TENTH BIRTHDAY ISSUE

Rutland Railway
Vermont Republicanism

How they Built the Covered Bridges
Mushrooms in Vermont
"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

No Favorites: Anticipating angry charges of partisan politics resulting from our page 10 article, the editors wish to reaffirm that Vermont Life is not partial to any party and is merely presenting an interpretive discussion of another Vermont characteristic. We cite our Winter 1948-49 article, Vermont Democrat, and also forecast a later discussion of the Democratic party in Vermont.

Contest: See page 15 for a test of Vermont knowledge. Where is the scene? We don't know but hope some reader will.

New Faces: Before the masthead at left collapses from sheer weight of numbers, we hasten to welcome three new editorial associates, new reviewer of the arts, and new Commission chairman, Mr. Stacey. Mr. Wild, Rutland Herald editorial writer, comes from a Vermont family by way of New York state, Chicago and the University of Wisconsin. He's done varied agricultural writing, farmed in Londonderry, has two newsman sons.

Miss Tomasi, a Montpelier native, attended Trinity and Wheaton colleges, has done news and editorial work, written articles, short stories and two novels, the last one, Like Lesser Gods.

Mr. Hoyt, Massachusetts born of Vermont parents, is a Middlebury graduate, built and now operates Owl's Head Harbor on Lake Champlain. He writes fiction extensively for national magazines, had published in 1950 the popular, Does it Always Rain Here, Mr. Hoyt?

Wrong Again: Hundreds have spotted it so far—an erroneous caption on page 30, of our Summer issue. Groton, of course, is on the Wells River. The cover shot, incidentally is near Route 12, not 14.

Index: An index of Vermont Life's first decade is now ready. Send 15c. W.H.Jr.

THE COVER

—Last Winter's issue also pictured this scene, the village of Waits River on Route 25. Arthur Griffin filmed it.
Green Mountain

POSTBOY

Exploration and its attendant adventure need not be relegated to the dim past or foreign territories. To savor this Autumn one needs: a car (if preferred, a horse or sturdy pair of legs), a county map, and a free, unhurried day ahead—a day with leisure to stop at random to investigate whatever hits your fancy.

We are talking about back road touring in Vermont—adventuring this crisp, bright season into the open countryside—where the roads are not string-straight but follow the land’s folds, where a scarcity of signposts invites you to get lost, but where, if you do, it makes no difference. This land of back roads, more than 9000 miles of them, lies beyond the usual touring purview awaiting the explorer of the real Vermont.

Autumn is perhaps the pleasantest time to try the back country, and this is the best place to relish the foliage colors. Our readers, we assume, enjoy a spirit of adventure and personal exploration that goes beyond guided or suggested tours, though such tours are available this season in various parts of the state.

True, each of us has his favorite road and region, but there are countless others of equal fascination. Here it might be said: there is no best area of Vermont to savor the Autumn colors. The bright foliage lies everywhere you chance to turn. The time for it varies with the year, but usually the last week of September and the first two of October span the height of leaf color.

A good course is to pick one area, perhaps to base there for a week, and on day-trips explore the intriguing, bewildering net of hidden roads that wind around it. Most Vermont towns are six miles square and within that compass often hold more than one-hundred miles of town highways.

This Autumn safari, then, requires a car, preferably not one of Detroit’s more colossal triumphs, which boast five feet of surplus overhang in back and a bare five inches of clearance beneath. Any sensible car will do. Then fill the tank with gasoline and carry handy a map of the county (secured from the Vermont Highway Department, Montpelier at 10c or $1.25 the set). These maps show all the public roads and most of the buildings. To supplement them, the more detailed U.S.G.S. topographic sheets would be helpful. These are available at most Vermont bookstores.

While you drive—slowly and unfettered by an immutable schedule—let your companion (who has also seen to the packing of a picnic lunch) take charge of the maps and call the turns. The topographic sheets will show many landmarks and settlements, and perhaps occasionally a road not on your county map. This road, probably now abandoned, had best be left to foot or horseback exploration.

Besides your picnic lunch we would suggest a camera and extra jackets. The air turns chilly as the shadows lengthen and after the sunlight has turned an Autumn gold. A detailed guidebook of the area, perhaps perused the evening before, will add pleasure to the leisurely explorations.

Of course, with all the maps and study, you will get twisted and finally lost. But the civilization of hardtop roads and numbered routes can never be far away. Getting lost will provide an excuse to stop at the next farmhouse to inquire the way. One may not be rewarded with a quotable gem of Vermont humor, but certainly some fascinating lore about the region will unfold.

Your back-country tours might be based upon historical interests—following the old Hazen or Crown Point Military roads, for instance—or they might trace Indian trails and watercourses, investigate geological oddities, abandoned settlements, locate covered bridges, or even discover the old house you’ve been looking for.

It is sometimes pleasant to happen upon a cider mill, an agricultural fair, an old-home-day or, late in the afternoon perhaps a village church where a chicken pie supper is being served. (On page 21 of this issue is a partial listing of these events). But best of all is happenstance roaming, the tours with no goals or routes pre-determined. END
Born in the early morning of steam transportation, more than 107 years ago, the Rutland—Vermont's oldest railroad—in its turbulent history has battled floods, fire and financial distress in a checkered career which demonstrates this railroad can survive just about every sort of calamity.

This year of 1956 marks the re-birth of the Rutland. After a five-year period of reorganization ending last Fall the Rutland is going ahead, not under full steam, because she is now fully dieselized, but running fast now and at a profit.

Just five years ago the Rutland was deep in financial disaster as it operated 407 miles of line, including the antiquated, 53-mile Chatham Division. Of its fifty-eight locomotives only four were less than 25 years old. Its freight cars were older. It took 94 percent of revenues just to operate.

By 1950 the railroad was losing some $390,000 per year, much of it in passenger service. It was an unwieldy organization with more than 1100 employees.

Today the Rutland can report a profit of $272,197.85 for last year with the profit trend continuing this year as the railroad operates 392 miles of improved line maintained with modern machinery and operated with new equipment and run by half as many people.

In 1953 a strike halted all operations for three weeks and passenger service was abandoned then as a necessary choice if the road was to ever operate again and provide much needed freight service to western Vermont and Northern New York.

All but 117 miles of the line is in Vermont as the Rutland extends its main stem south from Alburg near the Canadian border south through Western Vermont to Rutland. From Rutland, a tortuous line runs over the Green Mountains to Bellows Falls and a connection with the Boston & Maine. Another line from Rutland goes south to Bennington and White Creek, N. Y. From White Creek the Rutland uses trackage rights over the Boston & Maine, Troy Union and New York Central to reach Chatham, N. Y. where it connects with NYC's Harlem Division, and the Boston & Albany.

From Alburg, the Rutland crosses Lake Champlain to Rouses Point, N. Y., and thence across Northern New York to Ogdensburg on the St. Lawrence River.

One hundred and seven years ago this December the Rutland (then known as the Rutland & Burlington) won its first race with time, completing the Bellows Falls to Burlington track on December 18, 1849, two weeks ahead of a rival route being pushed by the Vermont Central (now the Central Vermont).

The occasion was marked at a rocky pass in Mt. Holly by the meeting of two trains, one from Boston and another from Burlington, accompanied by the drinking of toasts and speeches of congratulation.

The Rutland was described by its first president, before a train had run over its tracks, as of "greatest importance..."
Chartered in 1843 as the Champlain & Connecticut it became the Rutland & Burlington in 1847 and then the Rutland. It has carried men and material for three major wars, furnished the State with two governors and contributed greatly to the economic development of the territory through which it passes.

Although its name and headquarters have been identified with Rutland for many years, the railroad was first promoted by a Burlington steamship operator and merchant, Judge Timothy Follett. He was attracted by the possibility of linking Boston and the heart of New England with the traffic of Lake Champlain, the Great Lakes and Canada. “Bridge” traffic between those sections is still a main source of the Rutland’s income today.

Follett, who was the first president of the company, pushed the project with all the speed possible, ordering freight depots and railroad cars built before the track was completed. Freight and passengers were being carried from Bellows Falls to Ludlow by August 15, 1849, the journey over the mountain being completed by horse-drawn stage.

The Mount Holly section was considered the most difficult part of the construction and extra men were hired by the promoters to augment the contractor’s crew.

President Follett was able to report later the “rocky ramparts of Mount Holly surrendered in less time and at
Steam enthusiasts, (as dressed for the occasion, see below) enjoy a last excursion run on the now-abandoned Chatham division.

"The Pittsford," one of eight wood-burners, built 1849.


This 1907 locomotive dates from New York Central era.
A northbound Diesel freight skirts Emerald Lake at North Dorset.

Freight yard at Rutland with new car shop, center, engine house, left.

Rutland's 555,000 bu. Ogdensburg elevator.
Unloading a new gold and green freight car.
had required, before the days of the bulldozers and power shovels, the removal of more than five million yards of earth and 300,000 yards of solid rock.

It was during the difficult construction problems between Ludlow and Rutland that one of the marvels of medical history occurred. An explosion in Cavendish during the work in 1848, blew an inch-and-a-quarter iron bar through the head of the 25-year-old foreman, Phineas Gage. In spite of the three-inch hole, Gage never lost consciousness and suffered no pain. The physician rushed to his aid, found him sitting on the hotel veranda coolly conversing with those around him. He recovered and died in Chile 21 years later.

The historic union of the line from Burlington with the track from Bellows Falls was marked by a day of celebration at the summit of Mt. Holly with stock-holders and friends exchanging congratulations. A cannon was fired and waters from the Atlantic Ocean and Lake Champlain were intermingled.

The two trains were united behind a flag-decorated wood-burning locomotive and made a triumphal journey to Burlington with frequent stops for speeches. A dinner stop was made at Brandon, where the young company had ordered railroad cars for its new line constructed by a Brandon firm.

Bridges played an important role in the construction of the 121 miles of railroad. The Company was fortunate to have the services of such men as Nicholas M. Powers,* Vermont’s most famous covered bridge builder, and Theodore D. Judah, later prominent in building the first transcontinental railroad, working from California, east.

With the railroad extended to Burlington in 1849, the fall of 1850 noted the first passenger train making the 117 miles from Ogdensburg to Rouses Point, N. Y., over the then recently completed Northern Railroad, now the Rutland. The locomotive used to haul the train was the “Chazy.” Wood was burned for fuel and there were regular “loading stations” at intervals of a few miles along the road.

A huge depot designed to serve as both a railroad station and a hotel was constructed by the road at Rouses Point in 1852. It was an “open” building, 600 feet in length and more than a hundred feet in width. It stood on the long railroad wharf and for some years its upper finished rooms served as sleeping apartments for travelers who could obtain meals in the dining room below.

The Vermont and Canada Railroad was also constructed through to Windmill Point, directly across Lake Champlain in the town of Alburg, Vt., late in 1850, and nothing then remained to complete the uninterrupted iron track connecting the ports of Ogdensburg and Boston but a bridge across Lake Champlain. This was built and opened to traffic in 1852, the first passenger train drawn by the engine “Ottawa” crossing it late that year. The total length of the span was 522 feet and it lies on 36 piers. 7,000 wooden piles were driven into the soil at the bottom of the Lake until they rested on a solid foundation at a distance of from 12 to 30 feet below the Lake’s bottom.

One great element of its strength, strangely enough, is the Rutland’s turbulent history of more than a century as it has demonstrated its ability to survive all kinds of disaster. From 1871 to 1896, for example, the Rutland was leased to its then arch-rival, the present Central Vermont. That arrangement promptly and permanently deprived it of three of its most strategic subsidiaries. Just to complicate matters, its rival on the west, the Delaware & Hudson, held stock control during most of the 1890’s. From 1905 until 1938, control rested largely with the New York Central and at times jointly with the Central and the New Haven. A period of receivership and then reorganization has stabilized the railroad.

A reorganization period of five years was completed late last fall with the Rutland in the profit making column. Once more the Rutland had survived—and this despite more than its share of natural calamities, such as floods, blizzards and hurricanes. This uncanny resiliency, this refusal to die, has been a mighty source of inspiration to the men who planned and brought about the current revival. And, when they assumed their trust at the start of the reorganization in 1950—they needed all the inspiration they could get.

To put the Rutland back on its feet, the new regime had to do a lot of things all at once. It had to build up a new management team; had to make drastic economies; somewhere it had to find the cash to buy new equipment; and it also had to build up traffic. And, it had to do all these things before the whole enterprise drowned in a flood of red ink.

But now the Rutland has taken on a new look. Employees renovated an old car shop in Rutland into a modern and spacious office building. Freight offices along the line have been renovated. A small, but completely reorganized force is at work with traffic offices in Boston, New York, Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit and of course—Rutland. One of the first steps of the reorganization was to purchase economically operated diesels with the Rutland using for down payments, salvage money obtained from tearing up miles of abandoned branch line and 15 miles of sidings, and from selling 45 old steam locomotives and 180 obsolete cars. Eventually all of the railroad’s “steamers” were sold for the purchase of new equipment. A fleet of all-steel freight cars spruced in the bright new green and gold colors of the railroad have replaced obsolete wooden cars. Throughout the nation the new freight cars proudly advertise that the Rutland is the “Green Mountain Gateway.”

Renovation of the Rutland has included the elimination

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* See Vermont Life, Autumn 1955.
of many antiquated passenger depots along the line which have in many cases been sold for various purposes and others in better condition rented. The large station in Burlington has been sold to the Green Mountain Power Corp. and has been modernized into an attractive office building by this concern. However, gone are the days of the pot-belly stoves—a familiar sight for many years to passengers keeping warm in depots awaiting the arrival of trains to Boston, New York or Montreal.

An infusion of new blood and young men have invigorated the Rutland with the same optimism its pioneer builders had, and its last report from President Gardner A. Caverly, while granting the Rutland has a long way to go before it has a clear track, points to the substantial net profits now, an accomplishment many of the Rutland’s detractors said was impossible.

Thus it goes. But Caverly’s and the directors’ concern with a smooth-running team is by no means confined to top management. Their enthusiasm for the railroad and faith in its future have sparked a noticeable upturn in morale among the Rutland’s 570 employees. They seem to feel that at long last the road is going ahead.

Vermonters feel that the Rutland is their “railroad.” They express their loyalty in dollars too; the Rutland handles about 90 percent of the rail traffic at points where it competes with other railroads. Vermonters know that the railroad alone can carry certain heavy, bulky materials, day in and day out. They have no intention of neglecting the railroad whose demise would leave them stranded.

Even so, what the Rutland must have is more traffic; and it’s now giving full attention to that, its number one problem. It is going after more “bridge traffic” and new industries. Neither task is easy. The railroad must compete for every car of freight picked up for bridge traffic—long distance traffic routed over Rutland’s tracks. While bridge traffic already is up substantially, the Rutland needs and is working to build up industry along its line.

