

[Table of Contents](#)

Next: [Business and Infrastructure Resources](#)

Previous: [Town Organization](#)

## Section 2.

# Human Resources

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Poultney’s 3.9% growth rate is below the state average and reflects a slow but steady increase, certainly manageable. At 3,633 inhabitants, it is in the top quintile of Vermont’s communities. The fact that Poultney’s population is larger than 2,500 would earn town an urban designation by some US Census definitions, but the community’s independence from any adjacent larger place in excess of 50,000 enables it to be considered rural. At 43.9 square miles, Poultney is one of the larger Vermont towns in land area. Table 2.1 shows that just over a third of the town’s population may be considered “dependent” in 2000, a manageable demographic distribution. Small changes toward greater ethnic diversity are indicated by the data near the bottom of Table 2.1. The decline in French and French Canadian ancestry is probably influenced by an increase in Census categories available to respondents in 2000 than any real changes in the size of this ethnic group.

**Table 2.1 – Poultney Population Characteristics**

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<b>Total Population, 2000</b>	3,633
<b>Total Population, 1990</b>	3,498
<b>Absolute Population Change, 1990 – 2000</b>	135 inhabitants
<b>Percent Population Change, 1990 – 2000</b>	3.86%
<b>Persons per Square Mile, 2000</b>	82.8
<b>Persons per Square Mile, 1990</b>	79.7
<b>Area in Square Miles</b>	43.9
<b>Percent Dependent, 2000 (under 18 and over 65)</b>	37.1%
<b>Percent Rural, 2000</b>	100%
<b>Percent Rural Farm, 2000</b>	0.8% (from 1.3% in 1990)
<b>Percent Native Born (United States), 2000</b>	97.7% (from 100% in 1990)
<b>Percent Reporting Welsh Ancestry, 2000</b>	8.5% (from 11.4% in 1990)
<b>Percent Reporting French/French Canadian Ancestry, 2000</b>	14.4% (from 20.8% in 1990)

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Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2002. *Vermont Indicators Online*. <http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>  
US Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. *American FactFinder*. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

### A Brief Aside on Poultney’s Ethnic Diversity: Slate and the Welsh...

From the 1850s through the 1950s, the slate industry brought an influx of Welsh, Italian, Polish, Slovakian and Irish immigrants to the area, who have all contributed to the culture and life of the community. The history and achievements of Poultney’s citizens of Welsh heritage as well as the beauty of the region is widely recognized. In an early account dated 1883 and published in Wales in *Dros Gynanfo A Chyfandir* by William Davies Evans, Mr. Evans wrote of Poultney, "... I saw one of the cleanest and healthiest of villages. By the great width and straight lines of its streets, the splendor of its buildings and the order in the growth of its shady trees, I could believe that this would be a paradise in summer. ..." (Poultney Historical Society, 2002).

A strong Welsh history prevails in Poultney and is actively explored by the Poultney Area St. David’s Society. Founded in 1988 by Poultney residents Eleanor (Evans) McMorrow and Helen (Thomas) Jones, the St. David’s Society is actively recording Welsh history, which at one time included a performing Welsh male choir. Poultney is also home to another prominent Welsh organization, the Welsh-American Genealogical Society (Poultney Historical Society, 2002).

As Table 2.1 has shown, the Welsh population in this town is slowly declining as a percentage of the total. We have no evidence of any significant immigration of Welsh, although local folks may prove that wrong. Undoubtedly the Welsh population of Poultney, like the rest of the population is continuing to age, and the next section takes us to some information on age distributions.

## Age and Gender of Poultney's Citizens

Table 2.2 shows that Poultney reflects state trends toward a graying of the population. The effect of the baby boom is shown in the movement from the young middle aged to the older middle aged between 1990 and 2000. Similarly, the increases in numbers of people 65 and over mirror state and national trends. Town officials will want to look carefully at changes in the under-five-year-old cohort, an age range that is not growing nearly as rapidly as it has in previous decades.

**Table 2.2 – Age and Gender Demographic Comparisons**

	Poultney		Rutland County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
<b>Total Population</b>	3,498	3,633	62,142	63,400
<b>Percent 0-17 Years Old</b>	20.9	21.1	24.1	23.2
<b>Percent 18-24 Years Old</b>	21.5	17.6	10.8	8.3
<b>Percent 25-44 Years Old</b>	27.7	25.0	32.3	27.7
<b>Percent 45-64 Years Old</b>	16.9	20.3	19.1	25.8
<b>Percent 65+ Years Old</b>	13.0	16.0	13.7	15.0
<b>Median Age</b>	N.A.	35.9	N.A.	39.5
<b>Percent Male</b>	48.7	49	48.5	48.6
<b>Percent Female</b>	51.3	51	51.5	51.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. *American FactFinder*.

<http://factfinder.census.gov>

## Some Famous Citizens

Every community has some citizens that it is particularly fond of discussing and, frankly, using as a marker of great events, of ties between this place and larger places, or as a way of acknowledging and setting a standard for desirable behavior and contributions from subsequent generations. As a small community, Poultney has many residents to be proud of. Due to space constraints, we present only a few here to draw attention to the human capital a community may draw upon and celebrate. Source materials for this information were stated in the present tense. That tense is preserved here, albeit the citizens listed may have sadly passed on since.

