Warren Case of Middlebury took this Springtime shot from the covered bridge across the Green River in Guilford Center. A Yankee bargainer, Photographer Case agreed to drive the schoolchildren home if they would wait for the sun to come out. Mr. Case's success in photography and child psychology is plain to see. The sled, he says, was found in the bridge, apparently used to transport a hoist also stored there.
The local populace called the noisy contraption “BA-LAAM.” What the Postboy called it, at various times, would fit in perfectly with some of the language in some best selling novels.

Having offered some observations on the fast fading art of walking in the issue of last Fall’s Vermont Life, the P.B. felt that he should not let it be thought that he was one of those stick-in-the-mud Vermonters who never takes on any new thing. As he writes those words “stick-in-the-mud” he is reminded that during his walking days, spring time was “Mud Time” and the countryside was full of stuck-in-the-muds. The more progressive one was, or the more adventuring in spirit, the more apt he was to find himself and his vehicle both boiling, while the wheels churned the highway to soup. In short, motoring in the early days is the subject in hand and we pause to state that spring motoring was, at one time, hazardous to say the least.

Spring used to be the time when the rarely possessed motor driven vehicle and its owner spent much time out in the barn. We use the word barn advisedly because the building bearing a French name and especially dedicated to the housing of automobiles was called many strange things in the confines of Vermont, where its pristine existence was unknown.

The P.B. recalls how he used to take the piece of cast-off awning from his pride and joy and sit in its seat and work its pedals—or no, the pedal. He watched for the first sign of dry road in the village connecting with his driveway so he might get his machine out. Let’s get the name straight first. It wasn’t called a “car” nor yet a “motor.” No, it was an “auto.” As we describe its mechanical features perhaps it will be evident that the shortening of the name was in keeping with the length of the machine, some 80 inches over all. Its builders evidently were inspired, if such a word could be used in connection with the advent of such a contraption, by the horse-drawn buckboard, as far as the body was concerned.

Besides the body there were four cushion-tired bicycle wheels and it was about 3 feet wide. The seat was buggy style and the steering was done with a tiller. There was a footrest but no dash or cowl. Its driving mechanism was the thing that set it apart and seemed always about to shake it to pieces. The motor was rated at four (4) horse power single cylinder. It was not resting luxuriously under cover—nothing as soft as that. It was situated on the rear axle right out in the open, it being air cooled. We would say that the word “cool” rarely applied once the motor was started. Also the operator was in something of a lather from cranking by the time the engine began—no, not to purr. That is not the word. Grind is the word. There were two short levers sticking up at one’s left as he sat in the driver’s seat. One controlled the gas, and the other the air. In short one had to learn to be a good mixer or else he didn’t locomote. There was a bulb horn on the steering lever but that was utterly superfluous. Nobody could fail to hear you and your auto coming a half mile off, especially when running in low as was necessary on any grade above 5%. One then sped along at four miles per hour which was the legal limit as marked on the sign governing traffic in the P.B.’s native village.

But to get back to the motor again for a minute. The cooling was supposed to be aided by an oiling system which was really so rudimentary as to be infantile. There was a glass bottle-like affair on top of the motor which held about a pint of oil. One was supposed to let in a third of the contents in every so many miles—we’ve forgotten how many. On a good hot day, after running a few miles, one could turn off the switch (it ran on two dry batteries) and the engine would keep right on running for some time.

Oh, yes. There was a long lever outside of the seat on the left which was the gear shift. It was as simple as the modern shiftless cars. Forward was high. Back was low. No clutch pedal, the same as now. A foot brake with a ratchet completed the safety appliances. No windshield, no top, no lights—none of the modern gadgets that complicate things so. No reverse either—though we admit meeting several reverses during our motoring experiences. One of the P.B.’s chief joys during his first driving days, with this auto, was seeing the looks of consternation on the faces of approaching drivers of horse-drawn vehicles as they would hold up a hand which the law stated demanded a full stop on the part of the motorist. Coming to the required halt the P.B. would leisurely get out and walking to the front of his machine simply lift it up and walk in a half circle. Then he’d get in and drive off in the direction from which he had come leaving an open mouthed horse and driver standing in the road. The driver was probably angry—such damnable contraptions on the road! The P.B. never stopped to see.

As a matter of fact “autoing” in those days (we never went more than 15 miles from home with ours) was not only venturesome, since you never knew when something might break or fall off, or the whole thing stop for no known reason, but there was always the hazard assumed by the driver of horses which could not fail to involve the autoist as well.

There was a current wheeze about a motorist who offered to lead a horse past his offending auto only to be told by the unfraid driver not to bother about the horse but to please “lead Mother past.” It illustrated the obvious fact that generally people were more terrified than their steeds. But enough horses seemed ready to prance on their hind legs or bolt anywhere to get away from the contraption confronting them to offer plenty of variety to a short auto trip.

The P.B. got the habit of taking unfrequent roads to avoid being cordially hated and even so he, more than once, had to lead a shaking beast past his motor while the holder of the reins, likewise shaking, held on for dear life. In fact the P.B. and a friend once halted well in front of a beast which stopped suddenly and sat down like a circus animal and then fell over in the road. The P.B. hurried forward where a woman driver, holding a baby in her lap with another child beside her, sat staring at him in petrified silence. He separated the beast from the wagon and while his friend dragged the wagon and its contents past the auto, he kicked and pulled until the beast finally got to its feet. Getting a firm grip on the reins beside the bit the P.B. led the horse past his quiescent auto. The beast never deigned to look at it. The horse and buggy were joined and the reins handed to the lady. She took them automatically and, still speechless, drove away.

And yet, in the spring or two during our possession of this Orient Buckboard—for so it was denominated—we spent happy hours anticipating dry roads and spinning along at a good fifteen an hour. Oh, yes. We mentioned that the local populace referred to the machine as “BA-LAAM.” The Postboy was the ass.
It was a Sunday afternoon early last March. I had just turned right from Route 5 in the village of Wells River. Creamery Hill was lined with cars, so many that the entrance to Back Street (now known by the more sophisticated title of Grove Street) was nearly blocked. “This is unusual,” I thought. “What kind of activity can have brought so many people today? School buses, too.” I parked near the drug store and walked up the slight incline to the Village Hall. I had almost reached the door of the building when I heard men’s voices booming forth the refrain: “For he is a Pirate King. He is a Pirate King! And it is, it is a glorious thing to be a Pirate King.”

Something clicked in my brain. “Gilbert and Sullivan.” The Pirates of Penzance, I found, was being staged as a combination dress rehearsal and matinee for two hundred open-eyed, wide-mouthed youngsters and a good smattering of adults.

I paid a dollar to enter the hall, receiving a ticket that would admit me to one of the two evening performances next week. The rousing singing and colorful costumes caught my fancy and I was eager to learn the background of this ambitious performance that seemed so professional in every detail. Wonder grew as the operetta unfolded. Principals acted their parts with fine attention to characterization. Chorus members danced, sang and acted with abandon and enthusiasm.

And then the stage was aflame with color as the pirates, dressed in gay, picture-book style and carrying dazzling cutlasses, became the center of attraction. The ladies were breathtaking in their hoop-skirted dresses and bewitching little bonnets. Solos, duets and choruses
Richard Sherwin (right) gets fitted for his Pirate’s costume by Agnes Bailey. Others left to right are Olive Mays, Virginia Jones and Nora Darling, chairman of the costume committee. To equip the entire large cast only three costumes had to be rented. The ladies furnished their own gowns, many of them real period costumes. Pirate cutlasses were made, too.

followed the traditional D’Oyley Carte tempo; cues and stage directions were followed meticulously.

During the intermission between the acts I asked my nearest neighbor for reassurance that this was really a local talent show. She proved to be one of the make-up team which had deftly transformed principals and chorus members from costumed townspeople into real actors.

“I guess it was her idea in the first place,” the make-up lady said pointing to the director seated near the piano just below the stage. “And the idea was supported enthusiastically by the Woman’s Club and the Chamber of Commerce and by many people from this whole area who love to sing and act and generally have good fun working together. Of course, this isn’t our first venture,” she went on. “Last winter we plunged into the unknown when we put on Pinafore—but why don’t you ask the director how it all came about?”

The curtain went up then on the second act—a moonlight scene with beautiful maidens surrounding Major General Stanley, who sat in deep dejection among the tombs of his ancestors. I chuckled as I recognized the grief-stricken major as the young lawyer from our sister town across the river. Carried along by the bravado of the chorus of policemen and ladies and the excitement of

← Pirate John De-meritt under the crayon of Robert Guinn, Groton High School teacher and also chorus member

← Rena Vigneau, the operetta’s leading lady in the part of Mabel, is made up for the performance dress rehearsal by Pearl Zumore, in real life a Wells River beautician
the contest between pirates and policemen, the end came all too soon in the final ensemble of the fifty participants, the ladies this time garbed in the white nightgowns and caps of four generations ago and the gentlemen dressed as police officers or pirates.

As the curtain went down I made my way through the crowd of youngsters, still awed by the make-believe land they had just left, to the director who was congratulating the accompanist. I introduced myself to the director, expressing surprise at the whole undertaking.

“Yes,” she said in the course of our conversation, “we broke the ice in staging Pinafore and we were anxious to build on last year’s experience and present an even more polished performance. We wanted to enlist the cooperation of many people in this area and to make something that would be a highlight in the year’s activities in Wells River.”

I asked her how they organized the planning. “Well, I kept my hands on the directing of the stage performance,” she said. “This took in choice of principals, training the choruses, coaching stage acting and dialogue, the dancing and lighting. We had rehearsals Sunday afternoons and Thursday evenings for seven weeks. It took a lot of planning and extra coaching but the rehearsals were fun.”

“It could never have been staged,” she continued, “but for our costume committee and its most ingenious chairman. Only three costumes were rented. The rest were of local origin and the chairman designed the pirate costumes herself. Ragged sheets were solicited, dyed brilliant hues, and then fashioned into pirate jackets and breeches. The cutlasses were made by one of the men from plywood and painted a realistic silver color.”

“Each lady was responsible for her own gown, the costume committee making the bonnets and helping choose the proper colors for the gowns. Some authentic period dresses were worn, and for the second act all the attics of Wells River and Woodsville were searched for the nightgowns great-grandmother wore. An authentic nightshirt was even found for the Major General,” she went on.
The entire women's chorus for "The Pirates of Penzance." The first five on the front row left are the principals.

As to the staging, there was another committee to supervise that. "For this performance we rented tie-on scenery rather than painting the backdrops," she said. "Local carpenters built whatever sets were needed and new footlights were installed. All in all more than 100 people contributed time, ideas and materials to the production of "The Pirates of Penzance."

"Now that it's ready, how do you plan to sell the show to the countryside?" I asked.

"Today's audience is partly the answer," she said. "We shall depend on the school children who were here today to persuade any parents without tickets that they mustn't miss the performances next week. Nearly all reserved seats have already been sold and we expect full houses both nights. Our publicity committee plans to draw on a twenty mile radius for the audiences."

As to finances, the director explained, production of such an operetta costs a great deal more than the standard amateur night or even a minstrel show. "We felt, though, that the educational value in a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta made the cost worthwhile. At that, last year we cleared $500 which was divided between the two local service clubs. We hope to do even better this year."

"What made you think," I asked, "that you could gather together 50 singers and a similar number of seamstresses, carpenters, electricians, make-up artists, business managers from a small village like Wells River and come out with a successful production?"

"Fools rush in," she reminded me, but went on, "These people didn't come from Wells River alone. In planning Pinafore we felt timid about asking out-of-town people to help in an enterprise that would seem to benefit only our village directly.

"I've learned, though, and we've all learned," she said, "that the real benefits to Wells River and this whole area are not in the money raised but mainly in the experience of working together toward a common, worthwhile goal—people from Groton, South Ryegate, Newbury and Woodsville as well as Wells River. The production of Pinafore and now of "The Pirates of Penzance," she said, "has brought the people of this area closer together and has developed a spirit of cooperating with our neighbors that is felt in all our civic and business life."

Next Thursday night I came back again to the regular performance of "The Pirates of Penzance. I found that what was fun for the cast and the many who helped make the performance, made the evening doubly worthwhile for the enthusiastic audience. In Wells River they've found the old custom of making your own entertainment is still a good one.

END

Note: The narrator "I", our author says, is to be construed not as herself but as the composite of many persons who experienced local talent Gilbert & Sullivan in Wells River for the first time last Spring.

Left: Patrick Boudreault, a plumber, played a Pirate role

Sugaring

Here in pictures Dr. Philip R. Hastings tells the old, sweet story of Vermont maple making.

Like most farm work sugaring demands muscle and skill. But most Vermonters sugar mainly because they like to. And everybody else has reason to be glad they do.

One taps maples and the other raps spiles, hangs buckets and covers.

Some sugarmen use newfangled power drills but the hand brace and bit work well. Bucket of spiles hangs behind him.
Snow still lies deep on the hills above Glover as the sugar season comes in March. Maple-framed picture of hard work. Hand collecting sap from trees near the sugar house.

Spring Tonic. Cold maple sap is a fine thirst quencher, taken in moderation.

Many keep horses just to draw these sap collecting tanks where tractors can't.
Above the steaming sugar house the collecting tank sled is halted. The sap is drained down this long pipe to a storage tank inside. From there it flows slowly into the steaming evaporator shown below. It takes thirty or more gallons of sap to make one gallon of syrup. Sap flows only in thawing weather after freezing nights, runs best on a southern exposure.

The fire under the boiling sap needs many cords of dry wood for the two to six week maple sugaring season.

A critical job is to draw off syrup at just the right moment when it reaches 219 degrees.
Hot syrup fresh from evaporators is strained through felt filters. Run into cans it is sealed and labeled for market.

Right from the evaporator syrup looks thin and pale, gains body on cooling. Some drink hot syrup; others find it too sweet.

The complete sugaring party, this one held in Burlington, calls for pans of packed snow with syrup boiled down and poured hot on the snow. Required side items are black coffee, raised doughnuts and sour pickles. See page 50 for sugar on snow recipe.
A F E W  Y E A R S  A G O the Conants of Holyoke, Massachusetts, bought an old house and "fifty acres, more or less" as the deed reads, on the edge of the village of South Newfane, Vermont. One of those "abandoned farms" you read about. With it they got good neighbors and mountain spring water; some bear, deer and partridge in the surrounding foothills, native timber, sunshine, fresh air, the house and contents, likely out-buildings and a black-top to Brattleboro, about twelve miles down the West River valley. It didn't cost too much, but the Conants did pay $5.00 to have the title cleared. A few evenings later the owner came in to pay back the $5.00. When the Conants protested the owner insisted, laying a weather-beaten $5.00 bill on the table. "I wouldn't feel right about it," he said. This is the story of how the Conants, before the passing of Mrs. Conant last year, made their home in Vermont.

