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THE COVER

"The Old Leather Man"

About 1860 a man clad in a suit and cap made of leather scraps first made his appearance on the roads of Connecticut and western New York State. For the next thirty years the nameless itinerant walked a regular 34-day circuit from Danbury to the Connecticut River, begging for food, shunning pennies left for him by children, sleeping always out-of-doors, never speaking an intelligible word.

Legends about his origin, identity and activities proliferated during his lifetime. Most persistent was the tradition which claimed he was a Frenchman named Jules Benglay who was driven to America because of a tragic love affair. The "Old Leather Man" died in Pleasantville, New York on March 29, 1889, but his memory is still alive today in the oral tradition of Connecticut.

The cover reproduces a gold-trimmed advertising card distributed in the early nineteenth century by A. J. Davidson, a Hartford photographer. The card features a photo portrait copyrighted in 1885 by J. F. Rodgers. It is in the collection of the Connecticut Folklore Archive, The Center for Connecticut Studies, Eastern Connecticut State College.

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Connecticut History, formerly the Connecticut History Newsletter, is published in the fall and spring of each year with the cooperation of The Center for Connecticut Studies of Eastern Connecticut State College. The editors seek material on research projects in the field of Connecticut studies as well as scholarly articles. Articles should be submitted with footnotes and should be sent to: David M. Roth, Editor, Connecticut History, The Center for Connecticut Studies, Eastern Connecticut State College, Willimantic, Connecticut 06226

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The Association for the Study of Connecticut History is a non-profit organization formed to promote the scholarly study of Connecticut history. In addition to publishing Connecticut History, ASCH sponsors meetings in the fall and spring of each year devoted to the presentation of papers and research discussions. Membership in the Association is open to all individuals and institutions interested in Connecticut history. 1974-1975 ASCH dues of \$3 may be sent to the Membership Chairman:

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