That is not an easy job either; for the company’s territory has never been a “growth area.” Its people have always thought largely in terms of agriculture rather than industry. But today that is changing. Many of the towns served by the Rutland now have industrial development programs; and in its own effort to attract new industry the Rutland is working with these towns and with Vermont and New York state agencies.

Actually, Rutland’s territory has a very large industrial potential. It also is strong on such vital resources as water. In fact, both Vermont and Northern New York have rich natural resources. In New York there are supplies of iron ore, lead, titanium and other minerals. Vermont, of course, is noted for its marble and granite. Near the city of Rutland are large deposits of sand, limestone and clay that would make the area an ideal spot for a cement plant.

“We are discussing the possibility of a cement plant with several groups,” says Caverly. “There’s a very good chance that one of them may build a plant on our line.” It would have a freight rate advantage in serving much of New England as well as the St. Lawrence Valley.”

Before too long, low-cost electric power will be available from the St. Lawrence Power Project. More than a year ago the State of New York and the Province of Ontario joined hands to push this development. Dams and power houses, to be built near Massena, N. Y., and the Rutland’s terminal at Ogdensburg, will produce 13 billion kwh of power a year—more than the output of either the Grand Coulee or Hoover Dams.

Combined with the resources already on hand, low cost power and the Seaway should attract plenty of new industry to northern New York—and that’s bound to help the Rutland. At Ogdensburg, the road is in a particularly good spot to benefit directly. Its terminal there has about 100 acres of industrial land with sidings and utilities already in, and with frontage on the St. Lawrence River.

Already, the Rutland has several new light industries. But it needs some heavy industry too. Even one such plant could change the whole outlook for the railroad.

Today a future for the Rutland seems a certainty as the railroad continues to streamline its organization, its operations and its plan to fit today’s needs and to prepare for whatever future lies ahead. Back in the days before the reorganization of the Rutland and more recently during the strike of 1953, the people of western Vermont would rise in anger at any suggestion that the line might be abandoned. But it seems the railroad that brought Boston to Burlington, will be coming over the mountain for many years to come.

VERMONT Life
Always a Vermont cider mill is coy. It likes to be a mile or two out of the village. And there, drenched in sin, rambling, alluring, mysterious, even the meanest one in the old days was a tabby afternoon squatting place. On days when the mellow October sun cuddled it with warmth you could no more drag yourself away than the swarms of bees bumping over the aromatic red and yellow apples in the great outdoor bin. On benches beside the broad door and on woodpiles there gathered everything that wore outside pants, for it was intensely masculine. Urchins gazed wistfully into the twilight interior, their eye on an old broken tumbler beside the press oozing out its reviving cool nectar. Grandpaps eyed it, too, and reckoned on its lifting qualities when they felt “low” and fetched some up in an old white pitcher from the cellar on winter nights.

It was fascinating to see the cider made. It had a slow, old-fashioned air that seemed to be winking constantly at you. Everything was arranged in so cute an assembly line that even a child could understand its change from an apple to a bubbling tumbler of amber liquid. Outside was the great wooden bin where farmers backed their teams and unloaded the tumbling apples of every sort. Sometimes it seemed the pile grew so large it would fill two freight cars. But they melted away steadily as they went through a “chute” into the cider mill where the grinding box swallowed them, and, like a coffee grinder, reduced them to “pumice.” The grinder hung overhead so that from its bottom, when opened, a deluge of pumice would come down on a table where a cloth or sacking had been laid.

And here beside the endless helpings of pumice was the cider man working like a beaver. He picked up the four corners of the cloth or sacking, folded them over, lifted the supply into the ample, round, tub-like press and laid a wooden cover over it. It was but one dose some eight inches thick. Then he added another and another, interset with wooden partitions, till the press was full. Now came the great squeeze. Jacks, like a house jack only vastly larger, were set on top of the press with a bearing on overhead woodwork. With a long pole the cider man screwed the jacks, and the pumice settled. Great iridescent bubbles, big as goose eggs, swelled out and slowly rode down the sweating face of the wooden press. Children peering in at the great press clung to the door’s edge with both hands as though fastened to the edge of Aladdin’s Cave. Oldsters leaned forward with watch chains swinging idly from their vests, and the youngest and oldest drooled freely without shame.
The juice, filling the air with an aroma thick as amber velvet, ran in a rivulet out of the press and was caught in a tank. Many layers of pumice were added and blocks of wood were also added beneath the jack to take up the slack till the squeeze was finished, then the remaining pulp, orange-yellow, was taken off like great cart wheels, trundled away in wheelbarrows.

Every few days the cider man at the cider mill of which these lines bear record—and the mills didn't vary much—would come to the village with a lumber wagon and two-horse team. The wagon body was full of barrels of new cider, or apple juice. He would go back with a load of empties and an array of the cutest little brown jugs you ever saw. At the mill he could measure the capacity of each barrel by running a graduated wooden rod into the bung hole, touch the bottom each way, and take the reading. When the villagers' jugs were filled and lined up for delivery it was a gay sight for some wore little squat cork hats while others had corn cob plug hats at rakish angles on their heads. The villagers had a lot of fun with these jugs. They tried to keep them cool in the woodshed, but there is a fast-working demon in apple juice that in a few days can blow a cork to the ceiling and stick it there. The barrels went into cellars that had no heat in the old days. With an open bung they were allowed to "work" till their explosive nature was calmed, then re-bunged and the spigot driven in for later business.

It was a never-to-be-forgotten experience in late winter to go down into the cellar and tap a barrel. A barn lantern would send a glow over the barrel's brown belly. The spigot was tapped gently with a stick of fire wood, and ... Splish-o-o! . . . out she'd come, white as cream into an old china pitcher. Only robust males savored it, for by now it had a sharp taste far removed from its early apple juice freshness.

Today all this is changed. Gas instead of a romantic water wheel drives such machinery as is required. Few "put down" a barrel for winter. But don't think cider has gone away. Dozens of roadside stands in October can show you a display lively as any jewel box. Golden as the autumn sunshine itself, row after row of glass gallon jugs flash their welcome to the passer-by. But no more the ten and fifteen cent price for a filling. Cider has "riz" like its own "fiz" till a gallon sometimes pretty well ruins a dollar bill. Then again you can catch one for only fifty cents. And it's the same delicious old nectar which the pioneers looked forward to when they fetched in ox carts to their new homes a bundle of apple twig cuttings to start the orchards that now cover the Vermont uplands. They knew how to handle it, and so will you if you mind the slogan of Pa Brown from Bomoseen.

If you want this cider old,
Bear in mind to keep it cold.

If you're out to make it hard,
Set it right in the sunny yard.

But if you really want a drink that's neat,
Take the durn stuff when it's sweet.
ONE OF Vermont's democratic leaders, the late Park H. Pollard, once was advised by Calvin Coolidge either to move to some other state or to change his party affiliation, if he were really politically ambitious. The advice was sound enough politically, but it was ignored and Pollard worked for a lifetime for the Democratic Party without ever being elected to state office.

In the field of political novelties, Vermont has a place all its own. It is the only state that has maintained steadfast loyalty to the Republican Party in both state and national elections since the party was organized, more than 100 years ago. In fact, even before that time, Vermont was well-known for its independence of political trends sweeping the other states. It was the only state in the Union that gave its electoral votes to William Wirt, the anti-Masonic candidate, when Andrew Jackson was re-elected President in 1832.

In 1936 it may have been a novel experience for Maine to be a member of a minority of two, but not for Vermont, whose voters had not forgotten the election of 1912 when the state supported William Howard Taft. On that occasion Utah was the only other Taft state.

The closest Franklin D. Roosevelt ever came to victory in Vermont was in 1940 when he won a popular vote of 64,269, which was 14,102 short of Wendell Willkie's total and the narrowest margin on record for a Republican candidate for President in Vermont.

Faithful Vermont Republicans consider it no blemish on the state's record that a Vermonter cast the deciding ballot which elected Thomas Jefferson President in 1801. The ballot was cast by Congressman Matthew Lyon, one of the most colorful figures in early state history. Jefferson defeated Aaron Burr after six days and nights of Congressional balloting when Vermont's Federalist Congressman, Lewis Morris, withheld his vote and Lyon voted on the 36th ballot for Jefferson, thus deciding the outcome of the election.

Though no Democrat has held elective state office or won a seat in Congress since the first Republican state convention in 1854, this consistent record is more of a curiosity than it is a matter of great political importance in the national scheme of things. However, leaders of both parties have been puzzled by the phenomenon of this one-party state and interested in its as a symbol. They want to know the reasons for this tenacity of affiliation. Why has Vermont been so persistently Republican?

The reasons cannot be summed up neatly in a paragraph, as it is possible to sum up the basis for one-party control in the "Solid South." Many elements are involved, any one of which might be common to other states, but it is the combination of elements that is unique.

Perhaps the most important reason is the fact that Vermont has always been dominated by the voters in small towns and rural areas. The state has no large concentrated masses of population. It has only eight cities, the largest having a population of 33,155. The proportion of rural residents has been declining, but at the last census only 36 per cent of the population was classified as urban. This type of population, with small town and rural voters predominating, has always leaned much more to the Republican Party throughout the country than to the Democrats. Outside the South, of course.

Despite the considerable growth of manufacturing and...
a steadily changing economy, Vermont continues to have the characteristics of an agricultural state and dairying is the leading farm enterprise. The state Legislature is controlled by representatives from the smaller towns and farming continues to be listed as the leading occupation of members of the House.

Historically, Vermont has needed and supported tariff protection. The Republicans' sound money policy was always popular with thrifty Yankee farmers. In regard to liquor, conservatism was carried to what some might consider an extreme. The state had prohibition from 1852 to 1903 and a local option liquor law from 1903 until national prohibition—evidence of an attitude more in line with Republican than with Democratic party policy.

No other factor in the early history of Vermont Republicanism compares with the importance of the state's long tradition of anti-slavery sentiment. It was the intense anti-slavery feeling in Vermont that accounted for the strong start of the Republican Party, bringing under one party label a coalition of Whigs and anti-slavery or Free Soil Democrats.

Lawrence Brainerd of St. Albans, Vermont, a former Free Soil Democrat, called to order the first Republican national convention in Philadelphia, June 17, 1856. Brainerd had previously been one of the leaders in calling a convention of anti-slavery groups in 1854, which was Vermont's first Republican state convention. The candidate for governor who was nominated at this convention refused to accept the nomination and the new party endorsed the Whig candidate, Stephen Royce, who had won the 1854 election. Governor Royce was re-elected in 1855 on a ticket which was referred to as Republican by at least two Vermont newspapers and in 1856 the coalition officially adopted the Republican name.

This early Republican tendency was solidified a few years later by Redfield Proctor, who became, consecutively, governor, United States senator and Secretary of War. Proctor strengthened the new party by building an organization around returned Civil War veterans. He was said to have known at least one veteran in every town in the state, and for a half-century or more, the pro- or anti-Proctor tag was of key importance in Republican nominating conventions and primaries.

Yet being in a Republican rut hasn't developed machine politics in Vermont. The party is under such loose control from the top that it is wide open for any newcomer who wants to go through the preliminaries and doesn't expect to be elected governor or congressman on his first try for elective office. You can run for any office in Vermont on the Republican ticket without permission from any individual or organization. The party has no boss, unofficial or otherwise.

Much of the credit for this can be attributed to the adoption in 1916 of the direct primary system for nominating candidates. Through the years, the system has developed and kept alive a healthy competition for nominations within the Republican party. Division in the Republican ranks has been roughly along conservative and liberal lines. Spirited contests for primary nominations have been a healthy substitute through the years for close contests with the Democrats in the general election. In the absence of any party registration requirement, Democrats
have helped keep the ball rolling by voting in the Republican primary rather than their own.

Candidates who seek the Vermont governorship have been most successful with the advancement technique. The procedure starts with service in the Legislature, election to the speakership of the House and then serving as lieutenant governor. The only upset of this procedure occurred in 1946 when Ernest W. Gibson of Brattleboro defeated Gov. Mortimer R. Proctor in the primary election with a helping hand from the Democrats.

The old “mountain rule” for electing governors alternately from the east and west sides of the state has given way in recent years to a tendency for a division on a north and south regional basis.

The Republican organization has little power in Vermont. One reason is lack of control over patronage, and another is lack of control over candidates. Vermont governors handle state office patronage on their own, without much interference from the party organization. When the Republicans are in power in Washington, the state delegation in Congress is most influential in federal patronage matters rather than the party organization.

Vermont Democratic party affairs have been run in an altogether different way. During the period of more than 25 years that Frank H. Duffy of Rutland was Democratic national committeeman, the party was tightly controlled from the top by a small group of men. The Democratic primary has always been a method of endorsing nominees already chosen either by the Democratic state committee or by party convention in the old style. Organization candidates are never opposed in the primary. Instead, a large number of Democratic voters often engage in the more interesting pastime of meddling in the Republican primary.

Efforts of Democratic candidates in many past state campaigns were so perfunctory that some of the younger Democrats suspected that the Old Guard had little desire to win elections. All this was changed in 1952 and 1954 when the Democrats organized and conducted intensive campaigns for the governorship that paid off at the polls. Both elections were close enough to demonstrate that there was new life in the Democratic party and that the 100-year reign of the Republicans was finally being threatened. It is significant that Democratic State Senator E. Frank Branon, who trailed in the 1954 governorship election by only 5224 votes, is a widely known dairy farmer and probably collected many farm votes that are normally Republican. No other Democrat has ever come close to the Vermont governorship since the founding of the GOP.

Vermont might have had less reason to be satisfied with its continued Republican administrations, if they were not more liberal than the party platforms would indicate. The Republicans habitually promise little and do more, which is a rather unorthodox condition in national politics.

The Vermont GOP has always made much of the fetish of economy in administration of state affairs. “Cutting the pattern to fit the cloth” has been a popular phrase in dealing with financial issues.

Against this background, there is irony in the results of a 1940 census study which showed that Vermont’s index of state and local revenue load (a measure of tax burden in relation to ability to pay) was the highest of all the 48 states. Despite much viewing with alarm about reckless spending in the postwar years, by 1950 Vermont had considerably improved its position in comparison with other states. Its ability to pay had risen much more than its government expenditures.

The short tenure in office for Vermont governors has been a major factor in the relatively high quality of Vermont Republican politics. No governor has remained in office more than two terms, totaling four years, since 1809. Vermonters have no fear of a one-man monopoly in their state government. Most states have had political scandals which discredit the party in power and result in waves of reform that sweep the minority party into office, but scandal and graft have never been a problem to Vermont Republicans.