Mr. Conant's business is engineering in industrial machinery, and his son John is the "motor" type too; so it wasn't long before they had the plumbing and interior remodeling done. Then came grading and a good Vermont stone wall with a white picket fence and some climbing roses.

Mrs. Conant was a thirty-second degree flower lover. Out in front of the flagged patio that the men had added to the south side of the old "ell" was an ideal spot for the beginning of a garden. Mrs. Conant with Barbara, her daughter, was a real dirt gardener.

John and his dad set up a shop in the old barn, the better to do the remodeling jobs about the place and to "make things" that Mrs. Conant and Barbara needed for the house. John could work here too, on the body he was making for the un-
employed truck chassis he had picked up for a song. A truck or second car of some sort is mighty handy around a place in the country.

Even on the hottest summer day there is always a cool breeze on the patio, a good place to sit when sewing or with a good book. They call the place "Breezeway." As the grocer said when the Conants first bought the house and started trading at the village store, "The wind always ricochets through this valley."

The interior of the ell has been converted for general family use; a real "living" room with a fire-place for cool weather, cross ventilation for hot weather. The walls are paneled in the weathered gray sheathing from the old out-buildings now torn down. There are plenty of comfortable chairs and a trestle type dining table in front of one of the big square windows with the charming small panes.

"Where did you get those wonderful windows?" you ask the Conants and they'll tell you how those wonderful windows were in an old chicken house on their Holyoke property. "We stored them for twenty years, then suddenly found a use for them," Mr. Conant says.

Mr. Conant and his neighbors often enjoy a pipe in the weather-gray paneled living room in the ell. From the hand-hewn cross-beams above their heads hang the fragrant herbs grown in the kitchen garden. The travel poster above the mantel is a bright splotch of color, an English country scene in Devonshire.

The Conants and their friends like to go to Vermont country auctions. They use many of the old farm and kitchen utensils to furnish the bar. Some are mighty useful when having a party; others are just decorative reminders of pre-homogenized milk and hand-churned butter days in Vermont. The family like to see them hanging around. "Makes you feel less atomic-age-conscious" Barbara says.

"Of course we still use the old lamps and lanterns sometimes," she explains. "When there's an 'outage' and you have no 'juice' you light the old lanterns and the kerosene lamps. But that doesn't happen often now, even in the rugged Vermont country."

The ox-yoke above the bar is a nice touch, as are the simple home-spun fabric curtains at the window. The herbs are useful as well as decorative, in a family where "gourmet" cooking is fun. Running all along the wall at the end of the bar and opposite the fire-place end of the room, are concealed cup-boards and closets for the work clothes, garden tools, cleaning paraphernalia and sports equipment that make for comfort and convenience. This end of the room presents the appearance of just a wall sheathed in the silver grey of the weathered siding from old out-buildings. But behind a half dozen doors is a luxury of storage space.

Opposite the bar is the dining table, in front of sunny south windows looking out through the patio to the garden. Here in this room with its open-to-the-ridge-pole airiness and rag-rug comfort, the family lives and entertains with attendant work and worry reduced to the least common denominator.

Get up from the end of the dining table and turn around. Step right into the kitchen. The business end of the kitchen, modern as tomorrow! With a window commanding a breath-takingly beautiful view of the Vermont hills; and right, right over the sink to take the drudgery out of dish-washing.

Modern convenience and old time charm go hand in hand in this part of the kitchen. Porcelain sink and old wooden firkins. A rack for trays at one end, and old copper dipper at the other.

To the right of the kitchen door is the kitchen range, warm and toasty on a cool morning in spring or fall. Barbara is the artist in the Conant family. She it is who painted her mother's recipe for rolls on the wall above the wood box. And what a lovely old corner cupboard filled with the dishes of a simpler day. The blown glass goblets, the white ironstone fruit bowl, the Staffordshire teapot, the Sandwich...
Auctions, a cider mill and the herb garden helped furnish the Conant's bar

This nostalgic Victorian corner of the livingroom fits into the bay window

Pine pantry shelves panel the parlor. Old boards often can be re-used this way

glass—what woman wouldn't be happy with a cupboard like this in her kitchen?

Once upon a time, just opposite the stove, there was a pantry in this farm house kitchen. No longer needed to “keep things cool” now in the days of electric refrigeration, the wide pine boards which were the pantry shelves Mr. Conant removed and refinished to use as paneling around the fire-place wall in the “parlor.” To give finish to the top of the pantry alcove, a shelf is employed, and dressed with a cranberry red calico ruffle, the color picked up from the red in the provincial figured wall paper used in the kitchen. Along the shelf Barbara has placed tole ware box, lustre cup and saucer, earthenware jug and the other “antiques” picked up at country auctions or handed down from pantries in the family. The Victorian kitchen clock on the shelf ticks to daylight saving time, but who cares what time it is when it is summer in Vermont?

Gay peasant color frolics all over in this kitchen, but the blue and white Staffordshire dishes on the pine dresser make what might be called the focal point. The dresser itself is the family's conversation piece. Mr. Conant and John made it in the shop from old pine. “Where did you find such beautiful old pine boards?” you ask. Hang your inquiring head. The pine boards were taken from the siding of the little “necessary house” in the back yard; the one with the crescent in the door! P. S. The electric refrigerator is concealed in the recess directly opposite the window in what was the old pantry.

From pantry into the parlor went the pine that panels the north wall in the Conant’s “front room.” It isn’t really the front room, for two bedrooms front on the side of the house away from the living ell. But this is the formal room of the house, if you could use the term at all. The charming mantel framing the fire-place is from another old Vermont house, the Franklin stove, another. The warming pan, brass kettle used for kindling, the old clock, figurines and flip glasses are tuned to the interior, as is the spatter floor and braided wool rugs.

To the left of the fire-place the pine panelled door opens into a small passage way which leads to the linen closet and bath and thence to bedroom. This passage way has been made exciting by the use of reproduction Currier & Ives prints as wall covering. A neat way to use obsolete insurance calendars. A recessed bookcase adds charm to the room and houses some delightful early editions.

Opposite the fire-place a Victorian “bay-window,” doubtless added to this old house in the elegant eighties, invites the sunshine that favors southern exposures. Here is the melodian, the old song book, the Windsor chair and the Victorian glass vase with its fresh roses. A nice feeling for period is evidenced in this little group.

When the Conants bought the property, the old chicken house seemed substantial enough to be worthy of repair.

What can be done with a chicken-house that has fallen into what the word fanciers might term “innocuous desuetude,” is illustrated in the charming guest house which the Conants have made from theirs.
Above: The old chicken house (inset) became a comfortable guest house under the Conant's talented carpentry and decoration. Barbara and her mother had a lovely time doing the guest house. Barbara can do wonders with a paint brush. Victorian furniture from the attic of the house in town was given a beauty treatment and came out a smooth turquoise blue with decorative motifs done in contrasting colors. The glazed chintz at the windows harmonizes with the scheme of jonquil yellow walls and turquoise painted wood bed, dresser, wash stand, and night table. A small black Victorian stove is an accent pleasing both to the eye and the chilly chassis on a cool morning. In such an imaginative little guest house as this, there would be a pink rose in a bud vase on the dresser, to repeat the pink of the calico stars in the old fashioned hand pieced quilt on the bed.

But the most exciting, the significant thing shall we say, about "Breezeway" is that it is a family affair. One of those good gestures that make for happiness and fulfillment. John is planning to work out a ski-run on the property for winter sports. Work and plans and play, using the best of yesterday and today and tomorrow.

Mr. Conant is thinking about soil conservation too. He is leasing his land in five acre parcels on a five year lease, to a local farmer who plows and limes the tract, taking in payment all that he can raise on it. In time the whole tract will be restored. Fun doing, and an ace of hearts up the family sleeve.

End
The sawmill that stands by the Black River in Irasburg today is a new mill, but it is on the very site and built much like the old mill owned by Jerusha, the wife of Ira Allen, nearly 125 years ago. That picturesque old structure, displaying a variety of color and design which testified to its more than a century of service, was still in operation in 1950, when, on a bitterly cold night, it burned to the ground. From 1828, when the first recorded reference to the mill is dated, it was in continuous operation, except for a brief period in 1928, following the disastrous flood of '27. In fact, keeping the mill on the property "in good and sufficient repair" was one of the conditions of the earliest lease.

The records in the Irasburg town clerk's office show that in 1828 Mrs. Jerusha Allen leased the mill, land and water rights to Ezekiel Little, "who built the dam across the Black River." In 1852 Ira H. Allen, son of Ira and Jerusha, leased the land and water rights to William W. Little, son of Ezekiel, whose heirs were still holding and leasing the property when the present owner, Maynard R. Alexander, bought the lease in 1947.

The Allens, responsible for that first mill, were also responsible for most of Irasburg's early history, just as members of the family accounted for much of the beginning of Vermont itself. The more than 23,000 acres later named, for Ira Allen, Irasburgh (spelled Irasburg since about 1900), were granted to him and his associates by the General Assembly of the state in 1781. That body thought such a grant "fit for the Due Encouragement of their Laudable Designs, and for other Valuable Causes & Considerations," outstanding among these causes being the state's gratitude for the services of General Ira Allen in the Revolution and in organizing the first Vermont government. To be sure, the names of most of the 64 associates given in the grant are now presumed to have been made up for the occasion; however, the names of several of the Enos family were included, and they were authentic, being the names of the General's wife and his in-laws. A few years later Ira deeded to his wife, "in token of the affection I have for Jerusha Enos, Jr." this new town, as yet unsettled.

The town was organized in 1803. Later, Ira Allen's widow and his son, "Colonel" Ira H. Allen as he was later known in the town, came to Irasburg to live, owning most of the property within its limits for many years. Ira H. was a dominant figure in the life of his father's "burg" for half a century. The mill lease of 1852, for example, is made out in his handwriting, and his practice in such matters has often been described. He would sit down with the other parties interested in whatever business at hand and, with never a reference to law books or legal forms, write out fluently page after page of "hereinafters" and "whereof"s as he made various arrangements for the use of his and his mother's properties.

In those days—from 1812 to 1886—Irasburg was the county seat, but its population was on the decline after the Civil War. One of the causes for this was the adamant Ira H., who would not sell to the railroad the land it sought in Irasburg for tracks and depot. Thus important transportation routes by-passed the town, and Newport became the county seat.

Meanwhile the mill on the Black River continued its role in the community's economy, under the management of a variety of proprietors, including the Boston Lumber Company, E. P. Colton, and George Parker. The 1880's and '90's were the heyday of log drives, which were the chief means of logging transportation from the early days until the flood of 1927. In the peak years, five drives would appear on the river each spring, and the quiet stream was the scene of many lively encounters. The water would be just high enough, for a limited number of days, and operators were desperate as they pushed their timber down the stream, sometimes as far as the International Mill Company's plant in Newport, where the Black River empties into Lake Memphremagog.

One man, a worker in the mill in the old days, recalls the time when the logs from two drives were mixed up in the pond by the Irasburg mill; one boss, determined to free his logs to go down the sluice around the dam, stood precariously on the boom which held back the logs, with axe upraised to cut the boom. His rival, who would let no log of questioned ownership go by, knocked him into the water. Back up onto the boom he crawled, axe still in hand, but again he was pushed into the millpond, and kept there, at the point of a pike-pole, until he dropped the axe. The boom stayed.

For about 30 years, under the ownership of E. L. Chandler and the Parker-Young Company, the Irasburg mill was a feeder mill for the plants in Orleans making piano parts. But the ferocious waters of November, 1927, put the mill temporarily out of business. Mr. Alexander bought the mill, rebuilt it, and began sawing once more in 1929. He also reconverted the mill from steam power, which had been used since about 1903. Water power made the wheels go, as it had before and as it does today. The Black River, not to be confused with another Black River in southern Vermont, has its source in Eligo Pond in Greensboro, and now provides power through a 90-horsepower turbine wheel.

For as long as the oldest associates of the mill can remember, it has produced several million feet of lumber per year, which makes it one of the larger Vermont sawmills, as well as one of the oldest. Probably its peak production since the flood was in 1927, when under the New England Timber Salvage Administration the mill ran nights as well as days, to put into useful form the timber felled by the hurricane the previous autumn.

After the old mill burned, March 4, 1950, work was begun on a new one to
By Derick, Camera Clix, courtesy The Rotarian Magazine

take its place as soon as the high waters went down that spring. Trucks have taken the place of river currents and horse-drawn wagons in bringing logs to the mill. Trucks also take the mill products, from planed lumber to sawdust, to nearby farms for local use and to railroad freight cars for distant customers.

Another way in which the old mill has "gone modern" is in forestry methods. In cooperation with the Vermont Forest Service, the Irasburg mill encourages selective cutting, and re-foresting, on its own timber lots and on those of farmers whose logs it buys. In the words of Mr. Alexander, "With the right forestry practices, there is no reason why a mill like this can't go on forever."
RESOLVED to build a new school house 22 ft. by 26 the spring and summer of 1851.”

By that record, inscribed with a grey goose quill in the clerk’s book, our little red school house came into being.

All thirteen of the district’s qualified voters had met in the ramshackle one-room building that winter evening in 1850. Stamping the snow from their cowhide boots and setting a big square tin lantern on the school master’s desk to light the clerk’s task, Grandfather and his dozen brothers, nephews and other neighbors had been settled on the benches, ready for business, at six o’clock.

And when, after much debate, and deliberating, it had been resolved to build “sd. school house,” that handful of earnest farmers returned to their various homes among the hills of the little Vermont neighborhood.

The Superintending Committee must have given generously of its time and labor between sheepshearing and harvest that following spring and summer, for “said schoolhouse” stood ready for occupancy for the next year’s winter term.

A coat of red ocher, baked in the oven and mixed with linseed oil to penetrate the wood and with skim milk to spread, gave the new building a soft weathered red exterior. Like a hovering mother hen, it settled down there beside the road running between pasture and meadow, at the exact center of the three-mile-long district, to become the beloved Alma Mater of many a neighborhood chick.

The white wooden plaque on its gable end facing the road announced, “School District No. 8, Rupert, Oct. 1st, 1851.”

At the first meeting of the voters to be held in the new building, it was “resolved to raise a tax of thirty-four dollars and twenty-three cts. on said Dist., to defray the Teacher’s wages the first winter and other expenses.” The teacher boarded around at the homes of the scholars, so most of the other expense was for wood.

Grandfather was assigned to collect “said tax” to deliver at the school yard eight cords of “good body wood” for the big box stove.

It further became his duty to take his turn in dropping in at “said school” now and then on his way home from the cheese factory, to question the scholars.

Four months was the length of that first winter’s term, beginning on the second Monday in November. On that memorable morning, a dozen or so eager-eyed boys and girls, ranging between the ages of six and eighteen, congregated with book and slate and lunch bucket at the broad field-stone steps.

Hanging cap and hood and shawl and roundabout on the nails in the tiny entries partitioned out of the front corners of the building, they all filed into the newly plastered schoolroom.

