
Thomas Pollard: A Cornish Miner in the Appalachians

By Collamer M. Abbott

The nomadic life of a large number of Appalachian miners is epitomized in the life of Thomas Pollard. Like many of his fellow workers, Pollard—superintendent of the Ely copper mine in Vershire, Vermont, during the 1850s and 1860s—was used to pulling up stakes and moving to other mines, near or far. A Cornish miner with extensive practical experience, he was always on the go, prospecting, superintending, or developing mineral deposits for those capitalists willing to invest in speculative enterprises along the Appalachian Chain during the last half of the nineteenth century. As did other veterans of Cornish hardrock mining, Pollard inspired confidence in investors who knew nothing about the subject. Thomas Pollard's diaries, now in the collections of the Vermont Historical Society, can help us both see and interpret the patterns in the life of a Cornish miner in the Appalachians in the latter 1800s.¹

Having worked as a boy in Cornwall's mines, Pollard came to the United States at the age of twenty-seven in 1842. He worked in coal mines in Pennsylvania, then in gold and copper mines in Virginia. He was prospecting and inspecting mineral deposits in New York for capitalists in 1854 when investors in Vermont Copper Mining Company's operation in Vershire asked him to take charge of their mine. That property had been opened twenty years earlier by local men who lacked the experience and equipment necessary to develop the deposit.²

For the next seventeen years, except for a hiatus between 1863 and 1865, Pollard and his family had a home in the area. They first re-

sided at the mine in Vershire, then in West Fairlee, a mile and a half to the east, and finally in Post Mills, three miles to the southeast. Pollard ultimately moved to a farm he purchased in Dover, New Jersey. There he lived the rest of his life while actively exploring, prospecting, and developing mines from Pennsylvania to Maine for investors still interested in Appalachian deposits despite the boom on the western mining frontier.

Pollard stayed put through the 1860s and into the 1870s, during his tenure as "captain" and superintendent of the mine in Vershire, farming his property, selling and trading his produce, and boarding single miners. Although Pollard says very little about his wife in his diary, she, with the help of hired girls, carried the burden of boarding the miners. She was the silent partner in a life typical for the wife of a nomadic miner.

At the Vermont Copper Mining Company's mine, Pollard's duties as superintendent varied. He hired and fired workers, set contracts in the mine, designed a tramway to bring down ore to the washhouse, and bought all manner of supplies. He constructed a dumping chute, repaired the railroad in the mine, hired ox teams to haul ore and materials, and paid for a preacher and a brass band's performance.

During his 1863-65 hiatus from the Vermont Copper Company—the result of his resignation due to political maneuvering and disagreement among the directors—Pollard resumed the nomadic life of prospector and developer. In 1869, after a conflict over his adjacent property with Smith Ely, president of the Vermont Copper

Mining Company, Pollard was fired or resigned again. He thereupon resumed his nomadic life, traveling incessantly to prospect, explore, and develop marginal mines capable of only minor production of pyrites, copper, iron, and other minerals.

Pollard's wanderings began in early 1863, shortly after the friction began over his purchase, with partner Joseph I. Bicknell, of an adjacent property into which Vermont Copper's vein extended. Pollard moved to West Fairlee, and, with expenses and salary paid, traveled to Sweetsburg and Brome, "Canada East" (Quebec), and to Waterbury, Vermont. There he may have worked the copper mine that Isaac Tyson, Jr., had developed in the 1830s, when Tyson was at South Strafford manufacturing copperas and experimenting with a heated blast and anthracite coal to smelt copper. Pollard was pursuing the old maxim: "If you want to find a new mine, look in an old one."

In June 1863, Pollard prospected in Franconia, New Hampshire, and Waterbury, Vermont. Throughout the summer he continued to work in these places for investors, and he made a prospecting side trip to Wolcott, Vermont, where copper had been discovered but never developed. During the fall, amidst traveling in Canada, Vermont, and New Hampshire, he took charge of the Croton iron works on the Hudson River in November. The Croton mine was financed by New Yorker Loring L. Lombard, among the earliest investors in the Vermont Copper Mining Company operation in Vershire.