The late William Allen White, who used to visit in Vermont at the home of Dorothy Canfield Fisher, the novelist, refused at first to believe that there was no corruption in a party so long in power. He admitted later, however, after a study of conditions in Vermont, that the state was so small and everyone seemed to know so much about his neighbor’s business that graft was practically impossible.

There is no reason to suppose that because Vermont has been for all practical purposes a one-party state its residents have no interest in political affairs. The Republicans have not stayed in power because of apathy on the part of the voters. Under the town system of government, with the old annual town meetings, and with a 276-member Legislature including a representative from each town, Vermont has a large number of public offices for a small state. This helps to stimulate voting, particularly since in the small communities of which Vermont is primarily composed the voters know most of the candidates personally.

Not only is there a high degree of interest in voting in Vermont; there is also a remarkable lack of restriction upon the privilege. In 1952 Vermont had 201,000 registered voters, of whom 156,923 voted in the general election from a population of 377,000. It makes an interesting comparison with Georgia, for example, one of the one-party states of the Solid South, which has a population of 3,444,578 and cast only 653,802 votes in 1952. In this respect Vermont may well be proud to be called unique.
The Quiet Life

By Elizabeth Kent Gay

More and more the fall of the year is the favorite season of visitors to Vermont, as well as of many who spend all their time here, by choice or necessity. If the air has a sharp edge of frost, the earth is still giving back the heavy warmth of summer’s end. We are never so aware of the impermanence of beauty as on these haze-filled autumn days, when the shadow of winter sends us out to watch the grand crescendo of the year, the turning of the leaves.

In all her other seasons Vermont speaks in understatement, but in autumn she shouts for attention, loud and brilliant as any gypsy. Faced with these dreaming golden days it is easy to forget to lay up stores for the winter, yet the provident householder is harvesting his garden with an eye to the long white months to come. If he is one who counts books among the treasures of the earth he is also giving thought to his winter bookshelves as well as to his root cellar, his pantry and his freezer.

Several Vermont authors, both native and adopted, have given us lately their personal harvest of memories and research, tales and history. Dorothy Canfield Fisher’s Memories of My Home Town is a pleasant footnote to her Vermont Tradition, that rich store of insights into the character and history of Vermont. This latest little book was printed in a limited edition for the benefit of the Arlington Historical Society, to help in the preservation of the town’s records and its valuable historical papers.

A few of Mrs. Fisher’s stories are familiar from others of her books, all of them are told with her attentive eye and ear for what is distinctive in Vermont behavior. One chapter in particular is instructive for those who come newly to Vermont living, perhaps with diffidence and a concern lest they be for all time counted as outsiders. Arlington’s Dr. Kent was much like many of those valuable and generous-spirited people who choose Vermont for their permanent homes, often in their retirement years. By attending meetings, serving on committees, undertaking faithfully and with imagination small duties and routine assignments, he won his way to the heart of his adopted community, living disproof of the notion that Vermonters hold newcomers forever at arms’ length.

W. Storrs Lee is another Vermonter who, like Mrs. Fisher, has loved his native state so long that he knows her almost by heart. His book The Green Mountains of Vermont should be added to the shelves of anyone who shares the author’s affectionate curiosity about the mountain range that forms the state’s backbone and molds the men who settle in its shadow. Mr. Lee’s interests are wide and deep; they cover mines and eccentrics, town meeting and skiing, hiking and native sons, watering places, revival meetings, turnpikes, catamounts and disasters. He is no armchair historian, for his photographs and text are those of the

This issue of Vermont Life inaugurates a new column devoted to the arts in Vermont and conducted by Elizabeth Kent Gay. Mrs. Gay was born in Brookline, Mass., the eldest daughter of Ira Rich Kent, former editor of the Youth’s Companion and later of Houghton Mifflin Co., and of Louise Andrews Kent, author of the Mrs. Appleyard books and others for children and grown-ups. She attended the Park and the Winsor Schools and graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1935 where she did honors in history. She is the author of several children’s books, including The Village that Learned to Read, and is working with her mother on a book to be called The Summer Kitchen, combining fiction and recipes.

Mrs. Gay has lived in Cambridge, Mass., Cambridge, England, New York, Washington and, Woodside, California. For the past six years she had made her home at Kents Corner, Calais, in the first house built there, by her great-great-grandfather, and now in Maple Corner, Calais. She has four children, is active in town and county affairs and conducts a weekly newspaper column.
participant and the beholder. No reader, however expert in Vermont lore, could fail to find something in this book to add to his store of information and of sharp-witted stories and personalities.

Two guide-books amplify chapters in The Green Mountains of Vermont for those with special interests. Vermont’s Long Trail is a unique achievement: a “footpath in the wilderness” along the main range of the Green Mountains from Massachusetts to Canada. Those who travel it from end to end, whether all at once or in several installments, are numbered among the elite of hikers in the East. The little handbook put out by the Green Mountain Club, which maintains the trails and shelters of the Long Trail, contains a detailed description of every stretch of the Trail and its approaches, as well as a general guide to Green Mountain hiking down to hints on how to handle porcupines. It is invaluable for anyone who ventures onto Green Mountain trails, whether for an afternoon or for a more serious trip of days or weeks.

In many parts of the country the traveler comes upon villages and buildings restored to preserve the ways of our forefathers—Dearborn Village, Old Sturbridge and Storrowton come to mind. Vermont’s contribution, through the generosity of Mrs. J. Watson Webb, is the Shelburne Museum at Shelburne, a fine collection of reconstructed buildings from different parts of the state, each a museum in itself. Ralph N. Hill and Lilian Baker Carlisle have compiled a handsome catalog of those parts of the Museum presently open to the public, with the history of their acquisition and some indication of their contents. Every visitor will have his favorite—the little brick schoolhouse, the stone cottage, the horseshoe barn full of carriages and sleighs, and, most remarkable achievement of all, the SS Ticonderoga, whose journey overland is surely an epic in itself.

The Story of the Shelburne Museum pictures and describes all these, along with the old country store, the coaching tavern, the toyshop and many more, all worth a visit. The reconstructions are done with care and taste, and the student and amateur of architecture will find Shelburne especially appealing, for the range of styles and materials is most varied and every detail has been handled with thoughtful attention to period and authenticity.

The roots of our Vermont history lie in the tangled combats, encounters and disputes of the New Hampshire Grants and the New York patroons. Frederic Van de Water, one of Vermont’s authors by adoption, has combined his expert knowledge of the state’s history and his fictional talents in an historical romance of the 1770’s. His hero, Job Aldrich, faces the problems and decisions that beset many an early Vermont settler, especially one who by conviction and desire—he was a Quaker by upbringing—wished to avoid the embroilment of the nursling settlements.

Wings of the Morning is a tale of raw and bloody encounters between Yorkers, King’s men, and settlers caught between the two factions. In these brawls and raids were forged the independent men who fathered Vermont reluctant republic. Step by step Job Aldrich is forced to take sides. In the process he wins a wife, having first followed an alluring female will-of-the-wisp. Mr. Van de Water writes from a deep love of the Vermont countryside and a nice appreciation of the particular flavor of Vermont character, as readers of his books about his life on a dead-end road outside Brattleboro already know. Contemporary versions of his settlers doubtless walk the streets of West River valley towns today.

Robert E. Pike, a Vermonter by ancestry and upbringing, though a resident of Connecticut, has written a fine historical story for young people 12-16, with the early life of John Stark as its subject. The scenes of Stark’s childhood and boyhood, especially the rough and tumble of a spring salmon-fishing and a housewarming, are historically sound and alive to the ways of children in any age. The story of Stark’s capture by Indians, his endurance of torture at St. Francis and final release is full of courage and excitement. His experiences in the colonial army show us by what slender margin our independence was won. Just as the hero of Wings of the Morning discovers that he is a Vermonter, John Stark in Fighting Rebel finds that he is an American through fighting for the rights of his neighbors and fellow-colonists. It would be an unusual boy or girl who could read this book without being stirred by the depth and meaning of its patriotism.

Vermont boys today are not involved in national events to the same extent as those who grew up in the early days of the colony. However, they can display the same sort of independence and inventiveness, as Kay Avery sets out to prove in her true-to-life story for children 10-14, All for a Horse. The background is the kind of small town that we feel is most typical of our hill-country. A general storekeeper plays an important role, so does a school-teacher. The hero, Tom, and his sister Sally, even Andy, Tom’s rival, are all likeable young people. The minor characters are salty and genuine. Sugar-making on a small scale plays a part, and of course horses figure largely. Miss Avery, whose home is Middletown Springs, has a lively, easy style and a feeling for the natural-born contrariness of children that makes a good story and a satisfying ending.

For anyone building a Vermont or a New England bookshelf the University of Tennessee has published a truly comprehensive and descriptive book-list called Literary New England. The author, David James Harkness, is extension librarian for the University. He has included New England classics, contemporary writing, books of photographs, cookbooks, history, guidebooks and the names of native and adopted writers in the various state sections. There are references to films and to painters and
The editors will present a special prize to the first reader who identifies correctly this typical autumn scene.

sculptors, also to summer schools for writers. In short, a highly interesting and useful booklet has come to us from Tennessee, one we might have had the wit, if not the patience, to compile ourselves.

Here, then, is a good store of reading for the still crisp nights that follow the smoky windy days of fall, or for the brown wet days when winter hovers in the north and it rains and rains. With Mr. Harkness's literary book-list one can lay out still further reading pleasure on every sort of back-road as well as the main-traveled highways of Yankee writing.

MEMORIES OF MY HOME TOWN
Dorothy Canfield Fisher
Arlington Historical Society, Arlington, Vt. 1956, $1.00

THE GREEN MOUNTAINS OF VERMONT
W. Storrs Lee
Henry Holt and Co.
New York, 1955, $5.00

GUIDE BOOK OF THE LONG TRAIL
Green Mountain Club
Rutland, Vt. 1956, $1.00

The Story of the Shelburne Museum
Ralph Nading Hill and Lilian Baker Carlisle
The Shelburne Museum, Shelburne, Vt. 1955, $3.00

Wings of the Morning
Frederic F. Van de Water
Ives Washburn Inc.
New York, 1955, $3.95

Fighting Rebel
Robert E. Pike
Abelard-Schuman, Inc.
New York, 1955, $3.00

All For A Horse
Kay Avery
Thomas Y. Crowell Co.
New York, 1955, $2.50

Literary New England
David James Harkness
The University of Tennessee News Letter
Knoxville, Tenn. 1956

END

VERMONT Life 15
Sept. 1. Cold and zippy air. Out to Cornwall through a tangle of roadside color,—goldenrod, purple thistle, wild bergamot, chickory, tansy and asters,—but the brightest blossoms today are the clouds overhead that shine in burnished silver. What gifts of Nature lie upon the paths! Apple and choke cherry, butternuts which I see so many of I regret not bringing a bag, ears of corn, and those grateful to the non-human animal such as pignuts and acorns. As I sauntered along in the bright sunlight a red dragon-fly perched upon my hand. It pleased me that I offered a fellow sun lover a perch.

The humming-bird moths are eating the hearts out of our yellow tomatoes.

Sept. 5. The sound of insects and the rustling of wind in corn mark the earth’s breathing now. Most fields look green, with the cut grass, and the royal purple clumps of asters invite the yellow butterflies. To the East Middlebury pasture that was once a mill-pond. Between the open field and the ascending woods runs a gold-brown brook. Red partridge berries shine upon the knolls, and leaves of arbutus. A garden of wild forget-me-nots wholly conceals the water in places. It made them exciting to pick, for you never knew if you’d land in the middle of the stream or on the bank.

Sept. 11. Walked the Weybridge triangle, with pewees calling everywhere. Flocks of cloudless sulphurs have invaded the town, and I stirred them up as I went, each flock flying ahead of me and seeming to vanish into air before I came to the next. The two butterflies I noticed especially, though, were a brighter orange than their companions on the inside wing, and a more greenish yellow on the outside. They were coupled, and thinking they had become entangled I threw them into the air several times to set them free. When they repeatedly stayed together I let them settle onto an elm shoot, where I held my breath at the perfection of their protective coloring, the exact yellow-green of the leaves at present—which would have been remarkable enough—but in addition the brown edging of their wings precisely reproduced the brown (caused by blight or caterpillars) to be found on practically every elm leaf now. I looked away for a moment at something else, and when I looked for them again I could not find them amid the numerous roadside leaves, so perfect.

Dr. White’s new book, VERMONT DIARY, from which this article is taken, will be published in mid-September by Charles T. Branford Co., Boston, $3.50.
was their camouflage. A number of the woolly bear caterpillars trundling about.

Sept. 20. Now after the storm nests of round red apples lie in the long grass of the little orchard, and we gather these windfalls with the cold wet moisture on them. There is no doubt that the apple of Paradise was a McIntosh. Juice jets up into the air when you bite ’em in a pure, cold, delicious fountain. They are best of all eaten right there on the spot outdoors, with perhaps a grassblade or a dash of hemlock to season them.

How glorious the pillars of red woodbine holding up the green tree world!

Sept. 28. Spent the afternoon in the Zaremba orchard, packing boxes with a bevy of other Middleburyites. The college students went up the trees like sailors up the mast.
The sun shone on bending boughs almost solidly red with apples.

Oct. 1. The Battell rock maple stands on the ridge at the height of its glorious change, its branches turning red-orange on the end as though ignited by the sunlight. Inside, the tree is solid golden yellow, and you lean against the trunk at the heart of the sun. Even the shadows of the leaves are golden.

Oct. 4. To Three-Mile covered bridge, along the Creek. Quantities of elderberry, strangely neglected by housewives. The wind drowns out other sounds. The seeded clematis watched me from dark perches like the eyes of owls. Some half a mile before I reached the bridge I saw a marsh hawk descending and skirting the field with the precision of a dance or drill,—swing to the left, swing to the right, then upward, taking the wind in easy mastery, and along the creek where the clamor of crows as he went showed his present position at every moment. I wonder which tree is distinguished from the rest by being his home.

Oct. 12. The sun bursts forth at noon, and shines upon a golden world. Out West road, facing the wind. The sound of crickets everywhere. Leaves of the bloodroot are yellow. A flock of bluebirds gather on the wire. Not only the birds go in flocks now. One passes flocks of folks, picking orchard, or at an auction. I stood in the close thicket cutting bittersweet, disentangling it from the red of briar and sumach and the pale yellow of its own leaves, a magic mass of color into which I dropped a berried twig now and then, and dived down after it where it lay like gold on the bottom of a lake. The wind cuts obliquely across this road, so I have it in my face going back, too. Put myself in order as much as possible for re-passing the farmhouse, for I find that dogs are excessively conventional about one's personal appearance. Ash trees now purple. Elms toss their yellow heads against the silver clouds. Hard to battle with the blast, but more than worth it. A number of frogs and yellow-striped snakes lie flattened on the highroad, the frogs with their heads all pointed north toward the Creek. The travelling wind edged every grass blade with light and revolved the maples on themselves in a changing pageant of crimson, green and yellow.

