VERMONT Life

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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 30th day of September, 1951, L. T. Hayward, Notary Public. (Commission expires Feb. 10, 1955.)
Another Means of Transportation in which the Post Boy was something of a local pioneer, was the Safety Bicycle. In these days of considerable haste on the highway, it may seem that such a vehicle would never by any stretch of the imagination be thought dangerous. The answer is that there had been, ante-dating the one with two wheels, one with two dissimilar wheels. It apparently had been the dream-child of some homesick cowboy, separated from the range. Since one rode over the high wheel on whose axle the pedals worked, trailing behind him a much smaller wheel, any sudden cessation of forward motion would produce a result on the rider very like one he would experience with a bucking bronco.

So man devised the machine we know today and added the assurance of "Safety." At first there were solid tires and frames likewise of solid metal. Then came hollow tube frames and cushion tires, and then the kind demanding a pump and other emergency equipment. The braking was done by means of a curved piece of metal in front of the front fork, actuated by a lever on the handle bars. There were spurs sticking out from the front fork and the daring placed their feet on these on a down grade and let 'er rip.

Men With Whiskers sedately riding bicycles had become quite common in the P.B.'s village when he made an important discovery. He did not have to wait to grow up and wear whiskers to glide along at perhaps twice the speed of the usual roadhorse. There were bright, shining safety bicycles made for boys of his age, too. You see the P.B.'s father had the agency for LOVELL DIAMOND Bicycles right there in his Drug Store, and one day the youthful P.B. was looking over a catalog and there at the back on page 10 was the "Nonpareil Model for Boys." If you stir your memory sufficiently to recall those youthful moments of ecstacy which came every now and then, you will know just how the P.B. felt. You may also, moving your recollections to the days of your early parenthood, know just what the P.B.'s father let himself in for in the way of nagging by leaving that catalog around.

It Was a Warm Day in Late April. The mud had dried in the village and the dignified cyclists were riding up and down the street and even reporting trips as far as ten miles away as possible, by avoiding a few soft spots here and there. The P.B. had pointed out in addition to all the arguments used to induce grownups to buy a bicycle, that it would be of great economic value since the telegraph office was in the Drug Store and with this new machine messages could be delivered by the P.B. in the haste such a means of communication demanded. Finally this day it got down to "I DO WANT A BICYCLE."
The P.B.'s father smiled as he got up from his desk and nodded toward the back room. We followed, puzzled and quite unsuspecting. "I meant to give this to you on your birthday week after next," he said or it seems he did. Mere words assumed a minor place when he lifted a piece of old awning and there, in the life, was the youthful P.B. was looking over a catalog. Did we remember to thank our father? We doubt it. We probably made a noise in our throat and said the rest in looks and action. All that day we wheeled the precious thing up and down, up and down. Of course we first wheeled it home to surprise our mother. She acted as bowled over as we had been, and then recovered enough to make a few suggestions as to unhappy things which might result from being careless. Of course we couldn't ride the thing, but we could put our foot on the step on the rear axle and try a few hops. (Don't look at us that way, Junior. That was the way one mounted, hopping along to get up speed and then gracefully, sometimes, sliding over into the saddle.)

Learning to Ride was an operation requiring a teacher in those days. It seems now that half the village turned out to watch us wobble and twist and fall off for at least a week before we got the hang of it. The P.B. found going uphill, even a slight grade, with small hard tires and a ridiculously heavy frame, tiring on the legs. Some kind Providence hovered over the P.B. so he never suffered any real accident. He almost envied Edward Swift, a pal, who a short time later achieved the second youth's bicycle in town. He gained a temporary fame by managing to ride between the wheel of a buggy he was meeting and the hind legs of the horse and emerging at the back with only a mild but bloody gash on the top of his head.

Decoration Day offered a grand chance to show off, for trimmed "bikes" were added to the procession. The P.B. one such day came a cropper, however. There was in the family possession a very large Japanese umbrella, about the size of the modern lawn ones. It being a hot day he thought to add to his comfort, to say nothing of his fame, by tying this gay cover to the handlebars. He secured it tightly and set forth down the road to join the parade. As it was he picked up speed on a nice down grade, the wind took the fragile work of the Japanese and turned it into a complete red and yellow wreck, causing the rider to lose control and landing him a spiritual wreck in the soft grass beside the road.

Coming to a Stop was generally accomplished as we have said by means of a brake on the front wheel. Since the sudden use of this had often caused something quite like the action of the machine of pre-safety days, the local cobbler devised a means of stopping, using a piece of sole leather. This he fastened under the front fork. It was actuated by the extended foot. It seemed perfect until one day—it was on a Sunday, which wickedness may have accounted for the results—he was trying it out on a steeper hill than usual. His luxurious sideburns were streaming out on either side of his beaming countenance as he felt the air rushing against it. Discretion suggested slowing down and he stretched forth his foot and tried a few hops. (Don't look at us that way, Junior. That was the way one mounted, hopping along to get up speed and then gracefully, sometimes, sliding over into the saddle.)

Verdict of the Crib was that the machine was a failure. It was not safe, and no one could ride it. The P.B. was in it to win it. He was not going to be the one who couldn't ride this bicycle. He was going to add to his fame, to say nothing of his comfort, by tying this gay cover to the handlebars. He fastened it securely and set forth down the road to join the parade. As it was he picked up speed on a nice down grade, the wind took the fragile work of the Japanese and turned it into a complete red and yellow wreck, causing the rider to lose control and landing him a spiritual wreck in the soft grass beside the road.

VERMONT Life 1
The Minister was balmy—or so they thought.

CHRISTIAN MINISTERS are notoriously impractical, then turn out to be right.

A little church in Hyde Park, Vermont, needed a new furnace. The problem, of course, was money... or so everybody thought. Except the minister.

“Well, er, money, yes,” he said, “But it’s not so much the money. Let’s do something that will bring everybody together in one big concerted effort. I tell you...” He beamed... “let’s put on Gilbert and Sullivan’s ‘Mikado’.”

There was a stunned silence. It happened that in the group the minister was addressing were an aging ex-actor and a dramatic director. These two, at least, saw a quick clear image of the fifty or sixty splendid singers in a D’Oyly Carte company or Society of American Singers or Winthrop Ames cast. They saw the costumers, designers, technicians of a light opera production staff. Hyde Park is a tiny mountain town.

It couldn’t be done. Not in Hyde Park. Talent or no talent, the total population wasn’t enough to staff an operetta, let alone be audience besides. It couldn’t be done and it would be a gosh-awful show if it were done.

Fortunately, the wise old “pros” lacked the nerve to tell the minister he was simply balmy.

Well of course rural tradition still holds in Vermont. If a family home burns down or a barn needs raising, the neighbors rally round. A Hyde Park church needed a furnace, so the neighbors rallied round, and the neighbors in this instance were whole towns... Morrisville, Stowe, Hardwick, Eden, Johnson.

Hyde Park is one of the smaller villages but happens to be the county seat. The whole of Lamoille County applied itself to the gay (but not altogether simple) music of Arthur Sullivan and the witty lyrics of W. S. Gilbert. Most amazing people turned up from the most unexpected.

Players rent the Hyde Park Opera House.
I l the
Mountains

By Baird C. Hall

Photography by Verner Z. Reed

places. A set of high powered theatrical spotlights, cable to connect them, and the know-how to operate them appeared from Cadys Falls, for instance... where the owner had simply retired from the New York theater, equipment and all. By ones and by twos, like the animals to the Ark, singers and actors and scene designers and costume designers converged on the old Hyde Park Opera House.

This Opera House, owned but abandoned by the town and up for sale, was lent by the town fathers on the basis that "if anybody buys it they'll just have to wait til this shindig's over."

So to make a long, and sometimes agonizing, story short, on the nights of September 10 and 11 and 12, 1952, Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Mikado" played to packed houses. And again on the following Wednesday to again a full house, for the benefit of the county's Copley Hospital. The show was a riot. A hilarious and delightful riot.

Money fairly bulged the walls of the dingy old box office. But perhaps the real
point, as the impractical minister had intimated, was that when sixty or seventy theater folk stand, flushed with success, listening to the final curtain applause, they want to do it again. Soon. Together.

So that's how the Lamoille County Players was born. Lamoille County Players is a genuinely county-wide organization. There are two representatives from each town in the county on the executive board. Membership dues are nominal. School students of all towns in the county are members due free. Performers and technicians need not be "members" at all, nor need they be local residents. The Director of Music in the Burlington schools, for example, commute a total of 1158 miles and devoted an entire summer holiday to waving his baton at the cast of "H.M.S. Pinafore." He trained them and led them to triumph. For fun. A former Director of Music at Vermont Junior College has trained and led two casts to success, one the original "Mikado" cast, back when only a truly starry-eyed enthusiast could have drawn together a singing group and only a truly capable musician could make them jell.

When the Lamoille County Players were organized, first attention was turned to the old Hyde Park Opera House which had been borrowed for the "Mikado" production. The Opera House is a real theater, built to be just that, with steep-sloping floor, fixed seats, balcony, a wide deep stage, space above the stage to fly a full set, stairways from both wings down to a long row of dressing rooms below stage. It had become evident during "Mikado" performances that the theater had unusually good acoustics. One can hear well and see well from every seat in the house. It became evident upon examination that the building was entirely sound. Well built in the first place, slate roofed, its light board properly wired, all the place needed was a few minor repairs and some fresh paint and affection.

As a matter of fact, Hyde Park citizens apparently did not lack affection for the old Opera House because the local town meeting, having previously instructed the selectmen to sell the property, now ordered its sale to the village for the sum of one dollar and the village fathers promptly arranged its lease to the Lamoille County Players on a simple maintenance fee basis. No foolishness, of course...if the Players should break up and the building be sold, all proceeds beyond that original dollar go right back to the town. And the Players, not the taxpayers, must maintain the building. That's the rent. A sensible, characteristic, and generous arrangement. Probably it is this arrangement which has
made possible the mounting successes of the Players’ productions . . . because, as anyone active in little theater work knows, it is very difficult seriously to interest designers, electricians, costumers and all those very essential technicians unless the group has a real and permanent home of its own.

So, all that was needed was minor repairs and some fresh paint. Minor repairs on windows twenty feet tall, and fresh paint on an acre of ceiling forty feet above the auditorium floor are not entirely child’s play of course. There were generous donations of money and generous gifts of working time and a loan arranged at the local bank . . . and the Players launched vigorously into rehearsals of “The Gondoliers” to pay their bills.

“The Gondoliers” was presented on August 26 and 27 and 28, 1953, in the attractively re-decorated Opera House to large and enthusiastic audiences. Repair bills were paid and money set aside for installation of a new furnace. The following winter, the Players did George Kaufman’s “You Can’t Take It With You.” The town of Morrisville was host for these performances, in its Peoples Academy auditorium, because the Players’ new furnace was not completed. Proceeds again went to the county’s excellent small hospital.

In August of 1954, the show was “H.M.S. Pinafore.” The Players were back in their own home. The producer, the dramatic director, the musical director, the dance director, the cast and technical staff were now old hands. The show was not only a delightful riot but smoothly finished and right in detail. The four nights were sell-outs. Cars lined every street of the little village, and the summer visitor license plates were from half the states in the Union.

In October, 1954, to prove their furnace could make things cozy, the Players presented Kaufman and Ferber’s “Royal Family.” “Life With Father” was planned to follow. The usual little theater program, true enough . . . but this countrywide group up in the mountains of northern Vermont does produce with an enthusiasm and a competence which is little theater at its best. And the best little theater is a fairly high level. Good entertainment.

It is their production of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, undoubtedly, which has extended their reputation so far beyond their own Lamoille County. Less often presented than regular Broadway plays, Gilbert and Sullivan works have a following which might be described as fanatic. Your confirmed Savoyard will journey almost any distance for a showing of “Pinafore” or “The Mikado.” And the Lamoille Players have developed a distinct flair. It is always their dramatic director who is made ultimately responsible for the performance. They have excellent soloists and the choral work is well done . . . but no singer and no chorus ever simply “stands and delivers.” Dramatic action is continuous, lively and very funny. The operetta is a show, in perhaps the Ames rather than the D’Oyly Carte tradition. The result is gay, and somehow modern without disturbing the traditional “business” which is all there too.