There the pleasant-faced, but well-muscled, young school master directed the placing of lunch buckets in the cupboard at the rear of the room. The bigger fellows vied for the back seats, the smaller fry settled down front, and school “took up.”

For more than eighty consecutive years thereafter, the first day of each fall term was, in the lives of the boys and girls of the neighborhood, a social, as well as an educational event, marked by new shoes and new gingham dresses, a bouquet of carefully picked nasturtiums or sweetpeas for Teacher’s desk and a new anticipation for what life might hold.

Never shall I forget my own first day there at the age of five. Seated down front, my big brother Bob, who was all of six, and I joined the school body in chanting after the teacher. “Look out not in; look up not down; look forward not back; and lend a hand.”

After we had all lustily sung, “My country, ‘tis of thee, Sweet land of libertee,” Teacher, a cousin of whom we were very fond, heard her two small new charges read the alphabet from a tall chart beside her desk. There were pictures of kittens and ponies and zebras, of little girls in red capes and blue dresses, and of boys with fishing-poles on the pages, too, so the lesson was fun.

We cut gay flowers and vegetables from a seed catalog after we did our copy and then made a pilgrimage to the spring by the stone pile out back, having discovered the magic of waving two fingers. On the way back we even paid a visit to the traditional “three-holer” after making sure there were no windows in the rear wall of School.

And then it was noon recess. Out to the flat rock beneath the maples in the front
yard we all trooped to eat our lunches. Small hands, sweating with eagerness, tugged at the tin pail cover. And there were the plum jelly sandwiches, the chicken leg from Sunday's dinner, a big Red Astrachan apple, and a butternut cup cake, wrapped in a crisp white napkin by a loving mother. Shyly but happily, the two new scholars ate every crumb of their own good things, while the others traded delicacies, a practice in which we soon were sharing. Many a recipe for graham bread and black currant buns, shaved sugar cake and pumpkin preserves found their way into neighborhood cookbooks via the schoolyard rock.

"I'm on Dixie's land, Dixie don't know it; he's got a sore toe and he can't go it," shouted the first one to finish his lunch. We played the game hilariously 'til the bell rang for us to line up, red and puffing.

More copy, more cutting pictures, and listening to the others recite brought us to dismissal. Desks cleared, we listened while the others said the daily closing verses, verses which can still bring a measure of tranquility to those who used to say them in that long ago.

Teacher smiled as we finished, and we all got our things from the chimney cupboard and entry. There was only one entry by now; co-education had progressed to the point of permitting both boys and girls to pass through the same doorway.

Bob and I were the only ones to take the road up the hill to the east, since the others lived down the road to the west or up cross lots to the south. Bob took my hand protectively in his, and the road ahead looked bright in the fall sunshine.

But that was nearly a half dozen decades after the first opening day. By then that first four months' term had been lengthened to an annual three terms of ten or twelve weeks each. A bolt and lock had been placed between the school and entry. There was only one annual chore of becoming "riley" or freezing up at any time. Each Arbor Day began with cleaning the school yard. Six or eight older ones each brought a rake and employed it diligently, while the half dozen little ones returned the playhouse boards and stones to fence and pile. The annual chore was completed by noon.

As soon as lunch was eaten, it was time to plant the young tree, which one of the biggest boys had dug up in his father's pasture and higgled to school on his back that morning. While the strongest arms took turns at the shovel, the rest wrote their names on a sheet of paper, rolled it up, and placed it in a patent medicine bottle. We would carefully bury the bottle at the center of the hole, the sapling would be solicitously set into its new ground, and the soil returned and stamped in place. Each pupil must leave his stamp upon the earth, his name within the bottle.

The last day of school before Christmas was another event never to be forgotten. When somebody's father or hired man would stop out front with a loud "Whoa," the day before the exercises were to take place, we all went wild with delight. And when he dragged in the pungent green spruce, fresh from the woods, and set it up near the woodshed door, our hearts would almost burst with joy.

The branches that had to be lopped off we nailed above blackboards and windows. Out from the box under Teacher's desk came the strings of dried red rose haws strung at recess and the ropes of snowy popcorn brought from home. And then the paper chains the littlest ones had colored or cut from the brightest pages of the mail order catalogs and pasted when copy work was done. Butternuts wrapped in the gold and silver tinfoil from tobacco, carefully saved all year; spruce cones dipped in starch; and bright hatting snowflakes blossomed on the tree. Last of all, the tips of the branches we clipped the little tin candle holders with their rainbow of wax tapers not to be lighted until just before the exercises.

Next morning we hung our presents at the most tantalizing angle among the fragrant boughs. At one o'clock the grown-ups came from up and down the road. Fathers and mothers, cousins and aunts, uncles, older brothers and sisters and even the two-year-olds. Every seat was crowded, and sometimes we scholars had to sit on chunks along the outside walls. Someone drew the green paper shades, and Teacher lighted the candles.

"He comes in the night," "It was Christmas Eve and a beggar stood in the falling snow," "But jest fore Christmas I'm ez good ez I kin be," and "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem" came from weeks of rehearsing.

Then, amidst jingling bells and squeals of delight, in bounded Santa Claus to pass out the presents. Dolls' quilts picked from the year's dresses, birchbark covered blotters tied with bright ribbons, bows and arrows whittled after chores, the biggest, reddest Twenty Ounce Pippins from the fall picking, and dozens of other homely offerings that gladdened our childish hearts.

Teacher's gifts brought the biggest thrill of all, for they were wrapped in white tissue and tied with red ribbons to prolong the agony of joy in opening them. Bought gifts they were, bought in towns where we had never been. A pink and white workbasket, a china cup and saucer, delicate as an eggshell, a story book with pictures.

Two of us who hold treasured memories of the days spent in the little old school house stopped in last summer. It was my first visit there since it had been made into a summer cottage by Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Painter.

As I entered the beloved old room, left much as it was in my school days, memories of the lessons, the good times and the dear ones I had known there flooded my being. On the familiar teacher's desk lay the guest book, before it the well worn arm chair.

As we said good-bye, I looked into the faces of the present owners. Theirs are the faces of a man and woman and their sons and one son's wife, who live secure in their love for one another, their love for the outdoors, for learning, and for all that is best as a way of life. I thought with happy satisfaction, "Our dear old Alma Mater instructs her brood of scholars still."

Yes, Grandfather and his dozen farm neighbors served democracy and humanity well, when they "resolved to build a new school house 22 ft. by 26 the spring and summer of 1851."
Fairdale Farms
The Farm of Many Families

by John W. Spaven

This unique agricultural enterprise has shown that an employee-owned farm corporation can pay dividends to its owners and to Vermont.
Cradled among the rolling green mountains of southwestern Vermont, is one of the most remarkable farms in New England. About two miles west of Old Bennington on Route 9, Fairdale Farms, Inc. refutes the old saying that “too many cooks spoil the broth.” Its 700 acres and its nationally famous dairy herd are owned and operated by its employees, men endowed with years of valuable experience and a zest for working their own farm. Most of Fairdale’s 50 employees own a share or more of this successful farm enterprise.

Within its boundaries are some of the most fertile soils in the state. Although tilled since pre-Revolutionary times, the land, through good management, has increased in fertility through the years. Today its crop records are targets at which other top New England farmers shoot. These crops result each year in thousands of tons of the world’s finest forage crops—hay, silage, and pasture extra rich in mineral and vitamin content to nourish the clean, healthy dairy herd that produces Fairdale Certified Milk.

In the 6 years that the farm has been employee-owned, it has proven two things thought impossible by many farmers. It has shown that a rich man’s showplace can be made into a practical money maker, and that an incorporated agricultural enterprise, operated by many owners, can be successful.

The story of Fairdale’s development is an interesting one. Until 6 years ago the farm was owned by J. C. Colgate, whose grandfather made a fortune in the soap business. The late James C. Colgate founded the farm in 1892 when he bought several neighboring farms. Mr. Colgate called his new holdings the Fillmore Farms, named after the Fillmore family of which both Mrs. J. C. Colgate and Millard Fillmore, President of the United States, were members.

For several years Fillmore Farms was noted chiefly for prize-winning Horned Dorset Sheep. Many of the breed’s best individuals were imported from England for the foundation flock. The sheep won Colgate many silver cups but cost him a small fortune to keep.

In 1927, 15 farms totaling 3,000 acres had been added to the Fillmore Farms. Fields were enlarged, new buildings erected, and farm homes were modernized. It was that year that Fillmore Farms switched to registered Ayrshire cattle.

The new dairy herd paid better than did the Horned Dorset Sheep, although it still ran at a loss and was considered by other Vermont farmers as a rich man’s playing thing.

When Mr. Colgate’s son-in-law, James S. Dennis, became manager, farming at Fillmore took a more practical course. Milking machines and other new farm machinery were added. Fillmore Farms also started a milk route. Although its first day’s sales totaled only a quart and a half, the milk route grew rapidly and the cash box showed results. The high quality dairy products, including certified milk, soon attracted more customers than the Fillmore Farms could supply. It was then that the farm started to buy milk from selected dairy farms in the Bennington area. With the quality of its products always at a high standard, the number of its customers grew and grew. Soon the farm turned from a rich man’s hobby into a money-maker.

Several months after Mr. Colgate’s death, in 1946, the employees of Fillmore Farms were made an unusual offer. At a special meeting, these men and women were given the opportunity to run a part of the Farms as their own. It was not a
gift, but an offer to sell part of the Fillmore enterprise—the workers to run it as an employee-owned corporation.

The heirs of Mr. Colgate wanted to keep part of the farm to continue the Ayrshire breeding project. The rest they would sell. Available to the employees were a herd of over 340 dairy cattle, most of the croplands, buildings, equipment, and the dairy plant.

One of the reasons for this generous offer was that the Colgate heirs wanted to save the farm from being broken into small units or falling into hands which would not keep up the high standards set at Fillmore.

The property offered was worth $200,000, yet it was offered to the farm workers for half this amount. The employees were allowed to pay for the property at the rate of $8,000 a year for 4 years and with no interest charges. It was one of those “once in a lifetime” opportunities. And the workers lost no time in forming a corporation to operate their new farm. Stock was sold to each employee at $100 a share, par value. Over 400 shares were sold for only $10 each. This bargain in stock was offered only to employees who had over three years’ service on the farm. A free share of stock went to the man who gave the new farm its name. “Fairdale Farms” was a popular choice. Seven employees suggested it. To select the winner of the stock certificate, names of the seven were picked from a hat. Henry Boutin, dairy plant foreman, was the lucky man.

When the money from stock sales was totaled up, the new Fairdale Farms had raised about $9,500. The next year was a hard one. Although they continued as they had in former years to till the same fields, care for the same herd, produce the same products, and serve the same customers, they were also faced with the new responsibility of ownership.

Most important of all, the Fairdale workers began to get a balanced understanding of the special interests of each group upon which their success depended—customers, producers, employees, and stockholders. In spite of the many problems that showed up, Fairdale Farms enjoyed a moderate prosperity that first year.

The first slate of officers have been re-elected each year to head the corporation. Bob Holden, who first started working for Colgate as a boy in 1917 and later accepted a full-time job after graduating from the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College in 1928, was elected president and manager of Fairdale Farms. His teammates included Kenneth E. Worthington, vice-president; Maurice A. Douglass, treasurer; and Francis A. Humphries, clerk. From the first, the Fairdale organization was carefully planned so that the responsibility of each worker was easily defined. This has made for harmony among the many workers who controlled the farm.

The operations of this agricultural corporation are separated in departments each with its own head. For instance, Tom Kinney, who knows as much or more about growing high-yielding crops of corn, legumes, and grasses as any other farmer in Vermont, is in charge of a crew of four field crop men. The three dairy barn crews are under the direction of Herdsman Floyd Mattison, Bob Breese, and Lee Bentley. Tom Murphy, a recent graduate of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College, is in charge of the dairy plant group. Kenneth Worthington, vice-president of the corporation, is also foreman of the seven-man dairy plant group. Henry Boutin, who gave the Fairdale Farms its name, is foreman of the ten-route milk delivery business. The garage, dairy bar, maintenance group, and poultry sections of the business all have their specialized groups and foremen.

But it has been more than a good organization that has made Fairdale Farms a success. Much can be credited to the practical way the organization plans and carries out its farming activities each year. Some indication of Fairdale’s growth is shown in the comparison of milk pro-
cessed in the past few years. The first year, 1947, they processed 4,472,131 pounds of milk. During 1951, 5,649,103 were processed—well over a million pounds more than the first year.

Fairdale still maintains an outstanding Ayrshire herd. They won their fourth Constructive Breeder Award with an average production of 9,723 pounds of 4.1 percent milk and 401 pounds of fat on a twice-a-day milking. Forty-four of their Ayrshire herd produced more than 10,000 pounds of milk and 24 produced more than 12,000 pounds.

While Fairdale continued on with the world famous Ayrshires started by Colgate, they added other breeds to give a practical and flexible dairy herd—a herd suited to their own particular needs.

The employee-owners have been well satisfied with their investment. They have received good dividends on their cash invested in stock. These dividends were made while the corporation was paying off the mortgage, increasing the property value, and adding new machinery and animals. In addition to these dividends, the employees have received pay 15 percent over that of Vermont's average farm worker. They receive a week's sick leave and have group life and hospitalization insurance. All of these make the employee-owners with pay, and have group life and hospitalization insurance. Whenever possible special equipment is made available by Fairdale to these neighbors on a custom rate basis. Thus, farmers who produce milk for Fairdale have use of field balers, forage harvesters, combines, concrete mixers, pneumatic drill and other equipment which would be impractical for them to own themselves.

An increasing number of these producers are buying their feed, seed, fertilizers, and other farm supplies through Fairdale's system of ordering in carload lots. Special publications and a monthly milk producers' letter are sent to these cooperating farms.

Fairdale Farms' flexible program showed up to good advantage in its last fiscal year. Beset with ceiling prices on the products it sold, and rising prices on the goods it bought, and with reduced purchasing power in its sales area, its workers were faced with a challenge. They retrenched and with good results, Supervisory employees did routine tasks. Maintenance costs were cut to the bone. The milking herd was closely culled and marginal cows were sold for beef, when meat prices were unusually high. Sales personnel made a special but courteous drive to collect delinquent accounts. These combined efforts made it possible to keep in effect a December wage increase of about five percent. It also allowed Fairdale to pay for better employee benefits from hospital insurance.

In spite of this relatively poor season, Fairdale Farms was able to complete the year with a profit of 2.6 percent of gross sales and the usual dividend to stockholders of $5 per share.

This is typical of the good planning and top-notch farming done at Fairdale. Bob Holden and his co-workers take advantage of all the services available to farmers in the state. Bennington County's Extension Service agricultural agent, Harry Mitiguy, serves the Fairdale Farms with sound professional farming advice just as he serves the other farmers of his county. Fairdale cooperates with other governmental and state agencies working in the interests of better farming for Vermont.