Oct. 15. "We went out to the cider mill," said Maxine, "with a bag of doughnuts, and drank cider all the time we ate them to the last one,—and the man wouldn't take any pay for it." They came back with a jug of cider instead of a bag of doughnuts.
Oct. 15. The best of all days, deep blue sky without a cloud. To Bread Loaf with the mail stage. I hit it just right this time. Mostly the landscape is a full-foliaged jungle of red, orange, yellow and dark red. Crimson maples between the green pines. Along Ripton gorge the banks are golden yellow with birch, moose maple and rock maple. Even with what I had seen I was unprepared for Bread Loaf itself,—I hadn’t looked for such a shouted hallelujah as those illuminated hills. I’ve never seen the foliage before at just its peak,—the perfection of its fullness. On our way down the mountain we disturbed a great horned owl in a dead tree, who flew slowly and silently, coasting over the pasture that adjoins the wood.

Oct. 18. The drought enabled me to enter the Cornwall swamp and pick as large a quantity of black alder as desired. The quaking islands of browned royal fern with water between are most pleasing. How much like holly the black alder looks—though I prefer its method of growing in the semi-darkness of a swamp to the more open and conventional sites of holly. A butternut fell off its tree with a wallop as I passed. The berries of the panicled dogwood have fallen off, leaving the exquisite red stems. I gathered some of them with oak leaves. The most memorable picture of the walk was a big flock of starlings, a thousand strong, flying with rhythmic motion all together over the pasture as though Mother Nature were using them as a broom to sweep the landscape clear.

Oct. 20. Dark and dreary. I would say about two thirds of the foliage has fallen. Earth gains what air loses, and the ground beneath the thinned-out trees has a warm ruddy look. It seems to me the clouds thicken in fall—they boil up over the whole firmament in dense masses, no blue sky between. In summer you get cumuli with a lot of blue background. Now cloud is all.

Oct. 22. Two bonfires of leaf fuel in town park burn steadily hour after hour, with more piles of their fodder heaped beside these industrious fires. And the bonfires as you wander about the village streets at twilight! Some the shape of a pyramid, the flame rising at the apex; some with smoke alongside bright flame; some so choked with plenitude of leaves that only smoke comes out; some, the best, raising leaves aloft in a light breeze so that the smoke above the fire is tangled with sparks.
Oct. 27. Walk to Battell Wood and find the witch hazel blossoming in its entrancing fashion, the bright green petal-less leaf cups, the petalled yellow flowers, the empty nut capsule cases, the buds of next year, all on the same branch. This is like an old clan homestead, where grandfather, parents, children and infants all live together. There’s something very inclusive and complete about it. As I entered the wood I met a boy with a gun coming out. He passed me and disappeared toward town. Then a partridge rose up with a whir and disappeared in the opposite direction. It was my destiny to meet them both. It was not their destiny to meet each other.

Oct. 28. Now as the days shorten the cows draw in from the far-off hills and pasture close to their own barns, in more than one case grazing the family’s front yard and doorstep. One cow in the dooryard itself was gazing with apparently great interest right into its owner’s front window.

Oct. 30. Wind and rain in the night. To Weybridge in the afternoon against a heavy wind, my ultimate goal a chicken pie supper held at the Congregational Church. Purple-gray clouds with smooth bossed silver between, moving over mountains the color of Concord grapes. A wild and wintry touch to the landscape, in which denuded and dead trees seem to stand out prominently. The land beyond the monument, where Bittersweet Falls lies, goes down into a hollow, not deep enough to protect the trees, which stand naked as in November, but allowing bittersweet to hold its leaves. So I saw it, like something in a fairy tale, the bare wood encircled with yellow vines of brilliant berries, most of them high above my head, shining like jewels. Some places they grow so densely on themselves that the bittersweet formed an island high in air. It gives me more pleasure than pain to behold them out of reach, since I know nobody else can get them either, and the magic islands will stay up there undisturbed.

Oct. 31. To the Ledges. I find in the pasture field adjoining, amid the withered goldenrod and asters, the pure white hard shining nutlets of the Cromwell that look more mineral than vegetable. Pull myself up the rocks by the help of strong saplings, to the row of evergreen hemlock and larch. No creature comes secretly. Its path is heard in dried leaves. Exploring under the leaves and in the crevices of rocks I found Herb Robert and quantities of white Canada violet in blossom, and thought it just as exciting to be picking white violets on the edge of November as hepaticas on the edge of April. No sound of bird or beast in the wood save that of the pileated woodpecker, the clock who will tick off the minutes of the long winter months ahead.
GOING ON IN VERMONT THIS FALL

This listing of Autumn events, which gives considerable emphasis to table pleasures, was compiled last Spring, and is necessarily incomplete. A full schedule may now be obtained by writing to Vermont Life, Montpelier, Vt.

 aug. 25-Sept. 10 Manchester 27th Annual Art exhibit
 aug. 27-Sept. 1 Essex Jct. Champlain Valley exposition
 aug. 27-Sept. 4 Burlington UVM Marketing seminar
 aug. 29 Bennington Chamber Music concert (8:15)
 aug. 29-Sept. 1 So. Woodstock 100 & 50-Mile Trail rides
 aug. 30 E. Charleston Chicken Pie supper
 pt. 1 Bennington Chamber Music concert (8:15)
 pt. 2 Lake Dunmore Handicap Sail races
 pt. 2 Manchester SVA Concert (3:30)
 pt. 3 Sheffield 8th Annual Field day
 pt. 3-8 Rutland Rutland fair
 pt. 4 Bennington Bennington College opening
 pt. 4-9 Northfield Theta Chi centennial
 pt. 6 Newport Chicken Pie supper
 pt. 8 Bennington Chicken Pie supper, Church of God
 pt. 8 Newfane Co. Historical meeting (8)
 pt. 9 Newport Club Champs, golf tournament
 pt. 10-13 Burlington Vt.-N. H. Banking school
 pt. 12 East Barre Chicken Pie supper (5, 6)
 pt. 13 Newport Harvest supper, St. Mark’s
 pt. 13 Marshfield Chicken Pie supper
 pt. 13-15 Tunbridge Tunbridge World’s fair
 pt. 15 Bondville Church Food sale (1)
 pt. 16 Middlebury Small-bore Rifle tournament
 pt. 19 Riverton Chicken Pie supper (noon, 5)
 pt. 20 East Corinth Chicken Pie supper (5, 7)
 pt. 20 Fletcher Binghamville Chicken Pie supper (5)
 pt. 20 So. Ryegate Chicken Pie supper (5:30)
 pt. 22 Wilmington Deerfield Valley Farmers’ day
 pt. 25 Wolcott Chicken Pie supper (5:30)
 pt. 25 Lowell Chicken Pie supper (6)
 pt. 26 Bridport Chicken Pie supper (5:30)
 pt. 26 Bristol Chicken Pie supper
 pt. 26 Montpelier Methodist Chicken Pie supper (5:30)
 pt. 27 Chester Chicken Pie supper (5:30 & 7:30)
 pt. 29-30 Danville Festival Dance, Supper, tours

Sept. 30-Oct. 7
Oct. 1-31
Oct. 1
Oct. 30-Oct. 7
Oct. 2
Oct. 3
Oct. 30-Oct. 7
Oct. 3
Oct. 3
Oct. 3
Oct. 3
Oct. 3
Oct. 3
Oct. 2
Oct. 11
Oct. 12
Oct. 12
Oct. 13
Oct. 13
Oct. 13
Oct. 18
Oct. 18
Oct. 19
Oct. 23
Oct. 24
Oct. 26
Nov. 1
Nov. 3
Nov. 7
Nov. 7
Nov. 10-25
Nov. 17
Nov. 17
Nov. 29
Nov. 30

Forest Festival
Grouse Shooting
Berlin Corners Chicken Pie supper (noon & night)
Richmond Chicken Pie supper & bazaar
Vernon Chicken Pie supper (5:30, 7)
Worcester Chicken Pie supper (5, 6, 7)
Williamstown Chicken Pie supper
Barnet Village Chicken Pie supper (5)
Tunbridge Congo, Church, Chicken Pie supper
Waterbury Ctr. Bazaar & Chicken Pie supper (5:30)
Londonerry Dorcas Guild supper
Jericho Ctr. Chicken Pie supper (5:30)
Williston Chicken Pie supper (5:30, 6:15, 7)
Plainfield Chicken Pie supper (5, 6, 7)
Benson Turkey Supper and sale (5:30)
Georgia Plains Annual Turkey supper (4:30)
Bennington Church Harvest supper (5:30)
Newport Baked Bean supper
Windham Center Church Harvest supper
No. Pownal Chicken Pie supper (6)
Bennington Ch. of God, Chicken Pie supper
Fletcher Binghamville, Baked Bean supper (5)
Wilder Fair (2) & Chicken Pie supper (5, 6, 7)
Adams Church Harvest supper (5:30, 6:30)
St. Albans Methodist Ch., Chicken Shortcake supper
Williamstown United Ch., Chicken Pie supper
Reading Turkey Supper & Old Time ball
Newport Turkey supper
Harland Turkey supper, Damon Hall
Underhill Sale & Chicken Pie supper
Bristol Bazaar & Ham supper
Deer hunting
Warren Deer Hunters’ Supper
Newfane Church Supper & Hunter’s dance
Danville Game & Chicken Pie supper (6)
Bass fishing ends

VERMONT Life 21
The Birches of Vermont

It's the birches that people remember about Vermont. Other trees they remember, too, the vase-like elms, the rugged pines, the massive maples, but above all, it's the birches with their white trunks and graceful shapes that come into the mind's eye when people remember the Vermont countryside. They are everywhere, in all shapes and all sizes, decorating highlands and lowlands alike. There are little saplings clinging doggedly to the crevice in a rock and battling the winds of every season in a struggle for survival. There is the towering old landmark standing on the brow of a hill like a patriarch watching over his tribe. There are clumps growing out of the rocks on a hillside pasture, looking for all the world like bold flower arrangements and proving that often nature itself can make the best compositions. There are odd and unusual formations and the imagination can fashion them into huge musical instruments played by a forest giant.

They grow in symmetrical clumps along fences and stone walls, or they dot the pastures and shine out in the deep woods. They grow tall and supple when they crowd together in a grove beside the road and the wind sways them gently in a rhythmic ballet. The late afternoon sunlight catches their trunks and paints them with a flashing brightness that first is yellow, then orange and finally a deep pink as the last rays of the sun skim over the further hills. And in the light of the full moon, these trunks seem to have a phosphorescent glow and stand like so many silivered lances carried by an invisible army.

In the spring the birches are topped with a feathery green that adds its own subtle shade to the pastels of the spring palette, and in the fall they are golden plumes, blending with the oranges and scarlets that may surround them, or punctuating with bright spots, a hillside of dark pines and hemlocks. In the summer, their white trunks make a contrasting stem for a bouquet of shiny leaves and in winter their delicate branches make the laciest of traceries against the sky. All times, all seasons, there is always something about a white birch that gives it a personality. No wonder it's a tree people remember when they think of the Vermont countryside.

Photographed & written by Newell Green
WE ARE USED of late to hearing about “expansion attics.” That means that the upstairs isn’t finished off yet. It really saves initial expense and offers what seems to us an ideal plan. The accommodations grow as the family does. Incidentally it offers enough work ahead for the do-it-yourself fanatic to keep him out of mischief for some time.

Vermont offers another type of architecture, which certainly grows without benefit of any such professional supervision as that of an architect. It might be called continuous, or perhaps better extension, architecture. It does not expand upward. It simply stretches out. You have doubtless seen many such houses in your travels about the state. You have, we will venture, never seen any two alike.

It usually all starts with a good example of story-and-a-half Cape Cod style house. On the back perhaps there is a kitchen with only an attic over it and a woodshed. The use of the word “shed” here does not mean what it does when we get farther along in the building sequence, for this is an integral and necessary part of the house. Incidentally it often figures in the development of Vermont youth and we do not refer alone to the character building supposedly inherent in splitting kindling and keeping the woodbox filled. To a younger generation the parental command “Young man, you come with me to the woodshed” resulted in impressions of a more lasting nature and in a different location from those which left their mark at the time.

Now that we have the main structure up we must have shelter for horses and for cattle. Suppose we build the horse-barn twenty or more feet from the back of the house. Sometimes it is combined with the cow barn but probably it is several feet from its mate.

There we have the necessary structures for beginning business. We mean the ones that are built as the house has been, by carpenters. But sure as fate there must be pigs and so the young farmer starts the procession at the back end. He himself builds a hog-pen off the cow-barn and, looking ahead a few years he’ll eventually add a shed for sawdust beyond the hog-pen, making the hogs very angry because it shuts off the east light. They finally just grunt and bear it.

There’s still space between the woodshed and horse barn and like enough in time a wagon shed or a carriage shed will join these twain. If it’s a carriage shed it will be in keeping with the rest and have nice curving openings and doors. If things aren’t very prosperous it will be an open wagon shed and in time become just a catchall. And before we forget it we must mention that when something is erected between other buildings two walls of it
are already built. You see the economic advantages which are usually not lost sight of by the Vermont farmer.

Now it may well be that the womenfolks, finding that there is one chance for them to gather in a little cash and that is egg money, get a chicken house put up between the horse and cow barns. Of course hens aren't too fussy about the look of things and when father builds their house he isn't too particular to make it's roof line even with the others any more than he was with the hog pen. But he has discovered the great convenience in stormy weather and especially during the winter, of going from the woodshed into the wagon-shed and thence into the horse barn and so on clear through to dump the swill into the trough of the pig dwelling without sticking his nose out into the atmosphere. Add a lead pipe from the spring back on the hill pouring a steady stream of cold, cold water into an iron kettle just inside the shed door, and life isn't too rugged.

One important matter we have not mentioned. Handy to the kitchen door, there is that necessary small compartment, opening off from the floored part of the woodshed, which certainly in winter offered no inducement for loitering.

What there is extending back of the woodshed is as varied as the occupants of the farmhouses. Some show thought for appearance and others look like a procession of as unrelated objects as those in a circus parade. But, brother, on a cold windy day, they do help with the farm problems.

Original farm is now the J. C. Byler home, South Londonderry.
Fall Spectrum

Salisbury Plain
By Warren Case

Near Woodstock
By Robert Holland

Camel's Hump from Bolton Gorge
A Treasury of VERMONT LIFE

An anthology of the best pictures and articles from the Vermont magazine.

