



Montgomery Historical Society  
P. O. Box 47 Montgomery, Vermont 05470  
[www.montgomeryvt.us/mhs.htm](http://www.montgomeryvt.us/mhs.htm)  
[pratthall@gmail.com](mailto:pratthall@gmail.com)



**Mary Elkins Gardyne, 1950**

Mary Elkins Gardyne was a noted author and active in Montgomery's civic life. Her two books of poetry document life in early northern Vermont and southern Quebec in a hybrid dialect of French and English spoken by many of French Canadian origin who settled in the area. The two volumes were titled: "Oup In Ole Vermont" and "Encore Oup In Ole Vermont".

This poem, a sample, is titled "Les Etats Unis"

Non, non! I not get born on Stat!  
I earn' from Canadaw.  
I leev long tam on St. Louis  
Nace place you nevaire saw.

My moder, he eam'dead, w'en I

Ban only ha'f pas' four;  
An' gran'pere, who ees beeg farmerre  
Haint min' for tak' wan more.

She raise good cow, de hoss an' pig,  
An' plaintee chicken too!  
He cut de tie for ral'road, heem;  
Qui! earn d'argent beaucoup!

She justice peace, notaire publique,  
An' mak' eet hees beeznesse  
To kip de peace among nabor,  
So geev dem lawyaire res'.

From Canadaw, at 'bout twenty  
I t'ink I mak my trac'  
N'oubliez pas mon cher gran'pere,  
Mais still I haint go bac'.

I marry smartes' Vermont femme  
Dat show eet plain to me  
W'ere get de mos for w'at you do  
Eet ess L'Etats-Unis!

He say we geev de church support;  
Mais w'en de school ees free  
We sen' our youg wan rat along  
Wit' de majoritee.

I haint got eet moche learnin', me,  
los' mark my x for nam';  
Mais I ban want de boyan' girl  
To get heem all de sam'.

We plac' dem on firs' class High School  
An' see eet all way troo,  
So w'en dey read paper on me,  
Je comprend, sam' you do!

Eet ban long tam I want to 'splain  
To Yankee stan' we tak'  
Mais I can't spik eet English me,  
An' fraid I mak' de break.

She mos' wors' man dat nevaire lecv  
Who don't know w'en she's fed,  
Mais turn aroun' an' bite de han'  
Dat geet to heem hees bread.

You wrote me doun for wan dat know  
 An' tol' de worl' for me  
 I love de lan' dat geev us chanceLe bon Etats Unis!

Mary Elkins Gardyne, Encore Oup in Ole Vermont, Free Press Printing Co., Burlington, Vermont, 1927, pp. 26-27.

St Albans Messenger Article, 1949

## Mrs. Gardyne, Dialect Poet, Notes 82nd Birthdate Today

MONTGOMERY CENTER — Mrs. Mary Elkins Gardyne, widow of C. A. Gardyne, former assistant judge of Franklin County Court and local civic leader, is today observing her 82nd birthday anniversary at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Ann Dimmock of Haverhill, Mass., where she is spending about three months.

Mrs. Gardyne is prominently known throughout Vermont and New England for her prolific work in writing descriptive poems of Vermont life in the broken jargon of Canadian French-English dialect.

The Montgomery Center poetress has written many poems in the vein of her well-known "Oup in Ole Vermont" and "Encore Oup in Ole Vermont." These have been compiled and published in book form.

She wrote her first dialect poem during World War I. It was called "Harvest Moon" and proved an instant success among her friends.

Thus encouraged she wrote more verse along the same lines and in 1920 she brought out her first volume of collected poems to be followed in seven years by her second volume. During the interim she wrote and sold two humorous verse dramas, "The Antsisters of Widdy Maloney" and "The Old Fashioned Lyceum," both of which have proved popular for home-talent shows.

In the introduction to "Encore Oup in Ole Vermont," Mason S. Stone, a former state commissioner of education, declared, on publication of the poem, "The Mantle of the beloved William Henry Drummond has fallen on Mrs. Gardyne's shoulders."

Mrs. Gardyne's writing grew out of her love for her many French-Canadian neighbors and her desire to give poetic expression to the many fine qualities she learned to appreciate in them. Her familiarity with the French Canadian people of her community came from intimate contact in the business when she and her husband operated a general

store and he was Montgomery town clerk.

Although born in North Troy, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. William Gilman Elkins, she received her early education in a convent in Ottawa where she had her first intimate contact with Canadian people and learned to speak French.

After graduation from St. Johnsbury Academy in 1886, Mrs. Gardyne taught in North Troy for five years. She mothered four children.

Only recently Mrs. Gardyne received word from Mrs. Gordon Baldwin of Windsor, executive secretary of the Poetry Society of Vermont in Montpelier that she, Dorcas Palmer and Sarah Cleg-horn were elected honorary members of the society.