A sign which hangs in Bob Holden's office gives a hint as to one reason for Fairdale's success. It reads, "The most valuable hours on a farm are those spent in planning how to do more and better, with less work."

Fairdale was among the first farms in the state to join the Green Pastures Program. Sponsored by the Vermont Agricultural Extension Service, this educational program aids farmers of the state to grow more and better roughage. For the past two years, the Fairdale Farms has been selected as one of the three farms with the best roughage programs in Vermont. Fairdale is the only Green Mountain farm to rate in with the top three in two successive years.

Lester H. Smith and Stanley Judd, co-chairmen of the Green Pastures Committee, say of the Fairdale Farms: "Profitable dairy farming and good soils go hand in hand. Fairdale farm soils are strong and productive because they are derived from limestone, the rock that
Eleanor Gilman

Carl Campbell prepares a cow for milking as Floyd Mattison attaches a milking machine

FAIRDALE FACTS

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Silage Produced, Tons</th>
<th>Hay Produced, Tons</th>
<th>Hay Equivalent, Tons</th>
<th>Ayshire Herd Test Averages</th>
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<td>1955</td>
<td>1053</td>
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- Silage Produced, Tons: 972, 661, 722, 933, 1053
- Hay Produced, Tons: 444, 645, 507, 637, 805
- Hay Equivalent, Tons: 768, 866, 748, 948
- Ayshire Herd Test Averages:
  - Number Cows on Test: 81
  - Pounds Milk Produced: 9290, 9859, 8911, 9612, 9723
  - Fat Test: 4.5, 4.5, 4.5, 4.5
  - Pounds Fat Produced: 383, 396, 360, 391, 401
  - Days in Milk: 296, 192, 278, 298, 293
  - Total Milk Produced, Lbs: 1,775,674, 1,784,040, 1,681,630, 1,798,335, 1,689,294
  - Total Milk Processed, Lbs: 4,472,131, 4,769,074, 5,323,745, 5,765,440, 5,646,103
  - Fluid Milk Sales, Qts: 1,894,572, 1,973,095, 2,098,163, 2,222,653, 2,336,306
  - Total Route Sales: $428,316, $493,081, $545,203, $550,072, $572,254

1955:
- Silage Produced, Tons: 972
- Hay Equivalent, Tons: 1053
- Ayshire Herd Test Averages:
  - Number Cows on Test: 81
  - Pounds Milk Produced: 9290
  - Fat Test: 4.5
  - Pounds Fat Produced: 383
  - Days in Milk: 296
  - Total Milk Produced, Lbs: 1,775,674
  - Milk Purchased, Lbs: 2,696,457
  - Fluid Milk Sales, Qts: 1,894,572
  - Total Route Sales: $428,316

Don't think for a minute that the dairy cow is the only money maker on the Fairdale Farms. Like most good Yankee farmers, the folks who operate Fairdale have looked into all possible ways to make a dollar.

Many a person in every state in the nation has fond memories of a good meal, prepared and served at the Fairdale Dairy Bar. This house of good food is located on Route 9. Its clientele is served the products of Fairdale Farms and a diversity of other choice foods. Such features as old-fashioned chicken pie, garden-fresh vegetables, baking powder biscuits, ice cold buttermilk, and a variety of other dairy products have so delighted its diners, that many plan their Vermont travel so as to have a meal at the Dairy Bar. On a good Sunday, as many as 1200 people are served at the Dairy Bar. It opens its doors in May and continues until late September.

Like the Dairy Bar, the Fairdale Gift and Antique Shop attracts hundreds of summer visitors to examine and buy the hand-made gifts and antiques. Most of the

Both bottles and paper containers are filled and sealed by machine here in the Fairdale's modern dairy products processing plant.

Richard A. Hunt
The Fairdale milking herds may be turned out for rotation grazing in fields like this which already have been harvested.

Jim Holden rakes hay on the Whipstock Farm, one of several nearby leased by Fairdale. Bennington Monument is in the distance.

Gifts are made locally and shipments are made to every state in the nation.

Square dancing is another venture that has been a money-maker for Fairdale. Each Thursday evening the Fairdale open-air dancing area is packed with tourists and local folks anxious to try their talents at country dancing. Upwards of 400 dancers attend the weekly sessions.

The poultry flock supplies eggs to Fairdale milk route customers and tender meat for the Dairy Bar's famous Vermont chicken pies. The egg business has been so good that Fairdale now buys high quality eggs from many of its milk producers. About 150 dozens of eggs are sold each day on its milk routes.

The milk route system has six retail and four wholesale delivery routes. About 6,000 quarts of milk are sold each day to customers in towns in the Bennington, Vermont, area; in Williamstown, North Adams, and Pittsfield, Mass.; and in Albany and Troy, N. Y. and nearby areas.

The neat white trucks that carry the Fairdale Farms, Inc., sign have a wide choice of farm products for their customers. They carry certified milk; Golden Guernsey milk; homogenized milk; pasteurized milk; ice cream; heavy, coffee, and sour cream; buttermilk; chocolate milk; cottage cheese; yogurt; butter; eggs, and tomato juice.

Bob Holden, Fairdale's manager, likes to speak of the corporation as the "farm of many families." That it is. At the present time over 60 folks, representing 18 families, are living in Fairdale's many farm houses. Fairdale, like the much-publicized family-size farm, offers opportunities and positions for the children and grandchildren of its workers. The young people take an active interest in the enterprise. Eleven of Fairdale's present employees represent the second generation serving the organization.

The future of Fairdale looks secure. With another generation being prepared to take over the reins when their time comes, Fairdale is sure to continue its unusual development. Its land includes some of the Northeast's most fertile soils. Its crop yields are about three times the county average. The milk production of Fairdale cows is 50 percent above average. Its operations compare favorably with top standards of efficiency. Its products will continue to be the customers' best food buys. Fairdale's location permits economical service to the larger nearby markets in three states. With this foundation and with the keen, intelligent management that has characterized its farming, Fairdale will become an institution, and a most unusual one, in Vermont's agriculture.
TOP RIGHT: Mrs. Prior of Randolph team is covered by Bloomer Girls (left to right) Hortense Favour, Norma Eaton, Mary McIntosh.

ABOVE: Bloomer Girl team shed old-fashioned costumes after the warm-up. Adhesive tape held glasses in place during game.

LEFT: Elsie Bowen of Randolph rivals was only casualty with the makings of a shiner received in a tumble.

BELOW: The Grandmas, averaging 49 years old and aggregating 37 grandchildren, pose with Coach Dell Wood.

by Elizabeth Barnes

GRANDMOTHERS don’t have to sit on the sidelines any longer in South Royalton. Last season they won their laurels on the basketball floor.

Like most small-town events, this game was planned to raise money. The new gym needed stage curtains and Mrs. Norma Eaton, after two benefit dances had been sponsored by her Alumni committee, conceived a new fund-raiser, a “grand” basketball game.

A grandmother herself of a few months standing, she canvassed her contemporaries for team material. First she enlisted three eligibles in her clothes dryer shop: Bertha Davis, Hortense Favour, and Florence Boyce. The chairman of the school board, Mary McIntosh, was persuaded to join them, then Emma Tenney, chief operator in the telephone exchange, and finally enough housewives to make up two teams. The average age of these amateurs was 49.

The first practices under Coach Dell Wood were painful, but continued exercise limbered up stiff muscles. The girls began having so much fun that some of the husbands recruited other grandfathers for a game. Then there were two teams challenging the surrounding country and it wasn’t until after many anxious days that outside opposition was assured by Randolph.

February 23rd was the big night. Regular fans and many seeing a game for the first time came from miles around to pack the gym to the four corners. The crowd was taken
by surprise when the well-publicized “Bloomer Gals” appeared, dressed as old-fashioned grandmothers for the warm-up. But before the whistle blew, off came the bonnets, shawls and long dresses to reveal middies adapted from hubbies’ shirts and bloomers 1920 style made by Gladys Leighton.

The friendly struggle with the dungaree-clad Van Raalte Grandmas from Randolph, aided and abetted by Referee DeCoste, was full of laughs for players and spectators. Elsie Bowen’s tumble bruised her face, but it did not keep her from finishing the second half. Lena Turner, who had the most grandchildren (11), made the first basket for South Royalton; Mrs. Tenney, Mrs. Favour and Mrs. Leighton brought the score up to eight, while Mrs. Wallace Prior made Randolph’s two points.

The local Grandpas also won over the Randolph team which had to call in two players lacking credentials. However, Herbert Patch, 74, had some to spare—nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. The entire line-up of men and women counted 110 grandchildren among them.

Other features that night were twenty handsome cakes that were auctioned off, the serving of sugar on snow with all the “fixings,” and a dance. At 1:00 A.M. the Grandmas called it a day. Later they found that with the help of husbands, children, grandchildren and friends they had raised $500 for the curtain fund. END
Nearly a hundred and twenty years ago, a group of ministers from the Troy Conference of the Methodist Church chose the small village of West Poultney (now Poultney) as the site for a new school. They advanced several reasons for their choice. For one thing, Poultney was near the geographical center of the Conference itself. For another, the townfolk were known to be generous, and could be counted on to help raise the necessary funds for buildings.

And furthermore, they reported, the town was "noted for its beauty, healthfulness, temperance, good order, and freedom from influences baneful to a school."

Poultney villagers, enthusiastic about the proposed school, helped it get off to a good start with contributions ranging from ten cents to five hundred dollars. The first session was held during 1835–36, and the year following Troy Conference Academy moved into its new $40,000 building. The school had an enrollment of 147 gentlemen and one hundred ladies, and a teaching force of seven.

Today, the old one-building academy has grown into Green Mountain Junior College with fifteen buildings, a hundred-acre campus with rolling lawns and towering maple trees. As a two-year college with an enrollment of three hundred young women and a faculty of 30, it stands in the front rank of junior colleges in the East.

The characteristic generosity of Vermonters, together with Methodist liberalism, have been major influences shaping the institution through the years. Although conscious of the importance of tradition, these forces have boldly brought about changes when they were necessary.

Between T.C.A. of 1834 and Green Mountain Junior College of 1952 lies a record of change not only in the enrollment, program, faculty and buildings, but even in the ways of teaching. As early as the 1920’s the school...
“To serve all the person in the interest of all persons.”
This aerial view of Green Mountain's tree-shaded campus shows in the center Ames Hall, the largest college dormitory, which accommodates one-hundred students as well as containing the dining hall. The landscape scene in color on page 27 was taken from Hampton, New York.

turned to “student-centered” education. Since the last decade, the college has also emphasized individual guidance. And the most recent development has been a general education studies program, required for all students.

The combined forces, too, have guided the institution through many real crises, bringing it to its present thriving condition.

As with many junior colleges today, Green Mountain’s students represent not only a wide variety of backgrounds and interests, but also of purposes. Some are taking two-year terminal programs, of liberal arts or of studies leading to vocations. Others plan to transfer to senior colleges or to professional schools. Wide variety of study programs with a carefully-administered guidance plan are distinctive features of the junior college.

The diversity of student aims, and the way Green Mountain attempts to meet them, can be seen in the experiences of Barbara Herrin, Elizabeth Long, and Barbara Rugg. All are among the 130 sophomores this year.

Barbara Herrin, a serious-mannered young woman from Ho-Ho-Kus, N. J., planned carefully for her career three years ago. After graduation this Spring, she will enter the Medical Center in New York for nurse’s training. Of the three students, she is the only “transfer.”

“Back in Ridgewood High School I had the idea I wanted to be a surgeon,” she says, smiling. “But after I had a talk with our family doctor, I decided to go into nursing instead, so I looked into junior colleges for a good pre-nursing program.”

Green Mountain and a junior college in Virginia were recommended to Barbara by an advisor at the Medical Center. But some of her fellow high school students had already gone on to Green Mountain, and, like many prospective students, the college’s Vermont setting appealed to her.

“I spent two summers at Dorset, baby-sitting for some
friends who have a summer home there," she explains. "So you see, I knew a lot about Vermont—enough to know I'd like to spend the two years here. So I put in my application for Green Mountain."

As one of the college's pre-nursing students, Barbara spends a lot of her time in the science laboratories. This year, she is also studying American literature, world civilization, and philosophy.

Even with this heavy program of humanities and sciences, she finds time for horseback riding, now her favorite sport, and tennis. Scholastically, Barbara stands high. Last year she was elected to Phi Theta Kappa, the national honor society for junior college women, and she ranks in the upper tenth of liberal arts students on campus. All this year, she served as president of the student council, an experience she feels was as valuable as her studies.

Barbara Rugg, a poised, auburn-haired young woman, came to Green Mountain from Worcester, Mass. She intended to take two years of liberal arts study here, then transfer to a teachers' college, following her father's footsteps into the teaching profession. (Mr. Rugg teaches English at Worcester's South Side High School.)

During her freshman year, however, she enjoyed a course in drama so much she decided to switch from liberal arts to a program of Dramatic Arts. Following a number of conferences with her faculty advisor and the director of

At opposite ends of the conference table are Susan J. Ellithorp and Andrew Vargish, co-instructors of a general education course called The Cultural Development of America. All Green Mountain students must take part in the general education program.
The new Green Mountain Library, occupying a key position on the College campus, provides complete facilities for recreational and reference reading. The building, designed by architect Arland A. Dirlam, was completed in 1951. Besides the book collection, it contains seminar and conference rooms, and an audiovisual room seating 150 for instruction by films. Art exhibits often are arranged in the entrance lobby. Interior views of the Library are shown on the facing and last pages of this article.

In the well-equipped Art Studio Andrew Vargish gives pointers in color application to three of the many students enrolled in art courses at the College. Green Mountain makes the claim to have granted the first B. A. degree in Vermont to women. This was in 1868 when Green Mountain was named the Ripley Female College. A famed early graduate was the successful mystery writer, Anna K. Green.
student personnel, her change of program was approved. This year, she has been studying drama, speech and costuming.

Barbara has no notions about becoming a professional actress; amateur work satisfies her needs for expression completely. Her father, who directs plays for Worcester Polytechnic Institute and organizations around the city, feels her attitude is sensible.

The fact that she no longer has a specific vocational aim does not worry Barbara.

"After graduation, I hope to work in a bank in Worcester," she says. "I worked there last Summer, and liked it fine. If I can keep up with dramatics, somehow, I'll be glad to wait and see what happens."

Along with about a third of the students at Green Mountain, Barbara is a member of the campus Y.W.C.A., easily the largest and most active group on campus. Its members explore current personal, social and religious problems, and carry on various social service projects.
In the Little Theater dressing room Sarah Vernon Hodges shows Barbara Rugg how to handle a cape for her role in "I Remember Mama." Barbara likes the theater "for fun."

G. Edgar Shattuck, biology instructor, is also Barbara Herrin's faculty advisor. Barbara at one time wanted to be a surgeon, but later, three years ago, decided instead to become a nurse.

