The Editor’s Uneasy Chair

It might seem premature, our treating camping as the lead article subject in the spring. But many families, we find, like to make their plans for summer vacations early. For information more specific than this article can provide, write: Director of Parks, Vermont Department of Forests & Forest Parks, Montpelier; Director, Green Mountain National Forest, 22 Evelyn Street, Rutland; Green Mountain Club, 108 Merchants Row, Rutland.

Apologies are in order. We ran out of the Vermont Life Calendars for 1960 at Christmas time, too late to reprint. This year we’ll be better able to plan, and perhaps people will place their orders earlier.

Vermont Life, as many readers have noted (and as many have long applauded), contains no advertising—except as the whole magazine might be said to promote Vermont.

But we are now actively considering a limited, segregated page or two added to each issue for classified Vermont ads, the kind which would tell where to find specific accommodations, unusual products, fine craft items, antiques, country homes—in short the factual information readers might welcome. The program would give Vermont Life certain added revenue (to be used to improve editorial content), but that is a side issue. We’d like to know how you, the reader, would feel about this kind of classified advertising, of the type found in the Saturday Review and Yankee.

Prints for framing, of the old Currier maple sugar party (pages 16 & 17) probably will be available at a later date, to be announced. A few sets are still on hand ($2 ppd.) from the three-print set offered in our Winter issue.

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p.1—J. W. Smith, Robert Borst
p.9—Geoffrey Orton, R. Simons, U.S. Forest Service
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p.35—Photograph by John F. Smith, Jr.

p.36—Photograph by John Titchen
VERMONT LIFE readers, some of them, take us as Gospel. A year ago (page 59) we reproduced a century-old poster which advertised "Green Mountain Balm of Gilead and Cedar Plasters." These concoctions, the old ad showed, were sold in the Civil War era by M. K. Paine of Windsor.

The first oddity was that after our publication Oakley Skinner, who now runs the Rexall Drug Store there, began getting orders, all addressed to M. K. Paine, druggist and apothecary, for Balm of Gilead plasters. The straight-faced orders came from various points in Vermont, New York, Massachusetts and Kentucky.

Though Mr. Paine died more than 80 years ago, Mr. Skinner's store, in the Vermont tradition of discarding nothing, still has an adequate stock of the old plasters, all bearing revenue stamps of the 1860s. He is now supplying Mr. Paine's late-blooming customers.

Among its interesting citizenry Vermont has a full-fledged Scottish clan chief. Robert MacNeil, an architect from Marlboro, is the 45th chief of these world-scattered Scots. He is working now on plans to restore Kisimul castle, ancient seat of the clan, on the island of Barra.

Good road signs are used to show where something is, but Vermont goes further—aiding the bewildered traveler by telling him at times where he isn't. Here is a sample from Vergennes. Note that no further information is volunteered.

In these confusing days when superhighway building pairs off with the abandonment of ancient town roads we report with pleasure the re-creation of an abandoned road in part and the completion of a new, scenic, all-weather route near the top of Vermont. The road was partly a community effort and it runs eastward from Montgomery Center into the beautiful and several Jay mountains, past the Jay Peak Ski area and connects to eastern Vermont near Troy. There can be few more beautiful views than those opening from this road—even in Vermont.

W. H. JR.
Woodland Vacations

The country over families are finding new meanings, a new life, in the outdoors. Vermont's forest parks are a growing part of this returning to nature.

The great trend in recreation for Americans, perhaps, is their awakening love of the outdoors. One evidence of this is that last year some 70 million Americans visited the national parks. In Vermont the trend also is strong.

Here the enjoyment of state parks has increased since the War from 5,000 visitors a year to almost 80,000 last year. Yet outdoor vacationers find the forest areas peacefully quiet and the wilderness abundantly available.

Besides the great tracts of the Green Mountain National Forest—almost 600,000 acres along the state's backbone—Vermont's own state parks and forests comprise some 140 square miles of lakes and woodlands.

Currently Vermont is deep in its greatest expansion of forest park facilities in twenty-five years—the development of new park locations going forward with the enlargement and improvement of existing parks. At present some 2,000 campers can be accommodated at one time in the thirteen state parks which have camping facilities.

The camping season in Vermont—both in state and national forests—runs about 100 days, is most popular in July and August. There is a marked trend, however, to autumn camping vacations, in September and early October.

What do camping vacationers value the most? The quiet, restful woodlands, unspoiled scenery, the wildlife, the lack of commercialism, and the sharing of it with other people who value these same things in life.
Family Camping

Photographs by Hanson Carroll

The Robert Leete and Wallace Festa families of Ossining, N. Y. weren’t strangers to Vermont. The Festas had been on winter ski trips to the Green Mountains, and the Leetes had camped out at Calvin Coolidge State Forest Park near Plymouth. Last year the two families, combined numbering four adults and five children, decided on a joint camping vacation in Vermont. They elected to spend five days at Mt. Mansfield State Forest and five more at Groton State Forest Park. They wrote for August reservations. During their stay at Groton (which is pictured here), the two families went swimming, fished for bullpout, and took exploring hikes. They climbed nearby Owls Head, visited the granite quarries in Barre, explored the wild forest areas. And then they relaxed, too, in the warm sun, by the evening campfire, and snug at night in sleeping bags.

Tom Leete, Paula and Wallie Festa head down “Main Street” for the beach.

Inflated mattresses get plenty of use—in the daytime for sunbathing, at night for sleeping.
The Leetes are hosts for breakfast. The Festa camp was like this except not on the water's edge.

families explore the top of Owl's Head Mountain.

Bob Leete shows Susan how it's done. Later Susan soloed (in a life jacket).
Back to the camp—at a row around the lake and a swim.

Robby Leete gets another—so did brother Tom and Wallie Festa.

A trip to the granite quarries at Barre proved fascinating.
The two families relax around the campfire and watch the spark tracers.

G'night...
Camping sites. (see opp page)
B. Boat launching sites.
P. Parks with picnic areas.
S. Parks with swimming facilities.
T. Trails for hiking.
State Camp Areas


(2) Ascutney State Park—On Brownsville road off U.S. 5 five miles from Windsor. Paved park road to near summit (3,144 ft.). Outstanding views. Supplies at Brownsville or Ascutney. 2 picnic areas, tent platforms, lean-tos.

(3) Calvin Coolidge State Forest—Plymouth (supplies Bridgewater) off Rte. 100. Coolidge sites, Tyson Lakes, old gold mine nearby. 11,537 acres, hiking to 1,940 ft., scenic views, small swimming pond. Picnic area, tent platforms, lean-tos.


(8) Groton State Forest—6 ponds, 15,300 acres. Reached from U.S. 2 near Marshfield or U.S. 102 at Groton (supplies at either). Fishing. Swimming at Groton Lake, hiking to Owl’s Head. Picnic areas at Stillwater, Osmore, Ricker Ponds. Tent platforms, lean-tos at New Discovery, Stillwater, Ricker’s.

(9) Maidstone State Forest—On large lake, good fishing & boating, at edge of Essex County wilderness area, off Rte. 102 near Bloomfield (supplies). Interesting Brunswick Mineral Springs nearby. Picnic area with swimming. Lean-tos and tent platforms at south end of lake.


(12) Sandbar State Park—One of few (see Hapgood Park below) with adjacent camping & beach facilities, fishing. On sandy shore of Lake Champlain where U.S. 2 rosses causeway to Grand Isle; waterfowl refuge. Supplies at South Hero & W. Milton. Picnic area, tent platforms, lean-tos.

(13) Townshend State Forest—On Rte. 30, 2 miles west of Townshend. Historic covered bridge, Taft homestead, new Bald Mt. Dam nearby. Hiking trails to top (1,580 ft.) Bald Mt., fishing & swimming nearby. Supplies at Townshend. Picnic area, tent platforms, lean-tos.

(14) Little Rocky Pond—Reached by 3 mile trails from U.S. 7 at South Wallingford or by trail from Danby-Weston road. Hiking trails, trout fishing, lean-to shelters.

(15) Greendale Forest Camp—On gravel road 5 miles north of Weston. Nearby mountain stream, summer theater, concerts, craft guild at Weston (supplies). 10 picnic units & shelter, 10 camping units, tent and trailer camping.

(16) Hapgood Pond Forest Camp—2 miles north of Peru (supplies) on Rte. 11. Pond with 200-ft. beach, bath house, water. 19 picnic units, 19 camping units, tent sites with fireplaces.

(17) Silver Lake—3 miles east of Rte. 53 and Lake Dunmore. 5 camping units.
Camping Details

STATE PARKS


Hours—10 a.m. to 9 p.m. (picknickers).

Fees—Entrance fee 50c per car with five people or less. Lean-tos—$2.50 per day. Tent Sites—$1.50 per day.

Regulations—Stays limited to three weeks. Off-season, send reservations (with full deposit) to State Park Service, Montpelier. In-season, send there or to Caretaker of individual park. Reservations accepted for minimum of four days.

Fishing—State license and regulations pertain.

Hunting—No firearms, air guns, bows and arrows or sling-shots permitted.

Boating—Rowboats to rent in some areas. Main boating is at Sandbar, D.A.R., Groton and Maidstone.

Animals—Dogs and cats permitted if on leashes.

Trailers—No facilities for house trailers. Camp trailers use tent sites.

Laundry—Some areas have hand laundry room (no hot water). Launderomats located in larger towns.

Supplies—No groceries or ice are sold in park areas, are available from nearby towns.

State Forests—Areas are not developed for camping, no fires or camping permitted.

Equipment Supplied—Tent platforms (take tents up to 12' x 14') and lean-tos have fireplaces and grates (supplied with firewood), picnic tables. In each camp area are flush toilets, drinking water piped, some have electric service, cold water showers. Large shelters in picnic areas.

NATIONAL FOREST AREAS

Open Dates—May 30 to October 1.

Regulations—May be used without permits; no reservations. Outside of picnic and camp areas campground permits are required. For data write Green Mt. National Forest, 22 Evelyn St., Rutland.

Facilities—Camp areas use Adirondack-type shelters. Fireplaces provided. Picnic areas (13) at Texas Falls (off Rte. 125, 4 miles west of Hancock), 24 at White Rocks (off Rte. 103A, 2 miles east of Wallingford) and also see GMNF Camping areas (three), page 9.

Hunting and Fishing—Permitted in GMNF areas. State licenses and regulations pertain.

Hiking—Forest is traversed by Long Trail with connecting side trails.

