reliable information about available fertile lands, one would think he would have been very cautious, rather than enthusiastic, about offers received so soon after he began to publicize his ideas about colonization. The importance of a colony’s having a central town site with certain plots reserved for such public places as parks and schools was a lesson Smith drew from the work of Landis and those establishing the Union Colony, while “restrictions on building would also be covered in the original plan of the town and agreements with the comers.”³⁰⁰ He completely endorsed the

²⁹⁶Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 81. (Italics added).

²⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 82.

²⁹⁸*Ibid.*, 83.

²⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 84.

³⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 85. The extant deeds for the Rugby lots contain the restrictions Smith herewith recommended.

strict prohibition of liquor, which was characteristic of both Vineland and Greeley, noting that every deed should contain a clause about this issue.

In addition to investing its money in land, Smith advocated that boards should arrange “loans of small amounts, with security and prospective larger return,” based on a rather arcane scheme in which someone might purchase a portion of land, equip and support a colonist while he farmed half of the tract and began to make payments plus ten per cent interest in order to eventually take possession of his portion of the tract, having made the remainder of the tract more valuable because of his work, thus returning to his benefactor “large reward for the philanthropic use of his money.”³⁰¹ Smith believed that the lender would incur “no risk, for he merely pays for labor upon land which is in his own name,” and he reasoned that \$1,000 “would probably establish four colonists upon their own land, each two or three years” while the rising value of the land would benefit both the settlers and those who provided the capital for the colonization venture.³⁰²

Meanwhile, not only were Western railroads soliciting settlers for their extensive lands, but also Southern states were competing to attract new residents as part of the process of recovery from the devastation of the war years. Tennessee had been trying to attract immigrants, both from Northern states and from Europe since 1867, when the state’s first Board of Immigration had been established. In *The Tennessee Handbook and Emigrant’s Guide*, Commissioner Hermann Bokum, touted the attractive economic opportunities available in Tennessee. He was especially interested in East Tennessee, which both sides in the recent war had sought to control because of its “wealth in grain, in cattle, in hogs, not less than its mineral

³⁰¹Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 86-87.

³⁰²*Ibid.*, 87

resources.”³⁰³ He was enthusiastic about opportunities for newcomers in that section of the state because of “its minerals, of its magnificent valleys, of its glorious mountains, of its splendid water-power, [and] of its pure atmosphere.”³⁰⁴ The Cumberland Mountain area was particularly notable, he thought, because of the “remarkable clearness of its atmosphere and healthfulness of its climate.”³⁰⁵ Moreover, Bokum noted that railroads were making an enormous difference in a section of the state that had been generally rather isolated “from the rest of the world by its mountains.”³⁰⁶ However, as students of nineteenth-century American history well know, there were few railroads in the southeastern states until after 1870. While it is probably true that evaluating “the importance of railroads to American life is an almost impossible task,” scholars of the 1861-1865 war always list its extensive network of railroads as one of the most important Union advantages.³⁰⁷ Southern leaders, well aware of this reality, began to concentrate after 1865 on getting enough capital to correct this transportation deficiency, although raising money for any new project was complicated by the expense associated with the extensive rebuilding of areas badly damaged during a war fought primarily on Southern soil. Railroad construction proceeded very slowly. Some limited state aid for railroad construction slowly raised the total rail mileage in Tennessee. It was, however, fortunate for certain Southern cities, such as Chattanooga, Tennessee, that both businessmen and officials in Cincinnati, Ohio, were already interested in rail connections with Southern destinations. Engaged in a commercial rivalry with merchants in Louisville, Kentucky, its neighbor on the Ohio River, Cincinnati businessmen experienced a substantial loss of trade after the Louisville and Nashville Railroad was completed in 1859. City officials in Cincinnati suspected that the “tendency of the carrying trade... was to

³⁰³Hermann Bokum, *The Tennessee Handbook and Immigrant's Guide* (1868), 12.

³⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 7.

³⁰⁵*Ibid.*, 100.

³⁰⁶*Ibid.*, 7.

³⁰⁷Malcolm Keir, *The March of Commerce*, 155.

settle along other routes, leaving the metropolis out in the cold.”³⁰⁸ Since the constitution of Ohio prohibited “all forms of corporation subsidy by state or municipality,” some citizens attempted to raise private funds for railroad construction.³⁰⁹ After several unsuccessful attempts to obtain the necessary capital, Cincinnati leaders decided to construct a “railroad to Chattanooga upon municipal credit. An enabling act was obtained from the Ohio legislature in 1869,” and construction of the Cincinnati Southern railway was begun in 1874.³¹⁰ Although construction was complicated by the mountainous terrain, especially in eastern Tennessee, rail travel on the Cincinnati Southern Railroad became a reality in 1878, providing limited access to lands in such counties as Morgan and Scott which were very sparsely populated at the time. Although no specific evidence indicates why Smith (and perhaps other Board of Aid members) decided to take advantage of this new railway to explore the “table land or plateau of East Tennessee” in 1878, it is possible that they were attracted to the area after reading publications written by Colonel Joseph Buckner Killebrew.³¹¹

Killebrew had also written extensively about Tennessee’s agricultural and mineral resources. A Montgomery County native who graduated from the University of North Carolina with “first honors in June 1856,” Killebrew had become a successful farmer and large landowner by 1872.³¹² He soon became a highly respected agricultural leader and was active in “public

³⁰⁸Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 37.

³⁰⁹Frederick A. Cleveland and Fred Wilbur Powell, *Railroad Promotion and Capitalization in the United States* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1909), 131.

³¹⁰Ibid.

³¹¹The land the Board of Aid selected for its colony was labeled the “tableland of East Tennessee” in *Bulletin, No. 3*, published by the London Board in June 1880. However, in the same publication, and in newspaper articles which had begun to appear in various Boston papers in March 1880, the land was referred to as the “plateau of East Tennessee.” Sometimes it was labeled the “table land or plateau” of Scott, Morgan, Fentress and Overton counties although the Board never showed much interest in Overton County and never purchased any land there.

³¹²Samuel Boyd Smith, “Joseph Buckner Killebrew and the New South Movement in Tennessee,” *The East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications*, No. 37 (1965), 8. Killebrew was given a commission in the Confederate Army but never fought in the war because of his opposition to what he considered to be the army’s primary purpose: the preservation of slavery. He was always thereafter addressed as “Colonel Killebrew.”

service on the state level” from 1871 to 1881.³¹³ Killebrew’s personal interest in immigration dated from the period immediately after the war when he and other large landowners found it difficult to secure reliable and stable farm workers. Perhaps because Bokum, a native German, was the Tennessee’s Commissioner of Immigration at that time, Killebrew and another Montgomery County man tried to organize a trip to Europe to secure northern German workers for agricultural work in their county. They abandoned the project because they were unable to “finance the venture.”³¹⁴ Named Commissioner for Agriculture, Statistics, and Mines in 1875, with responsibility for immigration added to his work in 1877, Killebrew authored “numerous treatises on immigration and on such specific Tennessee resources a forests, oil, and mineral regions” in addition to his works on agriculture.³¹⁵ An article published in the *Nashville Daily American* in May 1878 stated that Killebrew’s “descriptive works [about the Cumberland Plateau] were read thoroughly by the English settlers before they decided to come to the Plateau.”³¹⁶ Their source for this information is unknown. Smith and his fellow Board members might have read Killebrew’s work, and once on the table lands in East Tennessee, they decided that these lands had great potential for their project.

A favorable response to Smith’s *Hard Times* papers, “by prominent citizens of Boston,” and some financial support led to the creation of a Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership in December 1877.³¹⁷ Smith was the Board’s president and his Pemberton Square office became the Board’s headquarters. Although Smith acknowledged in his final paper that November was not the ideal time to establish a colony, he insisted that much could still “be done immediately

³¹³Samuel Boyd Smith, “Joseph Buckner Killebrew,” 8.

³¹⁴*Ibid.*, 14.

³¹⁵*Ibid.*, 8-9.

³¹⁶*Nashville Daily American*, May 16, 1878, 3, quoted in Smith, “Joseph Buckner Killebrew,” 15.

³¹⁷“Mr. Hughes’s Visit: The Distinguished Englishman’s Mission to America” in *The Boston Daily Advertiser*, 21 August 1880, 3.

for the idle” if those supportive of his plan would focus upon “organization and the selection of lands.”³¹⁸

A site selection committee, led by Smith, began its work immediately and made two trips to lands west of the Mississippi River in late 1877 and early 1878 in order to find a suitable place for the Board’s first colony. Tracts in Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska were considered and rejected. Smith summarized the findings of the committee in a statement which was repeated in all Bulletins issued by the Board of Aid to Land Ownership, perhaps in order to emphasize what the Board considered the very significant contrast between their Cumberland Plateau property and the “peculiarities of prairie country,” noting that:

While they found abundance of fertile land, with an immense tide of immigration pouring in, their final conclusion was that the peculiarities of prairie country---winds and fire, chills and fever, limestone water and distance from metropolitan centres, drought, Indian raids and the treeless monotony of the prairies, contrasted with picturesque landscapes of the Eastern states---were forbidding drawbacks to the westward emigration of people from these states.³¹⁹

There were other reasons for not selecting a colonization site from unoccupied lands west of the Mississippi River. Very few of the new settlers in these areas were people who had migrated from New England. However, according to Smith, the truly “insuperable obstacle to the prosecution of organized colonization” on these lands was the “United States system of survey, making alternate square miles, independent of individual control, thus rendering it impossible” to

³¹⁸Smith, *The Hard Times*, 88.

³¹⁹Ibid. Smith’s reference to “these states,” meaning primarily New England, is a reminder that much of the land west of the Mississippi River was settled by people who previously lived in such states as Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, which had been created from what was known as the “Northwest Territory,” beginning in 1803. In fact, in his fourth paper, Smith stated that “statistics of late Western emigration [prior to 1873] show the disposition of people in older states to live in commercial and manufacturing places” where they became accustomed to certain amenities (such as churches, shopping areas, parks); this reality led him to insist on the importance of “*associate migration*” (italics in original, 68).

implement the scheme he had developed.³²⁰ In other words, the Board could not obtain what Smith had deemed absolutely necessary, i.e. “large tracts of agricultural land” which could be carefully subdivided, as Smith had recommended, into “towns with outlying farms.”³²¹

Although the site selection committee was in the process of rejecting offers of land west of the Mississippi, Smith corresponded with W. A. Harris, a land agent in Lawrence, Kansas, about purchasing land there in 1878. These letters, preserved among the Rugby Papers in the Tennessee State Library and Archives, reveal that in early March, Harris offered Smith 45,000 acres of land at \$4 per acre, if Smith paid cash, or up to \$4.50 per acre if Smith initially paid only one third of the total price, paying an additional one third within the next year, and the remainder within two years, with interest at the rate of seven per cent. Harris later responded to Smith’s interest in land in Reading, Kansas, telling him that a “first-class hotel with a basement, two stories, and a mansard roof” might cost as much as \$12,000 to construct, although Harris thought a suitable hotel could be built for much less since “you only wish it for the better class of visitors.”³²² There is another letter from Harris to Smith about hotel construction in May, and the final two letters from Harris in June described some complications associated with getting good titles to the land (which may have led Smith to abandon this project).

³²⁰Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 88. Smith did report that the Board had purchased “a fragment of an Indian reservation” which it did not retain because of “a defective title. Since then the state of Kansas has been obliged to remedy by legislation this defect in the title to the property. It has proved fortunate for the company that they did not secure this site, for it has since suffered extremely from dry weather and the crops have failed.” The Rugby settlers had exactly the same experience in 1881, when drought destroyed what would have been the first year’s harvest. It is just such vagaries (plus the many months between planting and harvesting) that make many farmers so dependent on credit, and makes peasant farmers so prone to debt-peonage. Security from such debt is just what “benevolent” capitalists involved in a Board of Aid might have been able to provide.

³²¹*Ibid.*, 83. Both Vineland and Greeley were the models of how a colony should be laid out. The Tennessee colony was therefore to be centered on a central town (Rugby) surrounded by numerous farms.

³²²W. A. Harris, Lawrence, Kansas, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 18 April 1878, Box 5, Folder 1, of the Rugby Papers. Manuscripts MS-69-1885. Nashville: Tennessee State Library and Archives (hereafter TSLA).

Having decisively rejected lands west of the Mississippi River for a variety of reasons, in the summer of 1878 Smith and the site selection committee toured Western North Carolina before returning to the tablelands of East Tennessee. For reasons Smith widely publicized, the committee decided these lands were ideal for their venture, and they made the first public announcement about their plans. In a statement published in Boston newspapers in Month? 1878 and then reproduced in every bulletin of first the Boston-based Board and then of the London-based Board, members of the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership gave their “unanimous judgment” about selection of a site:

That the mountain plateau of East Tennessee, in consideration of its climate, soil, elevation, sufficiently level surface, timber, water, mineral resources, accessibility, educational advantages, and markets, with the kindly disposition of its present population,--offers greater opportunity for the accomplishment of the design of this Board, than any other tract visited, in travel for six months, over a distance of more than twenty thousand miles, in Western and Southern States.³²³

It is almost impossible to understand why this site was selected, and perhaps even more difficult to reconcile the London-based Board’s staying with a site that was not only generally inaccessible but also of questionable value. No doubt the climate on the Plateau would have been attractive, especially in late Spring when Tennessee weather is often almost ideal, and especially when compared with the “winds and fire, the chills and fever” of the prairie lands. However, there is no evidence that Smith or other Board members took the time to ascertain

³²³Actually there are many places where one finds that same lengthy paragraph, including *Bulletins No. 1* and *No. 2*, issued by the Boston-based Board and articles in *The Boston Advertiser*, beginning in March 1880, and *Bulletins No. 3* and *No. 4*, published in Boston for the London-based Board, beginning in March 1880. Anyone who has studied Smith’s papers which were published as *The Hard Times* or other articles he wrote for *The Advertiser* can recognize his characteristic use of certain phrases and his style of writing which appeared again in the texts for the third and fourth *Bulletins*. Although I have not found a copy of the first two bulletins in the Rugby Papers, portions of the second *Bulletin* are reproduced in the lengthy paper entitled “Mr. Hughes’s Visit” which was published shortly before Hughes made his second visit to the United States, and his first to the Cumberland Plateau, in August 1880. It is obvious that Smith is the author of the second *Bulletin*. In his fourth paper published in November 1877 he specifically identified publication of periodic bulletins as a responsibility of a board of aid. He and Hughes were later to disagree sharply over the need for further publications. By June 1880, Hughes began to consider them an unnecessary expense, and since almost all the money for the project was coming from London, Smith had to accept his decision.

whether the soil was very fertile and whether there were successful farmers in the area. Moreover, while the new railway connected certain areas of Morgan County with Cincinnati, the Board had to build a road from Smith's chosen town site to the nearest train station at Sedgemoor, some seven miles away, a two-hour wagon ride. One then had a nine-hour train ride to the "refined civilization" of Cincinnati. Nashville, the state capital, located some 140 miles to the west of the site, was accessible only by unimproved roads. The nearest educational advantages were no closer than Knoxville, and since there were no rail connections to Knoxville, one cannot say that the Cumberland site had educational advantages. In his 1868 handbook and immigrants' guide Commissioner Bokum stated that most Tennesseans welcomed immigrants, "thinking of immigration as a powerful agent to bring prosperity."³²⁴ However, one can only guess what Board members meant by their reference to the "kindly disposition of the present population" since one of the advantages of the area selected was the ability to buy as much as 400,000 acres of land, indicating that the Board did not anticipate having close neighbors from any of the mountain natives already on the Plateau. Board members should *not* have been surprised that many people were quite willing to sell their land which, according to Bokum, had the lowest value per acre of any land in East Tennessee. Bokum included a helpful table in his handbook and guide showing the average value of land per acre in various Tennessee counties in 1867. The town site selected by the Board (think Smith) was located in Morgan County, where land was valued at 53 cents per acre, the lowest price of all the lands listed by Bokum. It was even lower than that of its neighbor to the east, Scott County, where land had an average value of 82 cents per acre. In Knox County, where the state's land grant university was, and is, located, land was valued at \$11.62 per acre, and in Hamilton County, where Chattanooga was fast becoming a "railroad and boating center," land values were even higher, averaging \$12.06 per

³²⁴Hermann Bokum, *The Tennessee Handbook and Immigrant's Guide*, 109-110.

acre. As will be explained more fully in Chapter 5, one would have thought Boston Board members would have been more cautious about buying land in counties with such low land values that were a direct result of the dearth of working farms and profitable industries. As a businessman, Franklin Smith should have taken a more sophisticated approach to site selection, being at least a little suspicious about the Board's ability to buy such large quantities of land ("above 300,000 acres") if indeed, the lands were "extraordinary in their resources."³²⁵ The subsequent history of this colonization venture emphasizes what Smith, Boyle, Hughes and others associated with the Board of Aid should have known: the fertility of the soil is the first consideration if one is determined to create a farming community, and direct accessibility to markets is not far behind in importance if one is to earn a living on the land.³²⁶

Before issuing the first public announcement about their site, Smith began to gather information about agriculture in Tennessee. He corresponded with Commissioner Killebrew, requesting information on a variety of topics. Responding to two of Smith's letters of 20 June 1878, Killebrew's secretary, J. Gordon Cantrell, told Smith he had forwarded "by express a number of reports (miscellaneous) which will doubtless be of much value to you."³²⁷ Although Cantrell had no copies of the "pamphlets on 'Sheep Husbandry'," he indicated he was making arrangements to have some sent to Smith, and he concluded the letter by stating that Colonel Killebrew would write Smith "tomorrow morning giving information regarding the 100,000 acre

³²⁵ *Organization, Objects and Measures [;] Description of the Estate on the Plateau of East Tennessee [;] Geological Section of the Plateau or Tableland* (Bulletin No. 3. Boston: The Board of Aid to Land Ownership Limited, 1880), 11.

³²⁶ Bokum stated that land in Scott County was suitable for "grazing purposes" and for "raising hogs and sheep" (37). However, anyone raising hogs would want to be growing corn in order to feed his animals, and therefore, the quality of the soil would be important. Although he indicated that Morgan County contained more fertile land than its neighbor to the east, he seemed to think its mineral resources were its most valuable attraction.

³²⁷ J. Gordon Cantrell, Nashville, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 20 June 1878, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

tract and the Table Land.”³²⁸ Apparently Smith had already begun to publicize the Board’s interest in the Tennessee site, for Thomas D. Hadley wrote Smith from Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, asking for information about the area in hopes that he and his “large family” might “get into a more primitive state and a more primitive style of living” although Hadley stated he would like to continue to be a newspaper publisher if he relocated.³²⁹

For work on the land titles, legal assistance would be essential. In early July 1878, rural East Tennessee attorney L. P. Bright wrote to Smith indicating that he would be glad to help with the work, which is “so important to my people,” and recommending that Smith contact “Colonel McGee---one of the wealthiest, most enterprising, liberal men in East Tennessee.”³³⁰ There is no indication that McGee, a Knoxville resident, was involved with this colonization project in any way whatsoever. As for L. P. Bright, he and A. B. Bright practiced law in Wartburg, the country seat of Morgan County, where the town of Rugby was, and is, located. Their firm’s letterhead advertised real estate as their specialty, stating “parties owning or expecting to own land in East Tennessee will do well to consult us.” A few weeks later Bright identified Knoxville attorney Oliver Perry Temple as the one to help Smith with the legal issues related to the purchase of land. Temple soon became and then remained the primary legal counselor of the Board until he became Knoxville’s Postmaster in 1881.³³¹

³²⁸J. Gordon Cantrell to Franklin W. Smith, 20 June 1878, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

³²⁹Thomas D. Hadley, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 24 June 1878, Box 5, Folder 1, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Hadley stated that he published a newspaper in Chester County, Pennsylvania, an area “thickly populated with well-to-do people looking for bargains and opportunities to purchase farms, merchandise, etc.”

³³⁰L. P. Bright, Wartburg, Tennessee, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 4 July 1878, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. The airport in Knoxville, Tennessee is named for McGee whose memory is commemorated in numerous other ways in the area. L. P. Bright died unexpectedly soon after he began to work with the Board of Aid. A. B. Bright invested heavily in the Board’s property after he became their local counsel.

³³¹The O. P. Temple Papers in the Special Collections Library, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, are a valuable resource for reconstructing some of the early business history of Rugby since Judge Temple carefully

Having secured legal counsel for the Board's work, Smith then focused on having the necessary financial resources. By the end of July, Smith wrote from East Tennessee to New York banker Edward D. Adams, who asked Smith to send documentation of "the charter, the report of the legislative committee, members of the Board, and such other details as are in print, and will indicate the formality of incorporation, the legal recognition, and the personnel of the management."³³² Adams also asked Smith to send him some estimate of the "cash necessary to float the enterprise into successful operations, and some idea of the resources from which the operating expenses and interest charges would be provided."³³³ (There is apparently no evidence of Smith's responses to these requests.)

A clue as to why such a large amount of land on the Cumberland Plateau was available for sale may be related to one Cyrus Clarke, whom Smith selected as the on-site manager for the Boston Board's colonization project. Probably on his first trip to Tennessee Smith had met Cyrus Clarke, who had migrated to Tennessee from Newcastle, Pennsylvania.³³⁴ Clarke was one of eight principals in the Tennessee Mining and Land Company, chartered by the State legislature on 5 February 1870. Clarke, incorrectly listed as "Clark" in the bill's text, and his fellow businessmen were designated by the Legislature as:

a body politic and corporate [whose business was identified as the] development of coal, iron, salt, and other mineral resources, and the mining and manufacture of coal, iron, and

preserved correspondence, especially with Franklin W. Smith, Thomas Hughes, John Boyle, and William Hastings Hughes, related to the Rugby colony.

³³²Edward D. Adams, New York, New York, to Franklin W. Smith, Huntsville, Tennessee, 30 July 1878, in the Rugby Papers TSLA. Smith was identified as "Prest." in the salutation and his address was given as Huntsville, Tennessee, which is the county seat of Scott County. Huntsville and Wartburg were the only towns of any size near the proposed colonization site.

³³³Ibid.

³³⁴Brian Stagg was completely unaware that Clarke was in Tennessee years before Smith and the site selection committee visited the region. He thought Clarke accompanied Smith from Boston, and he stated that Smith and "Clarke, the general manager of the company, had stumbled upon the wilderness of the northern Cumberland Mountains" in 1878. Then, according to Stagg, having decided that the mountain wilderness was ideal for his colonization scheme, Smith left "Clarke behind to secure an option on 350,000 acres" while he returned to Boston to recruit colonists (*The Distant Eden*, 3).

other minerals of the counties of Fentress, Scott, Anderson, Roane, Cumberland, Knox, Campbell and Bledsoe; the manufacture of lumber and wooden wares, and to encourage immigration to said counties; and for this purpose said company may purchase, hold and sell real estate; *provided* the same shall not exceed two hundred and fifty thousand acres, at any one time.³³⁵

The company's capital stock was to "consist of twenty-five hundred shares, of one hundred dollars each, which may be increased by the Board of Directors to ten thousand shares," and the company was to have "succession for ninety-nine years."³³⁶ Although it is impossible to know why Clarke and his fellow Pennsylvanians came to Tennessee, they could have been aware of Bokum's praise of East Tennessee. Bokum had specifically noted that Morgan County had "numerous minerals, iron and coal," as well as "stone for building, lime, marl, zinc, salt, lead, slate, fire clay, [and] sand."³³⁷ He also stated that land prices were as low as 50 cents per acre for some of these "mountain lands."³³⁸ Several documents in the Rugby Papers indicate that in 1878 Clarke had a large amount of land for sale (perhaps up to 400,000 acres).³³⁹ It is easy to imagine that he overheard Smith and his companions discussing colonization and decided that their plans could help to line his pockets. Nevertheless the Boards of Aid bought no land on the site until February 1880.

³³⁵Chapter LII, Section 90, *Acts of the State of Tennessee passed by the First Session of the Thirty-Sixth General Assembly for the Years 1869-1870* (Nashville: Jones, Purvis & Company, 1870), 352-354. (Italics in the original) As its section number indicates, the formation of this company was only one part of a lengthy private bill that created a wide variety of corporate bodies, beginning in Section 1 with the Maxwell Insurance Company and concluding in Section 93 with the "Bear Creek Turnpike Company" of Maury County.

³³⁶*Ibid.*, 352.

³³⁷Hermann Bokum, *The Tennessee Handbook and Immigrant's Guide*, 48-49.

³³⁸*Ibid.*, 15.

³³⁹The first prospectus issued by the London Board of Aid in July 1879 stated that the Board planned to purchase 50,000 acres of land from one vendor who had an additional 350,000 acres of land that the Board might purchase on very favorable terms. There were similar references in *Bulletins No. 3* and *4*, published in March and May 1880, and in the London Board's second prospectus, issued in June 1880. There are numerous indications that this vendor was Cyrus Clarke. As will be explained in Chapter 6, two of the other principals in the Tennessee Mining and Land Company claimed co-ownership of the tracts Clarke wanted to sell to the Board of Aid. Judge Temple warned the Board against dealing with Clarke until he could be assured of a clear title to the property. Apparently Clarke had borrowed money to purchase this property, and when he could not meet the payments to his creditors, there was a court-ordered sale of the land in January 1881. A. L. Crawford, the principal creditor, purchased the property.

Ironically –and sadly for his grandiose scheme---Smith’s driving motive of resettling unemployed and militant workers from the East onto new western lands was undermined at almost the very moment a colonization site was selected. The American economy improved, and the return of a degree of prosperity drastically reduced support for Smith’s colonization scheme. The men who might have provided funds for Smith’s project apparently ceased to fear those whose “only escape from future pauperism seemed to be a return to the soil, which might afford them a living.”³⁴⁰ The “magnitude of the 1877 strike [which had] startled contemporaries” seemed less important once there was a general economic upturn.³⁴¹ And yet, ironically enough, only a decade later in his utopian novel *Looking Backward 2000-1887*, author Edward Bellamy indicated that the New England economy was then in serious trouble again. Industrial unrest was widespread, and “(s)trikes had become so common at that period that people ceased to inquire into their particular grounds,” according to Bellamy’s central character Julian West.³⁴² Bellamy hoped that “industrial evolution” would destroy the “excessive individualism” which he blamed as the cause of both recurring economic and social problems.³⁴³ There is no evidence that he supported any of Smith’s ideas about mitigating the evils of capitalism through a system of “associate migration.” Nor is there any evidence that such noteworthy New England natives as James Russell Lowell (Hughes’s special friend) or Ralph Waldo Emerson or Oliver Wendell Holmes supported Smith’s scheme. This raises questions about why Smith continued to pursue plans to purchase East Tennessee lands after the economic and social reasons for his initial interest in colonization had disappeared. Nonetheless, he did.

³⁴⁰“Mr. Hughes’s Visit,” *Rugby, Tennessee*, 3.

³⁴¹Paul A. Gilje, *Rioting in America*, 118.

³⁴²Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward 2000-1887* (1887. Reprint. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), 9.

³⁴³*Ibid.*, 30 and 26.

A new stage in the development of what was to become the Rugby colony on the Cumberland Plateau came with the formation of a London-based Board of Aid to Land Ownership. New York banker Edward Adams suggested that Smith meet “my friend, Mr. Boyle” who was visiting from England in the autumn of 1878, and added that “you can depend upon my doing what I can to further your interests in this connection.”³⁴⁴ After meeting with Adams in New York, Boyle went to Boston to meet Smith, who persuaded him to visit the Cumberland Plateau before he left the United States. Boyle was very favorably impressed by what he found there. When he returned to London in December 1878, he wrote the Boston Board of Aid a glowing letter about the tablelands which Smith promptly published as a circular. Smith described Boyle as a man who had “extensive business experience, in commercial, railway, mining, and real estate relations, as managing trustee for above twenty-five years of large estates of a wealthy nobleman of England.”³⁴⁵ Boyle believed that he could “truthfully echo, with no uncertain sound, the opinions of the table land, expressed in the Bulletin No. 2 of Mr. Franklin W. Smith.”³⁴⁶ Boyle was favorably impressed by the climate and the soil that seemed much preferable to the “heavier red ones which I had passed over in Kentucky.”³⁴⁷ He judged the soil to be “pliable, rather sandy, porous, with a substratum, I heard, of clay, easily cultivated” as the abundant produce he was shown (including apples, cabbages, corn, and potatoes) seemed to prove.³⁴⁸ He was even more struck by the “noble timber” which he indicated “was a constant theme of my wonder and admiration,” and there were “abundant

³⁴⁴Edward Adams, New York, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 3 October 1878, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

³⁴⁵“Letter of John Boyle, Esq., Barrister-At-Law, 63 Chancery Lane, London, E. C., to the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership in Relation to His Visit to the TENNESSEE ESTATE” (Boston: The Board of Aid to Land Ownership, 1878), 3.

³⁴⁶Ibid.

³⁴⁷Ibid., 4.

³⁴⁸Ibid., 4-5.

streams of water.”³⁴⁹ Moreover, he had personally investigated the mineral resources, including coal and iron ore. The very positive results led him to strongly support Smith’s conclusion that “it would be difficult to find a country presenting so many favorable positions for establishing a large scheme of colonization...as soon as the railway now being constructed to and over a considerable portion of the table land” was completed.³⁵⁰ Boyle concluded his letter by assuring the Boston Board members that he had returned to England determined “to forward the intentions with which you sent forth your President [Smith] to England. Unless I am too sanguine, he will inform you that he returns to America with the prospect of substantial support for the enterprise initiated in Boston.”³⁵¹

Obviously Boyle had confided to Smith that both he and his fellow barrister Thomas Hughes were concerned about limited career opportunities for the sons of the well-to-do. Both Boyle and Hughes had sons coming of age in a period of economic decline in England. Hughes’s oldest son, James (Jem), was already in the United States in late 1878 where he was becoming a successful rancher on the Texas/Mexico border. In *The Hard Times*, Smith had emphasized that very capable men should be selected for leadership roles in order to “command public confidence” in the work of a board of aid to land ownership.³⁵² No doubt Smith realized the great value of involving Hughes in his plans for the plateau lands. The involvement of the well-known Hughes would be a sure way to attract widespread support and more money, (from both sides of the Atlantic) for his project. Smith then made quick plans to sail to England in order to meet Hughes, and he arrived in England soon after Boyle had returned there. Boyle had no doubt conferred with Hughes about the enormous potential of the Plateau lands soon after his

³⁴⁹“Letter of John Boyle,” 5.

³⁵⁰Ibid.

³⁵¹Ibid., 7.

³⁵²Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times*, 49.

return from America. He and Hughes apparently met with Smith in London where a Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, was created in January 1879.³⁵³

After his return to the United States in February 1879, Smith corresponded with a wide variety of people who showed interest in the Plateau project. Adams wrote from New York, indicating that he had told his partners about Smith's considering "our firm 'American bankers' of the enterprise—they approve my acceptance of the relation."³⁵⁴ Ten days later he warned Smith about a Mr. Chapman, who "claims to have many prominent friends" but was unreliable; moreover, Adams stated that Chapman would want a commission if he were involved in the negotiations, and "his connection would damage your enterprise."³⁵⁵ Adams wrote again to Smith almost immediately rejecting Chapman's participation, and asking "Why is it necessary to have so large a public presentation? If your money is provided, that fact alone, with the names you have will commend confidence that 'tis no dollarless scheme, born of necessity and languishing in poverty of everything except imaginary people and profits."³⁵⁶ In his letter of February 5, Adams encouraged Smith to contact Cincinnati Southern Railway officials about advertising the project and stated that opportunities in the United States for "landed estate and labor are now so promising."³⁵⁷

Meanwhile, Smith was receiving letters that add a note of intrigue to the colonization venture. One Horatio A. Hobbs, who must have been working for or with Smith, wrote to him from Cincinnati before traveling on the Cincinnati Southern Railroad to Somerset, Kentucky, the

³⁵³The first prospectus issued by the London Board of Aid in July 1879 referred to incorporation of the British colonization company in January 1879. Smith's correspondence proved that he was in London at that time so it is quite reasonable to think that he followed Boyle to England for the sole purpose of meeting with Hughes and Boyle to enlist their support for colonization on the Cumberland Plateau.

³⁵⁴Edward D. Adams, New York, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 13 January 1879, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. On the letterhead the firm is identified as "Winston, Lanier and Company, Bankers."

³⁵⁵Edward D. Adams, New York, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 24 January 1879, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

³⁵⁶Edward D. Adams, New York, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 28 January 1879, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

³⁵⁷Edward D. Adams, New York, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 5 February 1879, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

final segment of a journey which began in Boston. He told Smith that he had “kept a quiet tongue so far and companions are leaving all business matters to me.”³⁵⁸ In early January Hobbs wrote Smith from Jacksboro, Tennessee, after trustees of the railroad had set a date of 10 December 1879 for completion of the railroad to Chattanooga. In early February, Hobbs again wrote Smith from the same location, reporting that he was “doing a good business here.”³⁵⁹ He also stated that he had met “Mr. Charles Seymour of Knoxville” who was said to be a “tricky fellow.”³⁶⁰ Seymour warned Hobbs that “Mr. Smith would be likely to be taken in by some of the men he was dealing with but mentioned no names. I suppose he meant people in Tenn.”³⁶¹ In all probability, Seymour meant Cyrus Clarke. Clarke had a large amount of property he desperately wanted, and then needed, to sell in order to satisfy his creditors. Nevertheless, Smith named him the colony’s on-site manager, and the British Board retained him in this capacity for at least eighteen months. Even Thomas Hughes later criticized him for cheating the Board since he claimed he was owed thousands of dollars in commissions for his work in securing certain tracts of land, such as the Harriman property.

In order to hasten the work connected with colonization, Smith turned to the Board’s legal counselor, Judge Temple, for help with a variety of matters. Writing in February 1879 on stationery of the “Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Boston, Mass.,” Smith revealed the importance of his message by writing “Confidential!” in a prominent place immediately beneath the letterhead. He began by assuring Temple that since their personal meeting (perhaps in

³⁵⁸Horatio A. Hobbs, Cincinnati, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 3 October 1878, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

³⁵⁹Horatio A. Hobbs, Jacksboro, Tennessee, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 4 February 1879, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

³⁶⁰Ibid.

³⁶¹Ibid. In his letter of 24 September 1880 to Oliver P. Temple, Thomas Hughes stated that he had “talked with Mr. Clarke who has no objection whatever to Mr. Seymour’s presence as a guest of the Board on the 5th so by all means bring him” (Thomas Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville in the O. P. Temple Papers). Seymour was a partner in a Knoxville real estate firm, and since Clarke had land on the Plateau he wanted to sell, Temple might have feared that Clarke would consider him a business rival.

August 1878), he had “by no means been idle.”³⁶² In fact, he reported that “all my energies have been given to the organization above named and the furtherance of its plans for colonization in Tenn.”³⁶³ Smith shared his expectation of some “public announcement” about the venture, and told Temple that “your professional services in relation thereto will be requested by Mr. Clarke.”³⁶⁴

However, Smith soon changed his focus and noted, “What pity! the financial status of Tenn. Just as we are soliciting capital for our work, the recent letter of Secy. Key, disparaging the state credit (this with good reason) and stating that none will wish to put capital therein is published most unfortunately.”³⁶⁵ He then immediately asked Temple if he could “do anything to parry or remedy” the state’s pressing financial problems.³⁶⁶

Smith’s efforts to make sure the Board was recognized as a legal entity in Tennessee provide additional proof that the Board planned to purchase the bulk of its land from Cyrus Clarke. Smith wrote to both former Tennessee governor Neill S. Brown and Wartburg attorney A. B. Bright about the Board’s legal status as a colonization company. Only their replies, and not Smith’s letters survive in the Rugby Papers, but they suggest that Smith was asking them about the necessity of the Board of Aid’s obtaining a charter of incorporation for its project. Both Brown and Bright told Smith that the charter of the Tennessee Mining and Land Company would be sufficient for the Board’s proposed colony on the Plateau.³⁶⁷ Their responses seem to confirm that Clarke already owned the property the Board expected to buy.

After the establishment of the London-based Board, Smith continued his efforts to gain

³⁶²Franklin W. Smith, Boston, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, 20 February 1879, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

³⁶³Ibid.

³⁶⁴Ibid.

³⁶⁵Ibid.

³⁶⁶Ibid.

³⁶⁷Brown replied to Smith on 15 March 1879, and Bright responded on 18 March 1879. Their letters deal primarily with the legal status of the Board of Aid for the purposes of doing business in Tennessee.

American financial support for purchase of the Cumberland Plateau lands. He renewed his contact with Dr. A. G. Agnew, a New York physician, who had indicated he would be “glad to get any late information” about Smith’s “land ownership scheme.”³⁶⁸ In the spring of 1879, Smith invited Agnew to accompany him to Tennessee to view the area, an invitation which Agnew apparently did not accept. However, Agnew became a member of a subcommittee of prominent New Yorkers supportive of the proposed colony. Robert Bliss, vice-president of the Bank of New York, was chairman of the group, which included John J. McCook, J. P. Townsend, and Agnew. Smith’s very supportive banker friend, Edward Adams, of the banking firm, Winston, Lanier and Company served as its secretary.

By the spring of 1879 potential colonists were arriving at the site selected by the Boston Board. Adams wrote Smith that his younger brother Marshall (whom he had described in a previous letter as “plucky” and “considering change”) was leaving “tonight for Cincinnati with his bag marked Plateau City, Tenn.”³⁶⁹ Smith subsequently received a letter (marked “Plateau City, Tenn.) from Marshall Adams who stated that he was enclosing a list of the pioneers of the enterprise. Unfortunately, this list is not preserved in the Rugby Papers! Marshall Adams also expressed his interest in “immediately” establishing a saw mill in “Plateau City.”³⁷⁰ Two weeks later Henry D. Boyle, John Boyle’s eldest son, wrote to Smith from an area of the Plateau near the proposed town site, asking if a saw mill would be established in the “Tennessee colony?”³⁷¹

³⁶⁸A. G. Agnew, New York, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 13 January 1878, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

³⁶⁹Edward D. Adams, New York, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 14 January and 24 April 1879, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

³⁷⁰Marshall Adams, Plateau City, Tennessee, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 7 May 1879, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. However, in October 1879, Edward D. Adams wrote Smith that the “delays in perfecting titles” to land in Tennessee had persuaded his brother Marshall to move to Colorado. He also enclosed a bill for Marshall’s account, requesting that Smith “please send a check.” Perhaps Marshall had been employed in clearing the area where the Board would later construct a road to the Sedgemoor station (Adams, New York, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 3 October 1879, in the Rugby Papers).

