VERMONT'S CAPITAL CITY A CENTURY AGO

In this issue

NATIONAL LIFE
A Century of Service

DOWNTOWN SALMON
Fishing within city limits

MAPLE SUGAR PARTY
A Picture Story

TOWN MEETING
Democracy at Work


**VERMONT Life**

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE STATE OF VERMONT

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POST BOX

Roland Wells Robbins’ article on human hibernation which appeared in the Winter issue evoked an avalanche of letters, phone calls and newspaper comment. Bob Wilson, then a Herald reporter and now an AP man in Paris, was the reporter who unearthed the story for the Rutland Herald in 1939 and later sold it to other publications after which it spread rapidly. One newspaper columnist’s guess is that A. M. might have been some member of the Atkins family who owned and published the Argus, since there are several members of the family whose initials included M. A. which might have been reversed for “A Strange Tale,” Forrest Morse of East Montpelier phoned in to say that A. M. was Allen Morse who lived in Woodbury about two hours from where the hibernations took place.

Sirs

In regard to your article Human Hibernation in the latest issue of Vermont Life, which article I found most fascinating, I see no reason why your author “A.M.” isn’t A. H. Mills, the Middlebury poet who contributed a poem from time to time.

This is worth investigation, even if Mr. Mills is only the Vermont version of Poe. But factual evidence has it otherwise. In the Rutland Daily Herald’s front page of December 20 of this year, recent tests prove that dogs remain alive for 72 hours after their hearts were frozen to make them in a state of incubation.

John Fahner, Cuttingsville, Vt.

Sirs

Just finished reading your Human Hibernation article in Vermont Life—I feel quite sure there is at least a little truth in same—This may explain it—In most states we have a few families pretty generally known as Poor Fish—probably of the pickelery variety—and every fisherman knows you can freeze same solid and put in the bath tub; when returning home, they not only thaw out but start to swim. With or without bathing suits. Best I can offer—

B. F. VanSickle, Middletown, N. Y.

Human Hibernation a Hoax (Editorial)

We had no more than finished the lead article in the current issue of Vermont Life entitled, “Was Human Hibernation Practiced in Vermont?” by Roland Wells Robinson, and set the original story down in our mind as pure fabrication, then there appears in the news of the day from the University of Toronto the revelation that medical scientists had stopped the heart of a dog by freezing, while operating on that organ, and the belief that frozen sleep will some day be applied to humans for successful heart operations, now impossible.

Author Robinson has put in much study to determine where the story of hibernating human bodies originated, and who was its author. The tale told of the ancient practice in a section of Vermont, about 20 miles (Continued on page 55)
RISING SAP.

The Post Boy has just come indoors. He's been watching some boys and girls, free from school, streaking it across a meadow toward the foothills which brace the mountain. There a weathered sugar house has come to life for its annual visit. It is enveloped in a cloud of steam which the P. B. can smell from a distance. It's the smell of boiling sap, that distillation of summer sun and winter cold. For the Post Boy no Parisian compound, no matter how enthralling the name attached, could ever offer the allure of a steaming sap house. Seeing all this stirs feelings which come to most country boys when the sap begins to rise in the maples.

To get out of school clothes and into wool socks and rubber boots and an old sweater, and to splash through the melting snow in the road where miniature rivers are flowing from the hills. To feel the warmth of the sun on one's back and suddenly realize that warmth will be coming soon to stay after months of bundling up and urging fires. Then at the sugar house to jump on the sled with the gathering tub just starting on a trip around the sugar bush; to watch the silver track in the wake of the runners as they slide through the bush-edged road. Then, while the sap is being poured into the tub from the over-flowing buckets on the upper ridge, to look down on the valley and the village where, after months of open drafts, now chimneys are sending up leisurely wisps of smoke from slow burning fires. Blue jays are scolding three winter-bound crows circling against the clean blue sky. The hound tears past, hot on the scent of a rabbit. Suddenly the mad ecstasy of spring comes to a boil inside the sugar house. Seeing all this stirs feelings which come to most country boys when the sap begins to rise in the maples.

GREEN MOUNTAIN POSTBOY

By WALTER HARD

and sundry whose sweet tooth has been titillated by Vermont's special gift from the gods.

"The rapid settlement and growing importance of Vermont, is one of the most singular instances of the benefit and value of abilities, enterprise and industry, by which a wilderness may be made a fruitful field, and where towns and villages—where churches, schools and colleges—where polished manners and well-regulated society, may be exchanged for the dark haunts of savage beasts and savage men; from darkness to light in religion—from the gloom of ignorance to the bright cheering sunshine of knowledge."

"Not thirty years ago, the territory of Vermont was an uncultivated wild—a field for speculative and landjobbing, among the royal governments of New York and New Hampshire. She is now delivered from the contention of those imperious masters, and filled with inhabitants, whose abilities, enterprise, and patriotism, are not excelled by any state in the union. Her inhabitants are composed of men who disdained to be poor and confined to the small division of a little patrimonial inheritance. They emigrated with their wives and children, and became independent farmers and country gentlemen—respectable as rulers and legislators—respectable in wealth and numbers. In every quarter of it the traveller meets men and women of the best character and education, living in the most respectable style, acquainted with their own country, encouraging industry and assisting in building places of worship, and planting schools."

"Wheat and cattle, the staple of Vermont, are annually sent in large quantities into the other states and the British provinces, having a large surplus besides supplying their inhabitants and new settlers."

"Mad was the policy which wished to sever Vermont from New Hampshire. History will record and posterity will laugh at the leaders of the latter who resisted the application of the former when she requested to be united with them as one state. But happy was the decision for the prosperity of that hardy, resolute and respectable territory. A magistrate, representative or citizen in Vermont is equally venerable with a similar officer in any other state. They govern a wise, judicious, virtuous and wealthy yeomanry, who enjoy a liberty as pure as the air they breathe, which is not exceeded on the globe. Health reigns; and cheerfulness and vigour, those greatest of earthly treasures, are the result of their happy climate, happy government, and noble spirit of its inhabitants. This is not the fanciful rhapsody of one who indulges imagination; a visit into that region will show all to be facts."

TWO YEARS EARLIER.

Either the writer of the above wore spectacles of a rosier hue or the two years struggle for recognition made an amazing transformation if we are to take any stock in the contrasting picture of our fair state painted by the Reverend Nathan Perkins who kept a diary as he struggled through the scattered settlements on a missionary journey in 1789. His description of the suffering he underwent—due in part to the spiritual poverty of the inhabitants but mostly to the scanty and deplorable fare which his hosts and hostesses set out before him. He uses the words "mean" and "nasty" in describing the homes where he was forced to stay. "In ye wilderness—among all strangers—all alone—among log huts—people nasty—poor—low-lived—indelicate—and miserable cooks..." It may well be that the last item in the catalog of misery may offer the answer to this report so opposed to the one given above. Or maybe the Reverend just didn't meet the right people. He does let in a ray of sunshine at the end at the expense of a neighboring state. "All sadly parsimonious—many profane—yet cheerful and much more contented than in Hartford—and the women more contented than ye men." (Not the miserable cooks, Reverend Perkins?)

BEE DAY
at
Lyndon Center

Pictures by Mack Derick

An old Vermont custom of voluntary labor, a community bee, net $1200 and converted a village homestead into a modern set of college class-rooms for Lyndon Teachers College in Lyndonville—all in one day.

Members of the Chamber of Commerce and faculty and students of the college worked together on the very successful project. Local business establishments loaned trucks, with drivers, to the college to collect goods donated for the auction which was organized to help raise needed funds. Included among the varied and valuable gifts were several cars and trucks donated by nearby garages.

AT THE AUCTION. Right, Theodora Grant of Lyndonville tries out the organ for her friend. Lower right, Herbert Gregory, auctioneer, gathers a crowd. Below, Betty Ford of St. Johnsbury, a satisfied customer, displays her purchase. Betty is a Sophomore and President of the Art Club.
a classroom is born . . .

Volunteers handled the auction, food concessions, pony rides, griddle cake supper, parade and the evening's entertainment of plays and dancing as well as the activities at the old Cutting place where three shifts of unskilled volunteers began work at 9 a.m. on the construction of an arts and crafts room, kindergarten, music room, reading clinic, men's lounge, and the landscaping of the grounds. Painting, papering, placing of wall board, laying of floors, insulating, and cleaning were the order of the day.

Left at the registration desk are Dean Leonard Clark, President Rita L. Bole, Juanita SWEEN and Fletcher and Bradley Potter. Left below, Lyndon Center on Bee Day. At the right are two views of the Old Cutting Place prior to Bee Day. Below, Harriet Fisk of Barton, Barbara Cameron of Barre, Harold Miller of North Springfield, and Muriel Maw of Island Pond exhibit a good sense of team work.
At the left, top to bottom, Wilmer Lyon of Lyndonville and Dana Leavitt, a local contractor, apply wall board. Jean Colby, a Freshman, and Hazen Russell, President of the Chamber of Commerce, discuss a window frame. Mr. Russell starts the paint job. Everett Mitchell, Student Government President, and Warren Fox, Janitor, stand by ready to take over. Rita Bole looks on.

At the right is the old shed which is destined to become a kindergarten. Lydia Colby, Madeline Fox and Marion Dane do a commendable job of papering as the finished room reveals. At the bottom on the right, everyone wields a brush.
through volunteers, cooperation, hard work

Just as their forefathers before them joined in community enterprise to build new homes, so did the modern day populace at Lyndon Center combine efforts to produce a new classroom building for Lyndon State Teachers College last fall.

As the exterior face-lifting nears completion, the scenes on this page unfold. Three girls try their hands at painting while a fellow student works on the plumbing (left above). Freshman Kathleen Cook (center above) puts the finishing touches on a post while English instructor Charles Leavitt, aided by sophomore Norman Lewis of Lunenberg and Freshmen Abbie Reagan of St. Albans and Mabel Boomhower of Fairfield (right above), puts on a shutter.

Doing last minute work on the gables (at left) are Junior June Whitcher, Sophomore Molly String, and Junior Glenn Badger. The front of the building gets a final cleanup and a bit of landscaping (left below). Arthur Elliott is the man on the broom. Enjoying a moment's relaxation and the satisfaction of a job well done are Betty Ford, Harriet Fisk and Mildred Guy. (right below).
In addition to the auction, a food sale and pony rides were organized to help raise the money needed to refurbish the building.

Food was donated by townspeople and prepared by the college girls. Above two townswomen, Velma Darling and Mary Shattuck of Lyndonville, together with housemother Mrs. Helen Merriam, look over some of the food items while Sophomore Margaret Stone waits to make a sale. At the right above, Sophomores Molly String of Danville and Beverley Ford of Randolph and Freshman Jacqueline Cairns of Lancaster, N. H. peel onions.

Most popular activity (and a good source of income) with the younger set was the “Pony Ride” concession. At the right, G. I. Junior Kenneth Jenness takes time off from volunteer carpenter duty to give his young daughter a ride. Below, Jimmy Goche of Concord gets a pony ride while Freshman Marion Merrill of Lunenburg holds the reins.

The St. Johnsbury Radio Station announcer broadcasting Bee Day activities has an interested audience. Activities ended at midnight.
By J. E. Hart

If you should happen to be a dyed-in-the-wool conformist—one of those orderly conservative sort of persons, who like everything according to Hoyle and deplore any change from the normal, this story will probably disturb your equanimity. That’s because it almost constitutes rank heresy by being one of those unique sporting chronicles which shatters time honored fishing yarn traditions fashionable since the time of Isaac Walton.

As an example and purely for comparison’s sake, let’s thumb-nail the popular plot and characters of the current tale piscatorial. Like “Boy-meets Girl” stuff, they generally follow the same stereotyped pattern:

Bill and Bob (maybe Joe and Charlie too) have had a tough winter working in the city. During the long winter months they decide, comes next vacation, to leave the city (mark this) and go to the Adirondices to catch themselves some fish. They go and they do, with a background of fir, spruce hemlock, white water or mountain lake (take your pick). Altho they all catch fish, Bob snags the prize lunker on a little old mongrel fly which someone had left hung up in an alder bush (Lucky stiff!) Of course Bob’s dramatic battle with the finny Joe Louis provides the piece-de-resistance of the story. Finally however (after fifteen minutes of sheer excitement which consumes four paragraphs) he lands the fish. Then cameras click—woopee is made—a taxidermist gets work and everybody is

With local anglers once again in the good graces of the Canadian Pacific, this is a typical scene on the Newport Bridge when ice is out. (RICHARDSON STUDIO)
happy. That just about ends the piece except (barring broken arms or a depression) they are all going back again next year. Yes Sir-ree!

Now I timidly present the factual account of my monstrosity—the fishing yarn in reverse.

My heroes are not a measly one, two or a dozen. They number in the hundreds. And get this—they don’t leave a city to fish, they go to a city to fish. And instead of a background of nature’s pretties to garnish the action, this story has railroad cars, city blocks and industries for stage settings. What’s more, there are no weights or measurements recorded. Did you ever hear of such a screwy setup?

But let’s get down to brass tacks. The locale of the story is Newport, Vermont, situated on Lake Memphremagog, just a few miles south of the Canadian border. The cast consists of all the fishing population of that city which means practically the entire citizenry. Of course there are many obscure characters—out of townets who sneak in to enjoy the spring fishing. But mostly these folks play incidental roles ranking locally in the same category as Vermont Democrats. The corpus delicti of this scaly saga are no less than landlocked salmon.

Each year about the middle of April the ice breaks up in Lake Memphremagog at its southern tip where the Clyde River empties into that body of water. This seems to be moving day for the salmon tribe who leave the lake and start their migration up the fast flowing stream.

As soon as there is one square yard of open water on the lake some observant soul in Newport passes along the good word. Nor is the tocsin sounded in a furtive mouth-to-ear-manner. In fact the alarum is more on the Paul Revere order with a “To rods—To rods”—”The ice is out” motif. Then the stampede is on to the Canadian Pacific railroad bridge which spans the lake at the mouth of the Clyde. Everybody and his brother jostle and push to get a favored place on the bridge with the hopes of landing the first salmon.

But let’s step down to the bridge (it’s right off of Main Street) and dhow our way along its rail. Looking along its length, the numerous rods and fishing lines resemble nothing so much as barb wire entanglements. One wonders how a salmon could even swim between them. But they do, for a catch of thirty or more fish is considered a banner day. (Considering that there are upwards of a hundred lines in the water during most of the daylight hours a catch of this proportion is not excessive when considered percentage-wise. All of which proves that “King Salmon” is no pushover in any waters or by any method of fishing.