LONG TRAIL

The Long Trail is a unique footpath (no difficult climbing) begun in 1910 and reaching 255 miles from the Massachusetts to the Canadian lines. It follows the main ridge of the Green Mountains, is well marked with white blazes (connecting trails in blue). Cabins and lean-tos, available to hikers (no reservations) are located at convenient intervals along the trail, which is maintained by volunteer members of the Green Mountain Club (108 Merchants Row, Rutland). The Club’s valuable Guide Book may be ordered at $1, postpaid. The trail may be reached from many side trails and at numerous points where highways cross the Green Mountains.

WHAT TO TAKE

Camping gear is not available at state parks. It may be obtained in Vermont on a rental basis at Wilson’s, Center St., Rutland. Suggested basic equipment is as follows:

- Axe, with 2 ft. handle or longer.
- Army cots with air mattresses.
- Sleeping bags (or three wool blankets per person).
- Tent (if lean-to not used).
- Washbasin, with toilet articles, towels, etc.
- First Aid kit.

- Cooking utensils consisting of: cups, metal plates, spoons, knives, forks, three nested cooking pots, butcher knife, cooking spoons, spatula, skillet, dish pan, scouring pads, soap.
- Clothing—2 shirts (one heavy), camp clothing, 2 sets summer underwear, 2 pairs shoes (one walking type), heavy pajamas, 2 pairs heavy socks, heavy sweater or jacket, rainproof jacket, clothing for town trips.
- Added valuable equipment if space permits:
  - Refrigerator box (metal), water can, gasoline lantern, gasoline stove, swim suit, fishing tackle, camera and film, tent fly or tarpaulin.

- Stowed with care the equipment and supplies can be fitted into the trunk of a standard American sedan (with roof rack if tents and cots used), or with roof carrier on a small car.

WHAT DOES CAMPING COST?

A detailed survey of last year’s Vermont park campers shows that the average family spent about $6 per day per person. This did not include the cost of equipment or of getting to camp and back. It did include the cost of groceries, miscellaneous supplies, occasional visits to nearby points of interest, incidental meals in towns, souvenirs, etc. Though the majority of the thousands who took camping vacations last year were not, by the survey, motivated mainly by economy, on the average they logged very modest outlays.
There's hardly a man, woman or child in northern Vermont who hasn't heard the name Indian Joe. But not many would venture to tell you who he was or even if he was.

"Joe Injun" as he called himself, was very definitely real, and his life occupies a unique niche in Vermont history. In the rough and tumble pre-Revolutionary days, when a man was likely to reach for his gun and barricade the door at the sight of a redman, Injun Joe and his squaw Molly were fast making friends among the settlers. Colonists up and down the Lamoille and Connecticut valleys opened their doors gladly to the dusky Indian couple who were fugitives from their warlike brethren in Canada.

This redskin whose story is so little known was to be personally honored by General George Washington for his invaluable aid as a Revolutionary scout.

Joe's tradition is rare in a state with very little Indian heritage. Only a few town names, streams and lakes echo the dim Indian past.

Joe's life still is questioned by some who consider him a romantic myth, a fictitious redman invented to lend an Indian aura to "Joe's Pond" near West Danville. But the reality of Indian Joe springs to light from the pages of books and papers that make rich reading for the student of Vermont history. "Joe the Friendly Indian," as he is generally referred to, held a solid place in the affections of the early Vermont settler, judging from references to him in country gazetteers, town and state histories, journals of his contemporaries and state papers which detail his public care.¹

The colorful Indian, who was one day to fight loyally at the side of the colonists, was born in 1739 in Louisburg, Nova Scotia. His family belonged to the Mic Mac tribe, a branch of the powerful Algonkians. His father, according to Joe's description of him, was a "landowner with neat cattle, jacks and horses." Years later Joe would tell his white friends, in halting English and with much gesticulation, of his earliest nightmarish remembrances when Louisburg was taken by the British in 1745. "Red Coats come. Indians run. Drove Indians off—took all land." Left an orphan, the young Indian lad fled with the scattered remnants of his tribe to the Indian village of St. Francis.

Joe's new home was a seething melting-pot of exiled Indian tribes, located at the meeting place of the St. Lawrence River and the St. Francis. He suddenly was thrust into a world of violence and revenge. His early memories were of the shuffling parties of pathetic raid victims taken prisoner in the Connecticut Valley, their bodies maimed and starved after a brutal march to the northern Indian outpost. Whatever great culture these Indians had inherited from their ancestors was hidden from the white man. The northern Indian that Joe grew up with was hardly the Noble Redman of storybook fame but a fierce savage bent on torture of the white Englishman. He made a grim ally for the French.

The French and Indian War was in full flower when Joe was taken on a raid party to Vermont, somewhere near Newbury. The orgy of stealing and burning white men's property ended with the colonists driving off the redmen, except for Joe, who was left behind badly

¹ Vermont History, Jan., 1954; Thompson's Historical Sketches of the Discovery, Settlement and Progress of Events of the Coös Country, 1841, Hemenway's Vermont Historical Gazetteer; Orange County Gazetteer; Town histories—Barnef, Newbury, Ryegate, Peacham, Morrisstown; Address by former Governor Stanley C. Wilson Captain Joe and other Vermont Indians, over Station WBZ, Boston; Indian Joe, Revolutionary Scout by Lois Greer in The Vermonter; Safe Bridge, by Frances Parkinson Keyes.
wounded. The young Indian was cared for all winter by a kindly white family in the nearest farmhouse. When his health was restored they invited him to stay. Joe said he must return to his own people but in exchange for their friendship he promised he would devise a system to warn his new friends of approaching danger. He returned to his tumultuous village vowing to return soon to this land of friendly men.

Joe came back from time to time to hunt and fish in the fertile Coös valley where he had been wounded. The early settlers gradually got used to seeing the friendly Indian and exchanged beads and cloth for his fish and game. Their welcome became warmer as he passed along word of hostile Indians in ambush.

Joe never saw the St. Francis village after the famed Rogers Rangers party made its attack on the sleeping Indian settlement. He took flight with the panic-stricken survivors and made his way by hidden Indian trails back to the Coös valley. The trip was laborious, for Joe brought with him a squaw he had wooed and won away from her brave. With them they carried Squaw Molly’s two infant sons, Toomalek and Muxa-Wuxal.

Joe never returned to Canadian soil. Many have theorized that his elopement with another brave’s squaw could well have impelled him to keep two jumps ahead of his outraged people. In addition to his indiscretion of spiriting away Molly, his reputation as a traitor, warning the settlers, infuriated his red brothers. His life from then until the Revolution was one of intermittent pursuit by Indians who attempted to capture him and Molly and drag them back across the border. But for Indian Joe, return was out of the question when Canada became British territory, the land of the Red Coats who had ruined his family.

In their flight for safety, Joe and Molly took refuge in a cave located between Ryegate and Newbury (still visible), set up a makeshift wigwam in Peacham and at one time built a tiny cabin in the town of Walden. Very soon after they eloped from Canada the young couple in their wanderings discovered West Danville. Joe learned that the body of water in that town, later to bear his name, was greatly feared by his pursuing St. Francis brothers. They believed it harbored evil spirits. Joe and Molly found a small island in the lake and built a wigwam there amid its sheltering trees. Here the couple was believed to have lived most of the time until the Revolution.

The nomadic life of Joe and Molly was the common lot of the so-called Coösuck Indians in the Coös Valley by the Connecticut River. They flowed back and forth through Newbury, which was the only town in Vermont where historians believe there was once an organized Indian village before white settlers arrived. There were a few friendly Indians like Joe and Molly who helpfully taught Vermont’s first families how to sow their corn crops, cook Indian dishes and use animal skins to make household utensils and clothes. But an Indian was still an Indian and instinctively was to be feared. Typical of the “savages” was Captain John, later a Revolutionary fighter, who terrorized the children of Newbury, reciting tales of his brutal assaults on two Vermont pioneer women. Friendly and helpful Joe and Molly presented a sharp contrast to John.

Joe’s conditioning to the perils of human conflict had shaped him well for the role he was to play in the Revolutionary War. He was hired as a scout by General Jacob Bayley who was commanding the northern frontier forces, the shield protecting New England from Canada.

Newbury’s town history tells of the grave dangers faced by the famous general and by Indian Joe as one of his scouts. Their task was to guard the military stores in Newbury and Haverhill, protect the houses of prominent citizens and watch the roads. Joe was sent out on dangerous missions with rangers to point out trails unknown to white men. Joe is also believed to have been Bayley’s scout for the original mapping out of a military road known as the Bayley-Hazen Road. It was to run from Newbury to Canada and facilitate the march and return of troops. The road work was later discontinued on the orders of General Washington.

The high point of Indian Joe’s life came shortly after the Revolution ended. He received a letter of appreciation from General George Washington himself, it is said, and it summoned Joe to Washington’s headquarters at Newburgh, New York on the Hudson. Joe and Molly apparently made the arduous trip by canoe and on foot. On arrival they were invited to dine at the officers’ table in Washington’s quarters, after the officers had retired. Joe always cherished the memory of his visit to “The Great White Father.” Later when he was introduced to a rather dissolute white man, Joe remarked brusquely, “This hand shake with George Washington. No shake with bad man.”

History and local traditions of Indian Joe give us the picture of a man who inherited his ancestors’ legacy of

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2. Joe’s Pond was named after Indian Joe by a Revolutionary soldier, Major Jesse Leavenworth, who built the first mill in Danville after the war.
3. “Injun Joe’s Island” is now owned by the William Pearl family of St. Johnsbury, who take refuge there every summer in their camp.
4. Two canoes believed to have been Indian Joe’s are exhibited in Morrisstown’s Noyes House and Newbury’s D.A.R. chapter house. Noyes House also exhibits Indian Joe and Molly dolls created by 87-year-old Christena Foster of Morrisville. The Indian Joe and Molly wallpaper motif there was sketched by Frank Stockwell, vice president of the Morristown Historical Society.
fierce loyalty to a cause, without their strong tendency toward cruelty and revenge. He often boasted that he “never pointed the gun” (at a man). Joe’s deep hatred of the British caused him a great sacrifice on one occasion when he was stalking a big bull moose. After tracking the beast for two days, he finally caught up with it at the Canadian border. When the moose stepped over the line, Joe, refusing to tread on British soil, stopped in his tracks. He called out: “good-bye, Mr. Moose” and gave up the hunt.

Joe had a native wit and sense of fun; greatly enjoyed copying his white friends. Once he watched with interest while court officials in town were being served their noon meal, course by course, at a local tavern. Returning to his wigwam, Joe ordered Molly to serve him in white-man style. It was: “Molly, lift up woodchuck,” “Molly, put woodchuck on ground” several times over until Joe decided enough courses had been served and it was time to eat.

