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“that frequent recurrence to fundamental principles and a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, industry and frugality are absolutely necessary to preserve the blessings of liberty and keep government free.” Vermont Constitution

Editor’s Uneasy Chair

Picture: Maxfield Parrish once said, New Hampshire is an excellent spot to view Vermont. So it was with our Fall issue Mystery Picture (page 15), taken in West Littleton, N. H. at Archie Dainc’s place, looking across the Connecticut to Lower Waterford. Guesses ranged from Lake Sadawga to Bolton Flats, but four tied for the right answer with identical postmark dates, will share the prize. They were: Harry H. Parker of Littleton, Ruth A. Holmes of St. Johnsbury, Fred C. Bullock, Arthur T. Morrison of Lower Waterford.

Omission: Our Fall issue cited Artist Francis Colburn as “The only native-born Vermonter to have been represented at the large exhibits.” We hasten now to add the fine Pittsford artist, Hilda Belcher.

Dr. Peach: We still feel keenly the loss of Dr. Arthur W. Peach, who served ably from 1947 until this year as an editorial associate. As a champion of the values we seek to express he had no peer. He could always be counted upon for a spirited and amusing commentary with barbed rejoinders for those who sought to attack, change or question what he considered the traditional ideals and character of the state.

He was a great controversialist, and as such joins all the celebrated Vermont controversialists who have gone before him. Those who knew him will agree that there were so many facets to his personality, that his services in behalf of Vermont and Vermonters were so many and varied, we could not hope to do him justice in a few sentences. But we can attest to a personality so strong and colorful that he still seems very much with us.

THE COVER
—Taking shelter from bitter wind David Witham of North Bridgton, Maine found this striking setting at Woodstock. Only on the third winter did he find all conditions right.
Green Mountain

POSTBOY

Speaking of historic sites, as Vermont Life plans to in a series commencing next summer, we would like to nominate—as a monument to the dear, dead days—an antiquated gasoline pump close by Route 100 in Pittsfield village. It carries the clear, nostalgic price notice: 16 3/10c—transporting the viewer in memory to those not-so-distant days, to that unforgettable era of 7 for a $.

Gasoline prices lead to thoughts of finances and the impending 343 miles of Thruway planned for Vermont—and to a seeming phenomenon pointed out by several readers: The puzzle is that Vermonters almost without a dissenting voice have accepted the superhighway plan, yet a short 20 years ago they spurned offers for a Skyline Drive on the Green Mountains’ crests, and that to have been wholly financed by federal funds.

Are Vermonters, then, weakened in a score of years by the lure of four-laned speed, now willing to sacrifice unspoiled beauty and self-determinism? No, it’s just that they now see the plain need for better heavy-service highways. The Skyline Parkway was envisioned as a scenic detour and not to ease traffic problems. The mountains shall still remain inviolate and the Thruways will be built, owned and managed by Vermonters.

Few recall now that the Vermont Legislature in 1937 passed an act “authorizing” creation of a central, scenic highway from the Massachusetts to the Canadian borders. The act, perhaps a palliative for the Parkway’s rejection, carried with it no funds, and thus had come no closer to reality than the statute books when it was repealed quietly by the 1948 law revisions. In the normal course of highway work, however, the beautiful central routes of 100 and 8 in the intervening 19 years have undergone steady improvement, to almost the same end after all.

* * *

Vermont builds her bridges now more substantially than 130 years ago. An error in our Summer issue which involved an elephant brings this to mind. Our story on the Connecticut River valley reported the foundering of the old Putney ferry (there have been several there across the Connecticut) and the drowning of the beast which it carried.

From the excellent town history, Putney 1753–1953, we draw this correction: One day in 1820 a circus troop bound for Keene, N. H. across the river approached the Great Bridge in Putney (built in 1812 and rebuilt two years later). The elephant tested the bridge and declined the honor, but on order of his owner was prodded across. He was almost at the New Hampshire shore when part of the bridge collapsed. The elephant clung screaming to the broken beams, then plunged to the rocks below to die from a broken back. His driver was killed as well.

The bridge was repaired that summer but washed away next February, as bridges were in the habit of doing in that period. We are indebted to Mrs. K. W. Wheeler of Keene, N. H. for bringing this incident to light.

* * *

Anticipating the possibility that as this is read Mr. Eisenhower will have been reaffirmed in the Presidency, we’d like to report belatedly on his interest in one of Vermont Life’s recent subjects—the artist Bessie Drennan of Woodbury (Spring 1955).

Earlier this year Miss Drennan painted, in her own nostalgic vein, the scene of Egg-rolling on the White House lawn. At Easter the painting, framed in old Vermont sap spout, went to President Eisenhower, whose words of warm appreciation are now among Miss Drennan’s greatest treasures.
The old Pittsford Furnace near Pittsford Mills had the good fortune to be built practically atop an iron ore bed.

LEFT: These slag and ore samples from the author's collection were gathered at the sites of old Vermont iron works. At top are two special-shaped fire bricks from Pittsford and South Shaftsbury furnaces.
Active old foundries and crumbling stone stacks are the reminders today that Vermont 140 years ago led the Nation in the production of iron.

Iron in Vermont? A visitor from Minnesota’s Mesabi country will scoff at such a thing. But a check of state geology reports and the history books will show that not only was there plenty of iron in Vermont, but that the state once was in the forefront of iron production.

Bog ore was first discovered by pioneer Vermonters in the swampy areas and low spots which had once been covered by the pre-historic “Champlain Sea.” There were workable deposits of bog iron in Highgate, Swanton, Sheldon and Ferrisburg, with the biggest bed in Monkton. This ore was not mined, but simply dug out of drained open pits.

The other main type of Vermont iron is known to geologists as brown hematite. This was harder to get out of the ground. It was usually found in layers of from a few inches to several yards thick, and might extend a few feet, or several miles. Ore of this kind needed real mines, like the ones dug in Chittenden and Bennington where the miners descended sixty feet into a shaft and then picked away at the ore in galleries that extended in several directions.

Possession of an ore bed didn’t mean that you had a saleable product. To produce it, you had to build a blast furnace, or a bloomery forge. A furnace was a large,
hollow stack of native stone, tightly mortared and bound with iron bands. Inside, it was lined with special fire brick, designed to withstand terrific heat. The old-time furnaces were a lot like the stone fireplaces that today’s do-it-yourself householder builds in his back yard, and were fueled to the best advantage with charcoal, which gives a high clean heat.

In a back yard fireplace you may fan the flames, or get down and puff until you are red in the face. In making iron, the air to intensify the heat was introduced by means of waterwheels, operating big leather bellows to force air into the furnace. In later models, a system of wooden tubs with pistons compressed the air for the same use.

A typical Vermont iron furnace was charged at the top fifteen times a day. A charge consisted of thirty bushels of charcoal, fifteen hundred pounds of ore, and a hundred and fifty pounds of limestone. The limestone acted as a flux to melt and combine with any unburnable matter found in the furnace. This rose to the top of the red-hot mass and was drawn off in the form of slag.

In a fireplace, the important product is the steak that is cooked on top. In the iron furnace it is molten iron, drawn off at the bottom. On the sandy floor beside the bottom of the stone stack a trough was dug to receive the bright, smoking metal as it poured from the furnace. This depression was called the “sow.” Connected with it were smaller side ditches which for obvious reasons were called “pigs.”

The furnace building itself was a dark and cavernous place that often resembled Dante’s Inferno. Big, brawny iron workers moved about with blackened faces and bare chests glistening in the glare of the white-hot pig iron. To keep the furnace in continual blast they worked night and day in twelve hour shifts for periods as long as nine months. Thirsts ran heavy. It has been said that for every ton of iron made, at least a gallon of whiskey was consumed.

Charcoal in vast quantities was needed for the iron making process, and the forests around the furnaces were quickly cut. Farmers with timber holdings went into charcoal-making on the side, and in some regions the smoke from the colliers’ oven fires on the hills was always present. A bed of limestone nearby was considered a further asset by the furnaceman.

Pig iron ran about eighty pounds to the bar, and was a mighty important product to early Vermonters. From it could be made kettles, hinges, spikes, forks, hoes, chains, frying “spiders” and all manner of iron implements.

The word “forge” covered several other types of iron works. The most common, of course, was the blacksmith’s little hearing forge that stood at most village crossroads. On a larger scale were the Catalan forges that actually smelted iron. These worked on an old principle called the trompe, by which falling water was made to trap air and deliver it under pressure to a hearth. Naturally, an ideal spot was by a waterfall. In these forges the iron ore was melted and the iron formed in a pasty mass. A big mechanical hammer banged away at this, squeezing out the cinders and resulting in a salable bar of iron called a “bloom.” This gave the forge another name, a “blomery.” The first one in northern New York, at Willsboro Falls, used Vermont iron from Basin Harbor across Lake Champlain, Adirondack iron being as yet undiscovered. Later the traffic was reversed and five Vermont bloomeries, (at Vergennes, Salisbury, East Middlebury, Ackworth (Bristol) and Fair Haven), all used York State magnetic ore.