And so Pollard set out again, prospecting, exploring, and superintending old mines for the Croton works, among them the Brewster and Tilly Foster iron mines and the Empire lead mine in Putnam County, New York, near the Connecticut border. He also visited the Croton and Crugers iron mines along the Hudson River, made forays into Pennsylvania, to Sutton, Quebec, and to Otisville in Orange County, New

York. He traveled to obscure places like the Wallkill lead mine and the New York Central mine, and visited iron mines along the New York side of Lake Champlain. He was familiar with many iron mines around Dover, New Jersey, most of which he worked at some time: Mine Hill, Schooley's Mountain, Hibernia, Denville, Port Murray, Mount Hope, and Greenville.

When Pollard "took charge" of a mine, like Brewster's iron mine or the Croton mine, he superintended development, bought supplies and equipment, recruited workers, and "paid off" with money supplied by investors who visited their properties irregularly. The payrolls were never big. One of the biggest, in December 1863 at the Croton iron mine, amounted to only eight hundred dollars. The Croton mine suspended operations in June 1864—the fate of most marginal mines—after what results Pollard's diary does not indicate. His own compensation beyond expenses for prospecting might come to thirty-two dollars for four days of "service," or, in another instance, fifty dollars for five days of work at the Empire lead mine. As superintendent of the Ely mine in Vershire, he had received sixty-six dollars a month.

In January 1865—following a rump meeting of the Vermont Copper Mining Company which elected retired New York furniture manufacturer Smith Ely president and voted in a new board of directors—Pollard was induced to return to the company, along with Richard W. Barrett and Thomas Pascoe, Pollard's son-in-law. While superintending the Vershire mine, Pollard was also actively engaged at the Pike Hill mines in Corinth, located ten miles to the north and under the same investors. In April 1865 Pollard again "took charge" of the Vershire mine, after an agreement permitted him to continue prospecting and developing other mines while devoting one-third of his time to the affairs of the Vermont Copper Mining Company.

This time Pollard found himself involved in

a more complex job of getting the mine back in shape, after difficulties with management, finances, and labor had led to reduced production during the Civil War. Although he oversaw the whole operation, Pollard could depend on Barrett to boss the dressing department and Pascoe to manage the work underground.

The problems were how to develop the deposit most efficiently as the single main shaft deepened, how to transport the ore, and negotiating for the equipment needed to hoist, tram, and dress ore. The search for local timber to fill the demand for more housing in the booming settlement introduced even more difficulties, as did a plan to smelt ore on site. The introduction of smelting involved Pollard in an experiment to mine peat from a small bog about a mile east of West Fairlee, and in contracting with local farmers to produce large quantities of charcoal for smelter fuel.

Pollard moved his family back to the mushrooming mining village from West Fairlee, bustling now as the commercial center. While guiding work at the mine, he still traveled for investors, prospected in New Jersey mines, and managed, with hired help, to work his farm in Dover. At Vershire he had to purchase supplies, plant a garden, hire a school teacher, help manage the boarding house, and handle a brief miners' strike. All of this, various domestic matters, and he was still in charge of paying workers at the Brewster iron mine in New York.

In 1869 Pollard's extra undertakings included surveying the adit at Copperas Hill copper mine in South Strafford, Vermont, and election to the Vermont legislature in September. What he accomplished for the Vermont Copper Mining Company as a legislator he does not indicate in his diary, only recording his trips back and forth to the capital, Montpelier. In November 1869, when Smith Ely demanded that Pollard sell the pasture bordering the Vermont Copper Company property, Pollard refused and quit his job again.

This time he moved to Post Mills and continued prospecting and developing for New York capitalists, some of whom were still investing in the Vershire mine.

This time his activities led to an interesting interval at an old pyrites mine northeast of Anthony's Nose, a prominent feature of the Hudson River landscape at the northern entrance to the Highlands. In this venture he associated again with two early investors in the Vershire mine: Joseph I. Bicknell and Loring L. Lombard. In February 1870 Pollard took charge of the Hudson River Copper Company, devoting a third of his time to superintending the mine for \$125 a month. He was free the rest of the time to prospect and superintend other mines.