And speaking of fishing methods almost all known means of angling are employed on the Newport bridge. Quaintly enough the one major motif of everyone seems to be to catch a salmon with a fair field and no favors. This you can do by using any bait or lure (worms and minnows predominate) within game law requirements. Anything goes. That is, with one exception. Casting is out! And thereby hangs a tale.

It is only thru the courtesy of the Canadian Pacific Railroad that “No Trespassing” signs are kept from the two approaches to the bridge, for railroad traffic is fairly heavy throught the day. There are walkways on either side of the tracks, but altho these are wide enuf to allow pedestrians to walk safely across the bridge while trains are passing they do not have the width to permit casting of any sort.

Several years ago, no holds were barred and a large percentage of the lads who fished the bridge did whip out their flies with gusto. And they caught fish too!

But one day, an ambitious brother, forgetting that a train was passing, connected his fly on the hack cast to the ear of a brakeman riding the cars.

No vivid imagination is needed to conjure up the results of that catastrophe. In less time than it takes to say “Parmachence Belle,” the Canadian Pacific closed the bridge to fishing of any kind. And that day was certainly “Black Monday” for the good burghers of Newport.

But in a year or so, due to the continued

The community net, not a normal stock item, is needed to land the larger ones. (Richardson Studio)
and plaintive wailing of all and sundry, the C.P.R.R. relented and fishing was again resumed. Needless to say, however, casting was out. But definitely!

Continuing in a railroad mood, it has often been suggested that a passenger on the Boston-Montreal Express, which holds over a short time in Newport, could open the window of his coach or stand on the car's platform and catch himself a salmon, without even leaving the train. Quite possible—but that I would like to see!

But to get back to the actual fishing. The usual method operandi is to trickily hook a minnow so that it revolves slowly when it is retrieved. Then the lure is allowed to drift with the current away from the bridge until it is out upwards of 30 feet. This is followed by a sort of jerky retrieve which brings the wabbling minnow toward the surface—duplicating as much as possible the action of a wounded minnow.

As soon as a fish strikes all adjacent lines in the vicinity are pulled in to give the lucky angler a chance for his white alley. If this little act of neighborliness isn't done, the resultant snarl of lines would make the tangle of a crow's nest seem simple by comparison.

The actual play and landing of the fish provides the lighter touch. Mostly it's better than a Jack Benny program. Of course to the lad holding the rod it's a darn serious business. But the also-rans, the other less fortunate anglers on the bridge—make the occasion a Roman holiday. They kid the pants off the lucky angler—offer gratuitous advice, most of which is contradictory and confusing—deride the size of his fish and otherwise add to the noisy bedlam of the occasion.

But when the chips are down and the fish is actually played out and spent, they rush to his aid by helping him to net it. Very few fish are lost by horse-play.

The landing net used at the Newport bridge is truly an instrument of stature, almost requiring a Paul Bunyan to wield it. Due to the bridge being a good 6 feet over the water, plus another 3 foot wooden railing to add to the overall distance, a 10' landing net handle is required. Needless to say no sporting goods stores carry such Olympian equipment, so the entire ensemble of net and handle were tailor made for this work. Like the City Hall, it is community property—available at all times to anyone and paid for by popular subscription.

But fishing from the bridge is not the only method of salmon fishing within Newport's city limits. The plush boys—the lads who are strictly purists cast their flies daily in the rock-studded foamy waters of the Clyde River. They catch fish, too. In fact it has often been said that there is no more heart-warming sight in the eyes of your true fly fishermen, than to watch a salmon hit a wet or dry fly in fast water. Take equal parts of high voltage lightning—bulldog tenacity and the acrobatics of the 'man on the flying trapeze,' then add the grace of Annette Kellermann, and you'll have a fair idea of a hooked salmon doing his stuff. As one old Vermonter so aptly puts it, "Crimus! Did yuh see that fish? Fourth of July with fins, huh?" And he's right!

And that's the story of a city and its salmon. Detroit may boast of its autos—Pittsburgh of its steel mills and Boston its beans, but up Newport way it's the fabulous Salmon which busts vest buttons and make local chests puff out. END
Animals of all descriptions were on display, including the deer above and the Husky Malemute Sled Dog at the right. (PHOTO WORK SHOP)

GREEN MOUNTAIN

SPORTSMEN'S SHOW

Gene Byron, Jr. didn’t corral Bing Crosby for this White River Junction affair, but he and his fellow club members did have everything from minnows and seals to rubber boats.

By Harold F. Blaisdell

For every Vermonter who looks upon a covered bridge as an object of beauty, there are a hundred and one of us who are considerably more interested in the number and size of the trout which may lie under it. We are equally interested in shotguns, deer rifles, and long-eared hound dogs. This may be a deplorable state of affairs but it makes Vermont a natural spot for a sportsmen’s show.

The Hartford Rod and Gun Club of White River Junction was counting on just this when in 1948 the members held a show of extremely modest proportions in the Hartford High School Auditorium. The attending crowd overflowed the building and spilled into the streets.

Eugene J. Byron, Jr., the Club’s president, is not the sort to let the obvious slip through the net. “Let’s move outdoors next year and give ’em a real show,” he said. “Let’s give ’em the biggest outdoor show ever held.”

This Byron fellow is a friendly, curly-haired, cigar-smoking chap, effervescent as a fire extinguisher and fully as purposeful. His enthusiasm proved to be as contagious as a head cold among the three hundred and fifty members of the club and, furthermore, his proposition made sense. They promptly incorporated to finance the project and, just as a start, rented the Hartland Fair Grounds. A fair grounds shouldn’t be any too big, they figured; as it turned out, it wasn’t.

Rounding up talent, especially of the caliber he had in mind, was a new experience to Gene Byron but he refused to consider this in the light of a disadvantage. He bought a copy of Billboard magazine, the club hired a secretary for him and he started writing letters. Six months later, he had written over three thousand, was considerably wiser but not a whit sadder and, what is more, had his show booked almost to the last detail.

It was quite typical of Gene that one of his first moves was an attempt to sign up Bing Crosby. Mr. Crosby declined for reasons which he failed to make clear. Gene shrugs this refusal off as probable poor judgment on the part of some underling in the Crosby entourage, a mistake which Mr. Crosby undoubtedly has regretted keenly and repeatedly.

In the meantime there was plenty of work for all members of the club. There was enough, in fact, to justify the appointment of thirty separate committees.
which were active constantly from December right through Memorial Day weekend when the show was in full swing for four big days.

One of the details which these boys attended to was to buy and erect a big canvas water tank to accommodate the many aquatic events which were on schedule. They set the thing up and built a platform around it. When it was finished, they went up into the grandstand to relax and to have a look at their work only to discover that by no amount of neck stretching could they see into the tank. They promptly tore it down and set it up once more, this time in a spot affording an angle of visibility better calculated to meet with the approval of those customers who were to pay for grandstand seats. The fact that, with its platform, the tank was over a hundred feet long and some seventy feet wide was probably one reason why nobody laughed.

Then there was the little matter of a landing field. An airplane agency had agreed to exhibit its product on condition that landing and take-off facilities be provided on the grounds. They went ahead and built an airstrip without breaking stride.

From the number of exhibitors who were rapidly signing up, it became apparent that the permanent buildings of the fair grounds would be far from adequate so they rented a total of twenty tents and erected them. Ten of these tents were one hundred feet long, which will give you some idea of the amount of space taken up by exhibits.

A realistic forest setting had to be provided for the Indian village which was to prove to be one of the most popular attractions of the show. By that time, the club members were equal to anything so a forest was created, complete with a pond.

And then they... But this should be enough to give you the general idea.

When it came to advertising, the boys went all out. They bought time on nine different radio stations, had coverage in sixty-one newspapers, ran a movie short publicizing the show in twenty-six theaters and, of course, the three hundred and fifty members spread the word up and down the Connecticut valley.

Then, on May 27th, they opened the gates and held their collective breath while they waited to see if the twenty thousand dollars they had spent had any intentions of returning home.

Their apprehensions were understandable but, fortunately, they were unfounded for sportsmen and their families flocked to the show in spite of the discouragingly rainy weather which persisted throughout its duration. Not only did the Vermont addicts of rod and gun swarm through the gates but the show drew from every other New England state as well as New York. And nobody asked for his money back.

For professional entertainment, there was Georgia Mae, "triple yodel" star of radio station WBZ and of its television station WBZ-TV. There was Art Nuss, nationally famous fly and bait caster who can lay a fly or plug on a dime from away off yonder. There was a rodeo complete with bucking broncos and all that goes with it. There were woodchoppers, sawyers, log-rollers, canoe tilters and, finally, there was that master of entertainers, Sharkey, the Wonder Seal.

This Sharkey fellow is not to be considered in the same breath with those lesser lights of his tribe who waddle up of Mohawk Indians, headed by Chief Flying Cloud who acted as master of ceremonies for the show. There was Brad Gardner and his Alaskan Huskies. There was a rodeo complete with bucking broncos and all that goes with it. There were woodchoppers, sawyers, log-rollers, canoe tilters and, finally, there was that master of entertainers, Sharkey, the Wonder Seal.

This Sharkey fellow is not to be considered in the same breath with those lesser lights of his tribe who waddle up

One of the most popular parts of the show was the Mohawk Indian Village. The two tepees shown are only a section of the village. (SHERMAN PERKINS)
to trombones, blow their noses in them and then bark raucously until somebody tosses them a handful of dead herring. On the contrary, Sharkey is an established movie star, a Broadway attraction and a national personality. In addition to possessing an amazing repertoire of difficult stunts, he is an ad libber from 'way back and will go to no end of shenanigans to get laughs. You just haven't seen anything until you see Sharkey.

As big an attraction as this line-up of professional talent proved to be, there was equally fine entertainment awaiting those who made a tour of the grounds. Live specimen of practically every species of fish and game common to the state were on display; every conceivable article of sporting equipment and related paraphernalia, from trout flies through cabin cruisers and airplanes, was there to be admired (and purchased, if your wife happened to be watching the cute little deer at the time); the Indian village could be inspected; there were free movies on outdoor sports running continuously; there were sporting dogs on exhibition; antique firearms collections and the list could go on and on.

Just in case all this wasn't enough, Gene Byron had persuaded over a hundred and fifty manufacturers of sporting equipment to contribute articles to be given as gate prizes. As a result, the club passed out a steady flow of fly rods, bait casting rods, hunting knives, automatic reels, woolen shirts, landing nets, rubber boats and dozens of other prizes to lucky ticket holders. For the price of admission, you not only saw the show but stood a chance of going home richer by some valuable item of sporting equipment.

From the standpoint of personal convenience, there were busses running constantly between the show and White River Junction and there were eating facilities on the grounds which provided everything from hotdogs to complete lobster dinners.

The element of safety was not overlooked, the club having arranged for a police force to be on continuous duty as well as for a trained nurse who was in constant attendance to administer first aid should that be necessary. In fact, the only thing that was conspicuously missing was the spin-the-wheel-and-win-a-blanket-no-moth-will-eat element. This was a deliberate oversight which was welcomed as a refreshing departure from convention.

Gene Byron is a perfectionist, however, and feels that there may be some minor omissions or errors for which he can be criticized. As a defense against one particular anticipated, but as yet unrealized, complaint, he is carefully saving a letter received from a booking agent who, relying on capital letters to convey his indignation, wrote: "I DO NOT BOOK WASH ROOM ATTENDANTS."

This, then, was the Green Mountain Sportsmen's Show. It was held under the open sky and in the heart of the sporting country where a man could buy a deer
Governor Harold J. Arthur (then Lieutenant Governor) is inductrated into the Mohawk Indian tribe by Chief Flying Cloud and Gene Byron, Jr. At the right the Chief Executive joins in an Indian dance. (SHERMAN PERKINS; BILL BERESFORD)

rifle and sight it in on woodchucks in the next field, and where he could be on a trout stream trying out a new rod in a matter of minutes. All of which, it would seem, was pretty much as it should be.

The show is here to stay, too, for the Hartford Rod and Gun Club has projects for improving the local hunting and fishing which will absorb indefinitely the revenue which it provides. And if this account has given the impression that last year’s show was big time, go talk with Gene Byron about plans for the coming year. Sharkey is coming back, which by itself is enough to make the show outstanding, but in addition, Gene will tell you, that he is planning a parade of talent calculated to knock your eye out. He might sign up that Crosby fellow yet.

And wait until he tells you about the gate prizes he plans to have. Already he has arranged an expense free trip for two for an entire week of fishing in the Connecticut Lakes region and a similar excursion for two to Back Lake. He has a fourteen foot steel boat ready to be given away as well as two deer rifles and a flood of lesser prizes. Right now, he is working on deals which, if he can swing them, will provide an award of a brand new car in a sportsman’s model with an expense paid trip to Alaska, a deep sea fishing trip to Florida for two and a four day tour of New York for two more lucky ticket holders. After you have talked with him, you’ll come to feel that he’ll either get what he goes after or come so close that he scares somebody.

This hasn’t turned into a plug for the Hartford Rod and Gun Club and its Green Mountain Sportsmen’s show; it has been intended as one right along. And why not? Vermont’s biggest stock in trade is her outdoor recreational facilities and attractions. These boys have turned the spotlight on them and plenty of people looked and were pleased with what they saw. That kind of publicity never hurt anybody.

So, come the end of May, plan to head for the Hartland Fair Grounds, ten miles south of White River Junction. For purely selfish reasons you can’t afford to miss the Green Mountain Sportsmen’s Show. It’s the biggest outdoor sportsmen’s show on earth, I think.

This black bear, with its mate, was a part of the wild life exhibition. (PHOTO WORK SHOP)
Twenty men and giant crane spent two weeks dismantling church.

Center Church once had large congregation, produced thirteen ministers. Since merger with nearby group in 1920 it has been unused.

Built in 1846, spire’s Vermont setting was sylvan.

The Church

There is one less white spire rising from the Green Mountain countryside this Spring, but from the belfry of the absent church still comes a summons to worship, thanks to Vermont generosity.

The century-old Brookfield Center Congregational Church, idle for the past twenty years, has embarked on a new career of Christian service far from its native hills. With the salt spray of Long Island Sound blowing against it, the old meeting house stands today at Lordship, Connecticut, transplanted there to serve a young and growing church.

In a more flourishing era, Brookfield had two Congregational churches, but after a transition from manufacture to agriculture the community lost much of its populace and was only able to support one. A merger of the societies centered church activity at Pond Village, the largest settlement, and the Center Church was used only on rare occasions.

For a long time, Brookfield churchmen pondered the question of what to do with the extra edifice. To maintain
that Moved Away

Wes Herwig

it would increase the financial burden, but to allow the graceful landmark to disintegrate before the elements would be shameful, they averred. Finally, it was decided to give the church—lock, pews and steeple—to any group that would use it for its intended purpose and remove it.