Ethan Allen is sometimes erroneously credited with establishing Vermont’s iron industry. Actually, it was another famous Vermonter, Matthew Lyon, who built the state’s first iron works at Fair Haven in 1785. In addition to bar iron, Lyon made axes, hoes, ploughs and nails. He even tried to protect native industry by petitioning the State Legislature to impose a duty on nails coming into the state.

Lyon’s pioneer venture was followed closely by an iron establishment at Bennington and one in Tinmouth. The Lake Champlain area had the easy-to-get-at bog iron and the industry was centered at Vergennes. There was the big bed in Monkton, and sloops brought other ore from Highgate, Swanton and from the Rogers bed across the Lake in New York. At the falls in Vergennes were two blast furnaces for producing pig iron, and nine forges going full blast to convert it into hammers, anvils, pots and teakettles. These were shipped by boat to Montreal and Troy, and by overland wagon to Boston markets.

In 1813 the Monkton Iron Company at Vergennes was the largest iron works in the United States. The strategic site of the works was a boon to Commodore MacDonough in carrying out his naval campaign for control of Lake Champlain during the War of 1812. He built his fleet in the shipyard across the creek from the iron works, and the company, after supplying his fittings, quickly switched over to war production. They made two tons of cannon shot a day for MacDonough and the Northern Armies. After the threat of invasion was stopped by the defeat of the British fleet in 1814, Benjamin Welles, superintendent of the iron company, remarked:

“MacDonough saved our works, but our works saved his ships by furnishing a large supply of shot. So it is an even bargain.” From its preeminence as the nation’s largest iron works, the Monkton Iron Company took a swift drop and never recovered from the postwar depression. Various smaller bloomeries and foundries later occupied the site, but conducted only local business.

Israel Keith was a real pioneer in Vermont iron. He came from the bog iron country of tidewater Massachusetts and in 1791, started a furnace enterprise at
Bennington Iron Works furnaces as they appeared about 1870. The center, smaller stack was called the "Pulp." Ironmaster Thomas Trenor burned down a predecessor to one of these furnaces, mistakenly charging it with manganese instead of iron.

Pittsford, Vermont. Israel bought his land from Ira Allen and paid for it "in iron and holloware" after he got the furnace built. He soon went on north to Sheldon, where he could work the bog ore with which he was more familiar. His furnace on the bank of Black Creek employed a hundred men, and the iron products, bartered for other necessities, became known as "Sheldon Currency." Keith’s specialty was potash kettles, for potash-making was a big business at the time. These "kittles" were cast in molds to sizes holding forty-five, sixty, and ninety gallons apiece. Men came as much as two hundred miles for a Sheldon kettle, waited their turns, and loaded the cumbersome castings hot from the mold.

A small portion of the Keith furnace can still be found in the underbrush at Sheldon, forgotten and unmarked. More remains of the successor to his first Vermont iron venture, the well-preserved stack alongside Furnace Brook in Pittsford. This furnace was built in 1828 by the Granger family, long identified with Pittsford iron. The Grangers had been hauling ore six miles from a mine in Chittenden. Then, while excavating for a new furnace, they found their site to be directly over a new bed of iron ore. That luck, with good limestone in a quarry nearby, kept Pittsford iron in production for many years. During thirty weeks of 1856, this furnace produced nearly 1600 tons of pig iron.

Down in Bennington, William Blodgett commenced furnace operations soon after the Revolution. He had many successors who endeavored to make a go of the iron industry, among them a clothier, an Irish political refugee, a newspaper editor, a French scholar, and a minister. The clothier was Moses Sage, who in 1816 moved to Pennsylvania, where he erected another blast furnace. The place was called Pittsburgh.

The political refugee was Thomas Trenor, a stern, stubborn man with an Irish brogue and an easy temper. He

R. S. Allen
The old stone stack of the Green Mountain Iron Company at Forestdale was built in 1854. Two hundred men were employed here, casting pig iron, and later molding ornamental chairs, urns & statues.

R. S. Allen

insisted on putting a charge of a new black ore he'd found into his furnace, with the thought that it was a rich vein of iron. The stack commenced to rumble and shake. When the furnaceman tapped it, the liquid stream burst forth with a roar, took fire, and spattered in all directions, burning down the wooden sheds around the stone stack. Mr. Trenor had unwittingly charged the furnace with a deposit of black oxide of manganese, which with iron burns like fury. The ironmaster had to be extremely careful after that, for only half an inch of clay separated iron and manganese in some of his ore beds. Manganese was always the devil in the Vermont iron stockpile, and similar, though not so drastic mistakes happened at Pittsford and Dorset furnaces. A use for manganese was later found in making bleaching powder and in glass manufacture, but at Bennington tons of the stuff were thrown away.

Towns adjacent to Bennington also supported iron furnaces. There was Woodford, where big anchors for navy gun boats were cast during Jefferson's administration, and Shaftsbury, where all the pig iron was shipped to Troy, N. Y. for use by the Burden Company in making practically all the horseshoes used by the Union armies.

Up in Brandon were two furnaces. In Brandon village John Conant made the patent stoves that bore his name, and sold them all over New England and New York. This company later specialized in casting railroad car wheels, a product for which durable Vermont iron was especially suitable. At the other Brandon furnace in Forestdale, to satisfy popular demand, the molders even cast ornamental items like vases, chairs and statues, in addition to their old standby of pig iron.

All this iron activity took place on the western slopes of the Green Mountain Range. On the other side of the state was the small “Somerset Forge” in Dover, which shipped iron blooms to Bennington in competition with the

Israel Keith's Sheldon Furnace was located on Black Creek. Iron products made here were used for barter, known as "Sheldon Currency." Huge iron kettles were a specialty.

R. S. Allen
local works. There were two forges in Randolph, and one
at Cady's Falls in Morristown, whose ore came from the
“Gothic Bed” in Elmore.

At Tyson in the town of Plymouth was a substantial
iron industry, with furnaces erected in 1837 by Isaac
Tyson of Baltimore, Maryland. Tyson built a large blast
furnace for pig iron and a small one “for convenience.”
At one time Tyson Furnace expected to become a leading
city of the state. With its self-sufficient iron works, stove
foundry, company store, and houses for the workers, it
resembled some of the more prosperous “iron plantations”
of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, where everything was
supplied by and revolved around “the company.”

At Troy was the only workable Vermont ore of the
magnetic variety. Since the beds stretched for two miles,
some Boston promoters bought them and erected the
Troy Furnace beside the Missisquoi River. Lack of
transportation and distance from markets caused the
enterprise to fail. The company is noted chiefly for casting
the boundary markers that can still be seen today at many
points along the Canadian border.

One by one the iron beds in the state were exhausted, or
abandoned because of increased production costs. There
are still deposits of good grade iron to be found under the
Vermont soil, but as long as iron can be easily scooped up
in the open pits of Mesabi, Ungava, and Venezuela, the
mineral prospectors will pass them up.

A new hobby has revived interest in the old Vermont
iron furnace sites. This centers not on the iron, but on the
cast-off by-product, slag. Cut and polished by amateur
lapidaries, this makes interesting and inexpensive rings,
bracelets and other jewelry settings. Slag ranges from
bright blues and greens to white and orange brown, with
all shades and combinations in between.

For those interested in seeing some of the old furnace
stacks, there are six still standing in the state. Two are
visible from Route 9 to the east of Bennington. Perhaps
the best-preserved is the limestone and marble stack
beside Route 7 south of East Dorset. A little more hunting
will bring you to the Pittsford Furnace on the brook above
Pittsford Mills, and the Green Mountain Iron Company’s
old stack still stands under the bank, at the upper end of
Forestdale. Local inquiry is necessary to find the remote
old Troy Furnace, out of sight of the river road between
Troy and North Troy. Portions of other Vermont furnaces
still can be found, but archaeological digging would have
to be practiced at most of their sites. However, the
discerning eye can often pick out a flash of blue or bright
green slag in the bed of a brook, disclosing the former
presence of one of Vulcan’s Green Mountain workshops.

The iron industry in Vermont today is confined to
foundries, which were often run in connection with both
furnace and forge. In a foundry the metal is heated and
cast directly into molds. Modern foundries take bar iron
and melt it at high temperatures so that it may be cast
into any desired form. Nearly a dozen foundries still do
business in Vermont. Typical of them is the Gray Foundry,
Inc., of Poultney.

Follow down Furnace Street along the Poultney River
and you’ll find the Gray Foundry. Its buildings are ar-
ranged for utility, not beauty, but on a late winter’s
afternoon when the furnace is in blast, the leaden sky will
be lit up with a glow that gives this plant an aura all its
own.

From the squat, square office, a well-worn path leads
down to the heart of operations, the main moulding bay
foundry. Gone is the gloomy cave of the iron workers of
the last century. This is a modern, spacious building with
cupola furnaces, electric hoists and cranes. Only the
brimstone smell of hot iron remains the same.

Gray’s foundrymen prepare molds and pour iron five-
and-a-half days a week. Castings range from small blocks
to 3000-pound bases for paper-making machinery. The
steel stack of the furnace is charged with the proper
amounts of York State or Alabama pig iron, scrap iron,
coke and flux, and the air blast gets roaring in the cupola.
It takes 30,000 cubic feet of air to melt a ton of iron.