³⁷¹Henry D. Boyle, Horseshoe Bend, Scott County, Tennessee, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 20 May 1879, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

Three weeks later Boyle wrote Smith about a meeting held on at the “Tompkins place” [near the town site]; about 70 people were there.”³⁷²

Although there were potential colonists in place, neither the Boston-based Board nor the London-based Board took definite actions to establish a community in East Tennessee in 1879. It was February 1880 before the Board purchased any land on the Plateau. Writing to Judge Temple in July 1879, Albert M. Knight, Smith’s secretary, reported that it “was thought in the Spring that the Rail Road would be finished through the tract we are interested in and that other matters would be ripe for beginning a settlement.”³⁷³ Delays in building the railroad had changed those plans, and “the few who have taken up a home in that region, went quite on their own responsibility, preferring to await our development there rather than here.”³⁷⁴ Knight assured Temple that “definite and public action has not yet been taken, but it is to be hoped that the autumn will not pass without the work being commenced.”³⁷⁵

Until July of 1879 few people in East Tennessee knew anything about the formation of a British Board of Aid. Apparently Smith first informed Judge Temple about the formation of the London-based Board in July 1879. Writing to him from London, Smith regretted that he had “left in any degree indistinct the expected professional relationship of [Temple] to the Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited.”³⁷⁶ (This is the first written reference to the London Board.)

He then specified what services the British Board expected Temple to render:

By our contracts for the purchase of lands in Tenn., it is expressly provided that all deeds of conveyance, shall be proved as incontestable—by Ex. Gov. Neil S. Brown of

³⁷²Henry D. Boyle, Horseshoe Bend, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 9 June 1879, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. The Tompkins cabin was one of the very few structures anywhere in the area in which the Board was interested. Numerous early settlers stayed in this cabin until the Board began to erect buildings, such as the Barracks, where they could lodge. The Board purchased its first land in February 1880 from the Tompkins, paying \$800 for about 400 acres.

³⁷³Albert M. Knight, Boston, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, 2 July 1879, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

³⁷⁴Ibid.

³⁷⁵Ibid.

³⁷⁶Franklin W. Smith, London, to Oliver P. Temple, 17 July 1879, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

Nashville and Hon. O. P. Temple of Knoxville; at the expense of the vendors. While therefore Gov. Brown & yourself act for the protection of the Board, your (and his) services are to be retained at the expense of Mr. Cyrus Clarke and other vendors. Mr. Clarke has acted upon the agreement and I presumed had fully arranged accordingly with you as he has with Gov. Brown....In accord with Gov. Brown's advice and acceptably to the Board, Mr. L. P. Bright has been employed by Mr. Clarke to superintend the re-survey of the lands as stipulated; and Mr. Bright has been thus engaged for several months. More time has been required for the preliminary work than was anticipated; and Mr. B. has not yet presented one plan of Mr. Clarke's lands with abstract of title. But progress is now rapidly made & papers, doubtless will soon be in course of transmission to you for examination from Gov. Brown.³⁷⁷

Smith's identification of only one specific vendor, Clarke, is another indication that the Boston Board had planned to purchase most of its land from the man who had been named the project's on-site manager by Smith.

So by July 1879 Smith's colonization project was moving closer to establishment of a settlement in East Tennessee. The London Board of Aid had been formed, and the involvement of Thomas Hughes seemed to promise that there would be widespread interest in and ample financial support for the venture. Smith had secured competent legal counsel and had solid connections with a prestigious New York banking firm. A few colonists were already on site as was the American manager, Cyrus Clarke.

While Smith was in England in July 1879, the London Board issued a small pamphlet, the first announcement of Thomas Hughes's involvement with aid to land ownership in America. Why would Hughes take on yet another project, especially one in an area of the world about which he knew such little? Answering this question requires one to know more about the engaging and idealistic Englishman who is always identified as the founding father of Rugby, Tennessee.

³⁷⁷Franklin W. Smith, London, to Oliver P. Temple, 17 July 1879, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

Chapter 4, Thomas Hughes

Although Thomas Hughes was not involved in the first year of the colony's gestation, there would be no Rugby, Tennessee, without Thomas Hughes. His fame as the author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* as well as his reputation for unselfishly helping others "drew hundreds of young men after him into the Tennessee wilderness."³⁷⁸ But what led Hughes to connect himself with the colonization project that became Rugby? Hughes was as passionate about the values of a public school education and living on the land as he was about the dangers of living in the midst of a "mammon-ridden generation."³⁷⁹ It was his passions as well as the ideal of manly service to society, and especially to young gentlemen needing help, that forged his iconic connection with the colony. And since, from 1880, he has been identified as Rugby's primary founding father, to understand the colony's short life, we must understand Hughes. There is no shortage of material by, and about, this man. He was a popular and prolific writer who "started writing for publication while still in his twenties and---seemingly at least---rarely laid down his pen for the next fifty years or so."³⁸⁰ In works such as the oft-republished *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857) and its sequel *Tom Brown at Oxford* (1861), both of which are semi-autobiographical, as well as *Memoir of a Brother* (1873), *Vacation Rambles* (1895), and *Early Memories for the Children* (1899), he revealed a lot about himself. Moreover, he was a much-sought-after speaker, often asked to address large groups on very short notice.³⁸¹ On certain occasions, however, he carefully

³⁷⁸Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes: The Life of the Author of Tom Brown's Schooldays* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1952), 285.

³⁷⁹Thomas Hughes, *The Manliness of Christ*, (Boston: Houghton, Osgood and Company, 1880) 160.

³⁸⁰George J. Worth, *Thomas Hughes* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984), n.p.

³⁸¹While sailing to the United States for the first time in 1870, Hughes was asked to address some 500 English emigrants in the steerage section of the *Peruvian*. He encouraged these passengers to make the

prepared his speech, knowing that he was expected to make a significant statement about some specific issue. This was certainly the case when he participated in “Opening Day” events at the American Rugby on 5 October 1880.

In his “Opening Day” address at the Rugby colony, Hughes used the word *community* more than a dozen times. His frequent use of this word indicates a lot about his personal dreams for the settlement as well as his reasons for being involved in this colonization venture. *Community* is a word connected with every phase of Hughes’s life before he became president of the London-based Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Ltd., in 1879. Moreover, it is a word with very positive connections to the three most significant phases of his life: his bucolic boyhood in rural Berkshire, his formative years at the Rugby School in Warwickshire, and his participation in Christian Socialism, especially in its most successful endeavor, the Working Men’s College, in London.

In each of these epochs of his life a devout older man decisively influenced him by emphasizing the same basic theme: the essence of Christianity is loving behavior in relationships not orthodox belief. Their consistent message encouraged Hughes to care deeply about his fellow men, whether struggling workers in the laboring masses or “disadvantaged” sons of the upper classes, and to actively do what he could to help others. Knowing more about the character development of the man “everyone knew and

most of their opportunities in the “New World,” reminding them that their success would depend upon their own hard work. Once he arrived in America, he had numerous invitations to give lectures. He declined almost all of these, giving only one major address, his “John to Jonathan” speech, before an audience of 3,000 in the Boston Music Hall. However, when he visited the New York Normal School, he was asked to make an impromptu address to some 500 young women. He had the same experience when he visited the Philadelphia Normal School, where he addressed some 900 prospective teachers. Although these informal, spur-of-the-moment talks differed in some ways from his most carefully prepared speeches, Hughes always emphasized the importance of living a simple, honest life, and doing one’s Christian duty.

loved as ‘Tom’ ” helps one understand why he willingly, indeed eagerly, invested his energy, time, and money in projects such as the American Rugby.³⁸²

An idyllic childhood introduced Thomas Hughes to the joys of life in a harmonious community. Country life in rural Berkshire where Hughes was born on 20 October 1822 was generally peaceful, stable, and uncomplicated. A combination of paternalism and deference, as well as historic traditions, united people of all ranks in the Vale of the White Horse, making that society something of an organic whole. Hughes described his birthplace of Uffington as “then a very primitive village, far away from any high road...There were very few neighbours” and “the roads were almost impassable for carriages in the winter.”³⁸³ Its geographic isolation, some sixty miles west of London, also helped to make Uffington a close-knit community. Wantage, some seven miles away and the nearest town of any size, was the birthplace of the Saxon king Alfred (r. 871-901) whom the mature Hughes considered the greatest English monarch. Hughes had enormous admiration for Alfred’s “simple, honest life” and his genuine concern for those whom he governed.³⁸⁴ Hughes believed that Alfred had guided England to be a “network of communities” which, while quite separate from one another, enjoyed “the most intimate union as respected the individual members of each. Agricultural, not commercial, dispersed not centralized, content within their own limits,” these

³⁸²Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” 1.

³⁸³Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1873), 1. George Worth, one of Hughes’s biographers, labeled Uffington a “sleepy and secluded place” during the eleven years Hughes lived there (Worth, *Thomas Hughes*, 1).

³⁸⁴Thomas Hughes, *Alfred the Great* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1878), 6.

communities must have been much like the parish of Uffington in which six generations of Hughes's family had lived.³⁸⁵

Even as a child Hughes was well aware of being a member of the community's most important family. Hughes and his family were gentry. As the "untitled aristocracy," they shared a distinct "upbringing, way of life, family setting, occupations, avocations, social outlook and political beliefs" with members of the peerage.³⁸⁶ In nineteenth century England the peerage and the gentry together formed the ruling class, a group that "accounted for no more than 2 to 5 per cent of the population, although it was, by definition, an extremely influential percentage."³⁸⁷ Both "reverence for old forms" and "adherence to old ways," so characteristic of the English, helped to preserve a stable social hierarchy in villages such as Uffington.³⁸⁸ During Hughes's childhood, almost everyone, whether landowner or laborer, accepted his "original place in the hierarchy as natural and just."³⁸⁹ The harmony in this village, as well as in his family, gave Hughes a

³⁸⁵Thomas Hughes, *Alfred the Great*, 18. This quote is taken from Kemble's *History of England* which Hughes cited as one of the primary sources for his biography of Alfred, one of several works in a series studying "men and events from a religious point of view" (333).

³⁸⁶F. M. L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 5. In his work, *A Portrait of Jane Austen*, David Cecil was emphatic about Jane Austen's being a "child of the gentry, a member of the hereditary ruling class of England" (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1978, 24). Like Austen, Hughes has often been incorrectly labeled "middle class" when as Cecil noted, "There was no such gulf between the gentry and the aristocracy. These two together made up the ruling class" (24). In *The Victorian Period: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature, 1830-1890*, Robin Gilmour inaccurately identified Hughes as a "middle-class reformer" (177).

³⁸⁷Rosemary O'Day, *The Family and Family Relationships, 1500-1900: England, France and the United States* (Houndmills, England: The Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1994), 66.

³⁸⁸Thomas Hughes, *Alfred the Great*, 16.

³⁸⁹G. E. Mingay, *English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), 269.

sense of life's goodness as did his being a descendant of four clergymen who had served as vicar of the twelfth-century parish church.³⁹⁰

From his earliest years, Hughes learned to admire and respect the courage and integrity of his ancestors. His father John was “fond of telling family stories and there was none of which he was more proud” than the story of his great-great grandmother.³⁹¹ This remarkable woman had married George Watts, “a younger son himself,” and the first George Watts to hold the living at Uffington.³⁹² When he died at age forty-two, he left his widow and two children “in very poor circumstances.”³⁹³ Having “lived as the great lady” in Uffington, she nonetheless became a working widow, selling almost everything and investing the proceeds to create “a large dairy farm in the village.”³⁹⁴ Because of her hard work, this farm proved to be such a profitable enterprise that she was able to “portion her daughter and give her son a Cambridge education.”³⁹⁵ This second George Watts “sacrificed good chances of further preferment, by preaching a sermon at Whitehall before George II and his mistress, on Court vices, on the text, ‘And Nathan said unto David, Thou art the man.’”³⁹⁶ His son George then held the living. In sharing

³⁹⁰The harmony in the village of Uffington may also have been connected with the relative economic equality which must have existed there, perhaps because of its isolation and size. Hughes recalled being very surprised by Dr. Arnold's “criticisms of contemporary society. He had been blissfully unaware of any glaring inequalities” before he became a student at Rugby School in 1834 (Brenda Colloms, *Victorian Visionaries*, London: Constable and Company Limited, 1982, 50).

³⁹¹Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 94.

³⁹²Ibid.

³⁹³Ibid. In *England and the English*, Edward Lytton Bulwer criticized his fellow countrymen for creating a culture in which “to be rich becomes a merit; to be poor, and offence” (1833. Reprint. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1970, 33). That both John Hughes and then his son Thomas proudly preserved the story of this widow's response to poverty reveals a lot about their core values.

³⁹⁴Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 94.

³⁹⁵Ibid.

³⁹⁶Ibid., 95. Thomas Hughes certainly had a portion of his great-great grandfather's moral courage for he was known to “take unpopular positions and say what he believed rather than what his audiences wanted to hear” (George Worth, *Thomas Hughes*, 13). Writing to his wife from America in October 1870 before his very important “John to Jonathan” speech, he acknowledged that “I don't care two straws for applause, and

these stories with the next generation, Hughes assured them that “there is no family tradition which I would sooner see grow into an article of faith with all of you than this of thriftiness, and independence, as points of honor.”³⁹⁷

His paternal grandmother, the direct descendant of these three clergymen who had held the living of Uffington in “direct succession from father to son,” introduced Hughes to a more cultured and cosmopolitan community than that of his native village.³⁹⁸ She was also of the “Watts family of artists, and the personal friend of Walter Scott, Mrs. Siddons, Harrison Ainsworth, and many other artists and literary figures.”³⁹⁹ Her husband, Thomas Hughes, DD, the grandfather for whom the younger Thomas was named, had distinguished himself academically as the “Setonian Prizeman and Chancellor’s Medallist at Cambridge.”⁴⁰⁰ Dr. Hughes became a canon of St. Paul’s Cathedral, London, and an official in the courts of George III and George IV.⁴⁰¹ However, he also served as the vicar in Uffington, having “exchanged a much richer living for it, because his wife had been born there, and was deeply attached to the place.”⁴⁰² Her love of cherished local traditions was kept alive by her grandson in his second novel, *The Scouring of the White Horse, or the Long Vacation Rambles of a London Clerk* (1859), which described a harmonious community, united by observance of ancient, country customs.

will speak my mind in a plain, straightforward way” (Thomas Hughes, *Vacation Rambles*, London and New York: Macmillan and Company, 1895, 175).

³⁹⁷Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 95.

³⁹⁸*Ibid.*, 1.

³⁹⁹Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” li.

⁴⁰⁰Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 58.

⁴⁰¹*Ibid.* In *Early Memories for the Children*, written in 1891, Hughes recalled visits he and George would make to London to be with their grandparents. He was impressed with the peace and solitude of the precincts of St. Paul’s in contrast with the bustle of London. He also vividly remembered accompanying his grandmother on a trip to the Billingsgate fish market where a woman attacked her husband with an iron skillet during a ferocious argument (London: Thomas Burleigh, 1899).

⁴⁰²*Ibid.*, 1.

Hughes's father John was one of his son's most significant mentors. The only child of Thomas and Mary Ann Hughes, John Hughes (1790-1857) valued his place in rural Berkshire as well as in England's literary community. Hughes was a graduate of London's prestigious Westminster School and Oriel College, Oxford. He continued the family tradition of scholarly achievement by winning the "Latin verse prize, and [giving] one of the English odes recited before the United Sovereigns, when they paid a visit to the Oxford Commemoration in 1814."⁴⁰³ The author of the "macaronic Oriel grace-cup song, 'Exultet mater Oriel,'" he became a scholar and linguist of some note.⁴⁰⁴ However, like his mother, he felt strongly attached to Uffington and moved there after marrying Margaret Elizabeth Wilkinson (1797-1887), "a woman of sound health and wholesome practicality" from whom young Tom inherited his "red hair and unconquerable spirits."⁴⁰⁵

From his father, a keen participant in the field sports which were a valued part of community life in the country, Tom and his slightly older brother George (1821-1872) acquired a love of riding and hunting during their childhood years. A man who "was bred in the saddle," John was very interested in his sons being of "equestrian rank."⁴⁰⁶ When George was seven and Thomas six years old, they learned to handle a gun. About the same time they had their first riding lessons, supervised by their grandfather's coachman who "had been in our family for thirty years, and we were as fond of him as if he had been a relation."⁴⁰⁷ Having numerous servants gave Hughes and his family the

⁴⁰³Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 59-60. This 1814 event was a celebration of Napoleon Bonaparte's defeat and exile to Elba; subsequent events proved that the English had congratulated themselves too quickly after their first triumph over the "Emperor of the French."

⁴⁰⁴"John Hughes" in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 661.

⁴⁰⁵Ada Blanche Nisbet, "Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell," li and 284.

⁴⁰⁶Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 62 and 61.

⁴⁰⁷*Ibid.*, 3. As this language indicates, having loyal, faithful servants was one of the features of the

leisure to enjoy the best features of country life. Young Tom learned to love the outdoor activities that filled his free moments, providing both wholesome physical exercise and happy camaraderie with villagers of all ranks.

His experience of community in Uffington encouraged his growing sense of social responsibility. The Hughes family lived simply. They were never self-indulgent, and they never exploited those whose labor made their lives generally comfortable and physically easy. They were genuinely concerned about being good stewards of God's creation and God's creatures. More than forty years later, Thomas remembered that while their parents were away in January 1830, he and eight-year-old George, who was in charge "under the governess," had strictly obeyed their parents' admonition "not to neglect either the poor, or the birds."⁴⁰⁸ Numerous early experiences such as this taught him to associate privilege with responsibility and to reject *laissez-faire* "social isolation--the doctrine that one man has nothing to do with another" as rank nonsense.⁴⁰⁹

Hughes's father played an on-going and decisive role in the development of his son's values, including his awareness of the importance of community. John Hughes's letters, "always carefully preserved by George," reveal him to be a conscientious, morally-earnest, conservative Christian who invested a great deal of his time in being a loving and supportive mentor to his seven sons and only daughter, Jane Elizabeth.⁴¹⁰ In

lifestyle of upper-class families such as the Hugheses. In spite of the increased need for factory workers during the so-called "Industrial Revolution," many upper-class families continued to have a large number of servants until the early twentieth century, while to be middle-class you had to have at least one servant.

⁴⁰⁸Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, xii and 15. George's letter of 21 January 1830 indicated that he and Thomas had obeyed the parental admonitions: they fed the birds, and George "told cook" to provide food for those who were ill (15).

⁴⁰⁹Thomas Hughes, *Alfred the Great*, 126.

⁴¹⁰Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 57. The authors of the entries about John Hughes and Thomas Hughes in the *ODNB* erred when they stated that John was the father of "six sons" (661) and that Thomas was the "second of the six sons," of John and Margaret Hughes (680). In *Memoir of A Brother*, Hughes

almost every letter to his older sons (written primarily while they were at Rugby School in the years between 1834 and 1842), there is some reference to the importance of doing one's Christian duty. For example, in one of the most significant letters, he admonished them to remember as a "Christian, that to insult the poor is to despise the ordinance of God in making them so; and moreover, being well born and well bred, and having lived in good company at home...you should feel that it is the hereditary pride and duty of a gentleman" to care for the poor.⁴¹¹ To his credit, Tom, who had been involved in the vandalism which provoked this letter, confessed, and paid for some of the damages. Other Rugby boys had not done so. John warned his sons to "have no acquaintance you can avoid with the stingy cowards who shirked their share of the damages: they can be no fit company for you or any gentleman."⁴¹² The word *gentleman* appears frequently in John's letters to his sons. It is very apparent that he associated the word with a specific Christian lifestyle rather than with a specific social rank of the "major and minor nobility, [that is] duke through gentleman."⁴¹³ Thomas Hughes's reference in the "Opening Day" address to an "artificial class" of gentleman is a vivid reminder of how much he was influenced by his father's insistence on honesty and integrity and active moral behavior as marks of a gentleman. One might sum up his ideal as the Christian gentleman.

devoted several pages to George's decision to become a private tutor for several boys at Harrow in 1845 rather than taking a fellowship at Oxford which he was sure to get, being "probably the most popular man of his day at Oxford" as well as "one of the best oars and cricketers in England" (92). Hughes explained that George took the position of private tutor in order to prove to himself that he "could make his own living" which "example was not altogether thrown away" on his six brothers (93). Obviously John and Margaret Hughes were the parents of seven, not six, sons. In her biographical section about Thomas Hughes, Nisbet correctly recorded that he was "the second son in a family of seven sons and one daughter" ("Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell," 1).

⁴¹¹Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 36.

⁴¹²*Ibid.*, 37.

⁴¹³David Castronovo, *The English Gentleman: Images and Ideals in Literature and Society* (New York: The Ungar Publishing Company, 1987), 10.

In numerous letters John Hughes emphasized the connection between privilege and responsibility, encouraging his sons to recognize that “there is no situation in life worth having, and implying any respect, where moral firmness is not continually required, and unpleasant duties are to be performed.”⁴¹⁴ He practiced what he preached as a Berkshire country squire who willingly undertook the “many harsh and disagreeable duties” associated with England’s primary reliance upon bonds of patronage and deference (but also constables, the odd hanging, and penal transportation, as in the Tolpuddle Martyrs) to maintain law and order in rural areas in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁴¹⁵ Like his great-great grandfather Watts who had dared to chastise a king for his immoral conduct, John Hughes associated moral firmness with an indifference to rank and title. His correspondence indicates how he guided his sons to have this same disdain for the artificial distinctions often associated with those in authority:

I do not care two straws how you stand in the opinion of Doctor this, or Doctor that, provided you deserve your own good opinion as a Christian and a gentleman, and do justice to good principles and good blood, for which things you are indebted to sources independent of Rugby...You have no need to court anybody’s favour if you cultivate the means of making yourself independent; and if you only fear God in the true sense, you may snap your fingers at everything else,---which ends all I have to say on this point. ‘Upright and downright’ is the true motto.⁴¹⁶

In the next significant phase of his life, Hughes’s years at Rugby School reinforced the lessons about duty, charity, and integrity that he had been learning from his

⁴¹⁴Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 34-35.

⁴¹⁵*Ibid.*, 35. After his father’s death in 1834, John Hughes moved his family to Donnington Priory which was in a more populous part of Berkshire.

⁴¹⁶*Ibid.*, 39-40.

father since early childhood. Being a well-educated man, and the fourth generation of his family with an Oxbridge degree, John Hughes took seriously the responsibility of choosing schools for his older boys. Both boys were first sent to a private school in Hampshire for three years. However, John Hughes was firmly convinced that the “right basis of everyone’s education is this---to love God and your neighbor, and do your duty with diligence in whatever state of life circumstances may place you.”⁴¹⁷ Therefore, in 1834 the boys were sent to Rugby School in Warwickshire where Dr. Thomas Arnold had become the headmaster in 1828. John Hughes had known Arnold (1795-1842) at Oriel College “although he did not share either Arnold’s political or his theological liberalism.”⁴¹⁸ However, as Thomas later affirmed of John Hughes, “though considerably exercised by the Doctor’s politics, he shared that unhesitating faith in his character and ability which seems to have inspired all his contemporaries.”⁴¹⁹ Since John Hughes valued his sons’ character development much more than their making influential connections, it is no surprise that he chose Rugby rather than Eton for the boys, although Eton, known as the “cradle of the aristocracy,” was in their native Berkshire.⁴²⁰

Thomas Hughes was profoundly influenced by the “intensity of moral feeling” that characterized the life and teachings of Dr. Arnold.⁴²¹ Arnold primarily emphasized the “inculcation of social responsibility as the direct consequence of Christian belief,”

⁴¹⁷Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 53.

⁴¹⁸“Thomas Hughes” in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 680.

⁴¹⁹Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 17.

⁴²⁰Thomas Hughes was well aware of his father’s serious interest in promoting his moral growth. He quoted from so many of his father’s letters in *Memoir of a Brother* to help his sons and nephews understand “how carefully your grandfather watched the development of character in his sons” (105). He, in turn, felt deeply the responsibility of being a loving and helpful father to his nine children.

⁴²¹Elisabeth Jay, *Faith and Doubt in Victorian Britain* (Houndmills and London: Macmillan Education Ltd., 1986), 57.

thus reinforcing what Hughes had been taught at home.⁴²² By the time George and Tom Hughes arrived at Rugby, Arnold, still revered for “the enormous impression which he made upon the English public school system,” was making significant changes at Rugby.⁴²³ Arnold boldly stated his priorities for the school, noting that, “What we must look for...is 1st, religious and moral principles; 2ndly, gentlemanly conduct; 3rd, intellectual ability.”⁴²⁴ Like John Hughes, Arnold insisted that Christian behavior, rather than rigid adherence to a set of beliefs, was the mark of a Christian. Arnold identified “self-denial, humility, devotion and charity” as among the most important virtues.⁴²⁵ He emphasized exactly what John Hughes had taught his sons: “our first great duty is to love God; our second, to love our neighbor.”⁴²⁶ Thomas Hughes later cited a “strong religious faith in and loyalty to Christ” as one of the “invaluable possessions” he acquired in his Rugby years.⁴²⁷ Fifty years after his Rugby experience, he was to describe the most prominent characteristic of his generation at the school as “the feeling that in school and close we were in training for a big fight...which would last all our lives, and try all our powers, physical, intellectual, and moral, to the utmost.”⁴²⁸

As his *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* makes very clear, serious physical activity played a major role in young Tom Hughes’s “full spirited enjoyment of life” in the

⁴²²M. J. Jackson and J. Rogan, “Introductory Essay,” in Thomas Arnold, *Principles of Church Reform* (London: SPCK, 1962), 6.

⁴²³*Ibid.*, 7.

⁴²⁴Thomas William Heyck, *The Peoples of the British Isles: A New History from 1688 to 1870*. Vol. 2. (Chicago: Lyceum Books, Inc., 2nd edition, 2002), 246.

⁴²⁵Thomas Arnold, *Principles of Church Reform*, 110.

⁴²⁶*Ibid.* In an 1839 letter to his sons at Rugby, John Hughes reminded them that the “right basis of everyone’s education is this---to love God and your neighbor and do your duty in whatever state of life circumstances may place you” (Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 53).

⁴²⁷Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” liii.

⁴²⁸Thomas Hughes, *Fifty Years Ago* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1891), 5. In his speeches, especially to younger audiences, Hughes often referred to life as a battle.

Rugby community.⁴²⁹ Team sports, especially cricket and football, interested Tom much more than his classical studies. Never as scholarly as his older brother, Tom Hughes loved the rough-and-tumble world of team sports. Being captain of both the football and cricket teams in his final year at Rugby was a thrilling climax to what must have been a generally happy experience although he later remembered that Rugby had been a “rough not to say a brutal place when I arrived.”⁴³⁰ However, Arnold had done much to change that by making the older boys responsible for order, thus creating a community held together by earnest and thoughtful Christian behavior rather than by bullying. As captain of Rugby’s cricket team, Thomas Hughes proved that he thought seriously about his role in creating community for he made an “innovation which anticipated his later work, by inviting on to the playing fields the local boys who previously had been chased off.”⁴³¹

Arnold also influenced Hughes to take a more liberal view of the church’s role in the national community. Although “faith in progress, respectability, the importance of work, religious earnestness, belief in moderate political reform” are values associated with the Victorians, the Church of England in the nineteenth century was a church of “the rich, fashionable and cultivated classes.”⁴³² It was the Evangelical influence upon the Church of England which created a “perpetual call to seriousness---to a sense of personal responsibility.”⁴³³ Arnold also emphasized the seriousness of life, but he rejected

⁴²⁹ Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” *liv*.

⁴³⁰ “Thomas Hughes” in the *ODNB*, 680.

⁴³¹ *Ibid*.

⁴³² Robin Gilmour, *The Victorian Period: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature, 1830-1890* (London and New York: Longman, 1993), 244; Thomas Arnold, *Principles of Church Reform*, 39.

⁴³³ Ian Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians*. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1976), 18.

identification with the Evangelicals, partially because of “their narrow outlook.”⁴³⁴ A champion of the Established Church, like S. T. Coleridge, Arnold believed that the Church had “a civilizing, educational task” in addition to its more strictly religious functions.⁴³⁵ Therefore, Arnold advocated a Broad Church, dedicated to “the social and educational welfare of an avowedly Christian nation.”⁴³⁶ The one “leading principle of his whole life was an attempt to realize the idea of a Christian society,” leading him to reject “any distinction between the secular and the sacred.”⁴³⁷

Perhaps Arnold’s focus upon helping the nation to be a Christian community led Hughes, while at Rugby, to decide to study law. He apparently wanted to go directly from Rugby to the “Inns of Court and not to Oxford, but his father would not hear of it.”⁴³⁸ So in 1842, the year of Arnold’s death, he joined his older brother George at Oriel, their father’s old College, where he experienced another kind of academic community. Oxford compared unfavorably with Rugby, for as his *Tom Brown at Oxford* (1861) clearly indicated, Thomas Hughes found Oxford “snobbish and money-worshipping.”⁴³⁹ Once at Oriel, he had fallen in with an “idle, fast set, just did as the rest and made a fool of myself in all the usual ways.”⁴⁴⁰ However, his older brother had taken up rowing at Oxford. John Hughes was enthusiastic about his son’s new sport, encouraging him to “row, box, fence, and walk with all possible sturdiness.”⁴⁴¹ George was to win “every

⁴³⁴Thomas Arnold, *Principles of Church Reform*, 13.

⁴³⁵*Ibid.*, 42.

⁴³⁶Elisabeth Jay, *Faith and Doubt*, 53.

⁴³⁷*Ibid.*, 10.

⁴³⁸Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” liii.

⁴³⁹“Thomas Hughes” in the *ODNB*, 682. Historian F. M. L. Thompson stated that sons of landed aristocrats then at Oxford “proceeded to degrees without qualification or examination, purely on the basis of satisfying the terms of residence...For the general run, the university was a finishing school (*English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, 86).

⁴⁴⁰Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” liv.

⁴⁴¹Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 61.

honour which an oarsman can win at the University.”⁴⁴² Once George introduced Tom to the sport, his younger brother became an enthusiastic member of the crew, and they rowed together in their college boat. As at Rugby, Tom once again had the joyful experience of being a part of a close-knit community in a team sport rather than participating in an activity in which the object was to win for one’s self. Nonetheless, it is no surprise that he remembered his Rugby years as being a much more influential phase of his life.

It was, however, during his Oxford years that Hughes began to realize how much Arnold had influenced his evolving political preferences. Although his father was a conservative Tory, he was steadily becoming much more liberal. This political conversion is vividly depicted in *Tom Brown at Oxford* when young Tom placed the death warrant for Charles I along with a picture of John Milton on the walls of his college rooms. Both of these items surprised and displeased Squire Brown, who was “kindly and generous, but with no understanding of or sympathy with the new-fangled ideas” of the younger generation.⁴⁴³ Having traveled in northern England and Scotland as the debates about the repeal of the Corn Laws raged, Hughes realized he was becoming “an ardent freetrader. In other directions also I was rapidly falling away from the political faith in which we had been brought up.”⁴⁴⁴ He was then conscious of Arnold’s subtle influence on his political convictions:

I am not conscious, indeed I do not believe, that Arnold’s influence was ever brought to bear directly on English politics, in the case even of those boys who (like my brother and myself) came specially under it, in his own house, and in

⁴⁴²Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 75.

⁴⁴³Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” li. Squire Brown is, of course, John Hughes, who along with his eldest son, George, was a life-long Tory.

⁴⁴⁴Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 89.

the sixth form. What he did for us was, to make us think on the politics of Israel, and Rome, and Greece, leaving us free to apply the lessons he taught us in these, as best we could to our own country.... The noble side of democracy was carrying me away. I was haunted by Arnold's famous sentence, 'If there is one truth short of the highest for which I would gladly die, it is democracy without Jacobinism;' and 'the People's Charter' was beginning to have strange attractions for me.⁴⁴⁵

When he discussed his more liberal political ideas with his older brother, he became aware of the paradox of Arnold's influence on their worldviews:

Again, though Arnold's life had influenced him quite as powerfully as it did me, it was in quite a different direction, strengthening specifically in him the reverence for national life, and for the laws, traditions, and customs with which it is interwoven, and of which it is the expression. Somehow, his natural dislike for change, and preference for the old ways, seemed to gain as much strength and nourishment from the teaching and example of our old master, as the desire and hope for radical reforms did in me. As for democracy, not even Arnold's dictum could move him.⁴⁴⁶

In fact, George's "hatred of exaggeration and unfairness" made him highly critical of Corn Law opponents who described "country life as an inert mass of selfishness, tyranny, and stupidity."⁴⁴⁷ Both he and Tom knew that this was not an accurate description of the country life they had known and loved in Berkshire. Additional reflection on Arnold's influence led Thomas to identify "open-mindedness" as one of the most valuable possessions he took from Rugby for "we went out into the world the least hampered intellectually of any school of England boys of that time. To this day I am always ready to change an old opinion the moment I can get a better one."⁴⁴⁸ Although many would consider open-mindedness a very positive trait, its possession injured Hughes's political aspirations for he had a tendency "to see two sides to every question, a double vision

⁴⁴⁵Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 89.

⁴⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 91.

⁴⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 89.

⁴⁴⁸Ada Blanche Nisbet, "Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell," liii.

which caused both liberals and conservatives to question the integrity of his political principles.”⁴⁴⁹ Moreover, the American colonization venture indicates that his open-mindedness predisposed him to be easily influenced by the judgments of those he trusted.

Although Hughes believed there were valid economic reasons for repeal of the Corn Laws, he knew precious little about urban poverty prior to moving to London after completing his Oxford degree in 1845. He, like many other upper-class youth, had been sheltered from the appalling misery produced by rapid urbanization until his residence in the nation’s capital brought him face to face with the horrors described so brilliantly by Dickens in *Bleak House*, his 1853 masterpiece. More than three decades later Hughes recalled:

My rooms were in Lincoln’s Inn Fields, and I passed daily, twice at least, through the horrible nests of squalor and vice which then stood on the site of the New Law Courts. I soon found that (with the exception of thieves and beggars) these nests were peopled by slop-workers---poor men, women, and children... I saw that the competitive struggle for life had brought them to this pass... The natural consequence was that I had all but become a physical force Chartist, when the late Mr. Maurice became Chaplain of Lincoln’s Inn. He at once gathered a number of young students around him for the discussion of social questions and work among the poor, and within a year I had thrown over Chartism as a delusion, and had become a Christian Socialist, and was hard at work establishing associations amongst the London slop-workers.⁴⁵⁰

Frederick Denison Maurice was the third devout Christian who encouraged Hughes to make his Christianity a way of living in community. Even limited personal contact with urban poverty made Hughes very receptive to the sermons of Maurice whose gospel was “a preaching of fellowship.”⁴⁵¹ Maurice became a major influence on his life

⁴⁴⁹Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” lxxvi.

⁴⁵⁰Ibid., lviii-lix, quoting from an address Hughes gave in Manchester in 1884 when he was honored for his work as Chairman of the Co-operative Union.

⁴⁵¹J. Llewelyn Davies, ed. *The Working Men’s College 1854-1904: Records of Its History and Its Work for Fifty Years, by Members of the College* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1904), 130.

after 1846 when he became the Lincoln's Inn chaplain, and had the "opportunity of preaching fervid sermons from the pulpit of its chapel on Sunday afternoons to earnest and reverent audiences."⁴⁵² The life and work of Maurice, like that of Arnold, centered on a "strong moral feeling, which showed itself in concern for the social and educational welfare of an avowedly Christian nation."⁴⁵³ For Maurice, as for Arnold, "the spiritual (was) also the practical. Christianity was about the physical state of society."⁴⁵⁴

Maurice and other thoughtful Christians had serious concerns about the physical state of society in 1848. By then, Chartism, "the first British independent political working-class party," had generated wide-spread alarm among the governing classes.⁴⁵⁵ Grim economic conditions in England in 1848 led to a disturbing period of "unrest and alarm" in March and early April. It seemed as if "the physical force party (i.e. the revolutionaries) had completely beaten the moral force party (i.e. the reformists) in the Chartist body."⁴⁵⁶ Rumors about a major Chartist rally to be held on April 10 on Kennington Common led Hughes to volunteer his service as a special constable in a force of some 150,000 who were firmly committed to law and order. Hughes later admitted having "shrewd misgivings in my own mind that the Chartists had a great deal to say for themselves."⁴⁵⁷ The demonstration was much smaller than expected and generally non-violent although Hughes had gotten "embroiled in a scuffle in Trafalgar Square and had

⁴⁵²J. Llewelyn Davies, *The Working Men's College 1854-1904*, 5. Maurice had studied law at Cambridge before he read for the Bar in London. He then read for Holy Orders at Oxford before being ordained as an Anglican clergyman in 1834. He was thus extremely well-qualified for his work as the chaplain for the Inns of Court. He was a professor of English literature and modern history as well as "one of the Divinity professors at the new King's College, London," when he began his ministry at Lincoln's Inn (4).

⁴⁵³Elisabeth Jay, *Faith and Doubt in Victorian Britain*, 53.

⁴⁵⁴Edward Norman, *The Victorian Christian Socialists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 8.

⁴⁵⁵J. F. C. Harrison, *A History of the Working Men's College 1854-1954* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954), 5.

⁴⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁵⁷*Ibid.*, 7.

to be rescued by the police.”⁴⁵⁸ When Maurice met that evening with fellow clergyman Charles Kingsley (1819-1875) and barrister J. M. Ludlow (1821-1911) to discuss the day’s events, the trio laid the groundwork for the creation of Christian Socialism.