Last year word of the unique offer reached the Lordship Community Church, a Congregational church which had outgrown its small house of worship but found the way to a larger one barred by high building costs. The Connecticut Congregationalists dispatched a committee to Brookfield to investigate. After wallowing through three miles of springtime mud, they arrived at the secluded church and proceeded to scrutinize it from cellar to attic, sounding the aged beams, thumping the hand-hewn timbers, and finding them solid and strong. The deal was clinched when a contractor agreed to transport the church to Lordship and erect it for a fraction of a new building's cost.

"We'd rather have it than a new one anyway," said one member of the committee. "Why, this church has 104 years of religious experience behind it."
The remodeling of state Route 100 in 1937 had posed a problem that the selectmen of Moretown solved to everyone's satisfaction.

The elimination of a curve in the Middlesex-Waitsfield road and the addition of a new steel bridge near the Green Mountain Power Company's station number 8 had removed the century-old, yet still-sturdy Casey bridge as a factor in highway travel up the Mad River Valley. For some time many Mad River residents had clamored for a new, modern bridge; simultaneously, the sentimental and artistic argued that the picturesque old span should remain.

The new road and bridge came; but there were reasonable selectmen in Moretown who heard the other side. M. S. Griffith, H. J. Nelson and S. J. Platt, selectmen of that day, authorized Road Commissioner C. L. Baird to shingle the roof, put new boards on the sides where necessary, build swinging doors for both entrances and utilize the structure for storing the town snow-plow and other road equipment.

Everyone in Moretown was happy—swinging doors and all—and for 12 years Old Casey served well.

Time will tell, though, and Casey weakened under the strain of years, elements, and new loads. Foundations sagged and in strong winds the girders swayed. And no longer did the town have funds available to repair its ancient bridge.
Thus came the decision in the fall of 1949 to destroy the bridge before it did real damage. The first rainy day was named as the time when Old Casey should be burned.

On November 4th it rained and in the presence of Moretown’s present day selectmen, George Morse, Ephraim Girard and William Shepard, and officials of the Green Mountain Power Company the bridge (center) was sprayed with kerosene (upper left) and flaming firebrands touched to the timbers.

A bridge that has battled the elements for a century, however, does not die easily. The kerosene burned under the rafters and smoke came through the shingles (center left), but the bridge refused to catch fire.

To fight the rain, kindling was stacked against the walls on both ends of the bridge and set off. Within minutes flames roared through the structure, and the intense heat set nearby trees afire (lower left).

The weak point where the sag had been was first to collapse (upper right) and soon the entire span gave way, dropping with a crash into the river (center right). Officials were relieved when the fire continued to burn furiously and the bridge did not block the stream.

In a half hour it was all over and only the charred skeleton and foundation stones on either bank remained (lower right). Casey, another old-time Vermonter, had passed on.
Frederick Billings of Woodstock, Vermont, stood expectantly on the crowded deck of the packet Oregon as Captain R. H. Pearson, commanding, swung the second steam vessel ever to enter California waters through the narrows of the Golden Gate. It was April 1, 1849.

Once inside the Bay, the mob of weary, yet excited, passengers could see to their right a small forest of masts and hulks which marked the anchorage of the infant city of San Francisco. It was then a raw settlement sprawling over the sand hills of Yerba Buena Cove, a collection of wooden buildings, adobe huts, shacks and tents in which a mushrooming population of several thousand people lived the feverish existence of "the days of old, the days of gold, the days of '49.'

To most of the Oregon's passengers San Francisco was merely a jumping-off place. Their thoughts lay just back of the Coast Range in the great interior valley of the Sacramento and its tributary streams, where, only fourteen months before, James Wilson Marshall had discovered gold on the American River above Sutter's Fort on January 24, 1848.

No one could say that Frederick Billings wasn't usually well prepared for every situation in his eventful life. Unlike the majority of his shipmates he did not intend to rush off to "the auriferous parts of California," to the gold diggings up in the hills. In his baggage was a sign, painted in far-off Woodstock before he left, which read: "Frederick Billings—Attorney at Law." It was the first law shingle to be hung out in the city of San Francisco.

His friends at home in Vermont were generally puzzled to know why young Billings, with all his gifts, wanted to go out to the slope of the western lands. The twenty-six-year-old youth was born in Royalton in 1823, moved to Woodstock when he was twelve, attended Kimball Union Academy in Meriden, N. H., and graduated with distinction from the University of Vermont in 1844. He read law in Woodstock and was admitted to the Windsor County Bar in 1848. From 1846 to 1848 he served as Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs under Governor Horace Eaton. A brilliant career was assured him in Vermont.

But young Frederick had an older sister named Laura to whom he was deeply devoted. In 1845 Laura surprised the family by marrying Bezer Simmons, a whaler and a captain in the Commercial Marine. He was older, darkly handsome, and had a rough-and-ready charm about him. On his latest voyage to the Pacific Coast he had bought property on San Francisco Bay. It was Bezer who persuaded Frederick to accompany him and his wife to seek fortune in a land whose rich prospects the shrewd whaler clearly foresaw. The electrifying news of the discovery of gold, which reached the east in the fall of '48, reinforced their decision to go. Besides, Frederick wished to be near Laura and watch over her in that wild, new world.

It was Mayor Catlin of Burlington, a friend of his student days, who financed the trip for the young Argonaut with a loan of $1,000. Sole security available was Billings's own integrity. Mr. Catlin never had reason to regret his generosity. Not only was the loan soon repaid without interest, but when business reverses wiped out the once prosperous merchant, it was Frederick Billings who supported the venerable mayor until his death, an agreeable tale of loyalty in a wicked world.

The three Vermonters sailed from New York on February 1, 1849, on the overloaded packet Falcon, and then made the exhausting crossing of the Isthmus of Panama by dug-out canoe and muleback. They waited three disheartening weeks on the Pacific side before they were fortunate enough to board the Oregon, which had left New York December 9, 1848, and raced 'round the Horn. But tragedy struck the little party from Woodstock at journey's end. Four days after landing in San Francisco, Laura died of Panama fever. For young Frederick it was, as he often declared, the blackest day of his life. To forget his grief over the loss of his sister, the youthful lawyer settled himself on Portsmouth Square—the heart of the growing city—and plunged into work.

San Francisco in 1849 was a town of constant frenzied excitement. Each day was a short life. Existence was full of alarms and excursions. Rumors of new gold strikes emptied the town, caused vessels to be totally abandoned by crews and officers, and created tensions beyond belief. Gambling hells boomed and violence ran unchecked until the First Vigilante Committee of 1851 formed to suppress the evils of three years's making. Frequent fires roared through the flimsy "wood and calico" city with its many rag-palace canvas homes. In the Great Fire of 1851 Frederick Billings literally lost his shirt; his mother sent him three hand-made ones after hearing that everything he owned was destroyed, including his precious books.

Speculation was the order of the day. Cargoes bought at shipside from Yankee skippers, who fancied themselves sharp and hard-bitten traders, would be sold minutes later over the counter, or on a street corner, for five times the purchase price by San Franciscans of several weeks standing who were wise to the fantastic ways of the place. Most of the large fortunes of the Gold Rush days were not made in the gold fields, but were amassed in San Francisco by traders and merchants and men of affairs. Speculation in real estate produced some of the richest har-
took a cool-headed and strong-willed man not to make a fool of himself in the San Francisco of 1849.

One of Lawyer Billings's first clients was no less a personage than General John A. Sutter, the old Swiss pioneer who came down from his fort on the Sacramento River to get a legal paper drawn up. The business completed, General Sutter asked the amount of the fee. Hardly knowing what he ought to charge, but remembering that it was on his client's land that gold had been discovered, Billings plucked up courage enough to reply that he thought $10 would be about right. "Ten dollars!" exclaimed Sutter in amazement. "Why, young man, you'll never get rich in this country on $10 fees." Thereupon he pulled out of his weatherbeaten carpetbag a huge leather pouch and threw upon the table fifty heavy Mexican dollars, one after the other. "There," he said, "take that, and don't you ever take less from any man while you practise in California!" And Frederick Billings—being a natural born Vermonter—never did.

Despite this hesitant start, Frederick Billings soon demonstrated that he had one of the best business heads of his time, and, being a trained lawyer as well, he specialized in the larger aspects of his profession, becoming legal counselor to men of large affairs where important interests were involved.

Public recognition of these abilities came swiftly. Through his friend, Captain Henry W. Halleck, Secretary of State under General Bennett Riley, head of the provisional government in force until statehood was achieved, Mr. Billings was appointed legal adviser to the governor, in effect, Attorney General of California.

During the period between the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, 1848, which ended the Mexican War and ceded California to the United States, and the time it became a state, the laws governing the territory were in a state of hopeless confusion. Did Mexican law still hold? Or did the laws of the United States now apply? Nobody was quite sure. The question of title to land became a burning issue. Squatters and speculators challenged the validity of land grants made by Mexico in times past. Because of the widespread disregard of laws relating to property rights, lawyers were in tremendous demand. Litigation of this sort was the backlog of Billings's fledgling firm.

The press of business became so great that shortly after his arrival in San Francisco he took into partnership Archibald C. Peachy of Virginia, a friend met aboard the Oregon. In 1854 Henry W. Halleck resigned his commission in the army to join the firm, henceforth called "Halleck, Peachy and Billings," and soon recognized as the foremost law partnership on the Pacific Coast. Later in the '50s another Vermonter, Trenor W. Park of Bennington, became a fourth partner.

The firm's business assumed enormous proportions. In a city famous for legal talent and protracted litigation this organization was the largest and most lucrative. The times were flush and the fees were large. One client alone paid the firm a regular annual retainer of $30,000.

The firm entered the real estate field in an ambitious way when it built the Montgomery Block in 1853, the largest office building on the coast. Designed on massive military lines, though decorated in Florentine style, it became the most famous structure west of the Mississippi. It was called "Halleck's Folly" and "The Floating Fortress" by wiseacres who predicted that it would sink in the ooze of the tidelands because of its weight or float across the Bay on its foundation of redwood logs. No such thing happened. In fact, half a century later, it was the only downtown office building to escape unscathed in the devastating earthquake and fire of 1906. In its heyday it was the legal center of San Francisco and housed the offices of banks, railroads, newspapers and the stock exchange. In recent years it has been the favored location of writers and painters, and is fondly called "The Monkey Block."

Of the many cases in which Frederick Billings took a leading part one is especially worth recording because it became so famous in legal annals. This case involved the title to the New Almaden quicksilver mine located in the mountains near San Jose, forty miles south of San Francisco. The mine was discovered by Andres Castillo, a Mexican Commissioner, in 1845, before California became American territory.

When developed the mine became one of the most valuable pieces of property in the western hemisphere. Quicksilver was considered indispensable in the process of mining gold and silver; it was used pound for pound in the extraction of those precious metals from the ore. For generations the only major source has been the Almaden mine in Spain. The discovery of a new and seemingly inexhaustible supply created a sensation, and ownership became a matter of bitter contention.

After Mexico lost California, Castillo gradually sold out his interests to a syndicate headed by Eustace Barron. But the title had to be cleared by proving that Castillo was originally the true owner under the mining laws and customs of
when bricks and children came to San Francisco the city was truly established.

Mr. Billings was instrumental in helping Henry Durant found the old College of California which later merged with the University of California. He was chairman of the first five-man Board of Trustees and its leading spirit. It was Frederick Billings who gave the name “Berkeley” to the site of the institution, inspired by the good Bishop’s famous line: “Westward the course of empire takes its way.” He was asked to be president of the College, but declined. He gave Smebert’s portrait of Bishop Berkeley to the University in the presidency of Mr. Gilman.

He was also an influential and earnest actor in the exciting events leading up to Lincoln’s first election. Thomas Starr King, the charming and fiery young Unitarian evangelist, stamped the state for the anti-slavery cause. Mr. Billings, whose oratorical gifts were by then recognized, accompanied King everywhere. They traveled from one end of the state to the other urging the people to remain loyal to the Union. It was largely due to the personal magnetism and eloquence of these patriots that California was led away from the southern cause.

After the re-election of President Lincoln the California delegation in Congress urged upon him the propriety of giving the Pacific Coast a representative in the new cabinet, and unanimously recommended Mr. Billings for the place. Only two days before he was assassinated Lincoln gave assurances to a member of the delegation that he would grant their request. A year after Lincoln’s death the California Legislature unanimously passed a resolution requesting President Johnson to appoint a Californian to his cabinet. Again Mr. Billings was their choice. But poor health and a fundamental lack of interest in political preferment led him to decline.

The Civil War was responsible for the firm of “Halleck, Peachy and Billings” dissolving the partnership in 1861. Its members were by now wealthy men. Halleck re-entered the army and within a year was appointed General-in-Chief of the Union Armies.

In that same year Mr. Billings went to England to dispose of General John C. Fremont’s enormous Mariposa Ranch in the San Joaquin Valley, property which had been purchased from Alvarado, the Spanish governor, in 1846. Considered worthless at first, it became the talk of the west in 1849 when a vein—estimated to be a mile in length—of very rich gold-bearing rock was found, the first discovery of this kind to be made in California. The mine was profitably worked for years. Mr. Billings, who was one of Fremont’s closest friends as well as his business adviser, tried to sell the Mariposa to a British syndicate, but when the Civil War broke out the negotiations ended. While he was abroad Mr. Billings was entrusted with the important mission of purchasing war supplies for the Union Armies, most of which were shipped direct to his friend, General Fremont.

He returned to New York early in 1862, and after a whirlwind courtship he was married to Julia Parmly, a daughter of the city’s leading dentist and a lady of great beauty. They went to California on their wedding trip.

For some years Mr. Billings had been in failing health. The intense strain of life in the tumultuous ’40s had exhausted his physical powers. He returned to the east to recuperate and in 1865 tried California once more. This time he went round the Horn on a voyage in company with Louis Agassiz, the scientist, who became a firm friend. But continued ill health that same year drove him to take a trip through the Washington and Oregon territories. He looked on Puget Sound and explored the Columbia River. He was so impressed by the tremendous possibilities of the region and the obvious need for better communication with the eastern side of the continent that here was laid the foundation for his second career. But that is another story. Suffice it to say that Frederick Billings will be longest remembered in history for his part in rescuing the Northern Pacific Railroad from utter collapse in 1873, after Jay Cooke had wrecked its finances, and restoring it to a position of commanding success under his leadership as president from 1879 to 1881.

In 1866, his health broken, he surrendered to the inevitable. He wound up his many affairs and with the greatest reluctance bade farewell to San Francisco. He was at the peak of his profession and one of California’s great, though forgotten, men. He was Vermont’s most illustrious Forty-Niner.