The Lamoille County Players are a definite addition to Vermont’s summer theater schedule . . . in fact to Vermont’s year-round theater schedule. And, although we wince at putting it this way, a definite addition to the cultural life of a wide-spread community. Perhaps, since artists and singers and actors and scene designers are just folks, a better way to put it would be what that Hyde Park minister said in the first place . . . it’s nice for people to be “doing something that brings everybody together in one big concerted effort.”

“Haughty daughter of his Grace” from THE GONDOLIERS, and “That cultivated, educated, under-rated nobleman, the Duke of Plaza Toro”. 
Town Meeting Time

Vermont’s Rite of Spring reaffirms pure democracy

Pictured and told by
Grant Heilman
LAST SPRING I was in Corinth, Vermont—population 786—on Town Meeting day.

Although most communities have grown too large to operate effectively through town meeting action, in Vermont the small towns still conduct their year's most important business at an annual meeting, where every citizen has a chance to make himself and his ideas heard.

Long before the meeting began, the big wood stove in Corinth's square frame two-story Town Hall had been filled with chunk wood and was beginning to glow. But even by the time the Moderator's gavel called the meeting to order, the room was still chilly enough to require the voters to keep their sweaters and coats around them.

However, as the day progressed, and the discussions became more heated, so did the meeting room. By mid afternoon I noticed some of the windows had been opened slightly, to allow the crisp outside air to penetrate the now well-filled room.

The Town Hall was filled, and the afternoon session had standing room only—New Englanders are proud of their democratic traditions. Not only adults showed up: mothers who couldn't find babysitters brought their pre-school youngsters with them. And a delegation of students was in attendance, to report the proceedings back to their classrooms, so a new generation would be familiar with the activities of a Town Meeting.

Before the meeting Corinth residents had been furnished with copies of the Town's 64 page Annual Report, a document sprinkled with figures on the town's vital statistics for the past year. The charts and columns showed, among other things, the number of dog licenses issued (150), births registered (8), marriages performed (7), and deaths (8).

At the back of the Annual Report the townspeople found the following message:

TOWN MEETING WARNING

The legal voters of the Town of Corinth, Vermont and of the Town School District, are hereby notified and warned to meet in the Town House in said Town on Tuesday, March 2, 1954, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon, Eastern Standard Time to act upon the following articles, viz:

Then followed a lengthy list of the subjects to be discussed at the meeting. The Moderator played his part of keeping the meeting in order, and spurring on discussion of the numerous subjects outlined in the "Warning" notice. At one point near the beginning of the meeting, when there was a long pause in the discussion, he made a brief statement.

"It would be a nice thing," he said, "if you did your talking here today instead of throughout the rest of the year."

Such New England forthrightness didn't go unheeded, and discussion never lagged after that. Everyone had his say on everything. When the School Board recommended an increase of 10 cents in the school tax, the ensuing debate took almost half an hour, (the increase was finally defeated.)

Selectmen by the door scrutinize the voters and qualify them from checklist.

Corinth's old but commodious Town Hall.
Later on, voters had a chance to decide whether the town should be wet or dry—they voted dry, as they always have. But they did approve Sunday movies and lectures, though they vetoed Sunday auto racing.

Most of the voting was done by a show of hands. But if there was any doubt, or if anyone objected, a written ballot was taken. I watched as the voters lined up to drop their slips of paper into the ballot box. They were enjoying the meeting, not only being part of their government, but also the chance to get together here once a year and see their friends and neighbors.

Lunch time, upstairs over the meeting hall, served by the local PTA, was the time to sit with old friends. The talk wasn’t limited to Town Meeting business, though there was plenty of that to be thrashed out. The diners talked over the unseasonably warm weather, exchanged recipes, and discussed blister rust control on their pine trees. They were proposing to vote town money for control work.

By the time the afternoon session of the Town Meeting was over and the last of the Town’s business had been finished, the Moderator was hoarse, the Town Clerk had writer’s cramp, and the residents of the Town of Corinth were satisfied that their community affairs had been thoroughly aired and democratically decided upon in the finest American tradition. Not only that, but they had had a good time doing it.

The tellers count out one of the infrequent ballot votes.

Voters leave their seats to cast ballots on a school matter.
LEFT: The moderator takes up warning items in order.

A private citizen rises to state his personal views.

Schoolboys listen, get firsthand civics lesson.

Most questions are decided by voice vote, but if close the moderator calls for a show of hands.
The PTA provides bountiful dinner. Profits go to town schools.

Town meeting is a time also for old friends to visit together.

Baked beans, brownbread and salads go traditionally with the pies and coffee.
When factions are at loggerheads the article may be passed over until afternoon. Informal horse trades at dinner often heal the rift.
My old house stands high on a green mountain. For a mile and a half along the road to it there is no other dwelling. Only cellarholes remain down on the flat where houses used to stand, and the fields back of them have grown up to goldenrod and hardhack, white birch and blackberry bushes. Yet the town is obligated to maintain my lane in passable condition, since I bought a farm on the public road, even if at the very end of it.

In the spring my neighbors’ first greeting to me is, “How’s your road?”

If I say I have to leave my car outside and walk in, they invariably comment, “Well, you got a right of access to your property, ain’t you?”

It is a set phrase, which must, I think, go far back in Vermont history. It expresses a profound
Take Road

truth, a legal maxim, of which I soon learned to take advantage. When I have to appeal to the selectmen who are the final court of appeal in any Vermont town, I clinch my arguments on what should be done to my road by saying, "You know I got a right of access to my property, haven't I?" It works. Something gets done.

Ezra, the road commissioner, is a man of infinite resource and sagacity. Any road commissioner needs to be, though not all are. He also has to be a man of infinite patience, for no official in the world is a target for more complaints and more abuse, both to his face and behind his back. He can never satisfy the people who live on the back roads, however skilful he is at patching bridges and filling holes, yet he must also know how to construct and keep in repair modern highways subject to heavy traffic. He has to allot large sums of money which the town votes to his use, and know as he does so that nobody will think he has assigned enough to take care of some particular need. He will be accused of diverting the town's money to highways the state should keep up, or of letting good roads become washboardy and pitted. He will be held personally responsible for every two-plank bridge over a rivulet, that washes out in the rains or gives way under the heavy loads of pulpwood that pour down the back mountain lanes. I have listened with admiration to Ezra, conveying the idea to a truck-driver from out of the state who didn't see why he should mend the damage he'd done. Ezra merely remarked gently, "Well, I'd kind of hate to, but of course I could tell the State
I fail to chop at their sprouts, the next they come popping up in the middle of the road, and soon they would interlace across the track. In August joe-pye weed and fireweed border my road, and fringed gentian blossoms in muddy places beside it. When it is dry it is a lovely road, when it is wet it is horrid. The white-haired district commissioner who was brought up to advise whether the town should try to relocate it or maintain it more or less as it was, summed up the general opinion. "Well," he said, bearing down hard on each word, "It does kind of seem to me that when you bought this place you showed more courage than judgment." I agreed with him.

After that verdict, Ezra dumped a few loads of gravel on the worst spots, scraped the high core off the middle, which had torn the oilpan off more than one car, (the first carpenter I hired never ventured back after his first day) and left me to deal with my own problem. Nowadays Police this road had to be closed to heavy traffic." With another 700 cords of pulp to come out, that settled that, and the driver sullenly went to work.

As to my own problem road, like Christina Rossetti’s, it leads uphill all the way, right to the very end. It is full of big and little rocks, and in spring it develops deep, wide mudholes, which cannot be circumvented because there are woods on both sides. It is so narrow that if by a remote chance two cars meet on it, one must back up for half a mile or so. Alders, the most dogged and indestructible of all woody growths, form a tangle on each side as thick as a tropical mangrove swamp. If for one single year

after each rain I go out with a hoe and divert water from ruts into the grass-blocked ditches at the sides. I love planning little sluices, piling stones for tiny dams, hoeing out new channels and watching the gleaming water turn into them. One day when I was happily bending and sweating over this job, one of my neighbors came by, whistling cheerfully, rifle over shoulder, beagle hound at heel. He looked on silently for a moment, then flung back as he turned aside into a path through the field, "Fixing to run for road commissioner, huh?"

But my road is improved. Last summer I bought a piece of linoleum from a mail-order store in Rutland, and brought

Though Illustrator George Daly has not indicated, we feel sure the figures reproduced upon these pages do not represent in any close degree persons either living or departed. The exotic bird shown on the preceding page we think a bald eagle mutation.
it home. It was ten inches too short, and my measurement was not at fault. I wrote a nasty letter to the manager, and a day later a new piece of the proper size was left for me at the village grocery. Overwhelmed by such noble efficiency, I wrote again that I would keep both pieces. I was too slow. That afternoon, toward twilight, I saw far down my road an enormous van crawling slowly up my hill. It writhed around the right-angled turns, its sides brushing the alders. No such apparition had ever dared that track. It was a cab on two wheels and a vast belly on six more. It crept past my house, used most of the meadow to turn around in, and stopped at my kitchen door. The driver called to me, standing in frozen astonishment, “Come for a piece of linoleum.”

I wrung my hands and faltered, “I wrote to the man and said I would keep it.”

The two in the cab looked at each other, nodded, and repeated in unison, “She wrote to the man and she said she would keep it.”

I could only wail, “I’m terribly sorry.”

The driver leaned out toward me and said, “Can I ask you a Question?”

“Sure, what?”

“Promise you won’t be mad?”

“Promise.”

“Whaddya do when the Indians attack?”

But I thought proudly, two years ago you’d have been stuck.

END

THE AUTHOR—Mrs. Chapin, who has lived in Montreal for the past twenty years, is no stranger to Vermont Life readers. Another article about her summer home in East Wallingford will appear in our next issue. Her father, Ernest Hitchcock of Pittsford, where she grew up, was Vermont’s first Forestry Commissioner. A brother, Jack, was with the Extension Service in Burlington. Another, Curtice, was the president of Reynal & Hitchcock, publishers. Mrs. Chapin, who has “three children, three grandchildren and an herb garden,” comes to Vermont whenever she can manage. Her first book, “How People Talk,” came out in 1947, and her new “Quebec Now” is published this spring by a Canadian firm. She is correspondent in Quebec for the Christian Science Monitor. Mrs. Chapin’s article on the old “Vermont Butt’ry” appeared in our 1951-2 Winter issue. Her “Ferns of Vermont” was a feature of the past Summer Vermont Life.
Inspecting a sugar bush on a Forestry trip.

Twenty-five elementary school teachers, coming from every section of Vermont, were in a jovial mood as they stepped down from the school bus which had stopped in a farmyard near Stowe. To the west the clouds were slowly lifting from Mt. Mansfield’s Chin. Only 30 minutes ago these teachers had tumbled from their bunks, hurried into field clothes and breakfasted up there—at the State Ski Dorm at Smuggler’s Notch.

It was June and school was over—except for these teachers. They were enrolled in Vermont’s Outdoor Conservation Laboratory. Their school was actually an outdoor classroom, one in which they discovered perhaps the most unusual educational course ever offered in Vermont. They were learning by seeing—and they found much to see.

And so it went for ten days. These teachers, searching for knowledge to bring back to their own school pupils, studied the geological structure of mountains and table lands, stream bank erosion control, diversion terraces to control surface water, farm ponds, good land use and water pollution. They learned about flood control dams, forest plantings of many species, municipal forests, forestry experiments and all phases of wildlife conservation and management.

The ladies crawled through barbed-wire fences, hiked
up and down old logging roads, ducked under swinging branches, skirted poison ivy beds and skipped through swampy places. They loved every moment of it. And each evening the group would gather in the dorm’s lounge room to review plans for the next day’s field trip.

It all started, this outdoor classroom, one night in 1953 when a group from the Vermont Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs met with state conservation and education people. They came up with this new idea to further conservation education in Vermont. The sportsmen could and would find the means to finance the entire course, providing some help could come from the state. And meeting the requirements of the National Wildlife Federation, the Vermont Sportsmen could secure a federal grant.