Director of Student Personnel Norman J. Blair helps Elizabeth Long check her progress. Green Mountain has a strong guidance program; is particularly watchful during the first weeks to be sure new students have chosen the right studies. Elizabeth, one of thirty-six students who are now taking Medical Secretarial Studies, thinks a junior college best for this training.
The group definitely reflects the college’s religious background, and emphasizes lasting values.

Elizabeth Long, third of the trio, is among the thirty-six students taking Medical Secretarial studies. “Med Sec” is a popular offering, with only retailing and secretarial studies having larger enrollments. It is a field she has wanted to enter for some time.

“Mom and Dad wanted me to go to a four-year college at first,” she says, “but it didn’t make sense to me to go through four years and then go to secretarial school. So, practically from the time I decided to be a medical secretary, I thought a junior college would be best for me.”

Betsy—as she likes to be called—had been a good student at the Oxford School in Hartford, Conn., and she was accepted by several colleges in New England as well as at Green Mountain. Her reason for narrowing her college choice to Vermont was not the one entered on her application forms. She admits she was influenced by the fact that her fiance was then a student at Middlebury College.

She still felt that a two-year college program leading directly to medical secretarial work was what she wanted to take, and decided to come to Green Mountain. Somewhat reluctantly, her parents consented. Today, she says, they feel she made the correct choice.

Betsy feels that in her medical secretarial program she is acquiring skills that will always be in demand. She has heard that the need for medical secretaries is increasing, and the turnover is high. Last year, as part of her training, she worked at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, and has been offered a job after graduation this Spring.

Her program is pretty well divided between secretarial studies and sciences. She has learned to make blood counts, give basal metabolism tests, and perform routine laboratory work. At the same time, she has kept an interest in writing, and this year is editor of “Peaks,” the college yearbook.

All three girls feel their junior college programs fitted their aims perfectly. Best of all, perhaps, as graduation approaches, they have acquired a certain confidence in their abilities and with it, a restlessness to take up new challenges.

“I guess you could say we’re ready,” one of them summed up.

Dr. Howard C. Ackley, the president of Green Mountain since 1946, meets some students in his home on the campus.
Thirty below freezing! It was inconceivable until one stepped out into it at midnight, and the first shock of that clear, still air took away the breath as a plunge into sea-water does. A walrus sitting on a woolpack was our host in his sleigh... The night was as keen as the edge of a newly-ground sword... The horses were in a hurry to get home... But for the jingle of the sleigh-bells the ride might have taken place in a dream, for there was no sound of hoofs upon the snow, the runners sighed a little now and again as they glided over an inequality, and all the sheeted hills round about were as dumb as death. Only the Connecticut River kept up its heart and a lane of black water through the packed ice; we could hear the stream worrying round the heels of its small bergs. Elsewhere there was nothing but snow under the moon... With these words Rudyard Kipling recorded his arrival in Vermont, on a February evening in 1892. He was then a young man of only twenty-six, but already famous for his stories and poems of British India. A few weeks earlier he had married in London an American girl, Caroline Balestier, the sister of a friend and literary collaborator, Wolcott Balestier, who had died suddenly in Dresden the previous December. The Kiplings were on the first leg of their wedding journey which was planned to take them around the world. A visit to Mrs. Kipling's folks was naturally included in the itinerary. The Balestiers were summer residents of Vermont who later struck root there. Mrs. Kipling's grandmother had a house called Beechwood a few miles north of Brattleboro; her brother, Beatty Balestier, lived on a farm called Maplewood, adjoining his grandmother's place. This winter visit to his American in-laws proved to be a momentous event in Kipling's life, for during this time the newlyweds acquired a pasture of some eleven and a half acres on which they later built their first home. The tract adjoined Maplewood and Beechwood; it was in the town of Dummerston just over the Brattleboro town-line, which formed its southern boundary.

By the end of March the Kiplings were off on their round-the-world tour again. They got as far as Japan, only to find that their bank was suspending payments, and thereupon retraced their footsteps across the Pacific and across Canada and back to Vermont again. During the summer of 1892 they began to make plans for building a house on their recently-acquired land. Meanwhile, however, they rented a small house called Bliss Cottage, a half a mile or so south of the site of their projected home. It was here that they spent their first year in America, here that their first child, Josephine, was born in December, 1892, and here that the Jungle Books began to be written. Kipling himself has stated that he was "extraordinarily and self-centredly content" at Bliss Cottage. During the winter of 1892-1893 work was progressing on the new house, for which Henry Rutgers Marshall had drawn the plans. In the spring the carpenters arrived, and by the
early autumn of 1893 the Kiplings, now a family of three, were able to move in. They called the place Naulakha, after the fabulous Indian jewel described in the novel of the same name written by Kipling and Wolcott Balestier. Naulakha was their home for three more years, until late August 1896.

These four years spent in Vermont were important ones in Kipling’s life and in his creative development. The books that he wrote here—which include the two *Jungle Books, Captains Courageous*, many of the poems of *The Seven Seas* and the short stories of *The Day’s Work*—are evidence that Kipling, like many others before and since, found that Vermont was a good place to write in. In an “Appeal” which concludes the definitive edition of his collected verse Kipling entreats his readers to “seek not to question other than the books I leave behind.” Questioning these books, the reader will, indeed, find a pleasant, and still highly readable, record of Kipling’s Vermont years. He will find, for example, in the volume entitled *Letters of Travel*, essays called “In Sight of Monadnock” (1892), “On One Side Only” (1892) and “Leaves from a Winter Notebook” (1894); and in *Something of Myself for My Friends Known and Unknown*, the autobiography written by Kipling shortly before his death, a chapter devoted to the years at Bliss Cottage and at Naulakha. To these should be added the short story “A Walking Delegate” (1894), included in the volume *The Day’s Work*, and the poem “Pan in Vermont” (1893), to be found in *Collected Verse*. The visitor to Vermont, planning to include Naulakha in his itinerary, might well note these titles as preparatory reading. They will not only add to the enjoyment of the visit, but will provide good retrospective browsing as well. Better still, the visitor might well linger a bit longer in the vicinity, and read the books on the spot, close to the landscapes and the still-extant landmarks which they describe.

If you are planning to visit Naulakha, and wish to see Vermont as Kipling saw it, you should, by rights, leave your car in town and set forth with a horse and buggy. But as livery-stables are now extinct in Brattleboro, you will have to take things as they are and make the necessary adjustments in your imagination. Your starting-point will be the Wells Fountain, at the northern end of Main Street, in front of what must now be known as “the old” High School. The Wells Fountain, erected in 1890, was really a place to water your horses in Kipling’s day, but now it is pretty well overshadowed by filling-stations of another sort. Proceeding north out of Main Street along Route 5, past the Common on the left and the former Richards Bradley estate on the right, you will soon cross the bridge which spans the West River near its junction with the Connecticut.

“Kin you keep your feet through the West River Bridge,” says one of Kipling’s horse-characters, “with the narrower-gage
drink, before turning into the road that winds its way up along Waite Brook until it emerges at the top of the hill near the site of the Bliss Farm.

A country-place now called “Sanda-nona” has replaced the old Bliss Farm, but Bliss Cottage, the story-and-a-half hired man’s house where Kipling spent his first year in Vermont, has survived. It has been somewhat remodeled and has been moved a few hundred yards to the east of its original site, so that it now stands on the right-hand side of the road. Wantastiquet Mountain, across the Connecticut in New Hampshire, still looms on the eastern horizon, and in the distance, to the south, the spires of Main Street are visible. Wantastiquet, incidentally, was one of those words that “shuttled in and out” of Kipling’s imagination: it crops up, unexpectedly but appropriately, in an Emersonian parody included among the “Muse among the Motors” verses which Kipling wrote long after he had returned to England, when the age of the automobile had arrived. But, to return to the horse and buggy pace, you will leave Bliss Cottage behind, continue past Beechwood, Grandmother Balestier’s house, now shorn of its Victorian appendages, and then, just after you cross the Brattleboro-Dummerston town-line, you will see Naulakha up on the hillside to your left. The two stone gate-posts, marking the entrance to the place, are nearly opposite the site of Maplewood, where Beatty Balestier once lived.

Naulakha has changed very little since Kipling lived there. The house itself appears today much as it does in the photographs taken in the 1890’s, the differences are mainly in the surrounding grounds. The house is no longer set in a bare pasture, but nestles more securely among the sheltering trees and shrubs. The driveway winds up through pines and birches which were mere bushes in Kipling’s day. Naulakha is built against the hillside, facing east, with Mount Monadnock, “like a giant thumb-nail pointing heavenward,” just visible on the horizon. Kipling called the house his ship, with the kitchen and furnace at the stern, and his own study at the bow pointing south. The rooms all face east and are entered from corridors along the western side, where the main entrance is also to be found. It is a house with a view—and with “picture windows,” although the term had not yet become fashionable when the place was built.

The inside of the house is not, of course, just as the Kiplings left it. The main part of the furnishings and the more personal belongings were removed before they sold the house in 1903. A few “Kipling pieces,” however, still remain at Naulakha. In the study some of his furniture is left. In the same room are plaster statuettes of Bagheera and Grey Brother which were presented to the author of the Jungle Books by Joel Chandler Harris, the author of the Uncle Remus stories. On the fireplace is the inscription that Kipling’s father placed there: The night cometh when no man can work. In other parts of the house there are India print hangings and wood-carvings that recall John Lockwood Kipling’s long connection with the Lahore School of Art in India. One of the later residents of Naulakha was an engineer whose profession took him into many parts of the Orient, so that objects brought home from his own travels in turn found their place at Naulakha—continuing the Kipling tradition of joining East and West. Thus the house has changed over the years—as any house that is lived in must—but one feels that although it may not have looked exactly as it does now when Kipling lived here, it might have been like this.

“Beechwood,” the Balestier homestead as it appears today, lies near Naulakha.

Waite Farm as it is today. Waite Post Office, which existed for just two years, was Kipling’s address.
The study opens on to a broad verandah, which in turn leads into a flower garden. Beyond this is the "long walk," like a great open-air promenade deck, extending to a summer-house at the southern extremity of the estate. Building Naulakha and laying out the grounds, Kipling wrote, gave him a "life long taste for playing with timber, stone, concrete and such delightful things." He wrote, too, of his adventures with a windmill, which pumped insufficient water, and which was finally "hitched on two yoke of bullocks," and overthrown "as it might have been the Vendôme Column." One of his surviving letters, written to a pump manufacturer, recounts his tribulations with gasoline engines. Other letters, written to a Boston nurseryman, request hollyhocks, peonies, rosebushes and strawberry plants—with due warning that they must be able to withstand "the rigors of our northern climate." Already, at Naulakha, Kipling was learning that "the Glory of the Garden lies in more than meets the eye," as he later wrote in a much-quoted poem. In other poems he wrote of the wild flowers in the Vermont woods—of the "Northern blood-root, green against the draggled drift, faint and frail but first," and of "the mayflower 'neath her snow."

It is not surprising to find that a man who described with such skill the animals of the East should also observe the animals of the West: the woodchuck down in the field, the red squirrels among the beeches and the hickories, and the partridges eating checkerberries on the outskirts of the wood. Kipling learned to identify the tracks of fox and deer in the snow, and to recognize the sorrowful cry of "br'er coon" at night. Although these animals of the American forest are casually mentioned in Kipling's essays, it was the horses, who "were an integral part of our lives," that provided the subject of a whole story, called "A Walking Delegate." This fable is still good reading, especially good for reading aloud. The setting is a pasture near Naulakha: "half of it is pine and hemlock and spruce, with sumac and little juniper bushes, and the other half is gray rock and boulder and moss, with green streaks of brake and swamp..." The conversation among the horses gathered there for Sunday afternoon salting-time, copies the words and the phrases that Kipling's keen ear recorded during his own walks and rides about the hillsides and pastures near his home. "You look consider'ble bet up. 'Guess you'd better cramp her up under them pines, an' cool off a piece." "Can't say as I like top-buggies," says Rick, "they don't balance good." Or again, as

"A Walking Delegate," Kipling often caught the flavor of Vermont speech and the spirit of Vermont. Yet he was never wholly at home there. Like so many other children born in some outpost of the Empire, he had learned "to call old England 'home'." It is, in fact, worth noting that the poem from which these words are quoted, "The Native-Born," was written in 1894, the same year as "A Walking Delegate." A wistful longing for England never left Kipling, although—or perhaps because—he roamed the seven seas. Then, too, there was much twisting of the Lion's tail during the years he lived in America, notably in connection with the Venezuela boundary dispute. There were also minor annoyances, like curious tourists, village gossips and indiscreet reporters. Finally there was the tragi-comic quarrel with his brother-in-law, which led to an unpleasant and widely-publicized lawsuit, and which poisoned Naulakha for him. In September 1896 the Kiplings and their two American-born little daughters left for "home" and never returned to their "house" in Vermont.

It is impossible now to know whether or not they intended, at the time, to make this a final departure. During their next visit to the United States, in 1899, Kipling fell seriously ill in New York and at the same time his daughter Josephine died at the age of six. This was the child who had been born at Bliss Cottage, who

Bliss Cottage, the Kipling home while Naulakha was building, then stood where this picture was taken.

Brattleboro and the West River setback (Retreat Meadows) looking south from a hillside back of Waite Farm. Wantastiquet Mountain rises to the left.
Waite Farm, seen from a nearby hillside, lies in the fertile Connecticut River valley. U.S. Route Five runs between the rows of maple trees in the middle distance. The north shoulder of Wantastiquet Mountain in New Hampshire rises behind. Kipling liked the mountain name and years later used it in his "Muse Among the Motors." Across the fields from Waite, now the Thomas Dairy Farm, Kipling had once hoped to have a railway stop established.

At this desk, then located at Bliss Cottage where the Kiplings spent their first Vermont year he began in 1892, to write the "Jungle Books." On the rack to the right in this corner of Naulakha's livingroom, are Kipling's golf clubs. Many of the furnishings and personal belongings the Kiplings had were removed before Naulakha was sold in 1905.

A broad verandah leads to the flower gardens which Kipling "with a 'life long taste for playing with timber, stone, concrete and such delightful things,' laid out himself. Directly to the east Mount Monadnock is just visible "like a giant thumb-nail pointing heavenward."

Kipling loved and wrote of Vermont's wild flowers.
Kipling's father placed this Bible verse:
"The Night Cometh When No Man Can Work." Joel Chandler Harris presented to Kipling the statuettes of Grey Brother & Bagheera which stand on the mantle.

had run bare-foot on the garden paths at Naulakha and played in the woods there with her father. His grief has found expression in the poem called "Merrow Down," where only "the silence and the sun remain." "Much of the beloved Cousin Ruddy of our childhood died with Josephine," Angela Thirkell has written in a book of reminiscences, "and I feel that I have never seen him as a real person since that year." With Josephine gone, Naulakha could never be the same.