Foreword by STEWART H. HOLBROOK
To celebrate the tenth year of publication, the editors of VERMONT LIFE have selected the best articles, artwork and photographs that have appeared in this distinguished publication. In a documentary and readable manner are portrayed the many aspects of Vermont and Vermonters, present and past, which have set apart this state and her people. In these authentic portraits of literary quality, liberally illustrated with fine photography and art, you will find in this handsome book the inner basic Vermont, the type of American life that strikes a responsive need the country over. To many folks Vermont has become a spiritual home—if not an actual home. The Table of Contents which follows indicates the superb collection of Vermontiana that appears in this enduring volume.

The Contents


A Treasury of VERMONT LIFE

Four Seasons: "November Beauty" by Haydn S. Pearson, "Land of the Quiet Hills" by Frances S. Lovell, "Only Yesterday" by Walter Hard. Photographs: by Mack Derick, Samuel Hatfield, Arthur Griffin, Grant Heilman, Lawrence F. Willard, Newell Green, Robert Bourdon, Warren Case, Robert Holland. Art: by George Daly.


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The Countryman Press

WOODSTOCK, VERMONT
and the third injunction is clear in mind when, from higher ground, you look down once again on the hollow.

_Circumspice et gaudē_, the gate said: “Look around you and rejoice.”

Parts of the land could almost be Umbria, take away the farmhouse and the good Vermont barn to make it hill country in Italy; but no—with Vergil in mind the farm must stay, he loved them so.

You imagine the one who wrote Latin for gates that give you the view from Pent’s Hill, and standing there you tell yourself a story. One day a scholar, passing by, was struck with the beauty of the land below. From a mind filled with Latin pastoral verse he chose these lines and hastened to write them so others would stop as he had done.

This will not do. The gates were there before the scholar came, built by a man who knew where the gates would lead. The road is not a throughway, although it goes where it goes on purpose, and surely the man who knew Vergil was comfortable with the name of the hollow. What lies below is not one man’s discovery or one man’s treasure, and the road and the gates and the words painted on them express years of pride in The Kingdom.

You depart, content to leave it at that and to remember it always.
The word _nostalgia_ means, according to Webster, (a) “severe melancholia caused by protracted absence from home. . . . (b) homesickness, a brooding, poignant or enervating homesickness.” There is no word which better describes Francis Colburn’s paintings. One might say they are retrospective, but this rather academic word fails to convey strong feeling.

All of Colburn’s paintings are of Vermont. He was born in Fairfax and has spent most of his life in Burlington. Since he is not a transplanted Vermonter why, it may be inquired, are his paintings so nostalgic? The answer is that it is not an immediate nostalgia for a native state whose benefits Colburn enjoys daily, but a longing look at people and things which, in the frightful pace of the twentieth century, are disappearing even from the face of Vermont.

A nineteenth-century hill-country house with the family, in period dress, gathered in the foreground, children playing in front of an old barn wall which carries tattered fragments of a circus poster, the village green with its empty bandstand, the old captain of a Lake Champlain steamboat standing on the bridge—such is the content of Francis Colburn’s paintings. This insistent harkening back might seem strange were it not for the fact that recently nostalgia has become a widespread social phenomenon. Everywhere we see signs of a fond lingering over the American past—over the frontier, the self-sufficient life of the sunlit upland farm, an unhurried street of Victorian houses. Perhaps it is because change, descending upon us so rapidly, leaves us so breathless and rootless that we seek a sense of comfort and continuity from earlier, less complex and more stable times.

It is not, however, for the artist to reason why—it is enough that he senses that it is so. Colburn is one of the few artists, and one of the first, who sensed this phenomenon so strongly that it has become the hallmark of his work. And long hence, when the Great Accounting is made, it may well be that his pictures are considered among the best of these times, not only because they are the work of a craftsman, but because they are social documents.

Colburn was a University of Vermont sophomore with designs on a writing career when he first became interested in painting. A story he had sent to _McCall’s_ was returned with suggestions and the request that he send it back, when he chanced to go to Underhill to spend a week end.
Examples of Francis Colburn's varied styles are shown on this page. Opposite are University of Vermont students in his art classes.
with friends. A child there was playing with a box of paints, and to help out Colburn took up a brush. He never did send the story back to McCall’s.

Not so fortunately—in view of the long apprenticeship soon forthcoming—he sold his first picture to Professor Lester Prindle of the Latin department of the University, who said it reminded him of an Italian primitive. Twenty years ago the Professor Prindles were relatively rare. Presidents and prime ministers were not painting, and the shining goal of the average graduate was to become chairman of the board. Many colleges did not offer even the rudiments of instruction in art. Hopeful painters had to teach themselves, which Colburn did for one year following his graduation in 1934. Then he went to Bennington College to become director of public relations and to study with Stefan Hirsch. At Hirsch’s suggestion he submitted some paintings to the Scholarship Competition of the Art Students League, of which ten are awarded annually. He fortunately received one of these and went to New York for a year of study with such artists as Kuniyoshi and Harry Sternberg. After the scholarship ended he remained in New York for a year to study privately and in 1939 received his first major recognition: his picture was selected for Vermont at the New York World’s Fair.

Gradually his work began to command attention at such major shows as the Whitney Museum Annual, the Carnegie Institute Annual, the Corcoran Biennial in Washington, the Chicago Art Institute, the National Academy and many others. He has since received prizes for paintings exhibited in Vermont, Boston and Springfield, and San Francisco Museums. He has had one-man shows not only at such colleges as Dartmouth, Williams and Smith but at the Macbeth and Knödler galleries. He is in fact the only native-born Vermonter ever to have been represented at the large exhibitions. Of his paintings shown at the Knödler Galleries Genevieve Taggard commented that Colburn had “no interest in furnishing the metropolitan collector with quaint images of a stock attitude. . . . His latest pictures show a high technical level . . . also a mind, a sensibility, a penetrating imagination. . . . They will furnish insight for years to come. These pictures invite all . . . to see beyond the cliché to the actual hillside, cornfield, mountain stream, pasture lot, marble quarry, country cross-road. Here is a place where people have lived for a long time—where people now live. . . .”

In 1942 Colburn was appointed resident artist at the University of Vermont. Now, as a full professor and chairman of the Art Department, he finds himself teaching more and painting less. However—and this is an unusual reaction—he finds that he has learned more about painting by teaching than he did by studying. One of his special delights is the Wednesday class for adults in which doctors, nurses, businessmen and secretaries gather to work on their canvases for an intensely relaxing evening under the auspices of the adult education program at the University.

On the estate of painting today, Colburn feels that some of the habitants are bankrupt. He says he is somewhat alarmed, as are other artists, about the kind of American phenomenon called the school of abstract expressionist painting. “They have gone so far from the humanist point of view,” he says “that they have painted themselves right into their ivory towers. If you stop thinking of yourself as a part of society, then you are on the way out. Art is something more than therapy for the artist. While I think that some of the plastic experiments in handling paint have been worthwhile, it is time to use technical approaches for something a little more important than themselves.”

Colburn does not intend to abandon his native state for San Francisco, Paris or the Mediterranean. His roots here are several generations deep. “I intend to remain in the northcountry,” he says with more than a hint of Yankee accent. “I am emphatically a Vermonter.” END
ONLY YESTERDAY
A Remembrance of Vermont

By Walter Hard, Sr.

Illustrated by George Daly

Some time ago artist George Hughes of Arlington, had a cover picture on the Saturday Evening Post, of a first day at school which I remember because it was so different from what I recalled of mine. The picture showed an anxious mother trying to introduce her child to what was evidently a kindergarten. She was endeavoring to separate her jewel from her person but the young lady was climbing up her mother as though she were a tree. The other children stood by observing with the eyes of experience not to say joy, while the poor kindergartener was using all of the wiles in the book to dislodge the prospective pupil.

No doubt many of you remember your first day of school, some with pleasure and others quite the contrary. It was the culmination of many days of anticipation, not unmixed with some forebodings on the part of those of a shy disposition. More likely the day is most strongly impressed on the minds of many of you mothers, who saw your offspring whisked off in a bus with a crowd of strangers or perhaps departing holding to the hand of a neighbor's child, leaving you, turning toward the suddenly empty house, wiping your eyes and feeling that something had come to an end forever.

Happily I was saved all of the agony, and doubtless my mother too, because we lived almost directly across the road from the two-room school where my formal education was to begin. Naturally I had grown up seeing the children playing in the yard and later, joining them in the playground before school and often at recess, and probably looking at them with envious eyes as they lined up to march into the schoolroom.

I did not deprive my parents of my company for a whole long day either, as is usually the case now when children are mostly bus-carried. I simply walked across the street for my lunch which possibility I did not always look on as a privilege, much preferring to join those who brought their lunches in pails or bags and managed to get in much more time to play. This especially irked me because my parents had a crazy notion that tearing around like mad just after eating a fairly heavy meal was not good for one's health. In case I hastened my meal I gained nothing because then I had to sit still and look at a book or worse, lie down on the couch until the first bell rang.

School Districts were a political entity in those days being run by the voters who lived within such districts. Since our school was in the village and had two rooms it was ably managed by the school committee of District No. 9. I never heard the word "grades" mentioned. Just how we were sorted out I do not know but I have an idea that if you were good at figures you were pretty sure to move along. Also being able to read without waiting too long between words probably had something to do with it. The two rooms were always referred to as the Big Part and the Little Part. Probably there were four grades, as things are arranged now, in each part. I was usually much more interested in what some of the more learned classes were reciting than I was in the book I was supposed to be studying. I remember I brought home to my waiting family one day the startling information, gathered from listening evidently to a class in physiology—doubtless very rudimentary—that I had in my person twenty-four spines encasing a number of organs, which
was news to my parents and doubtless to the medical profession also.

I cannot remember when or why I left the Little Part. There were no ceremonies connected with our departure that I recall. There may well have been a sigh of relief on the part of Miss Tuttle, our teacher. And here I must record that I am sure she was a good teacher. At least she said things that made an impression on my mind to such an extent that I used to fill in any blanks in the family conversation at table by offering some bit of wisdom always introduced with the words "Miss Tuttle says—". I remember that Father sometimes, when perhaps I was too hungry to talk, would ask; "Well, what did Miss Tuttle say today?"

So eventually I left Miss Tuttle and found myself in the Big Part. I just escaped a man of heavy black eyebrows and a very quick temper. He was said to have a piece of an old tug which he used freely and he had on one occasion let fly with a book aimed at some recalcitrant pupil. My teacher was also a man but I do not recall any such outbursts on his part although I feel quite sure that corporal punishment was used for such was the general custom not only at school but at home.

I remember the joy of the opening day of school then, when I had been a part of it long enough to look down just a bit on the kids in the Little Part. It didn't take long to wear down the grass and weeds that had grown up in the school yard. On those crisp autumn days I used to have to be restrained by my parents from going to school too early. They didn't realize there were better chances of getting into the game of One Old Cat for a smaller boy, if he got there before all the big boys. And there were some big boys too. Some that had been there for several years, and later, when winter offered proper facilities for snowballing, they could throw a hard packed missile that really hurt. They weren't averse to twisting a fellow's arm either, or annexing a ball now and then. Probably this wasn't figured in as part of the curriculum but it had a certain educational value nevertheless, however unpleasant it might be.

Fall and spring besides baseball, playing horse was the most popular sport. The equipment was simple. A piece of old clothesline, say ten feet long, (sometimes when Monday morning came there turned out to be a difference of opinion between mothers and sons as to what constituted "old" clothesline) or a piece of hemp cord, made the reins with a slip noose at either end, one for the right "arm" of one horse of the team, the other for the left. The driver usually furnished the equipment and might add a willow whip. I was fairly fleet of foot especially when some of the older boys took after me, and so I was often entered as part of a team in races. The wide path around the school made an excellent track and at the end near the front steps there might be a cheering group of girls and small tots. I might add that girls, however, were not an incentive to anything but teasing in my young life as far as I can remember.

So before school and during the fifteen-minute recess we'd tear around like mad and come back, supposedly to sedately study or recite, sweaty and often winded, and certainly in no mood which might be considered scholastic. And they were really long hours especially in afternoon from one until four with a fifteen-minute recess to break the monotony. One other thing did offer a break and that was being granted the privilege of going for water. Just why the spring piped into Mr. Coy's shed next to his shoeshop was used I do not know since there were pumps much nearer. Not that we disapproved, any of us, for Mr. Coy's was up the street a good quarter of a mile and by walking slowly, considerable fresh air could be inhaled by the two chosen for that task. Whether it was considered an honor I do not recall. If so it must have been a reward of virtue and how then could I ever have participated in it? That pail of water was for drinking. What facilities there were for washing I have no idea. Matter of fact washing didn't interest me anyhow and if there were none it was all right with me. Naturally other toilet facilities were of the outdoor variety and one finger raised was the proper signal.

There is one thing in regard to my stay in the Big Part that would seem to need some explanation. There was a single desk and seat in the corner to the teacher's right where the occupant sat facing the side of the teacher and naturally with a full view of the school. Somehow that gives me an opportunity to express my gratitude to him for impressing on me the fact that a lie got you into trouble, with sufficient force so that I never forgot it. It all hap-
pened because in some way I came into possession of a piece of black crayon. White chalk was common but black wasn’t, and I felt that it should be put to some use. Somehow I went across to school early that morning and suddenly there loomed before me a slab of pure white marble. It was part of the marble sidewalk I’d always known but this morning it’s whiteness was too much for me to resist. With no feeling of guilt, as I remember, I took out the black crayon and wrote on that whiteness the words Edith and George. They were two older pupils who walked home together after school—a silly custom which I evidently thought should be held up to public ridicule. That black writing looked so good that I made the same decoration on a piece of white marble in the school building foundation. I may have added one more.

I was no sooner seated at my special desk when the blow fell. Of course the roll was called and prayer said. That was so soon over I didn’t sense it for suddenly I was confronted with a crime. Mr. Carpenter stated that someone had defaced school property by writing with black crayon on it. Defacing public property was a crime. Unless the party guilty of this offense came to him and confessed and erased said marks, the guilty one would be found by other means and duly punished. That noon my family, noting my loss of appetite, suggested I might be coming down with something. Something was certainly coming down on me, that I knew. I can to this day relive those dragging minutes of the noon hour which I passed, sitting on the front steps waiting for the bell.

Not to prolong the agony, the school assembled and each one was asked if he had committed the crime. All denied it including the guilty one. Then Mr. Carpenter said he was going to question those in the Little Part and as he started toward the door he beckoned to me to follow him. Strangely it never occurred to me at the time to wonder why he asked for my company on that trip to the next room. Once outside he stopped and did the thing for which I here and now offer him, if he’s alive, my heartfelt thanks. He advised me to confess and save myself a lot of trouble. He spoke as though he wanted to help me out and I responded. Not wholly. I’m sorry to say, for I only admitted that I had done “some of it.” There again he might have borne down but he didn’t. All he said was “See to it all traces are removed before school tomorrow.” For good and all I learned the truth of the statement: “Confession is good for the soul.” I either trod a straight path or if I got caught stepping off it, I was ready to admit it with no delay.