State fish & game, forestry, education, geology, and water conservation people working with federal conservation men in the state set up the course as a stepping stone to the more advanced University of Vermont Summer Conservation Workshop.

Final plans were rushed to get the school in operation last summer. Finally, from nearly 40 applicants, 25 teachers who had applied for the expense-free course were selected for the first year.

When it was all over the teachers agreed—it had been a valuable and interesting session—and fun.

That’s what its sponsors wanted to hear. They already were busy planning for the next year, to bring a permanent and far-reaching influence for conservation to more and more Vermonters.

Pictures continued on the next page.

Barbed wire fences are frequent hazards of the field trips. Teamwork and special-handling techniques are adopted rapidly.
Fish & Game crews above Waterbury Dam put on a demonstration of fish seining and tagging.

At the Water Conservation Laboratory Reinhold Thieme runs through water pollution tests.

Vermont State Forester Perry Merrill edifies the course graduates with some original verse.

U. S. Soil Conservation officer, Seldon Tinsley, digs a hole to demonstrate varying soil texture.

Artificial farm ponds have multiple uses. This is on the A. D. Dana place near Mt. Mansfield.
Vermont, whose generous rainfall and ripe soils encourage grasses which are the natural food of ruminants, has long been a favored cattle state. For many years it has been a recognized leader in the production of dairy products, and a combination of circumstances, among them the high retail price of meat, has recently prompted a growing number of Green Mountain farmers to go into beef production.

Cattle, which are among the earliest of domesticated animals, were at one time bred to pull plows and wagons as oxen. But for two centuries now the Western varieties have come to be valued for their milk or for their meat. These separate virtues have resulted in breeders’ developing two distinct types of cattle, and today a purebred milch cow resembles a beef Shorthorn to about the same degree that a sleek convertible looks like a stocky station wagon.

For purposes of ready identification—and this paragraph will seem to be an over-simplification to farmers—the cow designed to yield milk and butterfat is a triangular animal on four comparatively long legs, with the milk supply in the rear developed to a preponderant degree. The beef cow, by contrast, is rectangular, low-set, chunky all over, but with particularly heavy fleshing in the regions of the valuable meat cuts, such as over the ribs, loin, and back through the hind quarters. The dairy cow yields milk in abundance but dresses out only a comparatively

Vermon't's quality herds spearheaded a growing interest in beef. The Webb estate Herefords in Shelburne (above) have a long, successful show-ring history. Newcomer Roland Aldrich's bull calf, "HC Zato Larry 25th" (circle above), a $30 a pound investment, may prove the top Hereford in the Northeast.
At Woodstock is John Esser's Angus herd, started with cattle brought from North Dakota.

small amount of the desirable cuts; the beef breeds yield a high proportion of tender meat but usually give only sufficient milk to grow their calves.

Beef production, you might say, is a way of turning grass and grain into a product that is both saleable and economical to move. Three of the more efficient breeds in this category, all developed in Great Britain, have come to be paramount in the Northeast: the all-black, polled (or hornless) and easily recognizable Aberdeen Angus, from Scotland; the white-faced, largely red-bodied Herefords from the fertile valleys and plains of Herfordshire, and the roan or red (and occasionally all-white) beef Shorthorns from northern England. The respective advantages of the three breeds are the subject of considerable argument among beef fanciers. Herefords and Angus now predominate in Vermont.

Today there are some seventy-five recognized herds of beef cattle in the state. A typical operation, but longer established than most, is the farm of Mrs. Fred Peaslee at Guildhall, where raising registered Herefords is successfully combined with growing potatoes. On the impressive Webb estate at Shelburne, two hundred and fifty commercial Angus rub shoulders with a herd of registered “whitefaces.” At Saxtons River, Roland Aldrich is raising as his herd sire the highest-priced beef animal purchased by a New Englander, the $21,500 Hereford bull HC Zato Larry 25th. John Esser, of Woodstock, who left North Dakota five years ago because the winters there are too severe, is building a registered herd from a nucleus of Dakota Angus.

This state, according to Mr. Esser, is good beef country. Not only is the growing season just as long here as in his home state, but also it takes only about two acres to feed a cow the year round here as compared with fifteen acres in Dakota. And the term “western beef,” as being synonymous with better beef, is just not necessarily so, he says. Cattle with Hereford, Angus or Shorthorn blood can be just as well, if not as economically, finished for beef in Vermont as in Illinois.

In comparing dairying with beef production, it should be made clear that the per cow cash return here is considerably higher in dairying. Vermont, where milk production is currently having its troubles,
is still likely to remain a dairy state for some time to come if only because the dairy farmer not only realizes a profit from the sale of his calves and cull cows—the lone source of income for the beef man—but also has a steady income from the sale of milk. An economist estimated not long ago that to obtain the same gross income from beef as from dairy cows in this state, three times as many head of beef per farm would be needed.

Why, then, are there between three and four thousand beef cattle on Vermont farms today? One reason, of course, is the recent high price of meat. Then, too, a dairy farm requires a good deal more labor on the part of the farmer: milking twenty cows at twelve hour intervals every day of the year is a demanding and time-consuming chore any way you look at it. Also, dairy cows require stanchions, milk rooms and other costly furnishings which, unless already available, represent a higher investment than for the rough sheds adequate for beef herds. In this climate beef cattle can spend most of the winter outside.

As things stand today, Vermont agriculturalists say that a commercial (non-registered) beef herd can provide a supplementary, though low, income on farms where there is plenty of pasture and roughage. These cattle, being efficient mowing machines, can give the farmer a fairly good market for what he grows; they can repay him a moderate wage for his time, and provide him with manure to improve his land.

Unless there is a trend toward raising more grain in Vermont—and the trend has been all the other way in recent years—the future here of beef probably lies in the production of feeder calves and replacement heifers, which means that the calves are raised to run with their dams till weaned, then the bulls are sold to be fed and fattened elsewhere; or perhaps, if feed is plentiful, held over for another year.

Here are some instances in which raising beef might fit into the local farm picture:

1) On dairy, poultry and potato farms which have reached an efficient size without making use of all land and roughage available.
2) In cases where part-time farmers, or
Icrford herd of Mrs. Fred Peaslee at Guildhall is one of the oldest and most successful in Vermont.

Roland Aldrich's Hereford herd in Saxton's River contains some of New England's most valuable cattle.

Blocky Angus still look strange to Vermont dairymen; part of the Esser herd.

older dairy farmers short of help, may want to use their non-forested land for feed with a minimum of labor and buildings.

3) As a means of interesting youngsters in farm life, by letting them start their own small herds with only a few chores during the school year.

4) On farms with large deep freezers and a handy market for good quality beef.

5) In cases where men with plenty of capital and more than average experience may want to get into the always hazardous purebred business.

These are economic considerations, vital but somewhat oppressive. There is another argument put forward by the beef fan. The good grazier will tell you that affection, or at least respect, for a cow is a needed ingredient for success in this business.

The farmer with an eye for a beef critter finds nothing quite so rewarding as the sight of his black polls, or his whitefaces, grouped on a lush green meadow. A herd of well-growing calves and cows enjoys a quiet routine. It eats its fill, lies down to chew, then goes to eating again. To the farmer, professional and amateur alike, there is infectious contentment in this spectacle. When the day's work is done he can lean on the fence and admire, perhaps even envy, his friendly charges in the pasture. He can join, in such moments, in the sentiment of John Burroughs: "I had rather have the care of cattle than be the keeper of the great seal of the nation."
A Portuguese flag flies over Vermont

A strange tale told by
C. W. Burnham

Few are the motorists speeding through old Weathersfield Bow on U.S. 5 who realize that history hangs over their heads. But above an old road-side barn stands a miniature, full-rigged Portuguese ship of a century-and-a-half ago. Thereby hangs this tale.

This, Gene Moore’s farm, was once Danforth’s Tavern. Mr. Moore is 85 and his housekeeper 84. Youngest member of the family is Arthur Amerige, 77, the hired man. As Mr. Moore tells it Arthur came on a two-weeks’ trial. That was 36 years ago.

Once the Moore farm was part of the William Jarvis estate. Jarvis back in 1810 was U.S. Consul to Portugal. When he returned to this farm in Weathersfield Bow, Vermont, he brought with him prized Merino sheep from Spain. Thus began the great sheep boom, when Vermont led the nation, when sheep outnumbered Vermonters six to one.

To Vermont with Consul Jarvis came a Portuguese sailor. He it was who, perhaps homesick in the Vermont hills, carved the little ship.

There she stood, the weathervane of Weathersfield for more than a century, riding out even the hurricane of 1938. Finally she was taken down some 15 years ago and was stored reverently in Gene Moore’s barn.

Today an exact duplicate of the Portuguese ship, reproduced by the writer of this article from the original, sails aloft in Weathersfield Bow. Still the red and the green of Portugal stirs in the Vermont winds.

END

The Portuguese ship is 5 feet long, 3½ feet high, of spruce and pine. Rigging is stainless steel and the flag of copper.

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Vermont Life 23
ON THIS and the following seven pages Vermont Life presents with pleasure the winning photographs of the First Annual Vermont Life awards, made in conjunction with the Fourth Vermont Photographers' Exhibition of the Southern Vermont Art Center.

Reproduced here are the Vermont Life Medal Award photographs, three in color and three in black and white. Below is a Special Award Series by Neil Priessman of Wilmington, and on the facing page is the Honorable Mention by Judson Hall of Putney. In the color division Honorable Mention went to Burton Wolcott for his “The Last Row,” which, we regret is not shown here.

Judges of the Vermont Life photography awards were John W. Doscher, FPSA, FRPS, of So. Woodstock’s Country School of Photography; John F. Smith of Middlebury, a leading Vermont photographer in both color and black & white; and Vermont Life’s editor.

This year’s Fifth Vermont Photographers’ Exhibition at Manchester will be held August 13th through 21st. Entry blanks may be obtained now from the Photography Committee, Southern Vermont Art Center, Manchester, or by writing to Vermont Life, Montpelier. Entries must be received at Manchester before July 30th.

As before, Vermont Life award entrants must be Vermont residents and the subject matter must be of Vermont. Black and white prints must be at least 8x10 size, color transparencies 2 1/4 x 2 1/4 or larger.

This year for the first time, in addition to the Vermont Life awards, the Southern Vermont Artists will present three medals for 35mm. color slides.

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Special Award

By Neil Y. Priessman

Courtesy of This Week

THE HORSE IS HERE TO STAY

You can sit down with a paper and pencil and figure out in about five minutes flat where it will be cheaper to replace a pair of farm horses with a tractor.

But there are a few, back here in the hills, who don’t put much stock in their own figuring and none at all in anyone else’s. They’ve had their horses a long time—like replace a pair of farm horses with a tractor. better than they like most people. Besides that, who ever heard of a talking tractor?

“Hear one of those farm experts was up here yesterday?”

“Wait a minute—I’m not used to this heavy underwear yet.”

“Told the boss he ought to get rid of us and buy a tractor.”

“What did the boss say?”
Medal Award Photographs are reproduced on the following six pages.

Honorable Mention in Black & White

Frosted Corner

By Judson Hall

"Didn't say nothin' till he'd poured the expert full of cider. Then he sold him that set of harness your gramp wore out."
Country Winter  By Newell Green  Award Winner
LEFT: Newell Green, FPSA, FRPS, of Ascutney, Vt. and Hartford, Ct. says of his Country Winter: “The climate may be changing but old fashioned winters with plenty of snow still come along now and then. So it was a couple of years ago when all the farms down along the Williams River near Chester were piled high with snow. The roadway to this old stone house with the sun glinting across the snowbanks seemed to typify winter in the country that year. There was an unusual atmospheric effect at the time this picture was made, because even though the sun was shining on the immediate scene, there was a snow squall swirling along just beyond, giving the next ridge a misty look and adding depth.”

