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## Beyond the Farm: National Ambitions in Rural New England (Hardback)

By J. M. Opal

University of Pennsylvania Press, United States, 2008. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 229 x 155 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. During the first half-century of American independence, a fundamental change in the meaning and morality of ambition emerged in American culture. Long stigmatized as a dangerous passion that led people to pursue fame at the expense of duty, ambition also raised concerns among American Revolutionaries who espoused self-sacrifice. After the ratification of the U.S. Constitution and the creation of the federal republic in 1789, however, a new ethos of nation-making took hold in which ambition, properly cultivated, could rescue talent and virtue from the parochial needs of the family farm. Rather than an apology for an emerging market culture of material desire and commercial dealing, ambition became a civic project—a concerted reply to the localism of provincial life. By thus attaching itself to the national self-image during the early years of the Republic, before the wrenching upheavals of the Industrial Revolution, ambitious striving achieved a cultural dominance that future generations took for granted. Beyond the Farm not only describes this transformation as a national effort but also explores it as a personal journey. Centered on the lives of six...



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