But in general those days were each too short for the things I found to enjoy. Especially at the autumn season when there was tonic in the air, just running wasn’t enough. Running and shouting didn’t fully satisfy. There was still something more demanding release. When I got my first bicycle and could pump the pedals until my feet couldn’t go any faster and then hold them out and coast down the hill, and feel the air rushing up to meet me—only then did I come near to satisfaction.

Then the sun would drop behind Equinox and suddenly the first chill of autumn made me think of home and the warm kitchen which might be filled with the smell of griddle cakes and sausage sizzling in the skillet beside the griddle.

Mother put another batch on my plate and then all at once I couldn’t swallow another one. Sometimes I stopped to help with drying the dishes, if I remembered, but this night Mother said “No you scuttle upstairs to bed.” And the next I knew I heard a voice way off. Then it came nearer. It was Father calling “It’s late. Hurry up.” And then sure as fate he’d add “Don’t forget there’s time to use the soap and water.”
U.N. Day
Vermont Style

Pictured and told by
Ann della Chiesa

The international set did the cooking and the local folks literally ate it up. They came from all nations, all corners of the world; from as far east as China and as far west as Estonia. They brought their kimonos and their cookbooks and prepared a table which featured dishes of 13 different countries.

There was red hot borscht, fried rice from Indonesia, pickled pigs’ feet from Poland and spaghetti from Italy. To drink, there was Chinese tea and Turkish coffee—and, for the younger set, Vermont milk.

The dessert table featured pastries from Sweden, shortbread from Scotland and kuchen from Germany.

After the dinner, which was held in the auditorium of a Burlington school, there was more United Nations-type entertainment.

A Hawaiian schoolgirl danced the hula, a member of the Overseas Wives Club sang songs she’d learned in Belgium and Dr. Richard Stoehr, a native of Vienna, now at St. Michael’s College, played some of the songs and ballads.
which have endeared him to the hearts of many Vermonters.

The Greek community in Burlington sent some of its most spirited dancers and, to the background chant of a chorus, danced the gay “Sertos.”

They were all there, young and old, black, white and tan, and they laughed and chatted over the sweetened beans of the Dominican Republic, then tapped their feet to the beat of the catchy marimba.

It was a happy, homogeneous crowd—a small city United Nations, in which colorful Korean silks brushed against grey flannel suits.

To add an official touch, former ambassador to the United Nations Warren R. Austin sent Mrs. Austin to give greetings.

“It was such a success,” recalled Mrs. Buttrick, area director the YWCA, which sponsored the event, “that we plan to make an annual event of it. This year, we’ll hold it on United Nations Day in October.”

Working with foreign students has been a pet project of Mrs. Buttrick’s. She had found friends for the many foreign-speaking teen-agers who came to attend the University of Vermont, and when the Mary Fletcher and DeGoesbriand Memorial hospitals arranged their foreign training program for doctors, she invited them for tea. “Now,” she explained, “they wanted to do something in return.”

And because meeting over a meal is one of the best ways of getting acquainted or expressing friendship, the International Dinner was planned.

“They worked all night preparing some of the food. We expected 100 people,” she said. “But 300 came. Some patient folks stood in line for more than an hour. This year, however, we’ll know better.”

And with such enthusiasm for her project, and such assistance from the many more foreign peoples in Vermont, she won’t miss.

The crowds won’t stay away. All that food and fun and friendliness makes for a better world.
Throughout Vermont fields and forests growing wild is a vast and beautiful flora of fleshy fungi. The 3,000 different Vermont species are properly called mushrooms, and they offer rich harvests for anyone willing to gather and identify them for treats in good eating. In fact, tons go to waste every year for lack of pickers.

Despite popular belief, there is no difference between a mushroom and a toadstool. Both words mean the same, just as violin and fiddle refer to one musical instrument. The Boston Mycological Club, oldest mushroom-collecting society in North America, prefers to call all soft fleshy fungi, both edible and poisonous, mushrooms.

Another popular misconception is the silver spoon test for edibility. If you boil the unknown mushrooms with a silver spoon or half dollar and the silver turns black, the mushrooms are said to be poisonous. The truth is that several species of deadly Amanitas will pass this test with flying colors, and someone becomes a candidate for an obituary. In the summer of 1952, a Yale Professor’s wife paid with her life; and the annals of medical history include many similar cases.

Peeling a mushroom cap is another quack test. If it peels easily, the mushroom is supposed to be good. But like the silver spoon fetish, this test is strictly for the vultures and funeral homes.

Another dangerous rule is that anything growing on wood is safe. Jack-O’-Lantern (Clitocybe illudens), pumpkin-colored vase-shaped gill mushrooms growing in clusters on wood, frequently holds heathen carnival and the doctor acquires a not-so-well earned reputation for saving lives in mushroom poisoning in newspapers. (Persons poisoned by this fungus recover anyway in two to five
All mushrooms in this plate are edible except the deadly amanitas, top left.

Amanita muscaria, the Fly Amanita, is supposed to kill flies, but really only stupefies them. In the 18th century it was used as a substitute for flypaper.

Amanita phalloides, more properly Amanita caesarea, is deadly. The true A. phalloides of Europe and California is green and does not occur in Vermont.

Coprinus micaceus, glistening coprinus
Coprinus comatus, shaggy-mane mushroom
Marasmius oreades, fairy-ring mushroom
Agaricus campestris, common mushroom
Lepiota procera, parasol mushroom
Lepiota americana, American lepiota

Cortinarius violaceus, violet cortinarius
Hypholoma sublateritium, brick-red hypholoma
Pleurotus sapidus, sapid pleurotus

Cortinarius violaceus, violet cortinarius
Hypholoma sublateritium, brick-red hypholoma
Pleurotus sapidus, sapid pleurotus

Amanita muscaria Ay amanita
Amanita phalloides deadly amanita
Amanita caesarea Caesar’s mushroom

Lactarius deliciosus delicious lactarius

Coprinus comatus shaggy-mane mushroom
days even if no doctor were available.) Sometimes Jack-
O’-Lantern grows singly on the ground (actually from a
concealed tree root) and imitates the delicious egg-yellow
days even if no doctor were available.) Sometimes Jack-
O’-Lantern grows singly on the ground (actually from a
concealed tree root) and imitates the delicious egg-yellow
chanterelle which abounds in hemlock woods in Vermont,
and so lays a nasty trap for collectors who fail to observe
the differences between the two species.

There is no rule-of-thumb to separate edible mushrooms
from toxic. A collector for the kitchen must recognise
every species with absolute certainty and to shun all un-
known to him. His position is like that of a bank teller
who must know a customer before cashing his check. If
you don’t know your mushrooms, let them alone. If you
know one to six species which you have been eating for
years, continue, but shun all others.

Perhaps you heard the story of the fictional Mrs.
Guggenheim’s test, which has some basis of fact. One
summer’s day Mrs. Guggenheim gathered several pounds
growing on her lawn. They seemed ideal for her dinner
party planned for the next day. No mushroom expert was
handy, so Mrs. G. tried the mushrooms on her dog, Rex.
The next day Rex was well so Mrs. G. served the mush-
rooms to her guests.

During dessert, Reeves the butler announced that Rex
was dead. Horrified, Mrs. G. explained, and the mush-
room treats precipitated an exodus for treatments. Mrs.
G. asked Reeves for a farewell look at her late pet.

Reeves advised, “Better not, Ma’am. Pretty bad. A
big truck flattened him.”

There is a similar story about a cat that became ill.
After the mushroom eaters were treated, the cat got well.
She gave birth to seven kittens!

Statistically, an indiscriminate collector for the table
has about 1% chance of being poisoned fatally. In Vermont
over 3,000 different kinds (species) of mushrooms grow
wild including 600 known edibles, 35 poisonous of which
does are killers mostly of the Amanita genus, and 2,400
miscellaneous species which are too small or rare or harm-
less (too tough or bitter to eat) to have any economic
value as food. Incidentally, among green leaved plants
about 1% are poisonous. But why take that 1% chance of
eating something out of this world that may take you out
of this world? Be sure to know what you eat in fungi.

Certainties are better than cemeteries.

Dr. Rolf Singer, former mycologist at Harvard Uni-
versity, says that amateurs may experiment safely with
three families of mushrooms, the Boletes (spongy mush-
rooms with minute vertical tubes or pores underneath)
with no red color, coral mushrooms if not bitter tasting
raw, and puffballs if pure white inside. With puffballs,
however, be sure that the texture is the same throughout,

Since ancient times mushrooms have been highly es-
teemed as delicious condiments. Wild mushrooms cover
the entire quality range. Many surpass market mushrooms,
others vary to strong, insipid, bitter, tough, etc. A few
mildly poisonous kinds, usually Panaeolus species, are
sought to develop a jag by a group of people intent on
holding a “Panaeolus party.” These people cook and eat
these intoxicating fungi to induce delightful sensations of
floating through the air to the strains of heavenly music
while watching pink elephants perform exotic dances. In
Russia dried fly agarics (Amanita muscaria) are sometimes
taken instead of vodka for a super jag,—sometimes ending
in death.

The food value of mushrooms is not as high as was once
believed, for they contain only a little more nourishment
than vegetables. However, they contain proteins,—are rich
in mineral salts and vitamins.

As a state Vermont consumes probably about 30,000
pounds a year, nationally 30 million pounds. Within a
ten-mile radius of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, the
mushroom-growing center of America, more than 600
commercial growers raise two-thirds of the nation’s fungus
victuals.

The Swiss found wild mushrooms a valuable meat
substitute in World War II to bolster the appeal and
digestibility of a drab fare of potatoes. At that time the
Swiss hunted mushrooms to death and some canton
governments were forced to declare a closed season for
two years.

Only cultivated mushrooms are sold regularly in Ameri-
can markets, but in Europe the traffic in wild mushrooms
has been regular business for centuries. Folks too old to
work fortify their slim budgets by part-time collecting
for market where the local mushroom inspector passes
species on the approved list. This list ranges from a dozen
to fifty species in different European cities. Italian peasants
drag great logs and stumps into their back yards where
they lovingly sprinkle them with water regularly to induce
home crops.

Many tough and woody Vermont fungi growing on
trees are highly decorative. The use of large brackets for
art work is well known, but few people realize the
decorative possibilities of the small colorful brackets with
their velvet zones of purple, gray, yellow and green as
ornaments for hats or as parts of flower arrangements.

One species, Polyporus cinnabarinus, is bright red. These
fungi are botanically real flowers,—can be dried easily to
keep permanently. The woods are full of them, yours for
the picking.

Other fungi are commercially important to brew ale and
beer, and to manufacture certain chemicals and antibiotics
such as penicillin. Still other fungi make valuable fodder
for reindeer, cattle and pigs. Those common round whitish
brackets, Polyporus betulinus, you see on dead birch trees
are used to clean tiny parts of Swiss watches, and are

46 VERMONT Life
Top Left: *Collybia velutipes*

Top Right: *Boletus versipellis*

Above Left: *Cortinarius rubellus*

Above Right: *Laccaria laccata* (three on left)

Right: *Hydnum caput—ursi*

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All types shown are edible except *Amanita*.

*Calvatia gigantea* or giant puffball.

Above: *Hypholoma appendiculatum*, found often in open fields, and near defunct apple stumps.

Below: *Amanita verna*’s odd cap signals a genus to avoid.

Right: *Armillaria mellea*, in characteristic cluster. Below: Baseball-size puffballs, or the *Calvatia cyathiformis*.
edible when young but are considered poor flavored.

Edibility in mushrooms is highly relative. The book standard is after cooking. Species of milk mushrooms are called _Lactarius_ because they exude a milky juice when broken, and their related brittle caps of genus _Russula_ contain resinous matter. This makes them hot and peppery to taste when raw, but cooking destroys the resins. Charles McIlvaine, author of _1,000 American Fungi_, often ate anything not known to be definitely poisonous. Contrawise, I knew a lady so allergic that taking one sip of commercial mushroom soup would make her ill. Some people are allergic to several of the best edible species, can eat others without ill effect, a personal matter which every mushroom eater must determine. Some people have a natural or acquired immunity to mildly poisonous fungi.

Every year in Vermont hundreds of tons of wild mushrooms go to waste for lack of pickers. If you wish to make a hobby of collecting, don’t let the figure of 3,000 species scare you. Make friends with and learn one species at a time, and it will reward you with an epicurean treat every time you find it. If you learn the twenty commonest species, by volume you can collect about one third of all 600 known edibles; if you go farther and learn the 100 commonest, you can get ninety percent.

I know people who have collected and eaten many species on their own, without help of an expert, simply from books. The first genus to learn is _Amanita_, marked by white gills (plates on the under side) usually, a ring upon the stem (not always present) and a swollen base that forms a sac or cup for the stem or else consists of divided swellings or covered with flaky granules. _Amanita_ contains the killers, so you should learn this genus and avoid all _Amanitas_, and I mean ALL. (Some _Amanita_ species are deliciously edible, but too much danger lurks in confusing the species.)

My advice is to eat no wild mushroom until checked by an expert. Seek guidance from your nearest natural history museum, botany department of a college or university, a state or federal agricultural institution, or an organized mushroom club. (Such clubs often call themselves mycological societies, based on the Greek word, _mykos_, meaning fungus.) Go out with experienced collectors, but beware of silver-coin quacks who don’t know the botanical names.

I have often been asked how to grow cultivated mushrooms, _Agaricus bisporus_. Like other wild-mushroom hunters, I take the same view of commercial mushrooms as a trout fisherman does of a fish market,—definitely un­sporting but occasionally helpful to save face after an unsuccessful expedition. I have never raised mushrooms and don’t intend to. The business is highly specialized and excruciatingly technical,—requires a heavy capital investment. The Snowcap people told me that they invested $100,000 to start operations.

For the amateur at home, garden seed houses offer compost mushroom trays about two feet square for you to sprinkle with water in your cellar. These trays are apt to prove disappointing, because the average person cannot hope to duplicate the exact growing temperatures and humidity required by the fussy mushrooms. After talking with dozens of people at horticultural shows who have tried trays, I learned that you have little chance of recovering your initial investment of five dollars in a couple of trays in the form of mushroom crops. The odds have proved to be about nine to one against you. If an experiment is worth five dollars to you for fun, try a tray or two but kiss your money goodbye.