The visitor to Naulakha today will, then, find many reminders of Kipling's residence there, and in the books Kipling left behind may learn of the joys and sorrows he experienced there. In 1935, the year before his death, Kipling looked back over forty years to this Vermont house that had once been his. He recalled, among other things, an excursion up the flanks of Wantastiquet, the guardian mountain across the river. "Looking over sweeps of emptiness," he wrote, "we saw our 'Naulakha' riding on its hillside like a boat on the flank of a far wave."

A farm woman seeing the strangers, greeted them with the words: "Be ye the new lights 'crost the valley yonder? Ye don't know what a comfort they've been to me this winter. Ye aren't ever goin' to shroud 'em up—or be ye?" So, Kipling adds, "as long as we lived there, that broad side of 'Naulakha' which looked her-ward was always nakedly lit."

Another side of Kipling's study. In this room he finished the "Jungle Books," wrote "Captains Courageous" and many poems and short stories. The study opens to a broad porch leading to the flower gardens, which were designed by Kipling.
At the Sign of the Quill

A Department of Literary Comment

By Arthur Wallace Peach

The Eternal Quest

Across many a year the serene and pleasant voice behind the college teacher's desk is as clear to me as in that far yesterday—"In the end the thinking man faces this final challenge: he must make his peace with nature, with men, and with his God." Man seems to have made headway in making his peace with nature—although he will scamper for what he thinks is safe shelter when lightning begins to dance around—and he is, let us hope, in the present conception at the heart of the United Nations, nearer than we think to making his peace with men. As for the last phase, some of the great literature of the world deals with his search for the peace that passes understanding, and even in this confused, somewhat cynical and skeptical day, we find, now and then, the sincere and moving story of one individual journey toward that peace.

A "faith to live by" is an ancient cry and a persistent need for most of us, but many books that tell the story of such a search do not seem to me to have the touch of reality, the practical values that go with daily living and the facing of daily problems. Here in Vermont the mystical sense has been somewhat dimmed, I would guess, by the immediate necessities of generations of contending with forces that could not be dreamed away. Be that as it may, a Vermont writer has written a sincere book on the theme that I have been sketching.

She was frankly somewhat in doubt about Vermont when she came to the state—particularly about the winters—and she was guilty of remarking that one reason for the shortage of string in the United States at one time was the habit of our Vermont housewives in corralling bits of string in the immortal balls of our thrifty forebears. But she saw the light, and being intelligent, became in every sense a converted Vermonter and not a backslider, as oftens happens in the case of the unintelligent. Those of us who fortunately came to know her well discovered only belatedly that she had been a famous foreign correspondent, that she had interviewed Mussolini, had known as a friend the great Turkish leader, Kemal. Only when we found on our own initiative the autographed photographs of these men in her work-room, did we realize that our "converted Vermonter" was the widely known correspondent, Gladys Baker, to whom Europe had been a familiar haunt.

The book I am reviewing very informally is the story of her girlhood days in the deep South, her years as a newspaper woman, then as a foreign correspondent, and the tragic and courageous years since. The underlying theme, however, gives the book not only a distinguished quality, an aura of underlying undertones, but also its lasting significance, for it is the story of a search for a "Voice that is not stilled," the search for a faith that would answer a need as ancient as man and as immediate as this moment.

This particular theme, I hasten to say, is not labored. The chapters dealing with her youthful days, her newspaper life, the exciting and superlatively entertaining experiences in Europe with the great and near-great are vividly written. The style is not complex, but represents journalistic writing at its best—the style that seeks action, color, the brisk phrase that tags a man or an idea definitely without elaboration in glued on word after word; and the chapters as alive and alert...

Of these chapters, I commend to our Vermont readers two: "Southerner into a Damnyankee" and "Vermont—The Enchanted Land." These two chapters deserve a Vermonter's praise, as he cannot praise much pseudo I-love-Vermont scribbling.

Part II of the book is moving and appealing in a deeper way, for there is the story of death faced as few face it—as each of us must face it soon or late and as some of us have. On every page, however, there is the quality that gives the book its profound vitality—the shining courage even in the darkest hours, and through the pages the glimmer of the steadfast search for the final and satisfying faith to which I have referred in an earlier paragraph.

From an Address before the Brooklyn Society of Vermonters, March 27, 1909, by Wendell Phillips Stafford
To those interested merely in a grace­fully, brightly written story of a dramatic and colorful life, to those who wish to follow the path of suffering and pain and long seeking toward an inner peace, I commend the book. The author is Mrs. Roy Leonard Patrick, wife of one of the outstanding business leaders of the State; and here is the book with the title that sums up the book’s inner meaning and significance:

I Had to Know by Gladys Baker.

What’s the Use of Reading, Anyhow?

I knew nothing about him, other than he was the man I was to see. I found him comfortably seated in the immortal posture of the comfortable man—in an easy chair with his feet lifted on a foot­stool. His eyes were keen, his face pleasant. He had been reading, and books were all over the room—books for reading, not for the purpose of suggesting some precious culture. No man who reads widely has a one-rut mind in a country where one-rut minds seem to be on the increase.

Our business over, I commented on the book he was reading—a rousing “western,” which I had read. Any man who has an inner desire to shoot one of his neighbors or some more prominent citizen but does not dare to can work off that inner compulsion by reading a “westerner” where the villain dies vilely as he ought to—a sort of vicarious killing that is quite comforting.

“Yes,” he answered my question, “I read about everything—tossing away what does not interest me. Last night, I spent a few days with an explorer in Africa; during the week, I have been to the West Indies, and helped the Crusaders raise hob with Saladin; then I soared too high with Santayana in his Life of Reason, and fell plunk out of the sky into the life of a politician who put his party before his country. Yep, I like to read.”

He grew serious. ‘Ever stop to think? Physically, we have to live out our lives in narrow limits. Most people do not go, probably, more than a hundred miles from their homes, except once in a while—business, home duties, a thousand obligations keep us close; but, man, in the world of ideas—you can go anywhere; and I sure travel—in books!’

On leaving the house, I suggested to his wife what I neglected to tell him—that I should like to have him drop into my office when he was in Montpelier. Her answer was jarring—“He would like to, I know, but you see he has not walked for ten years.”

I have sketched the incident just as it occurred, and my report of what he said is verbatim, for I have not forgotten it and never shall; it contains the one and only wise philosophy of reading that I know.

The incident came to mind as I was pondering the generous lists of books on “Vermont Bookshelves” that readers of Vermont Life have been sending me from a dozen states, not including Vermont. In the last two issues I have mentioned the books on two complete lists. My own theory that I had the best list as a result of years of reading Vermont books is being badly bumped. Suppose you take a look at this super­b list, kindly sent to me by G. Murray Campbell, vice presid­ent of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company. I give his home address, using it without his permission, but it is a Vermontish trait to share good things—684 Pine St., Winnetka, Ill. Some of you may wish to compare notes and put each other on the track of favorite books, for a good thing shared is doubly good. Here’s the list:


That list comes pretty close to sum­ming up Vermont, past and present. If in doubt what book to read, just jump into the list anywhere; and if your IQ is not on the straight radio and television level, you are on the way to adventures of the mind and some ultimate wisdom. If “too busy,” that poor excuse of those who do not know that every day has a margin that can be used, save the list for your summer reading—in Vermont. If you cannot secure some of the books, just let me know. Vermont Life is intended to be of service to our readers.

“Is Vermont Humor Really Funny?”

I am suspicious of the above query which comes in a letter from a southern state. Possibly a Democrat is musing on the fact that Vermont year in and year out votes a Republican ticket, possibly he—or it may be a she—is casting a fly over me to see if I will rise to it, if so, I promptly do so, for I think Vermonters have a sense of humor that is distinctly theirs—even if it is not funny to others!

First of all, your true Vermont uses two types of jokes or stories—a quick­breaker and a slow-breaker; and if you don’t know what I mean, listen the next time you are in Vermont; but keep away from the few sophisticated places where you may hear variations of the “spooky” type of humor and wit you find in The New Yorker—the Vermont variations of such humor are not improvements on the original. Then, you do find a definite understatement of facts—possibly the outstanding characteristic. Also, your real Vermont, I am glad to say, never seems to see anything amusing in other people’s misfortunes; he may be silent in the face of them, but he does not make them the source of a joke. There may be a minor touch to which not even the subject objects: “Bill’s nose looks thataway ’cause his mother weaned him on cranberry sass”—a picture in one sentence.

Perhaps the best answer to the query above is to steal a few samples from the Folklore Department of the Vermont Quarterly, published by the Vermont Historical Society. This department is edited by Prof. Leon W. Dean of the University of Vermont; he and the members of his Green Mountain Folklore Society—anyone interested can join—collect these tales, and they are genuine, not faked dreamed up by some radio comic and his gag-men.

Here are a few:

1. An elderly native of Buck Hollow, just outside of Fairfield, is talking to a visitor. It’s mid-winter and the drifts are

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EVERY DAY during the spring and summer months a truck from one of Vermont’s six State hatcheries is on the road with a tankful of lively trout or a load of cans, stocking lakes and streams. The sight of one of these trucks sets up a chain reaction of cheer and excitement along its route—which is secret and unpredictable—and its reception is reflected on the faces of its crew. A hatchery truck outward bound is as cheerful a sight as an escaping bride and groom.

Sometimes the fish on the truck are small fry, sometimes fingerlings, sometimes of legal size, sometimes even of several pounds; and their planting ends a cycle of careful breeding that begins, each year in the fall, when nature’s process is interrupted by the hatchery staffs.

If this interruption did not take place, the fish would work upstream and spawn. The female, fanning the gravel, would work out a pocket in the stream bed. Over this pocket she and the male, side by side, would hold...
Left: Vermont Fish Hatcheries aid nature in restocking the state’s streams and lakes with game fish. This scrappy rainbow trout, weighed for the proud angler by Game Warden Alfred Gosselin, was taken near the falls of the Barton River at Orleans. Three State and one Federal hatcheries raise rainbows, other trout and salmon. This rainbow weighed better than three pounds.

steady in the current, the female laying a few eggs, the male throwing milt. Predatory wild life, dry spells, cloudbursts, or simply the failure of milt to reach or fertilize some of the eggs, would prevent from ninety-five to ninety-seven percent of the eggs from reaching mature fish size. The procedure followed by the hatcheries reduces this mortality to twenty-five percent or better.

The first step in this procedure, in Vermont, takes place in October and November, when brown trout, leaving Lake Memphremagog at North Derby, swim the John’s River, which is really a small stream, to spawn. At about the same time salmon leave the Lake and work up the Clyde River at Newport. Salmon always use the Clyde, brown trout always the John’s. As the salmon work upstream they are caught by the hatchery crews in seines; the browns, in the smaller river, are caught in an efficient stationary trap. Anywhere from a few hundred to over a thousand brown trout are caught each season, yielding from around 900,000 to 3,000,000 eggs—and the browns appear to be on the increase. The salmon catch is smaller, yielding from around 40,000 to 265,000 eggs.

These eggs are taken by a process called “stripping.” The captured fish is held over a bowl by a man wearing woolen mittens, which will hold the fish without injuring its delicate, mucous-protected skin. The man slides a mitten hand along the fish’s abdomen and presses the eggs—or milt, if the fish is a male—into the bowl. The bowl is made of wood because wood resists temperature changes better than metal. Now in each egg there is an air cell, or vacuum sack, with a tube extending to the egg’s wall. As soon as the egg leaves the fish this cell begins to draw. It will draw air or water if milt is not within reach; and by stripping eggs and milt into the same bowl only a small percentage of eggs remain unfertilized.

When first stripped into the bowl, the eggs form a sticky mass. Within about twenty minutes fertilization is complete and the eggs have separated. At this point they are “water hardened” by pouring water into the bowls and spilling away the milt. The water hardened eggs are then poured into twelve quart cans of water and taken to the nearby Morgan Hatchery, where they are spread on screen-bottomed trays in long rectangular troughs of running water. They must be in place on these trays within twelve hours after stripping.

What about the fish, though, after the eggs and milt are taken? Well, they are suffering from shock, and they are put in big wooden pens under water for the night to rest. At first they tend to lie on their sides; but they recover, straighten, and are soon set free for another year. They never learn, or perhaps they have no choice: they return the following fall, the salmon to the Clyde, the browns to the John’s, and are stripped again. Occasionally a fish is recognized either because of some scar or deformity or because it has been tagged.

After about four weeks in the Morgan Hatchery, the eggs have become “eyed”; that is to say, two dark spots, the eyes of the embryo, have appeared in each egg. The eggs can now be safely moved again. But first they are “shocked” (it is their turn now) by being put in pans and having water poured on them to agitate them and turn the “blanks,” the unfertilized eggs, white. The eggs are put back into the troughs; the dead eggs are picked out one at a time with a syringe, and the eggs are ready for shipment to other hatcheries. They are shipped in cases called “egg packs,” cases about eighteen inches square which contain trays. Wet moss is laid around the sides of each tray; wet cheese cloth is laid in; and the eggs are placed on the cheese cloth, which is folded over them.
Dry moss is packed around the trays for insulation and ice is sometimes placed on top of the packs to keep the trays wet and cold. When packed and iced like this the eggs may be kept safely for perhaps ten days during distribution.

All the salmon eggs are shipped to the St. Johnsbury Hatchery, a Federal hatchery run with State aid, which specializes in salmon. The State, by the way, is building a salmon rearing station of its own at Newark.

Brown trout are raised in the hatcheries at Bennington, Canaan, and Roxbury. But the State's supply of brown trout eggs exceeds its requirements, and the surplus is traded for salmon, rainbow, and lake trout eggs with hatcheries in northeastern states and Canada. Lake trout are the specialty of the Salisbury Hatchery, but rainbows are raised there too; and rainbows are raised in the Bennington, Roxbury, and St. Johnsbury Hatcheries, and in the Federal hatchery at Holden.

Brook trout are raised at five Vermont and the Federal hatchery at York Pond, Berlin, New Hampshire, is run with the cooperation of Vermont and New Hampshire. It strips its own brook trout and produces upward of fourteen million eggs a year. The York Pond Hatchery does not, however, supply all Vermont's need for brook trout eggs. The need is large; brook trout are raised in five State hatcheries and one Federal: Bennington, Canaan, Holden, Roxbury, Salisbury, and more recently in the Morgan Hatchery. Shortages in brook trout eggs are made up by purchases from hatcheries in other eastern states, including Pennsylvania.

A force of about twenty-two men run Vermont's six hatcheries, including two men in cooperating Federal hatcheries. Their duties extend to the making of small repairs and the upkeep of hatchery grounds. Game wardens help in stocking streams and lakes; and extra hands are hired when the salmon and browns are netted and stripped in the fall.

When shortages and surpluses of the various eggs have been canceled out and the needs of the hatcheries met, the eggs are laid again on screen-bottomed trays in troughs of running water. In the Roxbury Hatchery, which is representative, these troughs are made of cypress planking and are painted with aluminum inside and out. Paint containing lead kills the fish; and copper piping tends to kill them, so steel and iron piping are used. For thirty or thirty-five days the eyed eggs mature on the trays while the hatchery staff keeps picking them over and over with syringes to eliminate every white egg that appears. If these white, dead eggs are not re-
moved they will acquire a fungus which will spread to the fertile eggs, keep oxygen from reaching them, and kill the embryos.