ABOVE: Mrs. Magnaghi of Brattleboro, who began photography five years ago, calls herself “strictly an amateur,” is a member of the Brattleboro Camera Club and the Springfield (Mass.) Photographers Society. Mrs. Magnaghi reports that she and her husband were taking color shots one beautiful spring day when they decided to look at the Brownsville Birches site, made nationally famous by Newell Green (see left caption). By the time they had their equipment on the hilltop and had waited for the shifting May weather to turn better, it was mid-afternoon. This side-lighted view, one of two exposures made before the chill wind drove them downhill, resulted in this award winning picture.
AFTER THE STORM

By Robert Bourdon

ABOVE: Robert Bourdon, of Stowe whose many talents were related in our last Winter issue, reports: “As the title states, After the Storm was taken after a heavy snowstorm one morning as I was driving to work here on Mt. Mansfield. It’s not unusual that I have a camera in the car, and as I came up Harlow Hill I saw the possibilities of an unusual picture. Wading in deep snow just off the road, I made a couple of exposures at different positions, and remember not being satisfied. Through no fault of my own it seems to have become a popular picture. I think good pictures, like successful deer-hunting are the result of a little knowhow, and lots of luck.”

RIGHT: Burton Wolcott, who is planning early retirement and year around residence at his home in Clarendon, has been interested some 25 years in photography, largely of the outdoor, pictorial type. He has spent many vacations hiking and photographing much of the Long Trail and many a Vermont back road. Mr. Wolcott, now in New York, reports: The Singers was taken some 14 years ago at the Tunbridge World’s Fair. This singing group, dressed in the costumes of long ago and singing the old songs of that period, has long been a feature of the Fair. Some of the singers have been with the group for more than 30 years.”

Mr. Wolcott’s color scene, The Last Row, won honorable mention.
Another Brattleboro resident award winner, Mrs. Briggs, says of herself: "I am a comparative beginner at photography. Just three years ago I knew nothing about a camera or using it. Writing was my primary avocation; wildlife and gardening were secondary interests. Then pictures seemed required with some articles; so I dusted off an old camera that I had used casually about 20 years ago, before combined homemaking and a business career monopolized most of the daylight hours. In 1952 I joined the Brattleboro Camera Club. The picture Londonderry Artistry was taken on our Club's first summer trip last year for pictures of southern Vermont, and I can take little credit for its success. Providentially the day was beautiful and the 'advanced photographic leaders' of our group brought us back through Londonderry while the light was right for taking pictures there."
“I took this picture at Big Bromley in Manchester,” says Miss Boker (of Dorset and New York), “on one of those beautiful Vermont winter days in February; clear, crisp and quite cold. Skiing was superb; however, Time out for Lunch does have to come, and this caught my eye, the tall ones, the short ones, and the icicles were keeping pace too. Taken through the window while at lunch.” Miss Boker reports: “I’ve always taken pictures and my interest in photography was really stimulated when I developed my first negative and then saw the image of the scene I had taken come up on the white sheet of paper.” Miss Boker helped organize and was president of Volunteer Service Photographers, Inc., a nationwide volunteer organization which brings photography programs to veteran and civilian hospitals, where the value of photography as a therapy is now well recognized.
The Hazen Road

Canada wasn't invaded after all from this 175-year old military highway, but it served Vermont a better way.

By Crane Brinton

Photography by Geoffrey Orton

On May 10, 1776—two months before the Declaration of Independence—the Congress at Philadelphia voted “That as the road recommended by Gen. Washington between the towns of Newbury, on the Connecticut River, and the province of Canada, will facilitate the march and return of troops in that quarter, the gen'l be directed to prosecute the plan he has formed respecting said road.” Those of us who make the easy assumption that until railroads and telegraphs nothing really moved fast will be surprised to learn that by the end of that very same summer the road was finished and open to wagons for fourteen miles to the last outpost of settlement in Peacham. General Jacob Bayley, a leader in the already well-farmed lands of the Coos country in Newbury, Vermont, and Haverhill, New Hampshire, had pushed the road through with 110 men working 45 days for a pay of $10 a month. Food and half a pint of rum daily were generously thrown in.

Washington and his advisers wanted the proposed road as a kind of by-pass or alternative route to the famous Champlain trough, which even at that early time had been for over a century the highway between New York and Canada. The new road would have to be put through virgin forest for some ninety miles to St. Johns in what is now the province of Quebec, but once made it would outflank the British on Lake Champlain, and greatly shorten the route between Boston and Montreal. It would facilitate an American invasion of Canada, but also a British invasion of New England. This last, with the final failure of the invasion of Canada so boldly begun by Benedict Arnold and

Undated manuscript map of 1790's shows Hazen Road in dotted line. Original is in the Harvard Library.
Montgomery, was the real danger for the next few years. Bayley apparently did not dare renew work on his road the next summer.

In March of 1779, however, with Burgoyne’s army captured, with France formally our ally, the balance had swung enough to revive schemes for another invasion of Canada. In the late spring of 1779 work was resumed on the road, this time with a labor force composed largely of local militia already under arms to cover this exposed upper valley of the Connecticut. They were commanded by another man with interests in the Coos, Colonel (later General) Moses Hazen, whose name has ever since been attached to the whole road. A memorial tablet on US 5 at the bridge over the Wells River in the town of Newbury, where the road begins, does with much justice call the road the “Bayley-Hazen Road,” but the joint name has not stuck. All along the fifty-six miles from Wells River to Hazen’s Notch in Westfield, which is as far toward St. Johns and Montreal as the road ever got, it is still known as the “Hazen Military Road.”

Under Hazen the road did get pushed some forty miles further on its way, still through a magnificent hardwood forest untouched by man. Camps and blockhouses were established at intervals along the way, with a final camp on the site of the present village of Lowell. The British were still unbeaten in Canada, and their scouts had kept them fully informed of what the Vermonters were doing. There were rumors in Hazen’s camp of British attacking parties all around. Late in the autumn of 1779, with a rough wagon track as far as the ledges that there mark the main spine of the Green Mountains, Hazen broke camp for good. Some of the blockhouses he had built were manned intermittently during the rest of the war. Then with peace in 1783 settlers from southern New England, and indeed from

THE AUTHOR—Professor Brinton, author and historian at Harvard Univ., first came into Vermont via the old West River Railroad in 1911. He finally decided firmly on Vermont and came to Peacham in 1931. Aside from his long interest in the Hazen Road his “chief hobby is gardening, where my Yankee background comes out in my unwillingness to throw away perennials.”

Prof. Brinton, a Harvard graduate, an Oxford PhD. and a Rhodes Scholar, has been on the Harvard faculty since 1925. During the War he was with the OSS. He is the author of many magazine articles and books, including the “Anatomy of Revolution” (1952) and the recent, “Ideas & Men—the Story of Western Thought.”
particular have been so impressed with economic motivation as the great key to everything human that they found it easy to explain the whole enterprise as just another big land deal, with Hazen, Bayley, and a few other Coos men getting free government aid in opening up their lands to settlement. It is true that these leaders, like almost everybody else at the time, were actively interested in the new lands. The Bayleys moved early in along the road, and you will see their gravestones—along with those of some Delanos—in the quiet neighborhood cemetery by the Hazen road in Hardwick Street. Colonel Hazen wrote home from army headquarters in New Jersey in 1780, "In conjunction with Col. Bedel (another Coos leader) I beg you will plant a few potatoes, sow a little turnip seed and grass seed and a few handfuls of oats on the cleared land at the Blockhouses. You know what I mean by it. A word to the wise, etc., etc." The conspiratorial flavor of the last two sentences seems a bit unnecessary. All Hazen meant was that such evidence of actual settlement as was afforded by growing crops would be of great help in establishing land claims after the war. Actually Vermonters, who pride themselves on their sense of reality, should have no trouble admitting that the men who planned and built the road could have been moved by sound patriotic motives and strategic sense and yet at the same time could have attempted to further their own interests in this world. And certainly, if the road was primarily a real-estate venture, its builders put a wonderful disguise on it. They made it look so much like a military road that one suspects they must have thought of it as a military road. It makes no concessions to comfort or convenience, and very few even to the law of gravity. It goes as straight as possible, regardless of grade, like an old Roman road, but by no means regardless of that bogey of the early road builders in New England, swamps and streams. In general it keeps on the ridge-tops, dodging the wet spots as much as possible, crossing brooks and larger streams at right angles, almost never following them. The later mill and factory builders, the later railroad makers—these certainly guided by economic motives—sought the valleys and their easier communications. Peacham and Danville on the old Hazen road yielded to St. Johnsbury and Lyndonville on the new Connecticut and Passumpic railroad; Cabot Plains and Hardwick Street, where the first villages in these towns had grown up along the military road, were left to farms, and the villages moved down hill to the banks of the Winooski and the La- moille respectively.

Although in purely twentieth-century terms the Hazen road can be said to lead from nowhere to nowhere, a surprising mileage of the original road remains in active use today. It does not in its course often attain to the dignity of a "numbered" road, and never to that of a "US" number, but thanks to the persistence of farming along its course, thanks to the fact that northern Vermont has not gone back as far as much of southern Vermont and New Hampshire, almost all the old road is still passable by car. I have gone over almost all of it, and estimate very roughly that of its original fifty-six miles some fourteen, or one quarter, have now achieved the high rank of "black top" or numbered state road; some thirty-three miles, about three fifths, are dirt or gravel in various states of goodness, but at least legally town-maintained; and some nine miles, rather under one fifth, have been abandoned—one hopes legally with due notice, though Vermont towns have been known to be careless in such matters. Even the abandoned parts vary greatly; some are still driveable, others walkable, and at least one portion near Joe's Pond in Danville so grown up in spruce and fir thickets that it is barely crawlable.

The least adventurous motorist can easily sample the old road, get its Roman and military feel and spirit, which is not the feel and spirit of the easygoing, winding town roads, nor yet of the streamlined modern superhighway. North from Rye-gate Corner, north from Peacham village, along Hardwick Street, or north from Craftsbury Common (though this last piece may just possibly not be the original Hazen road) you can from the security of black top see the old road heading straight away over the hills toward that "fourteenth colony" it never reached—and that never was to be a fourteenth colony, but the independent Dominion of Canada.

NOTE: A portion of Prof. Brinton's article detailing the "problem spots" has been omitted here. Vermont Life will be glad to furnish on request supplements covering this material.
Just west of the Hazen Road in Ryegate lies the famed Ticklenaked Pond, 55 acres in area. It is reputedly good perch and pickerel waters.

little more adventurousness, but well short of danger even to low-swung modern cars, will enable you to see the old road in less modern guise, and some fine Vermont scenery on the way. I can recommend especially the little piece of dirt road just south of the Hazen road memorial tablet on Hardwick Street, which runs by the idyllic cemetery earlier mentioned; the road through high Cabot Plains; the road just north from Caspian Lake—ex-Beautiful Lake, ex-Davis Pond—in Greensboro; the road up the valley of Truland Brook in Lowell; the road north from Ryegate Corner all the way to Mosquito-ville across the line in Barnet, or south from Ryegate Corner by Ticklenaked Pond (do you still believe the early Yankees were prudes?).

The inch-to-the-mile topographic maps of the US Geological Survey will make this kind of motoring easier. The whole road can be pieced together on the Westfield, St. Johnsbury, Plainfield, Hardwick, Irasburg and Jay Peak quadrangles, which can be obtained at twenty cents each from the Director, Geological Survey, Washington 25, D. C., or at bookstores in Vermont towns like Montpelier, Burlington or Rutland. These maps are essential if you wish to explore the abandoned bits of the road, or the "problem" bits, those portions where, in spite of the fact that this is really a modern road, built in the age of surveys and documents, the exact course of the original road is as

Peacham Academy, founded in 1795 is the second oldest remaining in Vermont.

At the south end of Peacham Village this marks the route of the old Hazen Road.
Ye editor decides to by-pass this section of the Bayley-Hazen Road above Joe's Pond.

Hazen's Camp at Cabot Plains looked east toward the Kittredge Hills of Danville.

much a problem to the historian as the exact course of some Roman roads built originally two thousand years ago.

Sometimes what happened is quite clear. At the very starting point of the road in Wells River Village, the opening of the Montpelier and Wells River Railroad in 1873 forced a change in the road for a few rods. Above Truland Brook in Lowell—originally named less elegantly Kellyvale—is a semicircular bend in the almost abandoned road, a bend quite out of keeping with the spirit of the old military road. But with the existing road as a bow in your mind, you can on the spot find at once the original road, running straight as the bowstring, up and down quite unnecessarily steep grades. Once the road was in real civilian use, someone must have early discovered the truth of the old Yankee saying “a pail-bail (i.e. handle) down is no longer than a pail-bail up” and changed the course of the road to the great benefit of horses and oxen.