The first phase was over. The second, and greater, was yet to come, the period of high finance and empire-building. He divided the remaining twenty-four years of his life between New York City and Woodstock. In his old home town he established a famous farm and a residence which is still one of the showplaces of New England. Vermont, after all, was his first love and last. But Frederick Billings, until his death in 1896, was to remember the vivid, tempestuous years in California, the unforgettable adventure of “the days of old, the days of gold, the days of ’49.”
The first policies issued by the National Life Insurance Company in 1850 were written on the second floor of this small, brick building which was the home office of the Vermont Mutual Fire Insurance Company founded in 1828.

NATIONAL LIFE

Vermont's own life insurance company
starts its second century of national service

By Earle W. Newton

With the completion recently of the new State Office Building, of almost shoe-box simplicity in design but beautiful in Vermont marble, the large State House lawn is now surrounded by a quadrangle of four important, impressive buildings. First in the focus of attention of all tourists arriving in Montpelier is the State House itself. How many thousand camera lenses have been turned upon it? Its graceful dome is covered with pure gold leaf, contrasting with its backdrop, half sky or cloud and half the forested slope of Hubbard Park, with a glimpse of the tower look-out, resembling the ruin of something the Norsemen left. But although all these colors—orange dome, blue sky, white cloud, forest green, (with some autumnal glory) and gray granite, green grass or white snow, all contribute to the beauty of the picture (a favorite of Kodachromists) it is the Capitol building itself that provokes the "Ah!" of those first beholding it, for architects themselves account it an architectural gem. The Doric portico with solid granite columns like redwood trunks was modeled by Architect Ammi B. Young in 1836, after the Temple of Theseus in Athens.

The central mall of the State House lawn leads in a bee line to the entrance of the new State Office Building exactly where stood a century ago the cottage-like home of Dr. Julius Y. Dewey, one of the founders of the National Life Insurance Company, where his famous son, Admiral George Dewey, hero of Manila Bay, was born.

Flanking the State House on the east is the granite State Supreme Court Building, and, fittingly, on the west is the five-story granite home office building of the now nationally known National Life Insurance Company. This insurance building is of Rock of Ages memorial granite, and it is said that this is the only instance in which Rock of Ages monu-
mental stone has been used in building construction. The insurance building is so closely identified in its setting with the Capitol and other State Buildings that it is, itself, sometimes casually mistaken by tourists as one of the state's own structures. The four buildings taken together represent many millions of dollars in architectural outlay and they present not only one of the most attractive aspects of the Capitol City, but they house approximately a thousand men and women office workers—about evenly divided between State and insurance business.

This quadrangle of buildings is therefore a key to the chief characteristic of Vermont's Capital City—a city of statecraft and the insurance business, a city of white collar workers mainly—other industry, granite-cutting, clothes-pin making, and iron-founding being dominated by the desk worker.

There are, in all, five home offices of insurance companies in Montpelier, three of them fire insurance companies, one casualty and surety company, and one, the National, a life insurance company which is this year celebrating the 100th anniversary of the writing of its first life insurance policy on January 17, 1850. The close neighborhood of the State buildings and the various home office sites of the life insurance company has continued for a full century.

Inasmuch as no railroad or railroad bridge appears across the river, it is assumed that the original sketch was made prior to the entry of the railroad into Montpelier in 1849. The village then had a population of about 1000, the town about 2,300.

The prominent building on the hillside to the left is obviously the Capitol. It is the second of three capitol buildings on this site. The first, a wooden structure, was built in 1808 and replaced in 1838 by a stone building which was destroyed by fire in 1849.
A Century of Presidents of the

William C. Kittredge (Katzieff)
President
Nov. 8, 1849—Jan. 6, 1851

Julius Y. Dewey (Wood)
President
Jan. 6, 1851—May 29, 1877

Charles Dewey (Wood)
President
June 5, 1877—Jan. 15, 1901

James C. Houghton (Wood)
President
Jan. 15, 1901—March 4, 1902
National Life Insurance Company
Director's Room of Home Office

Joseph A. DeBoer (Katzieff)
President
April 8, 1902—Dec. 25, 1915

Elbert S. Brigham (Speicher)
President
Feb. 1, 1937—Jan. 28, 1948

Fred A. Howland (Katzieff)
President
Jan. 18, 1916—Feb. 1, 1937

Ernest Martin Hopkins (Hopkinson)
President
Jan. 28, 1948—
The first desk used in 1850 is still carefully preserved in the home office in Montpelier.

by the granite structure shown in this cover picture. This second State House was nearly destroyed by fire in 1857, after which the present state house was built, retaining the magnificent Temple of Theseus portico which had not been much damaged by the fire. To those familiar with Montpelier the old Pavilion hotel (large building on street level) is easily identified—and it was just across State street in a small brick building owned by the Vermont Mutual Fire Insurance Company (established in 1828) that the National Life wrote its first policies. This ceremony took place in a small low-posted room, about 15 x 16 feet. Present, presumably, for the signatures appear on the first policy, were William C. Kittredge of Fair Haven, Vermont,—briefly first president of the company, who was then Speaker of the Vermont House of Representatives, and Roger S. Howard, the company's secretary.

The first policy, a facsimile of which is shown here, was on the life of Daniel Baldwin. He was the projector and later president for many years of the Vermont Mutual Fire Insurance Company. Oil paintings of Mr. Baldwin and his wife, Emily, who was a great granddaughter of Eleazar Wheelock, founder and first president of Dartmouth College, now hang in the ante-room of President Ernest M. Hopkins' office. The paintings, reproduced here, are the work of Montpelier's own famous artist, Thomas Waterman Wood, who had many honors, among them the presidency of the National Academy of Design.

Mr. Baldwin made a distinguished first policyholder, and he should, one would think, have set a thrifty, sane example for others. But, after two years he let his policy lapse and withdrew from the office of vice president and director for reasons unknown, but presumed possibly to be on account of the fact that he was piqued when Dr. Julius Y. Dewey and not himself was, in 1851, elected president.

But that is a mere incident in the story of the National. It is a matter of wonderment to many visitors to Montpelier how such a large life insurance company came to grow up in so small a city—village it was then—so remote from the large centers of population.

It can be said and is sometimes said jokingly that Montpelier is the largest insurance city in the world, per capita. That statement seems factually true if you put fortissimo emphasis on "per capita." There are about 8,000 persons living in Montpelier and the National Life Insurance Company has over a billion dollars of insurance in force—that tidy sum of money when policies now written mature by death or otherwise. Montpelier is, regardless of "per capita" qualification, referred to in the Vermont volume of the "American Guide Series" as the "third largest insurance center in New England."—counting the five companies which maintain headquarters here. If this be correct, Montpelier is exceeded as an insurance center in New England only by Hartford, Conn., and Boston, Mass.

The story of how so large a life insurance company as the National Life now is took root in Vermont is scarcely known to any except those who have made some special study of its history. Guy B. Horton, the Company archivist for several years, has preserved many records which reveal much of interest about the Company's beginnings.

It would be pleasant to report that the idea of founding a life insurance company in Montpelier, was conceived by Vermonters. That cannot be said, but it is to our credit that once the idea was presented by Benjamin Balch, a Massachusetts man and professional promoter of life insurance, Vermonters were quick to recognize a good idea when they saw it.

Mr. Balch came to Vermont in the summer of 1848—not, apparently, because he had any particular love of our state, but because he had been unable to persuade Congress, or the state of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York or Pennsylvania to grant him a charter for a National Life Insurance Company. Those states already had a life insurance company and in those days one was thought to be enough. Thus, more or less driven to try Vermont, Mr. Balch came to Montpelier and laid his dreams before a group of local men—among them Dr. Julius Y. Dewey, physician, Timothy P. Redfield, lawyer, Daniel Baldwin, already present by Benjamin Balch, a Massachusetts man and professional promoter of life insurance, Vermonters. That cannot be said, but it is known to any except those who have about the Company's beginnings.

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Mr. Balch came to Montpelier and laid his dreams before a group of local men—among them Dr. Julius Y. Dewey, physician, Timothy P. Redfield, lawyer, Daniel Baldwin, already referred to, Homer W. Heaton, lawyer and banker, and Paul Dillingham of Waterbury, lawyer and Congressman.

As a part of National Life's centennial celebration, this statue of founder Julius Y. Dewey, the familiar "Doctor on Horseback," was constructed of ice and snow in front of the home office building in Montpelier. The statue, which was fifteen feet high, was sculptured by Stephen Johnson of Dartmouth College.

28 VERMONT Life
Mr. Balch's scheme was to found a life insurance company not only National in name but to have big-name men from many states associated with its incorporation. He had much knowledge of life insurance, then young as an institution. In 1844 he was instrumental in getting the Massachusetts legislature to grant a charter to the State Mutual Life Assurance Company of Worcester, Mass.—still going strong. He was author in 1844 of a prospectus for a general banking and revenue law, greatly resembling the National Banking Act of 1862; he drafted a bill for a railroad and magnetic telegraph to the Pacific, and for over fifty years he advocated the Darien ship canal. Obviously, he was a man of vision.

When he arrived in Montpelier in the summer of 1848 he found little difficulty in interesting in his project the group of local men named above.

The charter he sought and got from the Vermont legislature certainly carried some big-name weight. Section one named as incorporators the Hon. Henry Clay of Kentucky, Hon. Amos Abbott of Massachusetts, Hon. Robert P. Dunlap of Maine, Hon. William B. Maclay of New York, Hon. William M. Tredway of Virginia, Hon. Alexander Ramsay of Pennsylvania, Hon. Henry Y. Cranston of Rhode Island—then Mr. Balch himself and some Vermonters, including the Speaker of the House and the president of the Senate of the Vermont legislature. Thus, men from seven states were among the incorporators, although there is little evidence that any of the men of national fame did anything except permit Balch to use their names.

In those days the Vermont legislature met in October instead of January, and on the last day of that 1848 session, on November 13, the desired charter was granted, and the act signed by Governor Carlos Coolidge, related to but separated by several generations from the late President Calvin Coolidge.

There were provisions in the charter permitting the new company to begin business when it had as many as 200 applications for $1000 of life insurance, and it was not until January 1850 that this requirement was met. At a meeting January 15, 1850, Mr. Balch was removed as secretary, by the unanimous vote of his eight colleagues for having "transcended his powers and neglected to comply with his duties." Little is known of this episode but it seemingly points to some clash of temperament or ideas. Mr. Balch was dropped. Two days later the company wrote its first policies, as related, and Vermonters took over management of the company.

There were at the time only a few mutual life companies in the country, and of those that survived only eight are older than the National of Vermont, as follows:

1843 Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York
1844 New England Mutual Life Insurance Company
1845 Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company
1845 New York Life Insurance Company
1845 State Mutual Life Assurance Company
1846 Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company
1847 Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company

Dr. Julius Y. Dewey, one of the directors of the Company from the very first, took an active interest in its promotion, and the legend is that while serving his patients and riding about the countryside on horseback he gathered many of the early applications for life insurance. A year later, January 6, 1851, he was elected president and served for twenty-six years. He practically gave up the practice of medicine, and at a salary of only $800 a year he put all his time into promoting the National Life.

The present home office building of the National Life is built of Rock of Ages granite, the only private office building in the world built of this monumental stone.
Diorama (above) depicts Montpelier on December 26, 1838, the date of Admiral George Dewey's birth. The new State House had just been completed opposite the modest little house owned by Dr. Julius Y. Dewey, father of the future admiral. Dr. Dewey may be seen at left accepting congratulations on his new son, in front of his home (out of the picture to the left). The house (which appears in the actual diorama) has since been moved down the street a block, and its site is occupied by a new State Office Building and a commemorative marker.

Left: Diorama of Admiral Dewey's victory at Manila Bay May 1, 1898.
Above, left: President Ernest M. Hopkins of National Life Insurance Company and roses on the hundredth anniversary of writing of its first policy, January 17, 1850.

Above, right: Costumed girls and others participating in National Life's open house celebration which attracted 5500 persons to home office in Montpelier.

Below, left: First policyholder of the National Life Insurance Company, Daniel Baldwin, who was president of the Vermont Mutual Fire Insurance Company. The National Life began business, January 17, 1850 on the 2nd floor of this fire insurance company's home office.


Below, right: Daniel Baldwin's wife, who was Emily Wheelock, great granddaughter of Eleazar Wheelock, founder of Dartmouth College.
"Candle Dip Day" no longer appears on the calendar, but a century or more ago it was a day set aside when thrifty Vermont households made up the entire year's supply of candles.

One of Vermont's unique characters featured in National Life advertising was Snowflake Bentley, of Jericho, who spent a lifetime making micro-photographs of snowflakes.

Insurance Company. He not only acted as president but as general agent and medical examiner and he is commonly called founder of the Company. When he died in 1877 he was succeeded as president by his son, Charles Dewey, who remained in office until 1901. Thus, the management of the Company was for almost a full half century in the hands of the two Deweys, father and son and during this period, another son, Edward Dewey, served a long period as vice president and actuary.

Simeon Dewey and his wife, Prudence Yemans, came north from Hanover, N. H., at the close of the 18th century to become some of the first settlers of the hill town of Berlin, just south of Montpelier.

Julius Y. Dewey was their son. Curious circumstances often determine destiny. Young Julius, in his 19th summer, in a boastful fit, pitched seventeen loads of hay in half a day. He hurt himself by the exertion, and for long lay ill with pain in the hepatic region. The illness led him to study medicine and he was one of the first students at the newly established medical college at the University of Vermont. He received his degree in 1825 and at the early age of 22 he began practice in Montpelier. He prospered and built for himself the cottage house on State street directly opposite the State House, and here his four children by his first wife, Mary Perrin, were born, including the boy, George, destined to become Admiral of the Navy. Julius Dewey was 49 when he became president of the National Life Insurance Company.

In its first year of operation the company suffered the loss of only one policyholder by death. The California gold rush was at its peak, and it attracted many Vermont adventurers. The National Life wrote insurance on such men only at an extra premium. Rowland Allen of Ferrisburgh, Vermont, had his life so insured, on two policies, one for $500 in favor of his wife, and one for $500 to a friend who had loaned him that sum for the trip west. Alas, Mr. Allen died of dysentery on shipboard in the port of San Diego, May 17, 1850. Mail was so slow that it was not until July that the Company learned of this death. There was a clause in these early policies making death claim payments payable within 90 days, but the National Life thought it good business as well as good publicity, to send Widow Allen a $500 check at once. Small as this sum was it led to the insertion of this Card of Thanks in Vermont newspapers:

"We owe no allegiance: we bow to no throne. Our ruler is law, and the law is our own."
—Song of the Vermonters, 1779 by John Greenleaf Whittier
Vermont was the first state to be added to the original thirteen, in 1791, only 59 years before the National Life was founded.