Ludlow’s intimate knowledge of French socialism had already convinced him that the “paramount duty of Christians of his time was to Christianize Socialism.”⁴⁵⁹

However, Maurice became the leader of the small “group in revolt against Victorian materialism.”⁴⁶⁰ According to Maurice, its most articulate defender, Christian Socialism was “in conflict with ‘unsocial Christians and the unchristian socialists’ ” in order to create a truly Christian community.⁴⁶¹ For Maurice, “Socialism was simply the attempt to bring God’s government into the relations between men in their daily lives” although in 1848, as now, one’s definition of the word *socialism* was, and is, closely linked with one’s political convictions.⁴⁶² The Christian Socialists were a loose coalition of diverse people, once described almost critically by Hughes as marked by “a rather strong vein of fanaticism and eccentricity.”⁴⁶³ Nonetheless, all of the Christian Socialists criticized the “application of what they took to be the main tenets of classical political economy.”⁴⁶⁴ Therefore, they advocated economic cooperation rather than competition. As Maurice succinctly stated in the earliest of the *Tracts on Christian Socialism*, “The watchword of the Socialist is co-operation---The watchword of the Anti-Socialist is competition.

⁴⁵⁸J. F. C. Harrison, *A History of the Working Men’s College 1854-1954*, 7.

⁴⁵⁹Torben Christensen, *Origin and History of Christian Socialism 1848-1854* (Aarhus: Universitetsforlaget I Aarhus, 1962), 108. Ludlow had been born in India but reared in Paris where he proved to be a brilliant student. He then moved to England where he studied law before becoming a barrister. His intense interest in political events in France led him to actively follow the creation of workers’ associations after the Revolution of 1848.

⁴⁶⁰Brenda Colloms, *Victorian Visionaries* (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1982), 1.

⁴⁶¹Elisabeth Jay, *Faith and Doubt*, 63.

⁴⁶²J. F. C. Harrison, *A History of the Working Men’s College 1854-1954*, 9.

⁴⁶³Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 114.

⁴⁶⁴Edward Norman, *Victorian Christian Socialists*, 4.

Anyone who recognizes the principle of co-operation as a stronger and truer principle than that of competition, has a right to the honour or the disgrace of being called a Socialist.”⁴⁶⁵

In the summer of 1848 Hughes joined this small community of “honest, likeable men who saw something wrong in the world they lived in” and worked to “set it right.”⁴⁶⁶ Apparently, however, when his being a participant was first proposed, perhaps by Ludlow, his fellow barrister, someone objected, arguing that “We are not going to start a cricket club.”⁴⁶⁷ Hughes was soon the group’s “centre,” playing a major role in changing public perceptions about Christian Socialism and valued for his allegiance to their work:

[For] to them had come Thomas Hughes, the ‘blue,’ with the healthy mind and the healthy body, whom no one could accuse of madness or vice, who was the ideal hero of the British public and the sporting press. He had come, he shared their life, and loved it, and they loved him. Here was something to give their critics pause: Thomas Hughes had joined them; they could not be so bad after all if a man like that was among them.⁴⁶⁸

Hughes’s enthusiastic participation in a variety of Christian Socialist projects is what one might expect from a devout disciple of Thomas Arnold, and of F. D. Maurice. He eagerly joined in journalistic efforts to deal with key points of the People’s Charter “from a Christian standpoint, by men opposed to the physical force Chartists, but who nevertheless were in real sympathy with the people.”⁴⁶⁹ He also helped to organize a night school in the Bloomsbury area of London in September 1848 to provide a basic

⁴⁶⁵Edward Norman, *Victorian Christian Socialists*, 4.

⁴⁶⁶Brenda Colloms, *Victorian Visionaries*, 1.

⁴⁶⁷“Thomas Hughes” in the *ODNB*, 681.

⁴⁶⁸Charles Raven, *Christian Socialism* (London: Frank Cass and Company, Limited, 1920), 13, quoted in Nisbet, lxx.

⁴⁶⁹Ernie Trory, *Truth Against the World: The Life and Times of Thomas Hughes Author of Tom Brown’s Schooldays* (Hove, East Sussex: Crabtree Press, 1993), 66.

education to illiterate working men. In 1850 Hughes helped to organize the group's Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations, such as the Working Tailors' Association, in which artisans could be both employers and employees. His recollections of that experience reveal the same kind of admirable but naïve idealism which characterized his involvement with the Rugby colony:

I happened to be one of the original members [of the Society] and on the Council. We were all full of enthusiasm and hope in our work, and of propagandist zeal...I was also convinced that we had nothing to do but just to announce it, and found an association or two, in order to convert all England, and usher in the millennium at once, so plain did the whole thing seem to me...Our opponents called us Utopians and Socialists, and we retorted that at any rate we were Christians.⁴⁷⁰

Christian Socialists organized worker co-operatives in order to “transform the whole of society by means of small-scale experiments, which, once their superiority had been demonstrated would be enthusiastically adopted throughout the country.”⁴⁷¹

However, these well-meaning professionals soon saw that the “squabbles and idlings and swindlings and incompetence of the workmen in the London associations” doomed the groups to failure.⁴⁷² And yet, Hughes never lost his faith in the importance of co-operation as “a moral and Christian principle, the very anti-thesis of competition, selfishness, and greed which were the hallmarks of Christian society.”⁴⁷³ This is the reason he insisted that there be a consumers' cooperative to supply the needs of the settlers in the Rugby colony.

The failure of these workers' cooperatives led directly to the establishment of the Working Men's College, because Maurice believed that both workers and professionals

⁴⁷⁰Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 111-112.

⁴⁷¹J. F. C. Harrison, *A History of the Working Men's College 1854-1954*, 12-13.

⁴⁷²*Ibid.*, 15.

⁴⁷³*Ibid.*, 12.

needed an education.⁴⁷⁴ Hughes was one of the founders on the College which gave Hughes an opportunity to use both his physical and social skills in what he judged to be his “most successful and healthy social work.”⁴⁷⁵ Maurice realized that working-class men needed an education “before they would be capable of the self-restraint, staunchness, and obedience which are absolutely necessary in an Association for production.”⁴⁷⁶ He was also aware that upper-class professionals, such as Hughes, who wanted to help working men, had a lot to learn about their fellow Englishmen. Maurice’s very progressive ideas about the “education of the whole community” as well as the group’s knowledge of the history of the People’s College, Sheffield, led to the establishment of the Working Men’s College in London in 1854.⁴⁷⁷

As Maurice’s “most ardent co-adjutor” in this venture, Hughes was a pioneer in creating an institution providing evening class to “all dayworkers in the several branches of knowledge which distinguish the educated from the uneducated man.”⁴⁷⁸ At the time London had one public library. There was no real public education, and many influential people thought workers existed only to work. Writing fifty years after attending Maurice’s lecture about the proposed college and then enrolling as one of its first students, John Roebuck recalled that from the first he was aware of “the spirit of brotherly benevolence which led these gentlemen [like Hughes] to give their time and the

⁴⁷⁴In *Early Memories for the Children*, Hughes recalled that the “frequent failures [of the producer cooperatives] had shewn [Maurice], and I think most of those who were working with him and under him, that the London handicraftsmen were not ready for the experiment [of producer cooperatives] or that we were not the men to direct them in the practical part of it...an education was needed for all of us---parsons, lawyers, artists, and working men” (49). Maurice had been thinking about a working men’s college for some time. When he was dismissed from his faculty position at King’s College London because of his theological liberalism, he and other Christian Socialists established the College the next year.

⁴⁷⁵Thomas Hughes, *Early Memories for the Children*, 66.

⁴⁷⁶J. F. C. Harrison, *A History of the Working Men’s College 1854-1954*, 15.

⁴⁷⁷J. Llewelyn Davies, *The Working Men’s College 1854-1904*, 5.

⁴⁷⁸J. F. C. Harrison, *A History of the Working Men’s College 1854-1954*, 295; J. Llewelyn Davies, 61.

fruits of their own studies and opportunities to their less fortunate brethren. I knew the names of Thomas Hughes, Charles Kingsley, Lord Goderich, and Vansittart Neale as promoters of co-operative trade associations, and my own wishes and sympathies had in the immediately preceding year been heartily with them.”⁴⁷⁹ Roebuck was one of the first students to become a Fellow of the College, an honor which allowed him to serve on the College Council. This distinction gave him life-changing opportunities as he worked with men such as Hughes

who were recognised as leaders in thought and art, law and literature, and were rising to the eminence which has since been associated with the names of Frederick D. Maurice, Professor J.S. Brewer, J. Llewelyn Davies, John Ruskin, Thomas Hughes, John M. Ludlow, Lowes Dickinson, Dante G. Rossetti... To pass from my daily work to take my place in that circle was an experience which has fallen to the lot of few men of my class, and formed the most interesting period of my life.⁴⁸⁰

(Roebuck later emigrated to America and served for a brief period as the New York agent for the Rugby colony.)

While there is no doubt that Maurice’s leadership was crucial to the creation of the College, there is much evidence that it was Hughes who made fellowship among men of different ranks such a vital feature of the College community. Some of this fellowship emerged rather naturally as a result of Hughes’s boxing class, which “flourished and developed in many directions.”⁴⁸¹ Hughes proposed offering the classes after he noticed the generally “unhealthy look of almost all [the] pupils.”⁴⁸² Although Maurice was reluctant to approve his wish to offer boxing lessons, the classes were exceedingly

⁴⁷⁹J. Llewelyn Davies, *The Working Men’s College 1854-1904*, 62.

⁴⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 70-71.

⁴⁸¹*Ibid.*, 65.

⁴⁸²Thomas Hughes, *Early Memories for the Children*, 51.

popular. Hughes was pleased that the time and money he had devoted to boxing while at Oxford had not been completely wasted, although he apparently was not pleased when students bested him. One professor warned newcomers, “Mind you don’t hit Hughes on the nose by accident. If you do, you’ll catch it.”⁴⁸³ Hughes later organized a rowing club at the College, offering the students an opportunity to participate in yet another athletic activity that had brought him many joyous moments.

Hughes not only opened his heart to these students, he also opened his home, evidence of the role he might have played had he actually resided in the Rugby colony for any length of time. In 1856 he and Ludlow lived at the “The Firs, Wimbledon, in two houses joined by a spacious corridor or hall, which the two families used in common as a library. The invitation [to the students] was for cricket and other games on the common and in the grounds, and for dinner.”⁴⁸⁴ As one might expect, Hughes participated in the cricket match. Hughes was not content, however, to limit his social involvement to the occasional outing. When the College moved to larger quarters in 1857, and a club-room was made available for light refreshments and informal conversation, there began to be a gathering each Wednesday evening, described by one student as a “ ‘smoking concert’ over which our well-loved teacher, companion, leader, and friend, ‘Tom’ Hughes presided.”⁴⁸⁵ Singing was a regular feature of these social events, and “Hughes’s rendering of Thackeray’s ‘Three Sailors of Bristol City’ was always enjoyed.”⁴⁸⁶ Hughes’s leadership is no doubt the reason that in these “free-and-easies,” there was the

⁴⁸³J. Llewelyn Davies, *The Working Men’s College 1854-1904*, 25.

⁴⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 74.

⁴⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 71-72.

⁴⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 72.

“most perfect equality” between faculty and students even as “every prominent question of the day” was vigorously debated.⁴⁸⁷

When tensions with France in 1859 led to a national call for the “layman to train himself for home defense,” Hughes was the first to suggest that the College form a company within its community.⁴⁸⁸ Hughes’s “personality attracted recruits” and once again proved beneficial in strengthening the sense of community among the participants, including non-College men.⁴⁸⁹ The Working Men’s College raised three companies almost immediately, and Hughes was first a captain and then the Colonel of the 19th Middlesex Regiment which participated in the Grand review before the monarch on 23 June 1860. More than three decades later another College founder recalled what a valuable contribution Hughes made in this phase of the community’s life:

... besides helping to bring men from the different quarters of London into mutual contact, he brought physical exercise into combination with mental by the volunteer corps and the boxing class, a whole fine national spirit giving the tone to the whole. Many were the occasions on which the Inns of Court volunteers saw the author of *Tom Brown’s School Days* in command of the Working Men’s College corps, and then one felt with admiration what a man was there.⁴⁹⁰

By this time, the success of his first novel had made Hughes one of the most well-known men in England. Although *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* was first published anonymously in 1857, Hughes soon acknowledged the work which “for its day had an amazing vogue” with five editions appearing in its first year.⁴⁹¹ Written to prepare his

⁴⁸⁷Thomas Hughes, *Early Memories for the Children*, 64.

⁴⁸⁸Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” 251.

⁴⁸⁹J. Llewelyn Davies, *The Working Men’s College 1854-1904*, 137.

⁴⁹⁰*Ibid.*, 25.

⁴⁹¹Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 90. Seventy editions of this novel were published during Hughes’s lifetime.

eldest son Maurice for going off to public school, the novel “glorifies the happy healthiness of the English public school at its best.”⁴⁹² Tom Brown was a young man, much like Tom Hughes, who experienced both challenges and triumphs during his school days. Like Hughes, Brown much preferred the camaraderie of the athletic community to the serious classical study of the classroom. When Brown tells his team-mates that he would rather “win two school-house matches running than get the Balliol scholarship any day,” he is heartily cheered by the entire group.⁴⁹³ However, the novel is more than a celebration of the joys of youthful athletic life for it pays “tribute to the educational example provided by Dr. Arnold’s Rugby.”⁴⁹⁴ In the novel Hughes also acknowledged the importance of Christian Socialism by including a vignette, centered on the “ideal Christian Socialist parson” who plunged into a “very nest of Chartism and Atheism” but emerged victorious having gained the respect of “masters and men, Christians and Freethinkers alike.”⁴⁹⁵ Two other novels followed within the next four years, and Hughes continued to be an active writer for the remainder of his life.

Thomas Hughes did more than any other public school alumnus to convince his countrymen of the value of a public school education. According to his contemporary Fitzjames Stephen, Hughes’s *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* was a “composition so attractive to a considerable portion of the public, that the public schools had come to be invested in the eyes of the world at large with even more of that usual halo” associated with fondly

⁴⁹²Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” liv-lv. The fact that Hughes named his first child after the man he came to regard as the “dear prophet” proves how much he admired and respected Frederick Denison Maurice. Actually this son was named Walter Maurice but always called “Maurice.” Unfortunately, in 1859, only two years after the publication of this best-selling novel, Maurice drowned during a family holiday at the beach.

⁴⁹³Elisabeth Jay, *Faith and Doubt in Victorian Britain*, 64.

⁴⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 65.

⁴⁹⁵*Ibid.*

remembered places.⁴⁹⁶ As a result of increased parental interest and financial support, many new public schools joined the nine older establishments in providing a “gentleman’s” education. Many of the older grammar schools adopted a curriculum similar to that of the public schools, further increasing the number of classically educated youth, competing for careers in such acceptable professions as law, medicine, the church, and the military, if one entered as an officer. But, at a time when Britain “was calling for an *elite* with technical knowledge,” there were more and more public school graduates, such as Hughes’s four sons, who were entering the world of work.⁴⁹⁷

As if active involvement in his family life and legal career, as well as in the Working Men’s College and world of literature were not enough, Hughes maintained an active interest in politics. He was a fierce opponent of slavery of any kind and ardently supported the Union during the American Civil War. When the [London] *Times* claimed that “it was the Union rather than the Confederacy that was trampling on liberty,” Hughes responded by giving a major speech in January 1863 at a meeting of the Union and Emancipation Society in Exeter Hall.⁴⁹⁸ Two years later he was elected to Parliament along with fellow Liberal John Stuart Mill in an election which “strengthened the radical wing of the Liberal party” after his supporters created such slogans as “Vote for a Churchman who will do justice to Dissenters” and “Vote for a candidate who can defend your cause in the Press as well as in Parliament.”⁴⁹⁹ During the nine years of his Parliamentary career, he was on his feet many times in support of a wide variety of

⁴⁹⁶Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 279.

⁴⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 280. (Italics in the original)

⁴⁹⁸George Worth, *Thomas Hughes*, 76.

⁴⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 81; Ernie Trory, *Truth Against the World*, 143.

measures, ranging from a ban on adulterated foods to extension of the suffrage to working-class men.

When Hughes received a copy of the *Biglow Papers* from Ludlow, his fellow barrister and Christian Socialist, he was introduced to the work of an American who was to become one of his closest friends. James Russell Lowell (1821-1891) was as adamantly opposed to slavery as Hughes. Like Hughes, he used his pen to garner support for the causes he championed. After Hughes was asked to edit Lowell's *Biglow Papers* for publication in England in 1859, the two began a correspondence which lasted the remainder of their lives, and which led to Hughes's first visit to the United States in 1870.

Hughes described his three months in America as a "royal progress."⁵⁰⁰ Others have noted that he was "feted and lionized by his hosts wherever he went."⁵⁰¹ He spent most of his time in the North, making Lowell's house in Cambridge, Massachusetts, his home base and visiting friends in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Toronto. He also went as far west as Nebraska as the guest of the president of a major railroad. Although Hughes received many requests for speeches, he concentrated on giving one major address, his "John to Jonathan" speech, a "straightforward and manly attempt" to heal divisions caused by upper-class British support of the Confederacy.⁵⁰² He judged the address an enormous success, a positive contribution to creation of a "great family of English-speaking nations girdling the earth with a circle of free and happy

⁵⁰⁰Thomas Hughes, *Vacation Rambles*, 142.

⁵⁰¹George Worth, *Thomas Hughes*, 80.

⁵⁰²Ada Blanche Nisbet, "Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell," 85.

communities.”⁵⁰³ Moreover, he acknowledged that were he to emigrate, he could imagine living quite contentedly in one of the houses facing the Boston Common.

Since Hughes enjoyed his time in America so much, it is probable that as early as 1870 he was seriously thinking there were opportunities for his sons in the “New World.” Before leaving for America, he had written Lowell that “Latin and Greek for ten or twelve years, and the three learned professions to follow will not hold English boys. They will swarm off...so the point is, to find where they can light with the best chances.”⁵⁰⁴

Hughes’s knowledge of the British empire had long predisposed him to think of emigration as an economic and social panacea. More than a decade before he visited America, he had thought about the role of, and importance of, emigration in English life. In his highly acclaimed *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* (1857), he had praised Tom’s family, the Browns, for “subduing the earth in most English counties, and leaving their mark in American forests and Australian uplands” over hundreds of years.⁵⁰⁵ At the time of writing *Tom Brown at Oxford* some three years later, he indicated that “young Englishmen who had reached a dead end at home should think about going abroad to make a fresh start in life.”⁵⁰⁶ The hero of this novel considered emigrating to New Zealand with an old Rugby chum. Hughes’s younger brother Walter had become a military officer and was posted abroad as were many other sons of upper-class families.

⁵⁰³Ernie Trory, *Truth Against the World*, 171.

⁵⁰⁴Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” 67.

⁵⁰⁵Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown’s Schooldays*, 2.

⁵⁰⁶George Worth, *Thomas Hughes*, 82.

Four years after Hughes's happy time in America, his eldest son Jem made his first visit to the United States to explore opportunities for emigrants. After visiting school chums in Virginia in the summer of 1874, Jem moved on to Colorado. Hughes enthusiastically wrote Lowell about Jem's adventures, described in the young man's "most cheery letters" from Colorado, where he was "living in a hut on the slopes of the Rocky Mountains, earning \$2 a day, baking his own bread, and thinking of running across to California, and Ceylon (to look at coffee planting) before he settles."⁵⁰⁷ Hughes later wrote Lowell that Jem was getting valuable experience as a cowboy while driving 9,000 head of cattle and shooting at wolves. By 1878 Jem and three of his cousins, the sons of Hastings Hughes, had become ranchers on the Texas/Mexico border where they proved to be "quite successful ranchemen."⁵⁰⁸

Thomas Hughes was as passionate about the dangers of living in the midst of a "Mammon-ridden generation" that worshipped money as he was about the character-building effects of a public school education and living on the land.⁵⁰⁹ His involvement in the East Tennessee Rugby was a direct result of these passions. Hughes envisioned the American Rugby as an idyllic rural community in which classically educated young men could have the satisfaction of earning a living with their own hands on their own land. His passion for avoiding the snares of greed and materialism as well as for making an honest living on the land and for the role the public school played in a young man's character development drew on the best ideals of the Victorian Christian gentleman and combined and raised them to a moral mission. By the time Hughes met Franklin W.

⁵⁰⁷Ada Blanche Nisbet, "Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell," 145.

⁵⁰⁸Ibid. Jem later established his ranch just over the border in Mexico, and by 1890 was doing quite well. Hughes reported to Lowell that there were "very good accounts from his ranche, a profitable new market having opened for them in Mexico" (414).

⁵⁰⁹Thomas Hughes, *The Manliness of Christ*, 160.

Smith he was a moral missionary looking for a project that would make a positive difference in the lives of a rising generation of Tom Browns. For this ascetic mission, the infertility of the soil at the colonization site was irrelevant. Moreover, the colony's extremely rural location would "help, instead of hindering its sons and daughters in leading a brave, simple, and Christian life."⁵¹⁰

Hughes was vividly aware that he had never been shy with strangers; in fact, he enjoyed being with people and was not reluctant to use his "natural gift of sauciness" to entertain others.⁵¹¹ Thomas Arnold (Dr. Arnold's second son) remembered Hughes's "irrepressible and plastic nature" during his Rugby years when he was "always cheerful and gay."⁵¹² Hughes must have known that just as he had been the "center" of the Christian Socialists, he had served the same function at the Working Men's College. J. A. Westlake, who had taught art at the College along with John Ruskin, vividly remembered the important work Hughes did to make the college a community:

even to see a little of Hughes's activity at the Working Men's College made a lasting impression... his personality showed itself at its best. The width of his understanding of men and sympathy with them marked him out as endowed with a vocation for bringing them together. As he interpreted schoolboys and schoolmasters to one another, and worked for the happy combination of capital with labour, so he was the very embodiment of the spirit of the College.⁵¹³

All of those associated with the Working Men's College fondly recalled his "fostering care and example" which played a major role in the "continued and healthy vigour of the

⁵¹⁰"Address of the President," in Thomas Hughes, *Vacation Rambles*, 228.

⁵¹¹Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 10.

⁵¹²Ada Blanche Nisbet, "Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell," liii. While one cannot be certain what Arnold meant by "plastic nature," this may be a reference to Hughes's congeniality.

⁵¹³*Ibid.*, 24.

social life of the College.”⁵¹⁴ No doubt, it was his role in creating community that led to his being selected as the second principal of the College in 1872, after the unexpected death of Maurice, although he described his selection as “much against my will.”⁵¹⁵ However, as principal, he once again served a very useful role for he “aided powerfully in keeping alive the traditions of the College” at a critical time in its history.⁵¹⁶

His interaction with American visitors to London is additional testimony to the strength of his personality. Even before Hughes’s visit to America in 1870, he was considered the “most hospitable of men” by many prominent Americans who visited London.⁵¹⁷ Their letters and journals recorded his “never-failing readiness to ‘show the town’ to newcomers, or to make hotel or club arrangements and devise entertainments for old-timers.” He was more than willing to make visitors feel most “welcome and at home in England, and his friends came to look upon him as an unofficial one-man committee” to meet all of their needs. His “sincere warmth” never failed to make them enjoy their visit to America’s mother country even more than they might have done.

Hughes’s exuberant personality, reflecting a genuine altruism and boundless optimism, was his most valuable asset and his most significant contribution to the life of a variety of communities. Realizing that his refusal to compromise his principles made it impossible for him to be as politically effective as he had hoped to be, he looked around for other ways to continue the “faithful doing day by day of the work that lay at his own

⁵¹⁴J. Llewelyn Davies, *The Working Men’s College 1854-1904*, 107.

⁵¹⁵Thomas Hughes, *Early Memories for the Children*, 67.

⁵¹⁶J. Llewelyn Davies, *The Working Men’s College 1854-1904*, 25.

⁵¹⁷Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” liii. All of the quotes in this paragraph are from this page of this source.

threshold.”⁵¹⁸ He would be the animating spirit who convinced the youthful settlers of the value of “manual labor as part of the education of every young man.”⁵¹⁹ So a wide variety of reasons predisposed Hughes to be receptive to John Boyle’s glowing report on the Plateau lands as well as Franklin W. Smith’s efforts to recruit his support of a Board of Aid to Land Ownership. Hughes’s motives and intentions were honorable, even if his wife’s refusal to visit America, much less live at Rugby, limited what he could do to help the colony.

⁵¹⁸Thomas Hughes, *The Manliness of Christ*, 143. Hughes was very disappointed when his Parliamentary career ended in 1874. At the time of writing *Alfred the Great* in 1869, he identified himself as a “politician in and out of the House of Commons” (5).

⁵¹⁹*Ibid.*, 152. Hughes readily acknowledged that Ralph Waldo Emerson, whom he met in America in 1870, had positively influenced his thoughts about the value of earning a living with one’s hands. He considered Emerson the “wisest of American writers, and one of the best of American gentlemen” (150). Emerson was obviously very fond of Hughes, for he accepted Hughes’s invitation to speak at the London Working Men’s College when he and his daughter Ellen were in England although he declined all other requests for speeches.

Chapter 5, Rugby, Tennessee, 1877-1880

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PUBLICATIONS BY RUGBY'S FOUNDERS, 1877-1880

November 1877, Franklin W. Smith published *The Hard Times: Agricultural Development the True Remedy* (Boston: J. R. Osgood and Company). The book contained Smith's four lengthy papers originally published in *The Boston Advertiser* in November 1877.

1878, Bulletin No. 1 and Bulletin No. 2 were published by the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership. It is difficult to know exactly when these two bulletins were printed although it is certain that they were in print before November 1878.

1879, "Letter of John Boyle, Esq." to the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership was printed by Franklin W. Smith and perhaps circulated as an independent document before being reprinted in its entirety in Bulletin No. 4 (May 1880) of the London Board of Aid to Land Ownership Limited.

July 1879, *Aid to Ownership of Land*, a small prospectus for potential investors, was published in London by the Board of Aid to Land Ownership Limited (the London Board).

March 1880, Bulletin No. 3, entitled *Organization, Objects and Measures [;] Description of the Estate on the Plateau of East Tennessee[;] Geological Section of the Plateau or Tableland*, was published in Boston where it had been produced by Franklin W. Smith for the London Board.

May 1880, Bulletin No. 4, entitled *Colonization of the Plateau*, was published in Boston where it had been produced by Franklin W. Smith for the London Board.

June 1880, a second prospectus, entitled *Aid to Land Ownership, Industrial Settlement on the Cumberland Highlands of Tennessee*, was published in London by the London Board.

After Franklin W. Smith met with Thomas Hughes and John Boyle in London, they formed the London Board of Aid to Land Ownership Limited. Once the company was registered on 22 January 1879, its directors did not immediately take action to establish a colony in Tennessee. Instead, they focused on raising money for their venture. Unlike the men who founded Greeley's Union Colony of Colorado, the London Board of Aid had no pool of prospective settlers from whom to secure funds. Consequently, Board members published a small prospectus, entitled *Aid to Ownership of Land*, in July 1879. This ten-page pamphlet was the first of four publications issued by the company over the next twelve months. These four documents revealed that Board members had almost no conception of how to succeed as a colonizer, businessman, or farmer. Neither its two prospectuses nor its two bulletins provided a

clear sense of the company's purpose and goals. Moreover, both Bulletin No. 3 and Bulletin No. 4 contained irrelevant sections about the history and activities of the short-lived Boston-based Board of Aid to Land Ownership, misleading statements about what the London Board was planning to do, and totally useless materials about a variety of subjects.⁵²⁰ One searches in vain in these 289 pages of publicity for concrete plans related to the purchase of large amounts of land in rural East Tennessee. It should come as no surprise that the company failed to establish a flourishing colony.

The first prospectus solicited funds in response to the "urgent need of suitable openings in life for our young men."⁵²¹ This ten-page pamphlet was no doubt written by Thomas Hughes, who with fellow barristers John Boyle and Walter N. Senior formed the London-based Board of Aid.⁵²² Marked "Private," and obviously written for potential investors, the pamphlet is an example of those "rare prospectuses of little known colonization companies" which broaden and deepen our knowledge of British settlement in America.⁵²³ The little publication also provides valuable insight into the mindset of Hughes, Boyle, and Senior. Neither Hughes nor Senior had ever been to Tennessee when this pamphlet was published, and Boyle had been to the Cumberland Plateau only briefly in November 1878. It is not surprising that these men had totally unrealistic ideas about what they could or should do as colonizers.

The select audience to whom the first prospectus was addressed knew that educational and political reforms had dramatically increased the competition for a "suitable" position among

⁵²⁰The Boston Board of Aid had published two Bulletins in 1878. Apparently neither of these publications is included in the large collection of material known as the Rugby Papers, MS-69-1885, which are at the Tennessee State Library and Archives in Nashville.

⁵²¹*Aid to Ownership of Land* (London: The Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, 1879), 4.

⁵²²*Ibid.*, 9. Walter N. Senior was Hughes's nephew, the only child of his sister Jeannie, who married John Nassau Senior. Walter was also an alumnus of the Rugby School. While only three men were listed as Board members in this section of the pamphlet, the prospectus stated that they had the power to add other members. There is no evidence that anyone else ever joined the Board although London solicitor Henry Kimber, a major investor in the project, began to play the central role in the business affairs of Rugby in 1882.

⁵²³Helen I. Cowan, *British Emigration to British North America*, 305.

young Britons from well-to-do families. The law, medicine, the Church, and the army could accommodate only so many of these young men. There were few other options for them if they wished to maintain their upper-class status in a very class-conscious society. The original readers of this pamphlet were well aware that a gentleman “never worked with his hands on necessary, as opposed to leisurely, activities.”⁵²⁴ Well-to-do young men who showed an interest in manual labor would be forced to “seek their living in America and Australia.”⁵²⁵ Men in “England and the United States” had established a Board of Aid to Land Ownership because they recognized that the “duty” of making careers for young men “as free as may be from unnecessary risk and hardships [had] become an urgent one, both in England and in the Eastern States of America.”⁵²⁶ That might be the cornerstone of the whole arch: to provide the security and status of the English gentry, no longer economically viable at home, in the “nearly-free” land and “boundless opportunities” of America (or so they carelessly thought). Board members offered the experiences of the “Canadian and New Zealand Companies, and of the settlements of Greeley in Colorado, and Vineland in New Jersey,” as proof that helping “young men at what must, in any case be a very anxious and critical time in their lives” could be a “safe and profitable” investment.⁵²⁷ In other words, investors in the Board of Aid’s venture could do well while doing good!

However, Board members did not specifically state how their company would help these young men make a living. Instead, they indicated that after a “long and careful” search,

⁵²⁴Peter Laslett, *The World We Have Lost* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1969), 29.

⁵²⁵*Aid to Ownership of Land*, 3. In Hughes’s *Tom Brown at Oxford* (1861), one of the main characters considered emigration to Australia. By the summer of 1879, Hughes was well aware of how attractive America was to young Englishmen because his eldest son Jem and several of his nephews were becoming ranchers on the Texas/Mexico border.

⁵²⁶*Ibid.*, 3-4. This statement seems vintage Hughes. He had been reared to have a very strong sense of the importance of doing one’s duty. It is questionable whether anyone in the “Eastern States of America” had a duty to help young Britons make a living.

⁵²⁷*Ibid.* Franklin W. Smith focused on Greeley’s Union Colony of Colorado and Charles Landis’s establishment of Vineland, New Jersey as examples of successful colonization in his *Hard Times* (1877).

“extending over two years,” they had identified a site in Tennessee as the “country which offers at once the most healthy and enjoyable climate, the richest mineral wealth, magnificent timber, and a soil admirably fitted for both agriculture and pasture.”⁵²⁸ The Board then revealed its intention to purchase a large block of this highly desirable land on the “Cincinnati Southern Railway (now rapidly approaching completion, and which will open up this district for the first time) on the following terms, viz:---About 400,000 acres, at \$1.70 per acre (the purchase of 350,000 of these being optional); about 60,000 acres averaging from \$2.00 to \$3.00 per acre.”⁵²⁹ Board members believed that these lands were unoccupied only because they had been inaccessible before the construction of the railroad. Unfortunately, as “Mentor” tried to explain to Thomas Hughes in September 1880, on the eve of the Opening Day, the really valuable land in the region had already been occupied by earlier settlers even before the expansion of the region’s railroads.⁵³⁰ Moreover, the company announced that an ideal location for a “town” had already been identified.⁵³¹

Board members had developed a general idea of how much money they needed to acquire at least 110,000 acres of land and to establish a town. They estimated a capital of 50,000 pounds would be sufficient, with 7,000 pounds essential for “improvements and necessary buildings, viz., place of worship, town hall, hotel, school-house, and roads” and 5,000 pounds

⁵²⁸*Aid to Ownership of Land*, 6. This statement is misleading. John Boyle was the only member of the British Board who had ever seen this Tennessee site, much less searched carefully for land upon which to establish a colony. The site had been selected in 1878 by a committee of the Boston Board which made four trips to the West and the South in an eight to ten-month period.

⁵²⁹*Ibid.*, 5.

⁵³⁰“Mentor,” Cincinnati, to Thomas Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 7 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁵³¹*Aid to Ownership of Land*, 6. This site was selected by Franklin W. Smith. In Bulletin No. 4 of the Board of Aid to Land Ownership Limited, which Smith produced, he stated that the “final preference” for a town site “was thus stated, February 1879:---‘The most lovely location for a town in the region is between White Oak and Clear Fork [rivers]; elevated, gently undulating, easily cleared’” (26-27). This site was some seven miles from the railroad, proving that neither Smith nor the British Board understood the necessity of locating the town site directly on a railway as was done by those creating Greeley, Colorado, and Vineland, New Jersey.

allocated to “expenses--- surveys, printing, plans, etc.”⁵³² The remaining capital would be used to purchase additional land or for further “development of the estate.”⁵³³ Since English emigrants, as well as American migrants, were “waiting upon the plateau” in order to make their homes in the colony, Board members planned to raise 25,000 pounds as quickly as possible.⁵³⁴ Shares of 50 pounds each (about \$250 at the exchange rate prevailing at that time) were to be issued. The pamphlet concluded by identifying “Mr. Franklin W. Smith, of Boston, now in England” as a representative of Americans interested in the venture rather than as a member of the Board.⁵³⁵

Although the prospectus should have clearly stated how the London Board would provide career opportunities for young men in Tennessee, it did not. In fact, none of the Board’s publications specifically stated how the Board planned to provide employment for anyone. Ironically, the Board itself became the colony’s primary employer. Were these young gentlemen, who had never worked with their hands, to be employed as lumberjacks, or miners, or farmers and ranchers? If so, did the Board intend to provide practical instruction for these emigrants? One also questions how the achievements of the Canada and New Zealand companies were relevant to what the Board of Aid might achieve in Tennessee. Did the Board intend to emulate what the founders of Greeley, Colorado, and Vineland, New Jersey, had done? If those reading the pamphlet (or for that matter, writing the pamphlet) knew anything about

⁵³²*Aid to Ownership of Land*, 8. The exchange rate at the time was about \$4.90 to the pound sterling so the men were estimating that they would need about \$250,000 for their colonization venture.

⁵³³*Ibid.* The word *estate* is frequently used in the company’s publications to refer to all of their land.

⁵³⁴*Ibid.*, 9

⁵³⁵*Ibid.* The London Board’s 1880 prospectus stated that members of the original Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership were directors of the company. However, no specific names were mentioned so it is difficult to determine who was on that Board other than Smith who was president of the Boston Board. He had been in England in late 1878 and early 1879 in order to create interest in the land he and the Boston Board had deemed ideal for his social engineering scheme. His being in England again in July 1879, as a “representative” of interested Americans rather than as a director of the company, raises questions about why he continued to be involved with the London Board of Aid, unless, as the evidence seems to indicate, he expected to benefit financially from their venture as an employee of the Board rather than an investor.

Greeley, they were aware that officials of the Union Colony, although apparently assured of the participation of about six hundred families, initially purchased only 12,000 acres of land; Charles Landis bought two New Jersey tracts, containing about 20,000 acres, in order to create Vineland.⁵³⁶ Why was the Board of Aid planning to purchase such a large amount of land? How were colonists to be recruited? Was Hughes or Boyle or Senior planning to provide the crucial on-site leadership?

Subsequent Board of Aid publications answered none of these questions. Bulletin No. 3, entitled *Organization, Objects and Measures[;] Description of the Estate on the Plateau of East Tennessee[;] Geological Section of the Plateau or Tableland* and 34 pages long, was almost certainly the work of Franklin W. Smith.⁵³⁷ With its companion publications in 1880, the year of the establishment of the colony, this bulletin made the Board's intentions harder, not easier, to understand. For no apparent reason, Bulletin No. 3 began with several pages about the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership. Then Smith included several newspaper articles about the Boston Board's explorations, the climax of which was the Board's "discovery" of "lands, extraordinary in their resources of soil, timber, minerals, water supply and natural beauty" was emphasized.⁵³⁸ In a very misleading statement, this bulletin asserted that the Boston Board had spared no efforts to "mature facilities for an extensive and practicable plan of industrial colonization" even before the formation of a "joint corporation, under English registration."⁵³⁹

⁵³⁶In his 1877 newspaper articles which were then promptly published as *The Hard Times: Agricultural Development the True Remedy*, Franklin W. Smith stated that Landis had purchased 30,000 acres of land (75).

⁵³⁷Obviously Smith had published two bulletins while serving as president of the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership. John Boyle referred to "Bulletin No. 2 of Mr. Franklin W. Smith" in the letter he wrote to the Boston Board on 18 December 1878 after his initial visit to the Cumberland Plateau in November 1878 ("Letter of John Boyle, Esq.," 3). As was noted in Chapter 3, Smith immediately had Boyle's letter printed. The letter was reprinted in its entirety in Bulletin No. 4, also published in Boston, in May 1880.

⁵³⁸Bulletin No. 3, 11.