When the furnace is tapped, the foundry windows reflect
the glare, and the place comes alive. Gray’s foundrymen,
all with at least ten years experience, know their jobs and
respect the danger of the material with which they work.
Each is ready at the precise moment when the big ladle is
poured,—lighting the escaping gases with fire sticks,
holding the handle steady, or playing a stream of water on
the hot flask or mold. Sparks fly up and scatter on the
black sand of the foundry floor. Gushing from the furnace,
white-hot iron pours again and again with a plopping
noise like thick sour cream from a pitcher. Motions indi-
cate which casting is to be poured next. The little ones are
filled from hand ladles and left in smoking rows.

At the end of several hours of such work, all hands
stand back and the furnace is dumped. A huge fiery mass
cascades to the floor with sparks, coals and thick twisting
streams of slag. Water hisses and steams on this residue,
the glow fades, and the foundry is done for the day.

Gray Foundry, Inc. is thought to be the third oldest
foundry continually in business in the United States, and
still produces castings on the same site. It commenced
melting iron in 1828 as the Stanley Stove Works. The
patent Stanley anthracite stove was a big square orna-
mental affair, some of which are still to be found in the
back rooms of older Vermont houses. The stove business
grew with the demand, and later Stanley went into making
castings for horse power machines, slate-working ma-
achinery and curry combs for the Union cavalry during the
Civil War. The foundry was reorganized in 1900 under
the direction of A. Y. Gray, and has since born his name.
For the past forty years the plant has been run by Norman
G. Knapp, grandson of Mr. Gray, who has kept pace with the times by making a great variety of castings.

"We're classed as a small jobbing foundry," says Gray's president and general manager. "Our business is varied and not concentrated on any one product. In addition to the machinery for slate and marble working, we make castings for paper mill machinery, pumps, machine tools, pipe bending machinery, oil field maintenance machines, and road building machines to name a few. We can make just castings, or the complete machine. And our products go all over the world."

Mr. Knapp's Gray Foundry has risen from the ashes of two disastrous fires, and has had the waters of two floods four feet deep on the main foundry floor. It is a prime example of the survival of a small Vermont family company which has licked the problem of falling markets by diversifying its products and adding new lines.

ABOVE: The Poultney Foundry is one of about a dozen in Vermont. Scrap iron and flasks lie in the foreground.

ABOVE LEFT: Norman Knapp heads the 128-year-old Gray Foundry believed to be the third oldest in the Nation.

BELOW LEFT: Appropriate to the Poultney slate belt is this Gray Company diamond saw for cutting slate tiles.

BELOW: Hoist operator and foundrymen start the pour of molten iron into the runner box of a machine casting.
Brattleboro's Harris Hill tests some of the world's greatest performers in the annual February ski jump.
The best form gives you the best score in a ski jump and the three judges, up in their aerie where they don't miss a thing, are eyeing the top of the trestle. They each have twenty points to deduct for faulty form (distance of jump rates another twenty points). And from the top of the inrun everything counts.

A half dozen keyed-up and cocky young men are adjusting their gear at the top. A couple of thousand spectators below look like so many ants, but they're actually a few hundred feet and from a jumper's viewpoint, thirty seconds away.

When he gets his starting signal, the jumper tries to kick off with an air of confidence and come down the inrun low, skis together, in a fashion betraying no uncertainty ("uncertainty" here loses you one to two points). At the lip he will be doing about fifty miles an hour which makes it easy to miscue on the takeoff, jumping a shade early or late (deduct one to three points) or, as sometimes happens, not jumping at all (deduct four points). Ideally the spring should be correctly timed and executed without hesitation in one coordinated movement.
Catapulting off the lip, the jumper faces the prospect of five long seconds in the air and his first problem is to get set, skis parallel with each other and almost horizontal, knees and upper part of the body taut, arms moving easily to get balance. Possibly the jumper will get a second lift as he hits the air pressure off the face of the hill. The body should be pressed well forward here with a good stretch, the ski tips gradually brought down together to get the skis in line with the slope. Coincidentally the jumper should be spotting his landing while compensating for air drafts and the other unpleasant things that can happen during the flight. (Some coaches will say that air consciousness is all important: in practice they'll toss a red cap or other object on the ground, ask the jumper to identify it from the air).

Overjumping the hill—i.e. landing beyond the point at which it still slopes sharply and thereby courting a broken ankle—is a possibility the good jumper must bear in mind.

Neil Priessman, Jr.

Harry K. Asbury, Jr.
Now perhaps for a diving landing: a reach forward at the last minute may gain a few feet. The landing in any case must be decisive yet graceful. The outrun should be negotiated in balance and under full control and concluded, when conditions permit, with a smart turn. A fall anywhere along the line costs ten to twenty points and in effect eliminates the contender.

These and other aspects of jumping are shown to advantage one day each February on a 65-meter hill near the center of Brattleboro, Vermont, built in 1922 and opened the same year with the Vermont state championship. The hill paid for itself the first day and after the meet the Brattleboro Outing Club was organized to own and operate it.

Today Harris Hill—named after Fred H. Harris, godfather of local skiing—bears little resemblance to the narrow, rough jump of more than three decades ago. It has lost its bumps and been widened; its profile has been doctoried; the landing slope has been coated with loam, and the old wooden trestle replaced with an earthen one. Today jumpers regard Harris Hill as a well-balanced, smooth, safe jump, and it has been chosen three times as the site of national jumping championships. Some of the famous names, and the records they set through the years, are as follows: Norman Berger, 160 feet; Henry Hall, 180 feet; Bing Anderson, 190 feet; Strand Mikkleesen, 191 feet; Harold Sorrensen, 191 feet; Aurele Legere, 197 feet; Birger Ruud, 216 feet; Torger Tøkle, 230 feet; Arthur Tøkle, 239 feet.

Art Tokle set his record in 1951, retiring the second of the Winged Ski trophies presented by Mr. Harris. The third, as of this writing, is still in competition. But since Tøkle’s 239 feet tops by a considerable footage the maximum jump for which the hill was designed, it is unlikely that the record will be broken again. Unlikely, but not impossible, because Brattleboro’s Harris Hill ranks as a Mecca for U.S. jumpers.
Bird’s-Eye View of a Jumper
Photographed by Martin Iger

Problems of height, distance, speed and light make ski jumping for the photographer one of the most difficult subjects to capture—in its drama and suspense. Freelance photographer Martin Iger of New York tried something different at Brattleboro: the viewpoint a bird might have if daring enough to compete with the soaring skiers.

High above the landing hill and out from the take-off Iger suspended a heavy cable, to which he slung a boatswain’s chair. From this perch these unusual views were recorded as jumpers soared outward toward him, then sank to the hill below.
In January Vermont winters begin to tighten their grip, yet the strengthening cold seems to make us more rather than less active. It is now that reading circles are formed and the Bookwagons, making their regular trips along the well-plowed roads, are greeted with increasing eagerness as they leave a wide range of solid and entertaining reading at the small libraries and village stores.

In the earlier days of Vermont history the impulse to fortify the mind against the increasing cold was perhaps even stronger than it is now. The records of the Calais Circulating Library, neatly kept in an ancient lined ledger, tell the story of what one typical group of men did to provide themselves with literature in the days when there was no library system. No doubt the same process went on in many of our small Vermont towns.

The Calais citizens met first on January 14, 1832, organized, subscribed shares of $1.50, set the length of time a book could be kept at two months, fixed fines at six cents a week, elected a librarian and other officers and a Prudential committee to handle funds and select books. For several years thereafter an orator was chosen to deliver an appropriate address at the annual meeting. Lady members were not admitted until 1836. These records end in 1883, but the collection of books has been preserved intact and given to the Calais Historical Society where they can be seen at the Kent Tavern Museum, concrete evidence of our great-grandfathers’ taste in reading.

History dominates the list of books, both ancient and contemporary. Plutarch is included, with Sallust and Xenophon. Bunyan and Milton are there, with later on Scott, Dickens, George Eliot and Carlyle, Emerson, Washington Irving and W. D. Howells. There were lives of saints, to set an example for the spirit, and travel books, to range dreams of far places against the white hillsides. Very little poetry was included and fiction did not dominate till the later years.

A man could, and as later records of the town show often did, get a first-class education through such reading. It is good to know that the Vermont Free Public Library Commission, which sends the Bookwagons out into rural Vermont, supplies the best in current reading, winter and summer alike.

One of the items much in demand this winter will be *A Treasury of Vermont Life*, an anthology of articles and photographs, both in color and black and white, from this magazine, creating a complete picture of life in Vermont through chapters on the Country, the People, Vermonters Work, and Play, the Four Seasons, Vermonters Build, the Past and the Future. All those who have treasured their back copies of *Vermont Life* will find this a volume to share with their friends; for newcomers it will be a chance to complete their knowledge of the state in all its phases. The editors of this handsome Tenth Anniversary anthology, selecting its contents with their customary care for visual as well as literary appeal, were Stephen Greene, Ralph N. Hill, Jr., Arthur W. Peach and Walter Hard, Jr.