In the first nine years of National Life's business, insurance to the amount of $338,165 was written in 498 policies on the lives of California gold rush adventurers. Of the total death claims for these nine years, more than half were on participants in the gold rush.

But neither the gold rush, the Civil War, the Spanish War, two World Wars, nor various panics and depressions stopped the spread of the gospel of life insurance and the soundly progressive growth of the National Life Insurance Company.

The greatest strain the Company ever underwent was probably in the fall and winter, 1918-1919, when the National paid $1,113,703 on pneumonia-influenza death claims alone. But even this was met without disturbance or even change in dividend rate.

Lewis D. Stilwell, professor of history at Dartmouth College, in a penetrating study on Vermont migration, points out that no state has sent forth so large a portion of its people to aid in the establishment of newer commonwealths. Vermont, through its century old life insurance company, has made a considerable contribution, also, to the financial security of the nation. In its century of operation it has paid to policyholders and beneficiaries $599,547,394.20. It has on its books now the obligation to pay twice that sum—over a billion dollars to future maturing death claims or endowments.

The First Vermont post office was established at Bennington in 1783 from which post riders carried mail through the wilderness to Albany at three pence per mile.

National Life's first death claim was paid in July 1850, to a Forty-niner, Rowland Allen from Vermont, who died on his way to California gold fields.
Green Mountain SUGAR PARTY

For generations young Vermonters have been flocking, each spring, to Green Mountain sugarbushes, such as Eugene Mosher’s in Newport, for fun, frolic, and sugar-on-snow. Ordinarily there is still a trace of (Continued on page 36)
Franklin County MAPLE FESTIVAL

The World’s leading Maple Syrup producing area takes time out to honor the Mighty Maple.

SYMBOLIC of the release from the winter’s grip, maple syrup time brings a surge of energy and interest in the outdoors to all Vermonters. It’s the soil’s first crop of the year and it means food and fellowship and extra money.

It’s a tradition of long standing, dating back to the days when Indians boiled sap by dropping hot stones into the containers and also boiled their venison in the sap.

Only a few scattered oxen remain to tote the sap in from the orchard. There are some tractors with trailers but the bulk of this work has to be done by horses because of the irregular terrain.

The lean-to has given way to a carefully designed sugarhouse and iron and copper kettles have been replaced with storage tanks that permit a measured flow into pans with fluted (and therefore greatly increased) boiling surfaces. Of its own the syrup emerges at the end of the channelled route, to go into filter tanks.

Of the something like 4,000,000 sap-producing maples in Vermont, about 900,000 of them are in Franklin County, with the next largest number in the bordering county of Orleans. Franklin’s trees yield more than 250,000 gallons of syrup yearly, a figure which prompts the county to claim the title of leading maple syrup producing area in the world.

This spring a third Maple Syrup Festival is to be held April 14, 15, and 16 in St. Albans, the county seat. It again will center around a sugarhouse to be erected in Taylor Park by the Chamber of Commerce’s committee headed by Douglas Kelley, with the co-operation of the syrup producers of the county. It will be equipped with arch and pan and onlookers will see the steaming sap making its way back and forth across the pan until it reaches the faucet where it comes out as syrup.

On a smaller arch and pan the syrup then will be boiled to heavier consistency, for serving to the public as sugar-on-snow — a delicacy that rates with the best.

As part of the festival program there will be wood-chopping and other novel contests; crowning of a Maple Syrup King on the basis of good practices in orchard and sugarhouse; visits by various notables and a dance with oldtime music.

Once more about 500 telephone company employees of Southern Quebec and New England will assemble for the party, and other spectators will come from many other places.

The first year syrup was sent to all the Governors of the states and the second year, to a long list of radio notables.

Beyond keeping the public eye focused upon the appetizing dish of sugar-on-snow, the festival is encouraging the producers to take the best care of their sugar bushes and to improve constantly their syrup-making methods. And the festival itself is emerging as one of the nationally recognized events.

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helping the sugaring farmer to gather sap is another step in the sugarbush visit. The lack of snow made the trees more accessible to Pat and George and the going easier but still tough enough to work up an appetite for the sugaring off that comes at the end of the day.

Some folks are content to use a fork to eat their sugar on snow, but Chan Nealy keeps alive another Vermont tradition by whittling a wooden paddle for himself and Pat Smith. Old Vermonters will tell you the sugar is always better from a hard maple paddle.

The menu at a sugaring off party doesn’t vary much from year to year — donuts, pickles and hard-boiled eggs to counteract the sweetness of the sugar. And boards on a sap storage tank make a fine table for Pearle Lynch, Marie, Pat, George, Chan and Terry.

In the title picture Chan Nealy and Pat Smith prove that sweeter than love is the sharing of maple wax from the same wooden paddle. As one Vermont maple producer has advertised, “It’s the sweetest story ever told.”
A sugarhouse, complete with arch and pan and with room for the public to circulate past the equipment, is erected in St. Albans’ Taylor Park as a rallying point for the annual Franklin County Maple Festival.

Old meets new at the Festival as County Forester John Weir (left above) instructs high school agricultural students in the use of the latest mechanical tapping equipment while oxen lug sap-filled tanks from the orchards to the sugarhouse.

Highpoints of the Festival are the eating of sugar-on-snow in which everyone participates and the crowning of the Maple King. (Right below) Guy Green of Enosburg is crowned King by County Agent Ralph McWilliams for care of his sugarbush and production of good syrup.
On November 15, 1826 at 6:30 o'clock in the evening the Vermont Legislature meeting in Montpelier passed an act which was the actual beginning of the present Robert Hull Fleming Museum of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College. With George W. Benedict, William A. Porter, Zadock Thompson and associates as incorporators, Act Number 69 established an organization, the purpose being: "the acquisition and diffusion of knowledge in every department of natural history, and the accumulation of all materials natural and artificial which can advance these ends." The corporation was to be known as "The College of Natural History of the University of Vermont." According to the records, the members of the "Society," consisting chiefly of the officers and students of the University, held weekly sessions, and "access to the collection could be had by others at all proper times."

Among the first accessions of the "College of Natural History" was the "Colchester Jar," which is one of the most prized objects in the Museum today. A letter of presentation which was placed within the jar for safe-keeping, reads in part, as follows:—"This pot was found in Colchester, Vermont, in 1825 by Captain John Johnson, of whom I bought it yesterday." The letter concludes with these words: "If you think it worthy a place in the College of Natural History please to accept it from your humble servant. (Signed) Luther Loomis, Burlington, June 12, 1827."

The collections of the "Society" were housed in the Old Mill until 1862, at which time they were moved to the first floor of the newly constructed two story "Library Building."

In 1874 a third floor was added to this building, which was known as the 'Park Gallery of Art'. By 1880, the "Society" had lost its identity, and the first floor and its contents were designated as a Museum. But it was not until 1885 that the present Billings Library was constructed, making the entire old Library building (including the Park Gallery) available for collections.

The Robert Hull Fleming Museum was dedicated June 13, 1931. The Museum building of Colonial architecture was made possible through the generosity of James B. Wilbur, Miss Katherine Wolcott and several others. Mr. Wilbur requested many beautiful Oriental objects, once the property of Miss Katherine Wolcott, are displayed in the Fleming Room. Oriental weapons and armor, as well as wood carvings and silver work, are on view in the Cannon Room.
that a room be set aside for his large collection of Vermontiana, resulting in the very beautiful Wilbur Library. Miss Wolcott requested that the building be a memorial to her uncle, Robert Hull Fleming, of the class of 1862 of the University of Vermont.

The varied collections in the old Museum accumulated over a period of one hundred and five years were transferred to the new building and placed in the various rooms, and arranged in cases for the enjoyment and enlightenment of the visitors. Subjects represented are Geology and Paleontology; Primitive, Classical, Egyptian, Medieval and Oriental art, as well as Early American relics and Natural History.

Adele Holly, who came with her children once a year for over twenty years, until her retirement several years ago.

During the school year from October until May, programs are held in the auditorium each Saturday, designed especially for children. The first program, in 1931, was a talk on archery by Dr. John B. Wheeler, the "Old Country Doctor" who was a familiar figure on the streets of Burlington until a few years ago. One of the outstanding programs was a circus, complete with main tent, menagerie and side show.

Loan exhibits for the class room and club are available from the Museum. The exhibits of school work are held, from which pictures are selected for exhibition at the Fleming Museum.

The Vermont Film Library, which had its humble beginning as the Fleming Museum Classroom Film Library in 1933, is sponsored by the Vermont State Department of Education and the University of Vermont. The library furnishes silent and sound 16 millimeter motion pictures to the schools of Vermont, but many other groups such as the Granges, 4-H clubs, churches, fraternal organizations, and even individuals use the educational and entertainment movies. The Vermont Film Library now has over one hundred and fifty members, and over sixty renters. There are over seven hundred different subjects listed in the catalogue.

Classes for children in various branches of art study are held in the museum under competent leadership. These classes are sponsored by the Burlington Branch of the American Association of University Women and the Fleming Museum Association. Self expression through paint, clay, and body movement, is the primary aim of these classes.

It is the point of view of the Curator, Horace B. Eldred, that the Museum can be of service as a focal point for conference as well as classroom groups. So it has come about that local, state, and even national meetings and conferences have
Marble entrance court leads to Art Galleries on the ground floor. At the lefis 17th Century carved and inlaid Italian buffet. (MC ALLISTER)

The Cannon Room displays the varied objects collected by Henry LeGrand Cannon in his extensive travels. (MC ALLISTER)

James B. Wilbur Library holds donor’s large collection of Vermontana. His portrait hangs above the mantel. (MC ALLISTER)

Perley C. Glidden and Mrs. Edward Bartlett of the Vermont Film Library, ship pictures to 150 Vermont schools. (MC ALLISTER)

Milne-Shaw Seismograph is in underground room outside Museum. It is shown here with component parts dismantled. (ELDR)
A corner of the Early American Living Room shows furniture of the early 19th Century. (McAllister)

Puritan Court Cupboard, originally property of Stephen Tracy who came to America in 1623, is on loan by a descendant. (Connant)

18th Century Kitchen shows utensils and tools of the period. Included are bread board, bed warmer, and pipe tongs near oven. (McAllister)

"Colchester Jar" is said to be finest jar of New England Indian pottery. Found in 1825, it was one of museum's first gifts. (Eldred)

Model of dinosaurs—extinct for 60 million years—in Geology Room includes figure of man for comparison of size. (McAllister)

King George Doll, made at time of his coronation, is at center of bottom row in this collection of costume dolls. (McAllister)
Alabaster Slab from the Palace of King Assur-Nazir-Pal was presented to the museum in 1886. Carving was made 883–959 B.C.

Portrait of a Princess is a bronze casting of the classical period of art (about 1600) in the tiny country of Benin on the West Coast of Africa. The casting was made by the "Cera Perdue" or lost wax method in which the sculpture and mold were destroyed. Thus only one copy of any piece could be made.

(Mc Allister)

This unusual and beautiful Chinese Ball (at right) is carved from solid ivory and contains twenty-one concentric balls. The detailed picture (below) shows the intricate figures and delicate work in each of the balls. The standard is of teakwood.
Saturday morning is children's day at the museum. An ever-increasing program started with lectures and educational and entertaining moving pictures. Horace B. Eldred, Curator, and Mrs. Anne Parker, director of Saturday programs, are shown with a typical Saturday morning assembly.

Self expression through the medium of painting is also encouraged in the Saturday morning program (below).

Children's Day

In a Saturday morning dancing class under the direction of Mrs. Julie Lepeschkin each child reacts differently to stimulation of her natural feeling for rhythm. Various expressions of each child's ideas and interpretations are indicated in the picture.
The House that Havens Built

The house that young John Havens started in Clarendon in 1797 was a rugged Cape Cod cottage, and in the years to follow it saw a heap of living. The author tells of his discovery and the joys of rejuvenation.

By Roger Warner

It had been an encouraging morning. From the barn, which was falling down, four men had brought a hand-hewn timber ten inches square and twenty-four feet long to bolster the underpinning of the house, which must not fall down. They had braced it in place, from wall to wall, on uprights of equal strength. I had watched with excitement. This was a crucial step. It came before any consideration of plumbing or heating, or the pleasures of interior decoration.

Then the four had gone across the road to eat their lunch in the shade of the big poplar. One was lean, energetic Ray Bouley, professional builder. The others were Truman Young, slight and laconic, former farmer and town representative; Truman’s son Bob, just out of the Marine Corps; and aging Harley Holden, straight and dignified as a deacon. Not one of the three was a trained carpenter, but in the Vermont tradition they knew about building things and repairing things. They had come to help Ray Bouley with our house.

I could not keep from wondering what they thought about my purchase. I had had doubts about it myself, until I saw the big timber safely in place. Later I heard from Ray some of their conversation.

“Just what does he think he’s going to get out of that?” asked Mr. Holden, nodding across the road.

“I wouldn’t know,” said Truman, with usual caution.

“He’s got one of the best old houses around here. Just wait and see,” Bouley, the craftsman, reassured them.

“Wal, if it was mine, I’d put a match to it.” Mr. Holden summed up his opinion of the whole matter and the four went back to their fundamental work below ground.

Our house was, when we bought it, a lonesome derelict riding a crest of snake infested weeds. The stumps of worn-out shade trees, a defiant clump of roses and lilies, some flowering currant, a stray peony, an ancient apple and a cherry tree indicated that once it had been loved. Four-paned windows stared vacantly. The front door, above which the transom had been boarded up, was machine made, oak stained, vintage of 1910. The central chimney, which once had served two fireplaces, had succumbed to progress a good seventy years back. In its place was a spindly, creosote-stained stack, just big enough to take the smoke of two stoves. It seemed to dread another winter.

But outside and inside there were many good things about our house. Phyllis and I could see some of them at once. Others we were to discover as the days went by. Fortunately, all sills were as true and sound as when they were laid more than 150 years ago. So too were most of the beams, of spruce and black ash. Some, which had rotted during the vacant years, we replaced by new two-by-eights lashed which had rotted during the vacant years, we replaced by new two-by-eights lashed to the big timber. Presently the kitchen floor, like the rest of the house, was solid enough for a square dance. We walked with assurance and could listen to what the old house had to say.