The Hudson company's mine, called the Philips, is located in Putnam County, New York.³ It lies about four miles northeast of Peekskill on a ridge that peaks at Anthony's Nose opposite Bear Mountain. Originally considered an iron mine in the 1840s, it also contained copper. But Pollard worked it for the pyrites used to produce sulphuric acid in plants at Green Point, Long Island, Baltimore, and Highland Station on the Hudson near the mine. Between 1869 and 1871 Pollard superintended both the Brewster iron mine and the Philips mine.

At the Philips mine, Pollard again supervised mining, set contracts, and recruited miners, whose passage he paid from New York City and to whom he often gave bills of exchange to bring their wives or fiancées from Cornwall to the United States. On one trip Pollard escorted miners up the Hudson from New York. On another occasion he gave a bill of exchange for Catherine Bennett of "England." Another time the bill of exchange was for a miner, William Williams. Pollard also gave a bill of exchange to John Dabb for Mary Anne Dabb of St. Agnes, Cornwall.

Pollard's work at the Hudson River Copper Company involved frequent trips to surrounding villages: Cold Spring, Garrison, Highland

Station, and to Fort Montgomery on the west bank of the Hudson River. Travels further afield included visits to Brewster, an iron mine in Richmond, Massachusetts, a nickel prospect at Litchfield, Connecticut, and to the Forest of Dean iron mine across the river. Then he would be off by train to New York to catch the steam cars to Ely Station in Vermont and the stage coach to West Fairlee and Post Mills, where his family was then living. In 1871 he sold his Post Mills house and moved his family permanently to their Dover, New Jersey, farm.

On 18 April 1871, Pollard planted his first garden on his Dover farm, but his nomadic life continued. He was still in charge at the Brewster mine and, until September 1871, employed at the Philips mine. These obligations required him to make frequent trips up and down the Hudson River. Establishing himself in Dover also involved him and his family in its community life: church going, holiday celebrations, camp meetings at Denville, and school for the younger children in Dover village. With the help of hired hands, Pollard worked and improved his farm while commuting to places like Pottstown, Reading, and Columbia, Pennsylvania, and to mines nearby in New Jersey at Denville, Schooley's Mountain, Hibernia, Port Murray, and the Greenville iron mine at Copperas Mountain.

In the mid-1870s Pollard was occupied with a lawsuit in which he was charged with trespassing on the Vermont Copper Company's property in Vershire, Vermont—the old quarrel over property lines brought to a head. The suit required Pollard to make frequent extended trips to West Fairlee, to find a long list of witnesses in scattered places, to attend hearings in Chelsea, the seat of Orange County, and to explore the mine secretly at night to avoid confronting company “pickets,” hired in part to keep trespassers from surveying the terrain. Pollard eventually lost the case after years of litigation, expense, and travel made while he was still prospecting and superintending other mines.

In New York and Vermont Pollard still associated with investors from the early 1850s. These included Smith and John C. Ely, who were involved in other speculations and in trying to resolve the Vermont lawsuits over locations by buying Pollard's land. Some meetings may have been contentious. Once, according to Pollard's journal, John C. Ely swore that Pollard would not dare to go into the mine. This may have been what inspired Pollard to surreptitiously survey the mine one night with the help of one of the old workers still loyal to him.

Not all was work. When he was in West Fairlee he visited and went fox hunting with old friends, attended church at the mine or in West Fairlee, and participated in the installation of officers of the Jackson Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, of which he was a charter member.

Amongst other comings and goings in the 1870s, Pollard worked mines near Dover and superintended one in Cheshire, Connecticut. This mine was near what has been called the first barite mine in the United States, at Jinny Hill, discovered in 1813 and worked most intensively between 1838 and 1878. Both copper and barite mining attracted Cornish miners to the area, some following the fortunes of Thomas Pollard and others drawn by word of mouth.⁴

A picture from about 1875, when Pollard was working the copper property, shows miners at the adit of the Jinny Hill barite mine, where Cornish miners worked. On one occasion Pollard bought two pulleys from the Jinny Hill company for his hoisting equipment. He apparently knew the Cornish superintendent of the Jinny Hill mine, Captain Lanyon, and made at least one other visit to the site to pay Lanyon a bill of eleven dollars, perhaps for the pulleys.