Another book which should catch the eye of anyone interested in New England character and history is *Yankees in Paradise* by Bradford Smith, Vermont author with a distinguished record in biography and fiction as well as history. His latest book is subtitled ‘The New England Impact on Hawaii’ and is a detailed and fascinating account of the experiences of the early missionaries in the Sandwich Islands. The encounter between the gentle, pleasure-loving Hawaiians and the hard-driving, pleasure-mistrusting Yankees left neither group untouched. Here in small compass is the collision of mechanical, Puritanical civilization with a dignified, primitive race with values and standards of its own. The resulting conflicts, disasters, triumphs and compromises make absorbing reading in Mr. Smith’s understanding treatment.

(Continued on page 61)
Spruce Peak

One of Vermont's major new sports centers adds a whole new side to Stowe-Mt. Mansfield Skiing.

The double chair lift to the summit of Mt. Mansfield's neighbor, Spruce Peak, was officially opened just two years ago. Sepp Ruschp of the Mt. Mansfield company had studied and planned for the new area since the early 1940's. With the aid of Henry Simoneau, Engineer Charlie Lord, and many others, his vision of a whole new mountain made accessible to skiers was realized.

In 1953, trails were blasted and bulldozed, and the following year the towers of the 6,200 ft. Double Chair Lift began their march up the mountain. During the summer of 1954, bulldozers, trucks, a power shovel, teams of horses, and a crew of 120 men were employed on the project. In addition to the 24 regular towers, eight special multiple structures were built to support the 12,400 ft. cable. The 168 double chairs were designed to carry upward of 800 skiers per hour. The lift is powered by two 350 h.p. diesel motors. Either is capable of driving the lift, and is used alternately with the other.

Directly under the lift is the Alpine-like, "Main Street" nearly 1,000 ft. wide in some sections: "Whirlaway," and "Sterling Run" to the east, the first a steep but wide trail, and the latter, affording nearly two miles of winding, Sno-cat packed skiing enjoyed by all skiers, novice and expert alike. A fourth run, "The Smuggler's Trail," is on the Notch side of the lift.

Photographed by
ROBERT BOURDON

RIGHT: The "East Loop" looks toward Mt. Mansfield's T-Bar trails where it joins "Main Street."
"The Lookout" warming hut stands at the top of the chair lift.

From Spruce Peak's summit the main range of the Green Mountains stretches away to the south. The pointed peak is Camel's Hump.
"What wonderful things to draw!" Each new discovery of an old stove has brought this feeling of delight. Notwithstanding the trend from wood-burning stoves to oil and gas, in stove and furnace, many of these old stoves still exist because they fit so perfectly the needs of the user.

It is possible to buy a beautiful old stove in good condition, and a stove can be used wherever there is a chimney. Fire and time may have warped or cracked the grates, but grates can be replaced when necessary; and the charm and interest of the exterior is usually well worth the replacement. Economy, always a factor for so many, finds no other heating unit of so low initial cost.

These stoves still have advantages offered in no other form. My wood-burning kitchen range gives a great variety of heat on its broad top surface. Many pots of food in various stages of preparation can be placed on just the right temperature. The oven and the warming shelf are conveniences unmatched by any modern range. Even the gradual feeding of wood into the stove by hand has compensations: glimpses of the fire and the smell of incense-like smoke reward one when the stove is opened for refueling.

Some, as the original Franklin stove, can open, or are open on one side. Like the fireplace they give the glowing presence of the fire in the room, but, like the stove, all of the radiating surface is in the room. These in-the-room fireplaces or stoves retain the 80 per cent of heat that is lost up the chimney of the old fireplace. There is an added safety factor in an enclosed fire, and an extra advantage in a firebox that can be used for burning paper and other dry wastes.

Like the permanent Vermonters, summer residents find the appearance of old stoves in harmony with their old (Continued on page 26)
Descendant of Franklin Stove, opening in front

Glenwood Parlor Stove

Bought by grandfather of present owner, now 83.

Descendant of Franklin Stove, opening in front

Early Franklin Stove
Sawdust-burning Furnace

furniture and antiques, and ideal for the quick fire that takes off the morning chill. Some old-timers keep stoves in place even when they have a furnace. Though he has an oil furnace, an 80-year-old neighbor has three interesting old stoves in the various rooms of his house—ready for use. He says, “If the power goes off in a winter storm, we have to have heat.”

The convenience of oils and gas is very tempting, but that is now matched by the convenience of new methods of firing wood stoves. Some are designed to hold a day’s supply of wood put in at one time; a thermostat and gravity control the heat and regulate the gradual addition of the fuel to the fire. Better systems of draft regulation yield what has been promised by inventors from the time of the first improvement of drafts by Franklin—“more heat from less fuel.” Nor is any fuel as cheap as wood—when heat units and costs per cord are compared with heat units and relative costs for any other fuel; this, in spite of the rising cost of labor for cutting wood.

Where the woodlot owner cuts his own wood during a slack season of work—as in winter for the farmer—he is selling his labor (though it may be to himself) in a good market. In cutting trees imperfect for lumber, and cutting tops and branches left after a lumbering operation, he has excellent fuel—at the same time he improves his woods for a better crop of lumber. And should he be dis-

cussing this work with you, he will no doubt remind you, “I’ll keep warm twice with that wood—when I cut it and when I burn it!”

Green sawdust, that eyesore by-product of the sawmill, can now be used in furnaces and stoves designed for its burning, and designed to feed it into the firebox from the magazine, under thermostatic control. Wood and wood wastes for fuel are products of farming and lumbering that cannot be ignored in a country as rich as Vermont in wooded lands.

While I have a large collection of these drawings of stoves, it is a subject that I am sure I have only partly explored. From a little research, I find that over 800 patents on stoves and their improvements were issued in the first 55 years after the patent office was established in 1790. Franklin describes the successful use of his stove in 1744 (unpatented), and it is only since 1840 that stoves have become widely used. Their increased use had to wait for iron to become plentiful, for better methods of manufacture, and better methods of transporting their heavy weight.

This can well be a continuing story and a growing collection. While each patent may not represent a new and different stove, lists of stoves in old catalogues multiplied by lists of manufacturers suggest the number of different types that were made. In my neighborhood alone, an indication of the variety is the fact one seldom finds two stoves exactly alike.

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The World's Largest Granite Memorial Plant

is Rock of Ages' in Barre Town.

While automation is most evident in this 610 by 200 foot building, it by no means replaces the skills of craftsmen who fashion rough granite into cemetery and public memorials. Each monument is made to a customer’s specifications. Markers generally are of standard size and finish.

To work the granite through its many finishing stages, the craftsmen are aided by every new production and equipment convenience—wire saws, both band and contour types, continuous automatic polishing machines, the latest in surfacing machines and a tracer-controlled milling machine.

Air is kept clean by large collectors which gather dust at its source. The 113,800 square feet of floor-space is lighted by mercury vapor and fluorescent equipment. Water comes from a 200,000 gallon reservoir.

Rock of Ages formerly sent quarried stone to its several plants in adjacent towns but now makes all its monuments in this new center. From this plant they are shipped to 700 dealers throughout the nation.

The company also manufactures granite surface plates and granite for building and construction. 

END
May peace and plenty on our nation smile.
And trade with commerce.
Bless the British Isles.

Mary Anne Dundas finished this sampler.
June 12, 1797, aged 8 years.
This English sampler was worked in silk cross-stitch on hand-woven linen in 1797 by eight-year-old Mary Anne Dundas, daughter of Admiral Dundas of the British Navy. Showing a full-rigged naval ship, it expresses a sentiment of hope for England.

A needlepoint picture worked in wool by Mrs. Grinnell Martin, showing her three daughters and her home, King George Farm, in Sutton.

and other needlework from the collection of Mrs. Grinnell Martin, at her home in Sutton, Vermont. Embracing a large, diversified grouping of fine needlework from this country and abroad, the collection has been in Mrs. Martin's family for many years. Representative pieces will be shown next summer at the Fairbanks Museum, St. Johnsbury.
An English sampler worked in silk by Elizabeth Mines, “ended 1610,” depicting her home, family and possessions. This is one of earliest samplers known.

An American picture worked in wool in solid chain stitch giving the marriage record of John and Mary Hoog with an original design of birds, flowers, flags and shield. At the bottom is shown an early spur of the Pennsylvania Railroad.
This American memorial picture depicts the family sweeping at the tomb of George Washington, with Mt. Vernon and the Potomac in the background. Inscription on the tomb reads: "Sacred to the memory of General George Washington, who died December 14, 1799, aged 68 years." Picture was worked in chenille, silks, background painted watercolor.

Note: An exhibit from Mrs. Martin’s collection will be held next summer at Fairbanks Museum, St. Johnsbury.

An Italian sampler dated 1719, fashioned in silk on fine, hand-woven linen, shows twelve examples of Bargello stitches. Monogram of the worker appears below.
James F. Gilman

Forgotten recorder of rural Vermont

Sometimes during the year 1880 a tall, lanky red­headed young man arrived in Montpelier and hired a room. His appearance made no particular stir in the city and his twelve years there would now be forgotten but for the pictures he left behind him.

James Franklin Gilman may have told someone the name of the Massachusetts town where he was born in 1850, the names of his parents and where he went to school, but no one now remembers. We do know that he was drawing pictures of houses in Billerica, Mass. about 1870, that he never married, that he died in poverty in 1929 and that his grave is in Westboro, Mass. Thus summarized his life seems bleak and grim, but Gilman was a happy man in his work and his work was his life.