He once joined a party of settlers on a catamount hunt, one of many organized in those days to “reduce the numbers of destructive animals.” Joe finally treed a catamount in a hemlock. Pointing his gun tip through the boughs he was heard to mutter to the glowering cat, “You kill me. I kill you. Maybe both.” He fired and successfully brought down the animal amid chuckles of amusement from his fellow hunters.

Joe had a fondness for rum, but strong drink never seemed to make him belligerent. As one of his contemporaries wrote in his journal, “He was remarkably amiable and pleasant in his disposition when sober and even when intoxicated.” The journal went on to describe Joe as “a shrewd man and a close observer of men and manners. He praised his friends with genuine warmth and reproached those who used him ill with the bitterest terms of sarcasm which his imperfect knowledge of the English language could supply.”

Joe and Molly had their domestic spats and apparently their island on Joe’s Pond was not big enough for both of them at these times. They solved this, Danville people will tell you, by building another wigwam on what is now called Molly’s Pond, a mile and a half away from Joe’s. Joe then could stand on his western shore and Molly on her eastern shore and shout epithets at each other.

With the Revolution over and the settling of Vermont towns increasing, Joe and Molly continued wandering up and down the valleys, visiting their white friends and exchanging tokens. One family, the John McDaniels, first settlers of Hyde Park, had not long put away their belongings and set up housekeeping when Joe and Molly stopped by. The four were said to have lived peacefully together in the one-room cabin for six weeks. One of the few relics remaining from Indian Joe’s life resulted from this visit, and is now displayed in the Fairbanks Museum in St. Johnsbury. A birch bark milk pan made for the couple by Joe was donated to the museum by the McDaniels’ great-grandson.

Another early settler of Hyde Park, Captain Jedediah Hyde, frequently gave refuge to Joe and Molly when they were hiding from their Indian pursuers. Joe did chores and helped the Hydes plant their crops. When Indians came to their house asking if Joe and Molly had

5. Indian Joe’s gun is preserved in Newbury’s Oxbow chapter of D.A.R.

6. David Johnson, whose Papers are in the Newbury library, was the son of Revolutionary officer, Col. Thomas Johnson.
been seen, the Hydes would place a lighted lantern in the cupola atop their house as a warning signal. Joe and Molly never had children of their own and learned to love the Hydes’ small son, Russell. They often would “borrow” him, and placing him in the birch cradle they had fashioned for him, they would play babysitters, rocking him to sleep with a lullaby. Generations of Hydes since then have kept the tradition of singing Joe and Molly’s lullaby to their babies.

Occasionally, Joe would stop by Captain Hyde’s home to ask if he would tear out a leaf from the Good Book for Joe to place in the crown of his hat, to ward off “evil spirits.” Joe’s religious faith seemed deep and townspeople were impressed with his decorum at the meeting house. He is described as “attending the services, squatting on his haunches, regarding the minister fixedly until the end of the service.” His faith in the white man’s religion was mixed with a lingering paganism of his ancestors. He occasionally would be moved to set up a tepee in the woods and spend days chanting weird incantations.

When Morristown’s first settler, Jacob Walker, arrived in 1790 he found Joe and Molly camping on Butternut Island there. Joe became a self-styled protector of Walker and his fellow settlers. He once shot and killed a fierce mountain lion prowling around the Walker cabin. One severe winter, when food was scarce, Joe shot a moose. Before taking any for himself and Molly he gave generous portions to the Walkers and their friends. When Vermont’s first census was taken in 1791, Joe and Molly were listed as two of Morristown’s ten residents. Their names are preserved today in two small bodies of water, Joe’s and Molly’s Ponds, now nearly obscured by swamp growth. These are smaller and less known than the like-named ponds in West Danville and Cabot.

Joe’s step-sons gave him no comfort in his life. Muxa-Wuxal is believed to have drowned somewhere in the Morrisville area, causing great grief to his mother. Son Toomalek brought real tragedy to the couple. Described in various town histories as “of low stature, wanting two inches of five feet, he presented a fiendlike appearance with his stiff black hair growing down to within an inch of his eye-brows.” Toomalek committed three murders which, among other things, put an interesting light on the Indian system of justice. He first attacked the successful suitor of a former girlfriend, and killed the young squaw by mistake. For this he was acquitted on the ground that there was no intent. Toomalek’s second attempt on the suitor was successful, but this time he had plied the victim with quantities of rum and incited him to draw his knife. He was set free on grounds of self-defense. The third murder was committed in cold blood. His Indian peers appointed the dead youth’s father to be Toomalek’s executioner as “the avenger of the blood.”

The declining years of Joe and Molly are reflected in the numerous petitions to the Legislature for increased payments for their care. After 1792, reference in these petitions to Molly ceases. Her death remains a mystery. Danville people think they have the logical solution. After a heated quarrel, Joe paddled her as far as Molly’s Falls, jumped out of the canoe and pushed her over!

Since the couple were not inhabitants of any town, they were placed in the charge of several appointed guardians. One petition describes Joe as “advanced in years and much disordered in mind, unable to maintain himself especially in the height of winter.” The state’s highest pension for Joe came to an annual $86 which provided for “clothing, ammunition, hatchets, traps and all other necessaries for Joe, an Indian pensioner.” The largest item of medicine in treating the ailing Indian was for rum which was apparently needed in substantial quantities to keep him going.

His last guardian, Frye Bayley of Newbury, petitioned for money to pay bills for the final care for “Captain Joseph, an aged and infirm Indian.” The sick and mentally deranged old Indian had wandered out in the woods after a severe storm and was found there “badly frozen.” He died soon afterward, in February of 1810. Joe’s funeral services were conducted with simple dignity, the most prominent men of Haverhill, N. H. and Newbury in attendance. His gun was discharged over his grave as a final tribute to the passing of Vermont’s last friendly redman.

The old Revolutionary scout was laid to rest in the Oxbow Cemetery of his beloved Newbury. There, overlooking the sweeping Connecticut River that Joe had known so well, a fine monument marks his grave with the words “Erected in Memory of Old Joe, the Friendly Indian Guide.”
Of all the sections of the world where pioneering Vermonters have ventured, a little community in upper Michigan retains, perhaps, more of the flavor and tradition of the Green Mountains, which the settlers left behind them.

Here in Vermontville, founded in 1836 by 42 families of colonists, mainly from the Poultney area, there is held each year a big maple syrup festival. Sugaring is one of the main Vermont traditions and skills which they brought with them.

For Vermontville's farmers make as much as 20,000 gallons of syrup each spring, and it is said to be a reasonably good facsimile of the Vermont standard of quality.

Vermontville was planned carefully by the Rev. Sylvester Cochrane and the other Vermont leaders. Each of the settling families received 160 farm acres and also a town plot of 10 acres. Reminding the visitor of the villages of Rutland county is Vermontville’s maple-bordered village green, with the adjacent church and old academy buildings.

Each April Vermontville’s 700 citizens put on their gala maple celebration, often attracting as many as 20,000 visitors from all parts of Michigan. The maple trees located in Vermontville’s center, some 450 of them, are tapped out by the town’s high school students. The syrup made from these trees is sold to help with the costs of running the maple syrup festival.
Arthur Fitzwilliam Tate, who painted this colorful scene for Currier in 1855, was known for his New York landscapes, but this may have been inspired by a Vermont setting. Mr. Currier, better known when linked with Mr. Ives, married Lura Ormsbee, who was a Vermont.
Can this area of rural individualism keep its character in the modern world? Ralph Hill, in this excerpt from his new book, evaluates its past and guesses the future.

RALPH NADING HILL

ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE DALY

The happy union of the four seasons with the mountain and valley country has been put asunder. In *A Study of History* Arnold Toynbee has declared that New Hampshire is north of "the optimum climatic area," and that Maine is merely the habitat of "woodmen and watermen and hunters." Except as an offshoot of New York, Vermont is not mentioned. "...when we speak of New England and the part it has played in American history," says this distinguished assessor of civilizations, "we are really thinking of only three of its five little states—of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island." Since this is in defense of Vermont and New Hampshire, the chronicler of the excellent state of Maine must fend for himself, and should make rewarding work of it.

Mr. Hill's "Yankee Kingdom: Vermont & New Hampshire" will be published by Harpers, New York, May 11th.

This aerial view by Warren Case looks up the Connecticut River, from Bradford at the lower left northward to where the river swerves eastward below St. Johnsbury.
If you are to accept Vermont as a part of New England there are in all six states, Mr. Toynbee. And if your readers are to accept the phrase “optimum climatic area” for what it seems to mean, they must ask how it is possible to draw a line boldly through an area and assert that everything to the south is optimum and everything to the north more or less minimum. For if an optimum area is one where people respond most vigorously to their background of climate and geography, and New Hampshire and Vermont are not included, then, Mr. Toynbee, your theory does not hold water.

Our winters are hard, no denying that, and back in the sheep-raising days they used to joke about our special breed with pointed noses that evolved from eating grass between the stones. But the word Yankee, which during recent wars at least, has come to mean all Americans, has a unique significance when applied to the spare, silent and frugal people of the three northernmost New England states. In field and factory, in the councils of the nation during peace and war the people of Vermont and New Hampshire, whether as a result of geography and climate, optimum or otherwise, have shown spirit and character that have marked American institutions permanently and irrevocably. They have done so to a degree that is all out of proportion to their numbers and to the size of their homeland.

Through the years the number of native born Vermonters in Who's Who in America has been astonishingly high; indeed in at least one year, Mr. Toynbee, there were more per capita than in any other state. This sinfully provincial statistic is offered in defense, not so much of a state, as a region which you believe to be the preserve of woodmen, watermen, hunters and tourists. We do have a good many visitors, but how does it happen that so many of the thinking ones are not only touring, but moving to these minimum states from such optimum places as New York City? It is true that an enormous emigration to other parts of the country has held these states’ populations nearly stationary but this can be traced as much or more to the ambition and vitality of the emigrants, and their need for room to grow, as to the harsh disciplines of life on the vertical pastures of the White and Green Mountains. Of course, by the time these emigrants “escaped” the disciplines of the upland farm, they had already become disciplined; they had developed an impelling physical and intellectual force that enabled them to deal effectively with any environment. The people of the more “optimum” areas found them useful in fighting their wars, founding their newspapers, building and running their railroads.