Going to Connecticut from 1874 to 1876 did not rule out investigating the Alby copper mine and the Essex gold mine near Littleton, New Hampshire, nor gold in Concord, Vermont. Another trip took Pollard to the Liberty mine

near Frederick, Maryland, a property once worked by Isaac Tyson, Jr., the pioneer developer of the copperas and copper mine in Strafford, Vermont, in the 1830s. This trip to Maryland also allowed Pollard to visit his daughter Lette, who had just had a baby, and her husband Anthony Hosking. Hosking had worked with Pollard at the Vershire mine, then followed him to the Hudson River copper mine and to Cheshire, Connecticut.

Pollard soon returned to New Haven, Connecticut, meeting a Mr. Munson, who owned the Cheshire copper mine. But this was only a stop-over during more traveling undertaken to fight another lawsuit, this one instigated by his son-in-law Thomas Pascoe, who claimed an interest in Pollard's holdings in Vershire. Back and forth Pollard went from New York to Vermont to pursue the suit with Pascoe, who had now become the "villain." Pascoe was the father of Pollard's granddaughter Jemima, who was named after her mother, Pollard's daughter, who had died in 1863 in West Fairlee. The Cheshire "adventure" ended in January 1876, when Mr. Munson "kicked over" Pollard's proposal to continue to work the copper mine.

The years after 1876 may have been more hectic than ever. Pollard was commuting to Vermont while exploring soapstone quarries for Loring L. Lombard, working on his Dover farm, and resolving various family matters. After renting a house in Dover for \$22.50 a year, Pollard finished his new house, then "Mother," Lette, and Arthur went west, probably to visit Alice in Chicago. Of Arthur, Pollard wrote, "How I miss the dear boy," a rare comment along with the mention of "Mother," who so seldom appeared in the diary.

Once Pollard's children were old enough, some worked with him at different mines. But son Benjamin split off early, attending school as a boy in Barre, Vermont, about twenty-five miles northwest of Vershire. Barre's principal business was granite quarrying, an ac-

tivity that Pollard himself never seems to have entered, although some Cornishmen migrated to the marble quarries in western Vermont and other granite quarries in northern Vermont when the Vershire mine closed.

Son Benjamin established himself eventually in a clothing store in Rutland, Vermont. He visited frequently after Pollard moved to Dover and they met when Pollard commuted back and forth to Vermont. Another son, John, lived in Windsor, Vermont, and Pollard stopped there during trips. His son William worked with Pollard at the Hudson River copper mine, where his daughter Lette ran her boarding house and Pollard did the grocery shopping in nearby villages, lending her money for supplies.

In his diary, Pollard recorded daughter Jemima's marriage to Thomas Pascoe in 1862 and her death in the autumn of 1863, a few months after the birth of her daughter Jemima. In May 1872 Lette married Anthony Hosking, and in April 1873 Pollard's son William married Miss Jennie Wiggins. Anthony and Lette had a son in Frederick, Maryland, in 1874. Son Benjamin married a Miss Edison, probably in Rutland, Vermont, in May 1879, and immediately made a visit to the Dover farm with his bride.

When Pollard went back to West Fairlee or Ely village he was sure to call on old friends and colleagues. At the Dunstones he would find his granddaughter Jemima, whom her Aunt Mary Dunstone cared for after Pollard's daughter Jemima died. This relationship continued until 1882 because Jemima's father, Thomas Pascoe, was usually busy at mines away from home.

The impression might be that Pollard could not have had much of a family life, for he also seemed to be away more often than at home during his active years. But his diary records continuous participation in community events, and when his children were old enough they were constantly with him at different mines. He often carried the children to school, to Sunday

school or to church. In Vershire he served on the school committee for the district where the mine was located, involved in hiring and boarding teachers and maintaining the school building.

Pollard and his family were church-goers. Although he was almost certainly a Methodist like most Cornishmen, he attended Congregational, Episcopalian, and Presbyterian churches when he was away from home. He once heard Henry Ward Beecher preach, apparently in Peekskill, when superintendent of the Hudson River copper mine. In West Fairlee he went to the Union church. In the early days at Ely he had gone to services in the brick school at the east end of the village or to services in the parishioners' homes. When the Methodists built a chapel of their own in Ely village early in 1871, Pollard took the first opportunity to attend services there during one of his frequent visits home.