Whether drawing a small boy’s dog, a family of the Eighties in their mid-Victorian parlor or the fingers of the sun reaching through the clouds to gild Montpelier, he gives a sense of affectionate tenderness for his subject. An elm tree against the morning mist, a wrinkled old lady, a billiard table on fat legs—he rejoiced in them all and even drew the billiard table so that it seemed a little friendlier than other tables of the period.

Fortunately Gilman dated his pictures, so that the examples that still exist show how he progresses through more than twenty years of recording what he saw. By the time he was in his teens he already had a reputation for being able to draw.

He was self-taught, and his early pictures are like a draftsman’s architectural drawings. He would have been lost without his ruler. Every clapboard is the same width as every other clapboard. No brick is larger than another brick. When he colors his drawings the barns are as conscientiously red as if he were up on a ladder with a four-inch brush and Venetian red mixed with skim milk.

Perspective does not trouble him in these early pictures. Light and shade are no particular problems to him either. Even after he became more conscious of them he never lost his accurate way of reporting what he saw. Yet during

By Louise Andrews Kent

and

Elizabeth Kent Gay

Montpelier from Heaton Hill seventy years ago found Capitol dome still ungilded. Loomis Street is in the left foreground.

VERMONT Life
his years in Montpelier he became able to make the
details of a scene minister to the mood of the whole sub-
ject. It is a long road from the early, quite stiff architec-
tural drawings to the large picture he called, “Moonlight
on the Farm.” Gilman regarded this picture as his master-
piece. It is done in what is usually called crayon. He him-
self called it pencil. There are touches of white paint that
make the moon, the brook, the lights of the farmhouse
windows shine out in a landscape otherwise soft and
shadowy.

Most artists draw their self-portraits facing a mirror.
In “Moonlight on the Farm” Gilman is walking away from
us, his face a mystery. In another picture, however, we see
at least his profile.

From the series of pictures done in the vicinity of
Montpelier and Barre during the Eighties we can recon-

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struct a little of what Gilman must have been doing. In the summers he would go out on the road and stop at a prosperous-looking farm, asking if he might stay for a while and draw the homestead. The result is that many of the “best families” had Gilman drawings to hang in their parlors and hand down as family treasures. He liked to use members of the family as models—driving along the road, playing in the dooryard or pitching hay. This record of rural settings and houses of the Eighties is thus quite priceless, affectionately rendered, exact and appealing.

During the winters Gilman doubtless gave drawing lessons in his Montpelier “studio.” His ideas on teaching art are embodied in a small pamphlet called *Instructions in Pictorial Art for Home Study*.

Lack of money seems to have been a chronic state with Gilman, like many greater and lesser artists before and after him. When he got behind in his rent he paid for it in drawing. From this period came the interesting portfolio of drawings which contains work in crayon, pencil, charcoal, sepia and water color. Gilman was a master in many media. He etched, made lithographs and painted in oils. He even tried a few cartoons.

Most of Gilman’s work is in private hands but a number can be seen at the Kent Tavern Museum, Calais, during the summer months. They include the “Moonlight on the Farm.”

In 1884 Gilman became a Christian Scientist and when he left Montpelier in 1892 it was to be near Mary Baker Eddy outside Concord, N. H. Gilman drew her portrait (now in the Christian Science Church, Barre) and he also published a book of drawings and photographs of “Pleasant View,” Mrs. Eddy’s home. Gilman was asked to make drawings for Mrs. Eddy’s poem *Christ and Christmas* and he kept a diary during the time he worked with her. Extracts from the diary have been published but are difficult to find.

To Mrs. Eddy, a preface to the diary states, Gilman appeared “a lone, homeless wanderer with native ability for picture making. A vague, nameless sense of infinite beauty attended his thoughts from childhood. His childlike state of thought was engendered by the sequestered ways of art practice in country by-ways.”

Gilman studied to become a Christian Science healer with Dr. Foster Eddy and paid for his tuition by doing pictures. He was often depressed and one diary entry reads: “suffered with travail of soul, fear of failure to meet expenses of daily necessities. No order work except two $5 pictures. Experimented with pastel work to have something to sell. With but one dollar in my pocket, a month’s board owing, room rent over two weeks, clothing getting old and seedy, laundry work, etc. taking my last dollar, sold 2 pastels to Mr. Hill for $10.”
In 1892 Gilman moved to Gardner, Mass. and there we lose track of him, though we can be sure he went on drawing and painting for years. All he wished from life was to draw and earn enough money to pay for his materials and his board and room and “daily necessities.” Small and simple things always contented him—a boy fishing, pigeons flying round a dovecote, the look of light on roofs. He was too gentle and simple a person ever to be a success in money terms. His own kind of success can be judged by the pleasure that people still get from his quietly skillful, unaffected drawings and paintings of Vermont life in the Eighties. Certainly he earned the simple statement on his granite tombstone: James Franklin Gilman, Artist, 1850–1929.

Courtesy Ilda Robinson Witham

Gilman completed this striking portrait of Ilda Robinson of Calais in 1882, the year she died of consumption.
Gilman’s 1882 view of Kents Corner, Calais includes the Kent children, foreground, and their elders beyond. Large brick building today is the Vermont Historical Society’s Kent Tavern.

View of the Coburn farm in East Montpelier looks toward Plainfield and Spruce Mountain. A modern color photograph of the same scene appeared in Vermont Life’s Summer 1954 issue.
Ira Rich Kent of Calais, four when pictured by Gilman, became editor of the Youths Companion and managing editor of Houghton-Mifflin, publishers.
Morse Homestead just off the County Road in East Montpelier shows the whole family in natural pursuits. Mechanical mowing machine was then a novelty.

Gilman did many versions of this scene, Lower State Street, Montpelier. Following his custom of picturing actual people he showed here Mrs. Phylida Standish, children Ruth, Richard and Myles. Watering his horse upstream is Dr. Macomber. Hi Smith is on wood wagon.
Sunsets are deceptive things set on film. They impart a transient glow to landscapes, bring to sometimes drab scenes an unnatural beauty and appeal.

This is Molly's Pond in Cabot, Camel's Hump 30 miles westward. These exposures show what the eye alone cannot evaluate: the magical shift of hues which, minute by minute, the setting sun engenders.

These sequences were taken only minutes apart as the sun came finally to the mountain, bearing its brief, shifting colors to the darkening world below.
Some Vermont Ways

by

Vrest Orton

Advice to New Vermonters

It is true that I was born in Vermont, that my paternal ancestors came here from Connecticut before 1770; my maternal from Quebec in 1609 but... when I was about nine years old my father took me out of Vermont and I did not return until nearly 30 years later. Therefore I had to start all over. All the authenticity of my family tradition cut no ice at all. When I returned in the mid-thirties from New York City, I was stamped with the stigma of the outlander just as indelibly as if my forebears had never lived in the Republic of Vermont.

I cite these personal facts for two valid reasons: First, that no one will think me presumptuous in the title of this piece, and second, that any to whom such advice comes will understand that I have been through the same apprenticeship as any new Vermonter will have to go through. There's probably a third reason:—people are pretty much the same everywhere. From the dawn of the world's first recorded civilization down through the twenty distinct civilizations Prof. Toynbee records, rural people in the hill regions of the world, whether Basques in northern Spain, Sherpas in Darjeeling, whiskey still tenders in the highlands of Scotland, or Vermonters in the Green Mountains, all react just the same way toward newcomers. So there is nothing unique in the way Vermonters behave.

At the bottom of the equation is this: they are going to wait to see what kind of a person you turn out to be. This is a pretty good system. It works well anywhere. Vermonters like other hill people are extremely independent. They wish to remain so. I have seen some of the newcomers move into a town and without waiting to get their breaths, plunge wholeheartedly and quite sincerely into every opening, social or otherwise, that presents itself. Before they have a chance to get acquainted they find themselves deep in the heart of the highlands... from which spring several disadvantages. First, you have become terribly intimate with some people with whom, when you get to know them better, prove to be less desirable intimate companions. But it is too late. You can't withdraw. You are there. The others are there. Social intimacy just because of geographical propinquity is fraught with hazards. This is a sad but vital truth. Second, this effervescent desire to general intimacy also tends to rob Vermont neighbors of some of their classic independence. It is true that no man is an island, and it is also true that no man is an arena.

My advice to new Vermonters then, who are socially minded, is to go slowly. There are soft shoulders at the periphery. There are sharp curves. There are steep muddy hills and sometimes there are road blocks. In Vermont we have all kinds of people just as other countries. Some of the newcomers are still hypnotized by the potent rural myth which is that all Vermonters are wonderful, quaint, interesting and even honest folk. There is nothing so tragic as to have to live in close proximity with people one has become too intimate with after one finds that both parties have nothing in common. It takes about five years to find out some of these old truths. In other cases it takes ten... and more often it takes twenty-five.