⁵³⁹*Ibid.*, 10. If, in fact, the Boston-based Board and the London-based Board had formed a "joint corporation," it is curious that Smith was not a director of this new company. Had he declined to become a board member because he never intended to invest in the venture?

In fact, the Boston Board took no action to implement Smith's colonization scheme beyond searching for a site which met the criteria he had specified in *The Hard Times*.

Certain sections of Bulletin No. 3 raised questions about the London Board's interest in rural East Tennessee. Smith included a newspaper article praising the Cumberland Plateau's agricultural potential but then identified a new motive for Board of Aid interest in colonization there:

The soil is said to be good, easily tilled and adapted to all agricultural products. The country is heavily wooded and the grass is of luxuriant growth. The air is pure and the temperature agreeable the year through. No malaria exists and the climate is peculiarly favorable to the recuperation of consumptives. The promoters of the new enterprise hope to make the region the great watering-place and sanitarium of the West and South.⁵⁴⁰

Within the space of four pages, and sometimes even on the same page of Bulletin No. 3, the goal of the Board's project shifted between encouragement of "mixed agriculture" and the land's "advantages as a SANATARIUM [*sic*]." ⁵⁴¹ However, to emphasize that the Board's project had been carefully planned, Smith stated that the "English Board [would] guard against indiscriminate migration. It will invite to the settlement only 'tenant farmers,' experienced agriculturists and other with capital to invest and with which to employ American labor."⁵⁴² Having stated that settlers would be carefully screened, Smith then included a section entitled "Who may well go to the Table-land" in this bulletin as well as in *Bulletin No. 4*. Having no practical knowledge of agriculture, Smith had erroneously concluded that a wide variety of people could flourish as farmers on the Cumberland Plateau. Those who would certainly

⁵⁴⁰Bulletin No. 3, 13. In this article the town site was described as 100 miles from Nashville and six to eight hours by rail from Cincinnati. In fact, the town site was about 140 miles from Nashville, while the trip from Cincinnati would include nine hours by rail to Robbins Station, and an additional two-hour wagon ride to the town site, making total travel time from Cincinnati about eleven hours. All four of the Board's publications contained factual errors of this sort.

⁵⁴¹*Ibid.*, 13-17.

⁵⁴²*Ibid.*, 15. Smith's statement might have reduced the number of potential colonists since he implied that there would be a rather strict selection process.

succeed in this setting included the man “in middle life with a small competency,” and teen-aged sons “whom he don’t know what to do with,” because he and his sons would soon have a “self-supporting farm homestead.”⁵⁴³ Also anyone with “pulmonary, catarrhal or febrile difficulties; whose weak constitution is shaken by the extremes of the New England climate” should go because the “pure, genial climate of the Plateau” would increase their “strength for active employment.”⁵⁴⁴ This bulletin also advised the college graduate with “good sense and book knowledge” who was “struggling in an uncongenial life because of an imagined standard of gentility” to settle on the Cumberland Plateau.⁵⁴⁵ A widow with a small amount of capital and several boys should succeed on the Plateau because she could “care for the bees and the dairy, while in the light soil” her sons could easily do a “man’s work.”⁵⁴⁶ The “trader, whose business career has been a failure,” and the mechanic, “trained as a farmer” and now uncertain of employment, were also advised to go.⁵⁴⁷ Finally, a clerk or minister or teacher, “casting about for a livelihood,” and with enough money to “establish his home, and that can be an industrious, practical, not theoretical farmer” would be welcomed.⁵⁴⁸ These examples, taken from “hundreds who have made inquiries,” revealed once again that Smith, and the London Board which paid for this bulletin, completely misunderstood “what a farmer’s life and prospects really were.”⁵⁴⁹ Moreover, this lengthy section on “who may well go” flatly contradicted the assertion that prospective settlers would be carefully screened.

⁵⁴³Bulletin No. 3, 19. Did Smith or the British Board consider what might happen if the man with a “small competency” knew nothing whatsoever about farming?

⁵⁴⁴Ibid. One wonders who would hire settlers after they gained “strength for active employment.”

⁵⁴⁵Ibid., 20. Did a college man’s “good sense and book knowledge” guarantee that he would succeed as a farmer if he had never farmed?

⁵⁴⁶Ibid.

⁵⁴⁷Ibid., 22.

⁵⁴⁸Ibid.

⁵⁴⁹Ibid.; Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England*, 53. Smith’s *Hard Times: Agricultural Development the True Remedy* had already provided extensive proof that Smith’s ideas about agriculture were hopelessly romantic and totally unrealistic. Bulletin No. 3 concluded with the picture of a “Geological Section Extending Across the Cumberland Mountain from White to Roane, County, Tennessee” as well as a “County Map of Roads and Streams on the Plateau.” Did this material persuade anyone to invest in the Board’s venture or to settle in Tennessee?

Bulletin No. 4, entitled *Colonization of the Plateau* and published less than two months later, provided further evidence that Smith and the London Board had no coherent colonization plans. This 225-page document contained an incredibly large collection of irrelevant articles and miscellaneous reports, as well as almost all of Bulletin No. 3. Smith also included material published in his 1877 articles on “Agricultural Development the guaranty of continuous prosperity.”⁵⁵⁰ To further emphasize the desirability of the site, Smith reprinted John Boyle’s 1878 letter to the Boston Board as well as a letter from General W. T. Sherman that encouraged migration to the South, especially to eastern Tennessee, Alabama, and northern Georgia.⁵⁵¹ A report on the soil and resources of the Plateau, written in 1867 by the Mississippi commissioner of agriculture, appeared for the first time in the Board’s publications and was subsequently included in the London Board’s second prospectus. Almost none of this material provided useful details about the London Board’s intentions or its specific plans.

Because Bulletin No. 4 contained a list of men who had subscribed to the London company’s stock, it is useful in reconstructing Rugby’s history. Twelve British investors put money into the colonization project: Six were associated with the legal profession, including Hughes, Boyle, Senior, and English solicitor Henry Kimber, who was to play a major role in the venture. Two others were bankers. Eight men were listed as American subscribers. Although the name of Franklin W. Smith is included, there is no evidence that Smith purchased shares in the company, and there is reliable evidence that the other seven Americans did. However, since

⁵⁵⁰Franklin W. Smith, Bulletin No. 4, *Colonization of the Plateau* (Boston: Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, 1880), n.p. Once again Smith included a “Report on the Second Exploration of the Plateau,” repeating information about the 1878 travels of the Boston Board.

⁵⁵¹General Sherman had written this letter on 4 February 1879. He stated that his wide travels in the United States as well as his time in the South during the recent war made him well-qualified to write about migration. The letter was written from St. Augustine, Florida, where Smith’s in-laws had a winter home. Since Smith was in London in January 1879, one wonders if he went straight to Florida from London. One can easily imagine how delighted Smith would be to learn that such a distinguished Union leader as General Sherman was enthusiastic about the economic potential of the South.

Smith produced this bulletin, he could easily make certain his name was listed, as he would do if he expected to benefit financially from his involvement with the London Board's venture.

The rambling, rather irrelevant nature of Bulletins Nos. 3 and 4 might lead one to suspect that the London-based Board had no knowledge of their contents. However, it seems obvious that Hughes had seen these bulletins because the London-based Board's second prospectus, which Hughes no doubt wrote, contained material that had previously appeared in these Bulletins produced in Boston by Smith on behalf of the London Board. The London Board's second prospectus, a twenty-page document, was published in June 1880 and addressed specifically to British readers. This small pamphlet gave a brief history of the Board, repeating yet again information about the establishment and activities of the Boston Board. For the fourth time in four publications, the Boston Board's glowing praise of the "mountain plateau of East Tennessee" was reproduced.⁵⁵² New material described the London Board's activity in Tennessee, including their purchase of a "tract of land comprising 50,000 acres at least" and construction of a hotel and a store.⁵⁵³ As they had stated in their first prospectus, the London Board members anticipated that they would need huge amounts of land for their project. In this document they reiterated their intention to purchase up to "400,000 acres of land of great value, the soil being for the most part fertile virgin land, easily cultivated, gently undulating, and clothed with an abundance of fine timber, under which good pasturage is uniformly found."⁵⁵⁴ To provide "entirely independent testimony" of their site's potential for various industries, this pamphlet also contained the complete report of J. W. Harper, the agricultural commissioner and principal geologist of Mississippi, which had previously appeared in the London Board's

⁵⁵²*Aid to Land Ownership, Industrial Settlement on the Cumberland Highlands of Tennessee* (London: Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, 1880), 4.

⁵⁵³*Ibid.*, 7. In reality the Board had purchased or signed contracts to purchase about 30,000 acres of land by June 1880.

⁵⁵⁴*Ibid.*, 8.

Bulletin No. 4.⁵⁵⁵ Dr. Harper's report surveyed the region's climate, minerals, vegetation, fauna, and soil. He stated that the area was ideal for cattle breeding, and also indicated that wheat, barley, oats, and rye grew well on the Plateau. Harper criticized the local farmers for being careless and wearing out the soil, before noting that they were industrious but poor. Did British readers wonder why native farmers were poor, if, in fact, the land was so ideal for certain crops and for raising cattle, and if native farmers were truly "industrious"? Was it possible that the Plateau's residents were poor because these lands were not very valuable? There is no evidence that the poverty of native farmers alarmed the London Board, which concluded its prospectus by advertising that shares of "50 pounds each, 40 pounds called and paid up" could be acquired from the company's London secretary.⁵⁵⁶

Historian Charlotte Erickson noted that British emigrants who had never farmed seriously underestimated how difficult it would be to clear heavily-wooded land. Most emigrant farmers never managed to clear more than five acres per year. Some abandoned wooded land for the prairies, preferring to take their chances with windstorms and droughts rather than devoting so much time and energy to the painfully slow work of removing trees. Others willingly paid more for land that had been cleared. Both Hughes and Boyle seemed to think that an "abundance of fine timber" was one of the most valuable assets of the Plateau lands. This judgment reinforces the unfortunate reality: they had no practical knowledge about agriculture.

Although none of these publications included concrete plans for the Board's colonization project, the company did have some success in raising money. The Board's financial records in the Rugby Papers date from February 1880 when the company opened its "local" account at the

⁵⁵⁵*Aid to Land Ownership, Industrial Settlement on the Cumberland Highlands*, 9. Dr. Harper was also a professor of geology and agriculture at the University of Mississippi. This report was probably prepared for Hermann Bokum after he became Tennessee's first Commissioner of Immigration in 1867.

⁵⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 20.

Lafayette Bank of Commerce in Cincinnati, the nearest large city. According to the very detailed records kept by John Boyle's eldest son, Henry D. Boyle, who served as the colony's cashier from 1880 until May 1882, a deposit of \$5,000 from London was made to the Board's account on 20 February 1880.⁵⁵⁷ Five weeks later an additional \$4,000 from London was deposited, followed by \$9,725 on May 1. Boyle began to prepare monthly statements in May 1880 in response to Hughes's specific request for detailed information about the colony's finances. Although the first of these "Cash Account" statements, dated May 31, listed the first three deposits under "Proceeds of Remittances from Boston," this \$18,725 definitely came from London.⁵⁵⁸ Deposits from London in June, July, August, and September added an additional \$30,300 to the Board's account. While in Tennessee for the "Opening Day" events, Hughes gave Boyle a check for \$10,000, and by the end of October, the Board had raised more than \$70,000. Although this was a lot of money in 1880, the Board had initially indicated that it hoped to raise about \$125,000 for the first phases of its venture.

⁵⁵⁷All financial information shared in this work comes from the British Board of Aid's business records included in the Rugby Papers at the Tennessee State Library and Archives in Nashville, Tennessee. Although there is a rather general index to the huge amount of material contained in the Rugby Papers, it is impossible to be more specific about the location of these financial records than to indicate that they are on Mf. 239. The Board's business records cover numerous features of the enterprise. Information about the Board account at the Lafayette Bank as well as specific records dealing with expenditures for land, the roadway, the hotel, the commissary, the stable, the hospital, and various salaries, are included in the financial documents located primarily on Mf. 239 in the Rugby Papers. Many of the most useful records are in a 388-page account book, labeled "Accounts of the Board of Aid, London, 1880-1885," also on this microfilm. Other business records of the company, including numerous deeds and various contracts are on Mf. 1673. While Henry D. Boyle served as Cashier, he kept amazingly detailed records, noting in one case that someone had been overpaid one penny! However, the format of the records makes it difficult to follow the transactions. Sometimes credits are listed under "Cr." and at other times, the very same kinds of transactions are listed under "Dr." as if they were debits. Boyle terminated his work with the Board in May 1882 after the Board refused to raise his salary. Subsequent financial records are less comprehensive and even more difficult to decipher.

⁵⁵⁸Although these monthly "Cash Account" statements were kept on a printed form entitled "The Board of Aid to Land Ownership, (Limited)," the only category for investments in the company was labeled "Proceeds of Remittances from Boston." Beginning with the June statement, Boyle crossed through "Boston" and wrote in "London" when the money came from London. The May statement also listed \$1,285 as "Cash from John Boyle, Esq." which was paid to Cyrus Clarke on April 14. Clarke was the colony's on-site manager, but it is not clear whether this money was compensation for his services as manager or payment for land he purchased on the Board's behalf.

Moreover, even before opening its “local” account in Cincinnati, the company had begun to spend money, in fact to establish a pattern of spending money almost as fast as it was deposited in 1880. C. H. Wilson, an Etonian, Cambridge graduate, and mining engineer, had been hired by the Board and sent to Tennessee in December 1879. Wilson was expected to assess the quality of the coal and other minerals on the land the Board intended to purchase. According to Boyle’s records, expenditures in 1880 began on the very same day (February 20) as the first deposit when John Boyle spent \$2,361.80 for land. By the end of June, the Board had deposited more than \$20,000 in its Cincinnati account, but expenditures totaled more than \$20,000.⁵⁵⁹ On the eve of the official “Opening Day” events, the financial statements showed credits of \$53,677.07 and debits of \$54,179.06.

The men on the London-based Board of Aid underestimated how costly their project would be. Having hired Wilson in 1879, the Board added numerous other young Britons to its payroll in early 1880, including Henry D. Boyle, one of the colony’s first settlers. Soon most of the prospective colonists were working for the Board on a variety of tasks, including construction of the seven-mile road to the nearest railway station. Construction of this roadway had cost only \$100 by June 1880, but by “Opening Day” in early October, the Board had invested an additional \$14,000 in this road. By the end of the year, this project had cost almost \$15,000. Although the Board had spent only \$950 on its hotel by June, it had invested an additional \$10,000 in this facility by October first and by the end of the year, the Board had spent \$14,522.07 on this hotel. By December 1880, the Board had spent \$12,146.47 for other

⁵⁵⁹On the “Balance Sheet” for June 1880, Boyle listed \$20,050 under “Cr.” to the Board of Aid’s account. However, on the bank account statement, he showed the total of Board deposits as about \$21,900. On these “Balance Sheet” statements, he listed certain payments, such as some of those to Cincinnati companies, under “Cr.” while he listed other expenditures, such as expenditures for land, the hotel, the roadway to the railroad station, the Boston Office, under “Dr.” These inconsistencies make it difficult to interpret some of the financial records, but there is no question that the Board was spending as much money as it raised.

improvements such as the construction of barracks to provide temporary housing.⁵⁶⁰ Although Board members had anticipated needing \$35,000 for “improvements and necessary buildings,” by December 1880 the Board had already spent almost \$42,000 on the roadway, the hotel, and small buildings such as the barracks.⁵⁶¹

The Rugby Papers in the Tennessee State Library and Archives contain no financial records of the Boston Board of Aid. However, a “Memorandum” prepared by Albert M. Knight on 16 July 1880 clearly indicated that six Americans invested money between December 1877 and 25 April 1879 in Smith’s colonization scheme.⁵⁶² These men, including William O. Grover, John G. Cushing, Martin Brimmer, Charles R. Codman, Michael H. Simpson, and Russell Sturgis, Jr., provided a total of \$2437.50 for the Boston Board. They also contributed money, ranging from \$238 to \$1527, to the Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, as did J. D. W. French who purchased one share at a cost of \$488. From mid-March to mid-July, these seven invested a total of \$6,336 in the London Board. Amazingly enough, Knight indicated to Hughes that he had sent this money to the Board’s London bank account, not to the Cincinnati account for immediate use! Franklin W. Smith’s name is *not* included in Knight’s “Memorandum,” leading one to question why he listed himself as a subscriber in Bulletin No. 4 that he produced for the London Board.

Large expenditures for the Boston office also raise questions about Smith’s role in the London Board’s venture. The Boston office of the Board of Aid, staffed by Smith and Knight,

⁵⁶⁰In one of his first letters to Henry D. Boyle, Hughes stated that the Board feared it was “attempting to go too fast.” He stressed that “temporary lodging accommodation should be in a proper condition” before settlers arrived (Thomas Hughes, London, to Henry D. Boyle, Plateau, Tennessee, 19 April 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA).

⁵⁶¹*Aid to Ownership of Land*, 8.

⁵⁶²Knight was Smith’s secretary before he became secretary and agent for the London-based Board. The Boston office was maintained for two years after formation of the British Board. Apparently both Knight and Smith handled business matters for the Board. Knight prepared this “Memorandum” about the American subscribers in response to a June 1880 letter from Thomas Hughes asking Smith how much American money would be added to the Board’s account.

was the most expensive item on the Board's "Cash Account" statements as of 1 June 1880.

Henry D. Boyle had sent a total of \$3,500 from Rugby to Boston, including a check for \$3000 in early May, at the request of Smith although this check was a "drain on the Board's account."⁵⁶³

The London Board was not pleased with what Boyle had done. Although Hughes wrote Boyle that the Board exonerated him "from blame," he indicated that the Board "would have preferred that you declined to make the payment without instructions from us."⁵⁶⁴ Although it may be impossible to know what Smith did with this money, he had published Bulletins Nos. 3 and 4 by the time he received the Board's check. No doubt he used some of the \$3,000 to pay for publication of the bulletins and for maintenance of the Boston office. Some of this money probably paid Knight's salary. However, it is difficult to avoid concluding that Smith used some of the Board's money to pay himself rather generously for his "service" to the Board.⁵⁶⁵

Perhaps Smith used some of the \$2400 provided by the original American subscribers to pay himself for serving as president of the Boston Board of Aid. He did not use this money to purchase any of the property on the Cumberland Plateau. In mid-November 1878 Smith had received a letter stating that 25,000 to 30,000 acres of land was "ready" for him; if in the area with money, he could purchase "all the Tompkins land and 100 to 300 acres of the Massengale tract."⁵⁶⁶ Even after the formation of the London Board of Aid, the company did not

⁵⁶³Henry D. Boyle, Plateau, Tennessee, to Thomas Hughes, London, 4 June 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Prior to sending this check, the Board had spent \$500 on the Boston Office.

⁵⁶⁴Thomas Hughes, London, to Henry D. Boyle, Plateau, Tennessee, 20 May 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Hughes told Boyle that he had also written Smith about this payment.

⁵⁶⁵The British Board spent an additional \$1,150 on the Boston office before closing it in December 1880. The financial records for June 1882 indicate that Smith was paid \$742.11 for "salary, expenses, etc." although he had not been involved in Rugby's affairs since 1880. Perhaps this was supposed to be "back pay" although it is very reasonable to assume that he used some of the \$3,000 check (which Henry Boyle sent in May 1880) for his own salary for services rendered in 1880. Apparently, Smith did not immediately receive \$742.11 from the Board in June 1882, and once Henry Kimber began to play the major role in Rugby's business affairs, he instructed the cashier to place this money in the Board's "profit and loss" account. This action was finally taken in June 1888.

⁵⁶⁶Walter Allen, Kingston, Tennessee, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 11 November 1878, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

immediately begin to purchase land although, according to the Board's second prospectus, Board members had immediately taken up the "negociations [*sic*] already commenced by the Boston Board for purchase of a large tract of country in Scott, Morgan, Fentress, and Overton counties."⁵⁶⁷ The Rugby Papers contain no records of the London Board's financial affairs between January 1879 and February 1880. In an 1881 letter John Boyle referred to "how unbusinesslike (to speak mildly) was the whole course of business" in the London office in 1879.⁵⁶⁸ This is the only mention of what occurred in London during the period when slow progress on the construction of the Cincinnati Southern Railway delayed establishment of the Tennessee colony. The completion of this railroad, "opened for travel through to Chattanooga on the 16th February [1880]," was noted in all the Board's 1880 publications.⁵⁶⁹ The railroad's completion also marked the beginning of the London Board's purchase of property on the Plateau.

John Boyle, like Hughes a London barrister, and a major shareholder and vice-president of the company, played the primary role in the Board's acquisition of land. In February 1880 he made his second visit to East Tennessee in order to purchase property for the Board's colony.⁵⁷⁰ Although it is difficult to know from whom the first land was acquired, it is clear that Boyle did

Since the price of the mountain land ranged from \$1 to \$2 per acre, Smith would have needed ten or twenty times as much money as the Boston Board raised in order to purchase even 25,000 acres of property in East Tennessee. The London Board did purchase two tracts from the Tompkins but was never able to get its hands on the Massengale property. In 1883 Henry Kimber, who became a shareholder in 1880, purchased 101 acres of the Massengale lands as his personal farm.

⁵⁶⁷*Aid to Land Ownership, Industrial Settlement on the Cumberland Highlands*, 5.

⁵⁶⁸John Boyle, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 3 September 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers. It is curious that Boyle, who was said to have "extensive business experience," would be critical of the "unbusinesslike" atmosphere in the Board's office. Since he surely knew that Hughes was not a businessman nor was Hughes involved in the venture because of his management skills, one would have expected John Boyle to make the office "businesslike."

⁵⁶⁹Bulletin No. 3, 11.

⁵⁷⁰In his 1878 letter to the Boston Board following his first visit to the Cumberland Plateau, Boyle contrasted the "smooth and pleasant traveling for our waggon and team" once they came into Tennessee with what they had experienced in Kentucky ("Letter of John Boyle, Esq.," 4). No doubt traveling to Tennessee by rail was a much more enjoyable experience for Boyle and others who had been to the area when it was almost inaccessible!

not follow the general plan outlined in the Board's 1879 prospectus. Rather than buying 50,000 acres from one vendor, Boyle initially acquired several smaller tracts of land from numerous local residents such as Isaac Riseden who was paid \$200 on February 20.⁵⁷¹ In early March a local family, the Tompkins, received \$799 as final payment on a 234-acre tract, fulfilling the terms of a contract negotiated by Clarke on 11 February 1880.⁵⁷² On March 10, Boyle signed a contract for the Board's largest purchase, some 16,686 acres of land belonging to the Harriman heirs. Between February and May 26, he acquired six different tracts of land at a cost of \$3,167.85. During his two visits to the Cumberland Plateau between February and May 1880, he committed the Board to spending \$60,112 for the purchase of almost 31,000 acres of land. Unfortunately, there were legal complications connected with several of the smaller purchases, and the "Harriman Lands" were the source of extended correspondence and costly litigation. Lying in both Morgan and Scott counties, the "Harriman Lands" were managed by a New York trustee, V. Mumford Moore, so their purchase was by no means a simple and straightforward transaction. The Board paid two dollars per acre for this property, and John Boyle and the Board

⁵⁷¹In the first prospectus, Hughes stated that the Company would purchase most of its land from one vendor, from whom it would initially acquire about 50,000 acres of his more than 350,000 acres. This anonymous vendor was specifically identified as "Mr. Cyrus Clarke, who is the present manager for the Board on the plateau," in the second prospectus. Interestingly enough this prospectus indicated that Clarke "had granted very favorable terms for the purchase. The price is \$ an acre." ("Aid to Ownership of Land; Industrial Settlement," 8) The text is typed but the cost per acre is not included. The Board acquired three tracts, totaling 3,167 acres, from Riseden. It is difficult to determine the total cost of this land although the records seem to indicate that one 494-acre tract cost about \$5 per acre. This was a very high price to pay for these mountain lands. In 1880, the Board paid Riseden \$1344.35 and Boyle personally paid \$765.65. Riseden was to be paid an additional \$800 in August 1881 and another \$800 in August 1882. The land records indicate that there was an additional payment of \$2,000 connected with this land because of delay of deed.

⁵⁷²Clarke had paid one dollar for this tract at the time of signing a contract with ten members of the family, most of whom could not write their names. The contract stated that the family was to be paid an additional \$799 for this tract. However, if the land records are correct, the Tompkins were paid \$901. According to these records, Clark paid \$1; John Boyle paid \$101, and the Board paid \$799, for a total of \$901 for 234 acres, making this an expensive purchase.

spent an additional \$1,280 to settle a local resident's claim to 1280 acres of the "Harriman Lands" near the railroad station.⁵⁷³

The Board made it a priority to acquire land "in and round the town site" selected by Smith in 1878.⁵⁷⁴ While Boyle was in East Tennessee in May, Boston architect and engineer George F. Fuller, who had been hired by Smith, made his first visit to the region. After his first week on the Board's property, Fuller reported to Smith that he was "perfectly delighted with the location, it far exceeds my most sanguine expectations and I see no reason why Plateau should not become a most delightful resort. Nature has done everything for it in the way of scenery, springs of water and charming building sites."⁵⁷⁵ Fuller indicated that contracts had been executed for digging a well and working on the cellar of the proposed hotel. An on-site quarry was the source of "excellent building stone" which would first be put to use in the hotel's cellar.⁵⁷⁶ He also stated that he and several others, including John Boyle and Cyrus Clarke, had ridden over one of the areas being considered for a new wagon road from the town site to the railroad station at Robbins, a distance of some seven miles. Fuller judged this new route much superior to the existing road, noting that the "views along the entire route are splendid and very nice on the rise of ground near the track."⁵⁷⁷

Even if Fuller did not discuss the region's potential as a resort with John Boyle, his letter provided concrete proof that Smith had yet another motive for interest in these previously

⁵⁷³The land records indicate that Boyle paid \$1,080 to settle this claim with one Sedgebeer. Writing to Judge Temple in January 1881, Hughes stressed that the Board thought the "Harriman trustees were to deal with Sedgebeer and hold the Board harmless," but this was apparently not the case (Thomas Hughes, London, to Oliver P. Temple, 7 January 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.).

⁵⁷⁴Thomas Hughes, London, to Franklin W. Smith, Esq., Boston, 18 June 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Hughes stated that the Board thought it should gain control of the land "in and round the town site" before making other purchases. Boyle was making his third visit to the Cumberland Plateau when Fuller arrived.

⁵⁷⁵George F. Fuller, Plateau, Tennessee, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 13 May 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Smith had named the town-to-be "Plateau."

⁵⁷⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷⁷Ibid.

inaccessible Plateau lands.⁵⁷⁸ After support for Smith's social engineering scheme vanished in 1878, he had apparently convinced Boyle and Hughes that the land possessed "many favourable positions for establishing a large scheme of colonization, whether in town, manufacturing, farming, or residential sites."⁵⁷⁹ Hughes and Boyle were genuinely interested in advancing the careers of well-educated young Britons. They seemed to think these young men could make a living with their hands in rural East Tennessee. Although Smith may have sympathized with the London Board's intentions, apparently he was primarily thinking about the site's potential as a resort even as he worked with, or for, the Board in 1879 and 1880. There is no indication that Hughes ever considered making the area the "great watering place" of the South and West.⁵⁸⁰

The failure to identify and work toward achieving one specific goal was only one source of trouble for the London Board. Board members also failed to provide strong on-site leadership for the project. Between 1879 and 1882, there were too many men with authority to act for the Board when its members were not in Tennessee (as they seldom were). Too many of these men, such as the on-site manager Cyrus Clarke, also had personal agendas. The correspondence in both the Rugby Papers and the Temple Papers is filled with indications that having one strong, trustworthy manager in Tennessee could have prevented numerous problems, especially difficulties connected with its property. Responding to some confusion over the price of town lots after John Boyle left Tennessee in May 1880, Hughes reminded Henry Boyle that "your father talked this matter well over with Mr. Smith & Mr. Clarke & was, or should have been, clearly understood that Mr. C. Clarke in conjunction with Mr. Hill & Mr. F. W. Smith whenever that gentleman is on the plateau had full authority to make sales of any lands of which we had

⁵⁷⁸There were references to the region's potential as a great resort in Bulletins Nos. 3 and 4 published in March and May 1880.

⁵⁷⁹"Letter of John Boyle, Esq.," 5.

⁵⁸⁰Bulletin No. 3, 13.

obtained conveyances & possession.”⁵⁸¹ Hughes then made Boyle responsible for seeing “that these gentlemen clearly understand how the case stands.”⁵⁸² However, in concluding the letter, Hughes indicated he had written Smith “on all other points relating to our business.”⁵⁸³ Was Boyle to set Smith straight on certain business matters and then Smith was to instruct young Boyle on “all other points” of the Board’s business? It was complicated enough for the London Board to be managing the project from thousands of miles away without adding to the complexity of the management process.

The Board also made dealing with its land more complicated than it should have been. Boyle bought land from fifteen different vendors rather than purchasing property from a single “safe” source, such as the United States government or a major railroad.⁵⁸⁴ Consequently, numerous local lawyers, including Judge Oliver P. Temple of Knoxville, Wartburg attorney L. P. Bright and his son A. B. Bright, and a certain Mr. Henderson based in the area, worked with the Board on the purchase and sale of land. (Several New York lawyers were also involved in the purchase of the “Harriman Lands.”) Temple began his active involvement with the Board in February 1880 after an introductory meeting with Boyle at the Board’s town site on the Plateau. Boyle’s first letter to Temple focused on two topics of great importance to the London Board: town planning and property transactions. Boyle noted that “we have already made arrangements

⁵⁸¹Thomas Hughes, London, to Henry D. Boyle, Plateau, Tennessee, 20 May 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. “Mr. Hill” refers to Amos Hill, who had lived on the Cumberland Plateau for many years, having first visited the area while serving in the Union cavalry. After the war, he moved his family to East Tennessee because he found its climate so much more attractive than that of Michigan, where he had settled after emigrating from England in order to avoid prosecution for poaching on his employer’s estate. After years of hard work, he had managed to clear enough land to be a successful farmer. This achievement led to his being employed as the British Board’s nurseryman and forester. The Board paid him to establish a series of gardens along the road to the railway station in order to prove what the Plateau soils were capable of producing.

⁵⁸²Ibid. Since Cyrus Clarke’s son James was assistant manager of the Board’s project, Hughes had to make sure that Henry Boyle was well aware that the father’s authority exceeded that delegated by the Board to the son.

⁵⁸³Ibid.

⁵⁸⁴The founders of Greeley’s Union Colony purchased more than 9,000 of the 12,000 acres they acquired from the National Land Company which handled property transactions for the Denver Pacific Railroad. They also paid \$930 in fees for the right to occupy 60,000 acres of government land if they needed additional land.

in connection with our *Townsite for public recreation*, two ‘public parks’ having been marked on our plan, also an ‘*English Garden*’ and a ‘*cricket ground*’.”⁵⁸⁵ He then proceeded quickly to property transactions, with a reference to making copies of “Mr. Clarke’s papers” as well as telling Temple of the Board’s purchase of two tracts from the Tompkins.⁵⁸⁶ Boyle indicated that the Board had an interest in the “Peters lands [which] I believe we know how to get hold of.”⁵⁸⁷ However, he stated that the purchase of the Massengale property was problematic even though the land had been “secured by Mr. Clarke, and the document signed by all the parties on *terms extremely favourable as to price*. This evening, however, having been invited to visit the family, and proceeding to read, at their request the document once again, just as he turned the first page the *old lady snatched the document from his hand* and pocketing it said, ‘*I’ll keep this, I want to read it.*’⁵⁸⁸ Boyle’s reference to dealing with four different vendors, all of whom were complete strangers, is a reminder of why the Board thought it had to employ Temple in order to safely purchase property.

Although Temple was apparently very trustworthy, he could not protect the London Board from the complications of dealing with multiple vendors or numerous strangers, especially in the purchase of the “Harriman Lands.” After Boyle signed the contract to acquire this property in March 1880, Wartburg attorney L. P. Bright was hired to make reports and secure

⁵⁸⁵John Boyle, Horseshoe Bend, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 12 February 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers. Smith was on-site at the same time so Boyle’s “we” is a reminder that both Smith and the British Board thought the town should be laid out carefully. Smith had taken his ideas about town planning from what he knew about Charles Landis and Vineland, New Jersey. (The emphasis is in the original where Boyle underlined numerous words.)

⁵⁸⁶Ibid. His mention of “Clarke’s papers” is a reference to the large tract of land which Cyrus Clarke planned to sell to the Board. Temple discouraged the Board from dealing with Clarke. These two tracts contained about 600 acres of land.

⁵⁸⁷Ibid. A local surveyor C. S. Schenck apparently handled the Board’s purchase of 1150 acres from the Peters’ heirs. Boyle later wrote Temple that he believed Schenck had conspired with A. B. Bright and Cyrus Clarke to cheat the Board.

⁵⁸⁸Ibid. The Board never purchased the Massengale land. (See note 566.)

abstracts of the titles that he was then to send to Temple.⁵⁸⁹ In early April Bright wrote Temple that he had finished reports “on the Harriman lands (the 1900’s) with maps illustrating them.”⁵⁹⁰ He indicated that he had sent this material to “Mr. Boyle in New York” only to learn from “Mr. Smith that they will be returned to Mr. Clarke on the Plateau.”⁵⁹¹ Bright expressed surprise that “Henderson, knowing the condition of these titles, should expect you to pass on them with the data he has furnished. With my reports and abstracts you can pass on the 1900’s, but as far as the 700’s, you nor I nor anybody else can tell what is in them, till they have been surveyed and sifted.”⁵⁹² At that point the 700’s had not even been surveyed. Bright reiterated his surprise that Henderson had asked Temple to “pass on titles as complicated without sufficient data” and insisted that he knew all the tracts and had “full abstracts of the titles.”⁵⁹³ Yet, Bright was certain that this was “not enough. There must be work done on the ground, locating and surveying conflicts and getting facts about adverse possession, etc. that will take time.” It is almost inconceivable that Hughes, Boyle, and Senior, all of whom were barristers, would purchase a piece of property if there were any possibility of conflicts or questions about adverse possession. They did. And yet, by January 1881, Hughes was writing Temple that “it is very possible we

⁵⁸⁹Bright’s letterhead indicated that real estate was a specialty of “Bright and Bright, Attorneys at Law.” The letterhead also stated that “Parties owning or expecting to purchase land in East Tennessee will do well to consult us.” Bright practiced with his son, A. B. Bright. Unfortunately the elder Bright died in August 1880. The Board then worked with A. B. Bright on several transactions. While L. P. Bright may have been quite honest, John Boyle believed that A. B. Bright conspired with Cyrus Clarke and C. S. Schenck to cheat the Board. Wartburg is the county seat of Morgan County. The Board’s town site was primarily in Morgan County.

⁵⁹⁰L. P. Bright, Wartburg, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 8 April 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁵⁹¹Ibid. This letter provides additional clear evidence of the convoluted nature of the Board’s business affairs. Bright would naturally have assumed that his reports should go to Boyle. However, by early April Boyle had sailed for England. In his absence from the colony Clarke and Smith were to handle property transactions.

⁵⁹²Ibid. According to Bright, Henderson, a Knoxville attorney, knew very little about the Harriman lands. In 1881 Henderson, who claimed to be the local attorney for the Harriman trustees, was given a check for \$1290 which he was meant to send to New York as another payment on the Harriman property. Apparently Henderson received the check from J. R. Crook who had purchased more than 1,000 acres of coal lands from the London Board. Crook indicated that Cyrus Clarke told him to give the check to Henderson. The Board had to hire Jerome Templeton, who had become Temple’s partner, to retrieve the money, plus interest, from Henderson who finally surrendered it in June 1882.

⁵⁹³Ibid.

would not have gotten involved if we had known” how many legal complications would develop.⁵⁹⁴

Why were they unaware that they were making very dangerous purchases? Had Smith or some of the American subscribers led them to believe one could safely purchase large amounts of the mountain lands? It is evident that the London Board had confidence in Smith. Before Boyle left Tennessee in May 1880, he asked Smith to “act as agent” for the London-based Board, especially in dealing with the Harriman property.⁵⁹⁵ Although Smith and his wife had been at the town site in May, he was not there again until early October. So for the next three months, he wrote Temple frequently about the “Harriman lands.” Writing to Temple in early June, Smith expressed concern lest “delay in a report on titles to F. W. Gerding Louisville, within the time provided for in the Moore contract, might vitiate the contract.”⁵⁹⁶ Smith urged Temple to make a report immediately “on lands accepted” so that deeds could be prepared, and he “as Agent [could] pay for the lands in N.Y.”⁵⁹⁷ However, Smith was obviously determined to make sure that his involvement with the Board would not lead to legal difficulties. He asked Temple whether he could “execute a mortgage for the Board” and questioned whether “any responsibility to myself [is] likely to arise from thus acting as Agent if duly authorized or when authorized? Will such action occasion me any trouble by summons to appear or otherwise after I close my assistant advisory service as at present to the Board? If so, I beg to be advised thereof now in advance for I cannot obligate myself to future complications, inasmuch as I shall probably leave

⁵⁹⁴Thomas Hughes, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 7 January 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁵⁹⁵Franklin W. Smith, Boston, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 3 June 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁵⁹⁶Ibid.

⁵⁹⁷Ibid. Gerding was a New Yorker who had established a colony in Tennessee. The Board purchased 6219 acres of land, at a cost of \$2 per acre, from Gerding. His property was apparently adjacent to the Harriman lands which provided the main portion of the Board’s town site.

the country for awhile next year.”⁵⁹⁸ Three days later Smith raised questions about the reports that Temple, as the Board’s legal counsel, had prepared about the Harriman property. Smith noted that the lands Temple accepted “unqualifiedly” were “more scattered and irregular than I anticipated: but it is very fortunate that the large bodies of those approved-are in 1928 -1929 and 1930-adjacent to Plateau and our roadway to the Cin. Southern.”⁵⁹⁹ In fact, one wonders why Board members had moved ahead with construction of a roadway as well as buildings at the town site before Temple told them which lands they could safely accept.