George Jones is one of Poultney's most famous native citizens. A writer, he was co-founder of *The New York Times* daily newspaper. He is also known for his breaking up of the Tweed Ring; his role in the building of the second Times Building when he was 75 years old; and the raising of the Fund which assured General U.S. Grant an income during the last years of the General's life. He was friends with another famous writer who came to Poultney and learned the printing trade in East Poultney's *Northern Spectator* – Horace Greeley, founder of the *New York Tribune* (Poultney Historical Society, 2002).

Jones and Greeley remained friends throughout life and at one time worked jointly on the *Tribune*. Both are most likely to be credited with another young writer having been educated in Poultney - famous mystery writer Anna Katharine Green of Brooklyn, New York is an 1866 graduate of Ripley Female College (Green Mountain College's predecessor institution). The Literary Society of that institution is credited with having brought Ralph Waldo Emerson into Poultney's Joslin Hall in 1865 and having given him a tour of Poultney (Poultney Historical Society, 2002).

Richard H. Owens, retired Director of Program Control for NASA's (North American Aviation's) Saturn Rocket is a native of Poultney. Mr. Owens is also retired Director of Logistics at NASA's sites in California, Mississippi and the launch site at Cape Canaveral, Florida. He was also founder and President of the Ordrich Gold Mining Company located in central Nevada. He graduated from Green Mountain College in 1934 and the University of Michigan in 1936 and comes from one of the Welsh families drawn to the area (Poultney Historical Society, 2002).

## Poultney Housing and Family Information

Table 2.3 depicts housing and family characteristics and shows that Poultney is following state trends in terms of family household size continuing to contract, while home values increase. Community leaders concerned with the quality and affordability of the community's housing will find more useful information currently being released in the more detailed Census 2000 materials.

**Table 2.3 – Poultney Housing and Family Characteristics**

	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Number of Families</b>	824	846
<b>Number of Households</b>	1,181	1,287
<b>Average Family Size</b>	N.A.	2.92
<b>Average Household Size</b>	2.51	2.39
<b>Single-Mother Households</b>	100	123
<b>Total Children in Single-Parent Families</b>	N.A.	118 (16.7%)
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	1,624	1,673
<b>Number of Owner-Occupied Housing Units</b>	851	924
<b>Number of Renter-Occupied Housing Units</b>	330	363
<b>Median Housing Unit Value</b>	\$80,600	\$83,400
<b>Median Gross Rent</b>	\$413	\$497
<b>Median Gross Rent as Percent of Income</b>	29.9%	27%
<b>Percent Increase in Households (1990-2000)</b>		9%
<b>Percent Increase in Housing Units (1990-2000)</b>		3%

Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2002. *Vermont Indicators Online*.

<http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>

U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. *American FactFinder*.

<http://factfinder.census.gov>

Table 2.4 (next page) gives some insight into income data for Poultney, Rutland County and the State. Poultney lags consistently on all income figures indicators, but is slightly above county figures in most of the poverty measures. Table 2.5 suggests that Poultney's proportions of those who have been to college and/or received associate's or bachelor's degrees are slightly lower than the county's numbers. However Poultney has a higher percentage of residents with master's and doctoral degrees, buoyed no doubt by the faculty and staff at Green Mountain College.

**Table 2.4– Town, County, and State Income & Poverty Comparisons**

	<b>Poultney</b>	<b>Rutland County</b>	<b>Vermont</b>
<b>Annual Average Wage, 2001</b>	\$23,688	\$27,858	\$30,239
<b>Per Capita Income, 1999</b>	\$14,963	\$18,874	\$20,625
<b>Median Family Income, 1999</b>	\$40,556	\$44,742	\$48,625
<b>Median Household Income, 1999</b>	\$31,711	\$36,743	\$40,856

<b>Persons for whom Poverty Status was determined</b>	3,127	61,399	588,053
<b>Poverty Rate, 1999</b>	9.3%	10.9%	9.4%
<b>Child Poverty Rate (persons under 18 years), 1999</b>	1.8%	3.3%	2.8%
<b>Elderly Poverty Rate (persons 65 years or over), 1999</b>	1.1%	1.3%	1.1%
<b>Percentage of Households with Public Assistance Income, 1999</b>	5.1%	5.6%	4.8%

Sources: Center for Rural Studies / VCGI. 2002. *Vermont Indicators Online*. <http://crs.uvm.edu/indicators>  
U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000. *American FactFinder*. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

**Table 2.5 – Poultney Town Educational Attainment, 2000 (percent persons 25 years and older)**

	<b>Poultney</b>	<b>Rutland County</b>
<b>Less than High School</b>	19.5%	15.7%
<b>High School Diploma</b>	38.5%	35.8%
<b>Some College</b>	13.3%	18.1%
<b>Bachelor's / Associate's Degree</b>	19.8%	22.4%
<b>Graduate / Professional / PhD Degree</b>	8.9%	7.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 1990. *American FactFinder*. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

[Table of Contents](#)

Next: [Business and Infrastructure Resources](#)

Previous: [Town Organization](#)