After this period of a month or more the eggs begin to hatch. As they hatch, the fry pass down through the screens and lie on the bottom of the troughs—"sac fry," they are called because a sac is attached to each little abdomen, a sac which contains a month's food supply. At the end of that first month the sacs are gone and the tiny fish, like hayseeds on the clean, aluminum-painted bottoms of the troughs, begin to take food by mouth. They are fed beef hearts ground very fine and are given five feedings in each eight hour day. They show their character from the start—they dart for the tiny meat particles as they sink—they do not like to take them off the bottom, and they prefer to feed at the head of the trough, where the water runs in. Later the fry are fed on beef liver and the number of feedings is reduced; but hearts can be ground into smaller solid particles and are best for the first feedings.

Soon the growing fry crowd the troughs and have to be thinned out, or "spread," into other troughs. Finally all the hatchery's troughs are filled—there are about seventy-five. By then it is March or April, and the hatchery trucks, with loads of fish, begin those wonderfully cheerful excursions into the countryside. The smallest fish are planted highest in the streams—in planting, fish of each size are placed where they would naturally be found.

By September the Vermont hatcheries have planted all the fish they cannot winter over in the ponds and raceways that supplement its troughs. The troughs must be empty, now, for repairs and painting before receiving the next season's supply of eggs. In one pond, fish not yet a year old and from three to five inches long are placed. Another pond contains fish from five to eight inches long. If the variation in size is excessive, the larger fish tend to eat the smaller. The different species are kept in different ponds and raceways, except in the largest pond, where trout of the three species, from eight inches up to many pounds, live peacefully together, unafraid of the visitors who—always welcome—stare and gasp on sunny summer days.

But the fish that cause the largest gasps are not the large trout, or the albino salmon, or the freaks in the glass tank in the main hatchery; they are the sturgeons—scavengers four feet or so in length and armored with thick scales. These sturgeons, one to a pond, cruise majestically along the bottom, while dirt stirred by their passing lifts away and flows over the screened dams.

But some big trout, twelve pounds or more, have been planted in Vermont rivers by the cheerful crews of its hatchery trucks, and they are there right now—if you can catch them.
ERIC HODGINS has written a hilarious and, to me, slightly annoying saga of a certain Mr. Blandings who had a dream of a house in the country, and who went through a series of frustrations and mischances, costly to the point of financial ruin before his dream was realized. The source of my annoyance lay in the conviction that Mr. Blandings' tribulations were spread on just a bit too thick, and that actually, no one could be quite so gullible and naive as the book made him appear.

But perhaps I am in no position to pass judgment, for long long ago my first independent venture as a young man trying to get ahead in the world, was to buy a woebegone wreck of a house and fix it up for resale. With that operation a modestly successful thing in the past, I find it difficult today to pass a deserted house without making a mental appraisal of its economic and aesthetic potentialities.

One of my adventures with aged houses involved the rehabilitation of an entire village. Actually, this is not as impressive as it sounds for the village comprised only about a dozen buildings. For the past twenty years we have lived comfortably and happily in one of the houses we built over in the once deserted village of Landgrove.

Vermont has been, and to a great extent still is, a happy hunting ground for the man who is searching for the grey and weather beaten farmhouse standing snugly in the lee of a New England hillside amidst its lilacs and maples, symbolizing for him peace and contentment and happy childhood memories.

In Vermont's southern counties, twenty years of infiltration from the south, mostly by professional people in search of summer homes, has lessened the chance of finding the ideal home complete with crystal clear trout brook, magnificent view, and bargain price tag. But there are still many lovely places to be had, and in the northern part of the state, the possibilities are great.

We will assume that you have made the search and that you have found the place. Either your enthusiasm was such that you closed the deal and are now confronted with the problem of making the place habitable, or you are hesitating in the final step undecided as to whether or not the old buildings can be made livable and comfortable, at least at a price you can afford to pay.
In many instances, the first question to be settled is, "Can the old house be saved, or would it be cheaper to tear it down and start from scratch?" On this question you will get conflicting opinions. Your neighbor who has just completed the first stages of rehabilitating his early nineteenth century wreck (the final stages never seem to arrive, and that is a good thing too) is apt to put the empty space where his bank roll once was and tell you that you had better tear the thing down. And unless you cut him off quickly he will go into a long and detailed account of how many feet or inches one corner was down, how far the walls were off plumb, how many joists were rotted when the removed planking revealed their condition, and so forth and so on for as long as his breath lasts.

On the other hand, another neighbor who has had experience in fixing up old houses may counsel you to go ahead and remodel the existing structure, pointing out that in so doing you will not only save money but end up with a dwelling having a charm and beauty no new building could lay claim to.

To further confuse the issue it is quite possible that both of your advisors are right. The first answer, to tear it down and start from scratch, is probably the correct one if the house is in the last stages of deterioration, and is certainly correct, if you fall into hands such as those which guided Mr. Blandings' destinies.

The second answer, to fix it up, is certain to be the correct one if your advisor made a careful examination of the building and knew what he was doing when he did it, provided that the proper person can be found to take charge of the work (this person may be the owner himself), and provided further that the requirements of the owner are within the realm of reasonableness. If perfection is required, if every line must be plumb or level and every opening square, then the remodeling had best be forgotten.

I will say that in general, in Vermont, it is more economical to fix up an old house than it is to build a new one, assuming that approximately the same facilities and space are to be provided in each instance. It is true that many workmen dislike to work over old materials, for it can be a dirty and puttering business, and remodeling and restoration often require different and more ingenious techniques than new construction.

But when you start with an old house, even if it seems when finished that most of the building has been replaced, with new roof, siding, floors, plumbing and so forth, you avoid the cost of excavating, of building the frame, of grading and planting and landscaping. All of these are expensive and necessary features of new construction.

In fixing up an old house it is possible too for the owner, once the place is reasonably sound and weather tight, to do much of the interior finishing work himself. With a new house this is not so feasible. Of course, it may be true that your family can get along nicely with half the room the old house will afford when it is all fixed up. In this case, you could probably build a much smaller house cheaper than you could fix up the old, but who would claim that a coopet up modernistic box can compare in charm and livability with a gracious and spacious Vermont farm homestead?

Now to practical and specific details. First, what are the various types of construction encountered in old houses? Just as builders today have standardized construction, the oldtimers followed accepted methods of building, and most Vermont farmhouses built before 1850 conform to a general type, the timber-framed house. If you have ever stood inside a haybarn and looked up through the framework of heavy handhewn timbers, you have an idea of this type of structure. In a timber-framed house, heavy sills, usually eight by eights, rest on the foundation walls. The floor area above is so divided that the floor joists being spiked to these uprights, extended from the foundation to the eaves, the second story proved uneconomic if there are serious faults in the walls or foundations.

After 1850 "balloon type" construction became the general rule. In this type the familiar sawed framing lumber of today came into use, "two by fours," "two by eights," and similar dimensions. The "studs," or uprights, extended from the foundation to the eaves, the second story floor joists being spiked to these uprights. This method had serious shortcomings, and soon gave way to the "platform" type in use in contemporary frame houses.

There were inumerable variations on these general types, and few old Vermont houses fail to deviate from the general pattern in one respect or another. There are "plank" houses with outside walls of vertical planks covered by boards running horizontally, others with outside walls of planks laced on their side, resulting in walls of solid wood six or eight inches thick. A few timber-framed houses boast of walls in which the space between the studs is filled with brick and mortar.

But to get on with your house, chances are nine out of ten it is timber-framed construction, and can be economically repaired. Because the weight is carried by the heavy frame, almost any partition may be removed without damaging the strength of the floors or the structure itself. In this type of house there is almost no type of damage that cannot be economically repaired, provided always that it is not required that every floor be level and every wall or partition plumb. All that is required is to have some practical

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rule of thumb workman in charge and your local country craftsman, who is likely to be a combination of carpenter and mason, is just the man for the job. Intelligent decisions have to be made as to what needs doing and what need not be done. In most instances you can be guided by the judgment of your builder, remembering that if you insist on standards set by the suburban homes of Scarsdale or the apartment dwellings of Park Avenue you will end up dissatisfied with the work done and with a great deal of unnecessary expense.

Entire sills, or portions of sills, can be replaced without extravagant expense. If the studs are found to have deteriorated too, the damage is likely to have occurred only at the point of contact with the old sill, and may be repaired by merely laying in a short piece of two by four long enough to reach from the sound portion of the stud to the sill, and spiking it firmly in place. If the sleepers are sound, floors can be strengthened by spiking pieces of two by four into the sleeper and against the floor, and by inserting new joists between the old ones. If the sleepers are gone beyond repair, it is a more serious problem, but by no means insurmountable. If there is sufficient headroom in the basement, "jury" sleepers can be placed directly under the old ones, and supported by posts. Basement posts must have solid footing, preferably concrete or a large stone firmly settled in the earth. Care should be taken too that the base of the post is protected against moisture.

If the roof has been neglected, water may have damaged the rafters, the tops of the posts, or the "plates" (the heavy timbers supported by the corner posts and comprising the frame at the roof line). Any of this damage may be repaired, even if it appears quite extensive.

The next place to look for trouble—and if it's an old house, you are almost sure to find it—is in the chimneys. This is one point where it will not pay to temporize. Many of the old chimneys were built with only one course of brick, and tile flues were unknown. Every unlined chimney is a potential fire hazard, and time, expense, and peace of mind will be saved if questionable ones are replaced at the beginning. When rebuilding, get all the flues you can into one chimney, and by all means consider a fireplace. Try to arrange the location of the chimney so that it will serve the furnace and include a fireplace, and carry the flue for the kitchen stove as well.

A country house does not need to be fancy, and it is foolish to spend money for details which contribute only to elegant finish, and not at all to comfort and practicability. For instance, to install sash balances in an old house where none existed before, may be an expensive operation, and to my mind little is gained. In matters of trim the rule should be simplicity rather than elegance. Pressed steel thumb latch sets cost about as much as a good cigar, and work as well as mortised knob sets. Moreover they are in keeping with the country, and in the long run will give your house a more valid atmosphere.

Vermont winters are rugged, and insulation will contribute both to your comfort and your pocketbook. Sometimes, however, inter-wall insulation is difficult and expensive, and generous use of inexpensive building paper, caulking, and insulating wall boards, may be a practical substitute. Needless to say, tight foundation walls, well fitting doors and windows, storm windows and storm doors are essential if your Vermont farmhouse is to become a year-round home.

Two extremely important considerations in making a home in the country are water supply and fire protection. A water supply which was adequate for the needs of your predecessors may not, in fact, probably will not, be sufficient for your flush toilets and showerbaths. It may be that the flow of the spring or well is sufficient, but that the piping is not, in which event the line must be relaid. If the source itself is inadequate then some other supply must be located. This may involve you in finding a larger spring or deepening the one now in use or using brook water for non-drinking purposes, or the driving of a deep well. This latter can be an expensive operation, but once driven may prove to be the most satisfactory source. If you are cherishing the dream that some day you may live in your country place all year around then you must give thought to seeing that your water supply will not freeze up in winter. As to fire protection the first and most important requirement is that all the chimneys be sound and equipped with tile linings. Heating units must be selected with the safety factor in mind and operated with care to avoid the risk of fire hazard. Nearly every community in Vermont has a local volunteer fire department. Support it, and should the evil day ever arrive when it comes to save your house, remember that it can accomplish little or nothing without water. So, when doing your house over, if there is no brook or pond nearby, see that a pool is scooped out or a reservoir built so that water will be available in case of fire.

If you have not already succumbed and bought your home in Vermont, here are some steps to take now that may save anguish of the Blandings sort later:

1. Make sure the title of your intended property is clear. The small fee an attorney will charge to search the title may save trouble later and may uncover some interesting historical lore about your place as a special dividend.

2. Talk with the town selectmen or road commissioner and find out whether your intended home is on a town-maintained road or better. If it isn't, give weight to what this may mean to you after the Spring rains. If you have any thought of winter residence, find out, too, if the roads are regularly plowed.

3. When your property title is searched, look for clauses that might give a neighbor a right-of-way through that plot your wife plans for an old-fashioned rose garden. See, too, that someone else doesn't own the water rights to your bubbling spring. If your water supply is on someone else's property, investigate that, too, to see if your rights to it are binding.

4. Investigate the assessment now on your intended property and if you buy be sure no back taxes are owed. Find out the tax rate of your town and the usual basis of evaluation. Estimate how your intended improvements to the property will affect your annual tax bill.

And speaking of living the year around in Vermont remember that Vermont grows on one. Starting out you may not seriously consider the possibility of wanting to live here through the winter, and it may be that you will never become that seriously infected, but you may be sure that as time goes by you will discover that you will want to open the house earlier in the spring and keep it open later in the fall, and there will be winter vacations and long skiing weekends that you will want to spend in the country. So be sure when you are doing over your house, that you put a flue in the chimney so that central heating can be installed, and arrange your plumbing so that it can be used in whole or in part under freezing conditions. That is my final word of advice and it is a seriously considered word. I have seen many a summer dweller saddled with unnecessary expense because he was certain that his "summer" home would never be used in the winter. Thus he failed to have this work done when the general reconstruction was underway. Then, at increased expense and fuss, he had to do it later, when the charm of Vermont had worked on him as it does on us all.
Some VERMONT Ways of Life:  By VREST ORTON

In the last year or so I have had the pleasure of corresponding with several folk about the word Vermont and its use outside the state.

Of course the misuse of the word Vermont on maple products has long been the subject of controversy. Someday the state, in cooperation with the Federal Government, has got to do something to protect its good name so that entrepreneurs can not, by using the name Vermont on maple products not made in Vermont, gain unfair advantage. I am glad to see that our Senior Senator George Aiken, in Washington, has taken some steps to stop this misuse of our very valuable name which means so much to the outside world and which stands for something good and honest. I hope that readers will write Senator Aiken if and when they find unfair use of the word Vermont on products that are not Vermont in any way.

The good use, however, and not the misuse, of the word Vermont is what has interested me most. I was astonished one day to receive a letter from a person named Mrs. JOHN VERMONT. I could not quite credit it but upon investigation I found that it was true and there is living in New England actually such a person. The complications that Mrs. Vermont has to undergo are amusing. She wrote me that one person, upon being introduced to her said, "Oh you are the Mrs. Connecticut who is moving to Vermont." I was able to advise Mrs. Vermont that she should move to Vermont where such complications would doubtless cease.

Perhaps the most astonishing appearance of the name Vermont is in the program of the Festival of Britain. In Sir Thomas Beecham's internationally famous orchestra there is listed amongst the personnel, as playing the viola, one musician named "P. Vermont."