In almost every village square in Vermont bronze statues, sheathed by the weather in green, commemorate the long columns of men who marched away to the most bitter and tragic of our wars, and never came back. What they did on the battlefields and what the battlefields did to them and to New England valleys emptied of their youth is written in every town history and poignantly recalled each Decoration Day. But the influence in high places that other Yankees—the makers of opinion, the planners of strategy—had as a group is less well understood. This much is certain: out of few, if any states came men who had more to do with the anti-slavery issue and the tempestuous fortunes of the war itself than certain natives of Vermont and New Hampshire. What other area, comparable in size, produced a Daniel Webster, a Stephen Douglas, a Thaddeus Stevens or a Horace Greeley, to name but a few natives who became leaders of the times.

Henry Raymond was not born in Vermont but might as well have been; a mortgage on the Raymond farm in Lima, New York paid for his education at the University of Vermont. He married a girl from Winooski. Burlington was always his intellectual home. His career as founder of The New York Times led from there. George Jones, his partner, came from Poultney, the same place, curiously enough, where Greeley had served his apprenticeship before founding the New York Tribune. And what of Charles R. Miller from Hanover, to whom Jones presently relinquished editorial responsibility? George P. Rowell, founder of Printer’s Ink, the first newspaper directory, and also of the country’s first advertising agency, came from Concord (Vermont). Wilbur F. Storey, James R. Spaulding, Charles G. Greene, Stilson Hutchins and George W. Kendall from Salisbury, Montpelier, Boscowen, Whitefield and Amherst, founded re-
spectively the Chicago Times, the New York World, the Boston Post, the Washington Post, and the New Orleans Picayune. Henry Houghton from Sutton and E. P. Dutton from Keene entered the lists as book publishers.

Acknowledging the drain of young men from the hills into the vacuum of the prairies, an orator at a New England railroad convention declared that he was not afraid—that if the northcountry could not sell wheat, it could grow corn and potatoes. If it could not sell beef and mutton on the market at mid-western prices, it could export rock and ice. “And when we cease to export everything else, we will not have ceased to export men—men whom the land shall honor.”

So many outposts in the railroad empire were captured by northcountry Yankees that it seems almost to have been some kind of conspiracy. It was not that by any means. Generally it was a dogged advance over a lifetime from brakeman or tracklayer or engineer to the oak-paneled directors’ room. The conquests of the sons of upland New England included presidencies of the Arkansas Central, the Atcheson Topeka and Santa Fe, the Baltimore and Ohio, the Burlington, Cedar Rapids and Northern; Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, the Erie, the Georgia Central, the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio, the Grand Trunk, the Long Island, the New Orleans, Texas and Pacific, the New York Central, the New York, New Haven and Hartford, the Northern Pacific, and the Union Pacific.

The migration of northcountry Yankees was not only to the west. They were whaling on the North Atlantic, building subways under Times Square and they were in the Rockies selling daguerreotypes to miners for sixteen dollars each. Stilwell quotes a letter from a young Green Mountain emigrant in Tahiti, as saying that he had met Vermonters from Putney, Peru, Ludlow, Windsor, Hartford, Woodstock, Bradford, Peacham, Lyndon, Middlebury, Vergennes and other towns he couldn’t recall. The glitter of the circus drew Benjamin Franklin Keith, a farmer from Hillsboro Bridge, into the employ of P. T. Barnum. Presently he opened his own museum and theater in Boston and through his traveling shows spread the name of Keith on every covered bridge and billboard in the country.

Long before the Civil War Henry Augustus Willard of Westminster who as a young man had worked in Chase’s Hotel in Brattleboro and the Hudson River steamboats, became proprietor of Washington’s best hotel. John F. Winslow from Bennington, builder of the Union Navy’s Monitor, was busy with Bessemer steel, which he introduced as a manufacturer. Elisha Graves Otis from Halifax was ascending in the elevator business, and A. B. Chandler from West Randolph in the Postal Telegraph system, his own creation.

While such a list sounds like name-dropping on a grand scale, how else is one to prove the vigor of the breed? It is the ultimate answer to Toynbee’s assertion that Vermont and New Hampshire are beyond the belt of optimum challenge, for if the people have vitality so must the land and the climate. Vermonters have been vital enough to have practiced, since the earliest days, what is considered the purest form of agrarian democracy of any of the states. It must be a compelling environment else how is one to explain that an entire state with fewer people than a single large city continues to produce such
an inordinately large number of exceptional men? How does it happen that today four of the executive officers of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company are Vermonters, the president of the Association of American Railroads, the lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia, and the literary editor of *Time*?

Is it the intimate relationship of the people with the land and the seasons, their spiritual and moral heritage, or simply the New England conscience? Ernest Martin Hopkins believes that the "greatest single blessing that could come to a boy was to be born into a country minister’s family and to grow up under the circumstances which attached economically, mentally and spiritually to a country parsonage."

The life that I lived in subsequent villages—Dunbarton, Hopkinton, and Franklin, New Hampshire, Georgetown and Exbridge, Massachusetts, and Perkinsville, Vermont—was as far removed from anything which is existent as family life in these days as can be imagined. From earliest times that I can remember I was responsible for taking care of the horse, keeping the varnish on the buggy clean and bright, and driving around the countryside while my father made pastoral calls, attended funerals, or, best of all, exchanged pulpits with pastors in neighboring villages. Our home life was a pattern practically unknown at the present time—up and around soon after sunrise in summer and long before sunrise in winter, breakfast, morning prayers, school, and then home in the late afternoon for chores...

"Probably the greatest formative influence in my life was the evenings, when after supper dishes were cleared up, a big hanging lamp over the dining room table was lit and there was general understanding in the family that everybody was to read, though later in the evening any questions that any one of us had would be taken up and discussed seriously...

Writing, as have so many others, with a testimony of affection for a country decreed by geography to be the antithesis of bigness and richness in most matters except that of the heart, Scribner’s incomparable Maxwell Perkins, discoverer and alter ego of Thomas Wolfe, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ring Lardner, recalled being taught that "in a community like Windsor the truly important men were the school teacher, the newspaper editor and the clergyman. The doctor, too, was more respected than the business man. These people were supposed to have made a sacrifice because they cared more to serve their professions, and what they meant, than for money."

In *Faces in the Crowd* David Riesman wonders if the northcountry will continue to produce such men, since the younger generation stands relatively idle—without the old necessities. A great majority of the trail-blazers came off the farms or out of the small towns. The farms these days are dwindling rapidly in number. Without an avenue to the great stream of interstate commerce the small towns are having to struggle for a place in the sun. Their people will find it hard to maintain their traditional independence if they become enmeshed in the cogs of a kind of rural suburbia; but unless they gear themselves to the complex apparatus of the Twentieth Century they cannot subsist. That is the problem. Doubtless it will be in the heart of the Green Mountains, suggests Fred Lewis Pattee, “that centuries from now will be discovered the last specimens of the old Yankee Puritan stock, then long supposed to be extinct, just as even now one finds specimens of the aboriginal Celts in the mountains of Wales and Cornwall.”

Meanwhile it is well to repeat for the whole northcountry the prayer ascribed to the Reverend Hugh Peters who, long before the Revolution, as he looked out over a vast primeval landscape, declared: “We have met here on the rock Etam standing on Mount Pisgah... to dedicate and consecrate this extensive wilderness... and give it a new name worthy of the Athenians and ancient Spartans; which new name is ‘Verd-Mont’ in token that her mountains and hills shall be ever green and shall never die.”
Busy Life
OF EASE

The Ben Roberts find a happy new life on their mountainside farm

CAROLYN E. LONG

Photographs by Geoffrey Orton

DOWN by the Roberts' brook at Mountain Meadow the beavers are hard at work. In two years' time, they've built a fine dam, and their pond is deep enough for several very sturdy homes. It would seem that they could now relax. But, no; improvements, enlargements, and just plain maintenance go on. Up the hill from the beavers, Ben and Elizabeth Roberts are just as hard at work, though they've lived in their old hill farm for fifteen years.

Many people have wondered why the Roberts, and others like them, finish, say thirty years of work—it was preaching in Mr. Roberts' case—and then "retire" to some lonely spot in the Vermont hills where they work away on the house and the land from dawn to sunset like—well, like beavers. And what's more, they claim they enjoy it.

With the Roberts it was a love of the out-of-doors plus a kind of restlessness that led them at fifty-five to buy an old farm they had come upon quite by chance in the hills across the Huntington Valley from Camel's Hump. Their friends in Newton, Massachusetts, begged them not to leave the safe, orderly, sociable life of the parish. The farmer neighbors didn't say much but figured the Roberts would migrate south when the drifts began to pile four feet deep in the three-mile dirt road to town.

It's true the Roberts didn't know what they were
getting into. Call it lack of imagination or splendid innocence. At any rate, the first winter Mr. Roberts went off the road six times, and his neighbor, hitching up the team of horses to pull him out once more said, “The trouble is ya don’t know how t’drive.” “But,” he added, “You’ll learn.” And Mr. Roberts did. There’s a certain satisfaction in knowing how to sense soft spots under the pools in spring roads, where a car can sink to its hubcaps, or how to navigate the last icy hill to Mountain Meadow, no fence between car and ravine. The unexpected can always happen, and then it’s a test of resourcefulness to see what old piece of fence or broken branch, or stones clawed out of the bank can get the car moving again. And no one can deny the triumph of taking a car out in winter before the snowplow arrives. The Roberts often have to do this because Mr. Roberts in his “retirement” continues to preach nearly every Sunday at churches where he is needed. “Getting out” may mean lying flat in the snow to put on chains, or, better for Sunday clothes, tows the car with the tractor, which Mrs. Roberts has learned to drive. There is always a sense of adventure about getting “back in” again late at night. It is a journey away from the lights of the town up to the dark hills. The road narrows, snow banks and tree trunks plastered with snow to the north close in on either side. The car lurches through the deepening, untracked snow. Grey flakes funnel at the windshield. But ahead lies warmth and light. Home never seems more wonderful than after such a ride!

While it may have been lack of imagination that kept the Roberts from foreseeing some of the challenges of life at Mountain Meadow, still their life there suggests that it is imagination itself that makes a lot of work for them. They keep seeing so many things to do! Once the house was revised on the inside, repainted, and a fireplace and furnace installed, they then built on, mostly by themselves, an enclosed porch and study. Not satisfied, it occurred to them that the stones so arduously dug out of the meadows by the former owners could be hauled back for terraces and walls, while trees, bushes, and ferns could be transplanted from the woods to surround the house. But this wasn’t all. By the time Mr. Roberts’ imaginative eye was content there was a lovely expanse of green lawn, a lily pond, a larger pool with little waterfalls built into the brook that fed the pool, fences, birdhouses, and handpainted signs. And because he had to look at it while eating his breakfast, he put shutters and curtains on the windows of the erstwhile chicken house. Since there is no reason to think that the Roberts’ imagination will fail, it is obvious that hours and hours of happy activity will continue to ensnare them.