At first the interior confused us, because our eyes were accustomed to clean, uncluttered rooms. Wall paper, layer upon layer, covered the walls of the parlor, or to use the correct early Vermont term, the “square room.” It extended over the baseboard and corner posts. One morning we attacked the walls with putty knives, ripping the paper off in hunks. We found that the top of the baseboard was neatly beaded. We ripped again. Here around the whole room had been a chair rail. It must have been a continuation of the delicately moulded apron under the windows. Let’s see, this wall to the bedroom could not have been original. It cut right into the square of the room. Around the corner on the closet walls we found the chair rail—a continuation of the window moulding.

The original mantel, of excellent proportions in a simple Adam way, was in place, as was the tall cupboard beside it, with its raised paneled door. But the hearth had gone with the chimney. We would rebuild the fireplace right there. For hearth and facing we discussed Champlain black marble, as befitting the dignity of the Adam mantel. First quarried on Isle La Motte before the Revolution, this marble is flecked with tiny gray fossils, authentic Vermont antiques which considerably antedate the arrival of Champlain or the invasion of these parts by General Johnny Burgoyne.

We began to see our own living room and to realize what a proud room it had been. It was asking, in its own quiet way, to be a proud room again. Was it, we wondered, originally painted this dirty white? I borrowed some sandpaper, scrubbed violently. White yielded to a soft gray-green. A similar green we had admired in the Wythe House on our several visits to Williamsburg, Virginia. But why a Williamsburg color in a simple Vermont farm house? Havens had never benefited by the Rockefeller restoration. No, Havens used the colors he could get—and Mrs. Havens liked—at the end of the eighteenth century. Colors, evidently they believed, were more interesting than white. We agreed. In the old kitchen I scraped and scrubbed on the paneled door and the wainscots, this time going through six coats of paint. In the end I found a soft gray-blue. Call it Raleigh Tavern blue if you want to. Our painter matched it.
This is the Havens house, front view, after the Warners recaptured it. The floor plan followed an early American tradition which the present owners have changed but slightly. (DONALD WIEDENMAYER)

We liked it. The original color added much to the authentic charm of John Havens' house.

The house that young John Havens started in 1797 was of a type today usually called a Cape Cod cottage. That term is not entirely accurate, for the style was used throughout New England. John Havens was following a tradition. He built in Clarendon, Vermont, in 1797, much as his great grandfather might have built in Connecticut in 1697. The cellar wall was laid without mortar, the stones so big that oxen must have snorted dragging them from the fields and men grunted as they heaved them into place. The frame of the house was hand-hewn from first growth trees which Havens was glad to get rid of. Once pegged together on the ground, that frame was raised by Havens and his neighbors, who were no doubt cheered and rewarded by mugs of hard cider, or potions of New England rum. The corner posts, nine inches square, protruded honestly into the rooms. Exterior walls and interior partitions were of wide vertical planks all of two inches thick. Nails, spikes and hardware came from the local blacksmith. Tough plaster, bound with hog bristles, was applied over handsplit lath. Doors, trim, all that we call "mill-work," were made by the carpenters on the job. The honest marks of the hand plane show on door and stair. A few hand-cut moldings, raised panels, the beading on the boards of a batten door were decoration enough for Havens' house.

In his floor plan, as well as in method of construction, Havens followed an early American tradition. His front door opened into a tiny entry which contained five doors. To the right was his kitchen; to the left, the "square" room. The stairs, narrow and steep, led up straight ahead. There was a shallow closet in front of the chimney. The second floor, to begin with, was probably an open attic for the storage of provisions and the bedding down of some of the children. In the back of the first floor were three bedrooms, small and cramped by modern standards. It would appear that Havens built the kitchen half of his house first, with the chimney at the end, or that he changed his mind as he went along. At any rate, the two halves are framed independently, and the west, or living-room section, is deeper than the east.

Basically, our problem was to make Havens' house livable for two people the year round, and for the entertainment of more or less frequent guests during the
summer. (If you want to see your friends from the city, buy a farm in Vermont.) These results were to be accomplished with a minimum of rebuilding and no sacrifice of native charm. We found ourselves in violent discussions, if not arguments, as to the best way to do the job. We needed an arbiter to resolve our several ideas, a referee for our arguments. An architect must record in blue and white what we were about. We found him in Ernie Erickson of Rutland. Ernie listened to us—most of the time. He measured the house. His drawings of the agreed-on changes were precise to the last brick. Arguments became less frequent, now that we had the intellectual clarity of a blueprint. “Will the gold sofa go there?” “Where shall we put the highboy?” “But there isn’t room for an ironing board.” Night or day we reached for the blueprint.

Actually, when the air had cleared, we got what we wanted by removing one partition, by cutting the space for a back door and by moving three doors and building two closets. Without the partition our living room became 24 feet long, with a dining end beyond the original sixteen foot square room. The old kitchen became our bedroom. The two small bedrooms back of it became kitchen and breakfast room. The original deep pantry was to be our bathroom. Upstairs the two bedrooms were improved by new walls to the four-foot level, which gave generous storage space under the eaves.

When we began our recapture of John Havens’ straightforward dwelling in the late summer of 1946, all building materials were scarce and some non-existent. The arrival of a sink in a Rutland wholesale plumber’s shop was an important event. Waving a veteran’s priority, I felt lucky to get it. Stock doors and windows, flooring—these just weren’t. Perhaps this scarcity imposed upon us a discipline which in the end added to the appropriateness of what we did. We could not be tempted to replace the raised panel doors in the front of the house, nor the batten doors in the kitchen. We accepted and liked the old floor boards, some of them 24 inches across, worn by the feet of many generations. The six-paneled door at the old kitchen entrance needed only repairs. The original, matching front door we found in the cellar. It had been trimmed at the bottom. Its face was weathered by the storms of many winters. We made it stout once more with a back of random width pine.

New bricks, with which to build our chimney, were scarce and expensive. Ours, second-hand, came from an old mansion at that time being torn down near the New York state line. They have a mellow pinkness and a varied texture. Slates, we found by driving to Pawlet, were being quarried at a price, most of them promised to eager contractors in the larger centers. We ended by buying ours second-hand within two miles of home.

In the shed we found three of the early small-paneled windows which in scale and style belonged in our simple house. The rest had to wait until a day, two years later, when good sash could once again be made to measure. Holes for window pegs bored in the original frames guided us to their correct proportions. The larger ones have twelve over eight panes seven by nine inches. They are a face lifting of which John Havens would approve. He looked at America through small panes.

On only a few of the doors in our house did we find the original hand-wrought hardware, either the thumb latch or the strap hinge, which seems to have been popular in this part of Vermont. We decided to replace the later cast iron hardware with good antique examples if we could find them. A stop at one antique shop rewarded us with a pair of strap hinges, gracefully tapered to their arrow-head points. They went on the rejuvenated front door. Another shop produced six fine eighteenth century thumb latches, no two exactly alike, but all showing the skill and patience of the smith. Some of the men who helped us to restore the house, once they discovered our interest, appeared bearing gifts of antique hardware.

It is recorded in the precisely written first book of our town’s land titles that in 1778 one Silvanue How “of Petersham, in the County of Worcester and State of Massachusetts Bay, Gentleman,” sold his share of land in Clarendon. It had been granted in 1768 by Benning Wentworth, Royal Governor of the Province of New...
The living room in the remodeled house is larger than in the original, but it retains the old lines and the wide plank-
ing in the floor. Some of the boards, 24 inches wide, show the wear of many generations. (DONALD WIEDENMAIER)
When the cold, sharp winds of March mingle with the warming sun of coming Spring, Vermont towns set aside the first Tuesday of the month for a day of self government. The town halls are well filled with men and women who gather for the election of officers and the transaction of other town business. The men generally wear their best clothes and the women bring along a lunch for the noon meal. The various items of business have been conspicuously posted in three public places under a large black heading—"Warning!" A warning is often an advance notice of danger but the word here is used in its nonperilous form as a "summons."

The first item of business is the election of a moderator. This gentleman (or it could be a lady) is king for the day. He is the presiding officer of the meeting, decides questions of order, makes public declarations of votes passed and has special police powers, exercised at times with the help of the constable. He may first recognize his neighbor Bill in a hot debate regarding the appropriation of money for roads, and then quickly chastise little Susan Jones in the back of the hall for making too much noise with her all day sucker. Although the moderators' job is of short duration, many well known Vermonters vie for the distinction of being the man with the gavel. United States Senators, congressmen, legislators and big businessmen make a special effort to get home to hold this transitory position. When the moderator lets the gavel fall to call the town meeting to order the eyes of the political scientist glisten with pleasure as he writes in his textbook "This is an example of pure democracy."

Pure democracy is one way of saying that everybody gets together and has an equal voice in the governmental deliberations, as opposed to representative democracy where the citizens vote for officials to represent them at the law-making assemblies. In one sense pure democracy is a misleading term. Every male or female citizen in Vermont, 21 years of age, who has taken the freeman's oath and whose poll tax has been paid, is entitled to crowd into the hall and take part in the proceedings. Yet some town halls wouldn't hold the entire electorate if every qualified voter appeared. It may also be true that Jack Smith, though a very intelligent fellow, can't get up and express himself in public. Then again there may be an Abigail Chitterchatter who talks so often and so heatedly that the timid souls wouldn't dare to oppose her at the meeting. But in larger sense it is pure democracy because the opportunity is given every one to take a part. Having opened the doors and given the voter the free and unrestricted invitation to drink deeply of democracy in its purest state, it then becomes the duty of the citizen to take advantage of this great privilege. If he doesn't, he alone has defiled its pristine pureness.

The town meeting gets under way with the election of officers. Although the Vermont legislature allows a city to elect a mayor and an incorporated village to elect a president, the town can only pick "selectmen," one of whom is elected each year for a three-year term. These leading citizens have the general supervision of the affairs of the town and act as the executive head of town government. Caesar was reported to have said he would rather be first in a small Alpine village than second in Rome. In like manner most any Vermonter would rather be a selectman in his home town than Lieutenant Governor of his state. The selectman only devotes part of his time to town government, but the time devoted is compensated for primarily by the realization that he is respected and
MEETING

By Willis Brisbin

This article was written for Vermont Life two years ago when the late Mr. Brisbin was Secretary of Civil and Military Affairs. From the time he graduated from Law School, Mr. Brisbin had an intense interest and part in government at state, county and local levels. He served as alderman and president of the Burlington City Council, Municipal Judge, and Secretary of the State Senate. He practiced the "Pure Democracy" he writes about. Ed.

honored by his fellow townsmen. What reward is more worth while in the life of a man?

The town clerk in Vermont who properly attends to all his duties deserves a large gold medal or at least a merit badge. This busy officer not only takes the minutes at meetings but also records all real estate transactions in the town, along with every other type of legal paper from a mortgage to a fishing license. He (many times it is a "she") supplies information to town officers, lawyers, ministers and doctors. He records births, marriages, deaths, and completes printed forms for many departments—state and national. He is generally underpaid and sometimes not too efficient. The Vermont statutes do not provide for a county recorders' office. As a town selectman once said, "The legal security of the Vermonter's home and property depends a great deal on the town clerk's efficiency and accuracy."

The moderator calls for the election of more officers. There is the overseer of the poor, who parcels out his appropriation to the sick and unfortunate and tries to be shrewd enough to outwit a brother overseer in another town who wants to burden the town unfairly with a paupers' support.

Of no small importance is the collector of taxes. Probably the tax collector is the most disliked man in the community but the more he is disliked in some quarters, the more valuable he is to the town if he can collect money. There must also be three listers to set the value on all property within the town for tax purposes, a board of school directors for the town district, and auditors to peruse the accounts of the officers. These positions along with the road commissioner, the constable, the grand juror (who prosecutes crimes within the town) the town agent (who represents the towns in law suits) and the cemetery commissioners, are elected by ballot. The town may vote for a secret or Australian ballot with names of nominees printed in advance and secret booths in which to mark the ballots.

The day's work is not done when the officers are elected. The most heated arguments will begin when the appropriation of money is requested. The average Vermonter is not a tight wad but he is not a fertile field for a smooth talking salesman or a seller of wild cat oil stocks. He wants to know why the money is needed, how much is needed and how it is to be raised.

When the day is waning and the cows need to be milked the governmental day is over. The tired moderator puts away his gavel for another year. The men and women start to think of their home problems after rehashing the decisions of the day. The newly elected officers are proud of their new positions but strive to appear modest in the presence of their constituents.

Pure democracy has had its fling and Vermonters in the small towns have lived up to the unusual but all important oath they took as freemen before being allowed to vote. It reads:

"You solemnly swear (or affirm) that whenever you give your vote or suffrage, touching any matter that concerns the State of Vermont, you will do so as in your conscience you shall judge will most conduce to the best good of the same, as established by the Constitution, without fear or favor of any person."

It's a wonderful thing to be able to take such an oath—not only as a Vermonter, but also as an American.
This “girl-Greeley” explored the wilds of Northern Canada and braved the coldness, loneliness, and dangers of war-time Faroe Islands. When, in her later years, she wanted peace and quiet, she made her home at North Hollow Haven.
Elizabeth Taylor died in Vermont. That was on a wintry March day back in 1932, in her little two-room cabin, "Wake Robin," up North Hollow way from Rochester. She had frequently visited the Green Mountain State and in 1924, when it came to settling down after more than forty years of world-travelling, she chose a beautiful, wooded hilltop in the shadow of Cushman's Summit and the Brantree Mountains with a wide sweep of distant blue hills. "Killington is the highest of the three mountain peaks I see from my cabin," she wrote later, "Killington, then Pico, then Shrewsbury, in line."

At sixty-eight, this frail, bespectacled little woman was tired. For more than thirty years she had had no home, and she needed a resting place. She wanted to sit back and devote the remainder of her years to peace and quiet and to writing. She especially wished to finish her long-planned book about the cold, bleak, lonely Faroe Islands where she had spent close to a dozen difficult but fascinating years.

Elizabeth Taylor was born in Columbus, Ohio, in 1856, the fifth daughter of James Wickes Taylor who from 1870-1893 was the American Consul in Winnipeg. During those years Consul Taylor made frequent business trips through Canada, down into his home state of Minnesota and to Washington. Lizzie, the favorite, was more times than not his travelling companion. They had a great many things in common, those two, and foremost was an enduring love of the out-of-doors, of all aspects of nature. "What are storms and congestive chills and 'skeeters and black flies and punkies and short supplies, cold and wet, compared to the delight of being out of doors all the time on this beautiful river," she had written in 1888 during her first solo camping trip into the far reaches of Canada's Nipigon River. This attitude never changed throughout her long life.