It is also puzzling that the London Board so willingly accepted Smith’s advice and ideas about the development of a “large compact area from central town sites, by improvement upon a comprehensive plan and under regulations for the common good.”⁶⁰⁰ In their attempt to create a colony the London Board generally followed Smith’s guidance, focusing upon completion of the “Harriman, Riseden & Girding [sic] purchases” in order to have “sufficient lands for all our purposes until we can safely deal with Mr. Cyrus Clarke’s [lands].”⁶⁰¹ However, in spite of the fact that Hughes, Boyle, and Senior were barristers, they took numerous unnecessary risks in order to get this land at the town site. Hughes acknowledged that “if Judge Temple certifies a title *bad* we can have nothing to do with it, but if it is a question only of trouble or delay, or of such trivial compensations for claims not admitted as in the present case, we must accept,

⁵⁹⁸Franklin W. Smith, Boston, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 3 June 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers. In fact, Smith did go to Europe the next year. This letter seems to provide solid evidence that Smith was not really that supportive of what the London Board planned to do. Yes, he had selected the site where the British group placed its colony, but he never invested in the project. As will be explained in Chapter 6, he later claimed that the Board owed him \$742.11 for services rendered in 1881 after the Boston office was closed. However, after Henry Kimber became a major player in the colony’s financial affairs in 1882, he finally convinced the Board to reject Smith’s demands for any additional compensation, based on the Board’s counter-claims against him.

⁵⁹⁹Franklin W. Smith, Boston, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 6 June 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁶⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 4.

⁶⁰¹Thomas Hughes, London, to Franklin W. Smith, Esq., Boston, 18 June 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. The Harriman, Riseden, and Gerding purchases were the town site. The time never came when the Board could “safely deal” with Clarke’s land, and his property was purchased by one of his creditors. This development is explained in more detail in Chapter 6.

complete, and deal with them ourselves.”⁶⁰² That Smith led the London Board to believe that some of the claims were quite trivial is obvious. However, when Smith wrote Temple of the Board’s decision to “take that tract with the risk of the tax title,” he also urged “as you suggest I should think it best, if it can be done, that Mr. Bright, at once and quietly negotiate for that tax title; and that Mr. Henderson should instruct Mr. Schenck to prepare the surveys as with the others.”⁶⁰³ When Temple seemed to have some qualms about the Board’s decision, Smith assured him that the Board was “taking a small risk for larger advantage. Mr. Clarke writes me July 29 that he advises the acceptance.”⁶⁰⁴ Unfortunately, Board members did not question whether Smith and Clarke were providing reliable guidance until after Boyle had purchased or signed contracts to buy vast amounts of land on the Cumberland Plateau.

It is obvious that Thomas Hughes did not play the leadership role in the colonization project that his position as president of the Board of Aid to Land Ownership Limited or the Rugby myth would lead one to imagine. He did not participate in the acquisition of land nor did he provide on-site leadership as the project was getting under way. However, Hughes did play the public relations role that his literary fame and his exuberant personality would lead one to expect. He was a valuable “front man” for the project. His arrival in the United States for his inaugural visit to the colony’s site attracted international attention to the Board’s activity in Tennessee. Hughes had written Smith that after he arrived in New York, he would “go at once to Plateau remaining there until I complete all necessary business.”⁶⁰⁵ Once he arrived in New

⁶⁰²Thomas Hughes, London, to Franklin W. Smith, Esq., Boston, 18 June 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁶⁰³Franklin W. Smith, Newport, Rhode Island, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 5 July 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers. Legal fees and surveyor’s fees added a considerable sum to the original cost of several of the tracts.

⁶⁰⁴Franklin W. Smith, Newport, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 4 August 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers. Writing to Temple in October 1881, Boyle asserted that Clark “saddled us with lands we would not have bought but for reliance on him” and these lands were meant to greatly increase the value of “his own (so-called) lands” (John Boyle, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, 12 October 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers).

⁶⁰⁵Thomas Hughes, London, to Franklin W. Smith, Esq., Boston, 18 June 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

York on August 22, he told newspaper reporters that he had “come to work and not to blarney around.”⁶⁰⁶ However, instead of going at once to Tennessee to see the company’s colonization site, he spent a week in New York, staying at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. He was immediately deluged with letters from a wide variety of persons who had read of his arrival in the newspapers and had learned that he would “be open to engagements to lecture during a part of [his] stay in this country.”⁶⁰⁷ By August 1880, the London Board of Aid was twenty months old. Boyle, the company’s vice-president, had made two trips to the colony, remaining on site for about two months between February and late May 1880. Hughes, the company’s president, had written two prospectuses, and he also may have been the major fund-raiser for the project in England. However, he had never been in the South nor had he ever seen the region where the Board intended to invest about \$60,000 in land and create a colony to further the careers of well-educated young men. It is astonishing that Hughes did not go at *once* to the Cumberland Plateau, and perhaps even more astounding that he did not plan to devote *every minute* of his time in America to the Board’s colonization project. Why did he agree to be involved in the venture if he did not intend to work diligently, perhaps even tirelessly, to assure the success of “his” colony in Tennessee?

⁶⁰⁶Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 222.

⁶⁰⁷Thomas Chase, Haverford College, Pennsylvania, to Thomas Hughes, Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York City, 23 August 1880.

Chapter 6, Thomas Hughes and Rugby, Tennessee, 1880-1887

Although Thomas Hughes served as president of the London Board of Aid to Land Ownership, creating a thriving class-free agricultural community on the Cumberland Plateau was not his top priority. Had it been, he certainly would have visited the colony's site long before he finally did. Once on the Plateau, he would not have been as delighted as he was to discover that the area was an ideal place for the loafer, since the "outer world, its fidgets and its businesses," troubled no one.⁶⁰⁸ Moreover, he would have paid careful attention to a letter from "Mentor" who warned him that his "inexperienced English colony [would] fail on account of the poverty of the soil whereas they would have succeeded if you had been careful to select a good location."⁶⁰⁹ Hughes continued to cherish his romantic dreams of young elite Britons becoming successful farmers in a region where the mountaineers were "poor almost to a man" although "Mentor" had pointed out that "poverty of the soil keeps them poor."⁶¹⁰ If Hughes was Rugby's poster child in the United Kingdom and on the international circuit, he was not Rugby's active developer on the ground. His primary contribution, even in the United States, was envisioning Rugby as an idyllic rural community, but successful colonization required far more than an active imagination. Hughes never seemed to realize that the establishment of colonies, such as Greeley, Colorado and Vineland, New Jersey, required leaders who were patient and persistent planners and workers.

⁶⁰⁸Thomas Hughes, *Vacation Rambles* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1895), 188. In his letter to the *Spectator*, written on 10 September 1880 from Rugby, Tennessee, Hughes stated that "loafing as she should be taken" was to his generation "the one luxury" (187). Having three ample meals each day of his visit to Rugby proved to Hughes that "regular work here must be done by some one," but he was pleased that so many of the young people seemed to have "no object in view beyond enjoying one another's company" (188). Hughes's letters to the *Spectator* from Rugby, Tennessee were republished in this volume along with letters from family vacations and the letters he wrote to his wife Fanny when he was in the United States in 1870.

⁶⁰⁹"Mentor," Cincinnati, to Thomas Hughes, Esq., 7 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Although "Mentor" identified himself as being from "Dayton, Rhea County, Tennessee," the letter was written from Cincinnati. This letter and other correspondence identified in this chapter as being in the Rugby Papers, TSLA, can be viewed on Mf. 39.

⁶¹⁰Thomas Hughes, *Vacation Rambles*, 204; "Mentor" to Thomas Hughes.

Even after he arrived in the United States for a second time on 21 August 1880, he did not go directly to East Tennessee. Although he told newspaper reporters that he had come to “work, not to ‘blarney around’,” he remained in the New York area for nine days.⁶¹¹ Perhaps he was making contacts and raising money for colonization although apparently there were no contributions of American money in late August or early September.⁶¹² However, Hughes did respond at once to the wide variety of letters he began to receive immediately after his arrival was announced in American newspapers.⁶¹³ During his first visit to America a decade earlier, Hughes had been “feted and lionized by his hosts wherever he went.”⁶¹⁴ The letters he received in 1880 proved that he was still held in very high esteem by many Americans who thought of him as the “author of the best book ever written for boys” as well as “in the largest sense a friend of the United States and a true helper of humanity.”⁶¹⁵

⁶¹¹Edward Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 231.

⁶¹²Henry D. Boyle, who served as the on-site Cashier for the Board in 1880, kept careful records of income and expenses. He listed numerous contributions from London, beginning with a deposit of \$5,000 on 20 February 1880. An additional \$23,725 or \$27,725 from London was added between late February and September 30. In one record a deposit in September of \$7,000 was listed as being from London, but in the Board’s bank account records, the same \$7,000 was recorded as \$3,000 from London and a transfer of \$4,000 from the Boston Bank on September 25. Approximately 80% of the funding for the British Board’s colonization project was provided by Thomas and Hastings Hughes, John Boyle, Henry Kimber, and other British subscribers.

⁶¹³Hughes’s handwritten “Ansd” for “Answered” as well as a date appears on many of these letters, making it possible to know precisely when he handled this correspondence.

⁶¹⁴George Worth, *Thomas Hughes*, 80. Hughes’s daughter Caroline believed it was “owing to the fact of my father’s having publicly taken the side of the North in the Civil War that his reception in the United States in 1870 was so particularly warm and hearty” (Thomas Hughes, *Vacation Rambles*, p. 104).

⁶¹⁵Dr. Samuel W. Murphy, Wilmington, Delaware, to Thomas Hughes, 26 August 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA; M. Gusdorf, Ithaca, New York, to Thomas Hughes, Esq., M. P., 13 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Dr. Murphy was principal of the Rugby Academy for Boys in Wilmington. He assured Hughes that the “boys are all familiar with ‘Tom Brown’s Schooldays at Rugby’ and love Mr. Thomas Hughes the author of this charming book.” In spite of Murphy’s high praise of Hughes as “one of old England’s noblest sons” and his warm welcome on behalf of the Rugby Academy boys, Hughes did not accept the invitation to lecture in the “Grand Opera House of our city.” On behalf of the Social Science Club of Cornell University, Mr. Gusdorf invited Hughes to lecture on their campus. Hughes visited Cornell in 1870 and was very enthusiastic about the aims of its founders. He declined their 1880 invitation, noting it was “Impossible. More than I can do already.” The Student Lecture Association of the University of Michigan also invited Hughes to speak on their campus, indicating that his doing so would “afford the many friends of ‘Tom Brown’ at Michigan [such] great gratification” R. A. Renick, Ann Arbor, Michigan, to Thomas Hughes, 29 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Hughes declined their invitation in his response of October 2.

To many Americans Thomas Hughes was the embodiment of Christian manliness so it is not surprising that he was deluged with correspondence from admirers and invitations for speeches. He responded positively to many of these letters, although he declined to travel as far west as Michigan or Minnesota to speak or to give an address on cooperation in three different New Jersey cities. Perhaps it required almost super-human efforts to resist writing immediately to those who thanked him for his Tom Brown books which gave “us American boys that noble example of true unaffected manliness.”⁶¹⁶ Moreover, the invitations to lecture would have been equally hard to resist since they reinforced his conviction that he had something significant to say about a variety of issues. Hughes’s parliamentary career provided substantial evidence of his eagerness to share his thoughts on an amazing array of topics. While he served as an M. P. between 1865 and 1874, he was “no ‘one-speech’ man; every session found him on his feet when debates in progress called for his support or opposition.”⁶¹⁷ A study of Hansard indicates that Hughes supported “cooperative associations, trade arbitration and union, women’s suffrage, sanitary and house-dwelling reforms, public recreation facilities, secularization of the universities, disestablishment of the Irish Church, limitation of Sunday trading, liquor and gambling control, free assembly, weights and measures reform, free public education, and universal suffrage.”⁶¹⁸ As the breadth of his interests revealed, Hughes was a generalist instead of a specialist. However, his allegiance to so many causes and his refusal to yield to political pressure ended his political career in 1874 because his constituents in the radical borough of

⁶¹⁶W. A. Passavant, to Thomas Hughes Esq., Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, 24 August 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Passavant acknowledged that he was an “entire stranger” to Hughes, but assured him that he and other members of the “Reading Club among you are so well known” had the greatest respect for him. He asked Hughes for a “word or two in your own handwriting by way of encouragement.” Hughes’s familiar “Ansd” indicated that he wrote Passavant. (There is no address for Passavant on the letter.)

⁶¹⁷Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” lxxi.

⁶¹⁸Ibid., lxxii.

Frome opposed his support of the Established Church. Since he sorely missed having a parliamentary podium, he must have been gratified to be such a highly sought-after speaker.

Understandably, Hughes could not turn down the request from Haverford College when its president indicated that a “‘talk’ of any kind from the author of Tom Brown” would be an “honor.”⁶¹⁹ The Philadelphia Society for Organizing Charity extended a “cordial welcome to our shores to one who has devoted himself with so much wisdom and fidelity to practical schemes for improving the condition of Working Men” and asked for an address based on his “study and experience in this department of benevolent work.”⁶²⁰ Hughes was assured that his lecture in Philadelphia “would inure to the material benefit of the Working-Men of this the largest manufacturing City of the Continent, the vast majority of whom are natives or sons of natives of Great Britain and thus have a strong claim upon your active interest.”⁶²¹ No wonder Hughes accepted promptly and also spoke at Haverford. His correspondent from Cincinnati, the “wickedest city on the American continent,” sent an equally urgent request that he speak to young men “who have looked upon you from boyhood up as their special advisor and friend.”⁶²² On October third, only two days before the “Opening Day” events at Rugby, Hughes addressed “1,100 members of the Young Men’s Mercantile Library” in Cincinnati.⁶²³

⁶¹⁹Thomas Chase, Haverford College, Pennsylvania, to Thomas Hughes, Esq., New York, 23 August 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Chase told Hughes that the college had “seventy students, mostly from the wealthier class of ‘Friends’ or Quakers.” Hughes’s familiar “Ansd 25/8/1880” indicated that he responded promptly to Chase. He focused on Dr. Thomas Arnold when he spoke informally at Haverford College on October 23. The College honored him with an honorary LL.D.

⁶²⁰Charles D. Kellogg, General Secretary, Philadelphia Society for Organizing Charity, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Thomas Hughes, Esq. M. P., Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York City, 23 August 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁶²¹Ibid.

⁶²²The Reverend Charles W. Wendte, Cincinnati, Ohio, to Thomas Hughes, Esq., 14 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. A letter of invitation had been sent several weeks earlier, and this lengthy letter confirmed Hughes’s plan to lecture in Cincinnati.

⁶²³Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 235.

Other letters illustrate the great diversity of those who wished to have even a short visit with him. Hughes responded immediately to Lyman Abbott of New York's Christian Union, who indicated that the Union wanted to gather "leading educators and others" to meet him in order to promote a "better knowledge and ...acceptance" of the ideas which Hughes espoused. Abbott's reference to Hughes's efforts to "embody" his ideas in a "practical organization" might have indicated an interest in the Tennessee colony.⁶²⁴ A Reverend Mr. Dana of the Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis assured Hughes that he was well-known to many Americans because of his involvement with "English politics and especially through your writings which have been widely read in this country." Although he too invited Hughes to lecture, he noted that many would consider it a "great privilege to meet, and hear from you."⁶²⁵ Hughes did not accept Dana's invitation, even though Dana indicated he was "exceedingly interested in your colonial project in Tennessee."⁶²⁶ He did welcome the offer of John Wesley Harper, Jr., of *Harper's Weekly* to publicize his "visit to Tennessee."⁶²⁷ Among other interesting letters of welcome was an invitation from Julia Ward Howe. She offered to entertain Hughes and his friends for luncheon or tea although she could offer these refreshments "very modestly."⁶²⁸

⁶²⁴Lyman Abbott, The Christian Union, New York, to Thomas Hughes Esq., New York, 23 August 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. There is no indication which of Hughes's numerous "causes" the organization supported. Hughes's familiar "Ansd 23 A" proved that he valued Abbott's invitation for he answered the letter very soon after it was written and hand delivered.

⁶²⁵M. M. G. Dana, St. Paul, Minnesota, to Thomas Hughes, 1 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁶²⁶Ibid. Dana told Hughes that the citizens of Minnesota wanted to encourage a "desirable class of British emigrants" to settle in their state. Hughes also declined the invitation he received from the "Father and Mothers in West Medford, Massachusetts, who wanted him to speak to their children who had "set their hearts" on having some time with him (A. M. Bennett, West Medford, Massachusetts, to Thomas Hughes, Esqr., 3 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA).

⁶²⁷J. W. Harper, Jr., New York, to Thomas Hughes Esq., Q. C., etc., etc., etc., New York, 24 August 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Harper told Hughes that he would send an artist to accompany him to Tennessee if he wished. *Harper's Weekly* provided lavish publicity for the American Rugby in four lengthy articles which appeared in September, October, and November 1880.

⁶²⁸Julia Ward Howe, Newport, Rhode Island, to Thomas Hughes, New York, 25 August 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Hughes "answered 8/27" according to his handwritten note although there is no evidence that he

After almost ten days in the United States, Hughes made his inaugural visit to the South and to the Board's colonization site on September 1. He recorded his first impressions of the region in several articles, published in the *Spectator* shortly after they were written, and then included in Hughes's book about Rugby in 1881.⁶²⁹ These essays are the work of a casual traveler who was both delighted with and intrigued by what he found in an area distinctly different from anything he had previously encountered. His first piece concentrated on the nine-hour train ride on the Cincinnati Southern Railway from Cincinnati to the railway station nearest Rugby, at Sedgemoor, some seven miles from the colony's site. He marveled at the engineering feats which put the settlement-to-be in "direct communication with every important seaport from Boston to New Orleans" and with all major inland cities.⁶³⁰ Hughes was thrilled when a party of elite Brits from the best "public" schools, including the Board's geologist, C. H. Wilson, a "mighty Etonian and Cantab, in brains as well as bulk," met him at the Sedgemoor station.⁶³¹ Hughes confessed that although he knew all these young men "in ordinary life," he did not "for the first moment" recognize them in their battered felt hats and very casual clothes.⁶³² However, he considered their "free and easy" attire completely appropriate and very refreshing.⁶³³

visited Howe. She also invited Hughes to attend a meeting of the Town and Country Club and suggested that he plan a trip to Boston to participate in the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The Woman Suffrage Association of Boston, of which Howe was a member, invited Hughes to lecture on his "Tennessee enterprise" (John C. Haynes, Boston, to Thomas Hughes, Esq., Robbins, Scott County, Tennessee, 27 September 1880). The group offered one hundred dollars compensation. Hughes's hand-written "Impossible" indicated that he declined to speak to this organization.

⁶²⁹Hughes had begun to write travel articles for the *Spectator* in the early 1860s as a way of financing family excursions to various European countries. He signed these essays, "*Vacuus Viator*," alluding to a line from Juvenal which stated that the impecunious traveler could whistle at the highwayman. His daughter Caroline later collected these early essays, along with letters written to his wife Fanny in 1870 and the eight pieces he wrote from America in 1880, and published the work as *Vacation Rambles* in 1895.

⁶³⁰Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee: Being Some Account of the Settlement Founded on the Cumberland Plateau by the Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, a Company Incorporated in England, and Authorised to Hold and Deal in Land by Act of the Legislature of the State of Tennessee, with a Report on the Soils of the Plateau by the Hon. F. W. Killebrew, A. M. Ph.D., Commissioner of Agriculture for the State* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1881), 39.

⁶³¹*Ibid.*, 41; *Vacation Rambles*, 184.

⁶³²*Ibid.*, 40; *Vacation Rambles*, 184.

⁶³³*Ibid.*, 46; *Vacation Rambles*, 184.

Riding on horseback over the seven miles to the settlement with this group, “all public schoolmen, I think, another Etonian (in addition to the geologist who rode on ahead), two from Rugby, one Harrow, one Wellington,” Hughes arrived at the “city of the future.”⁶³⁴ He was amazed by the quantity and quality of food he was served at an “excellent tea,” before being assigned to one of two bedrooms in a small guesthouse, the only accommodation since the hotel was not yet finished.⁶³⁵ Writing his piece for the *Spectator* while resting on the veranda of the rustic house, Hughes observed that the “katydids are making delightful music in the trees, and the summer lightning is playing over the Western heaven.”⁶³⁶ To complete this enjoyable experience, a cool breeze was occasionally lifting the corners of his stationery, making him think of the colonization site as an “enchanted solitude.”⁶³⁷

His subsequent *Spectator* essays were also the work of a travel writer who aimed to thoroughly enjoy exploring a new region of the world. He was delighted with the “indescribable depth of blue atmosphere which laps all around us,” and found it “uplifting” to find the “sky twice as far off as [we] know it at home.”⁶³⁸ There is no indication that he asked serious questions about anything he encountered. One of the major, and most enjoyable, curiosities was the food that he described at great length, having expected to exist on rather Spartan fare until he returned to the major cities. After a substantial breakfast on his first full day on the Plateau, there was a “muster of cavalry,” and the young Brits left on a camping trip to explore areas west of the town site.⁶³⁹ Hughes then joined Amos Hill, the Board’s forester and chief gardener, to

⁶³⁴Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 41; *Vacation Rambles*, 185. Hughes noted that the town had already been “laid out.”

⁶³⁵Ibid. Hughes indicated the meal pattern was “breakfast at 6:15 a.m., with dinner at twelve, and tea at six” (45).

⁶³⁶Ibid., 43; *Vacation Rambles*, 186.

⁶³⁷Ibid.

⁶³⁸Thomas Hughes, *Vacation Rambles*, 188. This letter, entitled “The Luxury of Loafing,” is not included in his *Rugby, Tennessee*.

⁶³⁹Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 46; *Vacation Rambles*, 192. At least two of these young Brits, Henry D. Boyle and C. H. Wilson, were Board employees. Osmond Dakeyne, an Oxford graduate, was also receiving some

view the “English Garden” which he considered the “most advanced, most important and interesting feature of the settlement.”⁶⁴⁰ Although Hill had planted the garden he labeled a “failure” only four months earlier, it now contained large quantities of watermelons, cantaloupes, “huge bunches” of tomatoes, “Lima beans yielding at the rate of two hundred and fifty bushels per acre, cabbages, sweet potatoes, beets, and squash.”⁶⁴¹ Had Hughes known more about agriculture, he might have been alarmed that there was no other “cultivated spot for many miles, except small patches here and there of carelessly sown maize and millet, and a rood or two of sweet potatoes.”⁶⁴² The “prodigal abundance” Hughes found in Hill’s garden persuaded him that the “prospect of making a good living is beyond all question, for anyone who will set to work with a will.”⁶⁴³

It is both stunning and disturbing that Hughes would quickly jump to this erroneous conclusion. One of sixteen children of a Warwickshire laborer, Hill had been working since childhood, beginning with a series of “odd jobs” before moving on to the “garden, the stable, and the keepers” on Lord Denbeigh’s estate.⁶⁴⁴ Since immigrating to the United States almost thirty years earlier, he had worked as a gardener in New York and New Jersey before he and his family moved to Michigan where he farmed. After enlisting in the Union cavalry, and serving with 60,000 others in East Tennessee, he migrated to the Cumberland Plateau where he had farmed for eight years before he became a Board of Aid employee. How could Hughes assume that classically-educated young Englishmen who had never done any kind of manual labor, much less farmed, could quickly duplicate Hill’s professional agricultural achievements? There is no

funds from the Board. Dakeyne established and edited *The Rugbeian*, which became a weekly newspaper in the summer of 1881. The records are not explicit about which other young Englishmen were at the colonization site by September 1.

⁶⁴⁰Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 48; *Vacation Rambles*, 194.

⁶⁴¹*Ibid.*, 49; *Vacation Rambles* 195.

⁶⁴²*Ibid.*, 48; *Vacation Rambles*, 195.

⁶⁴³*Ibid.*, 49; *Vacation Rambles*, 195.

⁶⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 70.

evidence that Hughes had the slightest doubts about how readily the complete novice might become a successful farmer on the Cumberland Plateau. When Hughes made the nine-mile ride from the town site to Hill's farm a few days later, he saw only "two small farms" which he labeled "ramshackle," and yet he seemed unaware that the region's "beautiful open forest land" might challenge the skills of even the most experienced farmer, much less young men who had never farmed.⁶⁴⁵

Hughes was struck by the poverty of the natives whom he found "poor almost to a man."⁶⁴⁶ Although stories he had heard about the mountaineers led him to conclude that those living near the Board's land were better "specimens of the 'poor whites' of the South," he noted that almost all these people were "content to live from hand to mouth," and he labeled the women "dreadful slatterns."⁶⁴⁷ After finding within a ten-mile radius only six houses in any way equal to those of good English farmers, Hughes still did not question whether or not one could make money in agriculture on the Cumberland Plateau. When he visited the farm of a fifty-five-year-old neighbor, who had managed to clear fifty acres in twenty years, where he grew corn, millet, and vegetables, Hughes noted that "we should call his farming very slovenly."⁶⁴⁸ Apparently, he, like Professor Louis Harper, who reported on the soils of the region in 1867, attributed the mountaineers' low standard of living to their own careless and inefficient farming.⁶⁴⁹ Hughes seemed to assume that if the native farmers were not prosperous, it was

⁶⁴⁵Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 69 and 48.

⁶⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 62; *Vacation Rambles*, 204.

⁶⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 61, 63, and 65, and *Vacation Rambles*, 204, 205, and 207.

⁶⁴⁸*Ibid.*, 62; *Vacation Rambles*, 205. In spite of his criticism of this farmer, he gave an elaborate description of the delicious meal he was served by this native's dutiful wife who had prepared "white chicken and hot bread, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and preserves."

⁶⁴⁹Dr. Harper's report on the soils of the Cumberland Plateau was printed in its entirety in two of the British Board's 1880 publications. Harper was identified as the "Principal Geologist of Mississippi, and Professor of Geology and Agriculture in the University of Mississippi" in the second prospectus issued in London in June (*Aid to Land Ownership, Industrial Settlement on the Cumberland Highlands of Tennessee*, 9). In the Board's Bulletin No. 4, published in Boston in June, Harper was identified as the "Geologist and Agricultural Commissioner of

obviously because they had not “set to work with a will.”⁶⁵⁰ A decade earlier during his first voyage to America, Hughes had spent a little time with the passengers in steerage, whom he judged to be a “fine steady respectable class of poor,” living the “truest and deepest life, because the simplest, [that] lies amongst those who have little of the things of this world lying between them and their Father.”⁶⁵¹ He did not have the same positive feelings about the lifestyle of the poor mountaineers. Perhaps the former was merely a romantic illusion, the latter, a harsh reality.

After his careful inspection of the “English Garden,” Hughes briefly visited the hotel which was still a work in progress. In his *Spectator* essay he described the “sightly building, with deep verandahs, prettily latticed, from which one gets glimpses through the trees of magnificent ranges of blue, forest-covered mountains.”⁶⁵² Hughes announced the hotel was to be named the “Tabard,” a name suggested by an American supporter of the Board’s work who had purchased several bannisters from London’s historic Tabard, the “old Southwark hostelry” from which Chaucer’s pilgrims departed for Canterbury.⁶⁵³ He also predicted that “in spite of the absence of *alcoholic drinks*,” the hotel would have “every chance, if present indications can be trusted, of harboring and sending out as cheery pilgrims as followed the Miller and the Host, and told their world-famous stories 500 years ago.”⁶⁵⁴

Mississippi.” Harper’s report was no doubt prepared at the request of Hermann Bokum who became Tennessee’s first commissioner of immigration in 1867. Harper criticized the natives for being careless farmers. However, he stated that they were “industrious.” Hughes did not share Harper’s high opinion of the work ethic of the local people; he stated that the natives were very unreliable as laborers and too prone to quit work completely in order to go hunting after earning even a small amount of money. (See Chapter 5, pages 10-11).

⁶⁵⁰Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 49.

⁶⁵¹Thomas Hughes, *Vacation Rambles*, 107.

⁶⁵²*Ibid.*, 195. The hotel had twenty-four rooms and could lodge up to fifty guests.

⁶⁵³This supporter was Dr. C. P. Agnew who became a shareholder in the company and purchased property from the Board. No doubt, Dr. Agnew brought the bannisters to be added to Rugby’s “Tabard” when he accompanied Hughes to the colony’s site in September 1880.

⁶⁵⁴Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 49, (emphasis in the original); *Vacation Rambles*, 195-196. Hughes recounted the problems that developed when “two young natives toted over some barrels of whiskey.” Most of the workers got drunk and gambled for two days, an unpleasant episode which had “decided the question for us. If we are to have influence with the poor whites and blacks, we must be above suspicion ourselves so no liquor will be

On the evening of his first day on the colonization site, Hughes was “hailed by one of the boys in flannels” on his way to the lawn tennis courts on which four young Englishmen had worked for six weeks.⁶⁵⁵ Hughes watched two sets of tennis “played in a style which would have done credit to a county match.”⁶⁵⁶ As Hughes and the young athletes returned in the “twilight from the tennis-ground,” they “adopted unanimously” the name “Rugby” for their town-to-be.⁶⁵⁷ Hughes was delighted that the Etonians were “still far away in the forest. Had they been present, Thames might have prevailed over Avon,” and the colony might have been named “Eton.”⁶⁵⁸ Had this been the case, would Thomas Hughes be so prominently connected with the colony in the public mind? Or did his widespread literary fame insure that he would be labeled as the colony’s “founder” regardless of what he did or did not do to bring the colony into being?

Having spent only one full day at the town site, Hughes left early on the second day for an overnight excursion to two nearby “tourist attractions,” an exceptionally large cave and a notable waterfall. The colony’s on-site manager Cyrus Clarke and a “valuable guest from New York, a doctor who served on the Sanitary Commission through the war,” accompanied Hughes on the lengthy ride to these natural wonders and the farmhouse where they were to dine and

provided at the Tabard.” Smith had firmly recommended banning alcohol from the colony based on the successful temperance policies of the founders of Greeley, Colorado, and Vineland, New Jersey.

⁶⁵⁵Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 52; *Vacation Rambles*, 197.

⁶⁵⁶Ibid. The tennis rackets had only just arrived from London; Hughes was obviously delighted to witness the first match on these courts although he noted there was not much “turf.” The Plateau Lawn Tennis Club was organized on 24 July 1880, making it the colony’s first organization of any sort. Hughes noted that the Club had seven members, five English and two native, in September 1880. Henry D. Boyle, the colony’s cashier, was its captain, and Osmond Dakeyne, editor of *The Rugbeian*, was its secretary. In October 1881 club members traveled to Cincinnati for games with members of that city’s Lawn Tennis Club. This meeting ended in a draw with each team winning three matches.

⁶⁵⁷Ibid., 53; *Vacation Rambles*, 198. In 1879 Franklin W. Smith had given the name “Plateau” to the town-to-be. Hughes wrote Smith in June 1880 that the London Board rejected this name because it was “neither good English or good Yankee.” However, he assured Smith that “nothing will be done as to nomenclature without full consultation with you” (Thomas Hughes, London, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 18 June 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA). Obviously Hughes had no reservations about adopting the name “Rugby” for the colony’s first town without consulting Smith. On September 4, the tennis group officially became the “Rugby Lawn Tennis Club.”

⁶⁵⁸Ibid.

spend the night.⁶⁵⁹ Although this seventeen mile journey took more than three hours because of the poor condition of the country roads, Hughes seemed not to regret spending this much time as a tourist rather than as a hard-working colonizer. What he did regret was his “ignorance of botany,” for he saw fourteen flowers in bloom but could name only three or four.⁶⁶⁰ Hughes seldom referred to what local inhabitants were doing to make a living. None of these letters recording his first impressions of the area probe beneath the surface for deeper insights into local life. His essays contained the observations of a carefree tourist to whom the region was a “fairyland” rather than the concerns of a tenacious colonizer to whom the region was a challenging *terra incognita*.⁶⁶¹ If Hughes devoted any of his time before the “Opening Day,” scheduled for October 5, to the detailed work of establishing a colony, he never mentioned it in these essays.

Early in his visit Hughes briefly considered whether his visions of “splendid crops and simple life” could or would be realized in the colony.⁶⁶² Musing about what the colony might mean to young Englishmen, he recalled some lines from his dear friend, fellow Christian Socialist, and fellow author, the Anglican clergyman Charles Kingsley. He thought about “when all the world is young, lad, and all the trees are green, and every goose a swan, lad, and every lass a queen” and briefly seemed to realize that his visions might be geese rather than swans.⁶⁶³ This moment of doubt did not lead him to think seriously about what he needed to do to turn his visions into reality.

⁶⁵⁹Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 55; *Vacation Rambles*, 199. This physician was Dr. Agnew.

⁶⁶⁰*Ibid.*; *Vacation Rambles*, 200. Once again he included an elaborate description of the dinner he and his companions were served as guests of this local family. He never mentioned how much they paid for their board and lodging.

⁶⁶¹*Ibid.*, 46; *Vacation Rambles*, 200.

⁶⁶²*Ibid.*; *Vacation Rambles*, 193.

⁶⁶³*Ibid.*; *Vacation Rambles*, 193.

Nor did the most important letter he received during his time in the United States. Within a few days of his arrival at the colonization site, Hughes was warned that he was making a “great mistake” by an anonymous correspondent, “Mentor,” writing from Cincinnati on September 7.⁶⁶⁴ Aware that Hughes expected to “make a prosperous colony” on the Plateau, “Mentor” declared this to be impossible because of the poor quality of the land. The writer emphasized “you could not get half of the money you paid for it if you tried to sell it today” and tried to help Hughes understand the connection between the quality of the soil and the living standard of its residents. He identified the mountaineers as the “poorest and least educated” people in the United States and indicated that the “poverty of the soil keeps them poor.” Moreover, citing the prosperity of those living where the “soil is good,” he stated his firm belief that the “quality of the soil having been given, you can deduce the wealth and refinement of the people.”⁶⁶⁵ “Mentor” also noted that the presence of the Cincinnati Southern Railway did not in and of itself make the land more valuable. He assured Hughes that one could not say simply that “transportation is what was needed. I know now of lands in Kentucky...that are worth less than when the railroad was constructed, whereas good soils were settled up before the railroads were built.” This correspondent predicted the “inexperienced English colony will fail on account of the poverty of the soil, whereas they would have succeeded if you had been careful to have selected a good location.” “Mentor” assured Hughes that he wrote “out of kindness” because he considered Hughes’s “effort a noble one.” By the time Hughes received this letter, he was well

⁶⁶⁴“Mentor,” Dayton, Rhea County, Tennessee, to Thomas Hughes Esq., 7 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. All quotations in this paragraph are from this letter. By the time Hughes received this letter, the Board of Aid had purchased almost 31,000 acres of land in rural East Tennessee. Property sales had not begun. Even if Hughes sincerely believed that the “English Garden” proved that one could make a “good living” in the area, he should have been troubled by his anonymous correspondent’s assertion that the Board owned thousands of acres of less than ideal land.

⁶⁶⁵My paternal grandmother would have agreed with “Mentor” about the relationship between the land and its inhabitants. She always said, “As the land, so goes the people.” Having been reared on a farm, she married into a family with extensive agricultural interests so she could speak from years of personal experience. She would never have attempted to establish an agricultural colony on land which just “holds the world together.”

aware of the poverty of Rugby's native neighbors. However, there is no evidence that his personal observations or his correspondent's statements influenced his optimism about the colony's future.

Hughes's high expectations for the American Rugby would have been reinforced in September by the warm reception and widespread publicity that accompanied the colony's establishment. City and state officials gathered in Chattanooga on September 16 to celebrate "Tom Brown' at Chattanooga, Tennessee."⁶⁶⁶ Praised by the city's mayor as "one of the greatest philanthropists, and one of the first men of the world," Hughes expressed great satisfaction over the colony's Southern location.⁶⁶⁷ He rejoiced that the "experiment" was being tried in the South since he had "for fifteen years felt it to be the duty of every man that speaks the English language to try to heal up the breaches in this country."⁶⁶⁸ Hughes assured his hosts that the colony's founders were most hopeful that "all the success that has been prophesied for our colony will be achieved in the future, by the exercise of that national character for which

⁶⁶⁶"Tom Brown at Chattanooga, Tennessee" is the title of the ten-page program which provides details about this event. The program is preserved in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Thomas Hughes and his fellow Board of Aid member W. N. Senior, as well as Board employees Henry D. Boyle and C. H. Wilson, were the English guests at the banquet given to honor "Thomas Hughes, Esq., Q. C., author of Tom Brown at Rugby and at Oxford and Founder of the English Colony of Rugby, Tennessee." Tennessee's governor A. S. Marks and its Emigration Commissioner Colonel J. B. Killebrew joined Chattanooga's mayor and thirty prominent men to welcome these distinguished visitors. City officials sent a special train to transport Hughes and his party to and from Chattanooga.

⁶⁶⁷"Tom Brown at Chattanooga, Tennessee." While Tennessee was, and is, considered a southern state, Hughes well knew that East Tennessee was "strongly pro-Unionist and Republican" (Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, p. 67). Several prominent Memphians had invited Hughes to visit their city during the "Memphis Excursion," a celebration of the "blessings of health, abundant crops, and remunerative labor for all citizens" (I. N. Snowdon, Memphis, to Hon. Thomas Hughes, M. P., Cincinnati, Ohio, 11 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA). These men promised they would not try to convince Hughes that "our West Tennessee lands are superior to those you have selected...[or that] our people are more friendly and sociable than those whom you have favored by your intended settlement." (As a native West Tennessean, I know these Memphians were correct.) Hughes never visited West or Middle Tennessee and traveled no farther south than Chattanooga.

⁶⁶⁸*Ibid.* Hughes closely followed events during the tragic American War Between the States, and although a strong supporter of the Union, had great respect for Southern forces whose "gallantry" he praised although he believed they fought for a "bad cause" (Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 67). He eagerly visited battle sites near Chattanooga, judging these conflicts to be more important to world history than clashes at Thermopylae and at Tours.