With all of these improvements, Mountain Meadow reflects its new owners and looks quite unlike the working farm that it once was. But some parts of the old farm the Roberts felt it a great waste to let go. A nice sense of frugality can make one anything but frugal with time. Mr. Roberts mows the forty-acre meadow and helps a neighbor bale the hay for his cows, while Mrs. Roberts fertilizes, prunes, and sprays the old orchard. Attacks by marauding deer, rabbits, mice, and porcupines make her work harder. They love especially to nibble the new little trees she has set out. But every fall after the animals and birds have had their share, Mr. Roberts lugs into the cellar bushels of Macs, Cortlands, Snows, Delicious, and Spies, to keep until Mrs. Roberts can convert them to salads, sauce, jellies, pies, cakes, and an invention of her own, applesauce muffins. She finds, too, that apple cider can be canned. So, gratefully, the Roberts saved some of the gifts of the farm. But, of course, they worked hard to do it.

In the woods past the meadow, nature, too, offered gifts which the Roberts found it hard to refuse. There lay a fine sugar bush just waiting to be tapped. Few people who casually buy a can of maple syrup know the work that lies behind it. For one thing, it takes up to forty gallons of sap laboriously gathered to make a gallon of syrup. Deep snow or deep mud, rocks and roots make
spear collect with the tractor a jolting experience. Mrs. 
Roberts stays inside the sugar house where the steam 
from the evaporator is so thick that it condenses on hair, 
tace, and clothing. Every ten minutes or so she faces up 
to the hot fire, tossing in some green wood and some dry 
as fast as she can so the blaze won't cool down. By the 
end of the day they are both as tired as they ever wish 
to be, but the gallons of amber syrup ready for canning 
are their reward. If labor makes a product sweet, then 
their syrup is sweeter for them than any on a store shelf.

The Roberts deny that any great skill is necessary at 
sugaring off time, though they have learned just how to 
tap a tree and stoke the fire. Experience has taught the 
right moment to shake drops of milk on the boiling syrup 
so it won't overflow, the exact time to draw off more 
syrup. But the job that does require real skill is wood­
cutting. Since the Roberts, until four winters ago, relied 
on wood for their heat, Mr. Roberts got a good deal of 
practice with axe and saw. It was a concession to their 
muscles but not to their budget when an oil furnace was 
installed. They still use the old woodburning furnace 
until about December and the fireplace that takes four 
foot logs all year round. It does a man good, when he's 
spent his life talking, to know that he can learn to do 
something with his hands and do it pretty well.

When only the very top of Camel's Hump is still 
frosted with snow, sugaring and woodcutting are over 
and it's time to look happily forward to the garden and 
other projects. The grapevines must be pruned, the 
raspberry canes thinned, and as soon as the frost is out 
of the ground, the peas go in. As Mr. Roberts on the 
weekly trip to Burlington puts the car in second to slither 
down the first muddy hill from Mountain Meadow, it is 
not hard to imagine Mrs. Roberts saying, "Look at the 
beaver pond! Another six inches and it'll be over the road. 
Now, what are we going to do about that?"
George Holt's tame-sounding Seminar and Workshop in Art Teaching in its seven years at Bennington College has brought exciting experience of painting and sculpture into the lives of the region's rural school children, in a way perhaps unequalled elsewhere in Vermont.

Yet Bennington College isn't engaged in teacher training. The girls enrolled in George Holt's course are there for the contribution their teaching experience gives them to a liberal education. Obviously the course contains vocational implications. Some students do go on to graduate schools and become teachers, but Bennington has no teacher training program and no education "majors." The girls are mainly art majors who are learning and trying...
out modern tenets of art teaching for younger children.

Though the art teaching workshop is aimed primarily at the students themselves, the college believes strongly in the value of art education for children. "It is no frill or luxury, but an indispensible ingredient for working and developing the imagination," says Holt.

The Bennington College students enrolled in art education are trained in a special studio at the College, which emphasizes the techniques and materials appropriate for primary grade children. Added to this is the study of the theory and practice of art teaching through the writings of experienced teachers and educators. The practice itself, in the rural schools near Bennington, is directed by the course instructor in cooperation with the regular classroom teachers, for whom an art workshop is held each summer.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
HANSON CARROLL
VERMONT seems to have been unusually well "seasoned." It had some extra ones besides the four usually listed; Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. These special periods designated certain occupations, such as "Planting Time" or "Harvest Time." "Sugaring" is another very important one and it comes about the same time as one I'm recalling now: "Mud Time." Though the condition which gave this part of Spring its name, may have largely ceased to be so important to man's coming and going, it has left behind the appellation "a stick-in-the-mud." Likewise it may be that the phrase, applied to a state of mind, "in a rut," had its inception during this season, in those parts of the country where the earth was congealed each year in Winter and became a sea of mud in the Spring.

Of course this condition of the earth's surface chiefly affected man in making the dirt roads, on which most of us had to travel, anything but highways. My section of Vermont was fortunate in having a gravel and sand underpinning for the most part and, heaven knows, it was bad enough when the softening process got underway. The clay sections of the state were well nigh impassable. Fortunately the forefathers learned much about getting wheeled vehicles over swampy lands and often in Spring corduroy roads had to be resorted to. Question? Well "corduroy" roads were made by cutting down saplings or even fair sized trees, which then grew everywhere, and placing them on the cleared track at right angles to the direction of travel. There used to be miles of that kind of "hard surface" road.

I remember the period known as Mud Time, as a boy, not at all unpleasantly. Those were the first days when the sun shone down with a prophetic warmth, after days of snow and cold. How I did delight in that warmth, lying on my back on the banking on the south side of the house! (Must I explain "banking?") It had nothing to do with finances except that it was supposed to keep the cold out and thus cut down on the fuel bill. Our banking consisted of a frame of boards set up on all sides of the house. It was a foot wide and about three high and was held in place by posts. It was just like the form set up now for pouring concrete. This was filled, at our house, with sawdust. Some people used leaves and some held to straw. The much less particular householders used plain sand or dirt and I'm sorry to report, they often left their banking up until the boards rotted.

But returning to the muddy highways: Of course there were sections where it never got bad but they were few, and it demanded experience on the part of the traveler to determine by sight whether that stretch ahead was as solid as it looked or whether, in the night the bottom had dropped out. Oddly enough nice bright sunshine suitable for sun baths on the banking, usually made roads worse. A good rain settled them more quickly.

Mud Time was dreaded by all those who had to venture on the highways. Traffic was slowed to a walk and very often to a complete stop. Then, if it was a wooded section with brush by the road, such might have to be cut to spread under wheels. Stone walls often suffered loss when a wheel dropped in to the axle. The long suffering Doctor used two horses in that period and even after the coming of cars, in Mud Time he had to return to horses. Will Crawford, who drove the stage to the Depot with mail and passengers, always had his team's tails tied up with red ribbons.

And the butcher, in his heavy meat cart with the white canvas top—how his old horse would struggle to pull through the oozy mud! I recall seeing Pat Phalen, coming up Union Street's grade, Pat leaning out and slapping old
Kate with the reins, lest she lose momentum. Just as she was to reach the more solid gravel of Main Street, he gave her an extra slap. She jumped and snap went a tug, leaving the back wheels inches short of freedom from the gripping mud. I was watching from the drug store window and Holly Johnson was there. Seeing Pat standing by the stuck vehicle scratching his head in search for a helpful idea, Holly opened the store door. “Nevah mind Pat” he shouted in his Bondville vernacular, “Just reach into youah caat there and hitch on one of youah best beef steaks. It'll be tough enough t' pull anything.”

It was a drab time for adults but I enjoyed those muddy roads. I delighted in dragging my four wheeled cart along a muddy stretch, having loaded in stones to make the wheels sink in and drip mud as the farmers’ wagons did. With boots on, it was fun to follow a wide wheeled vehicle and watch the misplaced mud roll back into the rut.

Then later there were cars, always jacked up in the barn for winter. If an owner had a dry driveway leading to a passable or seemingly passable bit of highway, he’d try to be the first out with his car. He might get a half mile from the village and then what looked like terra firma would turn out to be most inhospitable. He endangered the clutch and often the drive shaft, by giving her the gas and rocking her back and forth. He might get out of one hole but inevitably he’d find a bottomless spot that called for a team of horses, before he could get back home.

Of course the mud ruts would freeze and for days stay that way. Often it got to be a serious question for auto drivers which rut to choose. Meeting a car posed the question as to which rut belonged to whom. Many were the scraped fenders and smashed running boards and now and then smashed noses. Clearance was a vital matter, and a low modern car, even with the improvement of “balloon” tires, would have been hopelessly mired on even a moderately soft bit of highway.

If the traveler found Mud Time trying, consider the mother of young children. The coming of Spring, with the chance to open doors and windows, and the freedom from innumerable pieces of footwear and garments—all these blessings were often covered with spring mud. Muddy feet were everywhere making the house look inhabited by centipedes. Rugs and carpets showed hopeless, ground-in grime. If ever, then, mothers partook of sainthood.

I recall a day when Friend Wife opened the door to let in some of the freshness of Spring, and stopped to revel in the blueness of the sky. Into view came our two, who only a half hour before had gone forth in proper spring footwear and lighter spring jackets, even seemingly safely prepared to do a bit of foot dragging in muddy ruts and puddles. As they drew near the spring sun suddenly was darkened. Not content with what moisture there was overlying normal dry land, the two had been exploring the brook. While the discouraged mother was removing the coated garments and making a few remarks suitable to the occasion, Robin, the collie, rushed past. Into the lately mopped kitchen she tore, dripping black mud, and on into the living room where she found the rug a quite satisfactory towel.

Mud Time was a problem which unconsciously impressed even these very children. A boy next door, a bit older, one day in Mud Time had been catechising our daughter. He was trying to show up her ignorance, but she had answered correctly and promptly each of his brain twisters. Finally he threw at her this blockbuster: “Huh, smarty. You know so much, now tell me: how much is mud times mud?”