One also should go slowly in choosing a town to live in. Some Vermont towns are more desirable for certain types of people than others. My advice before you choose a town to buy property in, is to read and study Vermont history. And not only formal history, but economic history, geography, land use, social trends, and population changes. Then get copies of the town history, if there is one, and lastly, study carefully town reports for the last ten years. See whether the town is run efficiently or not. The index of this is usually the town debt. Towns that constantly reach and hold to their debt limit are inefficiently run towns where the burden of poor stewardship is passed on to the people who have to pay more taxes for bad business. Look at the reports of the Town Road Commissioner, and see if the town does a good job not only building roads, but maintenance of summer roads and especially in spending money to scrape winter roads and to sand and salt hard surface winter roads. Towns that try to save tax money by not spending it for the purpose for which it was raised, are badly run towns. Look at the reports of delinquent taxes and of the Overseer of the poor. A heavy burden of taxes that can never be collected, a high cost of taking care of public charges indicate a poor town. Look at the reports of the School Board. A town that raises and spends money on schools, not only on just buildings, but on getting and keeping good teachers, is a good town.

Don't get the impression from all this, that there are a lot of poor people in Vermont. There have never been many poor people in Vermont. The only people out of work are usually those who won't work. Same as elsewhere. Anyone who has a modicum of good sense, a little willingness to work and some energy, can make a living in Vermont, anywhere... any town, north, south, east or west.

After you have selected your town, the next problem is to decide what part of the town you want to live in. Of course in our cities, this probably can be solved by a quick drive around the streets. In the rural towns, this survey...
can not be made in that way. I have seen very nice people come into a rural town, go into ecstasies about the wonderful view from the front porch of the old house for sale, the superb hand-hewn timbers in the attic roof (better look at those in the cellar too) and the inevitable trout brook on the property. I don’t say it happens every time, but sometimes this is the result: The view remains fine . . . that is, when you can get to the house. Remember, we have a law saying that the roads shall be kept in good repair in the summer and spring and fall, and that in the winter they shall be scraped. But also remember that the Road Commissioner is a human being; so are the three Selectmen. If your superb view from the front porch is on top of a hill, on a remote back one-way road that washes out in the spring, that can’t be plowed in the winter because of some of the narrow places . . . you will find that the Selectmen and Road Commissioner are still willing and would like to obey that law on the statute’s book, but there are limits to human endurance. If there are, and in some towns there are, 50 to 100 miles of road to plough in a day so the farmers can get out the milk, the kids can get to school, and others can go to work, your road may be about the last one the plough gets to. And that may be three in the morning.

I have seen these very nice people also find that the trout brook still runs, but eight families up the stream haven’t the same ideals about water purity as the nice people have, and these families consider a brook something put there to take things away in.

Perhaps more tragic a plight is this: these nice people who bought this wonderful quaint early American house (described by the realtors as “Colonial” . . . built in 1858 . . . some people think Colonial means anything before the 1914 World War) now find out that they are living in a section which the English call “a depressed social area”!

Of course, we have a few such areas. Who doesn’t? The people who live in them are perhaps unfortunate, perhaps we should do something about it, perhaps society is to blame. But also, perhaps if you are moving into Vermont you would rather not live in their midst.

Therefore, before buying a house in any part of a town you don’t know, I should certainly take these steps and ask advice of, first the nearest municipal court judge. He knows what kind of people live where, especially those who are constantly breaking laws. After this, I would surely consult a local lawyer, if there is one, next the president of the nearest bank, and finally the school teachers. They can give you hardboiled, unbiased advice. This you probably won’t get from some of the people who live in the town as they don’t want to say anything about their neighbors.

Next, when you have selected your place don’t, as a rule, attempt to be your own lawyer, surveyor and negotiator. The business of buying land is sometimes a long drawn-out exasperating mission. Records go back for 175 years, boundaries and people have changed hundreds of times. Vermonters are well intentioned and usually honest but some of the things we know are still wrong. The safe course is to retain a lawyer who will search the title, help you deal with the seller, advise you about terms, authenticate the deed, and introduce you to the best bank for a mortgage loan if you want one. And, if he thinks you need a formal survey, he will advise you and find you a surveyor.

Naturally, I could go on for pages . . . and write a book on this intriguing subject of how to start life in Vermont . . . but space here is limited (I may write a book later). But I must not forget one other piece of advice . . . get acquainted with the town clerk. This official usually, although elected at the town meeting annually, serves many terms and knows all the local conditions, ordinances, etc. He can tell you who owns what, how to register your car, when you can vote, how you can vote, how taxes are figured, what the Grand List is, and many other vexing questions that many of us who have lived here for years have never taken the time to fix firmly in our minds.

And lastly, try to go to the town meeting the first Tuesday in March. Listen. Listen for several years. The best way to get in wrong in Vermont is to sound off the first or the second session. After a while you will learn a number of interesting things in these town meetings, but mostly you will learn who are the people in the town trying to make the place a better town, who are those who don’t care, and who are the very small minority who want it left static, the way it was, so long as it isn’t “different”!

After attending town meetings for several years, minding your own business and paying your own bills you will, in a relatively short time, be properly oriented so you can move in local society and make your contributions to the community and even the state, without too many hazards and heartaches.

VERMONT Life
In the midst of Brattleboro’s main street—a business section largely characterized by the flow of the retail shop and store trade—stands one of the largest shoe and rubber footwear wholesalers in the nation.

Daily, mammoth long distance trucks back into the warehouses of Dunham Bros. Co., to bring footwear of all kinds for every member of the family from some of the 40 active sources of supply. And nearly as often freight cars grind onto the siding behind the warehouses, there to unload or take on more shipments. Or, perhaps, Dunham’s own truck can be seen heading for the post office piled high with smaller shipments that are to go by parcel post. Indeed, every day is a busy one, for orders come in from some thirty salesmen not only in New England but from as far south as South Carolina and as far west as Michigan. The postage bill alone was over $50,000 in 1955, an increase of 150 per cent in the last twenty years.

These are only the outward signs of the well-ordered bustle that marks this progressive firm, now within four years of celebrating its diamond jubilee. But they are faithful indicators of what Dunham’s means to the community. Its heavy payroll goes into the pockets of well over 100 people of Brattleboro and surrounding towns, and the civic leadership of its officers carries on a tradition...
that started back in 1885 when George and Charles Dunham made their modest start.

It was in that year that the two brothers, both born on a farm in North Paris, Maine, sat on a park bench overlooking the Connecticut River, talked about buying a small shoe store and sealed the bargain with a handshake. George had been a Latin and Greek teacher in Portland, Maine, High School and Charles had worked in his father's general store in North Paris.

That handshake pooled their resources of $2,500 and, as things turned out, it was the total capital investment in the company whose sales have run well over a hundred million dollars.

Perhaps one secret of the success in traceable to the first advertisement the two brothers inserted in The Reformer on July 31, 1885. It read: “Dunham Bros, who have just secured possession of their recently purchased boot and shoe business of H. W. Simonds, make their announcement in another column. They are enterprising fellows, square in deal, and propose to push things on the one successful basis—cash.”

Enterprise, square dealing and a sound financial policy thus are the three tenets upon which this business was founded. The growth in the last 71 years is evidence that the brothers were sound in their original judgment and were able to inculcate those ideas in those who have since taken their places.

Sales in the small store the first year were $13,000 and increased steadily until, in 1891, the brothers decided to go into the wholesale business. On dull days George piled sample cases in his horse and buggy rig and called on customers within a radius of twenty or thirty miles of Brattleboro. Some orders were small, some a little larger, but all added to make a good total.

On one of these trips, in 1894, he saw in Saxtons River, a lumberman's sock that was the best he had ever seen. Upon inquiry he found it was manufactured by a concern in Mishawaka, Indiana. Excited, he and his brother wrote the Mishawaka Woolen Manufacturing Co. seeking a franchise for the company's entire line.

It proved to be the turning point in the Dunham business. Although the company did not grant the franchise for two years, the brothers' persistence was finally recognized and they took on the famous Red Ball line in 1897. So successful were they that they soon outsold all other New England wholesalers combined. Toward the end of the century the president of the Mishawaka firm came to Brattleboro and offered them the exclusive contract as wholesalers in New England and Greater New York. The one and only formal contract was signed on January 2, 1900, an agreement that was to have great benefit for both parties.

(Text continued on page 46)
ABOVE: Driver empties his truck onto carrier belt. Dunham's has latest equipment for easy loading and unloading.

RIGHT: Filing cabinets, serviced by four girls, represent five to six thousand Dunham customers east of Mississippi.
LEFT: Shoe-conscious women admire Dunham's retail store display, Main Street, Brattleboro.

BETWEEN: Sample department employees supply the salesmen with every item in the line, 800 different styles of shoes and of rubber footwear.
The initial surge of Dunham Bros. growth was aided by a third brother, Lyndon, and it was he who became its president in 1927 and guided the company's fortunes through the depression of the 1930's and the years of World War II.

Lyndon L. Dunham joined his elder brothers in 1894 when he left a grain business in Niantic, Connecticut, and took over a second retail store Charles and George had opened in Bellows Falls. When the company went into the wholesale business he came to Brattleboro to run the store there. Eventually, the Bellows Falls store was given up when the brothers decided to concentrate their efforts in Brattleboro.

The growth of the wholesale business has not brought about any slackening of effort in the retail store, and now it is regarded as the largest in Vermont.