Church services in West Fairlee, where he must have known almost everybody, were as much a social as a religious occasion. Church meant Sunday school for the children, as well as Sunday school picnics and religious holidays. Another aspect of Pollard's religious experience was his membership in Jackson Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, still active in West Fairlee today.

With all of Pollard's traveling, one can lose touch with the varied social lives of people in small villages like Ely, West Fairlee, Dover, and Cheshire. His diary records levees at West Fairlee, church festivals and Sunday school, the Cornish miners' band for gala occasions, balls, birthdays, picnics, weddings, baseball games, velocipede races, the agricultural fair at Post Mills, sleighing parties, dramatic shows in Ely hall or Whitney's in West Fairlee, a circus in Peekskill, neighborhood parties for children, camp meetings, concerts by traveling orchestras, collar and elbow wrestling, Christmas parties, fox hunting with old cronies, and a tightrope walker

in Dover.

Pollard's diary entries of the 1870s can be repetitious, but they tell of a full life: intensive improvement and production on his Dover farm, building a new house in Dover, more prospecting, seeing his children grow up and leave home. Pollard served a stint as superintendent of the Cape Rosier copper mine in 1881 and 1882 during the frenetic mining boom in Maine, and a brief tenure at the old Ely mine in Vershire in 1889 and 1890. The latter property, was by then owned by the Copperfield Mining and Smelting Company, financed by German capitalist Otto K. Krause. Krause backed the experiments of an old enemy of the Vermont Copper Mining Company, Francis Michael Frederick Cazin, the man who had precipitated the closing of the mine in 1883.

The Ely job put Pollard back on familiar ground in Vershire and West Fairlee, but he was older and not well and had to quit for the last time in March 1890. After that he worked his farm, visited his dispersed family, and made one last long trip to Chicago in May 1893 to visit his daughter Alice and the Columbian Exposition. That trip ended in tragedy when Alice contracted typhoid and died and Pollard accompanied her body back to New Jersey for burial. Pollard's wife, Mary, had died in 1887. He died at another daughter's home in Clifton, New Jersey, in February 1900, aged 85.



Modern commuters who complain about daily trips to the city might be amazed at Thomas Pollard's regime. At his most active he maintained a pace exhausting even using automobiles and highways. Pollard used a spiderweb network of railroads and stage coaches that reached into every corner of his mineral domain. One sequence of his movements reads as follows: On 29 Feb. 1864, Pollard left West Fairlee by stage for Ely Station, took the train to New York City,

rode the Hudson River Railroad up the river, then took horse and buggy to Brewster, arriving at noon on 1 March. On 2 March he went to Peekskill, stayed till the fourth, then went to New York. On the sixth he returned to Peekskill and walked to his residence that night. On the seventh he paid the miners at the Croton iron mine. On the ninth he journeyed back to New York City and then returned up river to the Brewster iron mine.

Other trips involved boat passages from New Haven, Connecticut, to New York City. Where no railroads ran, Pollard traveled by stagecoach or, for shorter trips, horse and buggy. These trips were not always easy. Pollard described the six-hour trip from the Hudson River Copper Company's mine near Peekskill to Brewster in 1870 as "a hard drive."

An interesting feature of Pollard's peregrinations was how relatives and fellow workers followed him from Vermont to New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Maine, New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut.⁵ Richard W. Barrett, who had headed the ore dressing department at Vershire, worked at the Brewster iron mine in 1864 under Superintendent Pollard. Both Thomas Pascoe, Pollard's son-in-law, and Barrett returned to the Vershire in 1865 when the new directors and president, Smith Ely, took over. Anthony Hosking, a young miner who eventually married Pollard's daughter Lette, followed Pollard to the Hudson River Copper Company after he left the Vershire in February 1869. Hosking later worked at the Cheshire, Connecticut, copper mine with Pollard. Lette also joined her father at the Hudson River mine, where she kept a boarding house for miners.

Others who followed Pollard to different mines included his son William, John Hammer, William Paul, and James Quinn. Sam Woolcock, who had worked at Vershire, also worked for Pollard at the Hudson River mine. Woolcock later returned to the Vershire, where he was one of the ringleaders of the 1883 "Ely War"—the

revolt of unpaid miners against Vermont Copper Mining Company. Joseph Polsue, an old Vershire hand, worked under Pollard at the Hudson River copper mine, and two other Vershire veterans, Alexander Polglase and James Paul, worked with Pollard in Cheshire, Connecticut.