England is renowned.”⁶⁶⁹ Also in mid-September John Wesley Harper dispatched some of his staff to East Tennessee, and *Harper’s Weekly* ran an article, entitled “Tom Brown in Tennessee,” further cementing the connection between Hughes and the colony in the public mind.⁶⁷⁰

Describing the venture as a “new land enterprise at the West,” the piece stated that a “town has been laid out and a hotel built...There has been a liberal reserve, for recreation, of parks, cricket grounds, and gardens.”⁶⁷¹ While the writer correctly noted that the colonizers aimed for the settlement to be “distinctively Christian,” he erroneously asserted that the London Board had a capital of 150,000 pounds.⁶⁷²

The long-awaited “Opening Day” finally arrived on October 5, although a huge downpour the day before made Hughes uneasy about what visitors to the colony would encounter. Although he thought it was not essential for the “Opening Day” to produce property sales, Hughes did believe that the “character and reputation of the settlement [would] be determined, in great measure for the present,” by what visitors experienced that day.⁶⁷³ He had first suggested holding a “public inaugural on September 1 at the town site” but all was postponed until early October because of delays in construction of the hotel and the roadway to the Sedgemoor station.⁶⁷⁴ Hughes insisted that a worship service be the heart of the dedication

⁶⁶⁹“Tom Brown at Chattanooga, Tennessee”

⁶⁷⁰“‘Tom Brown’ in Tennessee,” *Harper’s Weekly*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1238, 18 September 1880, 595. Thomas Hughes was in Cincinnati when the *Harper’s* staff arrived. He had gone to Cincinnati to speak on September 11 during the inaugural events of the Cincinnati Exposition. His son Jem visited Rugby while he was away, returning in early October for the “Opening Day” events.

⁶⁷¹“‘Tom Brown’ in Tennessee”

⁶⁷²*Ibid.* Since the London Board had raised about \$70,000 by this time (about 15,000 pounds), the *Harper’s* statement was an enormous exaggeration of the Board’s financial resources. Ernie Trory was even more inaccurate in his assertion that after the “merging of the American and English groups to form the Board of Aid to Land Ownership,” there was an “injection of 150,000 pounds of English capital” (Ernie Trory, *Truth Against the World*: 202). About \$25,000 of the \$70,000 total had come from American investors.

⁶⁷³Thomas Hughes, London, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 22 June 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁶⁷⁴Thomas Hughes, London, to Henry D. Boyle, Plateau, Tennessee, 20 May 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. He wrote Boyle that he did not expect the site to be ready any earlier than September 1 although he stated he would “come at once if that is better, let the matter be weighed.” John Boyle made two trips to Tennessee in the first five months of 1880. Obviously Hughes did not plan to make two trips to America in 1880.

day, so the Right Reverend Charles Todd Quintard, Episcopal Bishop of Tennessee, began a brief worship service promptly at 11 a.m. As Hughes had requested, the readings consisted of two psalms, including “Except the Lord shall build the house” [and] the chapter of Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the Temple” from the Book of Kings.⁶⁷⁵ Hughes and other English visitors and colonists then participated in Holy Communion.

But no one doubted that Hughes himself would be the featured “attraction” of the day. Indeed Hughes’s many English and American friends and fans were interested in the Board of Aid’s colony only because it was being established by “Tom Brown.” Almost every letter he received and every article about the colony made some reference to his famous novel about his Rugby School years. In the “Address of the President,” Hughes aimed to explain the “intentions of the founders of the colony.”⁶⁷⁶ Especially Hughes tried to correct the “one-sided and English view” of the settlement that the newspapers had publicized, indicating that the colony was meant to be exclusively English.⁶⁷⁷ Indeed, Hughes was quick to announce the settlement open to “all who like our principles and our ways, and care to come here to make homes for themselves.”⁶⁷⁸

Hughes knew that his “Opening Day” statements about the colony would be widely publicized. Indeed his literary fame and his public-speaking skills were perhaps the very reasons he had been chosen as president of the Board of Aid. However, he wanted to assure his audience that he and others on the British Board had thought seriously about their venture, asking themselves “What is the idea we are to try to realize?”⁶⁷⁹ Hughes emphasized that the Board aimed to “establish a *community*. What does that imply? This much, at any rate, that we should

⁶⁷⁵Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 91.

⁶⁷⁶Charles Todd Quintard, Sewanee, Tennessee, to Thomas Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 24 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁶⁷⁷Following advice he received from Albert M. Knight, the Board’s Boston secretary and agent. Albert M. Knight, Boston, to W. Hastings Hughes Esq., Robbins Station, Tennessee, 28 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁶⁷⁸Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 92.

⁶⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 94.

all have *something* in common; that we should recognise *some* bond which binds us all together, and endeavor, each and all of us, to keep this in view and strengthen it in all ways.”⁶⁸⁰ Before he identified several commonalities colonists would share, he quickly assured his audience that “we have no sympathy whatever with the state communism of Europe, represented by Lasalle [*sic*] and Karl Marx, and on this continent by very inferior, and even more violent and anarchic persons.”⁶⁸¹

Emphasizing that “we have no vision whatever to realize of a paternal state,” Hughes then began to enumerate what colonists would share.⁶⁸² He first named “this lovely corner of God’s earth which has been intrusted to us” and we should “treat it lovingly and reverently.”⁶⁸³ The Board wanted the growth of the town to be guided by a concern for the “common good, and with care that neither convenience nor beauty is neglected.”⁶⁸⁴ Although Hughes expected both public buildings and private houses to be “simple and even rough in materials and construction,” he emphasized that they were also to be “slightly and good in form and proportion.”⁶⁸⁵ One of these public buildings, provided by the Board, was to be a “church, in which the experiment will be tried whether the members of different Christian denominations [can] agree well enough to use one building for their several acts of worship.”⁶⁸⁶ Hughes expressed a personal fondness for the services of the Church of England, especially the “meaning and beauty, and value of common prayers,” but he was quick to emphasize that freedom of worship would be respected in

⁶⁸⁰Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 95. (Emphasis in the original).

⁶⁸¹*Ibid.* Hughes emphasized that the Board was quite “content with the laws relating to private property and family life as we find them.”

⁶⁸²*Ibid.*

⁶⁸³*Ibid.*, 96 and 97.

⁶⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 97.

⁶⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 99.

⁶⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 104.

Rugby.⁶⁸⁷ He apparently believed that using the same building for religious activities would lead to the development of a common bond in the spiritual life of the settlement.

Hughes said almost nothing about how the colony's economic opportunities might "establish and keep alive the corporate feeling, which is the main strength of all healthy communities."⁶⁸⁸ It is highly improbable that Hughes understood what the Board could have done or should have done to help colonists make a living. However, he knew the settlers would have a "number of imperative wants which must be provided for and satisfied day by day. We want food, clothes, furniture, and a great variety of things besides, which our nurture and culture have made all but essential to us."⁶⁸⁹ Dwelling on a subject he considered of great importance, he announced that a consumers' cooperative would be formed. This commissary was to be the local "center of supply" with ownership vested in "every settler, or at any rate, every householder" with membership available in "small shares of five dollars each."⁶⁹⁰ Because the region was considered ideal for "raising and pasturing cattle," the Board meant to establish a "common herd managed by a committee elected by the shareholders."⁶⁹¹ Since the Board's publications had insisted that investing in its colonization project would be profitable, it is interesting that Hughes denounced those "prospectuses and pamphlets [containing] figures and statements showing the rapidity with which enormous gain will be made."⁶⁹² He lamented that other colonies were "being, as a rule, dwarfed and demoralized by hurrying forward in pursuit of gain" and condemned the "feverish activity of mercantile speculation which is the great danger

⁶⁸⁷Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 104.

⁶⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 106.

⁶⁸⁹*Ibid.*, 100.

⁶⁹⁰*Ibid.*

⁶⁹¹Hughes's announcement that the "common herd" would be managed by a committee revealed how little he knew about raising cattle. This project was never even attempted.

⁶⁹²*Ibid.*, 106.

and, to my mind, the great disgrace of our time.”⁶⁹³ Hughes then boldly stated that Board members would make no predictions about how profitable their venture would be although they believed their property had been “well bought, and that those who settle here and buy from us will get good value for their money, and will find it as easy as ...it should be to make a living here.”⁶⁹⁴ Obviously his remarks about the settlement’s financial success were directed to potential colonists rather than to those investing only their money in the venture.

Obviously, the economic life of the colony was less important to Hughes than the creation of an environment in which “healthy, brave, modest, and true men and women” might thrive.⁶⁹⁵ He, therefore, concluded his public remarks with an assurance that the Board’s “aim and our hope are to plant on these highlands a community of gentlemen and ladies” who would contrast favorably with the “artificial class which goes by those grand names both in Europe and here.”⁶⁹⁶

Hughes’s “Opening Day Address” did not explain how the Board of Aid would make Rugby an economically viable venture. However, it is highly probable that Hughes’s audience of distinguished officials, interested supporters, new settlers, and the “fringe of white and black natives [who] regarded the proceedings with grave attention” were so impressed by his engaging presence that they did not notice the omission.⁶⁹⁷ Others certainly evaluated his presentation positively. After reading the address, Whitelaw Reid, editor of the *New York Tribune*, praised

⁶⁹³Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 106.

⁶⁹⁴Ibid. Hughes’s statement seems proof that he completely ignored the advice he received from “Mentor.”

⁶⁹⁵Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 106.

⁶⁹⁶Ibid. In *The English Gentleman*, a small, highly entertaining work, combining satire and reality, Douglas Sutherland wrote, “It has always been assumed that the most desirable position in the world is to be accepted as a lady or a gentleman. It was assumed by many from Jane Austen to Daphne du Maurier that it is the surest way to happiness and possibly even to eternal salvation” (Cornwall: Debrett’s Peerage Ltd., 1978), n.p. It is precisely the use of the terms “ladies” and “gentlemen” to identify social position rather than Christian lifestyle which Hughes stringently opposed.

⁶⁹⁷Thomas Hughes, *Vacation Rambles*, 226. One wonders how Bishop Quintard responded to Hughes’s “Opening Day” address. If he expected Hughes to be specific about how classically educated young Britons were to become prosperous East Tennessee colonists, he was no doubt disappointed by what he heard on October 5.

the “admirable little speech.”⁶⁹⁸ He assured Hughes that even though his talk “suffered a little at the hands of the telegraph operators... it shone as a beautiful piece of work.”⁶⁹⁹ Perhaps those hearing as well as those reading the address were convinced of the colony’s prospects for success because of Hughes’s participation in the venture and what seemed to be the Board’s careful planning. Certainly, this is the impression conveyed to the authors of the first biography of Hughes, who stated that the “colony was to be a community, tightly organised to prevent the evils of modern competitive society.”⁷⁰⁰ Hughes had emphasized that the colony’s sponsors were doing their “best to organize our infant community on such lines and principles as our own experience and observation, and the study of the efforts of those who have gone before us, seem to point out as the right and true ones?”⁷⁰¹ Had not the Board’s first publication, as well as subsequent publications, referred to the successes of the Canada Company and of those establishing the “settlements of Greeley in Colorado and of Vineland in New Jersey” as appropriate precedents for what the Board of Aid intended to achieve?⁷⁰² Unfortunately, Rugby’s founders had no personal experience of colonization. They never understood the importance of the enormously detailed planning that colonizers, like Greeley’s Nathan Meeker and Vineland’s Charles Landis had made a top priority. Board members never acknowledged that successful colonization required sustained hard work to turn a vision of the colony’s future into reality. Moreover, Rugby’s founding fathers had not forged and embraced a coherent vision for the colony.

⁶⁹⁸Whitelaw Reid, New York, to Thomas Hughes, Esq. Q.C., Rugby, Tennessee, 11 October 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁶⁹⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰⁰Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 228.

⁷⁰¹Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 94.

⁷⁰²*Aid to Ownership of Land*, 3.

Thomas Hughes envisioned the American Rugby as being an idyllic rural community in which classically-educated graduates of England's prestigious public schools could have the satisfaction of earning a living with their own hands. Hughes was certain that American agriculture offered the ideal career for the "vast surplus over home needs of boys and young men" filled with the public school spirit which he so much valued.⁷⁰³ No other economic activity would offer each youth the opportunity to be "so thoroughly master of his own life, free to build it up after his own ideal---none in which the characteristics of his training---hardiness, reticence, independence, scrupulousness in money matters, will stand him in better stead, or have so free a field for development."⁷⁰⁴ Moreover, much more important than providing economic opportunities was the colony's ability to promote "healthy, hopeful, reverent---in one word, godly," lives.⁷⁰⁵

Perhaps other principals in the colonization project did not share Hughes's unrealistic vision for Rugby that ignored the mismatch between poor land and the young gentlemen's lack of relevant experience and skills. However, his fellow barrister and fellow Board member, John Boyle, was no more practical than he about the Plateau's potential. Although Boyle made his first visit to the region in November 1878, when the growing season was coming to a close, he immediately judged the soil to be "easily cultivated, appearing to yield readily to the hand of man."⁷⁰⁶ He saw "very fine corn, potatoes (of both sorts), apples, cabbages, tobacco, and other produce" and concluded that it was not "laborious cultivation which had been used, but the very

⁷⁰³Thomas Hughes, "An Address delivered in Big School, Rugby, at the Request of Dr. Jex Blake," in *Rugby, Tennessee*, 108.

⁷⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 109.

⁷⁰⁵Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 92.

⁷⁰⁶John Boyle, "Letter of John Boyle, Esq., Barrister-at-Law, 63 Chancery Lane, London, E.C., to the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership in Relation to His Visit to the Tennessee Estate" (Boston: Board of Aid to Land Ownership, 1878), 5.

slightest and least artificial.”⁷⁰⁷ He was also extremely impressed by the area’s abundant natural resources, especially the “extent, variety, and great value of the timber” as well as the “ores of iron and the seams of coal.”⁷⁰⁸ Writing to members of the Boston Board of Aid, he praised their “sound scheme for peopling those lovely and lonely woodlands and the romantic canyons” and predicted they would achieve “noble results in busy factories, thriving homesteads, and healthy town centres, [which were] destined to arise and yield bread and happiness.”⁷⁰⁹ Boyle seemed to think there was a certain magic to the colonization process. His predictions about the future of Smith’s colonization scheme must have been founded on folktales rather than on knowledge of economic history. His letter proves that he did not know much about the Boston Board’s intentions to re-locate unemployed urban workers to Tennessee nor did he understand challenges of colonization on the Cumberland Plateau. However, there was a lot of unoccupied land for sale in that area. Since Boyle had two sons coming of age during tough economic times in Britain, it seems likely that he thought these young men might become successful country squires if they immigrated to East Tennessee. It is also very probable that Boyle expected “resource stripping” of coal, timber, iron, and perhaps oil, to pay big rewards to those investing in the East Tennessee lands, which had been brought to his attention in 1878 by Franklin W. Smith.⁷¹⁰

⁷⁰⁷“Letter of John Boyle, Esq.,” 5. Perhaps Boyle had viewed this splendid harvest on Amos Hill’s farm. However, there was no way he could know anything about the work which produced these crops unless he had discussed agriculture with some of the local residents. There is no evidence that he asked anyone about the quality of the region’s soils. Like Smith and Hughes, he was content to jump to erroneous conclusions without having much practical knowledge of agriculture or of the area.

⁷⁰⁸Ibid.

⁷⁰⁹Ibid., 7. His description of the woodlands as “lovely and lonely” and the canyons as “romantic” proves that he was no more of a realist than Thomas Hughes or Franklin W. Smith when it came to selecting a colonization site. Moreover, his belief that “busy factories, thriving homesteads, and healthy town centres” would “arise” reveals a complete ignorance of the complex process by which a new center of human life was established.

⁷¹⁰Boyle stated that a “Belgian gentleman, well versed in the study of ores and minerals,” had accompanied him to East Tennessee. They believed that five of the six coal samples they had taken would “yield a strong and good coke” (6).

Boston hardware merchant Franklin W. Smith first envisioned the Cumberland highlands as ideal for his social engineering scheme.⁷¹¹ He imagined that sparsely-populated Tennessee lands would be the perfect place for unemployed New England mechanics, who might otherwise become a public menace in the economic crises of the late 1870s. Like Hughes, Smith had no practical experience of farming and therefore no hesitancy in advising men to “go back to the land” even if those receiving the advice had not previously lived and worked on the land.⁷¹² He, like Hughes, could give this advice with a clear conscience, since he had no clue how difficult it might be to make a living as a farmer. However, Smith’s interest in the agricultural potential of the Plateau seemed to decrease after he had convinced Boyle and Hughes of the region’s value. Although Smith was identified in the London Board’s first prospectus as the representative of the “Americans interested in the venture,” by the summer of 1879 he was probably beginning to focus more on the area’s becoming a resort than on its being an idyllic rural community where young Englishmen might become prosperous farmers.⁷¹³ Bulletins Nos. 3 and 4, which Smith compiled, provided ample evidence of his “double vision” of the British Board’s venture. Perhaps after developing his colonization scheme Smith had read of Samuel Tate’s 1865 purchase of more than 2,000 acres of scenic East Tennessee lands containing a mineral-rich spring. Tate had built a “Victorian-style hotel that could house as many as 500 guests.”⁷¹⁴ In 1876 the property was sold to Captain Thomas Tomlinson who “transformed the hotel into one of the nation’s premier luxury vacation resorts, Tate Springs Resort.”⁷¹⁵ The completion of a

⁷¹¹The development of Smith’s vision for the region was explained in Chapter 3.

⁷¹²Franklin W. Smith, *The Hard Times* (Boston: Houghton, Osgood, and Company, 1877), 8 and passim; Hughes, “An Address delivered at Big School, Rugby,” in *Rugby, Tennessee*, 109.

⁷¹³*Aid to Ownership of Land*, 9. The prospectus implied that Smith and other Americans were completely supportive of the British Board’s efforts to provide employment opportunities for well-to-do young men.

⁷¹⁴Chris Villines, “Meet Me at the Station,” *The Tennessee Cooperator*, March 2013, 23.

⁷¹⁵*Ibid.*

railroad brought thousands of visitors to this resort which offered tennis, golf, riding, and swimming, and which became known as the “showplace of the South.”⁷¹⁶

Although there is no evidence that the elder Boyle initially shared Smith’s ideas about creating a popular southern resort on the Plateau, he, like Hughes, wanted the Board to take advantage of their site’s natural beauty. In perhaps his first letter to Knoxville’s Judge Temple, Boyle stated that “we have already made arrangements in connection with our Townsite for public recreation, two ‘public parks’ having been marked on our plan, also an ‘English Garden’ and a ‘cricket ground’.”⁷¹⁷ Some eight months later, in his “Opening Day” address, Hughes reported that the Board had made provisions for “parks, gardens, and recreation grounds.”⁷¹⁸ Property had also been reserved for walking and riding trails along the “two beautiful streams which will be a delight forever to those who dwell here, if they are left free for the use and enjoyment of all.”⁷¹⁹ No doubt this incredibly progressive environmental awareness made the American Rugby an attractive town. Had its scenic beauty been combined with meaningful employment opportunities and direct rail connections, the settlement might have become an example of a successful, carefully planned community. And as early as the April 1881 Boyle was beginning to focus on the region’s becoming a resort in order to realize some profit on the considerable investment he had made in the company and its East Tennessee real estate.

Knoxville Judge Oliver P. Temple, who served as the American legal counsel for the Board, welcomed the Rugby colony because he thought upper-class English settlers would make a very positive contribution to the development of rural East Tennessee. Temple’s aggressive

⁷¹⁶Chris Villines, “Meet Me at the Station,” 23.

⁷¹⁷John Boyle, Horseshoe Bend, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 12 February 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers. Horseshoe Bend contained little more than the nearest post office and some rather rough lodging at a time when there were no buildings at the Board’s town site.

⁷¹⁸Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 50.

⁷¹⁹Ibid.

interest in attracting hard-working immigrants to the region was well-known. His strong pro-Union, Republican convictions made him a natural ally of Smith, and then of Hughes. Although Temple has been identified as one of the colony's important agricultural advisors, there is no evidence that he did anything to promote the economic health of the colony in spite of his fervent hopes for its success. Nor did he warn the colony's founders how difficult it would be for classically-educated young men to make a living on the heavily-wooded Cumberland Plateau.

A fourth principal, Cyrus Clarke of Pennsylvania, had originally come to the area in order to exploit its timber and mineral resources. After Clarke and seven other men formed the Tennessee Mining and Land Company in 1869, they purchased a large amount of land in rural East Tennessee. Although the company's plans failed to materialize, Clarke remained in the region where he met Smith when members of the Boston Board of Aid made their first visit to Tennessee in 1878. For reasons known only to Smith, he selected Clarke as the Boston's Board on-site manager, a position Clarke retained after the formation of the British Board. No doubt Clarke welcomed these colonizers to whom he hoped to sell a large tract of mountain land. Clarke did not share Hughes's ideas about economic cooperation and did not support Hughes's plan to establish a consumers' cooperative in the colony. He argued that the Board could make a handsome profit from operating the only large store in the town. However, Hughes insisted that it was not the Board's "business to make money out of trade, and if we can see our way to nothing better than a store of the Board I think the sooner we can close it the better...Rival storekeepers, selling the same articles, will not be a healthy or satisfactory element in a new colony."⁷²⁰

⁷²⁰Thomas Hughes, London, to Franklin W. Smith, Boston, 21 June 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Hughes stated that he would bring the "rules and methods of business of our Cooperators Union and hope to convert our temporary store into a society embracing all residents during my stay on the Plateau." He wrote Smith in response

Although Hughes wanted the colony to be a community, rather than a collection of individuals, he did not provide on-site leadership for the settlement. Instead he left Rugby almost immediately after the “Opening Day” events, taking the train on October 7 for Chicago where he spent several days with his old friend, Brooke Herford, and was honored at a dinner given by the Literary Club.⁷²¹ On Sunday, October 10, he gave a lecture on “Charles Kingsley” in Chicago, although he confessed that “in England he had never taken part in Sunday lectures” because he had been reared to reserve Sunday for “rest and worship.”⁷²² Hughes remained in North America for another month without returning to Rugby. He visited with friends in various cities, including Toronto, Boston, Philadelphia, and New York. He also participated in numerous public events, including a large Lotus Club banquet in New York on October 30. Whitelaw Reid of the *New York Tribune* had written Hughes that the Club wanted to honor him with a dinner for about 120 men, including “some people worth seeing.”⁷²³ He assured Hughes that the event would give him a “good chance to say some things which the newspapers will be sure to report, and although all public dinners are a bore you will not find this too fatiguing.”⁷²⁴ During his final week in New York, Hughes spoke “twice at Cooper Union---on 1 November before the Farmer’s Club on Rugby, and 5 November before working men on co-operation.”⁷²⁵

to his letters of June 5, 6, 7, and 9, which give some indication of the extensive correspondence between Hughes and Smith as the British Board’s activity at the colonization site expanded.

⁷²¹Hughes’s eldest son Jem attended the “Opening Day” events and then accompanied him to Chicago. Herford wrote Hughes, “We shall be delighted to have your son with you! *If* he can share your bed, or take a sofa in the same room! By good fortune, my second son, also a Western herdsman, will be in from N. W. Nebraska where he is on a cattle ranche” (Brooke Herford, Chicago, to Thomas Hughes, 28 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA, emphasis in the original). Apparently the “ranching craze” of the 1880s was as attractive to young Americans who lived east of the Mississippi River as to young Britons.

⁷²²“Personals” in *Harper’s Weekly*, Saturday, October 30, 1880, Vol. XXIV, No. 1244. Hughes stoutly championed an interesting mix of liberal and conservative ideas.

⁷²³Whitelaw Reid, New York, to Thomas Hughes Esq. Q. C., Robbins Station, Cincinnati Southern R.R., Tennessee, 13 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁷²⁴*Ibid.* It is very probable that Hughes met Horace Greeley during his first visit to America. Greeley died in 1872, several years before Hughes contemplated being involved in a colonization venture. It is unfortunate that Hughes had no opportunity to have a serious talk with Greeley about the success of his Union Colony of Colorado.

⁷²⁵Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 235.

While Thomas Hughes was enjoying his final month in America, his younger brother Hastings Hughes was beginning to play an active role in the Rugby colony. Twelve years younger than Tom, Hastings had immigrated to America in 1879 after a series of devastating experiences, including the death of his wife and the failure of his sherry-importing business. Although he served as the Board's first New York agent, working from the office that had housed his sherry business, he initially planned to live in Tennessee. Soon after the dedication day events, he contacted Judge Temple about the organization of the commissary that he was to serve as secretary and treasurer.⁷²⁶ Within a week, he wrote enthusiastically, asking for the "papers to fill up declaring my intention of becoming a citizen of Tennessee."⁷²⁷ Although he acknowledged that he had made this important decision "after much hesitation," he seemed quite excited, inviting Temple to "my baptism or whatever other form may be required to convert a full blown British subject and son of Papa John [Bull] into a ditto American citizen, and adopted nephew of Uncle Sam."⁷²⁸ Less than ten days later, Hastings Hughes was reporting that he had no time to think of naturalization until "our boom calms here which doesn't seem likely for the present...the hotel keeps always quite or nearly full and town and villa lots are going like hot rolls."⁷²⁹

Reports of Rugby's popularity in letters from Hastings and newspaper accounts reinforced Thomas Hughes's optimistic expectations that the venture would go from strength to strength. As if he were an experienced colonizer, Hughes generously dispensed advice to Hastings in order to guide his behavior as the British Board's on-site agent. Reminding Hastings

⁷²⁶William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 13 October 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷²⁷William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 19 October 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷²⁸Ibid.

⁷²⁹William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 28 October 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

that “much will depend on the next half year or so,” he also warned him that the “funds of the Co. immediately available are practically exhausted.”⁷³⁰ Indeed, Thomas Hughes anticipated that he might have “to provide the funds for meeting” Rugby’s land payments coming due unless he could raise more money in New York and Boston, as he hoped to do.⁷³¹ However, the very next day he shared his belief that the “thing ought to go well with the start it has had,” indicating that he was not alarmed by the company’s financial challenges.⁷³² Before leaving the country, a happy Hughes wrote Temple that the colony’s prospects “look bright and I trust it may do all for the State which we have hoped.”⁷³³ Shortly thereafter, Hughes wrote his close friend, Lord Ripon, that the colony was progressing “far better than I had ever hoped,” and he praised the colonists, for he could “scarcely have picked better men.”⁷³⁴ Writing to Hastings immediately before arriving in England, Hughes emphasized, “I quite think we have got the game in our hands now only it must be played very cautiously....We can build up a community such as we want to see far more surely by showing everyone that we are jog-trot every day folks, who want to go on just as like their neighbors as possible.”⁷³⁵ Further investments primarily from London, increased the Board’s capital to \$83,374.60 by 31 December 1880. By then more than one hundred people were living in Rugby, making it the largest town in the region. J.W. Harper had referred to Rugby’s establishment as the “initiation of England’s second period of colonization in America,” and the settlement’s growing population seemed to indicate that

⁷³⁰Thomas Hughes, Chicago, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 11 October 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁷³¹Ibid.

⁷³²Thomas Hughes, Toronto, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 12 October 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁷³³Thomas Hughes, New York, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 5 November 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷³⁴Thomas Hughes, on board the *Germanic*, to Lord Ripon, 14 November 1880, quoted in Mack and Armytage, 236.

⁷³⁵Thomas Hughes, New York, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 17 November 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

Rugby would be the first of many new British-American communities established in the 1880s.⁷³⁶

However, although the property that John Boyle had purchased for the Board began to sell in October, one can hardly label the initial sales a “boom.” Between February and June 1880, John Boyle had purchased or committed the Board to buying almost 31,000 acres of land at a cost of about \$60,000.⁷³⁷ Land sales in October added \$1,940 to the Board’s cash account. Two of the six men purchasing property in October were Board members, Thomas Hughes and W. N. Senior, who bought several town lots at a total cost of \$1,060. Henry D. Boyle, the Board’s cashier, purchased \$220 worth of property. There were four sales in November which added another \$2,686.75 to the Board’s bank account. In December seven settlers purchased property, but they, like many subsequent buyers, made very small down payments. The Board also sold a large tract of land, thought to contain valuable coal, to one J. R. Croke, who agreed to pay \$40,000 for property that had cost less than two dollars per acre. However, Croke initially paid only \$4,000 for this purchase, committing himself to pay off the balance in “nine (9) promissory notes for four thousand (\$4000.00) dollars each payable on the first days of January 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889 and 1890.”⁷³⁸ The total income from land sales in 1880, including the Croke purchase, was only \$8,600.

⁷³⁶Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 235.

⁷³⁷According to the “List of Land purchased by the Board of Aid,” the Board acquired 30,972 acres of land in fifteen different transactions at a total cost of \$60,112.19. The Board initially paid more than \$25,000 for this property and was committed to a series of payments, beginning in June 1881 and continuing until March 1883, in order to pay for all of its purchases. John Boyle paid \$5269.65 of the total cost of the land when he dealt with the various vendors between February and May 1880. This “List” of land purchases is in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁷³⁸The Rugby Papers contain a document related to the sale of these lands to J. R. Croke. On its cover sheet is a handwritten note, “Dec 16-1889, Release of Lien on Croke Coal Lands” and the word “Copy.” According to this document, the lands were sold to Croke by a deed “dated the tenth of May 1881,” although Henry D. Boyle listed the sale of these lands in the Cash Account statement for December 1880. He listed the sale price of \$40,000 under “credits” on the statement although Croke apparently paid only \$4,000 at the time. Boyle’s including the total sale price in figures related to land sales distorted the reality of how much the Board was making from land sales. Moreover, according to the “Release of Lien,” Croke purchased 1,350 acres of land although there are references in

Thomas Hughes's expectations about the colony's future were influenced more by numerous inquiries from various prospective settlers than by Rugby's financial records. While in America, Hughes had received a letter from a New Orleans resident, interested in the "place because it is being established by a man who has the reputation of being a clear-headed philanthropist."⁷³⁹ This man wanted to know about specific features of the colony, including "what class of people [would] form the Community" as well as how much money one needed to go there and "make a start in husbandry."⁷⁴⁰ Another correspondent claimed knowledge of Hughes "as far as a man can be known from his works. By giving Tom Brown and his friends to the world you have raised a very grateful and cordial interest in your life among thousands of whom you have never even heard."⁷⁴¹ Having "just returned from exploring Asia Minor with my chief," this young adventurer had read about the "New Rugby" and decided it might be the place for him.⁷⁴² He confessed to wanting a "home of my own" although he had neither a "large capital" nor "knowledge of things agricultural."⁷⁴³ He told Hughes he was "very ready to learn anything, provided there is some ultimate chance of doing well."⁷⁴⁴

The multitude of young men for whom Hughes wrote letters of introduction to his brother Hastings proved that many were interested in and had high expectations of the "New Rugby," at least partially because of its association with Thomas Hughes. Yet, there is a curious disconnect between rhetoric and reality in Thomas Hughes's communication about the colony. The "letters

some business records to his having bought only 975 acres. Such discrepancies in Rugby's business records make it very difficult to be precise about the colony's financial affairs.

⁷³⁹John M. Huggett, New Orleans, to the Right Reverend J. N. Gollehen, 10 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. This letter was forwarded to Hughes by the Bishop or a member of his staff. Hughes's familiar "Ansd. [Answered] 21/9/90" is an indication of his response.

⁷⁴⁰Ibid. The Rugby Papers contain no evidence that Huggett participated in the life of the colony.

⁷⁴¹George B. Burgin, Constantinople, to the author of "Tom Brown's Schooldays," 31 October 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Hughes's familiar "Answered Nov. 26" indicated that he conscientiously responded to requests about the colony even though he was not providing the much-needed on-site leadership in Rugby.

⁷⁴²Ibid.

⁷⁴³Ibid.

⁷⁴⁴Ibid.

of introduction” he wrote for young emigrants going to Rugby provide excellent evidence of the chasm between his unrealistic expectations and their subsequent experiences. For example, writing for one young man, Hughes emphasized that “Mr. Howard Startin is the son of Mr. G. Startin of G. Startin & Co. of 150 Fenchurch St., a highly respected city firm.”⁷⁴⁵ Startin’s father was prepared to pay fifty pounds to have his son placed with “one of the Rugby settlers with whom he is most likely to learn his business best as a settler.”⁷⁴⁶ Thomas Hughes did not indicate whether this young man had any marketable skills. Moreover, he well knew that his brother Hastings had never done any kind of manual labor, nor did he know anything about agriculture. Moreover, Hastings had only lived in Tennessee for three months. Yet Hughes suggested to Hastings that it would “be best” for young Startin if he took him on and gave him “all the advice and assistance he may need in finding his legs in his new home.”⁷⁴⁷ One wonders what Thomas thought Hastings could teach Startin about earning a living in the colony. Often Hughes seemed more interested in a young man’s family than in his familiarity with any kind of work. He would identify the “bearer” as the son of a “friend of our Mr. Russell Sturgis, father of the Boston shareholder,” and describe the young man as “just the kind of settler we hope for” without any indication of what the young man knew how to do.⁷⁴⁸ Or he would notify Hastings that the “bearer Mr. Strachey is the nephew to Sir E. Strachey” and ask Hastings to “do all you can” for him.⁷⁴⁹ For every letter like the one he sent with “Mr. C. V. Alexander” who “knows

⁷⁴⁵Thomas Hughes, London, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 23 December 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁷⁴⁶Ibid.

⁷⁴⁷Ibid.

⁷⁴⁸Thomas Hughes, London, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 23 December 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁷⁴⁹Thomas Hughes, London, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 29 January 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

enough of carpentry to make his own way,” there were many others with no reference to the bearer’s skills.⁷⁵⁰

Although Hughes surely knew that the Board itself was the region’s only employer, it was not until April 1881 that he altered his advice to prospective colonists. Hughes wrote Hastings that he was “telling all applicants now that we cannot promise work of any kind and I recommend no youngster to go who cannot see his way to pay fifty or seventy pounds for a year’s board, lodging and teaching.”⁷⁵¹ However, two days later, after informing one father that “we cannot guarantee work as we have already more young men on our hands than we can manage,” he suggested that if a young man were “willing and capable, and has enough to keep himself for a month or two, I think he may go with a good prospect of getting on.”⁷⁵² Why did Hughes think this young man would be on the road to success after only two months if others were being advised to serve as apprentices for one year?

Even as the colony was attracting more young men than the Board could employ, Hughes received a letter which could have drastically altered Rugby’s history. Just as “Mentor” had tried to warn Hughes about the colony’s unpromising location, one G. Ernest Rawlinson cautioned Hughes of the consequences of having so many inexperienced settlers. He suggested that the Board “establish at or near Rugby, Tennessee, a Colonial College, or ‘educational farm’ to which parents might send out boys whom they intended to become settlers, and where all kinds of

⁷⁵⁰Thomas Hughes, London, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 23 December 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Thomas told Hastings that this seventeen- year-old was “physically strong” and was the nephew of Leslie Probyn who had sent him off with fifty pounds. There is no evidence that Alexander settled in the colony.

⁷⁵¹Thomas Hughes, London, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 5 April 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. However, he told Hastings that these “bearers, Mr. Evans and Mr. Kersey” had met him with “strong letters from the headmaster of Clifton College” which convinced him that “these two will I think soon find their own way.” The headmaster of Clifton College was the brother of C. H. Wilson, Rugby’s resident geologist.

⁷⁵²Thomas Hughes, Margate, to James Matthews, 7 April 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. (No address is given for James Matthews.) Two weeks later Hughes was again advising Hastings to place the “bearer Mr. Stevenson” with a settler (Thomas Hughes, London, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 22 April 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA).

practical agriculture” might be taught.⁷⁵³ Rawlinson believed that such a “farm or college of this sort would not only pay a good percentage, but would also supply a great need.” While “Mentor” had offered advice based on his familiarity with various kinds of land, Rawlinson wrote from his personal experience of emigration to the United States where he had been engaged in farming and raising livestock. He urged Hughes to consider his proposal, emphasizing that such a farm or college “under the direct auspices and supervision of the company” would attract many young men who would then be a “very useful class of settlers” for the colony. Moreover, he argued that both the “character of the company and especially your name” would convince parents that their sons would be “properly treated and efficiently instructed and advised.”

Although Rawlinson advanced a sound proposal, Hughes’s hand-written “Send to Hgs.” did not bode well for its being implemented. Hastings Hughes knew no more about agriculture than his older brother, nor was he any more aware than Tom of how hard one had to work in order to succeed as a colonizer. He had lived in Tennessee only five months when he received a letter from Rawlinson who explained that he had been involved in “farming and stock raising in Southern Colorado” from 1873 to 1878.⁷⁵⁴ Having witnessed the “misfortunes and hardships of young men sent out West with a little capital” Rawlinson well knew how easily these youthful emigrants were taken in by “unscrupulous settlers.” Therefore, he believed a “‘College’ (especially one presided over by Mr. Thomas Hughes) would be the greatest possible boon to such intending settlers.” Rawlinson had given the matter careful thought and sent Hastings a

⁷⁵³G. Ernest Rawlinson, Canterbury, England, to Thomas Hughes, London, 19 March 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. In 1881 Thomas Hughes was still the principal of the Working Men’s College. Although he was not devoting much time to the College, he may have reasoned that he could not take on anything else, even something that could have been very beneficial to the American Rugby. All of the quotes in this paragraph come from this source.

⁷⁵⁴G. Ernest Rawlinson, Canterbury, England, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 24 March 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. All of the quotes in this paragraph come from this letter.

“tolerably full sketch” of his plan, expecting England’s growing population to increase the need for such a program as more parents turned to “emigration as the best means of livelihood for their sons.” He offered himself as manager of the program, indicating that he would study “all the details of the Agricultural College at Cirencester, and of one or two private enterprises styling themselves, ‘Colonial Colleges’” before preceding directly to Rugby. Rawlinson not only had practical agricultural experience but also he had the upper-class background which positioned him to be a welcome addition to the Board’s enterprise. His father was a Canon of Canterbury Cathedral, and a professor at Oxford, and he had been “educated at Rugby, under Dr. Temple” before graduating from Balliol College, Oxford. Hastings’s handwritten note indicated that he answered the letter in April and planned to refer the matter to John Boyle.