Almost at the north line of Cabot town the Hazen road, there a rather poor dirt road, apparently stops short as it runs at right angles into a good primary road from Walden station to Cabot village. I still feel some pride in the fact that when I first saw the Plainfield quadrangle map I “extrapolated” the old Hazen road on purely theoretical grounds, and on going to the spot found unmistakably the grass-grown road, wholly abandoned and not shown on the map, striking straight across a spruce-scattered pasture. Clearly this half mile was abandoned because as the farms were finally carved out from the forest, it served no local purpose. Of course the road as a whole had by then ceased to serve as a through road. Indeed, it never was maintained as a through road, for until the motor car there was no other highway authority than town or county.

This failure to prove necessary or even useful in the final farming stage of the region certainly accounts for almost all the abandonments and puzzles. But the original course of the road—the Urweg as the Germans might say—is not always so easy to establish as in the above-mentioned bit north of Cabot Plains. The original survey, made under military auspices by Major Wilkinson, ought to be in the archives of the War Department, but no one has yet found it. In 1809 a turnpike company, with the grandiose scheme of making a through toll road from Boston to Montreal, had the road surveyed by James Whitelaw, who had been concerned with the original military survey. Whitelaw’s special map, which does indeed generally follow the course of the original road, is now in the archives in Montpelier. But it is a very general map, and it does not necessarily reproduce the course of the original road. There are a number of other sketch maps in town archives, and there are specific mentions of the road as it touched various points. But maps and other documents can and do err. There is tradition, the opinions of older men whose fathers had perhaps traveled the old road, and who talked to the first generation of local historians in the nineteenth century. Finally, there is the “spirit of the road,” the ways builders had of solving the problem of just where to run it, ways the historian who has tramped enough along it comes to feel he knows instinctively.

Admittedly the first two sources—maps and tradition—are safer, and my teachers, trained in the early days of “scientific” history, would have said they are the only real sources. But I confess I have moments when I think my “feel” for the road is worth consulting, even if it conflicts with the documents—or worse yet, with local tradition. I can for instance entertain the possibility that the Hazen road kept on its fine straight course north and west of the little hill called Mount Sarah in Greensboro, and came into what is now East Craftsbury along the present little-traveled and charming dirt road that...
Taverns on the Road once were many but few still survive. This one at South Walden stands where the Hazen Road crosses busy Route 15.

Comes in by the Simpson estate. Yet the town of Greensboro has built and named a "Hazen Road School" on a road half a mile east of my Hazen road, and who am I to know more than the town fathers about the course of the Hazen road in Greensboro?

I am firmer about what is the major puzzle along the whole course of the road. There is a sketch map in the Craftsbury town records, described in detail by a good local historian, F. W. Baldwin (The Vermont, November 1906, page 311), according to which the original Hazen road cut diagonally across the northeast part of the town, passing between Little and Great Hosmer ponds and reaching the Black River at the old Hayden farm in Albany town. There is no such road today, and I have not been able to find any clear traces of one, though much of the land

Caspian Lake is situated eastward and below this roadside marker in Greensboro.

This old cemetery, containing Bayley and Delano graves, lies by a section of the Hazen Road now almost abandoned, just south of Hardwick Street's blacktop surface.
Near Craftsbury a little-used part of the Road drops into the fertile Black River valley.

traversed is now in arable or pasture, and traces of an old road might well have disappeared, especially if it had never been at all improved over the first wagon road. On the other hand, the road from East Craftsbury to Craftsbury Common—the part on the east side of the hill on which the village of Craftsbury Common lies is abandoned, but easily traceable—looks very Hazenish, and crosses the Black River at a point easily bridged, avoiding what on the supposed diagonal road must have been difficult swampy country. Once on top of the characteristic whale-back ridge of Craftsbury, the present road goes on for three good miles on high, dry ground, exactly the kind the builders seem to have loved, and which they chose in Ryegate, Peacham, and other towns. In spite of that town map, I incline to believe the old Hazen road did run through Craftsbury Common, and well west of both Hosmer ponds, not between Great and Little Hosmer.

Local tradition confirms me on this, and both Whitelaw’s state map of 1796 and an interesting manuscript map of northern Vermont now in the Harvard College Library, undated but certainly of the 1790’s, show the road going through the Common. This latter map may hold the key to the difficulty, for at the Craftsbury-Greensboro line it shows a fork, with one road going right up to “Lutterlock,” a misspelling of the old name for Albany, and another going through “Minden,” the old name for Craftsbury, and on to the notch in the mountains. Very early, of course, local roads began to supplement the Hazen road, and the road by Great Hosmer may well have been just such a local road.

Another problem point comes just after the Hazen road crosses US 2 near Joe’s Pond in Danville. The old road certainly went boldly up the hill in Cabot at the west end of the pond. There is an old town road, apparently finally abandoned only early in the twentieth century after fire had destroyed the one farm on it, which does climb the hill and come out at the present Bolton farm on its top. This road is shown as a mere trail on the St. Johnsbury quadrangle, surveyed in 1931 and 1936-38, but is given the label “Hazen Road.” Mr. William Bolton who now owns the family farm says that his father, who was much interested in the old road, had heard from his father that in fact the original military road ran some few rods to a quarter of a mile further north and east of the road so labeled by the map makers; and indeed from his barn a very straight road, now a mere trace in the grass, does run across the pasture and down toward Joe’s Pond. Once it reaches the woods, however, it can be followed only with the eye of faith—if with that.

Where the Hazen road once stopped abruptly at the notch, a fine state road now goes down steeply into the town of Montgomery. You can now go on easily to Montreal, if you wish, which is more than Hazen’s militia could do. But the road they built helped settle the state, even if it did peter out among the ledges. And it is still here, to remind us how much change has been compressed into those two centuries since it was built—almost as much change, to judge from the problems of tracing the exact course of the old road, as though Julius Caesar, instead of George Washington, had it built.
Connoisseurs say that formal art teaching is the quickest way to spoil a good primitive painter. Miss Bessie Drennan, of Woodbury, Vermont, is an exception, for she took a few lessons before she started painting five years ago. Nonetheless her work remains typical of contemporary American primitives: her colors are intense, her figures busy, the atmosphere of each piece is urgent, restless, often gay.

Like the subjects of most untaught and subjective artists from the Egyptians who painted on walls to Grandma Moses, Miss Drennan’s are composite scenes made up of a number of separately remembered units. In “June Wedding” (above) the church looks like (but is not) the old West Church in neighboring Calais. The surrey in the foreground appears in several of Miss Drennan’s paintings: her father owned one and she likes surreys. Seven generations of her family have lived in Woodbury, and she remembers well the sheep and cows on the farm connected with the old homestead.

Miss Drennan has made—and sold—several copies of this picture, and her devotees are partisan over their pet versions. No one disputes a recent copy which has Autumn foliage and an overcast sky. It is still Bessie Drennan’s “June Wedding.”
Miss Drennan lives with her sisters at the old family home in Woodbury. In what once was the old ballroom one sister, Mrs. Frances Darling, conducts a successful antique shop. Mrs. Blanche Drennan Utely represents Woodbury in the Legislature.

Bessie Drennan, who started painting in 1950, finds a large canvas may take her a week to complete. She is busy most of the time now with special commissions from collectors and other Drennan fans.

Photography by Neil Y. Priessman
When Bessie Drennan couldn't find anyone to picture the old place in Woodbury where she lives with her sisters, she took two or three painting lessons in Montpelier and did the job herself. Here she is holding one of several canvases she has painted of the house.
MUSEUM WHERE THINGS HAPPEN

By Hegen Petersen
Photography by Neil Priessman, Jr.

When someone claims his roof has been blown off and wants the insurance company to get it back on again, when a snake of unknown species is found behind the family TV set, when teacher wants nine-year-old Jimmy to describe for her a rhinoceros hornbill—then the people of St. Johnsbury turn to their museum for help: they know they're likely to find the answer there.

For the Fairbanks Museum of Natural Science, a unique institution in Vermont, is a lot more than a repository of collections. It is an information booth, a classroom, a

Sedate decor of St. Johnsbury's famed natural history museum houses well-loved exhibits and lively classes of youngsters.
community center and a Grade A tourist attraction, all in one. In the same day, the staff may explain a grasshopper invasion, draw attention to a coming eclipse and promote and direct the study of conservation. The people of St. Johnsbury (population about 9,000) use their museum, and are proud of it.

Platform scales and a piece of quartz rock the size of your hand gave the place its start. The history of some quartz crystals he found on a walk as a lad of twelve inspired Franklin Fairbanks, nephew of the inventor of the platform scale and son of Vermont's twenty-first governor, to study and collect minerals. Soon collections of insects, animals and birds were added. Years later, when the collections had outgrown their quarters in his home, Mr. Fairbanks became convinced that a museum of natural science would be a useful and welcome addition to the community.

Not very much later, Mrs. Franklin Fairbanks was trawelling mortar on the cornerstone of the new building and her husband was speaking to the St. Johnsbury children present at the ceremony:

"I want you to understand from this time on this building is to be yours, and that you are to carefully guard its interests, and I want each of you to say to yourselves 'This is my building and I have an interest in it.'"

The ancient Romans thought of a museum as a place of study. The modern definition—one with a Victorian overtone—says a museum is a place where "objects of permanent interest" are "preserved and exhibited."

Fairbanks was more Roman than Victorian, apparently. When he dedicated the brown sandstone building on Main Street some sixty-five years ago he decreed mere accumulation.

"A collection of birds, animals and shells or whatever it may be is, after all, but a collection of dead things unless used as an illustration to help in our search for knowledge."

The donor did not want his museum to be just a catch-all for arrowheads and dusty glassware. He wanted it to be a place to attract children, a building where work was being done and things were happening.

Heart of the Romanesque building—designed, incidentally, by a local architect, Lambert Packard—is a classroom, and here all public school children of the third to eighth grades come twice monthly for talks on thunderstorms, winter feeding of birds, bird migration, flowers, erosion, and a handful of other subjects which the children of our day should know something about.

During the summer Miss Frances Gilotti, a naturalist, runs daily trips which range in subject from "Nature Explorers"—a two-hour, twice-weekly jaunt for children eight years old and up—to "Outdoor Cookery," given each Wednesday for children ten years and older. Charge for these trips is usually 50 cents to $1 per child for the summer.

At various and appropriate times through the year, there are also story-telling hours, craft classes, games, movies, quiz programs, art classes, treasure hunts and special exhibits which draw an average of 1000 children each month.

For adults, the community rooms downstairs are always open, and such groups as the St. Johnsbury Players, the Women's Club and the Passumpsic Valley Guild of Arts and Crafts make use of them.

For adults and children alike the flower tables, which stand near the Museum's entrance from April to October, are supplied each day with fresh wild flowers, properly labelled, to show what is growing in the area at the time. And the Living Exhibit currently features coons, a skunk, tropical fish, turtles, snakes and a smiling but, one is told, unfriendly great horned owl. The favorite for many visitors is a Panamanian parrot named Joe, who from time to time voices almost recognizable snatches of light opera.

In addition to serving the 30,000
visitors each year, the Museum works in connection with the U.S. Weather Bureau and has provided one of the longest weather histories observed from a single location in New England. Calls for weather information come in daily from residents of the area and many a legal case and insurance settlement—like that of the man who lost the roof of his house in a windstorm—has been aided by establishing the exact weather conditions on a given date.

With the aid of local bird spotters, the Museum also keeps a record of bird migration which is sent regularly to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

But of course people who come to a museum expect to see collections of inanimate things, and visitors to the Fairbanks Museum are not disappointed. Here there are more than 1800 specimens of mounted birds, including a caseful of richly plumed birds of paradise which is the envy of rival museum directors. The mammal collection, though smaller, includes most of the animals native to Vermont. There are expensive collections of shells, minerals, insects, coins and stamps, and a herbarium of more than 6000 species.