People jokingly called the Cornish "Cousin Jacks" and "Cousin Jennies" because they all seemed to be related, and that seems to have been the case with Pollard. Besides his own family there was his brother John Pollard, who had mined in the South before the Civil War and crossed through the lines to escape involvement. There were Thomas Pollard's Uncle William and Aunt Amaretta, Cousin John and Uncle John, Sister Juliette, Cousin Annie, and Sister Jemima Hocking.

One way to epitomize Thomas Pollard's and many other Cornish miners' nomadic lives, in outline if not in detail, is to quote from an autobiographical sketch by his brother John, with its links to events chronicled in Thomas's diary:

I, John Pollard, was born March 12, 1824, in the parish of Kay, about 4 miles west of Truro, Cornwall, England. My father's name was Thomas. He died when I was about 5 years old. My mother's name was Alice. She died when I was about 8 years old.

About that time I was put to work at a stamp mill at whelefortune [sic], about 1 mile south of Chasewater. I worked at the stamps awhile, and in a tailor shop awhile, and in a jeweler's shop one year, then went underground in a copper mine at wheledamsil [sic] at eleven years of age. When 16 I went to South Wales with my brother Thomas and worked in a mine there about two years. Then I returned to England and worked in the same mine I had left until I was 19 years old. From there I went to Bideford

and worked in a mine until 1846. There I met my future wife, Elizabeth Brend. I came to the United States of America in 1846, landing in New York the 6th of August after a voyage, in a sailing vessel, of 52 days. I went to work in Minersville, Schuylkill County, Pa., in the coal mines.

About six months later I sent to England for Miss Brend, and met her on landing, in New York City where we were married. After working in Minersville about two years I entered a partnership with the firm name of Holman & Co. and we sold our coal in Philadelphia, Pa. I left the coal fields in 1852 and went to work in a gold mine in Spotsylvania County. . . about 17 miles from Fredericksburg. From there I went to Sikesville in Maryland and worked in a copper mine there. While working there I had an offer to go back to Virginia to take charge of a lead mine. . . in Albermarle County. I was there one year and then went to Carroll County, Virginia, and was there six years living in a log cabin and lived very happy without much care and my family kept well and I had good pay and saved lots of my earnings and lived well, although that section of the country was rough it was very healthy. I was quite content to stay there, but very unexpectedly a man from Baltimore, Maryland, who was president of the Guilford Copper Mine in Guilford County, North Carolina, who had heard of me through some of my friends came over the mountains a 100 miles by stagecoach and engaged me to go to North Carolina to supervise his mine. [John Pollard relocated to the North during the Civil War to avoid being drafted into the Confederate Army.

After passing through the lines] we got a good rest in Pottsville [Pa.,] and then went to West Fairlee, Vermont, and visited my brother Thomas and family. From there we went to England, on our way there my dear wife fell sick. We went to her father's in Bideford, Devonshire, there my wife died one week after we got there. We, the children and I, visited friends in Swansea, Wales, and in Cornwall, England, and at the end of six months came back to the United States. . . .

My sister-in-law came to America with me and I married her as soon as we reached New York. The laws of England forbid my marrying my deceased wife's sister. My brother Thomas had a situation waiting for me in Orange County, New York, on my arrival. So I took my wife and two daughters there and soon commenced housekeeping. My next move was to Brewster, Putnam County, New York, to supervise the Tilly Foster Iron Mines, . . . while there my second wife died, Nov. 8, 1867. She died in West Fairlee, Vt., at my brother Thomas's home, was there on a visit. She was buried there. In the year 1870 I with my two daughters, Mary Eliza and Alice Ann, moved to Richmond, Mass. In Nov. 1873 I married Lefa Hall and came to North Adams, [Mass.,] to live and North Adams has been my home since that time. Since then I went to Lumpkin County, Georgia, and superintended a gold mine for a New York company[;] this was the last mining I did. In Jan. 19, 1890, my wife Lefa died. My daughter Alice has been my housekeeper since that time. I see that I have omitted to state that I went to Cape Rosier in the state of Maine and superintended the opening of a

copper mine before my wife died. I was in very good health at the time but my wife was not and she wished me to come home and quit mining and I did so. [John died at 75 in North Adams in 1899.]⁶