Physically, the expansion has kept up with the trend. Besides taking over more office space, the company has built two six-story warehouses behind the Main Street premises and other storage space is rented in other parts of town.

Dunham's ace-in-the-hole has been, besides its strong policy towards its customers, an employe relationship that has paid large dividends. Many of its employes have been there for ten or fifteen years, but others have piled up from...
twenty to fifty years of service. A few years ago three employees retired with a total service of 164 years. One had sixty years (she was the first full time employee at the retail store), another fifty-six years and the third forty-eight years.

The company has had but three presidents, all bearing the Dunham name. George was head until he died in 1927, then Lyndon took over until he died in 1950. Today John L. Dunham, son of Lyndon, is its head.

The brothers saw the advantage of bringing new blood into the business, too. In 1919, Harold W. Mason who had married into the Dunham family upon his graduation from Dartmouth, came home from the war and joined the company. Upon the death of George he became vice-president and treasurer. He also found time for some political activity on a national scale and was secretary of the Republican National Committee. For several years he was Vermont National Committeeman. In 1944, at the age of 49, he died. His son, George, now fills the company offices he once held, while Nelson F. Withington was employed in 1945 as general manager.

The new leadership is vigorous and promises to guide the company to its high point. It is keeping before it the tenets of its founders—enterprise, square dealing and sound financial policy.
You can hunt rabbits without a Beagle hound—lots of people do—but it isn't as much fun and it's much harder work.

Hunters know that most rabbits are shot when they circle back to their starting points. Experience has taught them that a scared rabbit is a poor target when he first starts running—particularly as he takes off when you least expect it. Knowing that bunnies like to keep pretty close to home, and that they tend to return to their starting point once their initial fright is over, the plan is to pick a spot nearby where the rabbit will have to cross open ground, and wait for him to come back.

This sounds easy but it doesn’t take into account some of the rabbits’ other habits, such as standing motionless and letting you walk right past without seeing him. Or hiding in the densest bramble patches or brush piles where you couldn't spot him in the first place. Perhaps after his first frightened dash he decides that it is a nice day for sight-seeing so he takes several hours to make his circle—all this time you are waiting expectantly with gun poised. By the time the rabbit gets back, you are probably home cursing your bad luck.

A Beagle can change all this. Any dog will chase game if given the chance but it takes a real hunting dog to do the
RABBITS

"Duffy and Rocky are trying to sweet-talk Tom into a rabbit hunt."

"Come on Tom, let's get going."

Written and Photographed by
John F. Smith, Jr.
job right. There is a big difference between chasing and hunting and on rabbits there is a big difference between Other Dogs and Beagles. (Bassett owners will please pardon us; there are exceptions. Of course, some Beagle owners will say that the Bassett got his sad look when he found out he wasn’t a Beagle.)

The Beagle is easily the number-one rabbit hound in numbers and popularity. Small, clean and friendly, he is not an expensive dog to own. When he isn’t out hunting rabbits, he makes an ideal pet. And, oddly enough, this adaptability doesn’t seem to affect his abilities as a hunter.

Once in the field, he becomes all business. No blundering about hoping to pick up a scent. If there has been a rabbit in the area, he’ll soon know about it. Slowly and deliberately, each brush-pile and possible hiding place is investigated. Suddenly the tempo of his sniffing increases and the tail which had been flopping back and forth starts describing excited circles. Finally after a couple of tentative yips the dog sounds off with the characteristic baying of a hound on the trail, and scampers off.

When he’s on the trail, the dog won’t be distracted by even the hottest scents of other animals—he’s after a

“When Tom blows that whistle, it means stop whatever you’re doing and get back—fast.”
"Let's see what we can find in this brush."

"If you didn't keep me on this foolish leash, I wouldn't get all tangled up."

rabbit. Chances are the rabbit will try doubling back on his own trail or a number of confusing tricks. But our hero sticks to the trail, circling around to pick it up again if he should lose it momentarily.

It is on the trail that the Beagles' short legs are most helpful. He can penetrate dense undergrowth with ease and even more important, his speed is limited so that he doesn't push his quarry too closely. Once the rabbit knows he is in little danger of being overtaken he slows down and resorts to guile rather than speed. A faster dog would panic him and he would probably run for his life in a straight line rather than circling.

In the meantime, the hunter is keeping track of the rabbits' progress by listening to the sound of his hounds. So long as they are baying, he knows they are trailing a rabbit and he can judge distance and direction. If the baying stops, he knows they have lost the trail or the rabbit has holed up. (The burrow-dwelling cottontail rabbit seeks safety underground at the first opportunity, ending the chase and frustrating both dogs and hunter. His cousin, the snowshoe hare is a surface-dweller and places his faith in speed for protection. He seems to enjoy trying to outspeed and outwit the dogs—making far better sport.) Once the trail is lost, the dogs may be called in by voice or whistle and another area investigated.

If the dogs keep on the trail, the hunter takes his stand along a clearing or road and listens and waits. With
“Time to be heading home, he says.”

“But Tom, I don’t want to go home yet.”

experience, he can tell approximately how much lead the rabbit has and be ready for him. Usually, the rabbit will stop and wait before crossing open ground and then try to bolt across as quickly as possible. Once he bursts into the open, the dog has done his job and it is up to the hunter.

Breeding alone doesn’t necessarily make a good rabbit dog. He must be trained to make the best use of his natural instincts and abilities. The best way to do this is to take him along and work him with older, more experienced dogs.

One of my neighbors, T. O. Rogers, is a Beagle fancier and rabbit hunter. He keeps a small pack for hunting and usually has a litter of puppies to train each year. Most of these pups must be sold but Tom and his wife have the fun of raising them and watching them develop into rabbit dogs. The saddest part of the process comes when it is time to decide which of the pups must be sold to keep down the size of the pack.

This year, Tom kept only one of the new pups. These pictures show a typical training hunt as it might have been seen through the eyes of the dogs themselves—Gus, the pup (who is now the largest of the three): His father, Rocky, and (Miss) Duffy, an old family friend.
Even for a state of individualists and for timber country at that, John Rowell of Tunbridge stands apart. In the Paul Bunyan tradition he reminds you physically of the giant maples he cuts, but at heart he's also an educator with a zeal for practical forest conservation, a self-made man whose lore of woodcraft and tree-growth secrets, gathered in his thirty-three years, holds listeners of any age enthralled.

John Rowell, in business for himself thirteen years now, is a specialist in big timber, in odd, unusual and extra-wide native woods. He knows where in Vermont to find them, and where over the world—as far as South Africa—people want them.

Back in Vermont after World War II, Rowell started in the lumber business with an eye to unusual orders—to make use of the big logs most mills can't handle and to supply the outsized boards and uncommon woods others couldn't. He began buying odd logs at scattered mills, spotting and buying stumpage that regular loggers leave.

Rowell built or rigged most of his own heavy-duty (but very portable) logging equipment. One of his loader-trucks can lift five tons of dead weight ten feet in the air. His own sawmill in Tunbridge cuts boards wider—up to twenty-six inches—than most mills handle.

Right from the start roller logs, cut from giant maples, were the mainstay of his special trade. These are the huge rollers used in paper and textile-making machines. Maple

Photographed by
Geoffrey Orton
is the only commercial wood that wears evenly, without
ridges forming from the annual ring growth.

Now Rowell is furnishing unusual woods and paneling
to down-country architects and builders— butternut,
cherry, cucumber wood (a variety of poplar), curly and
bird’s-eye maple and sycamore, for example. But still the
bulk of his business is in high-grade maple.

“Maples that are more than twenty-four inches in
diameter give dark sap,” Rowell says. “The quality and
the yield of a sugar bush is improved when trees that big
are thinned out.”

A strong advocate of timberland ownership for invest­
ment, is Rowell. He points out that an acre of land will
support just so much leaf surface, but that if you cut back
the big trees on that acre to three-quarters of the maxi­
mum, the rate of growth will speed up four to ten times
what it was before. By proper and frequent cutting, (a
twenty-inch tree removed per acre each year), a net yield
of $5 per acre per year is possible—a better return than
most land use offers in Vermont.

“A timber lot is like a bank account. You have to save
to cut and you have to cut to save,” Rowell states. “But
unlike a bank account, your timber interest won’t com­
ound. You have to harvest your interest. Besides, timber
is Vermont’s only renewable resource.”

Slowly John Rowell is buying his own timberland—in
part so he can manage it as he thinks best and harvest
from his own property, and in part as an investment
toward his youngsters’ education. The trees will be there,
growing and yielding in the years ahead, for John Rowell
and for his children.
Roxwell's Timbridge mill is equipped to saw boards up to 26-inches wide. This is another of his specialties.

Huge maple, destined for North Adams mill is felled at East Barre. Roller log trees must have a sound section of at least five feet.
This winter, as you pause to admire the attractive array of wooden gadgets displayed for Christmas shoppers, you can remember an old adage: It's an ill wind that blows no one some good. For it certainly applies to Vermont's woodworking industry.

A hundred years or so ago, this industry was the main-spring of most Green Mountain villages, and every up-and-coming community had its cooper's shop, its chair-making shop, and its wagon factory. But as time went on and mass-produced wares of paper, glass and metal began to take over the uses of wood, the dollars that had rolled so merrily from thousands of small shops dotted over the state diminished and often dropped out of sight entirely. And with them went the hopes and ambitions of many a Vermont town.

