the Western Baptist Theological Institute in Covington, Kentucky. Wood and Rufus Burleson (the future Wood visited for six weeks at the Louisiana plantation of former Mississippi father, N. Milton Wood. An 1844 to biographical sources about the subject to Illinois in 1868 and thence to Massachusetts in 1874. Subsequent research led Maria E. Wood, a daughter of a Baptist minister who moved his family from Maine 1822—born in Camden, Maine 1840—began college in Waterville, Maine 1852—took pastorate in Waterville, Maine 1866—took pastorate in Thomaston, Maine 1868—took pastorate in Augusta, Maine 1869—took pastorate in Bangor, Maine 1874—took pastorate in Bangor, Maine 1874—returned to New England 1874—died in Camden, Maine 1876—buried in Waterville, Maine

N. Milton Wood in the United States, 1822-1876.

Questions and Data
Was it coincidence that the president of the new Western Baptist Theological Institute, Robert S. Patton, was a former president of Waterville College? Did relationships formed in Covington lead to Wood’s later invitation to a pastorate in Upper Alton, Illinois, where Patton held a chair in systematic theology? The literary sources consulted as far as quite limited. Can the data available through the Historical Census Data Browser at the University of Virginia Library offer any insight? Data on religion and churches was gathered in the 1850, 1860, and 1870 federal censuses. Have considered the 1870 category “buildings” to be roughly equivalent to the 1850 and 1860 “churches.” 1860 data under represents the number of Baptist churches as a result of misclassification in data gathering. Numerous subcategories of Baptist—including Free Will Baptists—were counted in 1860, thus perhaps thinning the ranks of those who might have reported as simply Baptist in other years.

Maine and the Nation
N. Milton Wood and Maine Baptists
As he maps in the previous column illustrates, Maine was not a site of particular strength for Baptists at the national level. It was, however, the state where N. Milton Wood made his name as a minister and theologian. His rise to prominence within the Maine Baptist Convention seems to have resulted from his role in theological disputes that had particularly disruptive effects in Waterville, the site of his second pastorate. In Waterville, Wood confronted the challenge of theological disputes with a more senior minister, David N. Sheldon, who had held the Waterville pastorate when Wood was a student. Sheldon had baptized Wood in 1843. Sheldon had presided over a controversial sermon before his colleagues in the Maine Baptist Convention in Chicago in 1844. By the time Wood returned to Waterville as pastor in January 1845, Sheldon’s disputes with his colleagues had been going on for eight years, and his theological distance from Baptist doctrines had become so profound he no longer sat in the Waterville but also the presidency of the Maine Baptist Missionary Society. Wood engaged in an extended theological debate with Sheldon that was published in the Portland periodical Zion’s Advocate. Wood proved himself an able practitioner of the kind of logical argumentation that characterized systematic theology. Wood became president of the Maine Baptist Convention in 1854. He became secretary of the Convention the following year, and in 1857, he became secretary of the Maine Baptist Missionary Society. Wood remained secretary of the Missionary Society for the next thirty years. Wood’s leadership of the Maine Baptist Convention in the 1850s was probably the most prominent. Wood may have led to his invitation to the pastorate in Upper Alton, Illinois. His skills in theological argumentation probably contributed to his being invited to teach systematic theology at Patton’s request. Wood returned to Maine to teach the kind of logical argumentation that characterized systematic theology.

Conclusions
Intersections between Historical Census Data and Microhistory
Much of the digital humanities work that students do in history courses at Wheaton College more closely resembles microhistory than it does the kind of large-scale data mining familiar to many practitioners of digital humanities who employ XML/TEI, which was the digital tool through which we first encountered N. Milton Wood. The simple mapping exercises reflected here provide context for better understanding the shape of Wood’s career. General knowledge of geography and transportation routes in the mid-nineteenth century might lead the historian to note that both the Western Baptist Theological Institute where Wood studied and the 1840s and Shurtleff College where he taught in the 1870s were in border towns situated across significant routes of water transportation from major cities. Covington, Kentucky, lies across the Ohio River from Cincinnati, and Upper Alton, Illinois, lies across the Mississippi River from St. Louis. Maps generated from historical census data demonstrate further perhaps significant characteristics of the places where Wood lived, studied, and worked. Maine, Mississippi, and Illinois held only modest numbers of Baptist churches in the mid-nineteenth century. Kentucky, the site of Wood’s theological education, was closer to New York and Georgia in the density of Baptist churches at the beginning of the decade when he lived there. Further research manipulating census data at a more granule level could yield additional details about the topics of Baptist life in the mid-nineteenth century. A more nuanced sense of the sites of Protestantism could well add to further development of the historical literature about regional distinctions, East and West as well as North and South.