Thomas Pollard was retired when he visited the great Columbian Exposition in 1893, the "Chicago Fare," as he called it. The exposition included elaborate exhibits by the great mining districts of the western states. In his career of prospecting and developing marginal eastern mines Pollard had always employed the most primitive equipment: hand hammers and drills, spalling and cobbing hammers, black powder, candles or oil lamps, and simple ore carts, tramways, and horse whims. Processing never got beyond the hand cobbing of ore, which was shipped elsewhere for treatment to extract sulphuric acid or smelting to recover copper. The Chicago exposition featured the latest equipment—beyond anything Pollard had probably ever used—built for use in large, modern mineral enterprises.

What did Thomas Pollard think of the exhibits of western mining states: Montana's exhibit of gold nuggets and other mineral specimens, and its nine-foot statue of Justice in native silver? What of Colorado's exhibit of gold- and silver-bearing quartz from such famous places as Leadville, Gunnison County, Cripple Creek, and Creede, and its statue of the Silver Queen—eighteen feet high from its base to the American eagle

at its summit? How about the exhibits from Arizona, Idaho, California, South Dakota, and Michigan, with its renowned Calumet and Hecla? Pollard didn't say!⁷

Did Thomas Pollard prosper? Rich New Yorkers, who had made their fortunes in other fields, paid the expenses and salary for all of Pollard's work, which may have paid him better than superintending a single mine. Pollard was also able to acquire stock in some ventures, such as the Vermont Copper Mining Company and its offshoot peat company, and in other mines—some of which he sold for a profit. His affluence must have been modest, but, while working at the Ely mine in the 1850s and 1860s, he prospered enough to buy his farm in Dover, New Jersey. Later he built a new house for his family and was able to continue working the farm with hired help. He was able to travel after retirement.

Although his life did not become the bonanza dream of the western miner, it seems to have achieved the more modest American dream that he had sought when he left the poverty and restricted possibilities of the declining mining industry of his native Cornwall. We may conclude one thing from Thomas Pollard's own record, supported by his brother John's autobiography, and by the experiences of those miners who followed Thomas from mine to mine: his career typified those of a large number of miners in the northern Appalachian region of the eastern United States during the last half of the nineteenth century. ■

Notes:

- 1 My less detailed article on Thomas Pollard appeared in *International Review of the History of Banking* (Geneve, Librairie Droz) No.6 (1973): 171-178. Major sources for this article are: "Genealogy of the Descendents of Thomas Pollard and Cordelia Hicks, Cornwall, England, and United States of America." MS. Mrs. N. H. Schling, Huntington, New York; and Thomas Pollard's Diaries for the years 1858, 1861-65, 1869-76, 1878-79, 1890-91, 1893 and 1895. These last two sources are in the Vermont Historical Society Collections, Montpelier, Vermont.
- 2 For details on the Vermont Copper Mining Co. mine in Vershire, Vermont, see Collamer M. Abbott, "Green Mountain Copper," MS. 1964, in Collamer Abbott Papers, Special Collections, Bailey-Howe Library, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT.
- 3 John H. Betts, "Anthony's Nose, New York: A New Look at an Old Location," *Matrix* 5 (Winter 1997): 131-145.
- 4 Greg A. Brick, Robert M. Thorson, and David A. Poirier, "Geoarcheology of the Jinny Hill Mines," *Cultural Resource Management* 21, no. 7 (1998): 31-35.
- 5 I have traced the migration and dispersion of some of the hundreds of miners from the Vermont copper mines in "Migrating Miners," *Society for Industrial Archeology: New England Chapter* 11, no. 2 (1992): 6-7.
- 6 Autobiographical sketch by John Pollard, dated 23 Feb. 1899, copy of MS. by Mrs. N. H. Schling, also included in "Genealogy of the Descendants of Thomas Pollard and Cordelia Hicks."
- 7 I am indebted to Mark and Karen Vendl of LaGrange Park, III. for notes on the World's Columbian Exposition from their presentation "Mines and Mining Enterprises, World's Columbian Exposition, 1893," at the Eleventh Annual Conference of the Mining History Association, Tonopah, Nevada, June 2000.