"If I'd only been a boy," she sometimes complained, but in spite of the numerous restrictions forced upon the women of that period, she managed to do many things but few men would have dared. On the fourth year following this Nipigon trip she eagerly braved the wilds of Northern Canada and the censure of less venturesome stay-at-homes to become the only woman included by the U.S. government in a 1908 list of great explorers in the American Arctic region. This trip took her several thousand miles down north on the long Mackenzie River to the Arctic Circle forts of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Although Miss Taylor wrote and illustrated a series of articles about the Mackenzie trip which were published a year later in Outing magazine, she was far more proud, as an amateur botanist, of being the first to discover and record two hitherto unknown insects. She was especially pleased when one of them was given her name, *Pseudosiova Taylori.*

Other trips followed. In Norway, during 1893, this "girl-Greeley" travelled with guide Ole and Freya, "a pretty, buff-colored pony of true Norse blood. Round, fat and surefooted." They visited the Saeterdal and traversed Hardanger Vidda, the upland summer pastures, throughout its greatest length and over its highest ridges. Again delighting in the unusual, she boasted of being the first English-speaking woman to make this Hardanger trip.

In 1895 she was enroute to Iceland to
and fear of submarine-infested northern waters made it impractical for her to leave. She stood up throughout those long years of want and privation, however, with a degree of cheerfulness and a great deal of calm resignation.

“We have had storms for 18 days,” she wrote to a friend in Vermont. “The house groaned & shook & creaked & strained like a laboring ship at sea. The uproar was unbearable for any length of time. The fright brought on the premature birth of Amalie’s little son. What a night that was. We not knowing whether the roof would go & then what would Amalie do. The doctor 20 miles away, the house like a barn, and Amalie in great danger. . . . When the baby was four days old came another awful storm, a ‘cast wind’ from the southwest. No one can remember such a cast wind storm before. I had to have big shutters nailed over windows,. . . Boards & stones & grass sods from the roofs were whirled high in the air. . . . Above the roar of the gale rose the shouting of men who were trying to rope down roofs. The surface of the fjord was scooped up in great white masses . . . and borne through the air like snow in a blizzard. . . . So you see Elizabeth T. has had some trying experiences & then to wind up with a sprained ankle!”

Such were her adventures, many of which she recorded for British and American newspapers and magazines. Writing did not come easy to Miss Taylor. One short article would take months of study and of concentrated and conscientious labor. It was impossible for her to do hack work, and the results achieved seldom failed to be outstanding. Her six *Atlantic Monthly* articles, for example, richly deserve reprinting.

**—**

In July 1919, at the age of sixty-three, “Mistela” said goodbye to her beloved Faroe Islands for the last time. Five years later this “gentle, frail little creature” returned to Rochester, Vermont, and to North Hollows’ fine free sweep of air, “so sweet & pure & the early morning hours so beautiful & serene.” At “Wake Robin Farm,” on land owned by her friend Mrs. Blanche Dunham Hubbard, she found “the big things . . . good air and water, people I like and who like me, and in the end my own house-roof.”

Elizabeth Taylor loved Vermont. She had visited there as far back as 1888, and in 1908 she had spent part of a summer in Dorset. A year later she was in Windham and in Bennington where she “tried her wings” with two club talks about her Faroe Island experiences. These all-too-

**52 Vermont Life**
There's a shout from the heart of the spring,
And the bird in your soul wakes to answer
When you hear the first sugar bird sing."

Inside her brown-stained, green-trimmed cabin, Elizabeth Taylor was surrounded by the many objects dear to her heart—her bone spoons and fish-hooks from the far-away Hudson's Bay posts of the Mackenzie River; the treasured Hardanger blanket brought back from the great Norwegian Vidda; souvenir gifts of friend Amalia Oster of Eide in the Faroes. Colorful sketches lined the walls, sketches and oils painted during her trips and while she was studying art in France, England and Italy. Outside were the beauties of nature and Vermont.

"The air is sweet and pure & my joy in my cabin never lessens." She busied herself with a garden, she helped Blanche Hubbard and Mrs. Dunham down at the farmhouse, and she tried to get some writing done. "My book scheme must be carried out through this winter," she constantly repeated, but illness kept her from the concentration necessary. During the coldest of the winter nights she gathered all she could "in a semi-circle before the fireplace, to keep from freezing, with oranges wrapped in warm clothing, milk on the mantle piece, with a few precious eggs & lemons. I do not undress at night, but camp near by on the couch & keep the Perfection oil heater going. Yet even then things freeze in the other end of the room." In spite of illness, storm-bound cabin, continued below zero weather, she still could report, "the winter has been a good one."

Life certainly was not easy in this isolated spot. "My little cabin is so small & so wind swept from all directions that it cannot be called warm, (it) has no plaster, no protected cellar, just a few stones as foundation. A person accustomed to a furnace or steam heated houses & wearing ordinary clothing would think it unbearable." Her constant "companionship of a solitary life" was Belinda, a faithful coffee-tan cat. "I am never lonely," she said, and then hastened to add, "not more than an occasional twing that is easily put aside."

And thus it was for seven years. Although she never finished the Faroe Island book, she did write a few more articles for the Atlantic Monthly, Forum and The British Chambers's Journal whenever "Wake Robin" needed some roof repairs or if she had to get a new stove.

High in this upland hollow Miss Taylor witnessed the sufferings and havoc caused by the devastating flood of 1927. "Day after day knowing nothing, nothing coming in or going out, no knowledge of what had happened to New England in general & Vermont in particular. From my cabin I saw the waters descending from the slopes and ridges above. My little home was in no danger of being carried away as there was only a short distance of slope above it, yet the water flowed around and under it—white, rushing, tossing water that made new water courses, carried away lumber, caused land slides and generally weakened the land." Fortunately, she reported, there was no loss of life in the neighborhood, "but such a woeful amount of loss to the community." She was especially irritated when friends wrote that they felt quite at ease about her. "When we read about your freshet, we knew you were on high land, out of reach of the water!"

Once settled in her cabin, she seldom went more afield than to the Hubbard farmhouse at the foot of the hill. For the 1928 presidential election, however, she travelled those few miles into Rochester, her first trip away from "Wake Robin" in three and a half years. "I took the Freemans Oath & voted & saw a shop again & bought a tea pot (to celebrate Hoover's success) & grapes & saw the waste & tragedy of the White River in flood."

To the end Elizabeth Taylor was proud of her ability to withstand hardships. "I am credited by disinterested critics as being a specially hard boiled old party. One old farmer told me he was sure that not one woman in a hundred could be found that would live here as I do, with contentment & with no foolish fears."

Today "Wake Robin" cabin is once again in use. It has a cellar now, and two more rooms. It's warm and comfortable even in the coldest weather. Mrs. Hubbard's step-son and his wife have lived in it ever since the big farmhouse down by the road burned to the ground several years ago. Elizabeth Taylor built well and she would be the first to rejoice that her much-loved refuge is now a snug and attractive shelter for friend Stanley Hubbard, for his ex-schoolteacher wife Florence, and for their son little Harold, too.

Elizabeth Taylor is still remembered in the far-off Faroes. Dr. R. K. Rasmussen has recently written from Eide, "I arrived here in June 1920, spending my first 5 weeks in the attic where she had resided 5 years. I heard her name the first day of my arrival and saw the same day her writing table, a box only—and a very little one. The table is still in the garret."

So too is she still affectionately remembered in Rochester. The Stanley Hubbard's will tell you that.
At the Sign of the Quill

A Department of Literary Comment

By Arthur Wallace Peach

Under the Quill, informal comment about Vermont literary matters, authors, books, and related topics, will appear from time to time. The themes discussed, however, may range widely from authors and books to cabbages and kings; and gossip will not be frowned upon. Letters from readers with enthusiasm—or the reverse, for that matter—for any items of Vermont poetry or prose will be welcomed; and if specific information is sought about any writer or book, we will try to be helpful.

Even a Democrat ought to know that. The theme I am “footnoting” appears in a review of Dorothy Canfield’s recent book of stories, Four-Square, in The Saturday Review, Dec. 3rd issue. The reviewer evidently knows little of Vermont—probably lives in Connecticut from which state alert and alive Vermonters started coming a century and more ago. He has some trouble with the question whether Mrs. Fisher is a Vermont or not, stating that she was born in Kansas and was graduated from Ohio State University, but agrees that “Vermont takes kindly to outlanders and absorbs them, and they absorb Vermont”—a general statement that is not true of course even as such a statement is not true—and that “it is inevitable that she will always be known as a ‘Vermont author.’” He is inclined to the belief that Four Square is not a Vermont book. It seems to me that it is as I think I can prove in the next appearance of the Quill.

But here is a story that I venture to predict will live long among the cherished annals of pilgrims who have found a refuge in this “green little, sweet little, clean little land” we call Vermont. The famous Bread Loaf School of English, to mention one instance, would not be in existence, probably, if he had not given it his support in its early years. He has a bad habit, however—as have other Vermonters—of not answering letters. I know of two sincere invitations sent to him inviting him to a Vermont affair as a guest, and neither letter was answered or acknowledged. I know because I sent them—and he won’t get any more. But, in the interest of truth, I must admit he has been generous with his advice and help in several Vermont cultural activities with which I have been connected in the past. Still, it ain’t neighborly not to answer letters.
certainly, in most pilgrimages. The early chapters of life in Austria are engaging in subject matter and style such as the sketch of "An Austrian Christmas"; and there is a bit of the flavor—to a Vermont—of a true fairy tale, for the novitiate finds that the Baron is to be married to a Princess who in turn believes the Baron is in love with the novitiate turned teacher; so she, in turn, disturbed by the turn of events, says to the Baron: "Will you please get engaged to the Princess right away?" The Baron, however, induces the young teacher to become a good housekeeper, and in the end the fairy tale closes as it should.

The dark years that followed came with the appearance of Hitler—the Baroness saw him and describes him thus: "He seemed to be very, very ordinary, a little vulgar, not too well educated—no resemblance to the hero in silver armor on the wall."—and the refusal of the Trapp family to sing for the Führer boded so ill for them that, for that reason and others, they decided to leave Austria for America.

Their first reactions were "What a strange country," and the reader will enjoy and also benefit by reading the delightful chapters that cover those first experiences—and I do not intend to give them away, other than to quote Mrs. Trapp's exclamation: "Oh, I am so glad to be here—I want never to leave again!"

The concerts given by the family were a success everywhere, but everywhere they found no state or section that appealed to them—"In the wilderness at least I would have seen the starry sky, but in New York the little sky which one might still see between the skyscrapers is veiled in smoke"—"Philadelphia summers had been a real penance for us northerners"—but they found a final haven in the mountain setting of Stowe. [Some Vermont real estate agents should blush, however, at the yarns they told the Trapps which Mrs. Trapp, I am glad to say, faithfully recorded.] They bought one farm, and then wound up with seven hundred acres. "What a panorama!" Mrs. Trapp writes, "Three valleys lay before us, and as many as nine mountain ranges we could count stretching into the blue distance. We had been in all forty-eight states; we had stood on many a top of the Green, White, Blue, Smoky, and Rocky mountains... but never had we come across anything like this."

The rest of the story must not even be sketched here. The book itself is certainly to find a permanent place on Vermont's bookshelf of books to be remembered; and all who like a sincere rehearsal of lives lived generously, courageously, finally winning national acclaim among music lovers, in a strange land that has become a loved homeland should read The Story of the Trapp Family Singers by Maria Augusta Trapp, J. B. Lippincott Company. Eight illustrations. $3.50.

Notes in Passing

Alas, The Green Mountain Boys by Daniel P. Thompson (1795-1868), the old classic of many a Vermont boyhood of the distant past, probably has gone for good unless some genius can rescue it. No modern lass, reading Howard's proposal to Miss Hendee—"May I not have the happiness to hear those lips declare that my affection has been in some measure reciprocated?"—will read the rest of the book—although she will turn to the 'phone (I heard her) and call her sweetheart with these endorsing terms: "How are you, old egg?... Nevertheless, Thompson was near enough to the periods in which his novels and stories were laid to catch more of the atmosphere and genuine characters of the times than some of the young debunkers of our day who are busy remodeling Vermont heroes of the past. Such tales as The Rangers, A Story of the Revolution, and Tales of the Green Mountains are still worth a rapid reading if readers can locate copies.

From a Vermont Book of Memories

From "Uncle Lisha's Shop" by Rowland E. Robinson (1833-1900), Antoine, one of the characters, had been listening to stories of turkey-shoots, and he had one to tell. "Dar mek me rembeb one tam dayy hev it shoot-turkey in Canady, an' dey'll ant you see dem turkey, bah gosh, no! Dey'll have it 'hind a hill of it, an' you'll gat for guess where he'll was den shoot. Yes, sah! Well, boy, Ah'll be dere, an' Ah'll se' dawn an' listed for hear, an' bombye pooty soon Ah'll hear dat turkey beeg'n for gobbler. Houkle, houkle, houkle! Den Ah'll pant up ma gun up so Ah'll tink de hall drop off where he'll hit dat nowse, an' Ah'll shot off, pluck! Squowk! Squowk!" Ah'll hear dat turkey said; an' bah gosh! You'll any ant believed me, dat hall stroke it rught bit between hees backs!"

Thomas Rowley (1721-1896), poet of the Green Mountain Boys.

Addressed to a Clergyman

By our pastor perplex,

How shall we determine?

"Watch and pray," says the text; "Go to sleep," says the sermon.

POST BOX (continued)

from Montpelier, of freezing the bodies of old people, putting the bodies out of doors under evergreen boughs and leaving them until spring when they were thawed out and became active again. Robinson spent much time and effort in following up the story because wherever it was told in print or on the radio it created much interest.

He traced the story to an old scrap book in Bridgewater, in possession of an aged person. Pasted in this book was a clipping titled "A Strange Tale" by A. M. Further pursuit of where the clipping came from traced it to an issue of the Montpelier Argus and Patriot of December 21, 1887. Whatever A. M. was could not be determined, but the story goes on to say that its writer was an old man who found the strange tale recorded in an old diary, quoting dates. As to the truth of the story here the search ended.

The Rutland Herald, the Boston Globe, Yankee Magazine, The Old Farmer's Almanac, all had used the tale within the past decade or two, and it has been related on a radio network. The story was fast becoming one of the strangest legends in New England and that is why Mr. Robinson went to so much trouble to get to the bottom of the story. His own conclusion was that there was no truth in fact that human bodies had ever been frozen stiff and kept during the winter, to be resuscitated again in time to help do the spring's work.

The story had earmark of being founded on fact. Having been printed in the days when fictitious stories were not ordinarily published in country newspapers, having the presumed initials of the writer, bearing dates, all made the tale logical except for the fact that human hibernation has never been known. The common woodchuck and other animals hibernate and certain cold blooded reptiles are known to freeze stiff during winter months in cold climates—but humans, never.