PHOTOGRAPHIC AWARDS

VERMONT LIFE takes pleasure in announcing the following awards presented at the Ninth Annual Photographers’ Exhibition held at Manchester’s Southern Vermont Art Center: In color—“Beside Still Waters” by Alice M. Edwards of Bennington, “Golden Autumn” by Dolly Magnaghi of Brattleboro, and “Shrouded in Fog” by Roslynn MacNish of Hartford, Ct. Honorable mentions in color went to Barbara Maarschalk of New York for “Oxen,” Bertha McCormick of Manchester for “Fall Canopy” and Ruth Wood of Montpelier for “Breakfast for Birds.”

In the black and white print category medals went to Edwin L. Bigelow of Manchester Center for “Release from Winter,” to Laurence Eberhard of West Caldwell, N. J. for “Upland Grazing near Ascutney” and to Mary DeS. Parrish of Peru for her “Mounting for Crystals.”

Honorable Mention awards were: “Morning Mist” by R. M. Brockway of So. Dorset, “Pawlet Farm” by John Holden of Burlington and “Dr. Heinrich Bruening” by Robert Mertens of Woodstock.

Reproductions from these awards will appear from time to time in VERMONT LIFE. See pages 32 and 34 of this issue.
PORTRAITS OF SPRING

Winter's release finds man and beast reawakening to the outdoor world. Industry goes forward; The land is opened for new seed. While the streams rush down, below, cattle savor the fresh green.

Siou'ft, by Verner Z. Reed
BATTLE MONUMENT: PRIDE & PROBLEM

VERMONT’S GREAT GRAY ELEPHANT has cost more in the last six years than it did to build it seventy years ago—and nobody can see the end.

The 300-foot Bennington Battle Monument, 301 feet 10½ inches to be exact, began with an association in 1854, disbanded and then revived in 1875. The idea stemmed from celebration plans for the nation’s centennial. Only a modest, 30-foot affair was contemplated at first.

Lofty ideas led to a great monument. Statistically it is 37 feet square at the base; built of blue dolomite, quarried at Sandy Hill, N. Y.; its 20-foot deep base reaches to bedrock; it contains 34 flights of stairs with 412 steps.

The monument’s cornerstone was laid on Bennington Battle day, 1887, and it was finished November 25th, two years later. Raising the two-ton capstone in place attracted a crowd estimated at 3,000 persons.

The State of Vermont paid $10,000 toward the site. The remaining costs came to $102,000, when it was completed in 1889. Payments were: by Congress of the U.S. $40,000, State of Massachusetts $10,000, State of New Hampshire $5,000, State of Vermont $5,000, Bennington Battle Monument Association & Historical Society $40,000.

The monument was in dangerously poor shape when the State of Vermont reluctantly took it over in 1953. A total of $124,660 has been spent on it since then for repairs (as well as an elevator and other equipment) and $12,000 more was allocated last fall for more emergency repairs.

The National Park Service, which last year estimated rehabilitation might cost $165,000, courteously refused the suggestion they take it over.

A solution for Vermont’s monumental problem, short of the humiliation of razing it, perhaps would earn a hero’s niche beside Seth Warner, at least among the shrine and the budget minded.

END
White Water,

which once carried the riverman’s log drives, now provides exciting springtime sport. Vermont’s preeminent white water areas are the West River northwest of Brattleboro and the White River west of Hartford, (shown here). The excitement is pictured by John Titchen at the left and Hanson Carroll below.
Anyone who draws an outline map of Vermont is apt to labor a bit with the western boundary. Almost straight lines serve for the top and bottom of the state, and the Connecticut River on the east is pretty easy. The other side gets more involved. First comes the elongated length of Lake Champlain, dipping into a reclining S-Curve. Then there's a long straight line and some crazy joggles down toward the bottom corner. The how and why of this stretch, southwest Vermont's frontier, has its full share of history, oddity and tall tales.

Before the Revolution the southwest corner of what is now Vermont was a very popular area for settlement. The prospects looked so good that 18th century land merchants clamored for titles, and the colonial governors of New Hampshire and New York happily carved it up into square townships to suit their fancy. The trouble was that both colonies made overlapping grants.

This state of affairs ground to a halt during the War for Independence, when fifty-one of the so-called "Hampshire Grants" declared themselves independent. They intended to be free from land grabbers of both newly-formed states. New Hampshire gave up her claims gracefully after a few years, but New York, sulking, took more than a decade to recognize that Vermont even existed.

As early as 1779 there were attempts to settle a boundary between infant York State and the government of
"the grants." Little came of it except to tell what already-established towns were to be in which state. Thirty-five long years rolled by before the boundary was actually surveyed.

In 1812–14 a joint commission of professional engineers and surveyors from both Vermont and New York had the line run, using the old town boundaries as a base. They described it in rather primitive fashion. It began at "a red or black oak tree," and after angling erratically for eight miles, went "north 46 miles, 43 chains and 50 links" to "a bunch of hornbeam saplings on the south bank of the Poultney River." (Hornbeam is a species of beech.) The surveyors set up 33 monuments, tombstone-like marble slabs with rounded tops, at prominent locations. Some of these still exist, notably on the West Rupert-Salem road and at West Pawlet.

It was an adequate enough line for the times, and more than ninety years of sun, snow and vandalism went by before thought was given to re-surveying the boundary. Of the original 33 markers, six were missing entirely, and three were in rather doubtful sites.

Accordingly, during 1903–04, 101 new monuments were erected, granite obelisks milled by Temple Brothers of Rutland, and set in four foot bases of concrete. Because of the mountainous terrain much of the way, some of the stones are short pieces which could be lugged uphill more readily through deep woods.

After half a century, some of these sturdy gray stone needles are askew; a few are toppled, broken or missing entirely. But the majority loom up wherever highways and railways cross the state line.

A leisurely trip up this border country, along the picket line of these silent sentries, is a rewarding experience. Crossing and re-crossing the boundary by automobile, with a few well-chosen excursions on foot, will give the traveler a look at the Vermont scenery from new angles.

Starting along Pownal, from the southwestern corner of the state(*) the line runs at the two thousand foot elevation for the most part, through dense new-growth forest on the Taconic mountain range.

The original charter of Pownal stated that it was to be "six miles square." But somewhere things got confused, and when the surveyors of 1814 laid out the line they used corners of lots already recorded in Pownal land records. Their transits ran the survey by vague reference, such as "a place where a hemlock tree heretofore stood," or "a large roundish rock on the north-easterly bank of the Hoosic River." These took the surveying party off on some pretty weird tangents, only two of which were marked originally. It resulted in the ragged appearance of the boundary today.

Unlike the Canadian boundary's wide course, this line does not show as a slashed swath through the woods. Plenty of good-sized timber grows directly on it. In open country the border is likely to be an old stone wall, or a wire fence between neighboring farms, Virginia creeper, sumac, and towering elms along its length. In still other spots it is an invisible line, particularly where a farm has spacious fields and its owner plows and plants in both states.

One Hoosick dairyman tells of the corn he planted for years in a field that straddled the line. For Sunday dinner he always offered two platters on the cob, served steaming hot.

"Take your choice," he'd say, solemnly. "There's some partial to New York corn, whilst others prefers the Vermont."

His guests usually took him seriously, and he never failed to enjoy the joke, though his wife got a bit tired of washing double platters.

(*) See Vermont Life, Spring 1957
The Yankees and Yorkers who bitterly contested the grants of Bennington County towns would be surprised to learn that ownership of continuous property in the adjoining states today is quite common.

To the west of Bennington is Leslie Harrington’s “Dividing Line” farm. Mr. Harrington’s house is in Vermont, but his barns and sheds are firmly anchored on New York soil. A scrub ball game in the driveway finds first base in one state and third in another. Home and second are equally divided.

Climbing the hill and looking down toward the Waloomsac Valley, the surveyors of 1814 must have been startled to find their instruments pointing straight at a three-story house of fine Flemish bond brickwork. Captain David Mathews, a well-to-do farmer and Revolutionary patriot, had erected it about 1802. Whether by accident or whimsical design, Mathews placed it right on the town line, which of course became the interstate boundary as well.

It has been related persistently that the State Line House is in “two states, three counties and four towns.” But two is the most it can claim of any of these subdivisions. The oddly-located mansion has a history of a century and a half of gracious living. Though taverns, a gas station, restaurant and even a stock car speedway have come and gone as adjuncts to it, the house itself has always remained a private dwelling. It stands on Route 67 out of North Bennington, near the Bennington Battlefield.

Behind the State Line House is a stretch of railroad which appears normal enough. But a century ago two separate companies had to be formed to build it, each spiking rails only as far as the state line. By lease and subsequent purchase the situation still exists today. Though long jointly operated, this piece of track and the nonexistent “White Creek Station” at the boundary are listed officially as the junction-terminal point of the Rutland and the Boston & Maine railroads.

Crossing the track and swinging uphill into New York, the border hunter comes to a mile of gravel road running directly along the line; the only such stretch on its length. This is called, (naturally) “State Line Road,” and it is maintained and plowed in winter by the Town of Shaftsbury. Vermonter James Williamson has a farm on the east side, and the three York State homes to the west, a gas station, restaurant and even a stock car speedway run to the town line, which of course became the interstate boundary as well.

On the west of Shaftsbury the border takes to the high hills; is intersected only by the main river valleys and the back country hollows: Shaftsbury, Black Hole, Murray, Beattie and Perkins. A handful of Vermonters live on the dead-end roads which lead up these wooded clefts in the mountains. They have the advantages of remote privacy and cheaper auto insurance. But residents find it difficult to explain why their RFD is a New York state town. And to vote or do business with their towns of residence—Shaftsbury, Arlington and Sandgate—involves a lengthy drive around the mountain. The hollows slumber except in the hunting and fishing seasons, or periodically when a timber tract is lumbered and the pulpwood is trucked away to mills on the Hudson River.

This is the Battenkill watershed, and its trout are world-famed. Though the Kill and its tributaries are pretty well posted at the boundaries, most fishermen find it prudent to take out licenses in both states. There is always the chance that a big one might fight his way up or downstream.

Gun-toters often go on the same plan, with duplicate licenses—just in case. The mountain boundary is not well defined, and local hunters who scout the line country have a chance of bagging a buck in either or both states. Vermont’s later-ending season has given many an alibi to an empty-handed nimrod. “Those deer are smart. They must know the season’s over in New York.”

Northward the line traverses the Poultney-Granville slate quarrying region. At West Pawlet it cuts between the house and barn of the Wright sisters, and another house and garage beyond. Then it shoots north on the side hill along the railroad line, beside huge slate dumps. In this area the Delaware & Hudson Railroad manages to dodge back and forth across the border five times.