Then came World War I, followed by World War II, each with its attendant restrictions on metals. The manufacture of wooden toys took a new lease on life, and wooden kitchenware appeared once more on store counters. In 1954 there were 170 woodworking plants in the state with a gross annual income of ten million dollars—not an overwhelming figure, but encouraging for a state with more cows than people. And among these 170 plants were a number of ventures which had started up in the last
Native hardwood lumber is stacked in 10,000 board foot loads for kiln drying.

BELOW: Chet Phillips and Lester Taylor seal in pairs fast-selling "Q-T" cutting boards.

A timely example of these small, but flourishing enterprises is the J. K. Adams Company of Dorset, which opened for business just 12 years ago in December, 1944 and has certainly proved an enduring Christmas gift to the community.

Half screened as it is by a stand of young trees, the inconspicuous wood and cement building is hardly noticed by the passing motorist as he speeds along Route 30. But that same motorist would be astonished if he could see the variety of products made there or know that their high quality has made them respected from Maine to Malta—literally, for one of the firm’s foreign admirers is a Maltese businessman who received one of Adams’ beautiful hardwood carving boards last Christmas.

You will see these carving boards as well as the company’s cutting boards and blocks in a wide range of sizes in shops and department stores all over the country. Two original features of the boards appreciated by homemakers are the built-in magnet which holds the steel slicing knife (which comes with each board) and the carbide knife sharpener set in one corner. Another gadget designed to please is a server, with smart brass fixtures and troughs for crackers and tidbits. Turn this tray over and it becomes a handy cutting board supported by its brass legs. But the most impressive of this line is the new “Magnum” platter, large enough to hold a roast, baked potatoes and relishes.

A recent development is a hanging knife rack with flexible “fingers” that will accommodate any blade thickness. Other kitchen wall accessories are the old-fashioned roller towel rack (always packaged with a gaily striped...
towel) and the "Old Vermont" kitchen shelf. A companion piece to the roller towel rack, this shelf has a plate groove, a slot for knives or other kitchen implements, and four brass hooks for pans, chopping boards or any of the other kitchen gadgets people like to keep handy.

Nor have the menfolk been forgotten. The plant manufactures a gun rack in red maple and wild cherry that sells by the thousands to sports shops. The Adams work bench of kiln-dried maple is the ultimate for professional and home craftsmen.

From mid-July until late fall, it is the gift trade items that keep the shop humming. But contract orders act as a valuable back-log of production and hold employment at a steady level throughout the year. Important among these contract jobs are tripods, tilting drawing tables and easels made for a single firm. J. K. Adams Co. manufactures its entire stock of drafting equipment.

As you walk around and observe the up-to-date methods and machinery used in this plant, it is rather surprising to learn that all this started with a retired stockbroker's philanthropic interest in his Vermont neighbors, and that the business had its first home in a small garage in Dorset village.

A native San Franciscan who fell in love with Vermont while his son and daughter were attending college at Dartmouth and Bennington respectively, Josiah K. Adams decided in 1944 to quit the ticker tape for a more relaxed life in the Green Mountains. The little garage where he
first began making a simple pull toy called the Speedy Racer furnished an outlet for his sparetime interest in woodworking. But it was also an expression of his concern for the plight of returning Vermont veterans. For Dorset, well known though it is for its rich historic background and scenic beauty, is not noted for its employment possibilities.

The little pull toy, a contract job manufactured from the waste ends of other woodworking plants, led to other contract projects, some for the government and others for private enterprise.

In 1946 the business was moved to its present site. Part of the present plant, which was built piecemeal, is a large old wooden icehouse, which Mr. Adams bought and then rebuilt in its present location.

In 1950, he acquired an associate, Malcolm Cooper, who, like Adams, has a background far removed from the woodworking industry. Their first meeting was a chance encounter which took place under rather unusual circumstances.

As Mr. Adams tells it, driving from the plant one Saturday afternoon, he glanced in his rear view mirror and saw a car turn into the shop parking space. Curious, he followed the tall driver, stopped to chat, and finally invited him in for a look around the plant. Cooper’s evident interest led to other meetings and the result was a combination that has meant a great deal to the growth and development of the company. Cooper’s experience as an industrial engineer and his legal training have proved invaluable in stream-
Against a backdrop of young pines a group of employees takes an afternoon break in the J. K. Adams company’s back yard.

lining production as well as in designing new products.

All the woods used in the shop—maple, beech, oak, cherry, birch and other hardwoods—come from Vermont forest tracts, and the rough lumber is stacked in the yard in lofty piles. Here in the shadow of Owl’s Head and Mr. Aolus, the wood is seasoned until it is rolled into the drying kiln.

These oil-heated Moore drying kilns, each of which will hold a full 10,000 board feet of lumber, are the heart of the plant and one of its greatest prides. For the kilns themselves and the scientific devices for testing their efficiency are the last word in modern equipment. Here the temperature is gradually stepped up to 180 degrees and the lumber which started with a moisture content of 55 percent is gradually dried down to a moisture content of seven to eight percent. Here Phil Connell, who presides over this part of the plant’s operations, keeps a graphic record of the wood’s moisture content from day to day.

All of the Vermont craftsmen employed by Adams, who hail from Dorset, East Dorset, South Dorset, Pawlet, Manchester Depot and Manchester Center, seem to feel the same satisfaction in turning out fine quality work that animated their forbears.

Although the company started as a “contract shop,” the fine design and excellent workmanship of its own items have produced a steadily increasing demand from gift shops, sport shops, and department stores as well as industrial firms seeking unusual and practical Christmas remembrances for their employees and patrons. This industrial gift business plus the growing premium business now accounts for most of the plant’s largest orders. The result is that today the ratio of orders is about 70 per cent company products to 30 per cent contract work.

One reason for this is the management’s constant effort to improve its products. And this effort extends down through the whole plant, for both Mr. Cooper and Mr. Adams encourage suggestions. With the look-ahead policy and high standards now in force, the prospects seem bright for this company’s turning out its “wooden dollars” for many years to come.
The Quiet Life
(Continued from page 17)

For the arm-chair explorer of Vermont and other backroads, who spends the winter planning next season’s adventures, the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges has issued a Guide to Covered Bridges of the United States, a descriptive listing, up-to-date as possible, by states and counties, of all the covered bridges left standing. These fast-vanishing landmarks of a more leisurely day appeal to most of us for their ingenious variety of construction, their interest as photographic subjects, or just their sturdy charm as a characteristic element in our landscape.

In Return to Eden, a book of character sketches and anecdotes centering around the author’s settling in a small Vermont village, Edgar Cary Markham recalls nostalgically covered-bridge times when farming was largely done by hand and families depended on their own efforts for entertainment. The traditions of independence and neighborly kindness which he praises still exist in many Vermont communities, though those who practice them drive late-model cars and own television sets and freezers. We have, in truth, the best of both worlds.

Robert Ashley in Rebel Raiders has illuminated for young people the St. Albans Raid, a little-known episode of the Civil War in which Confederate soldiers attacked that quiet Vermont town from Canada, robbing its banks and terrifying its citizens. Our twelve-year old reader pronounces it first-class, exciting and true. Men at Work in New England by Henry B. Lent describes twenty-three Yankee products, from felt hats to destroyers, including Vermont maple syrup, granite, marble, skiing and machine tools, all in a brisk, informative style. The variety of uses to which New Englanders are putting their skill and craftsmanship is impressive. These will surely be included in the Bookwagons’ school collections this winter.

For young people everywhere, but especially those in their teens who feel a responsibility for the welfare of their complicated world, Senator Ralph Flanders, in Letter to a Generation, has analyzed the perils which threaten Western civilization and proposes their conquest through universal controlled disarmament. In this ‘Grand Project’ he hopes to enlist the energy and idealism of which he believes youth to be capable. His wisdom, experience and sense of history, coupled with his strong moral principles, make his proposition realistic and tough-minded in a way that should appeal to idealists of all ages. Letter to a Generation is a small book, but one to read and ponder in the quiet of winter evenings when snow drifts cold and still across the roads, nails pull in the clapboards with a melodious twang and birch logs in the fireplace turn from luxury to necessity.

A Treasury of Vermont Life
Edited by Stephen Greene, Ralph N. Hill, Jr., Arthur W. Peach, and Walter Hard, Jr.
The Countryman Press, Woodstock, 1956, $5

Yankees in Paradise
Bradford Smith

A Guide to Covered Bridges of the United States
Edited by Betsy and Philip Clough
National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges, Inc., 1956
Charles Wilson, 6 Gardner Road, Reading, Mass., $1.25

Return to Eden
Edgar Cary Markham
Vantage Press, New York, 1956, $2.50

Rebel Raiders
Robert Ashley
The John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia and Toronto, 1956, $1.75

Men at Work in New England
Henry B. Lent
G. P. Putnam’s Sons, New York, 1956, $2.75

Letter to a Generation
Ralph E. Flanders
Beacon Press, Boston, 1956, $2.50

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President Eisenhower, Rutland, 1955