Having followed the instructions he received from Thomas Hughes, Rawlinson persisted in his efforts to interest Hughes in a “Colonial College,” indicating that a simple house and “even 160 acres of land with part pasture and part arable should suffice to begin with.”⁷⁵⁵ He even enclosed an advertisement which might have been used to test the “feeling of the public in regard to such an institution,” and he encouraged Hughes to consider this institution as the “necessary complement of your efforts to help young men to settle; as it is generally the want of practical experience and of disinterested advice” which led to failure.⁷⁵⁶ The Rugby Papers include only these three letters about a project which, as Rawlinson suggested, might have been tried “at first on a small scale,” and while preparing young men to be “successful and prosperous settlers” would have paid the “Company as a financial speculation.”⁷⁵⁷

⁷⁵⁵G. Ernest Rawlinson, Canterbury, to Thomas Hughes, London, 26 March 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁷⁵⁶Ibid. There is no indication that Thomas Hughes responded to this third letter from Rawlinson.

⁷⁵⁷G. Ernest Rawlinson, Canterbury, England, to William Hastings Hughes, 24 March 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. One cannot but wish that Rawlinson had been given a chance to work with Rugby’s inexperienced young colonists in order to train them to be successful farmers and to maximize the potential of the Board’s property.

The Rugby Papers also have an example of a contract by which an inexperienced young settler was to receive “instruction in farming and gardening” and a year’s board and lodging from two settlers.⁷⁵⁸ Hastings Hughes negotiated the agreement for William Last to pay three hundred dollars for this apprenticeship with James Milmore and Joseph Edward Virgo. In mid-September 1880 Milmore had written Thomas Hughes about his plans to move to the Board’s colony. He told Hughes that he had “lived with the Earl of Galloway.”⁷⁵⁹ In fact, Milmore had been the earl’s butler. His knowledge of farming and gardening may have left a lot to be desired, and he had not lived in rural East Tennessee long enough to have an understanding of the region’s climate or its soils. This contract well illustrated the point that Rawlinson was trying to make to both Thomas and Hastings Hughes. The brothers’ ignorance of agriculture and of colonization made it impossible for them to understand the significance of Rawlinson’s proposal, so they seem to have made little response.

Indeed Thomas Hughes was beginning to be troubled by developments in the colony. He and other British supporters considered 1881 to be the “most critical year in the life of the settlement.”⁷⁶⁰ Unfortunately, 1881 was to be a year of conflict and crisis. Property disputes were the first major source of conflict. As early as December 1880 Hughes learned of legal challenges to the Board’s ownership of certain portions of the Harriman lands. Although he realized that the Board might “expect more or less trouble of this kind,” he confessed that such conflict “certainly damps one’s ardour.”⁷⁶¹ After another local resident claimed that he owned some “1300 acres near the proposed station,” Hughes wrote Judge Temple that the Board had

⁷⁵⁸“Agreement between James Milmore and Joseph Edward Virgo and William Hastings Hughes,” 7 June 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁷⁵⁹James Milmore to Thomas Hughes, 16 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. There are no addresses on this letter.

⁷⁶⁰Thomas Hughes, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 5 April 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁶¹Thomas Hughes, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 28 December 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

thought the “Harriman trustees were to deal with this claim and hold us harmless.”⁷⁶² He indicated that if the Board had to pay “\$1000 or upwards” to settle the dispute, the company would subtract the payment from “future installments of the purchase money.”⁷⁶³ Hughes considered the “springing up of these claims in respect of lands purchased by the Board [to be] alarming and discouraging” although the Board had full “confidence” in Temple’s ability to deal with all the legal issues related to its land.⁷⁶⁴

Subsequent events were even more unsettling to Hughes. He was deeply disturbed when he learned that the Board had “no right to bring or defend any suit in the Courts of this State.”⁷⁶⁵ He wrote Temple that the Board “had not seen your opinion given to Mr. Smith, and were under the impression that the law of the State had been altered to meet the case of foreign corporations, and to place them on equality with native corporations or individuals.”⁷⁶⁶ Local attorney A. B. Bright had written Temple that the Board’s legal status in the state was problematic because Hughes had not filed the company’s charter with the Secretary of State as he had instructed him to do. However, Temple apparently thought passage of a private bill would be more useful to the Board than a charter, which he considered “objectionable.”⁷⁶⁷ As Hughes understood it, there were distinct legal advantages to the Board’s remaining a foreign corporation, “inasmuch as it

⁷⁶²Thomas Hughes, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 7 January 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁶³Ibid. Sedgbeer filed a lawsuit against the Board in January 1881, and the Board later paid him almost \$1,300 to settle this property dispute. Boyle had signed the contract to purchase the Harriman lands on 10 March 1880. In October 1880 Hughes gave Smith a check for \$10,624 for the first payment on this property, and the Board was to make additional payments in 1881 and 1882. It is not clear whether \$1,300 was deducted from these payments.

⁷⁶⁴Thomas Hughes to Oliver P. Temple, 7 January 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁶⁵A. B. Bright, Wartburg, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 23 January 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁶⁶Thomas Hughes, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 7 February 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁶⁷Ibid. The disagreement between Bright and Temple over whether a charter or a private bill offered the company better legal protection is only one of the points on which these two attorneys clashed. The friction between these two East Tennesseans complicated the British Board’s life. Hughes was concerned about the “unexpected outlay” connected with the costs of passing Temple’s private bill. Temple stated that his fees would be \$750. The bill had not become law as of March 24, and there is no indication that it passed in the 1881-1882 session.

insured that any action or suit against or by us would be tried in Federal, and not State courts, in which latter possibly juries might be prejudiced against a foreign corporation.”⁷⁶⁸ Moreover, Temple warned about the “consequence of forming a municipality” so Rugby did not become a self-governing town.⁷⁶⁹ Local residents were thus denied the opportunity to forge community ties by working together to govern themselves. However, Hughes made it clear that the Board did not want to forfeit the “privilege” associated with its foreign status.⁷⁷⁰

While the colony’s residents struggled through a brutal winter, the “worst in a quarter century,” the British Board attempted to cope with further unexpected and unpleasant realities.⁷⁷¹ Thomas Hughes was uncharacteristically negative, writing Temple that “had we been as fully informed as we are now on the legal position, and the state of the titles, it is more than probable that we should never have embarked on this enterprise. Now our efforts must all be directed to stopping every hole and making our position safe.”⁷⁷² Although Hughes reaffirmed his confidence in Temple’s “very hearty and friendly aid,” Temple had already received a confrontational letter from shareholder Henry Kimber, who began to play a major role in the business affairs of the colony in 1881.⁷⁷³ Kimber raised numerous questions about Temple’s work on the Harriman lands. He asked Temple why he had not accepted blocks of land in their entirety, as well as why he had not been specific about the acreage and cost of each tract. He also implied that Temple should have had an “agent on the ground to buy up some of the

⁷⁶⁸Thomas Hughes, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 7 February 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁶⁹William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 19 April 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁷⁰Thomas Hughes, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 7 February 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁷¹Barbara Stagg, *Images of America: Historic Rugby* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2007), 25. The previous winter had been very mild.

⁷⁷²Thomas Hughes, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 7 February 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁷³*Ibid.* Kimber “owned a settlement in Natal, where two of his sons lived” and had sent “emigrants from his own constituency of Wandsworth” to New Zealand (Mack and Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 248). No doubt, he thought his experiences as a colonizer would make it relatively easy to solve Rugby’s problems. He was wrong.

‘clouds’ and deducting the amount from the purchase money.”⁷⁷⁴ Temple explained that he had not been able “to accept an entire block of land” because he was “only authorized to accept lands the title to which was good.”⁷⁷⁵ He also asserted that the Board could not deduct the costs of purchasing tax titles “for there is not any warranty of the titles. The Board takes the titles at its own risk.”⁷⁷⁶ Apparently, one of the hazards of buying mountain lands was the tendency of squatters to pay taxes on property long enough to claim the tax title regardless of who possessed the legal title to the land. Property of absentee owners, such as the Harriman lands, was particularly vulnerable to this practice. Hastings Hughes soon became convinced that land ownership on the Cumberland Plateau was a “matter of claims and counter-claims.”⁷⁷⁷ Had the Board emulated the founders of Greeley, Colorado, in purchasing the bulk of its land from a single reliable source, such as a railroad, it would have encountered fewer legal complications.

Although Hughes was worried about the legal complications connected with Rugby, he revealed none of his misgivings about the colony to the public. Responding to a “prominent gentleman” from Nashville, who had inquired about rumors that the colony was to be re-located to Minnesota, Hughes stated that “so far as we know the settlement is going on famously.”⁷⁷⁸ He refuted the assertion that the “managers of the Rugby Colony were so disappointed” in their

⁷⁷⁴Kimber’s letter to Temple is not included in the Temple Papers so one must reconstruct Kimber’s questions from the responses Temple sent to Boyle. Temple began the letter to Boyle with a reference to Kimber’s letter which “you were so kind as to place in my hands for inspection.” Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, to John Boyle, Rugby, Tennessee, 7 February 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁷⁶Ibid. When Boyle arrived in Tennessee in early February 1881, he hand delivered Kimber’s letter to Temple. Temple responded to Boyle, rather than writing directly to Kimber. When Hughes and Kimber visited the colony in 1883, Kimber once again wrote a confrontational letter to Temple. Temple responded to Hughes. It is very curious that he dealt with Kimber in this triangular pattern.

⁷⁷⁷William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 16 October 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁷⁸“Tom Hughes’ Denial” in the Nashville *American*, containing a reprint of Hughes’s letter of 23 February 1881 to an unidentified Nashvillian, in the O. P. Temple Papers. A Louisville newspaper had published a story about the colony’s move to Minnesota. In mid-March the London Board’s secretary, Edward Bellamy, wrote Hastings Hughes that the “stupid report of the transportation of the colony to Minnesota is just spreading over this country” (Edward Bellamy, London, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 15 March 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA).

Tennessee location that they were ready to quit the state.⁷⁷⁹ However, he stretched the truth when he insisted that there was “no trouble as to titles” with the exception of “two claims on outlying portions of our lands.”⁷⁸⁰

Hughes knew all was not well, but in 1881 there were several reasons to be hopeful about Rugby’s future. *The Rugbeian*, edited by Oxford graduate Osmond Dakeyne, was launched as a monthly publication in January 1881, and by the summer was being published weekly. Dana Estes was raising money for the construction of a library at Rugby. His firm, Estes and Lauriat, like that of the Macmillan brothers, had made money publishing Hughes’s Tom Brown books. He, therefore, had persuaded numerous American publishers to donate books to the settlement in honor of Hughes. When he first wrote Hughes about his “plan for the formation of a free public library for Rugby,” he stated that he had collected 3,400 volumes from publishers in Boston and New York.⁷⁸¹ By late April 1881, he had \$825, although he indicated he did not want to “go out of Boston with less than a thousand dollars.”⁷⁸² Two months later, he had raised \$1125 and was intent on collecting enough money for a “brick or stone building which [would] be an ornament to the town and a permanent structure.”⁷⁸³

In May 1881 Margaret Elizabeth Hughes, Thomas Hughes’s eighty-four-year-old mother, emigrated from England in order to make her home at Rugby. An American newspaper

⁷⁷⁹“Tom Hughes’ Denial” in the *Nashville American*, 23 February 1881.

⁷⁸⁰*Ibid.*

⁷⁸¹Dana Estes, Boston, to Thomas Hughes, 28 October 1880, reprinted in “The New Colony at Rugby, Tennessee” in the *Cincinnati Commercial*, 8 November 1880. (No address was given for Hughes who was spending his last week in the United States in New York where he was staying with Dr. Agnew.)

⁷⁸²Dana Estes, Boston, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 26 April 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Estes considered it a “great pity that Mr. Smith should not assist the matter somewhat himself but suppose it is useless to appeal to him again.” Indeed it was a “great pity” that Franklin W. Smith never made a contribution to this fund nor did he subscribe to shares of the British Board of Aid nor did he buy land in the colony. His failure to put any money into the venture will be considered in more detail in Chapter 7.

⁷⁸³Dana Estes, Boston, to William Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 23 June 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Estes had received \$100 from newspaper owner George W. Childs, of Philadelphia, who was one of Hughes’s close American friends.

described Margaret as the “graceful realization of the ideal of an old English lady.”⁷⁸⁴ This “generous, high-principled, warm-hearted woman” was accompanied by her niece, Emmy, the youngest child and only daughter of Hastings Hughes.⁷⁸⁵ They moved into Uffington, the house that Thomas Hughes had constructed for himself and named for the beloved Berkshire parish in which he spent his childhood. Thomas Hughes’s wife, Fanny Ford Hughes’s refusal to visit the United States, much less consider living at Rugby, may have persuaded Margaret Hughes to relocate in order to support her son’s colonization project. She quickly became a valuable presence in the religious and social life of the settlement. Bishop Quintard had encouraged Thomas Hughes to “have the Church organized at Rugby from the very first.”⁷⁸⁶ Indeed it was, as Bishop Quintard met with prospective communicants immediately after the “Opening Day” ceremony on October 5. Eight Englishmen, including Henry D. Boyle, Osmond Dakeyne, and Amos Hill, all Board employees, composed the first vestry. Margaret Hughes became president of the “Ladies Church Working Society” which presented a handsome handmade kneeler to the church. She also entertained frequently in her spacious home. Niece Emmy found the residents to be “very unsociable and shy,” and she disliked living so far from a city of any size.⁷⁸⁷ Even after a two-hour journey to the nearest railway station at Sedgemoor, Cincinnati was still nine hours away. The Commissary carried a variety of items, but Emmy lamented, “We have to send

⁷⁸⁴Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 238.

⁷⁸⁵Ernie Trory, *Truth Against the World*, 24. Emmy’s mother died soon after she was born so she had lived with her grandmother for many years. Margaret Hughes was widowed in 1857. She and Emmy lived for several years in London with Jane Elizabeth Hughes Senior and her family until Jeannie’s death in 1877.

⁷⁸⁶Charles Todd Quintard, Sewanee, Tennessee, to Thomas Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 24 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁷⁸⁷Emily Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, to Lucy Taylor, Paris, France, in *Dissipations at Uffington House: the Letters of Emmy Hughes, Rugby, Morgan County, Tennessee, July 5, 1881-July 15, 1887*. Introduction and notes, John R. DeBruyn, Lambeth College (Memphis, Tennessee: Memphis State University), 15.

to Cincinnati for everything, except the basic necessities, and we have to wait a long time for them to come.”⁷⁸⁸

In early February 1881, four months before the May arrival of Margaret and Emily Hughes, John Boyle had come to the colony yet again to deal with numerous pressing issues. There was considerable discontent among the residents, and Boyle found the colony “full of cabal, causes, meetings, rumours, threatening, and denunciation.”⁷⁸⁹ Several public meetings led to the printing of a letter (perhaps for circulation in the colony as well as to send to Hughes) containing recommendations made “not in the spirit of hostility or caviling, but of earnest sympathy and friendship for the mutual interests of the Board and Colonists.”⁷⁹⁰ Those preparing this letter expressed the “most profound respect and admiration for the Founder of the Enterprise” before making a number of concrete suggestions.⁷⁹¹ In a prescient and portentous harbinger of what was to come, colonists were concerned about the “condition of the Water Supply” and the failure of the Board to erect “Water Works.”⁷⁹² They also regretted that the Board had not made good on its promises to support “Educational and other ‘Public Purposes’” and requested action to meet the urgent “Religious and Educational Wants of the Town.”⁷⁹³ Writing to Judge Temple, Boyle noted the “strong feeling that the Board ought to erect the

⁷⁸⁸Emily Hughes, *Dissipations at Uffington House*, 15. Emmy was seriously ill at the time of the typhoid epidemic, but she eventually recovered. In spite of her complaints about life at Rugby, Emily remained there until her grandmother’s death in October 1887. She was engaged to marry the Board’s geologist C. H. Wilson, who left Rugby in 1887 and died soon thereafter of Honduras fever, a result of having spent a brief period in Honduras. Emmy’s letters and photographs provide valuable insight into Rugby’s early years.

⁷⁸⁹John Boyle, Rugby, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 4 May 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁹⁰“To the Chairman and Directors of the Board of Aid to Land Ownership (Limited)” in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. This document contained no signatures nor was it dated. In his letter of May 4, John Boyle referred to a Saturday meeting in which some of the issues covered in this document, including the water works, were raised. The concern about the lack of “suitable Accommodation for Visitors” in the “coming Summer” also indicates that the document was prepared in the Spring of 1881.

⁷⁹¹*Ibid.* Hughes was truly held in such high esteem that his presence in the settlement might have led to the creation of a community capable of making the most of a generally inappropriate site. If nothing else, perhaps Rugby might have become a popular resort since the region offered riding, swimming, tennis, and hiking.

⁷⁹²*Ibid.*

⁷⁹³*Ibid.*

waterworks, and do many other things besides to help on the place.”⁷⁹⁴ However, he confided in Temple that he “dare not confess here that there seems to be no prospect of more clear capital being at present subscribed.”⁷⁹⁵ Boyle had learned that Hughes and Senior might try to raise an additional 10,000 pounds, but he thought it would be better if Americans assisted in increasing the Board’s capital to “50,000 pounds instead of 20,000 pounds” so that Americans could “take the lead and control the future of our English colony.”⁷⁹⁶

Ironically, the manager and co-manager of the colony at that time were Americans. The British Board had “inherited” Cyrus Clarke as the resident manager from Franklin W. Smith, who met Clarke in 1878 when he and members of the Boston Board were favorably impressed with the potential of the Cumberland Plateau tablelands. Clarke tried hard to persuade the British Board to buy land he claimed to own on the Plateau. Temple continually cautioned Hughes that “you cannot safely accept” Clarke’s lands while others contested his ownership.⁷⁹⁷ Hastings Hughes distrusted Clarke and was well aware of Clarke’s determination to make money from his connection with the British Board of Aid. After Thomas Hughes left Rugby, Hastings informed Clarke of his concerns indicating that “in my opinion your own position as manager will, after the termination of your present agreement, become untenable, inasmuch as questions

⁷⁹⁴John Boyle, Rugby, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 4 May 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁷⁹⁵Ibid. Boyle indicated that he was both surprised and annoyed that there was not more money for the project. He had committed the Board to spend almost \$61,000 to buy land; otherwise, more of the company’s capital could have been used to make the kind of improvements which might have made the colony more prosperous.

⁷⁹⁶Ibid. Boyle reminded Temple that he would be entitled to some of the projected 10,000 pounds which Hughes and Senior might raise since he had recently loaned the Board 4,000 pounds. Boyle asked Temple to help with fund-raising and stated that he would stop in Boston before he returned to England. However, he aimed to use any money he could acquire there for the “land optioned in Fentress and Morgan Counties.” He continued to believe that the area contained vast untapped resources of coal and oil which would reward additional investment. Numerous attempts to locate oil proved unsuccessful.

⁷⁹⁷Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Thomas Hughes, 22 October 1880, in the O. P. Temple Papers. Hughes was probably in Boston when this letter was written.

may constantly arise in which your interests and theirs will not be identical.”⁷⁹⁸ Clarke’s lands were sold by court order to satisfy his creditors in early 1881.⁷⁹⁹ Clarke’s relationship with the British Board began to sour when he realized that the Board was not going to purchase his property. He first vented his anger at Temple, labeling the fees he charged the Board “excessive.”⁸⁰⁰ Once John Boyle became more actively involved in managing the colony after his arrival in early February 1881, Clarke was increasingly disaffected. After he was dismissed from his post, he threatened to sue the Board. However, Smith assured the Board that the Clarks should pay the Board “damages for having by misrepresentation and concealment of facts led us into outlays which but for them would never have been entered on.”⁸⁰¹ Clarke did take the Board to court and was awarded damages by a jury of local residents. He also refused to help the Board in lawsuits where he could have been a useful witness.

Boyle knew of problems associated with the Hotel Tabard before he arrived in the colony. There were numerous complaints from “Ladies [who were] leaving the Hotel to go down to get some decent food at Chattanooga.”⁸⁰² Boyle had already found an “excellent man and his wife for Managers” of the hotel, before he gave the manager, George S. Herbert, a “notice to quit.”⁸⁰³ After Herbert threatened to sue the Board, Boyle vacillated between retaining Herbert to avoid a lawsuit and firing him to stop “defections from the Hotel.”⁸⁰⁴

⁷⁹⁸William Hastings Hughes, Jersey City, to Cyrus Clarke, Rugby, Tennessee, 4 November 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁷⁹⁹Temple had indicated that legal challenges to Clarke’s ownership would not be resolved before March 1881. A. L. Crawford, who held a mortgage on Clarke’s land, purchased this property at the sale in January 1881. *The Rugbeian and District Reporter* of 14 October 1881 included an article about survey work for a new railroad, expected to “pass within one mile of Rugby” and being constructed by “Mr. Cyrus Clarke and Mr. A. L. Crawford, Esq., of New Castle, Pennsylvania (Vol. II, no. 56). This project never materialized.

⁸⁰⁰Quoted in Thomas Hughes, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 7 January 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers. Hughes assured Temple that the Board did not consider his fees unreasonable.

⁸⁰¹John Boyle, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 2 November 1881, in the Temple Papers.

⁸⁰²Ibid.

⁸⁰³Ibid.

⁸⁰⁴Ibid. Once he decided to retain Herbert, he had to pay \$60, one month’s salary, to the couple he had engaged to replace him. By the end of the year Herbert had been replaced by J. Rylands Haigh, who proved to be so

Scottish journalist Archibald Sutter found the “Tabard Inn” to be an “excellent hotel” when he visited the “Rugby settlement, in Tennessee, of which Mr. Thomas Hughes, M. P., is the principal director.”⁸⁰⁵ Sutter had no complaints about Herbert or the hotel’s food; in fact, he noted that he was met by the “English landlord” and then served a “good dinner.”⁸⁰⁶ After traveling for more than a month in America, Sutter was pleased to find the “rare advantage of a little good society” in Rugby.⁸⁰⁷ He was delighted to report that “in passing many of the houses pretty British faces appear at the windows, smart young Oxonians meet you, and the good dress and good manners of the men must impress their American brethren.”⁸⁰⁸ He was favorably impressed with the “refined language, rather rare in Western towns.”⁸⁰⁹

Sutter met many young men who were being paid one dollar per day for doing the “common work of a labourer,” including digging ditches, clearing land, and building roads.⁸¹⁰ They were “well-educated gentlemen, and quite unfit for such labour. They complain that they expected to get experience in stock farming.”⁸¹¹ Sutter was not very sympathetic to their complaints since he believed “no one, I presume, here would object to their raising stock, or farming,” and he did not think doing hard manual labor would hurt them.⁸¹² However, he did acknowledge that their work was “not what they expected” although he believed their employer

unsatisfactory that he was fired early in 1882. Haigh was furious, and on 15 March 1882 he sent the Board a bill for 1,500 pounds for damages associated with being evicted from the hotel “under sheriff’s warrant in depth of snow (“Statement of J. Rylands Haigh,” 15 March 1882, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA). Haigh’s successor, Abner Ross, became the third manager of the Tabard in less than two years.

⁸⁰⁵ Archibald Sutter, *American Notes* (Edinburgh and London: 1882), 66 and 63. A civil engineer, Sutter was in the United States to visit the property of the Missouri Land Company of Scotland. He spent two months in the United States and wrote a series of travel letters which were first published in the *Edinburgh Courant* after his return to Scotland.

⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁸⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁸⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁸¹¹ *Ibid.*

⁸¹² *Ibid.*

[meaning the British Board] was “having the worst of it.”⁸¹³ Nonetheless, Sutter could not believe that “Rugby has anything to fear as a settlement.”⁸¹⁴ Sutter’s favorable impressions of the United States led him to encourage “any young man, not under the age of twenty-one,” to emigrate for if he were a worker he would “do well in any walk of life.”⁸¹⁵ However, he noted that the “only young men I have seen who were discontented were the young men at the New Rugby, in Tennessee: but these were well-educated men, brought up with every luxury, and to them living in a log house must have been very trying.”⁸¹⁶ However, since there were numerous books and other sources of information about colonization, Sutter could not feel sorry for these young men, for “they should, of all other men, have known what was before them.”⁸¹⁷

In contrast to Sutter’s favorable impressions of the hotel and the “good society” in Rugby, the writer of a tendentious article about Rugby published in the *New York Times* in July 1881 was highly critical of many features of the colony. There is no evidence that the journalist who wrote the article had visited Rugby. However, he emphatically declared there was “no decent hotel.”⁸¹⁸ Moreover, unlike Sutter, he was certainly much more sympathetic to the colony’s young residents than to its most famous founder. Thomas Hughes was chastised for “having given the infant scheme the benefit of his famous name” and then leaving its “youth and future to the care of others.”⁸¹⁹ According to this piece, the venture was “so badly and seemingly willfully mismanaged that many of the settlers, getting no adequate return for money they have invested, and finding life at Rugby, very different from what they expected, feel that they have

⁸¹³ Archibald Sutter, *American Notes*, 69-70.

⁸¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁸¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 100.

⁸¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁸¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁸¹⁸ “Mr. Hughes’s Colony,” *The New York Times*, 12 July 1881.

⁸¹⁹ *Ibid.*

been swindled.”⁸²⁰ Unfortunately, the author of the article assumed that the founders of the colony had only philanthropy in mind when they launched the project although their first prospectus emphasized that assisting emigration could be a “safe and profitable investment.”⁸²¹ He could then lambast the British Board for “not fulfilling its early promises” to colonists and for pretending that the venture was anything other than a “naked land speculation, managed, not by a genial gentleman of letters, but by a band or ring, who consider one man’s money as good as another’s.”⁸²² The Board was harshly criticized for “discharging the Clarkes from their post as managers” and turning over control of the colony to “Mr. Boyle [who] has had upon Rugby the effect of a hard frost upon a tender plant.”⁸²³ The entire piece is filled with egregious errors, such as giving the Clarkes credit for building the “road, the church, the saw mill, and opened up the wilderness.”⁸²⁴ Moreover, the judgment that if correctly managed, the colony “would grow to thousands in a few years, for situation, soil, and climate favor the growth of a great community” revealed a total ignorance of the colony’s isolated location and the poor quality of the region’s soil.⁸²⁵

An outbreak of typhoid fever in the colony in mid-August 1881 made the highly critical newspaper article the least of the Board’s problems. The region’s unexpectedly harsh winter was followed by an extremely hot summer in 1881 and a severe, 100-day drought. This prolonged drought and perhaps human carelessness led to contamination of the hotel’s well, which produced the typhoid. The dreadful epidemic killed seven residents, including Osmond

⁸²⁰“Mr. Hughes’s Colony,” *The New York Times*, 12 July 1881.

⁸²¹*Aid to Ownership of Land*, 4. According to Bulletin No. 3, the British Board’s colonization project was “not primarily of a benevolent character” (Boston: The Board of Aid to Land Ownership, 1880), 11.

⁸²²“Mr. Hughes’s Colony,” *The New York Times*, 12 July 1881.

⁸²³*Ibid.*

⁸²⁴*Ibid.* The saw mill and the road were among the first projects completed by the London Board. The building used initially as both a church and a school house was also erected by the Board in 1880. The carpenter Gothic building, known as Christ Church, was completed in 1887, and is still one of the treasures of the village.

⁸²⁵*Ibid.*

Dakeyne, the Oxford grad who established and edited *The Rugbeian*. Although the epidemic was linked only to the hotel well while other sources of water were pronounced safe, the devastating disease “stopped land sales, and ended any hope of turning Rugby into a popular summer resort.”⁸²⁶ After local attorney A. B. Bright visited Rugby on August 30, he wrote Judge Temple that the “place is ‘on its last legs.’ There was only one boarder at the Hotel. The fever is abating and the patients, leaving as fast as they recover. The settlers are all leaving—15 or 20 at a time.”⁸²⁷ Bright indicated that he planned to “re-organize ‘The Board’ and put the whole thing on a different footing...Some one must ‘come to the Rescue’ or Rugby will soon be regarded as a thing of the past.”⁸²⁸

Even before the typhoid fever disaster, Thomas Hughes had lamented to Lord Ripon that “affairs in his American settlement were ‘going all wrong.’”⁸²⁹ At precisely the time when the settlers were struggling with the deadly epidemic, John Boyle was assuring Temple that “we are moving at this moment to increase our Capital.”⁸³⁰ However, he noted that Board members believed there was “some undercurrent of influence being excited against the colony, and the newspapers in the States no longer publish smooth things about us.”⁸³¹ Boyle asked Temple to “investigate the state of matters on the spot,” and indicated that “Mr. Thomas Hughes may act on your suggestion, and proceed to the Colony.”⁸³² Although Hughes was no doubt corresponding with his mother during these difficult days, he did not visit the colony again until 1883. Since Mrs. Hughes burned all of the letters she had received from her son Thomas shortly before her

⁸²⁶Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 239. These authors incorrectly gave the death toll as seventeen. The financial records in the Rugby Papers include a “Hospital” page containing a list of payments, several of which are small amounts for digging various graves.

⁸²⁷A. B. Bright, Sunbright, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 31 August 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁸²⁸Ibid.

⁸²⁹Mack and Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 239. Hughes had written Ripon on July 14.

⁸³⁰John Boyle, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 18 August 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁸³¹Ibid.

⁸³²Ibid.

death in 1887, it is impossible to know what thoughts he shared with her at this time. However, writing to his dear friend, Lord Ripon, he indicated that the “place has received a blow from which it may not recover.”⁸³³ He also stated that Rugby’s failure would make him a poor man, since he had invested about 7,000 pounds in the venture, more than he ought to have done, “but I never could count the cost when my heart was in a thing.”⁸³⁴

The “unhappy and fatal epidemic” had disastrous consequences for the Board of Aid’s financial condition as well as for individual investors.⁸³⁵ Not only was the Board unable to increase its capital, but also it could not pay Temple the total amount it owed him. Boyle indicated that “by dint of great exertion and considerable personal sacrifice we have been able to meet, when due, certain considerable drafts which had been made through the Bank at Cincinnati.”⁸³⁶ He told Temple that he had sent 250 pounds to the bank in Cincinnati as partial payment for what the Board owed him, and he “deeply regretted” being unable to settle with Temple earlier.⁸³⁷ Boyle regretted that the “amount of crop this season will amount practically to *nothing*” which would make it difficult to persuade others that the “place is not to be a failure.”⁸³⁸ He noted that numerous people, including Temple, Amos Hill, J. B. Killebrew, and Thomas Hughes had provided positive accounts of the colony’s potential. However, he was critical of Hughes for “he has blown rather an uncertain trumpet about the place and has quite

⁸³³Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 239. Hughes wrote Ripon on September 14.

⁸³⁴Ibid. Hughes’s investment was about \$35,000. He told Ripon that his wife had found a tenant for their house in London’s posh Mayfair. He and his family were going to economize by going to Eastbourne for several months. He also applied for and received a “place,” becoming a county judge, based in Chester in 1882.

⁸³⁵John Boyle, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 8 September 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁸³⁶Ibid.

⁸³⁷Ibid. Boyle noted that at the current exchange rate this draft would be about \$1207. He requested that Temple “accept this amount on account of your Bill of costs, and that you will allow the Balance to stand over for the present, the above sum being all that we can at the present time pay.” It is stunning how much money the British Board spent on legal fees because they had purchased land from numerous individuals rather than one safe source such as the federal government or a major railroad.

⁸³⁸Ibid.

altered what he first said about the prospects young men have in going there and the money they would require.”⁸³⁹

The Board of Aid’s on-site cashier, Henry D. Boyle, was very pessimistic about Rugby’s future by the time his father arrived in the colony yet again in late November 1881.⁸⁴⁰ Because young Boyle had resided in Rugby and worked as the Board’s on-site “Cashier” for two years, he had an intimate knowledge of the Company’s business affairs and of the colonists’ serious concerns. Responding to numerous questions raised by Edward Bellamy, the Board’s London secretary, Boyle indicated that the Board’s long-distance management of the colony left a lot to be desired. He strongly protested the Board’s proposing to cut expenses by reviewing all invoices before authorizing that he pay for anything, including “provisions for the hotel” as well as “food for the Board’s horses or oxen.”⁸⁴¹ Boyle also predicted “fearful disaster and that close at hand” unless the London-based Board began to spend more money to provide necessities, such as the water works. He judged Board attempts to economize as the “very worst thing that can happen to the place [for]

the withdrawal of the survey party from work or the lessening of the present staff in any degree must inevitably lead to a panic here among both settlers and natives. The consequence of this would be complete disaster. The commissary in which the Board have so much money will break up, the many people who owe us money will go off, the native population will commence marauding operations as to timber, tan bark, staves, etc. on an enormous scale, and they will lay claim to and take possession of large quantities of the Board lands which it will require years and vast sums of money spent on law suits to dispossess them of.”⁸⁴²

⁸³⁹John Boyle, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 8 September 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁸⁴⁰John Boyle was accompanied by his wife, daughter, and second son, Montgomerie.

⁸⁴¹Henry D. Boyle, Rugby, Tennessee, to Edward Bellamy, Esq., London, 31 December 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. All quotations in this paragraph come from this letter. Boyle responded to Bellamy’s letter of December 12 which had arrived the night before. He indicated that he was responding to Bellamy’s letter since his father was in Cincinnati, and since he had more knowledge of the specific issues about which Bellamy raised questions. The Rugby Papers contain pages one through five and page nine of Boyle’s letter. Page nine was not the final page.

⁸⁴²Boyle stated that the “confidence of the whole population of this section is already much shaken in the Board.”

Henry Boyle emphasized that the “only thing” that could prevent disaster would be “some sign of renewed activity on the part of the Board.”⁸⁴³ Unfortunately legal and financial troubles made it almost impossible for the Board to launch new initiatives. In October 1881 Cyrus Clarke was threatening legal action against the Board as was a man named “Cory, calling himself the Norwegian agent for the Board.”⁸⁴⁴ Cory claimed that he had been hired in 1880 to recruit Norwegian settlers for Rugby and then never paid for his work. He wrote Hughes, accusing him and the Board of “barefaced deception and misrepresentation” and indicating that he would accept an “amicable settlement of 1,300 pounds.”⁸⁴⁵ Although Boyle told Temple that Hughes was a “good deal perturbed by this,” he emphasized that there was “no foundation” for Cory’s claims, and therefore, his demands should be “resisted to the Death.”⁸⁴⁶ The Board loaned the Commissary \$2,500 in late December. While in the colony in early 1882 John Boyle had added almost \$1,500 to the Board’s funds, and yet by March 31, the Board’s bank balance and cash on hand totaled \$152. Shareholder Henry Kimber [1834-1923] partnered with George Smith to provide enough new money to keep the company solvent.⁸⁴⁷

⁸⁴³Henry D. Boyle, Rugby, Tennessee, to Edward Bellamy, Esq., London, 31 December 1881, in the Rugby Papers., TSLA.

⁸⁴⁴John Boyle, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 2 November 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁸⁴⁵Ibid. Hughes received the letter from Cory on October 1.

⁸⁴⁶Ibid. Boyle considered Cory to be a “needy and unprincipled adventurer” who was “endeavoring to extort money” from the Board after he observed “how unbusinesslike (to speak mildly) was the whole course of business” in the Board’s London office in 1880.

⁸⁴⁷George Smith was a principal in Smith, Elder, Publishers, based in London. The Rugby Papers do not contain specific details about the transaction in which Kimber and Smith became the mortgagees. On page 166, dated 31 March 1883, in the Board’s account book there is a list of payments received for land “sales since the mortgage of 11 April 1882.” These payments were made to “Geo. Smith and Henry Kimber, Mortgagees.” Perhaps the first mention of the “Mortgagees” is found in a letter written some eleven months before this notice appeared in the March 1883 ledger. While at Rugby in April 1882, John Boyle wrote Judge Temple that he was pleased to learn that Temple would remain the “Counsel for the Board in case of any difficulties with the Mortgagees.” In the same letter Boyle criticized Thomas Hughes for writing “unwisely in last ‘Rugbeian’ as to the Mortgagees,” and he stated that Hughes had been “forbidden to come to Tenn. by physicians” (John Boyle, Rugby, Tennessee, to Oliver P. Temple, 4 April 1882, in the O. P. Temple Papers). After Henry Kimber became a major financial backer of the colony, he began to play a dominant role in its business affairs. His brother Alfred Kimber, who apparently lived in New York, also began to participate in the colony’s financial affairs in April 1882. In his April 1882 letter to Judge Temple, John Boyle stated that his son, Henry D. Boyle, had met recently with Alfred Kimber in New York; Henry Boyle

The Rugby Canning Company, a new initiative aimed at providing employment and making money, was launched not by the Board but by a group of settlers in the autumn of 1882. The minutes of board meetings of the Company indicate it was formed in late September as an “earnest effort of the citizens here to fulfill some portion of the promises of prosperity under which they were brought here.”⁸⁴⁸ After the settlers began to raise money for their company, they sent two of their directors to Cincinnati to purchase equipment to be used for canning tomatoes. These men signed a contract on December 13, committing the company to spend almost \$1,200 for machinery, which was delivered in early 1883. By then Hastings Hughes had been elected president of the company. He convinced his fellow directors that they ought not to begin canning tomatoes until they had raised at least \$5,000.⁸⁴⁹ Thomas Hughes donated \$500, and the company’s secretary, C. H. Blacklock, wrote many letters to prospective investors, emphasizing the importance of “some kind of manufacturing industry [to provide] sufficient revenue and encouragement to hold the community together whilst its now necessarily slow growth progressed.”⁸⁵⁰ Unfortunately, Hastings Hughes was frequently away from Rugby at this time. His fellow directors regretted that he was “not here now” in April 1883 as they tried to decide whether to go ahead with the project even though they had spent all their money on machinery, leaving no operating funds. These directors decided not to begin canning tomatoes in 1883, and the project was never attempted. Hastings Hughes spent less and less time in

had concluded that “Mr. A. Kimber knows and cares little about the affairs of this company and showed himself bored with, and anxious to get clear of them” (Boyle to Temple, 4 April 1882, in the Temple Papers).