This last exhibition reached the Museum through Henry C. Ide, a St. Johnsbury native who was once Philippine’s Gov. General. Judge Ide lived in Samoa at the time that Robert Louis Stevenson was there, and it was to Annie Ide, the Judge’s daughter, that Stevenson deeded his birthday after she complained that since she was born on Christmas she could never properly celebrate her own. The deed, a copy of which is on view at the Museum, legally provides that henceforth she must always celebrate November 13 “by the sporting of fine raiment, eating of rich meats and receipt of gifts, compliments and copies of verse, according to the manner of our ancestors,” failing which the birthday was to revert to the President of the United States.

Roam where you will among the collections, there is something for every taste. There is a stone—flexible sandstone it is popularly called—which you can bend with your hands. There is the original death warrant of Private William Scott, the Sleeping Sentinel of the Civil War, a warrant which was never executed because Scott was pardoned by President Lincoln. 

There is an extraordinary exchange of letters between Bristol Bill Warburton, a notorious bank robber of the last century, and Mrs. Bliss Davis. Bill had pushed a steak knife into the throat of State’s Attorney Bliss Davis at the close of his trial in Danville, and thought, quite rightly as it happened, that she was harboring a grudge on this account.

“Wherever I am known,” the thug wrote from jail to the lady, “(Danville excepted) I have been looked upon as a man of good disposition, kind and obliging to all, so much so that even my enemies, (or rather persons whose principles were opposed to mine) loved me . . .” He added that he was sending her a “bauble, not for its worth, but as a token of my friendly feelings towards you.”

In her reply to her husband’s would-be assassin, Mrs. Davis ignored Bill’s self appraisal, acknowledged the “token of peace” and sent him a Bible. “You will oblige me by giving it a daily perusal,” she said. “Respectfully yours,” Mrs. Davis signed her letter, then scratched this out and substituted “yours sincerely.”

The present director of the Fairbanks Museum is Frederick Mold, graduate of Columbia and specialist in museum work. He is an apostle of Fairbanks in regard to what makes a museum a good one; he likes to work with children and is firmly dedicated to the “living museum” idea. When he first came to St. Johnsbury, people
used to come in and say "This is just like it was forty years ago." He reports cheerfully that after five years of work there, he now hears this comment rather less often.

One of Mr. Mold's first projects when he arrived was to persuade a local service club to donate a sound projector to show the excellent films available from universities and foundations. Now two to three hundred children show up each Saturday for free showings of these movies, which are spiced here and there with children's comedies.

A workshop was another of the early needs, so local businessmen and other residents have contributed several power tools with which staff members and Junior Curators—the young volunteers who do much useful work around the place—maintain the building and construct special exhibits.

Special gifts, in both work and money, have gone far to ease the continual plague of fund shortage. Although the Museum is run by a body of self-perpetuating trustees and is not a town property, the civic fathers feel that it is of such value to the community that ever since 1935 they have helped with its upkeep. They now contribute $8000 yearly to make up the bulk of the spending money. Since endowment funds yield only $4000, the Museum would be hard up without bequests and gifts from friends. Typical of these is a recent check which enabled the Museum to replace its outworn and dangerous wiring system. Another gift bought a labor saving stoker for the coal furnace. A retired teacher gives $35 yearly toward teaching aids, such as a miniature planetarium and a set of bird kodachromes.

These financial difficulties, common to similar institutions but especially severe in this case because the community which supports it is so small, naturally prompt many compromises, not all of them unfortunate. When "fluid light" setups, the latest thing for the illumination of exhibition cases, sell for $1500 apiece, they obviously do not fit the Museum budget. But Director Mold and his staff built a satisfactory substitute for less than $100 by diffusing fluorescent light through glass which was coated with a mixture of beer and epsom salts.

The staff, although it has accomplished much over the years, does not intend to let up: there is always much to be done. For example the Trustees have made over one of the corridors and a large room downstairs into a Hall of Science to show a number of working models of machines and instruments. Another of the basement rooms has been turned into a children's workshop. Special exhibits are planned for the future on such things as the workings of TV and the history of the local Fairbanks Morse scales company.

When Director Mold can get hold of $3000, he plans to put up what he calls
"He thinks it's fun to crawl through my sleeve," Mold tells a fascinated audience.

"the poor man's planetarium." For this figure, using volunteer labor, he thinks he can set up something which will duplicate all the essential functions of New York's $100,000 Hayden Planetarium.

One way of gauging the effectiveness of a museum is to figure attendance in proportion to the size of the community. A Carnegie Foundation expert some years ago assessed the work of the Fairbanks Museum together with a number of other like establishments in the country, and the little St. Johnsbury institution was surprised to find itself in joint occupation of first place with the huge Field Museum of Chicago: both received efficiency ratings of 100 percent.

A tribute of another kind, which would probably have pleased Mr. Fairbanks even more, came recently from a little boy, a visitor from the Middle West. He asked an attendant what the Museum cost, explaining he would like to buy it and take it home with him.

"A gopher snake is friendly. It likes to be petted," Director Mold shows them.
What’s cooking? No matter what it is, chances are, if it’s being cooked in a public place in the United States, there’s a Blodgett oven helping to make it a tasty dish.

Same thing is true, too, on an international level, whether it’s a whole sheep cooking in a lonely Arab village, chow in an American Army outpost, or an exotic dish in a famed restaurant.

For Burlington’s G. S. Blodgett Co. today operates an international scale, sending ovens, stoves and burners all over the world.

Few machine plants provide an aroma of baking cake. Paul Grimes is a willing sampler of bake test run by Consulting Engineer Ray Sargent in experimental oven.
The firm itself is international now, also. For the past two years there's been a subsidiary firm, Garland-Blodgett, Ltd., in Toronto.

But let's begin at the beginning.

The time: 1848.

The place: 191 College Street, Burlington, Vt.

Gardner S. Blodgett, 29-year-old executive, is talking in his plumbing store with Paul T. Sweet. A local tavern owner has come to Blodgett, telling him about the difficulties with the oven in his tavern. It doesn't heat properly, he says, cooks

The chef demonstrates a Blodgett oven bakes, cooks, roasts.

Interior of Blodgett plant is painted to increase efficiency and safety. Stationary objects are eye-resting green, operating parts bright orange.

Painter William Francis finishes standard oven. Yellow assemblies to be painted next are parts of subcontract order for electronics manufacturer.
unevenly, and the customers are complaining.

Blodgett, intrigued with a stiff problem, now ponders the matter with Sweet, his helper. They believe it should be a simple task to make a better oven than the one in the tavern.

They agree to give it a try, then doodle over drawings. Finally they put together a wood-burning oven.

Thus the first Blodgett oven is made.
The tavern owner, of course, is delighted.

Gardner S. Blodgett and Paul T. Sweet have started something. They've built a better oven, and the cooks of the world will beat a path to their door.

Orders were slow in arriving at first, but the fame of the ovens spread from kitchen to kitchen and the demand grew.

In 1854, the two men, in order to protect their product, "an improved oven for baking," had it patented, and then organized the business, G. S. Blodgett and Co.

The fame of one of the organizers is as great as the anonymity of the other. Little is known about Paul T. Sweet, but Blodgett, his name perpetuated today by the company bearing it, also won recognition during the Civil War.

For it was Blodgett, Major G. S. Blodgett, assistant quartermaster of volunteers, who outfitted the First Vermont Cavalry, including the purchase of the Morgan horses which were to win such fame during the war.

Blodgett, son of a minister named Lutheran P. Blodgett, was born in Rochester, Vt. He attended Jericho Academy, clerked in a country store, then went to New York City where for three years he was in a wholesale dry goods house.

Blodgett, like so many after him, then tired of life in the city, decided Vermont offered opportunities—and a better life—so returned to his home state.

The G. S. Blodgett Co. now is looked on in Burlington as the Patrick family business, since it has now been in this family for three generations.

First one to join the firm was John S. Patrick, a native of Hinesburg who, in 1892, at the age of 39, became secretary and treasurer of the firm, and later bought out Blodgett's interest in it.

Second in line was Roy L. Patrick,
one-story plant overlooking Burlington Bay of Lake Champlain. It's a priceless setting, with 13 miles of beautiful Lake Champlain for a front yard, and the Adirondacks towering in the distant west. Typical of up-to-date factories, the plant at first glance looks more like a just-built school, featuring wide expanses of glass, than a factory.

Inside there's a long U-shaped assembly and manufacturing line. Into one end pour supplies—each year 1,440 tons of sheet metal, enough to blanket 30 football fields; 36 carloads of fiberglass insulation, enough to insulate 120 houses; plus barrels of nuts, bolts, paint and other materials.

The ovens, stoves and burners, crated and ready to take their places in the eating houses of the world, pour out from the factory in a steady stream.

When the firm began each worker needed only a hammer, a mallet and shears. There have been changes.

Today, if a man were to bring his own equipment, he'd need a truck—and a large one. For the company estimates it has invested $6,000 in equipment per worker.

In one end of the roomy building is the research department, where each year the Blodgett Company spends from $50,000 to $75,000 to make certain its products are the best available—and are improving.

The company doesn't hesitate to tell its aims in this department. Aim is to put out an oven that will cook faster, but that has a cooler front, for the comfort of the cook.

There's an oven being tested now that answers some of these requirements. It will be field tested for months before production begins—and by that time the research department will have moved ahead, looking for other ways to improve the oven.

Step from the research department and you're in the office of Fred C. Neuls, general manager of the G. S. Blodgett Co. Note how close to the production line that office is, and you'll have a hint of how this general manager works.

Neuls, as you talk with him, will impress you first with how sure he is this firm is turning out a good product, how positive he is that Vermont is the place where this product should be made, and how proud he is of the working force under him. And it's of the latter that he likes to talk.

He'll drive home several major points:
1. The G. S. Blodgett Co. never has been shut down due to labor troubles. Historically a close bond has existed between workers and management.
2. There is practically no labor turnover. A job at Blodgett has been a lifetime post for many men.

who throughout his lifetime was closely allied with many of the leading Vermont industries, and was widely known for his civic and charitable activities.

Third generation members of the Patrick family now are in charge of the Blodgett enterprises, which have been divided into two companies.

John H. Patrick heads the Blodgett Supply Co., handling plumbing and heating supplies, and the Vermont Appliance Co. Robert F. Patrick, his brother, is president of the G. S. Blodgett Co. manufacturing business, having joined the business immediately after finishing school. It has been through his administration that the company made its major strides in volume growth and mechanization.

Today the firm is operating in a modern,
3. Each man, at least once each year, talks with the boss, discusses how his individual job is going; what, if anything, is wrong, and what can be done about correcting the trouble. "And they're always ready to tell us, too," points out Neuls.

Here's how Blodgett decides how much each employe will be paid: There's a rate of base pay for each job. Thus a skilled tool and die maker is rated higher than the man who sweeps the floor. In addition there's a standard of productivity set for each job. Each employe must meet this standard to earn his base pay.

How does it work out?
At present the Blodgett Company is paying from 30 to 40 per cent over the base pay rate for all employes.

That chance to tell the boss what is wrong is called the "annual review," and it's held each year during September. Employes, one at a time, visit Neuls. Both the company and the employe benefit from these visits.

For from these talks have come ideas that have made production smoother, have lowered costs, have lightened the employe's load, making him more content and a better workman, and have increased employe's earnings.

Take one example:
Many of the completed ovens are moved from the factory by trucks which back up to a loading platform at the rear of the plant. The height of each truck body floor varies, and manhandling the heavy ovens over walk-up planks into the truck was a cumbersome job, a man-maddening task.

Then one of the men on this job popped up with an idea, Neuls promised to consider it—as he does all ideas brought to him.

A few weeks later the company had spent $1,600, but installed on the loading platform was a hydraulic device that did away with the need for heavy planks and sweaty tugging to load the ovens.

Other ideas used by the company have been more or less expensive, but no less valuable—from a 10,000 square foot building extension to moving power outlets to better positions, a program of buying safety shoes, and the list of small matters that so often make the difference between a fretful, dissatisfied employe and one who is content and willing to do his part to keep Blodgett production rolling.