One of Mrs. Gardyne's daughters, Mrs. Ann Dimmock of Haverhill, Mass., is following in her mother's literary footsteps. She has written considerable verse and the following appeared in The Boston Herald of last Dec. 20.

The "JHW" refers to Jasper Wright, who was teaching at Montgomery at the same time as did Mrs. Dimmock.

### Vermont Schoolmaster

(To J. H. W.)

I often think of how his coming made a difference in our town...

Fitted by training an ability To play a greater role, he let the little village

Hold his heart, for country folk And country ways were to his liking,

And he saw a need to serve. He had a wholesome attitude toward work.

His students caught the fire of new ideas

Expanding young minds far beyond

The interests of the valley...

He found beauty in the com-

monplace Where, careless and unseeing we passed by.

It seems but yesterday yet one can count

More than a score of years since he went on

I always think of him at Christmas time...

Perhaps because of Wise Men bringing gifts.



MONTGOMERY CTR.— Mrs. Mary Elkins Gardyne, known throughout the state for her phrasing of the French-Canadian dialect, noted her 83rd birthday recently still interested in the many aspects of life in this community and the world.

A native of North Troy where she was born Jan. 23, 1867 and the widow of the late Charles A. Gardyne, former town clerk, she is residing now with a daughter, Mrs. Harold V. Gavel.

Mrs. Gardyne has devoted a lifetime to the writing of things she sees about her, with many of verses published in Vermont papers, and she served for many for the St. Albans Messenger.

She is best known, however, for her French-Canadian poems, many of which are familiar to readers in the small collections which she has had printed, "Oup in Ole Vermont" which was published in 1920. 1950

A more recent collection that was welcomed by readers who treasured her authentic creations of the French-Canadian humor and philosophy as well as speech is "Encore Oup in Ole Vermont" which contained later poems.

Reviewers of her work have found a real feeling for the people of whom she has written and have praised them as much superior to the mere caricatures in the harsh humor often found in the many dialect poems in circulation.

Readings of her works featured her birthday party when 15 of her friends and neighbors gathered at the Gavel home for a social afternoon. In addition she received many messages from near and far.

Still in good health, she takes a lively interest in everyday events, attends church each Sunday, helps around the house.

Her obituary from the St. Albans Messenger follows below:



January 7-1956

## Mary Gardyne, Author, Dies In St. Albans

MONTGOMERY CENTER, Jan. 7.—Mrs. Mary Elkins Gardyne, 89, author and widow of State Sen. Charles A. Gardyne, died Saturday evening in Kerbs Memorial Hospital, St. Albans, after a long illness.

Mrs. Gardyne was widely known through two books of verse dealing with the French Canadians, dramatic group plays and historical articles. She was in wide demand as a lecturer, and gave French Canadian dialect readings throughout the state for many years.

Mr. and Mrs. Gardyne's interest in the development of northern Vermont was manifested in her writings and his long career of public service.

Mrs. Gardyne has been for years a leader in the religious and civic life of this town and very early initiated such projects as street lights, sidewalks, tree planting and cemetery care. Through her guidance, the village organizations raised money for the success of many community projects for over 40 years.

She was an honorary member of the Richford Women's Club and the Poetry Society of Vermont.

Mrs. Gardyne was the third child of the late William G. and Fanny Elkins. She was born in North Troy, Jan. 3, 1867, and was a great - great - granddaughter of Col. Jonathan Elkins, Vermont patriot of the Revolutionary War.

She was educated in the Convent of the Grey Nuns in Ottawa, Ont., and was one of the oldest living graduates of St. Johnsbury Academy. She was graduated there in 1886.

Following her marriage in 1889, she spent four years in Westfield, where her husband was in the mercantile business. Later they lived in Manchester N. H.

The Gardynes moved to Montgomery Center in 1894 and operated a general store here for over 35 years.

Five children were born to them. The eldest, William M. Gardyne, died in infancy in 1894.

Since the death of her husband in 1945, Mrs. Gardyne had lived in the homes of two daughters, Mrs. Harold V. Gavel here, and Mrs. David W. Dimmock in Falmouth, Mass.

Mrs. Gardyne leaves three daughters, Mrs. William (Margaret) Hettrick of Buffalo, N.Y., Mrs. David (Dorothy) W. Dimmock and Mrs. Harold (Marion) V. Gavel; a son, Charles H. Gardyne of Portland, Maine; a granddaughter, Mrs. John D. Adams, and three great-granddaughters, of Arlington, and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be held at 2:30 p.m. Monday at Community Baptist Church here. The Rev. Richard Armstrong will officiate. Interment will be in Enosburg Falls. Friends are requested to omit flowers and instead, contributions may be sent to the Kerbs Memorial Hospital, St. Albans, Vt.