⁸⁴⁸C. H. Blacklock, Rugby, Tennessee, to Colonel J. B. Killebrew, Nashville, Tennessee, 2 December 1882, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁸⁴⁹According to the canning company records, after Hastings Hughes began to be involved in the venture, he insisted that the directors needed a capital of \$10,000 before beginning the project. He later agreed that the company might begin its work after \$5,000 had been raised. Thomas Hughes gave \$500 and his mother contributed \$200, but the directors secured less than \$3,000. The canning company records are on Mf. 253, Reel #3, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

⁸⁵⁰C. H. Blacklock, Rugby, Tennessee, to Dr. C. P. Agnew, New York, New York, 20 December 1882. Dr. Agnew did not invest in this project. Nor did Franklin W. Smith who stated that his friend Russell Sturgis, Jr. would pledge \$200.

Tennessee in later years, and after he married Sarah Forbes, daughter of railroad magnate John Murray Forbes in 1887, he lived in Massachusetts.

When Thomas Hughes made his second visit to Rugby in 1883, he came primarily to visit his mother. By then he was not actively involved in the financial affairs of the Board of Aid although John Boyle hoped his presence would “once more produce an influx into the Colony such as followed his former appearances upon the scene in Tennessee.”⁸⁵¹ Hughes was accompanied by Kimber, provoking Boyle to hope that Temple would “not realize any disagreeable result which you at one time anticipated from the English solicitor.”⁸⁵² The “disagreeable result” did not come until Hughes and Kimber returned in the autumn of 1884. Then Kimber directed an angry letter to Temple, who was apparently trying to collect money he claimed the Board owed him. Kimber indicated that he, Hughes, and others were not willing to pay Temple any additional money because “this place...has cost and is costing us all so terribly dear and involves us in what looks like losses of \$100,000 or more to people who can ill afford it.”⁸⁵³ Kimber accused Temple of causing some of the financial losses he and other investors had suffered. Temple responded to the “insinuations of Mr. Kimber” in a seven-page letter to

⁸⁵¹John Boyle, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 14 September 1883, in the O. P. Temple Papers.

⁸⁵²Ibid. Hughes and Boyle were barristers; Kimber was a solicitor. There is no record of how Hughes and Kimber spent their time while visiting in the settlement in 1883.

⁸⁵³Henry Kimber, Rugby, Tennessee, to Jerome Templeton, Knoxville, Tennessee, 27 September 1884, in the O. P. Temple Papers. On 24 March 1883, Kimber wrote Temple a very critical letter, accusing him of making numerous legal errors which had been costly for the shareholders. For example, he specifically questioned why there were legal challenges to the Board’s ownership of two separate tracts included in the Harriman lands. One of these, known as the Redman land, had been conveyed to V. Mumford Moore, the Harriman trustee, by Redman. However, according to Judge Temple, long after the fact, he learned that Redman had “secretly and fraudulently executed a deed to his wife for the same land several months before.” Temple indicated that he considered this deed “utterly void,” but he insisted that it was the “duty of Mr. Bright or Mr. Clarke” to make sure that Moore got a clear title to the Redman land. Throughout Temple’s lengthy letter he insisted that he was “neither legally or morally responsible for the consequences” the Board encountered as a result of buying some of the Harriman lands. Moreover, he argued that it was a wonder, “considering the numberless conflicting titles, and their complexity and confusion that more mistakes were not made” (Oliver P. temple, Knoxville, to Henry Kimber Esq., London, 10 April 1883, in the O. P. Temple Papers).

Hughes, arguing that he was guilty of “no neglect of duty” in dealing with land the Board subsequently purchased.⁸⁵⁴

In addition to the in-fighting among principal supporters touched off by Rugby’s misfortunes, land values continued to fall after the epidemic in 1881. The coup de grace came when the “Tabard” was destroyed by fire in 1884. Although a second Tabard was opened in 1887, three years without a hotel had destroyed Rugby’s chances of becoming a popular health resort. Thomas Hughes continued to make annual visits to his mother, coming to Rugby as a loving son rather than as a company executive.⁸⁵⁵ After her death on 5 October 1887, exactly seven years to the day after the gala “Opening Day” events, he was never again in East Tennessee, although he continued to be optimistic about Rugby’s future. In one of his last letters about the venture, Hughes assured Rugby’s faithful physician Dr. Charles Kemp that although he might never again visit Tennessee, “you, I know my dear friend will always feel how truly my heart is with you in the famous fight you are making to plant a righteous and prosperous colony in those fascinating mountains.”⁸⁵⁶

⁸⁵⁴Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Judge Thomas Hughes, 3 October 1884, in the O. P. Temple Papers. In May 1884, Temple had received a letter from Franklin W. Smith, claiming that although he had “such a great repugnance to a lawsuit, its vexation and trouble,” he was determined to press his claim against the London Board. He stated that he and Temple could “well sympathize mutually in our experience of our relations to the B. of A. to L. O. i.e. the English part of it” (Franklin W. Smith, Boston, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, 3 May 1884, in the O. P. Temple Papers. There is no evidence that Smith filed a suit against the London Board. His wife divorced him, and in the early 1900s he lost all of his property as a result of bankruptcy. Smith died in poverty and obscurity.

⁸⁵⁵In 1884 Hughes also visited his son Jem at his ranch just over the Texas border in Mexico, where he thoroughly enjoyed being “free of the fraternity of gentlemen cowpunchers” (*Vacation Rambles*, 224). He was delighted with Jem’s life and gave him 1,000 pounds in 1886 to support his life and work (Mack and Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 275).

⁸⁵⁶Thomas Hughes, Chester, England, to Dr. Charles P. Kemp, Rugby, Tennessee, 7 December 1891, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. In addition to his deep regret about Rugby’s failure to thrive, Hughes was in mourning for the death of his “second son, a Captain in the Buffs [who] died two months ago. He stayed in India too long, until he fell off his horse at a review and nobody thought out there that he would ever get home. He did but never really rallied.” This son was the third of Hughes’s children to predecease him. His daughter Evie had died in his arms in December 1856, as he was finishing *Tom Brown’s Schooldays*. Maurice, his eldest son, for whom the *Schooldays* was written, drowned in 1859 while the family was on holiday at a beach resort.

In spite of Rugby's failure to become an idyllic rural community, Hughes never lost his faith in the importance of fighting materialism and working to help others. Yet, his involvement in this colonization venture does seem to be evidence that Mack and Armytage were correct: "Hughes often [seemed] unwilling to face unpleasant truths or to look squarely at reality."⁸⁵⁷ When he wrote to Ripon in November 1881, after the typhoid epidemic drastically reduced the colony's prospects, he confessed, "I know well there is some lesson which God means I should learn from this trouble, and which in part I think I have learned. For the rest I wait reverently and I hope patiently for further light."⁸⁵⁸ Had Hughes learned that successful colonization required knowledgeable, capable leaders who were active participants in the life of their settlements? Had he learned that months of attention to tedious details as well as extremely careful site selection preceded the achievements of men such as Thomas Talbot, Nathan Meeker and General Robert Cameron, and Charles Landis? Was he aware that young men such as Samuel Butler proved how important it was to focus on recruiting resilient, self-reliant settlers? There is no evidence that Hughes, Boyle, Kimber, Smith, Temple, or Clarke really understood that "land was never cheap enough to carry out unrealistic plans."⁸⁵⁹ Nor did they realize that creation of a new center of human life required not only an investment of money but an almost sacrificial investment of one's energy and time.

⁸⁵⁷Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 286.

⁸⁵⁸Letter to Lord Ripon, 14 November 1881, quoted in Mack and Armytage, 252.

⁸⁵⁹Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England*, 49.

Chapter 7, Conclusion: The Rugby Reality

What have we learned about Rugby, Tennessee?

Was Tennessee's Rugby colony a utopia or an idyllic rural community? No. Although its principal founders praised the beauty of the colonization site, Rugby never became a prosperous, self-governing municipality characterized by a pervasive concern for the common good.⁸⁶⁰ After John Boyle's first visit to East Tennessee in 1878, he lauded the region's "purer and more genial atmosphere and temperature" and concluded that "Nature has liberally supplied this charming land" with everything necessary for both prosperity and contentment.⁸⁶¹ Predisposed to be delighted with the region because of Boyle's glowing praise, in 1880 Thomas Hughes labeled the colony's site an "enchanted solitude."⁸⁶² Hughes had long believed that the United States was a "land of opportunity for England's surplus stock of [classically-educated] young men."⁸⁶³ He expected Rugby's rural isolation to "help, instead of hindering, its sons and daughters in living a brave, simple, and godly life."⁸⁶⁴ Neither Hughes nor Boyle doubted that a sustainable economy would develop in a region with soil which appeared "to yield readily to the hand of man," and which had such "noble timber," and an abundance of water power, coal, and other minerals.⁸⁶⁵ Both men misunderstood "what a farmer's life and prospects really were,"⁸⁶⁶ and none of the colony's founders made sure that Rugby offered opportunities for economic success to all hard-working settlers.

⁸⁶⁰As shown in Chapter 6, Rugby did not become a self-governing municipality because Judge Temple advised the British Board of the legal advantages of its foreign status. Hughes wrote Temple about the Board's "retaining its foreign status so that court cases will be heard in Federal (not local) courts" (Thomas Hughes, London, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, 9 February 1881, in the O. P. Temple Papers).

⁸⁶¹"Letter of John Boyle, Esq., Barrister-At-Law, 63, Chancery Lane, London, E. C., to the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership in relation to His Visit to the TENNESSEE ESTATE," 4 and 7.

⁸⁶²Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 43.

⁸⁶³Ada Blanche Nisbet, "Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell," 143.

⁸⁶⁴Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 106.

⁸⁶⁵"Letter of John Boyle, Esq.," 5-6.

⁸⁶⁶Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England*, 49-50.

Moreover, none of Rugby's principal founders worked to create a strong sense of community among its early settlers. Colonies, such as Jamestown, the Plymouth Plantation, and the Canterbury settlement in New Zealand, were planted by "groups of associates under able leaders."⁸⁶⁷ Rugby's early residents migrated and emigrated from various parts of the United States and the United Kingdom. Since many of the early colonists were British, they shared some time-honored traditions, such as afternoon tea, cricket, and lawn tennis. Although "social rituals create a reality which would be nothing without them," these rituals alone could not bear the weight of creating a thriving community.⁸⁶⁸ Since Thomas Hughes had dedicated his life to the "bridging process," one wonders why he did not become the animating center of the Rugby colony.⁸⁶⁹

Was the colony an experiment in Christian Socialism? No. Hughes's concern for the working classes, whom the British governing class generally ignored, led him to become the center of a group of Christian Socialists between 1848 and 1854. As the "empiric man of action" of that group,⁸⁷⁰ he participated in the establishment of the London Working Men's College in 1854, and did more than any other founder to create the fellowship which made the College a community. Later in life he acknowledged that he considered his involvement in the College the "most healthy social work" he had undertaken.⁸⁷¹ Could Rugby, Tennessee have been the same kind of "healthy social work"? Writing to Lowell from Rugby almost five years after the

⁸⁶⁷Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England*, 114.

⁸⁶⁸Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 62.

⁸⁶⁹Edward C. Mack and W. H. G. Armytage, *Thomas Hughes*, 285.

⁸⁷⁰*Ibid.* When Frederick Denison Maurice died in 1872, Hughes reluctantly agreed to become Principal of the College. But it was R. B. Litchfield, the Provost, who dealt with the severe financial challenges the College faced. Apparently Hughes believed one could be the center of an enterprise without being responsible for the myriad of essential details associated with its vital economic life. His involvement in the Rugby colony revealed the same tendency to ignore those features of an enterprise which did not interest him.

⁸⁷¹Thomas Hughes, *Early Memories for the Children*, 62.

colony's official "Opening Day" on 5 October 1880, he described enjoying "my back woods holiday in dust shoes no stockings old pair pants and light flannel shirt, this sun and air being to me meat and drink (ambrosia) and clothing."⁸⁷² Does Hughes's "confession to his delight and contentment with life on the Cumberland Mountains" prove that he planned to reside in Rugby?⁸⁷³ Hughes was both enthusiastic and supportive when George, his youngest son, immigrated to the United States to become a rancher. He declared himself "very glad [George] went in bravely for the healthy new life on the soil instead of pining and half starving in a profession."⁸⁷⁴ Perhaps Hughes's delight with life in the American Rugby and with the ranch life Jem and George had chosen suggests that "he would have come to Rugby to live had it not been for his wife's disapproval of the project and refusal to leave England."⁸⁷⁵

Was Tennessee's Rugby colony an audacious land speculation? No. Although in early 1881 some colonists began to complain that the "place was not altogether the paradise they had anticipated," there is no evidence that the Board attempted to make easy money by purchasing large quantities of inexpensive mountain land and selling it at inflated prices.⁸⁷⁶ The Board of Aid's business records indicate that the Board paid between one dollar and two dollars per acre for almost all of the land it acquired.⁸⁷⁷ The Board initially sold these lands for ten dollars per

⁸⁷²Ada Blanche Nisbet, "Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell," 319. Hughes wrote to Lowell on 3 September 1885 from Uffington House, his mother's Rugby residence. During this visit to Rugby, Hughes was joined by his eldest son Jem who came from his ranch just over the Texas/Mexico border, and his youngest son George who came from his ranch in Kansas.

⁸⁷³Ibid., 317.

⁸⁷⁴Ibid., 404. Hughes wrote this Christmas letter to Lowell from Uffington House, Chester, on Boxing Day, 26 December 1889. Obviously a proud father, Hughes told Lowell that George had "his heart in the life and is not going to be content till he has made [his ranch] the best farm in the US, rather a large order, but he means the sky & so will shoot higher than most." George did indeed become a successful rancher before retiring at age forty to become one of the leading citizens of Topeka, Kansas.

⁸⁷⁵Ibid., 217. Nisbet stated that the "gossip" indicated Hughes would have lived in the settlement.

⁸⁷⁶"Mr. Hughes's Colony," *The New York Times* 12 July 1881.

⁸⁷⁷Some of the secondary sources state that the Board paid between twenty cents and two dollars per acre for its land. The business records absolutely refute this assertion. The least expensive lands cost at least one dollar per acre. The land records in the Rugby Papers are included in Mf. 239.

acre, and in late 1880, negotiated a contract to sell approximately 1,000 acres of coal lands for forty dollars per acre.⁸⁷⁸ By the summer of 1881 some “settlers, getting no adequate return for the money they [had] invested, and finding life at Rugby very different from what they expected,” were angry with Hughes and the Board of Aid.⁸⁷⁹ Perhaps these colonists lacked the “skills and endurance of a frontier farmer.”⁸⁸⁰ However, Rugby’s failure to meet their expectations does not justify the conclusion that the colony’s founders swindled the settlers. Nor does the Board’s ability to sell land at “from \$5 to \$10 per acre” prove that “its receipts [had] nearly equaled its outlay” after it had sold one-fourth of its land and that the venture was, therefore, a “naked land speculation.”⁸⁸¹ In fact, the business records prove that the Board never recovered anywhere near the \$60,000 that it spent on land. Even when the company was reorganized as the Rugby Land Company, Limited, in 1892, its directors, including Hughes, Boyle, and Kimber, still owned vast amounts of land on the Cumberland Plateau.⁸⁸²

Was the Rugby venture masterminded by a “genial man of letters”?⁸⁸³ No. There is, however, no question that Thomas Hughes was an enormously popular author as well as an extremely likeable man. The histories of the London Working Men’s College are filled with tributes to his generosity and unselfishness. When Lowell wrote Hughes shortly before Hughes returned to England in 1870, he emphasized that “I would rather have the kind of welcome that met you in this country than all the shouts of all the crowds on the ‘Via Sacra’ of Fame. There was ‘love’ in it, you beloved old boy, and no man ever earns that for nothing---unless now and

⁸⁷⁸The coal contract was with one J. R. Croke, who was to pay \$4,000 per year for ten years. (See Chapter 6 for a fuller explanation of this transaction.)

⁸⁷⁹“Mr. Hughes’s Colony,” *The New York Times*, 12 July 1881.

⁸⁸⁰Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England*, 50.

⁸⁸¹“Mr. Hughes’s Colony,” *New York Times*, 12 July 1881.

⁸⁸²Hughes’s son Jem (James Ford) Hughes and Kimber’s son Charles P. Dixon were also among the five directors of the company after its reorganization.

⁸⁸³“Mr. Hughes’s Colony,” *New York Times*, 12 July 1881.

then from a woman.”⁸⁸⁴ Hughes was almost painfully aware of the way he had been received in the United States, writing to Lowell that “in one sense I shall be almost glad to get away, for I feel awe stricken and humiliated beyond expression at the sort of greeting I get from all people in this country.”⁸⁸⁵ Hughes’s modesty and humility were among his endearing qualities. However, he did not mastermind Rugby.

Was the venture masterminded by several self-interested individuals? No. There were apparently several self-interested individuals involved in this colonization project, but they did not invest their energy and time in providing leadership for the colony. As was shown in Chapter 3, Franklin W. Smith originated the scheme which led to the creation of the British Board of Aid and the establishment of Rugby. Although Smith served as president of the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership and as the “representative” of Americans supportive of the work of the London Board, he never invested in the shares of either colonization company.⁸⁸⁶ On 31 March 1881, Smith paid \$500 (of the total purchase price of \$806) to buy land from the Board; he cancelled this purchase on July 13.⁸⁸⁷ Smith allowed the Board to retain the \$500 as a loan. Smith made no contribution when Dana Estes was trying to raise enough money to build a fine library in Rugby. Writing to Hastings Hughes, Estes acknowledged it “a great pity that Mr. Smith should not assist the matter somewhat himself...but I suppose it is useless to appeal to him again.”⁸⁸⁸ The Board’s account book for June 1882 stated that Smith received (or was to

⁸⁸⁴Ada Blanche Nisbet, “Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell,” 86. Lowell’s letter was written on 18 October 1870 after Hughes left New England for New York where he gave a lecture on the labor question.

⁸⁸⁵Ibid. Hughes wrote this letter on 19 October 1870. He acknowledged that being away from his wife for three months had been a challenge for they had been married twenty-three years and had almost never been apart. However, he confessed that in some ways he was not ready to leave the United States, for “there is still so much I want to see and understand here.” Nisbet noted that Hughes’s wife “maintained a hostility” to America (89).

⁸⁸⁶*Aid to Ownership of Land*, 8.

⁸⁸⁷The details of these transactions were recorded on page 123 of the Board’s account book which is in the Rugby Papers, TSLA, and included on Mf. 239, Reel #1.

⁸⁸⁸Dana Estes, Boston, to Hastings Hughes, Rugby, Tennessee, 26 April 1881, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA.

receive) \$742.11 for “salary expenses etc. as per account,” and subsequent financial records indicated that Smith had contributed \$1242.11 to the Board.⁸⁸⁹ Almost two years later Smith wrote Judge Temple from St. Augustine, Florida, lamenting that Temple was no longer a practicing attorney, for the “Board of Aid owes me- Cash loaned \$500, Travel Expenses say \$150, Cash disbursed \$60, Services \$650 and interest for 2 or 3 years,” making a total of \$1,360.⁸⁹⁰ He indicated to Temple that he had “in vain sought a settlement” and wanted to know who served as “Mr. Clarke’s lawyer who gained his settlement.”⁸⁹¹

Franklin W. Smith had selected Cyrus Clarke to be the resident manager of the Boston Board’s proposed colony on the Cumberland Plateau in 1878. Clarke remained in that post after the London Board was formed in January 1879, so that Board had Smith to thank, or to blame, for the colony’s site and its first manager. It is beyond all question that Clarke claimed to own a large amount of land on the Cumberland Plateau. The London Board’s first prospectus stated that the Board planned to purchase “up to 400,000 acres at \$1.70 per acre” from one vendor who had offered quite reasonable terms.⁸⁹² John Boyle played the major role in purchasing land for the Board when he was in East Tennessee for two months on two separate visits between early February and late May 1880, and Clarke was involved in some of these transactions. The financial records showed a total compensation to Clarke of \$3,876.60, a very large sum of money for whatever services he rendered during the two years, 1880-1881, when he was the London

⁸⁸⁹This information was first listed on page 155 of the account book.

⁸⁹⁰Franklin W. Smith, St. Augustine, Florida, to Oliver P. Temple, Knoxville, Tennessee, 25 March 1884, in the O. P. Temple Papers. Smith indicated that St. Augustine was his “new winter home.”

⁸⁹¹Ibid. Smith wondered about what a lawsuit would cost and where the trial would be held. He had many other questions of Temple, whom he obviously expected to respond *gratis*.

⁸⁹²*Aid to Ownership of Land*, 5.

Board's employee.⁸⁹³ From the time he arrived in the colony, Hastings Hughes distrusted Clarke, and he apparently tried unsuccessfully to convince his brother Tom that Clarke had a conflict of interest.⁸⁹⁴ Numerous problems led John Boyle to dismiss Clarke from his post as manager in February 1882. Clarke filed suit against the Board and won a settlement from the Board when the case was tried in a local court. Thomas Hughes belatedly acknowledged that Clarke had cheated the Board. Writing to Lowell in the summer of 1884, he stated that he would be going to Tennessee in August as he planned to do "every year while my mother is alive. You will I know rejoice that we are getting to the end of rascally law suits which the old psalm singing Pennsylvanian who managed the land buying and laying out at Rugby left as a legacy when we turned him off nearly three years ago."⁸⁹⁵ Hughes indicated that thanks to the "staunchness" [*sic*] of several friends, he, and they would "beat the land sharks all along the line, though by the time we are through the land will have cost about treble it's [*sic*] nominal price."⁸⁹⁶ Although both Smith and Clarke initially appeared to be supportive of the London Board's colonization project, they did not make a positive contribution to the success of the Rugby venture.

Did Rugby's founders expect the colony to provide agricultural employment for young, well-educated English gentlemen? Yes and no. Thomas Hughes certainly believed Rugby would provide career opportunities for many young Englishmen. Speaking to the boys of Rugby

⁸⁹³For example, the Ledger Balance for March 1884 continued to list Cyrus Clarke, \$3,876.60. This money is clearly labeled "commissions" on several different pages of the Board's account book. There is no indication that Clarke was paid a salary.

⁸⁹⁴Hastings Hughes shared his concerns with Clarke when he wrote him in November 1880, stating that he could not imagine that the Board would renew Clarke's contract since he had land for sale which he wanted the Board to purchase (Hastings Hughes, Jersey City, New Jersey, to Cyrus Clarke, Rugby, Tennessee, 4 November 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA).

⁸⁹⁵Ada Blanche Nisbet, "Some Letters of Thomas Hughes to James Russell Lowell," 281. Hughes wrote this letter on 29 June 1884 to Lowell who resided in London while serving as the American ambassador to the United Kingdom from early 1880 until his wife's death in 1885. In this letter Hughes identified his friend George Smith as a major financial supporter. Smith and Henry Kimber became the mortgagees for Rugby in April 1882.

⁸⁹⁶*Ibid.*, 282.

School in Warwickshire in April 1881, some six months after Rugby's "Opening Day," Hughes encouraged these young men to "go back to the land, and take with you the spirit and traditions" [of public school life]; take up honest manual labor, but remain scholars and gentlemen."⁸⁹⁷

However, unlike his older brother George, Tom Hughes had completely unrealistic ideas about what a farmer's life entailed. In spite of his never having been a working farmer, even as a young man, George was alive to the challenges of making a living on the land as one of his letters proved. Writing as the eldest son to his beloved mother as career options for his younger brother Hastings were being considered, George indicated Hastings should not farm:

...to succeed in farming in England now, one must be a remarkable man; one must thoroughly understand all practical details, and be able to work oneself better than a labourer; besides this, the farmer must be a tolerable chemist and geologist, must understand bookkeeping and accounts, and must be enterprising and yet cautious; as patient as Job, and as active minded (and bodied) as anyone you can think of.⁸⁹⁸

George was also very realistic about the challenges faced by a colonist, for "no one is so much isolated as a colonist. He is thrown entirely on his own resources, and has no one to give him advice and sympathy."⁸⁹⁹ Had George lived, he would, no doubt, have warned his younger brothers, Tom and Hastings, about the dangers of being lured to Tennessee by cheap land. He would have counseled them that the "land was not cheap enough for them to carry out unrealistic plans."⁹⁰⁰ Just as he refused to join the Christian Socialists because he did not believe in "heroic remedies," he would have encouraged Tom Hughes to rethink getting involved in colonization as a response to the "urgent need of suitable openings in life for our young men."⁹⁰¹ There is no

⁸⁹⁷ "Address Delivered in Big School, Rugby, England, 7 April 1881, in Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 127.

⁸⁹⁸ Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 102. George's letter was written in 1848, when he was twenty-seven years old, and Hastings was a sixteen-year-old public school student. George recommended that his parents secure a cadetship in the army for Hastings (102-103). This is the same Hastings who did reside in Rugby although there is no indication that he ever considered being involved in agriculture there.

⁸⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰⁰ Charlotte Erickson, *Leaving England*, 49.

⁹⁰¹ Thomas Hughes, *Memoir of a Brother*, 116; *Aid to Ownership of Land*, 3.

evidence that Rugby's other founders were as focused on creating a class-free agricultural community as Hughes initially was although he did not invest his energy and time in making that happen.

There is evidence that both Franklin W. Smith, and later John Boyle, hoped that Rugby would become the "great watering place of the South."⁹⁰² In Bulletin No. 3, Smith included an article which had first appeared in the *Boston Post* which mentioned that the colony's founders planned for the area to become a popular resort. The archival evidence does not indicate that the London Board initially embraced this vision. However, by April 1881, Boyle had become more interested in promoting the region's potential as a resort in order to recover some of the large amount of money the Board had spent on land, the road to the station, the hotel, and other improvements, a total of more than \$120,000. In a contract he was negotiating with Cyrus Clarke, he mentioned that the Board would be advertising for erection of a larger hotel than the Tabard which could accommodate only fifty guests. However, a larger hotel was never built, and when the original Tabard burned in 1884, Rugby was without suitable accommodation for tourists for three years, and its potential as a resort was severely damaged.

Did the settlement's site make success an almost unreachable goal, or could strong, on-site leadership have created a thriving and prosperous community? As early as 1882, contemporaries were blaming Rugby's failure to thrive on its site. Perhaps the success of Greeley's Union Colony of Colorado prompted a writer for *The Daily News* of Denver to offer some conclusions about Rugby:

⁹⁰²Franklin W. Smith, *Organization, Objects and Measures[;] Description of the Estate on the Plateau of East Tennessee [;] Geological Section of the Plateau or Tableland*. (Boston: The Board of Aid to Land Ownership, Limited, 1880),16.

Some thoughtless people are expressing wonder at the sudden collapse of Mr. Thomas Hughes's Rugby colony in Tennessee. There is nothing very surprising about it when all the facts are considered. The experiment was based on Utopian notions of the value of co-operation in agriculture, and its victims were ignorant of the first principles of American farming. The tract selected was as barren as a tombstone, and the climate was both unpleasant and unhealthy. The scheme was a foreordained failure, and nothing short of a miracle could have made a success of it. If Mr. Hughes had taken his pilgrim band to Colorado, he might have founded a colony that would have lived and flourished until the crack of doom. It only shows that a man may be a great philanthropist and a very foolish farmer at the same time.⁹⁰³

Thomas Hughes never pretended to be a farmer, and East Tennessee's climate is not "unhealthy and unpleasant." However, the writer of this piece was correct to point out that Rugby's location was less than ideal for the establishment of an agricultural settlement. Although capable and determined leadership can make an enormous difference in the life of a colony, site selection was the most important feature of the planning process. Horace Greeley and Nathan Meeker wisely acknowledged this reality, and the site selection committee for the Union Colony of Colorado was composed of three men (Meeker, Cameron, and West) who had a combined total of seventy years' experience of living in the West. They were well aware that the "interests of so many families, with the earnings of their lives and the comforts of home, the interests of so many industrious, skillful, intelligent and well-to-do people should not be put in jeopardy for want of thorough investigation."⁹⁰⁴ So these men were sharply focused, and after "mature deliberation, careful examination, and a thorough canvass of the advantages and disadvantages of this, in comparison with other locations, the final choice was made."⁹⁰⁵ Unfortunately, the London Board was composed of three non-farmers, Hughes, Boyle, and Senior, who knew nothing about Tennessee. Yet, these three men were willing to "inherit" their colonization site from the Boston Board of Aid to Land Ownership, whose president, Franklin W. Smith, another non-farmer, had

⁹⁰³*The Daily News*, Denver, Wednesday, 8 February 1882, 4.

⁹⁰⁴William Pabor, *A History of the Union Colony of Colorado*, 4.

⁹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, 9.

led the site selection committee. In his 1868 publication, Hermann Bokum, Tennessee's Commissioner of Immigration, stated that less than five per cent of the land in Morgan County and less than ten per cent of the land in Scott County was being farmed. He specifically mentioned "raising hogs and sheep" as appropriate for Scott County.⁹⁰⁶ Moreover, he warned that those who intended to purchase land in Scott and "several other counties in East Tennessee have to employ lawyers, so that they may be certain of obtaining good titles."⁹⁰⁷ The fact that such a small amount of land was being farmed in these counties on the Cumberland Plateau some seven decades after Tennessee's admission to the Union should have raised questions about the quality of the land. This was precisely the point that "Mentor" tried to make unsuccessfully to Hughes when he assured him that "good lands [in the region] were settled up" long before the railroads were constructed.⁹⁰⁸

Sixty years after "Mentor" offered Thomas Hughes some valuable agricultural advice, a University of Tennessee graduate student in agriculture, Ernest I. Miller, cited Rugby's inappropriate and inhospitable location as one reason for the colony's failure to flourish. He correctly noted that "scenic features" as well as the "timber and mineral resources bore more weight in the choice [of the colony's site] than did agricultural suitability."⁹⁰⁹ Miller pointed out that "agriculture in the immediate region surrounding Rugby, at the time of its establishment, was practically non-existent."⁹¹⁰ He stated that in 1879 there were "only 619 farms, containing 23,106 acres" in the area, and most of those belonged to German immigrants who lived in the

⁹⁰⁶Hermann Bokum, *Tennessee Handbook and Immigrant's Guide*, 37.

⁹⁰⁷*Ibid.*

⁹⁰⁸"Mentor," Dayton, Rhea County, writing from Cincinnati, to Thomas Hughes, Esq., 7 September 1880, in the Rugby Papers, TSLA. Hughes was in and out of Rugby at the time; there is no address for him on the letter.

⁹⁰⁹Ernest I. Miller, *The English Settlement at Rugby, Tennessee*. Rural Research Series, Monograph No. 128. (Knoxville, Tennessee: The University of Tennessee, 1941), 6.

⁹¹⁰*Ibid.*, 15.

Wartburg area.⁹¹¹ However, Miller identified other factors which made it difficult for Rugby to thrive. High on his list was the founders' "selection of settlers without agricultural background and training."⁹¹² Although Smith had stated in Bulletin No. 3 that the London Board would carefully screen prospective settlers, there was never either a recruiting or a selection process. Based upon his study of Hughes's speech to the boys at Rugby School in April 1881, Miller concluded that "Hughes himself had not thought through the question as to what qualifications a successful settler in his colony should possess. He believed, rather naively, that 'the English public school spirit---the spirit of hardiness, of reticence, of scrupulousness in all money matters, of cordial fellowship' was a sufficient test of fitness."⁹¹³ Miller cited a newspaper article which stated that "John Boyle, the Rugby manager appointed in 1881, operated a farm nine miles from the town site which he proposed to turn into a practical agricultural school for young men."⁹¹⁴ To more precisely make his point about the importance of recruiting skilled, resilient colonists, Miller cited a 1937 Farm Security Administration Report on the desirable qualities of agricultural settlers. At the top of the list was "technical knowledge, gained chiefly through experience, of the type of agriculture to be practiced in the new farm settlement."⁹¹⁵ The report also emphasized the importance of a settler's having a "favorable attitude toward farm life and the particular opportunity to settle---a wish to farm and a willingness to sacrifice comforts and other values when necessary."⁹¹⁶ By contrast, as Miller rightly argued, for many of Rugby's

⁹¹¹Ernest I. Miller, *The English Settlement*, 15. Wartburg was, and is, the county seat of Morgan County, where the town of Rugby is located.

⁹¹²*Ibid.*, 35.

⁹¹³*Ibid.*, 7.

⁹¹⁴*Ibid.*, 25. This article appeared in the *Cincinnati Commercial* on 11 May 1881. Boyle did purchase farm land several miles from the town site. However, there is no archival evidence that Boyle ever operated any kind of training program for the young Britons who came to Rugby. Boyle was not "appointed" manager of the colony in 1881 although he spent a considerable amount of time there to deal with numerous problems (as was explained in Chapter 6). Clarke continued as the colony's manager until he was terminated by Boyle, probably in early 1882.

⁹¹⁵John B. Holt's study for the Farm Security Administration in Miller, 10.

⁹¹⁶*Ibid.*, 10-11.

settlers, it was “never a choice between working or starving” so they did very little work.⁹¹⁷

Miller was well aware that Thomas Hughes left Rugby soon after its “formal dedication,” and he cited the absence of “intelligent and authoritative leadership” as another reason Rugby failed to flourish.⁹¹⁸

While it is certainly counter-factual to speculate about what Rugby might have become if Thomas Hughes had resided in the settlement, I think Hughes sincerely wanted to establish a “community of gentlemen and ladies” on the Cumberland Plateau.⁹¹⁹ He became president of the London Board of Aid to Land Ownership, but he did not think carefully about colonization. Apparently he did not realize that colonization was a very complex process whereby an individual or a group made an intentional attempt to establish a new and lasting community. Hughes apparently never understood that a colony is a viable outpost of a larger culture, planted on uninhabited lands by people “in possession of a strong determination, ample self-reliance, perseverance, and a spirit unaffected by prolonged monotony.”⁹²⁰ Creating a class-free agriculture settlement would have involved a lot of monotonous work, such as clearing and plowing land, or feeding and caring for livestock. Miller correctly pointed out that pioneers in an agricultural settlement must endure the “sheer drudgery of gardening and field work.”⁹²¹ Neither Hughes nor his fellow London Board members had any personal knowledge of how hard men and women work in order to earn a living on the land.

None of Rugby’s founders acknowledged that three factors played a decisive role in a colony’s success. Since most emigrants and migrants were on the move in order to become more

⁹¹⁷Ernest I. Miller, *The English Settlement*, 10.

⁹¹⁸*Ibid.*

⁹¹⁹Thomas Hughes, *Rugby, Tennessee*, 106.

⁹²⁰Stanley C. Johnson, *A History of Emigration from the United Kingdom to North America, 1763-1912*, 339-340.

⁹²¹Ernest I. Miller, *The English Settlement*, 12.

prosperous, a sustainable economy was essential. Meticulous planning and extremely careful site selection were crucial to the success of a colony. Second, to create a new community in what had otherwise been a wilderness, pioneer colonists had to be both skilled and determined. Third, and every bit as important as skillful, self-reliant pioneers, was strong local leadership that guided social cooperation to carry out the colony's general plan and to overcome unforeseen obstacles. Rugby had neither the strong local leadership nor the skillful pioneers who might have overcome the challenges of a less-than-promising site in order to create a sustainable economy. This dissertation, the first book-length treatment of the birth and childhood of "Tennessee's Victorian Village,"⁹²² has endeavored to explain how the Rugby myth has distorted the truth about Rugby's early history.

Even though the colony never became the "righteous and prosperous community" Hughes expected, his intentions in establishing the Rugby colony deserve study. His emphasis upon the importance of leading a "brave, simple, and truthful life" continues to challenge our received notions of self-indulgence in a world made smaller by globalization.⁹²³ Americans are less than six per cent of the people on this planet, and yet, we consume more than ninety per cent of the world's resources. Our society is every bit as obsessed with *having* rather than *being* as were Hughes's contemporaries. We need to be reminded of respecting what is "fair and true and noble," and of being concerned about "those who are around [us] and will come after [us], and make the path easier for them also."⁹²⁴ However, Hughes's involvement with the Rugby colony should serve as a vivid warning that good intentions are not enough. If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing well.

⁹²²Doug and Dawn Brachey, *Rugby: Tennessee's Victorian Village* (Brentwood, Tennessee: JM Productions, 1987).

⁹²³Thomas Hughes, *The Manliness of Christ*, 144.

⁹²⁴*Ibid.*, 146.

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Oliver Perry Temple was first retained as legal counsel by the Boston-based Board of Aid to Land Ownership to review deeds for land purchases on the Cumberland Plateau. He subsequently worked for the London-based Board of Aid so his papers include correspondence with Franklin W. Smith, Thomas Hughes, John Boyle, William Hastings Hughes, Cyrus Clarke, Henry Kimber, and others involved in the establishment of the colony between 1879 and 1887.

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Brenda Louise Alexander was born in Jackson, Tennessee. Her parents, Cooper and Mildred Louise Pierce Alexander, graduated from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where she began her formal education as a four-year-old in the University's Nursery School. Her mother completed her master's degree in Child and Family Studies during the year that Brenda and her brother, Pierce Cooper Alexander, were in the Nursery School. After graduating from Jackson High School, Brenda attended Vanderbilt University before transferring to UT, Knoxville, to complete her undergraduate degree in Child and Family Studies. She also earned her first master's degree in this field at UT, Knoxville. Her brother is also a graduate of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and of the UT Medical School in Memphis.

After working several years as a journalist, Brenda received a Rotary Foundation Fellowship to study history and politics at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. She participated in a student study tour of the Soviet Union at the conclusion of her Rotary Fellowship experience and then returned to the United States where she became a research analyst for the Tennessee State Senate. She later devoted four years to the study of religion at Harvard University, where she earned two master's degrees. Brenda then moved to Washington, D.C. where she worked as Director of Christian Education for Christ Church, Georgetown. After moving back to her hometown, she taught history for twelve years, achieving the rank of associate professor at Union University. During that time she earned a master's degree in education, with a focus upon history education.

In 2006 Brenda became a doctoral student in modern European history at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She completed her Ph.D. in May 2014.