Mushrooms lead dark and mysterious private lives. The main vegetative part grows as concealed threads underground or in the wood,—is called mycelium. In silent stealth mycelium scavanges large areas of earth or the forest floor for dead animal and vegetable matter or eats away (rots) the entire heartwood of large dead trees. The mushroom itself, as we see it, is only the fruiting body of the mushroom plant.

Mycelium generates button mushrooms, simply young fruits which expand and open as they mature, and form on their knifelike plates underneath, called gills, billions of tiny one-celled particles called spores. You need a powerful microscope to see spores individually they are so tiny, but in mass they appear to the naked eye as a fine dust deposit, sometimes visible on the ground under mushrooms.

Air currents pick up and scatter far and wide trillions of spores which permeate the air everywhere. Like seeds, dried spores settle everywhere, may lie dormant one to six years depending upon the species and conditions before germinating. Only one spore in a million lands on the stump of the right kind of tree or right spot in a pasture to start a new colony of mycelium. If fungi should all suddenly stop breaking down forest debris into humus, forests would soon starve for lack of humus food and become cluttered yards deep with dead sticks and leaves.
Every day you breathe the spores of hundreds of different fungi species,—wipe them off your furniture when you dust.

A spore germinates primary mycelium. When it meets in its path of growth the primary mycelium of the proper opposite sex (mushrooms have four sexes instead of two!), the two mycelia join and form secondary mycelium. Only this secondary mycelium can bear mushrooms. It spends a dark underground existence, expanding inches to yards in all directions in its ravenous quest to collect nourishment for the glories day, usually after a rain, when it thrusts above ground all its misered goodness as mushrooms, often in a matter of hours.

Wild mycelia get nourishment in one or more of three ways, depending upon the species and conditions. Some parasitize live trees and plants,—others form sheaths around tree rootlets and live in harmonious partnership called symbiosis. The mycelium gives its tree host vital mineral salts and vitamins in exchange for starch and sugar. Many species of trees, especially conifers which need Boletes, cannot flourish without their favorite mushroom partners. Not as many mushroom species live the third way by purely scavenging dead vegetation as was once believed.

In Vermont forests one can find wild mushrooms growing in an amazing variety of size, form, color, flavor and toxicity. Only a trained mycologist ever sees the tiny species of inky caps the size of a doll’s thimble that pop up at midnight and dissolve in their own typical black fluid before dawn. On the other hand a single edible 64-pound specimen of Hen-of-the-woods, *Polyosporus frondosus*, was found and exhibited by Jose Ferreira of Hyde Park, Mass. in 1951. It took several days to develop.

Mushrooms assume the shapes of balls, clubs, cones, cups, coral, ears, fingers, shelves, stars, vases, umbrellas, and even birds’ nests holding tiny fungus eggs! Mushrooms grow in every color of the rainbow, often with artistic blends of red, yellow, and purple on one plant. Beef steak mushrooms, chicken mushrooms, coffee mushrooms, liver mushrooms and oyster mushrooms have typical textures and flavors, all native to Vermont; and French chefs use the little garlic mushroom, *Marasmius scorodonius*, common on dead twigs and leaves in Vermont, to add a tangy onion flavor to soups.

Different mushroom species require different conditions of temperature and moisture, and different kinds of substrata on which to grow; and like flowering plants many have definite fruiting seasons. When Autumnal frosts blacken tender vegetation and chill the earth, summer mushrooms are replaced by many Fall species of *Hygrophorus* and *Tricholoma* (which include many fine esculents). The Vermont season is late April to mid-November, although one fine eating mushroom, *Collybia velutipes*, grows the year round. In 1951 The Boston Mycological Club made a field trip on the fifth of December and collected eleven edible species!

Some mushrooms attack others. One parasite covers large white milk mushrooms with a layer of minute red cups, effaces the gills completely, and aborts the whole plant into a misshapen orange-red form that looks like a large piece of cooked lobster meat. Brilliant groups of this mid-summer fungus carnage are unmistakeable on the forest floor and collectors prize them for the table.

Mushrooms wage a constant war of infiltration against Man. Destructive fungi attack art work, fabrics, old prints, greased apparatus, and optical instruments on which the Army spends great sums of your and my money for preventative research. All wooden parts of bridges, buildings, mines, ships and telegraph poles are attacked internally with little or no apparent evidence until the overstained shell surrounding the rotted core suddenly collapses. One edible mushroom, *Lentinus lepidus*, with sawtooth-like gill edges used to infest railroad ties and was notorious as “The Train Wrecker” in the old days before cresosote applications.

If you are interested in studying wild mushrooms, four societies are not too far from parts of Vermont; The Boston Mycological Club, Farlow Herbarium, 20 Divinity Avenue, Cambridge, Mass.; Cercle des Mycologues Amateurs de Quebec, P.O. Box 1934, Postal Terminus, Quebec City, P.Q., Canada; Berkshire Mycological Society, Alvah Sanborn, Director of Pleasant Valley Sanctuary, Lenox, Mass.; and Father Bernard Taché, S.J., Secretary, Cercle Mycologues Amateurs de Montreal, 1180 rue Bleury, Montreal 2, P.Q., Canada.
Two summers ago a violent thunderstorm descended on the farm of Donald Reed in Fairfield, Vermont. Capriciously, a gust picked up an empty forty-foot hexagonal silo and dropped it neatly across a brook six hundred feet away. Looking for some good fortune among the bad, Mrs. Reed ruefully told newsmen: "Well, anyway, it makes a perfect covered bridge!"

Looking back over a hundred and thirty years of covered bridges in Vermont, you will find this to be just about the only bridge erected by act of Providence. The rest were built by act of Man, and a good deal of thought, planning, sweat and toil went into them.

First of all, there had to be a site for the bridge. Today's modern highways ride roughshod over terrain. If a bridge is plotted on the map at a certain point,—that is where it will be, even if the engineers have to move the river to put it under the bridge. But with no such facilities as diesel engines, bulldozers and dynamite at their disposal, our grandfathers had to be more choosy.

For the most part, the towns themselves decided where their bridges should be. In Pittsford there was an early crossing on the Pitts property, which gave the town its name. This was abandoned in favor of a bridge, built nearer the growing village at the Mead farm. Hard by the Gorham and Hammond properties two more bridges were built across Otter Creek, serving the northern and southern ends of town. When the railroad came along, another bridge was built to give direct access to the depot. Today, all four of Pittsford's covered bridges still stand, and bear the old names of "Gorham," "Mead," "Depot" and "Hammond."

A town like Pittsford, Rutland or Brandon that lay on both sides of a stream always seemed to have a petition before its town meeting for the erection of some new bridge, often to serve the needs of only a single farm. Avery Billings of Rutland had the answer to one such petition. "Mr. Moderator," he bellowed, "Inasmuch as we have already built bridges over Otter Creek at Gookins' Falls, Ripley's, Dorr's and Billings', four bridges in two and a half miles,—Mr. Moderator, I move we bridge the whole dang creek,—lengthwise!"

For most Vermont towns, the erection of a permanent structure like a covered bridge was a major project. A Selectman's committee usually took care of the details. They set general specifications, obtained bids from local or "outside" bridge builders, and in some cases even saw to it that the timber to be used was properly seasoned and reasonably free from knots.

For all but the biggest bridges, a local bridge builder had a decided edge in landing a town contract. His abilities were known to the selectmen and they figured the workmen would be drawn from the immediate vicinity, thus keeping the money spent within the town. The
bridge builder had to know and see to just about everything. He had to supply a working design for the bridge, see that the right sizes of timber were sawed at the mill, and choose masons, carpenters, laborers and finishers. His was the decision on the method of building the bridge. Some spans had to be erected in place, over falsework. Some could use parts or portions of an old bridge if one existed. Still others had to be partially put together on land and snaked out over the stream on makeshift platforms with block and tackle.

Down underneath there is more stone work to building covered bridges than the casual observer might notice or think about. A few bridges were located on natural abutments of jutting rock, and used a minimum of masonry. Notable in this respect are the Chiselville Bridge north of East Arlington, and the Brown Bridge in Shrewsbury.

By far the majority of Vermont covered bridges have abutments of rubble masonry. This is unsquared chunks of stone in various sizes, prepared for laying simply by knocking off the weak corners and loose pieces. If the stones were fairly even, they were placed in layers or “courses,” but for the most part no attempt was made to even the layers until the top of the abutment was reached.

A few bridges had sub-foundations of piling, long poles driven into the stream bed where the bottom was not stable. A primitive horse-operated pile-driver accomplished this work before the masons began. Sometimes, if a stream was deep and swift, a small cofferdam was necessary for the stone worker to get an abutment started, but more often he began well back from the normal water line.

The abutments and piers of the covered bridges were practically all laid up “dry,” and like stone walls, they held tight together. Often, as a binder, a thin liquid mixture of lime and cement was poured into the mass of the abutment. It trickled between the stones, filled up the gaps and hardened to make a more solid piece of work. This was called “grout,” named for Martin Grout, a Massachusetts stone mason of wide repute. Grout used his mixture in work on public buildings such as the Windham County Courthouse at Newfane, Vermont. The process was quickly adapted to bridge foundations as well.

When cement mortar came into use, it was extensively used for repairs to bridge abutments and piers, the faces of the stones being joined more firmly by “pointing up” with this binding material. Mortared abutments can be seen in the covered bridges at West Arlington, East Fairfield and southeast of Charlotte. Rubble granite was used to a great extent in the northern part of the state. The Moseley Bridge in Northfield has huge granite blocks in regular courses for its abutments.

Vermont’s other famous quarry product, marble,—has found its way into the foundations of bridges, too. The Sanderson Bridge in Brandon has faced white marble blocks, arranged in regular courses,—called “range

(Continued on page 52)

THE AUTHOR: Richard Sanders Allen, 39, postmaster at Round Lake, N. Y., is the nation’s foremost expert on covered bridges. His enthusiasms and ranging in Vermont cover abandoned towns, railroads, old postofices and forge sites. His definitive article on Vermont’s old iron smelting and mining industry will appear the next issue.

Mr. Allen’s ancestors were all Vermonters. His father was once Barre city engineer. His mother’s family came from Washington, Vermont. This article is the third in a series by Mr. Allen. Others appeared in the Spring 1954 (on the architectural types), and in Fall of 1955 (which concerned the bridges’ builders).
masonry.” Over the years, concrete or concrete facing has replaced much of the old stone masonry. The thirty-year-old Holmes Farm bridge in Canaan had concrete abutments from the beginning.

While the masons fashioned the abutments, the workers in wood were busy. One of the first jobs was to establish communication from one side of the stream to the other by means of a catwalk, even though it stretched precariously in a roundabout crossing from rock to rock. The job of some carpenters was to put up scaffolding in the river, or occasionally, if there was a special hurry to complete the bridge,—on the winter’s ice. This falsework was usually in the form of a huge sawhorse-shaped framework, called a “bent.” Several of these were braced with diagonal timbers and a rude platform built across their tops. Rope and a knowledge of knots was essential in this work. Trees, stumps and rocks for tying and snubbing were selected in advance by the riggers who would later raise the heavy trusses.

For the early big bridges, and those in remote areas, special carpentry skills were necessary. This called for a thorough knowledge of hand tools, the only ones that were used.

First of these was the broadax. As the name implies, the broadax was a short-handled cutting tool with a broad sharp blade, bevelled on only one side. A regular ax cut down a tree, but the broadax was used to hew it from a round log into a square beam. The hewer usually notched the log at intervals and then whacked off chunks of wood between notches until he had a roughly flat side. If you were left-handed, you simply reversed the ax on the handle and hewed away. Beams that resulted were nearly as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry, as large as the great logs of pine and spruce of which they were made. They can be found today, high and dry. 

For smaller logs and partly finished timbers, a different tool was used. This was the adz. If you have ever broken garden sod on a hot day with what is called a mattock or grub-hook, you have an idea of the principle of the adze. The adzeman straddled the log and brought the tool with its bright keen blade down between his legs. The big chips flew and the timber took shape. A tall, thin worker catching on of the big timbers in the 111-year-old “double-barrel” covered bridge at the entrance to the Shelburne Museum at Shelburne, Vermont.

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The adze has been called the “Devil’s own tool for danger.” One can easily picture, with a keen blade swinging rhythmically between the legs, or within inches of the feet, that only a slight deflection would bring injury. Old-time adzemen wore the scars of their calling.

Once a cocky youngster came to a bridge building foreman, looking for work.

“What kin ye do?” queried the foreman.

“I’m an adzeman.”

Up went the foreman’s eyebrows. He shifted his chew and looked the young fellow up and down.

“You be an adzeman, eh? Then let’s see yer legs!”

Caught, the boy slowly hauled his breeches out of his boots. His shins were as lily-white as his face was red.

The mortise and tenon joint was the ball-and-socket of the covered bridge builder’s day. One timber had a “mortise” or broad slot chiseled into it. Another was fashioned into a flat tongue or “tenon” to fit snugly into the mortise. The early tenons were hewed out, but later a special tenon saw did the job. For further fastening, a hole was bored through the joint and a round or square peg driven into it. In some cases, a round peg in a square hole made the tightest joint!

This method of fastening brought into use still more tools. The chisel was big and broad, all wood, with a sharp steel tip, and was pounded with a club-like wooden hammer called a maul. This last was of ironwood or oak, and if you “mauled” a finger instead of your chisel you knew it in a hurry.

Holes were first bored with an auger,—a pointed, corkscrew-like shaft with a wooden handle. For smaller holes a regular bit and brace were used, the brace being all of wood.

The pegs were made in a variety of ways, usually by an older member of the bridge building crew. Short lengths of wood, clamped in a shaving horse, were shaped to round, square or point with a drawknife. Sometimes they were fashioned by driving the rough-shaped wood through a bored hole in an iron plate, the hole being the approximate size of the auger would bore. Still another method was to carefully hew them out of sawed oblong “blanks” with a small broadax. The round pegs were called “trunnels” (a contraction of “tree-nails.”) The pointed ones were “fids,” and those with step-like staggered edges, “keys.” Still another small fastening device was a flat, tapered piece, naturally called a “wedge.” All were driven into place with a maul.

Walter Hard, Sr. tells of a workman who showed up one day when the Chiselville Bridge in Sunderland was being rebuilt. The foreman sized him up as being of no
account and set him to work shaping pegs with a small broadax, using a big boulder as a chopping block. The man worked steadily all day, his keen blade not once touching the stone. Then as the long day ended he lifted the ax high above his head and set the gorge to echoing as he shattered it into the rock.

"By Judast," he exclaimed, "I was taught to put your ax in the choppin' block when you was done for the day!"