Employes benefit too. For, as Neuls explains, "A responsibility for the successful continuance of such a system rests with the management and that responsibility is to give prompt answers."

The policy is to take some action on every suggestion, even though the only action possible is to explain to the employe why his suggestion cannot be put into effect.

Neuls, who came to Vermont and Blodgett from New York, likes the Vermont workman, and is impressed with that workman's ability to learn and his willingness to fit into a team. He mentions this as a prime reason for the success of the Blodgett company.

Ask the sales manager, Paul Grimes, where these ovens, these burners and stoves go when they are hiked over that loading platform, and he will give you an answer that will surprise you.

In a nutshell it's: All over the world. And it has been that way for most of the 106 years that Blodgett has been manufacturing ovens.

Some of the first ovens were turned out for the Union forces during the Civil War. Since that time, and in every war in which the United States has fought, the Burlington firm has made the thousands of ovens needed for feeding the troops.

But even years ago, it wasn't only troops who carried the Blodgett products abroad.

Historian W. S. Rann, writing in 1886, lifted his eyebrows in amazement as he wrote that "Every missionary going out under the American Board takes one of the ovens with him." And as a result, concludes Rann, "No other industry in the country can boast of a more extended market than this."

And it's the same today. Fifty Blodgett stoves were recently sent to Saudi Arabia. A specification was attached to this order. The stoves had to be big enough to be used in the cooking of whole sheep.

Some ovens never leave Burlington. Many of the city's restaurants use Blodgett ovens, and the University of Vermont, the Hotel Vermont and the three hospitals in the area use the local product.

Nationally the ovens are spread from the modest diner to big restaurant chains and the eating centers of the nation. They're in use in Schrafft's and Stouffer's chains, in chain stores such as Wool
worth's and Kresge's, and the Waldorf Astoria.

Again going international, the kitchens in the new United Nations building in New York have ovens that bear the Blodgett label.

Here is the company's challenge: Walk into any good restaurant in the United States, and the chances are seven or eight out of ten that you'll find a Blodgett oven in the kitchen.

The post-war boom in the construction of hospitals and schools has meant good business for Blodgett. It is estimated that 40 per cent of the plant's production today ends up in either a school or a hospital.

You've heard the argument about Vermonters being hard to change, that if their grandfathers were satisfied with something, they are; that if they are making one product, buggy whips, let's say, they won't change, even though there's hardly a buggy left in the nation.

Try this argument out on Neuls. Chances are he'll nod absent— but then disprove it by telling you about the biggest recent boom at Blodgett—pizza.

Pizza is a Neapolitan pancake, a delectable flat sheet of crust topped with a flavorful combination of such things as tomato sauce, onions, green peppers, mushrooms, sausage, black olives, anchovies and a variety of cheeses. Pizza has captured the taste of Americans.

Pizza palaces or pizzerias have sprung up throughout the country, and what started as an Italian dish is rapidly becoming as American as a hot dog.
By the Seed You Shall Know Them.

I have said a great deal, over the years, about Vermont’s chief export product. Students of the subject know that for over 150 years the state has been producing and exporting this valuable item. In fact, more than any other New England state, records prove that the Green Mountain Republic, while surpassed by other states in certain commercial and manufactured goods, was never surpassed in the greatest product of all: men. Virtually the seed bed of New England character, Vermont produced men who became pioneers and leaders in building up the United States during the entire 19th century and some of the 20th. This process has not ended, even though it may have slowed down. In 1930, Messrs. Mencken and Angoff, in the *American Mercury*, showed that Vermont had more native sons per capita in that classic compendium of national success *Who’s Who in America*, than any other state.

Stewart Holbrook, in his excellent book *Yankee Exodus* brings forth more engaging proof of the theory and shows how well the Vermont boys did when they got going in different parts of the United States. We can continue to talk here in Vermont, as we do, about increasing industry and bringing in more of this and more of that new kind of commercial enterprise. But I fervently hope that Vermont leaders today will never neglect the opportunity to keep alive and valid those Vermont factors that have, over a century and a half, contributed men of character and leadership to the world.

The Men from Taft Hill

Last fall, it was my honor to dedicate a permanent historic roadside marker which we of The Vermont Historic Sites Commission caused to be erected in the village of West Townsend, two miles from a place called Taft Hill. Not many of today’s Vermonters ever heard of Taft Hill. Not many more know of Aaron, Peter, and Alphonso... all Tafts, whose characters were splendid examples of the Vermont way, of life and leadership.

When Senator Robert A. Taft was up here in 1952, at which time the Republican Party of Vermont gave him a dinner, he told me a little about the Taft family. It was enough to whet my interest.

Had it never been that Senator Robert Taft’s grandfather was this Alphonso of Taft Hill in Vermont and father of President William Howard Taft, the story of the Taft family would still be a great and noble one. For the whole Taft family, from Peter right down to Robert and Charles Taft, have demonstrated what kind of stuff they were all made of—what kind of seed was planted in Vermont and how it grew. It is a story that all Vermonters should and I expect do view with pride.

Peter

The first Taft was Aaron who settled in Townsend in 1799. He was a pioneer and one of the earliest in that region. But it was his son Peter who began the long family record of unique character and distinguished public service. Peter R. Taft was first president of the Trustees of the Leland & Gray Seminary of Townsend.

One of the Taft family tells me this: “He, Peter, was in some ways the most colorful of the bunch. He walked the hundred miles from Uxbridge to West Townsend leading a cow. He later became a member of the Legislature and Probate Judge of Windham County. After his son Alphonso went to Ohio, Peter used to visit him and he went around to the sheriff’s sales in the neighboring counties trading in cattle and horses.”

Alphonso

But it was Peter’s son Alphonso (from whom Robert Taft got his middle name) who became the first nationally and internationally known Taft. His long and remarkable career is little known because of the subsequent fame of his son, the President, and his grandsons, Robert and Charles. But it is worth stopping a moment to look at.

Alphonso Taft was born on Taft Hill in 1810. He taught school in Townsend to...
earn money (the Tafts had very little of the world’s goods then) to put himself through the local Seminary. At 19 he entered Yale College. There was so little money in the Taft ménage in those days that Alphonso walked from Townshend, Vermont to New Haven, Connecticut, and he walked back home for vacations. One historian says he did this to “save money.” I don’t believe a word of that. I think Alphonso Taft walked because he didn’t have the money to travel on a public conveyance and because the Tafts, like all early Vermonters, had grit, courage and stamina to surmount obstacles. These traits came to fruition in Alphonso’s grandson Senator Robert Taft.

Alphonso was graduated with high honors from Yale and in 1840 moved to Cincinnati, Ohio where he began the practice of law. He started the Taft traditions in Ohio . . . traditions which Bob Taft and his brother, Charles have so ably kept alive and flourishing.

Alphonso, whom so few today have heard of, was a pioneer in the founding of the Republican Party; a delegate to the first convention and Justice of the Supreme Court in Cincinnati. President U. S. Grant later appointed him Secretary of War, and then Attorney-General in his cabinet. Alphonso then served as Minister to Austria, and also Minister to Russia. One early Vermont biographer says of him: “he was a man of high principles, rugged honesty, sterling character, and withal a strong and able man.”

I love that “withal.”

Alphonso’s son, William Howard Taft, while President of the United States, visited Vermont in 1912 and made a journey down to see his family’s early home in West Townshend. While there, President Taft said:—

“My father used to say that the thing you could certainly say about the Vermonter was that he was always a safe man, upon whom you could count for the things he ought to do, and that he never failed.”

The new marker erected in 1954 by The Vermont Historic Sites Commission on Route 30, West Townshend, Vermont.

The Seed Blossoms

If I had my choice, I would select these few words as the best description of a real Vermonter that it is possible to conceive. Nothing, I think, so accurately describes the unique and rare virtues of the great men that Vermont has turned out. A man you could count on for the things he ought to do. That is the apotheosis of character. That is Vermont.

I was a little too young to know how this might be applied to Alphonso’s son the President. But I am thankful that I have lived in a time when, from first hand, I know that these same moving words can be said and no one will deny them, about his grandson, Senator Robert Alphonso Taft.

I suppose I should, in a manner of speaking, entitle this paper, “A Letter of Appreciation from Vermont to the Tafts.” We have never bragged much about the Taft family because I suppose it is not seemly. But I hope that Senator Taft’s family and his brother Charles, will accept this small note, which I trust expresses the feeling of all good Vermonters. We want to say that we are mighty proud of the fact that there is something of the Vermont way of life in the characters of the famous family that started on Taft Hill, hard by the small village of West Townshend, Vermont. But what we really prefer to say is this: It is we, of Vermont today, who are honored by this fact of history.
The Country Store

It's not what it used to be 100 odd years ago—in the goods it sells.

But it's still there and still serves the needs of the community.

For 128 years so far—and still managed by the same family.

The store looked quite the same outside a half-century ago.

Champagne and beer, electric blankets and oil lamps, pressure cookers and crosscut saws, nylon stockings and woodsman's boots—these are just a few of the items that the Peru country store keeps in stock, carrying out the tradition which the store's founder, J. J. Hapgood, inaugurated back in 1827 to stock what this small community needed and wanted.

Country stores are interesting places whether they are the variety dressed up for the tourist trade or the type such as Arthur Kelton is running in the same pat-
By Ruth Mansfield

Photography by Frances MacDonald

In the early account books of the store, kept in a system that only the proprietor could fathom, little is known of the store’s founder, Joseph Jackson Hapgood. The Hapgood genealogy says “J.J.” was born in 1805, moved from Marlboro to Peru, Vermont, in 1806. Purchased lands, built a house using the lower part for a store. “He married in 1832, Hepsi, Barnard, who tended the store and he the farm, carrying on also an extensive lumber business. He prospered, built more houses, and for many years was the only merchant in the town, became a man of wealth and standing. He died in Peru, in 1875.”

Of Marshall Jay, his son, much is known. Marshall liked publicity. In fact, it would almost seem, after listening to a few of Mrs. Kelton’s stories of her grandfather, that he lived his life for posterity. Hapgood Pond, that little gem of water set in the midst of the National Park area, is named for Marshall.

He attended Burr and Burton Seminary in Manchester, where his great grandson Arthur is now a sophomore, graduated from Williams College, studied law at Harvard Law School, passed his bar examinations but he returned to the store where he divided his time between merchandising, buying huge tracts of land (at the time of his death he owned 10,000 tourists and skiers who flock in by the thousands annually to Big Bromley, located within its boundaries. This may partially account for the champagne, sparkling burgundy, the Clos des Tomeuriers and other fine wines that are displayed on top of the meat counter. But then there is a large selection of saws, axes, rifles, knives, wool for knitting, oil lamps, air conditioners, shirts, paints and contemporary American cooking pots. In fact, every place I looked I saw different items. Learning that they had just completed the annual inventory, I asked Mr. Kelton, busy at the moment in his role of postmaster as the post office is at one end of the store, how many different items he carried in stock. “Goodness, I don’t know,” he declared. “There is one thing I know I haven’t got. That’s a washboard. I sold the last one a short time ago and I don’t intend to restock that item,” he added.

When I came out of the store, I almost expected to see horses and buggies drawn up outside. Reading the old records and talking to the Keltons, I was transplanted back to the early eighteen hundreds when men brought in shingles and hard wood ashes to barter for molasses, tea, spices and calico.

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VERNEMON Life 57
Postmaster Arthur Kelton distributes morning’s mail.

acres in addition to the land he had given towards a national park) and erecting and operating steam saw-mills.

Marshall Hapgood transported me back 75 years, to the times when a man could and did write the following instructions for his clerks:

“Never on any account run this store for a day unless you have had eight full hours sleep on the night previous. This will necessitate you to be in bed by ten at the latest. I will have no person undertake to run my store who has had only a half rest the night previous. Saturday and Sunday nights are yours—do what you please with them. But if upon the other nights, you fail to be in bed by ten o’clock, you are positively forbidden to unlock the store the next day. This of course does not apply to cases of illness or necessity but due to sitting up with any healthy young lady.