Southwest of Poultney the invisible boundary comes to an abrupt halt at the Poultney River. The spot is across a pasture, north of a railroad spur, which runs to the ground-slate plant of the A. B. Potter Company. The “bunch of hornbeam saplings,” which once stood here, are long gone, of course. The exact junction appears unmarked.

From this point to Lake Champlain, the Vermont-New York line is the “deepest channel” of the Poultney River, a long and devious route which takes almost all sixteen directions of the compass. Since this river has known high and low water, the channel, and therefore the boundary line, can vary from week to week. During a dry spell along the upper reaches of the stream, a healthy leap will carry one from state to state. But spring thaws fill the meandering Poultney brim full and overflowing.

Before the Revolution a half-pay British major, Philip Skene, held a patent for 12 square miles of territory at the head of Lake Champlain’s navigation. Scheming Major Skene wanted to enclose the falls of the Poultney in his patent, and he sent out surveyors to include them with his lands. Unfortunately for him the western boundary of Skenesboro (now Whitehall) was already well located and defined. When the honest rod and transit men came back and reported to Skene that his twelve miles just wouldn’t stretch to Poultney, the angry major caned and kicked them down the steps of his fine stone house.

The new settlers south of East Bay felt that since they were east of Lake Champlain, they thus were worthy of
joining up with Vermont. Two groups petitioned the Vermont legislature for the establishment of new towns. One group wanted the name “New Cheshire,” while another surveyed the tentative borders of “Greenfield.” But the boundary commission of 1779 decided that their embryo town was in old Charlotte County, and it became Hampton, New York, instead of an extra part of Vermont.

Fifty years later Hampton was the home of William Miller, a preacher who believed in the Second Advent. He traveled extensively in New York and Vermont, pounding his honest belief that according to Biblical calculation the end of the world would surely come on December 31, 1843. The prophet’s followers were called “Millerites” and numbered nearly 50,000 at the height of their fanaticism. They prepared for the fateful (or joyful) day by disposing of all their worldly goods and assembling on mountain tops for a quick take-off to Heaven. They wanted to be high above the cemeteries and the seas, which were supposed to give up their dead.

New Year’s Eve came and went and nothing happened, except that a great number of people came down with pneumonia. William Miller, discredited as a “crazy calculator,” died in obscurity. He lies in a Hampton cemetery only half a mile from Fair Haven’s West Street crossing of the Poultney River.

Bridges punctuate the line of the Poultney on its two-state journeying, and two are unusual. One of the most primitive of interstate bridges is found west of the Route 22A crossing south of Fair Haven, serving a single farm on the York side. The rough log span is held in place by suspension cables anchored in nearby trees.

There is another oddity here. A back road runs from Whitehall, New York, to the projecting tip of West Haven. This is the only spot where you can drive west from New York State into Vermont.

Though the channel of the Poultney River often changes slightly, only two breakthroughs of the stream’s main course have given the boundary-makers real concern. Back when Vermont was still an independent republic the river met the “Great Ledge” north of Fair Haven and ran to the east of it, about a half a mile further than it does today. Then it turned straight west to tumble and churn over a 150-foot series of waterfalls.

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An early settler of West Haven, Gen. Isaac Clark, recognized the waterpower possibilities of the site and commenced to erect a sawmill here. Legend has it that a half-breed Indian named Haskins had long fished and hunted this deep valley and had a cabin near the falls. When Clark took title to the land the squatter saw there would be no room for both.

Haskins’ good looks and disposition had not been improved by a near-fatal hand-to-claw encounter with a bear. As Gen. Clark’s mill took shape the half-breed’s jealousy grew. At last he hobbled along the bank of the Poultney, armed with a shovel, a grubhook, and a revengeful plan. By means of some arduous digging, Haskins started a tiny channel across the ledge, and the river did the rest. Soon the Poultney was surging over Carver’s Falls, General Clark’s sawmill was left high and dry, and Independent Vermont had a new boundary.

The rocky ramparts on the north are thought to be some of the first portions of Vermont to emerge from the ancient seas. It is surprising to think that until the great freshet of 1783 this narrow, silted river was a deep bay of Lake Champlain, navigable for miles by 40-ton boats.

For many years East Bay was a ships’ graveyard. War vessels of both 1776 and 1814, together with latter-day lake schooners and canal boats were anchored and left to rot away, sinking in its sluggish sloughs. Only recently, the bones of Commodore Macdonough’s Vergennes-built Ticonderoga, a relic from the War of 1812, were pried from the muddy bottom, and placed on exhibit at Whitehall.

The last change in the Poultney River occurred about 1830, when the stream cut across a westward loop opposite the mouth of the Castleton River. For decades a Mr. Sharp who owned the land and a mill site, considered the piece to be part of the state of New York. After some forty-six years the authorities took steps to make it official, and the few acres of “Sharp’s cornfield” were formally ceded to New York. Boundary changes in the United States must be approved in Washington, and it was 1880 before the little bill got through the House and Senate.

Residents along the southwest border may sometimes wish their little pieces of land and homesites were all in one state. When they were dealing with provinces and infant states it was worth fighting for. But with the red tape and litigation involved today, only a very major change in the course of the river or in the use of land along the 54.6-mile line, would make the trouble worth-while. “Sharp’s Cornfield” probably is the last chunk of its original territory that Vermont will ever give New York.
In 1958 Cornwall, Vermont, had a problem. King size. Cornwall is an agricultural community spread out over a large area. There is no real village as such, though one street in Cornwall and one in West Cornwall are built-up more heavily than the rest of the area. There are about 800 residents.

Their problem had to do with their schools. These were old,—the No. 2 School had actually been built in 1858, not 1958. They were crowded and due to become more so according to the pre-school census. They were outmoded, and in some cases actually dangerous.

The minimum needed to fix up the old schools would be $11,000. A new modern school would cost $129,000.

So far their problem wasn't much different from the one facing thousands and thousands of communities all over the country. But Cornwall's was worse because
their Grand List was only $6500. (One percent of the valuation of the town’s taxable property.) Their tax was already $9.10 on each dollar of the Grand List, which meant that each property owner paid nine and one-tenth percent of the appraisers’ valuation of his property each year. That was a whacking lot for farmers who had extensive buildings and acreage.

They just couldn’t afford any $129,000 for a new school. To bond for that amount on a twenty year basis, after state aid and a new-school sinking fund had been taken into consideration, would mean another dollar tax on the Grand List. Any such tax would cause new people to shun the town, and might make some of the present residents leave.

On the other hand, $11,000 worth of fixing-up the old buildings would still give them an educational system so inadequate that they might lose prospective new residents on this score. And certainly they would not be doing as much as they wanted to for their children.

There was no water in any of the three schools. Chemical toilet facilities, despite all efforts to care for them properly, were highly offensive by spring. Iron stoves, wood fired, did all the heating. That Number 2 School site had been picked for its view which left it open to winter winds. Like all the other stoves, its chunks would burn out during the night, and some mornings the children would arrive to find the temperature at zero inside the building. They might not get it above 40 all day. All the water for drinking and washing had to be carried from nearby farms, and normally became tepid by the end of the day. In one school the huge iron stove partially blocked the main exit from the classroom.

To make matters worse, the voters had in years past consistently refused, for financial reasons, to approve a new school.

But some good had come from earlier attempts. In 1946 a new-school-investigating committee was formed by vote of the Town Meeting. And a Miss Sarah Guernsey, now over 100 years old and nearly blind, who had once been a teacher in these Cornwall schools, sent $1500 of her life savings toward a permanent new-school sinking fund.

In 1951 the matter of building a school was finally brought to a vote. It was defeated. However, in defeat a tax on the Grand List was voted, the amount to be set aside and added to the new-school sinking fund. Yet by
1958, when overcrowding finally brought the issue to a head again, the sinking fund had reached only $15,000.

The situation was hopeless on the face of it. The voters wouldn’t vote a new school because they couldn’t afford the terrific taxes that would result. The old schools were, to put it politely, frightful.

From here in, Cornwall simply refused to be like anybody else. They didn’t give up and admit it was hopeless. They didn’t go bleating to Washington for a handout, or to the State of Vermont. It never occurred to them that anybody but Cornwall people, past and present, should solve their dilemma. A typically independent Vermont attitude.

First, as a real long-shot, a Cornwall man wrote a former citizen whose mother still lived in Cornwall, a man of considerable means, to see if he’d build them a school. This gentleman of course said he wouldn’t. But he added that if the active citizens decided to donate to a school fund, each according to his means, he’d donate, too. This gave the committee food for thought.

They held meetings to get an expression of opinion from as many citizens as possible. They wrote letters to the papers. They began to find out how many people would give money outright to cut down the amount of a bond issue to a size they could handle tax-wise.

There seemed to be considerable favorable acceptance of this idea. So they organized workers and began to canvass the town. They felt that by doing this they would not only be cutting down the bond issue, but would be talking over their problem with each citizen, would bring his ideas and criticisms out into the open.

Money and pledges began to come in. They started with the sinking fund of $15,000. Gradually that rose to $26,000. Then more slowly to $28,000; then to $30,000.

The Rutland Herald ran an editorial entitled “Unique School Plan,” in which they said Cornwall’s citizens seemed to be, “trying to raise themselves by their own bootstraps.” They pointed out that the donors would still have to “share in the taxes needed for bond interest and repayments. Nobody is getting fooled. It may have some ‘bootsrap’ characteristics, but it also has some interesting possibilities.”

The pledges kept coming in. One man pledged three beef cattle. A soldier on duty in Korea sent a pledge actually from halfway around the world. A citizen donated a five acre site for the school. Things like that.

The high percentage of donors, and their donations which represented a heavy sacrifice, finally impressed the man who had originally said, “No.” He made a gift of stock currently valued at over $23,000.

This brought the total to about $63,000. A meeting was warned to put the matter of bonding for $40,000—keeping it as low as they dared—to a vote. But solicitation went on.

Every town has a list of former residents who have left and done well financially elsewhere. One of these former Cornwall citizens, much impressed by the concerted effort of the community, anonymously offered $40,000. This was the exact amount they needed.

On the face of it, this seemed to have solved everything. But then came the heart-breaking news from the State Board of Education that it hadn’t.

Vermont law, Cornwall was told, reads that state aid of 30% for new school construction can be paid only on money to be raised by taxes, not on gift money. They were, therefore, still shy $20,000, the amount of the state aid they had planned on. A horrible blow.

A meeting was called to talk over this new development.