Several readers of Vermont Life have written me about Vermont place names. The first letter comes from I. E. Hughes, of Whitehall, New York, who says, "I am a native of Vermont, born in Fair Haven in 1878. There is a spot in the Adirondack Mountains near Saranac Lake they call Vermontville... there is also a place about 2 ½ miles north of Fair Haven, Vermont, they call Screw Driver. There is a lake, named Glen Lake but when I was a boy they called it Screw Driver Pond."

Miss Julia R. Kellogg of Benson, writes that when she was in Illinois forty years ago, near Peoria and was introduced as from Vermont, people thought she was from a nearby town called Vermont.

W. K. Bullock of Geneva, Illinois speaks of the same thing when he writes, "There is a Vermont, Illinois in Fulton County south of the better known town of Table Grove. Vermonters came to these parts at an early date... I know two families, Garfields and Harley whose grandparents came from Mt. Holly and another by the name of Peck who were famous Merino sheep breeders and who came from Sandgate, Vermont. I am quite sure there is a town named Vermont in Iowa..."

Mrs. Elsie C. Wells, of Bakersfield, Vermont, confirms the town called Vermontville, in New York. She writes; "we have the old name Puddledock for nearby East Fairfield. Old maps show a swamp just about where the depot now stands... of course Fairfield and Bakersfield jointly claim an Egypt, still known by that name..."

Ray Hawkins, the only reader living in a town named from Vermont who has written me, says that Vermontville, Michigan has a very interesting history. He says: "Every spring we have a maple sugar festival here in April. We are located on the Thornapple River... Rev. Sylvester Cochrane of East Poultney, Vermont, visited this section in 1835 with a view of settling here. He found it very sparsely settled and returned to Vermont and held some meetings in Poultney and at Castleton to form a colony to come out here and take up land. They adopted a set of rules and regulations similar to the ones the Pilgrim Fathers adopted. Something like 40 men signed the agreement but less than 30 became actual settlers."

"In about April 1836 they sent 3 men ahead to locate the land. Each was to have 10 acres in the village and a farm outside. They bought the land, paying about $1.25 an acre for it. Some of the settlers came that summer and fall and among them was my great grandfather Ray Hawkins."

Mr. Hawkins adds that of 4th generation descendants of the original settlers from Vermont who established Vermontville, only he and Vance Barber remain and the Barbers are the only family to hold any of the original land taken up by the first settlers. Mr. Hawkins modestly says that Vermontville compares favorably with surrounding towns... which proves, by this use of the understatement that he is a Vermonter.

Mr. Bullock's recollection about there being a town called Vermont in Iowa is evidently incorrect unless it is too small to have a post office. The U. S. Postal Guide lists no Vermont in Iowa. This guide lists only the following with post offices: Vermont in Illinois; Vermontville in Michigan, Vermontville in New York.

There are probably hundreds of colloquial names in Vermont for villages and small places which never appear on the map. I remember as a small boy living in North Calais, Vermont, the village of North Calais was always and I think is still called "Number Ten" from, as I remember, the school district number. The village of Adamant, in Calais Township was then called Sodom. East Calais was often called Moscow. There are plenty of yarns as to how Adamant got the name of Sodom, but I have never heard why East Calais was called Moscow. There is another small settlement in Stowe called Mosquito, and I have often wondered how it got its name.

In the town where I live and its surrounding territory there is a typical variety of these rural nicknames. There was once a section called "Paydenware." What it meant and why such an outlandish name was hitched to the region no one can tell today. One part of the town was, for many years, called Pre-um-catsey... which is my written version of the spoken term... a term I have never seen written. Investigation revealed that this was a corruption of three words used to designate the people who lived in this special section and whose conduct as well as houses were always on a free and easy basis.

Someday, some student bent on getting a Ph.D. for something more interesting than enumerating the vowel sounds in Chaucer, could compile a very diverting book on colloquial names in Vermont and the stories of how such names came to be.
MAPLE SUGAR ON SNOW

Boil maple syrup at medium heat until, when dropped from the tip of a spoon on well packed snow it remains on the surface and becomes waxy, or just holds its shape. If maple sugar is used for this purpose, simply add a little water and melt the sugar. Then boil gently and test in the same way as the syrup.

MAPLE BISCUITS
2 c. flour 2 Tbsp. shortening
4 tsp. baking powder 3/4 c. milk
1/2 tsp. salt 1 c. soft maple sugar
Sift dry ingredients together, cut in shortening. Add milk, roll on floured board to 3/4 inch thickness. Spread with maple sugar; roll like jelly roll. Slice and bake in greased tin at 375° for 15 minutes. Makes 24—one-in. cakes.

MAPLE MUFFINS
2 c. flour 3/4 c. soft maple sugar
3 tsp. baking powder 1 c. milk
1/2 tsp. salt 1 large egg
4 Tbsp. melted fat
Mix and sift flour, baking powder, salt. Add maple sugar, milk, beaten egg. Beat well, fold in melted fat. Place in greased muffin tins, bake 15 to 20 minutes at 375°. Makes 18—23/4” muffins.

MAPLE BUTTERNUT PUDDING
2 Tbsp. sugar 1 1/2 c. milk
1/4 c. flour 1 Tbsp. butter
1/4 tsp. salt 1 tsp. vanilla
2 1/3 c. maple syrup 1 1/3 c. chopped
2 eggs, well beaten 2 c. butternuts

MAPLE CUSTARD PIE
3 c. milk 1 Tbsp. flour
3 eggs, separated 3/4 tsp. salt
1 c. maple syrup 1 tsp. vanilla
3/4 c. sugar 1 nine-in. pie shell

MAPLE CREAM CANDY
2 c. maple sugar 3/4 c. thick cream
1 c. whole butternut meats
Boil sugar and cream slowly until it threads. Add butternut meats, beat until creamy. Pour into buttered cake pan, cut in squares.

MAPLE TEA CAKES
1/3 c. shortening 2 c. pastry flour
1/3 c. granulated sugar 1 c. maple sugar
1 c. maple sugar 3 tsp. baking powder
shavings 1/2 tsp. salt
1 egg well beaten 1/2 c. nuts
3/4 c. milk finely chopped

SOUR CREAM CAKE
1 egg 1 1/2 c. pastrY flour
1 c. maple sugar 1 tsp. soda
1 c. thick sour cream 1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. vanilla
Beat egg well, add sugar, continue beating. Add sour cream alternately with flour mixed and sifted with soda, salt. Add vanilla, stir well. Bake in greased 9-in. pan at 375° 25-30 min. Serve plain or with maple icing.

MAPLE BUTTERNUT ICING
1 c. sugar 3/4 c. cream of tartar
1 c. maple syrup 2 egg whites
1/3 c. water 1/3 c. chopped
2 egg yolks 1 c. thick cream butter nuts
Stir sugar, maple syrup, cream of tartar and water in pan until sugar dissolves. Boil until it spins thread. Pour gradually over stiffly beaten egg whites, beating constantly until thick enough to stand in peaks. Stir in butternuts, spread quickly on cake.

MAPLE HARD SAUCE ICING
1/3 c. butter or 3 Tbsp. maple syrup margarine 3 Tbsp. cream
2 c. confectioner’s sugar 2 Tbsp. strong coffee
2 Tbsp. cream
Cream butter, add remaining ingredients gradually and alternately. Beat constantly. This makes a thick fluffy icing.

MAPLE GINGERBREAD
2 c. pastry flour 1 tsp. ginger
1/2 tsp. salt 1 egg
1 tsp. soda 1 c. sour cream
1 c. maple syrup
Mix and sift dry ingredients. Beat egg well, mix with sour cream, syrup. Combine mixtures, stir, turn into greased 9-in. cake pan. Bake 25-30 minutes at 350°. Serve with whipped cream or hot with butter.

MAPLE MOUSSE
2 egg yolks 1 pint thick cream
1 c. maple syrup 1 tsp. vanilla
Cook beaten egg yolks and maple syrup in double boiler until thick, stirring frequently. Cool, fold in whipped cream, add vanilla. Freeze until firm. Serves six.

MAPLE COOKIES
1 c. maple syrup 3/4 c. pastry flour
3/4 c. soft butter 1 tsp. baking powder
2 eggs well beaten 1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 c. milk 1 tsp. vanilla

PUMPKIN PIE
2 c. steamed pumpkin 3/4 tsp. cinnamon
2 egg yolks 1 large egg
2/3 c. maple sugar 1 1/2 tsp. ginger
3/4 tsp. salt 2 egg whites
Mix ingredients in order given, folding beaten egg whites in last. Place in 10-inch uncooked pie shell and bake at 350° for 45 min.

MAPLE FUDGE
2 c. maple syrup 1/2 c. butternut
1 Tbsp. light corn syrup or walnut meats,
3/4 c. thin cream coarsely chopped
Stir constantly maple, corn syrup and cream in saucepan over low flame, until it boils. Continue cooking without stirring until it forms soft ball in water. When lukewarm beat until it thickens and loses gloss. Add nuts, pour in greased pan. When cold, cut in squares.

MAPLE SURPRISE
1 c. rice 1 c. thick cream
2 c. milk or water 1/2 c. maple syrup
Cook rice in milk or water in double boiler until soft. Whip cream, add maple syrup gradually and blend with rice. Place in large bowl or individual dishes. Cool. Serve with thin cream. Serves six.

PULLED MAPLE CANDY
3 1/2 c. white sugar 1 Tbsp. vinegar
1 c. maple syrup 1/4 c. cream tartar
1 1/2 c. water 1 Tbsp. butter
1 tsp. vanilla
Heat sugar, syrup, water to full rolling boil. Add vinegar, cream of tartar, butter. Boil until brittle when dropped in water. Pour on buttered platter. When cool, pull until firm, twist, cut into 1 inch sticks.

MAPLE SUGAR CAKES
2 lbs. maple sugar 1/2 c. cream of tartar
3/4 c. cream of tartar 1 c. water
Heat sugar, cream of tartar and water until it forms a soft ball in water. When almost cool, work with wooden paddle until thick, creamy, cloudy. Pour in 1/2-in. deep muffin tins. When cold, invert and drop cakes out. Makes 10-12 two-in. cakes.
A NY GOOD RECIPE is better with maple sugar added!” These were the words of a Vermont farm woman whom I interviewed while doing a food survey recently. Maybe that’s a little bit exaggerated but I think it just about sums up the feeling of Vermonters who have maple syrup and maple sugar on hand the year round.

In his book, Winter in Vermont, Charles Crane says, “Everything about sugar-making touches a well of tenderness in the Vermonter’s soul—he is touched with the symbolism of the running sap and the boilin’ down. To sugar-off has become an idiom of Vermont speech, understood far beyond our borders, implying a satisfaction in accomplishment.”

And so to me, as to many Vermonters, “sugaring-off” means the ultimate in good food and good companionship. I remember so well the days of my childhood when fifty or more relatives and friends would gather at my grandfather’s sugar house. As soon as the crowd arrived, they were served delicious eggs boiled in the sap, thick slices of homemade bread with slabs of home-cured ham and dozens of old fashioned raised doughnuts.

While tucking away these “snacks,” the visitors were settling the affairs of the nation and talking about the recent town meeting. Meanwhile, the syrup was cooking down. Experienced testers were watching it thread from a long handled spoon, then trying it on snow until it was just right. Then Sugar on Snow—little pools of sweet golden delicacy that could be rolled on a fork and popped into the mouth before it even cooled. To help us eat more, Aunt Sophronia produced her home-made dill pickles.

Since those days many new devices for gathering, cooking and packing the syrup have come into use but the sugaring parties are still a treat to Vermont youngsters and their elders. But the season is short and so housewives have developed a host of recipes to conjure up just a little of that gala “sugaring-off” feeling all through the year. Some are shown on the opposite page.

The story of Maple Cookery would be incomplete without mentioning the foods that just naturally “go with” maple syrup. What Vermonter has failed to know the thrill of raised doughnuts or hot baking powder biscuits with the first maple syrup of the season? Vermont farm children carry maple sugar sandwiches in their lunch boxes. Pancakes, waffles and French toast just don’t mean a thing without maple syrup to go on them. For this, cook the syrup down until it is about the thickness of molasses and then serve it warm.

We use it, too, for glazing ham, carrots and sweet potatoes, for sweetening cucumber pickles and for seasoning baked beans. It may not be true that Vermonters eat pie for breakfast—but it is certainly a fact that we use maple syrup or sugar in most meals of the day. A tasty maple dessert “sugars off” any good menu.

NOTE: If a recipe calls for maple sugar and you have only maple syrup on hand, simply boil down the syrup over a low flame until it forms a firm ball when dropped in cold water, then beat until it thickens.
Anthony Pratico, fur buyer from Rutland, checks over pelts of beaver taken by Ralph Evans of Groton (right). Watching with Evans is old-time fur trader Charlie Silver of Montpelier, who came along just to watch the fun.

Vermont Game Warden Charles Collett tags Evans' 25 beaver pelts. The impromptu tagging station was set up in the office of Philip White's general store. The dickering with fur buyers took place in the yard outside.

That industrious and fascinating rodent, the beaver, has held its place in Vermont and Vermont's economy from the days of the earliest trappers, though for a hundred years it was about extinct.

Finally in 1900 a closed season was clamped on beaver trapping. But there didn't seem to be beaver left to protect and then in 1921 a few were brought in from New York state and eleven years later six more from Maine.

These newcomers to Vermont prospered under protection and found the northeastern part of the state particularly to their liking. By 1940 there were about 275 of the hard-working animals within Vermont's borders. They took to the slow-moving streams in abandoned meadows and scrub growth areas.

Then, for the first time in a half-century, a beaver season was opened in 1950. Some still don't think it was such a good idea, but that year 1081 beaver were taken and last year during the open season (part of February) 1556 more were trapped. The most were taken in Washington, Caledonia and Essex counties.

Beaver do have a habit of building dams in places that
humans don’t approve of and about a thousand have to be pulled apart or dynamited each year. Generally, though, beaver are beneficial, slowing down streams, preventing soil erosion and providing trout pools. They chew down a lot of poplar or aspens but don’t harm timber trees.

The present beaver trapping seasons are intended to keep the population at the highest level the available food supplies will support and to limit them to areas where they do not flood valuable agricultural land.

Each year the Vermont Fish & Game Service as provided by law, inspects all beaver pelts and tags those legally taken. They cannot legally be sold or shipped without this tag.

The little town of Groton in northeastern Vermont is a center for beaver trapping, and here last year state wardens for one day set up a tagging station at Philip White’s general store. Beaver trappers in that area came into Groton with their cured pelts and had them tagged.

Fur dealers came, too, to look over the furs, to dicker and perhaps to buy. The accompanying photographs show what happened last March on beaver day in Groton.
I like Vermont because it is quiet, because you have a population that is solid and not driven mad by the American mania—that mania which considers a town of 4000 twice as good as a town of 2000...

—Sinclair Lewis in 1929