“Put your whole mind, during business hours, upon business and business—only business alone. Tell no stories, listen to no stories. Talk about nothing but business in business hours. There will be enough to keep you fully employed if things are kept perfectly straight. When folks detain you to tell you a long story, leave them. Consider every moment as worth something and you will just hit the mark. Waste no time upon fooling with customers—and let me repeat, talk nothing but business in the store and be hindered in nothing by listening to anything but business talk.”

That doesn’t sound much like the old country store we read about where customers came in for a plug of tobacco and stayed to chew, not only the tobacco, but the neighborhood gossip for hours on end. Despite old Marshall’s instructions and his attempt to make the store a place of business only, it was the club of Peru. The store opened at 6:30 in the morning and closed according to Mr. Kelton “when everyone got ready to go home,”—a contrast to the present hours of eight to six except on Saturdays. The clerk probably did have to follow the retiring instructions as he slept over the store where his lamp or candle would shine out like a beacon over the village.

Despite these rather severe instructions, Marshall Hapgood revealed a mellower side in another document which is now displayed in the store. This was composed before he went into the lumber business, which made him quite a fortune. He was his own clerk when he posted this upon the door:

Until Further Notice
Our STORE will be CLOSED
Wednesdays and Fridays
J. J. Hapgood & Co.
Peru, Vt., Nov. 1st, 1876.
Let those of our friends who are inclined to doubt the propriety of this measure remember that your merchant can enjoy none of the delightful autumn and winter evenings. He is penned up. He cannot employ a clerk without raising the rate per cent of profit upon his goods. He desires leisure time in order to better himself for his chosen profession.
The Millington twins in a bygone era conversed by the store with Marshall Hapgood.

He loves the Open Air and the open air loves him.

In other words, Marshall Hapgood was a hunter and, like any other true Vermonter, he was not going to be confined in bird season or restrained by a store from tracking down deer and bear. Marshall built up the store and the Keltons have carried it on, adding the items which the community needs or wants. But old Marshall had other interests as he grew older. He was interested in education and for years was superintendent of schools. Then he got into politics. Six terms as town representative earned for him at Montpelier the nickname of the “The Great Objector.” He was the foe of cigarettes and fought for their suppression, largely because the cigarette was responsible for so many disastrous forest fires. He was the author of a bill prohibiting the operation of games of chance at agricultural fairs and it was his custom to go the rounds of Vermont fairs in an effort to see that the law was complied with. The state of Vermont benefited largely through one of his bills. “Though not heralded as an important piece of legislation,” as the Brattleboro Daily Reformer wrote in his obituary, “nevertheless it saved the state thousands of dollars. This was the bill that provided that bills in both houses proposing amendments to existing laws should have the new matter printed in italics and the matter to be eliminated printed within brackets, showing at a glance how the new law would read, without the necessity of looking it up.”

As Mrs. Kelton recalls her grandfather was eccentric. “He had two strange habits. He never went to bed like other folks. He would wander around through the house, reading, thinking and dozing. Then he would nap a bit through the day. And I cannot remember his ever sitting down to the dining room table—even at family Christmas parties. A place was always set for him but he would wander back and forth, helping himself to whatever he wished to eat.”

The store is now on a side road since the main highway, Route 11 from Londonderry to Manchester, was moved outside the village a few years ago. “I was glad of that,” said Mr. Kelton. “When the main road by-passed us, it made the village a pleasant place in which to live. No, I don’t put out any signs to advertise this store. After all, we are just a country store, in business to serve this village. That’s all.”

Mrs. Ray Hulett waits on Ahial Crandall, Chester Alden.
At the Sign of the Quill

A Department of Literary Comment
By Arthur Wallace Peach

CLOSE BESIDE THE MARSH

Like frogs that sang for Aristophanes
Bre-keke-kesh-koash, so shrill,
Are these along the marsh beneath the hill,
So many millions shrilling lonesome glee.
No string of silver bells so loud as these
Has jingled on surcingled pony's thill
On winter moonlit sleigh. All else is still
And twilight darkens till nobody sees.
"Bre-keke-kesh-koash," before the days
Of Christ or Moses or of man they made
The superhuman ringing of their lays
To sing and jingle in the lonely glade
That merges into marshes. Nothing stays
The same on earth, but this wild song has stayed.
—Arthur Wentworth Hewitt in First Harvest, 1954

Just Gossip—More or Less

What is your pet favorite symbol of spring? I know that a realist and his hard-boiled sister of my day, disregarding my adjective "favorite," would name these symbols—wet feet, slush, sniffles; and something could be said in defense of their callous estimates. But letting their verdict pass, many New Englanders, turning to their youth or dwelling now outside the crowded places would have their pet symbols—pussy-willows, jonquils, crocuses—in other words, buds and flowers. I personally refuse to believe that spring has arrived until I see my first robin, coming with his banjo on his knee gaily from the South. Another friend watches for the first martin. Another from his skyscraper-office window in one of our great cities studies the southern sky for the first shy hint of the light that means the spring. Dr. Hewitt in his sonnet reaches farther than the rest of us. A Greek scholar, he has gone back 2300 years to the Greek dramatist and poet, Aristophanes, for his symbol, for one of the Greek's themes that has outdistanced time has to do with the hyla or the spring frogs, known to most of us as "spring peepers"—and they are an ancient symbol that we can still hear in our twilight meadows and marshes.

The real point I am trying to make is as simple and symbolic as the hylas' cry along the marsh—how much do we really see of the seasons as they come and go? Most of us, it seems to me, go tap, tapping with our five-sense mind, too intent on the routines of life to look up and beyond at this most interesting and constantly changing earth around us. I have followed for miles, because I have that type of mind, cars with from two to five passengers through some of our loveliest scenery, and along those many miles not a head would turn from the road running before them. Have you ever, going down a village or city street, seen anyone look up at the sky? I know that in a modern street there is much to avoid, but a glance upward takes a moment and reaches into eternal skies.

There is hope for us only if we learn to see, for, having eyes, we see not. The best guides to this interesting earth are the gifted ones of course—the artist who going with you can reveal the world he sees in terms of color and shade—notice the shadows and the sunlight on the next barn you see; hiking along a country road, you are lucky if you have a friend who knows the flowers, one who knows the trees, one who knows his geology and the story of the rocks even in a brook's nearby pool.

All the above makes a large order, I know—such friends are not numerous enough; so we must turn to books; and one of the wisest plans for a summer outing is to look over in the spring the wise books that teach us to see—and there are many of them, some in pocket size, some in library size, but all useful. I will not mention my favorite ones in this Quill, for an experiment in search of them is one phase of the adventuring of which I have written so much in this department. I will, however, in the summer Quill list those books that serve well those of us going about with unseen eyes. In the meantime, I will welcome from those who have found helpful.

Our physical sight must grow dim as the years go, but not our inner sight. One of my friends, Mrs. Bertha Oppenheim, the author of a Vermont classic, Winged Seeds, had the gift of the observing eye to which I have referred. In her last years before her death her sight began to fail; and this poem, which she sent me, says all there is to say on the theme which I am now closing.

Prayer
Ah, if perhaps I blind shall be
Before my life is done,
Dear God, my soul's sight let me keep
Of trees and sky and sun;
My memories of wondrous light,
Of color, wind and rain,
Of apple blossoms, bittersweet,
Of cardinal and crane;
Of snow-white winter, gray-green spring,
And magic stars and moon,
Of smoky, gorgeous, autumn days,
Of hills and trail and dune!

About the 251 Club

In my summer Quill, 1954, I announced boldly that the way to see and know Vermont was to visit every town in the state, and I proposed to organize a club of those who had done or would do so. The idea appealed to one of our largest dailies in a great city, and it was promptly written up at length, and questions flowed in. I doubt if the idea is workable in many states, but it certainly is in Vermont.

Those who sent in proof of having visited every town became charter members—and the list is an impressive if not extensive one; the list of those who began immediately to do their visiting—all to become members of 251—is extensive; and space is not available for me to go into the details I should like to sketch about this form of adventuring. However, I have decided to send all members of 251 a bulletin of "what is going on." Readers of Vermont Life to whom the idea is new but interesting are invited to write me in care of Vermont Life for information.

The scheme of visiting our towns can easily and profitably be made a plan for several summer vacations.

The Last Word on the Old Country Store

When Mr. Gerald Carson, who has a 150-acre farm, near Millerton, N. Y., informed the staff of the Vermont Historical Society that he was planning to tell the story of the country's old country stores, I, at least, was skeptical. The whole subject seemed to me complicated, with facets hidden in innumerable records and the mysterious elements of human personality; and knowing the old stores in my state and regarding them with high esteem—they performed and do now perform a vital service in their communities—I was not keen about watching a former New York advertising writer poking a sophisticated nose among them.

My skepticism, Vermont brand I admit, vanished with my contacts with Mr. Carson, and now that his book has appeared, I am no longer a skeptic but an advocate. Mr. Carl Carmer, the New York historian and author, calls the book "a major contemporary contribution to American social history." Such praise, even if true, is depressing, for most of us associate books on social history with professional jargon. The Old Country Store is a human book, readable, enjoyable, written in a friendly style, and yet at the same time soundly based in material that has been understood, appreciated, and carefully written.

In his foreword Mr. Carson writes: "In the days when men lived separate and solitary lives, it was the country store that tied the scattered farms into a community. The store was what made a neighborhood and gave it its central nervous system and a conscience. It also put some fun into life." The country store does that today—and more—in Vermont.

In my wanderings around the state I make constant use of them, and in them I can buy anything from a tire to a fishpole or a cure for a "tummy" ache. I am not referring to stores, no matter how interesting, that seek to imitate the old stores of a century ago, but the "real article" of today.

Part I of the book deals with the years from 1791 to 1861, and on page 12 I find this reference to Vermont—and it has the right ring:

And so it is remembered and passed along, how in a Vermont store there was a 'setter' beside the stove who watched impersonally as the proprietor wielded the turkey-wing duster, scattered the floor-sweep, and pushed the push broom.

"Where's Eddie—is he sick?" inquired the merchant's guest, solicitously.

"No. He's through."

A pause for further reflection; and then: "Got anybody in mind to fill the vacancy?"

The storekeeper went on with his dusting:

"Nope," he said briefly over his shoulder. "Eddie didn't leave no vacancy."

I have heard plenty of oratory in country stores, but the laconic, pointed comment, made drily, is still a part of the Vermonters' equipment and his storekeepers'; and the hurricane of words blowing at him and around him and me today tends to make, in my ears anyway, a blessed relief—saying much in little instead of loosing an entire vocabulary on a suffering listener.

The 290 pages of the book are closely packed with concrete detail—one main reason for the book's interest and vitality. Suppose you glance through this:

When the buyer had stated her wants in some article of dry groceries, the merchant plunged a scoop into the bin or barrel and out it came full of loose rice, beans, or coffee. He laid a piece of flat wrapping paper on the scales, checked the weight, folded and crimped the paper, tied it up with twine. There was a nice, handy cotton twine called "Tea Twine" for tea and other light packages, sometimes plain white, sometimes a twist of red and white together. The string came out of a holder that looked like a beehive, or from the other kind, which swung overhead and held the ball of twine in a sort of cage. Each parcel was wrapped once with a single string and tied with a bow knot. Loose pieces were carefully wrapped on a perpetual ball which was kept in the twine box. Time wasn't money, but string was.

You can see the entire operation.

Part II covers the years between 1861 and 1921; so the book treatment has a wide sweep—in fact, Mr. Carson roamsthe country over. I like his chapter titles so much I might as well list them—and they do give a hint of the phases discussed.

In Part I we have these: A Chance to Grow up with the Country, How to Live Without Money, The Thrivingest People in the World, Human Nature and Other Trials, A Look at the Books, A Man of Many Parts, The Drummers of Pearl Street. In Part II, we have these: The Man Who Brought the News Up and Down the Line, From Cradle to Coffin, Sittin' Round the Old Store Stove, One for a Man Two for a Horse, The Old Store Gets a New Look, You Can't Go to Town in a Bathtub. The only weakness in that list is "Sittin'." Who ever heard of anyone "sittin'" in a country store or on a country porch? It ain't "sittin"; it's "settin'."

By and large, The Old Country Store is a book to be enjoyed, and at the same time it is a source of information. It should have a long and useful life.