Undaunted, scenting complete victory, the citizens decided to recanvass the town. They’d ask each family if its pledge couldn’t be raised in the light of the fact that there’d be no tax increase at all, and no bonds. The men who spoke to the meeting promised that they personally would reassess their pledges drastically.

The fund grew with recanvass. It crept upward slowly. By that time there wasn’t much talked about except the new school drive.

It came halfway of this new amount, three quarters of the way.

Then came the terrific news that the fund was at last over the top. One hundred and twenty-nine thousand dollars raised.

With around ninety percent of the town contributing, theirs had been an unbelievable accomplishment for an 800 person community that had simply refused to believe that the task was impossible. They’d buckled down, made the most of the good breaks, worked even harder to counteract the bad breaks, and had provided for their own in the independent tradition of all Vermonters. No other community anywhere, as far as they know, has ever done what they did.

They’d had help from former residents, yes. But even without the two large donations, they would have cut down the size of their bond issue to a point where they could have handled it. Having watched them operate, I’m not even sure they wouldn’t have found some other means of going all the way.

And so, a short while back, they all gathered and stood solemnly—and in spirit little blind Miss Guernsey and others stood with them—and watched ground broken for their new bond-free, $129,000 Elementary School. A community more close-knit than ever before by this tremendous, concerted effort they had made.

And they tried, in the fashion of Vermonters, not to look too proud of this thing they’d all had a part in doing.
Tink Day of Woodstock earned his nickname from an ability to repair just about anything. He opened his shop in Woodstock more than forty years ago.

Day's shop is equipped with just about every tool there is for carpentry work—many of them items that were passed down from his father and grandfather. They were wheelwrights and sleigh-makers, and from them Tink Day also inherited his skills in carpentry and cabinet-making.

As a sideline Day runs an antique business. In this varied collection of the odd and interesting, among the old lanterns and beaded chandeliers, the highboys and Regency chairs, the china and Victorian paintings is a merry-go-round-horse, which once belonged to P. T. Barnum. But about his most valued possession is something which Day made himself, an intricately fashioned tool chest over which he labored in spare hours for three years. It is the only chest, he says, where you don't have to “move a tool to get a tool.”

Clarence Day takes it easy much of the time now, and he won't guarantee when a job will be done. But Woodstock people still bring him things to fix, and if it's made of wood, the chances are he can fix it for you, if anyone can.
It seems I'm always lending tools out to someone . . . keep track of them in this book so I can get them back . . . some fellows have kept them three years.

You won't catch me filing many saws these days . . . leave that to the younger fellows.
“Used to play a horn at dances . . . don’t have much to do with instruments these days . . . fix a violin once in a while.”

“Here’s a strange one . . . it’s a hand cuff . . . hitches right on a fellow’s wrist and holds them right there . . . funny thing about this is that the patent number reads ‘Number 12’ . . . I would call that early!”

“Can’t do much in this business without good eyesight . . . take that fellow in England that made a gold lock and key which weighed 1 gram . . . made a chain for it too, which hung around a flea’s neck . . . the story is right in one of my carpentry manuals.”
Here’s a trick mirror... they say they don’t make them anymore.

“When I got started in this business a house could be built for a few hundred dollars... bricks sold for a cent each, and lumber went for 1½ cents a foot.”

Why you can make beautiful music from just what you’ve got in your hands there... no, that’s not quite it...”
We, the People...

PHOTOGRAPHED BY GRANT HEILMAN

March Meeting is a cross-section—of the people who make direct democracy work. Here, recorded at Burke, are their faces—the elder citizens, woman and child, the town official, schoolboys learning their heritage.
RECENT BOOKS

MOST OF THE BOOKS that have dropped onto my desk like falling leaves in the last few weeks have been the work of enthusiastic specialists, amateurs, in the truest sense, of unusual subjects. Offbeat books tend to find offbeat publishers, so that it is not surprising that a number of smaller firms are represented on the list and that some are privately published.

Books of this kind should give courage to hesitant writers eager to share their enthusiasms with a larger audience. They prompt me to wish for still other books to be written: a history in pictures of round barns, for instance, a study of some of the master carpenters who built so many of our unassumingly lovely village houses; perhaps a picture book of fences and walls, or the biography of a hill-country clairvoyant—you can go on with the list yourself and I hope you will.

Bruce Wright dedicates THE GHOST OF NORTH AMERICA “to all those men and women who have reported a large, brown, long-tailed animal crossing the road in front of them between Canada and the Gulf coast of the Mississippi, and who have subsequently had their saneness questioned and have been laughed at, and even had their breath smelled.”

All these embattled people should be reassured that they almost certainly did see a panther, according to the author, who has checked dozens of first person reports. Panthers, says Mr. Wright, long thought to have vanished from our scene, are not only holding their own but in increasing. Anyone who has lived in Vermont’s back country for twenty or thirty years can testify, if not to the presence of panthers, at least to the increase in beaver, deer, muskrat, otter, bear and other wild creatures.

The wilderness seems to be closing in on us at the same time that the concrete nightmare of thoroughway and suburbia is rolling out towards us on the other side. With the steady decrease in the number of farms, each year more cleared land goes back to birch and fir. Soon the ledgy open pasture, as part of our landscape, will be as legendary as the panther once was.

Perhaps you are not a seer of wild animals, but a lover of caves. Speleologist is your correct multi-syllabled name, and for you is Caves in Vermont by John Scott, a meticulous listing of the known caves of the state by counties, with explicit directions for finding each one from the outside and where to go once you get in. Perhaps most noteworthy is that the explorations on which the list is based were undertaken by a group of children, nine to thirteen years old, known as the Killooleet Independent Speleological Society. The book includes ‘reported’ caves, not yet visited, which should inspire many a ‘spelunker’ to look over his equipment and take off to make similar discoveries on his own.

A quieter sport, one to be followed mostly in broad daylight and better suited to those of more mature years, is that of collecting covered bridges. Clearly the covered bridge, like the cave, appeals to something fundamental in human beings. In COVERED BRIDGE RAMBLINGS IN NEW ENGLAND, C. Ernest Walker of Contoocook, New Hampshire, comes nearer than anyone else I have encountered to communicating the true charm and appeal of these other-worldly structures, many of them vanishing each year as more modern highways and vehicles outdate them. Even if you own some of the other excellent books in this field you should have this one too, if only for the entertaining bits of folk lore and story that Mr. Walker has included, his many fine photographs and exhaustive lists.

If you have ever picked up an arrowhead from a plowed field, a scrap of blue and white earthenware or a handwrought nail from a freshly turned garden patch, or poked about in an abandoned cellar hole, wondering who lived there and how, you have tasted a measure of the lure of archaeology. In HIDDEN AMERICA, Roland Wells Robbins, with Evan Jones, has chronicled his highly successful and imaginative explorations of forgotten corners of the American past.

We may tend to think of archaeologists operating mainly in the ancient world and forget that history lies all about us, waiting quietly for someone to dig it up. Mr. Robbins’ book is highly contagious and made me want to rush out with my own pick, shovel and imagination. His pursuit of the buried past has led him to the exact site of Thoreau’s cabin on Walden Pond and to the Saugus Iron Works in Massachusetts. He has dug at Crown Point and at Philipsburg Manor on the Hudson, at Dogtown Common near Gloucester, Mass. and at Thomas Jefferson’s birthplace. In his book Mr. Robbins also discusses a few excavations other than his own and concludes with many practical hints to help the kindled reader in scientifically overturning his backyard without destroying precious artifacts. The uses of airplane photography, of tools and maps are all assessed. This is a hand-
some book, richly and usefully illustrated with photographs and drawings.

The writers of children's books are as much specialists in their way as the enthusiastic collector-authors of the books reviewed above. They have, ideally, retained something of that sense of wonder which children are born with and most grown-ups have lost, and can communicate this again to their young audience.

Here are three good books for middle-aged children by New England writers. Phoebe Erickson of the Woodstock area presents in WILDWING a wild colt saved from destruction by a young Arapahoe Indian boy. She has also drawn the pictures for this sensitive story of Bronze Feather and Wildwing. In Hildreth Wriston's, YANKEE MUSKET a Vermont boy grows up against the stormy background of defeat and victory in the Revolutionary War. The pull of opposing loyalties is well portrayed.

THE GRASS WAS THAT HIGH is a growing up story too, a modern one of Kit from Connecticut who reluctantly leaves her sailboat for a summer in Vermont that wins her new values and new friends through the raising of a bull calf named Hilltop. (Dorothy Pitkin, the author, lives in New Hampshire and visits in Vermont.) My spies in the 4th and 8th grades have given blue ribbons to these three books, with special enthusiasm for Wildwing.

Vermont has been the birthplace of a number of curious things: the founders of Mormonism saw the light of day here; so did the electric motor and the Fairbanks scale. Vermonters introduced Merino sheep to this country and, according to Charles Morrow Wilson, author of THE MAGNIFICENT SCUFFLERS, also brought from Ireland and developed to a high level of artistry a kind of wrestling known as 'collar and elbow'. Franklin County was the seed-bed of this sport, ancestor to collegiate and Olympic wrestling today. Mr. Wilson has had a wonderful time searching the old newspaper files and the memories of ancient sportsmen for the racy details of this little-known chapter in American sports history. There are fine illustrations by Jon Corbino. Mr. Wilson now lives in Putney and the book comes to us from Brattleboro's Stephen Greene Press.

Finally, there is Robert Duffus, who has been leisurely collecting his memories of his boyhood for us in Williams- town Branch and now presents himself as a fledgling journalist in WATERBURY RECORD, naively blundering into the complexities of life in that small Winooski town. Those who enjoy Mr. Duffus' unhurried recollections might like to look up his Innocents at Cedro, to me the finest of the three, in which he tells of his college days at Stanford when he shared for a time the dwelling of Thorstein Veblen.

* * * * *

Robert E. Pike, whose avocation is collecting the lore of upper New England, has published a very readable grouping of tales and personality sketches centered upon extreme northeastern Vermont and the Indian Stream Republic country of New Hampshire—SPIKED BOOTS.

RECENT BOOKS


CAVES IN VERMONT—John Scott. Kilcolleet, Hancock, Vermont, $1.00, from the author.


The earliest postmarked and correct location of this scene, dated after midnight February 29th, will win VERMONT LIFE's special award. Residents of the town of location are not eligible. Please send postal cards only, addressed to Mystery Picture, VERMONT LIFE, Montpelier, Vt.

Winner of our Winter issue mystery, the church on Rte. 12B in Braintree, was Clifford Eaton of So. Royalton.