Saws were in use everywhere on a bridge job. The hand, the buck, and the two-man cross-cut saw still see much use today. Rare is the pit-saw, which was well-known to the bridge builder. With one man on a platform and another below, a long beam could be cut lengthwise with a pit-saw,—to the accompaniment of much sweating and heaving. The bottom sawyer tired in the shoulders and the top man in the back. If they changed places often during the day, come nightfall both were tired all over.

One more hand tool added to the bridge carpenter's exacting labor. This was the plane. When more "finished" work was desired, oftentimes the hewn timbers were further worked to smoothness by planing. The size of the plane varied with the size of the man who handled it. One bridge builder's plane measured nearly three feet long, and with a powerful young giant to shove it, would send a wide shaving curling up and over the user's shoulder.

Vermont's well-known lattice covered bridges presented special problems to the builder and his crew. The water-powered sawmills cut the wide spruce, pine, and hemlock plank with their up-and-down gang-saws. Coupled wagons hauled the timber to the bridge site, where it was slid off on the ground with cant hook and crowbar.

If the adze was the "Devil's own" tool, then the boring machine was "Satan's sure-bet." This contraption was a mechanical auger. The operator sat a little behind it, leaning over. He located where the hole in the plank was to be and turned two crank handles which were geared to bore the auger into the wood. Thus he continued, hole after hole, proceeding from one end of the heavy plank to the other. Often a boring machine would bind at a knot, the screw-blade would dull and have to be replaced, and the end of the plank always seemed miles away.

Picture a hot summer's day, down in a valley where no air was stirring, and the prospect of 5536 holes to be bored! (This was approximately what was needed for an average 100-foot lattice bridge.) Even the zest of a race between two rival boring machine operators was denied the sweaty laborers. Those holes were marked to fit and had to be EXACT.

If 5536 holes was an awesome prospect, think of what 1680 hand-made pegs to fit them would mean! Little wonder the lattice covered bridge builders turned over the making of the oak trunnels to small wood-working shops, from whom they bought by the thousand. These pegs were turned down on a wood lathe to their 1" to 2" diameters.

Look at the pins in the majority of the lattice bridges and you will see the marks on the end of the shaft where the lathe clamp held them, way back over a hundred years ago. The specifications of the bridge and the woodworker's individual methods determined the size and shape of the trunnels. There were short, long, fat, thin, round-headed, square-headed and headless bridge pegs. Women and boys dipped them in linseed oil and then they were tossed in a bin to be taken to the bridge site by the wagon-load.

When a lattice bridge was pinned together, the whole truss or side of the bridge was laid out in a meadow adjacent to the bridge location. The carefully-bored holes in the lattice were lined up to match on the criss-crossed plank, and the oiled trunnels placed in the openings. Now up stepped a hefty individual, wielding a beetle. This was a long-handed mallet with an iron-bound oaken or iron-wood head. It gave off the satisfying clunk of wood against wood as the beetleman drove home the pegs in the web of lattice planks.

At length all was in readiness, and the ticklish job of jockeying the truss out over the river began. All hands were called to help in this work. Men fell to on the ropes, heaving with might and main. Shouts and orders filled the air, intermingled with the cheers from townsfolk who gathered to watch. Horses strained to hold lines snubbed tight around big stumps. This was where the master bridge builder showed his worth as an organizing supervisor,—the final bridge raising where everything had to move smoothly and according to plan.

Down at West Dummerston, young Caleb Lamson took a tumble during a raising. Caleb, only 22, was contractor for the big bridge across the West River. He was standing on top of the truss halfway across the river when the scaffolding suddenly collapsed. Wisely staying there until he saw which way the truss was going, Lamson jumped in the other direction. Down he went into the shallow, rocky water. He survived, but his back was permanently injured. One of his workmen, intent on the boss's predicament, failed to see his own danger and was killed by a falling timber. Lamson rebuilt immediately, and his 280-foot structure, the longest covered highway bridge in Vermont, still spans West River at West Dummerston.

After the lattice bridges came the patented trusses with iron rods, nuts and bolts. Machinist's tools came into use in addition to those of the carpenter. A good stout hammer pounded washers into place, and a big open-end wrench was enough to tighten up a nut on the threads of a long iron rod.

A good builder in the latter day of the covered bridge put a bit of "hump" or camber in his bridges, to allow for the slight settling that occurred when traffic commenced to use it. Then, in about a year he would re-visit the site with a few men and "tune-up" the bridge. A "tune-up
Only the experienced bridge carpenter handled the adze, where a slip could cause serious injury. Tall adzemen favored a saddle position while short men hewed "right up to the toes."

A typical mortise and tenon joint, as found in the rafters of a covered bridge. The tongue-like piece (lower center) fitted into the mortise or hole above, held by wedges (left center).

Sample lattice bridge pegs or "trunnels." All but two are machine-made. They range in size from 21 to seven inches long.

Left: Plane to smooth heavy timbers was sometimes three feet long. Planer could throw a shaving from it over his shoulder.
A typical example of rubble masonry, laid up “dry,” is Best’s Bridge over Mill Brook, west of Brownsville in West Windsor.

Right: Frank F. Wildung, staff member at the Shelburne Museum demonstrates a boring machine. This hand-turned auger was used to drill the countless holes necessary in the plank timbers that went into the lattice type of covered bridge.

How were clapboards made? Here is a clapboard log of pine cut neatly so the boards could be taken from it for bridge siding.
job” was quite similar to what a musician would do with a violin. The bridge was carefully examined to determine any sag or looseness. Then the men would tighten up the turn-buckles and nuts of the iron work, and wedge tighter any sag or looseness. Then the men would tighten up the violin. The bridge was carefully examined to determine

Something increased traffic called for the addition of an arch in an existing bridge. This was usually accomplished by means of clamping flat planks together, overlapping them in a thick mass to build up into a heavy arch. Iron rods were bolted through this laminated timber, and the floor beams relocated to hang from their lower ends. These arches varied in size from the little bridge on the shore of Lake Champlain in Charlotte with five thicknesses, to the strengthened bridge at Taftsville with ten. (The former “Three-Mile Bridge” in Middlebury used Eighteen!)

With the heavy work completed, the ordinary carpenters took over for the finishing touches. They were well trained in raising a roof, for they used the same method every day in barns and houses. Cross-bracing at top and bottom of the bridge went ahead speedily. Naturally-bent heavy wooden pieces called “ship’s knees” were sometimes used for right-angle braces between lateral timber and truss of the bridges, and gave solid resistance against wind pressure. These are prominent in the big railroad bridge at Swanton, Vermont.

The laying of wide floor plank, horizontally to traffic, resulted in the “clack-clack” so dear to the hearts of those who recall crossing a covered bridge in their youth. Most Vermont covered spans today have been replanked vertically, or at least have vertical runners, so that rubber tires are given a smooth passage.

Good shingling was a necessity to the life of the bridge. The shingles were split or cleaved from a piece of dry pine or cedar. This was done with a tool called a “froe,” — a heavy, dull blade with a handle attached to it at right angles. Struck on top of the blade with a maul, it would split off a nearly finished “shake” or shingle. Hundreds of these were used in finishing the roof of a covered bridge, and were usually purchased by the bundle from independent wood-workers.

Last Fall the Town of Townshend deeded the Scott Bridge over West River to the Vermont Historic Sites Commission. The Brattleboro “Reformer” tells of an incident which occurred on this bridge. At one time Seth Allen of West Townshend was hired to reshingle Scott Bridge. Allen was good at his work, and nimble enough to need little but a ladder in carrying it out. But for some obscure reason, he enjoyed working by moonlight. Late one night a man who lived on the west hill drove home from town by way of the quiet darkness of the long Scott Bridge. Halfway across, a terrific hammering began over his head. The horse left no time for investigation and took off for the tall timber as though the devil were at his heels. Mr. Allen was subsequently requested to PLEASE do his bridge shingling at a more orthodox time.

Siding was usually applied by means of thin planking laid vertically, though some Vermont bridges, notably two in the town of Bennington, have horizontally-laid siding. The very early bridges were sided horizontally with narrow clap boards,—long wedge-shaped boards struck or “rived” out of a big dry log.

Some bridges in Weathersfield, Troy and Westfield have an unusual wrinkle in covered bridge building little practiced in Vermont. This is the buttress, a small covered triangular piece protruding from the outsides of the trusses,—actually extra bracing for stiffness. These have been compared in a head-on view of the bridges to the droopy ears of a sad beagle hound.

The portals, or entrances, were the only place for the builder of a covered bridge to show originality where it might be admired. Practical and unostentatious, Vermont bridge contractors seldom took advantage of this opportunity, and bridge portals in the state are in general plain to the point of severity. Occasionally, an added touch brightened up an entrance, such as the board-and-batten finish on some of the bridges in Northfield, reminiscent of candy stripes. Extra ornamental pieces curve under the eaves of bridges in Irasburg, Belvidere, Waterville and Arlington, and in Lyndon two spans have a high wide, and handsome horizontal finish across their gables.

Paint? Most of the Vermont bridges never saw a drop until modern times. The builders reasoned that well-seasoned siding didn’t need it, and new siding would be cheap, anyway. Sometimes just the portals were painted. In 1865, the Salisbury Station Bridge over Otter Creek sported bright yellow ends with red trim, traces of which are still visible. The bridge across the Passumpsic at Lyndonville is red with white trim, as are the renovated spans in Bennington, and several other covered bridges in Northfield.

In Montgomery, the interiors of the village covered bridges were once kept scrupulously whitewashed, both as a preservative and a fire preventative. One Montgomery boy was specifically warned NOT to play in the bridge down the village street. One night he came home with his trousers bearing a tell-tale white smudge.

“Well were you playing in the bridge, John?” asked his father sternly.

John thought quickly. “I-ahhh,” he stammered, “I stayed after school to clap the erasers!”

The men who swung the adzes and ground the boring machines are long gone, and the boy who “clapped the erasers” is crowding seventy. But over a hundred examples of the covered bridges they worked on and knew so well still stand in Vermont waiting to be admired and appreciated.
Some Vermont Covered Bridge Portal Types

Middlebury
Bennetton
Grandon
Shelburne
Hinckley
Swanton
Barre
East Shoreham
Waitsfield
West Rutland
Pittsford
Brattleboro
Fairfax
Northfield Falls
Lyndonville
South Danville
North Troy
Averill
West Woodstock
Lyndon Center

From Mr. Allen's Workbook.
“Y ou’ll starve to death in Vermont! Sure, you can make things up there but where are you going to sell them? There aren’t any local markets and you’re too far away from the city buyers to sell them anything.”

With these words ringing in his ears, Edward A. Young set out with his wife and two children to establish Vermont’s first metal-spinning shop.

Young knew the metal-spinning business (shaping metals on a lathe). The family had four generations of experience to back them up. Working with his father in their plant in Yonkers, New York, he had helped to pioneer the spinning of stainless steel and had done the first spinning of tantalum. Theirs was one of the largest metal-spinning shops in the country, doing precision work for the aircraft and radar industries as well as manufacturing all types of spun metal utensils. They had even worked on World War II’s Manhattan Project.

While living in Yonkers, Ed met and married a girl whose family had come from Bristol, Vermont. On visits and vacations he came to know and love Vermont. Finally, when his father passed away two years ago, he decided to move to Vermont and carry on the business there. It was a gamble but a worthwhile one.

After some exploration, he chose New Haven as the new site for his business. It was small, about one thousand population and it had no industry. He knew the area from previous visits. Buying a house and a few acres, he moved his spinning lathe and other equipment into the barn and set up Thistle Metal Spinning. The abundance of thistle on his land made the title particularly apt.

This much had been relatively easy. The big problem was not spinning metal but finding markets for the finished product. Now Young set out to prove that his advisors had been wrong about local and out of state buyers. Soon came an order for seventy thousand spun metal lampshades, from a Lyndonville concern. There were local markets after all. With this order for encouragement he started turning out work for other local concerns. Collaborating with Kennedy Brothers of Bristol he is designing metal items to go with their line of wood products. Personal contacts with out-of-state buyers and
exhibits at various gift shows have resulted in an ever-increasing volume of business with more distant outlets.

The metal spinning process lends itself to a variety of products. The same equipment which is used to mass-produce metal lamp shades can also be used to make copper, brass or aluminum or other metal vases, trays, cooking utensils, etc. In each case, the metal spinner starts out with a flat disk of metal which is placed in a lathe which looks very much like an ordinary wood turning lathe. The rapidly-rotating or spinning metal is then forced against a wooden or metal form until it assumes the shape of the form. Various hand held tools are used as levers to press the metal against the form and to shape, cut and burnish it.

The forms used are made on the same machine and it is here that Ed's skill as an artist as well as a craftsman is evident. In most cases he starts out with the roughest of preliminary sketches—or none at all. Some of his most beautiful gift items are created right on the spinning lathe, the design taking shape as the form is made. If he is satisfied with the result, production runs can be made directly on the form he has designed.

This designing skill has worked right into the Young household. Mrs. Young was having trouble with pies running over in the oven. Cleaning the oven after these mishaps was quite a chore, and she had been enlisting Ed's help as an oven cleaner. Ed decided that he much preferred metal-spinning to oven-cleaning. After a few experiments on the lathe, he presented his wife with a special, rimmed pie plate which caught all of the drippings and freed him from his KP. Many of these plates are now seeing double duty—not only for baking—but also as casseroles and serving dishes in the Young household.

Thistle Metal Spinning is now a successful business. New equipment is being added. Ed now has another metal-spinner and an apprentice working with him to help keep up with the growing demand. When the plant outgrows its present quarters, there is plenty of land available for any necessary expansion.

Edward Young is a busy man, for a small business places heavy demands on its owner's time. Yet, somehow, he finds time to take part in local affairs. For a year he served...
as lay preacher at the South Starksboro Friend's Meeting House. He now teaches the Jr. High Sunday School Class at the New Haven Congregational Church while his wife, Marion, teaches the intermediate group. He is keenly interested in the Boy Scouts and is serving as scoutmaster and district chairman of Addison County. Again his interest is shared by Mrs. Young who is the local Girl Scout leader.

Many people have thought about getting away from the rush and confusion of city life. The Edward Youngs didn't just think about it—they did something about it. They're glad they did.
Above: At left Ed Young fits disk of aluminum on lathe. In center, form of ice bucket top begins to take shape. Young above puts final touches on spinning and it's done.

Right: Scoutmaster Young with his New Haven troop.

Far Left: Spinner Phil Morin works on aluminum reflectors.

Left: Another type is drilled by Apprentice W. Farnsworth.

Below: Sunday finds Young with his Sunday School class.
“There are times in the year when anyone with an itch for travel must think of those parts of the earth that God favored above others when He handed out the seasons. There are two of these that I have enjoyed many times but I still find myself goggling and marveling every time they come around. One is the English spring and the other is New England in the fall.”

Alistair Cooke, in One Man’s America, 1952