Now comes a scientific announcement that frozen sleep is possible. In fact the very reliable Associated Press story of December 19 about the Toronto experiment says, "Frozen sleep is unconsciousness that comes when the temperature of the entire body is dropped a little below 90 Fahrenheit. Human beings have been kept unconscious for days in this way with no bad effects."

If human beings can be kept frozen for days, why not for weeks and months? Well, "freezing" a human being into unconsciousness at a temperature just below 90 degrees and freezing a body and keeping it in a temperature well below zero is quite a different matter. For our part we can credit the announcement that freezing the limbs, and even the heart, into torpor for a time is possible, but as for freezing the entire body solid and keeping it for months at below zero temperature, we believe that the story of ancient vintage which has come to light in the last decade or two, is pure fabrication—a hoax.

Newport Express
Scouting in Vermont is a year-round activity and in winter or summer camping out is an integral part of the Scout program.

BOY SCOUTS

In the wilderness footsteps of their forefathers, these modern day Green Mountain Boys keep alive the Vermont heritage of community service, adventure, and self-reliance

By Howard D. Butler

As a group of Boy Scouts hike down some of Vermont's forest trails, we can almost see the ghosts of the Green Mountain Boys nodding in approbation. For the Boy Scout, who today follows in the wilderness footsteps of his pioneer forefathers, is keeping alive those very things which made the Green Mountain Boys a remembered and great part of Vermont's heritage. Self-reliance, the lure and understanding of the out of doors, the desire for adventure and the spirit of service to community, state and nation are the threads which make up the warp and woof of the Boy Scout Program. It is for these things, for the good and great things accomplished, that we remember the Allen Boys and their comrades.

In front of the Baptist Church in Barre, stands a monument to what is considered by many to be the first Boy Scout Troop in America. It was organized October 29, 1909, four months before the Boy Scouts of America was chartered, with William Foster Milne as Scoutmaster. Milne, who had come to Barre from England, had brought with him the literature and material necessary to organize a Troop of Scouts.

From this small beginning, the Boy Scout Movement has spread until at the present time the membership of the three Vermont Councils is well over 4,000 Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Senior Scouts. At the time this is written, the Long Trail Council with headquarters in Burlington is well in the lead for the Albert Stone Trophy for 1949, given each year to the Boy Scout Council in New England which shows the largest growth in boy membership. The winning Council must in addition to an increase for the current year, have reached an all-time high for a five-year period.

In order to provide service for the organizations and groups of citizens in the towns and cities of Vermont who wish to use the Boy Scout Program for the boys of their community, three Councils now cover the entire state. The Calvin Coolidge Council with headquarters in Brattleboro, serves Windsor and Windham Counties. To the west, the Green Mountain Council, with Rutland as its headquarters, serves Rutland, Addison and Bennington Counties. To the North, the youngest Council of Vermont, organized in 1935, serves the nine northern Counties. This is the Long Trail Council, with headquarters in Burlington. In the early days of Scouting in Vermont, Councils rose and fell; now towns had the benefit of local help; now they had to depend upon what service they could obtain by use of the mails from the Office of the National Council in New York City. Since 1933, however, with the establishment of the Long Trail Council, service to every town and city, village and hamlet in Vermont has been continuously available.

The neighborliness of the Vermonter makes the “Good Turn” tradition of Scouting a natural part of a boy’s experience. As an individual, as a member of a Patrol and as a member of his Troop a Boy Scout is constantly reminded of that part of his Scout Oath which says, “I will do my best...to help other people at all times.” Service to community, state and nation is an important part of Scouting. A Scout is always ready to help. Each year many Scouts, under their leaders, assist the Green Mountain Club in maintaining the Long Trail, that great footpath in the wilderness which runs from the Massachusetts border along Vermont's Green Mountain backbone to the Canadian line. During the two World
A typical Troop camping unit at Lake Eden's Camp Zackwoods II.

Wars the Boy Scouts of Vermont have served their country well. World War II found the Boy Scouts in every community collecting waste paper, scrap metals and rubber at the request of the United States Government. The total collections of scrap materials run into hundreds of thousands of tons. Poster distribution during the past few years for the government, state and agencies like the American Red Cross, March of Dimes, and Community Chests have run to the millions.

The Federal Charter of the Boy Scouts of America says: "The purpose of this Corporation shall be to promote, through organization, cooperation with other agencies, the ability of boys to do things for themselves and others, to train them in Scoutcraft, and to teach them patriotism, courage, self-reliance, and kindred virtues, using the methods which are now in common use by Boy Scouts by placing emphasis upon the Scout Oath and Law for character development, citizenship training and physical fitness."

"Cooperation with other agencies" is therefore a fundamental policy of the Boy Scout Movement and particularly so, as the Boy Scout Program is offered for the use of schools, Churches, granges and farm organizations or groups of interested citizens.

Many farm boys in Vermont who live too far from a regular Troop to be a member are Boy Scouts nevertheless for they are members of the Lone Scouts. So, Scouting is available to every boy in the Green Mountain State, regardless of where he may live. Scouting in the rural area in Vermont has had a tremendous upsurge during the past few years. 4-H and Boy Scout Merit Badge requirements in nearly every agricultural subject are the same. A Scout who completes a 4-H project can receive his Boy Scout Merit Badge without further work on his part.

Activities of the Scouts are many and varied. Some of them of course have a distinctive Vermont flavor. The program of one of the Districts reveals such activities planned for all Troops as a winter carnival, smelt fishing derby, sugar-on-snow party, orientation hike, Camporee and during Boy Scout Week, plans for the Scouts to take over the City as its officers for a day.

In many of Vermont's cities and towns, the Boy Scout Mayor-for-a-day idea has become an annual event, eagerly awaited by the Scouts. City officials have found that this is a very desirable way for future citizens to learn how their local government works.

Recently, living up to their motto, "Be Prepared," the Scouts of a District mobilized, 275 strong in less than one and one half hours after the first telephone call had gone out. They were then transported to the United States Military Reservation in Underhill where a practice search for "lost" persons represented by dummies was conducted under the direction of the Vermont State Police. Boy Scouts are called upon frequently to aid local authorities in their efforts to locate lost or missing persons in the wooded and mountainous areas of the state. This practice search enabled the Scouts who participated to know what steps they must take to perfect their own techniques so that when called for a real emergency they would truly "Be Prepared."

The method by which a Boy Scout Troop operates is as democratic as a Vermont Town Meeting. Boys choose the Patrol with which they will be associated and the Scouts in the Patrol elect their own Patrol Leaders. The Patrol Leaders and other Junior Officers of the Troop plan, with the assistance of the Scoutmaster, the

Ex-Mayor John J. Burns and present day Mayor J. Edward Moran of Burlington sit in with the Scout Council which has taken over the city government during Boy Scout week.
Teepees, tents or cabins form the homes for Scouts at their summer camps.

Almost every week-end of the year will find Scouts camping on the Long Trail, sometimes using the shelters provided by the Green Mountain Club, but many times using lean-tos which they have constructed themselves of material which they can find at hand.

Each of Vermont's three Boy Scout Councils operates a summer camp for its Scouts. If operated primarily for their own Scouts, you'll find that some Scouts from other states do attend our Vermont Scout Camps.

Camp Plymouth, operated by the Calvin Coolidge Council, is located 6 miles north of Ludlow off State Highway 100. With 5 Troop sites Camp Plymouth can accommodate 100 Scouts per week.

Camp Sunrise, camp of the Green Mountain Council, is in Orwell, off Highway 22-A, 14 miles north of Fair Haven. Situated on the lake from which it takes its name, Camp Sunrise accommodates 96 Scouts per week during its 6 week season.

A major part of any Scout Camp's activities center around its waterfront. "Every Scout a Swimmer" has long been a slogan of the Boy Scouts of America. Special emphasis is placed on teaching Scouts to swim and of course on improving the swimming ability of those who are already able to swim.

To the Scouts who can swim opportunities are offered to learn life saving, how to handle a canoe (including the knowledge of how to empty a swamped canoe and re-enter it safely from the water without swamping it again) and of course the proper handling of a row boat.

How nearly the Scouting way parallels to the Vermont way of life is expressed in a statement taken from the Handbook for Boys, published by the Boy Scouts of America.

"Scouting helps the Scout to value the great heritage which the past has brought to him in the American way of life, and..."
General or recreational swimming is one of the most popular periods and vital parts of the summer program at Camp Zackwoods II.

Learning to empty a swamped canoe across the timbers of another canoe is one of the many requirements of the Canoeing Merit Badge.

Under expert instruction Scouts learn to handle firearms safely and to improve their marksmanship.

This sylvan setting is the background for Scouts attending a Sunday service at summer camp. Scouts may attend local churches if they wish.

In the canoe-jousting event in the weekly Water Carnival, the loser gets a ducking! Life Guards hover in the foreground.

The big Indian ceremonial drum exerts an irresistible drawing force on nearly every Scout.
Some VERMONT Ways of Life: By VREST ORTON

Commerce in the Underbrush

A very fine friend, exiled now in New York City, and sadly homesick for the Green Mountain State, was nominated recently for membership in our Vermont Historical Society. In his letter of acceptance, my friend said, "one small question: is the purpose of this Society to foster tourist trade or is it to persuade incoming people to disown the modern way of life and adopt Vermont?"

This question disturbs me, somehow. Probably because it confuses. There are more insinuations and inuendoes in that sentence than you could pack into a hogshead. And to me they seem inconsistent.

Of course the purpose of the Vermont Historical Society is not to foster "tourist trade." But, no one denies that the unique, intriguing history of this state, and the nostalgia that surrounds it, as well as the legends and folklore that embellish it, are all part and parcel of the magnetism Vermont works on people in the United States. These things constitute an effective and constant Vermont asset and we can not deny that we are employing this asset to attract to Vermont new settlers who themselves will be an asset.

I don't think this is a crime!

This is why I hate to accept my good friend's insinuation that the venerable 112 year-old official Historical Society of this great state is out in the highways and byways flagging down tourists with cheap gimmicks. That is what I read into his question. I think he ought to come back home, and see that we don't do things just that way.

The Modern Way Versus Vermont

When my friend asks the second part of his question . . . "is its purpose to persuade incoming people to disown the modern way of life and adopt Vermont?" I am even more confused and concerned.

I am doubtful of the wisdom, force, and logic of the premise that adopting Vermont is the same as completely leaving the modern way of life in the United States. There has been, it seems to me, altogether too much saccharine nonsense and sweet sentiment written about Vermont and Vermonters. If there hadn't, I doubt if our suffering nostalgic friends, expatriated in the great cities of the United States, would be yearning quite so vocally for the way of life we have in Vermont. Sure, I admit, our Vermont way of life is not exactly like that of Green Village, Michigan Boulevard, Broad Street, or Park Avenue, but at bottom, I must rise to assure my friend that when you come to live in Vermont you don't escape from the world of reality unless you are willing to abjure life itself.

The world can be too much with us in Vermont as elsewhere.

We have, I suspect, exactly the same percentage of people who are living futile, useless lives as does Delancy Street and Sutton Place.

Under the Underbrush

But later in his letter, my friend goes to town with a truly wonderful expression. . . . He says, "I well understand the importance of educating the people of Vermont in Vermont's history and so its philosophy, and God knows the younger ones need it, but is commerce crawling around in the Underbrush?"

I like that. I like that very much. It is an epoch-making phrase. But I must rise to assure my friend, who seems to suspect the worst, that commerce is indeed crawling around in the underbrush in Vermont, as it does and must do in any place in the world, modern, oldtime, medium, civilized, uncivilized . . . where men must make a living in the channels of trade, profession, barter, or entrepreneurship.

I can't understand this disdain on the part of the intellectuals toward commerce. I used to feel the same way, before I began to make a living by working, but that was so long ago I have forgotten why I felt that way.

I think my friend will find, and I am sorry if this comes as a shock and dis-
“Opportunities”

The purpose of this column is to assist persons seeking special types of opportunity in Vermont as well as special types of opportunity seeking people. It is for the particular use of the many still outside Vermont who want to employ their talents here and for those within the state who have use for persons with special talents. It is not, however, a general employment service. After use in this column all letters are turned over to the state office of the Vermont State Employment Service. When writing us regarding “Opportunities” appearing in this column please address box number which appears before the particular item and your letter will be forwarded to the person in question. Vermont Life assumes no responsibility for the statements made in letters to it.

VL.31. A G. I. is interested in buying in Vermont a fully equipped general store with a post office and living quarters for a family of three. Any one know of one?

VL.32. A secretary who loves Vermont and what it offers in the way of wholesome worthwhile living seeks work in her field in Vermont and particularly in the Burlington area. She has had several years of experience in private schools, in a University, for a hotel manager, a literary man and in a regular business office. She is mature, unencumbered and interested in simple, friendly living.

VL.33. A young dentist, born and raised in Vermont, at present practicing in another state, is interested in returning to Vermont to practice. He wants to settle in or relatively near a winter sports area and adequate office and living space for a family will be necessary. His wife has had considerable experience in kindergarten teaching and the two are desirous of taking an active part in the civic life of the community in which they settle.

VL.34. Wanted Most Urgently—The Vermont Way of Life—by a couple who would adapt their experience to some small industry, power station or mechanized farm where some time might be spent at agriculture. The wife was born in Vermont and has had many years of professional dramatic theater experience. She would like to direct plays for radio or a little theatre group and is also interested in radio announcing. The husband is now employed as assistant foreman of the instrument department of an oil refinery, where industrial instruments measuring and controlling temperature, pressure, flow, etc. are maintained and serviced.

VL.35. Young man, age 24, desiring permanent residence in Vermont, seeks assistant managerial position, or its equivalent with a going concern. He is presently employed with a major petroleum company in New York City, has a broad knowledge of office routine and is capable of assuming responsibilities. Present position can be vouched for by immediate superiors. A natural understanding of people, combined with a sense of duty to them and his employer’s demands may be an asset to a Vermont concern.

VL.36. A young woman who lived in northern Vermont for over a year, would like to return. She graduated from high school with majors in art, social studies and English and desires a position where art training and experience—including poster painting, scrap craft, free hand decorating, needle work, general designing, and some jewelry making, leather work, and ceramics—can be put to use. Has had some experience in writing for print, and in typing. She’s a Congregationalist of partly Vermont ancestry and interdenominational, interracial, intercultural leanings and would be willing to help local churches on a non-professional basis. She has a B. S. in Religious Education from a recognized college of religious and social work. She would also need a place to live. She neither drinks nor smokes, loves music and good home life, children and animals included, enjoys all kinds of sports and is an inveterate explorer of back roads, old cellar holes, abandoned farms, and the like. Would rather be a Vermonter than anything else in the world.
VERMONT is a Way of LIFE