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America is Different

by CARL ZUCKMAYER


Translated for Vermont Life by DR. WERNER NEUSE, Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont. Special assistance by MISS ILSE WINTER, Thetford Center, Vermont.

CARL ZUCKMAYER, distinguished German playwright, poet and novelist, was born in 1896. He fought through World War I, turned to the theater, and, after years of struggle, in 1925 wrote “The Happy Vineyard,” a comedy which made him famous overnight. Another comedy, “The Captain of Köpenick,” which will be produced in New York next fall, was an overwhelming success in Europe and made him a wealthy man.

He left Hitler’s Germany in 1933, fled for his life from the Gestapo in Nazi Austria five years later, came to America, worked despairingly in Hollywood and New York, and then, in 1940, under the aegis of his friend, Dorothy Thompson, settled in Barnard, Vermont, to raise chickens and produce goats’ milk. During these years of extreme hardship he wrote his masterpiece, the tragic drama, “The Devil’s General,” a revelation of the German mind and conscience under Hitler.

His wife, Alice Herdan, a gifted writer, has described their life in Vermont vividly and humorously in “The Farm in the Green Mountains,” a best-seller in Germany.

Zuckmayer lived in Vermont for fifteen years, moving to Woodstock from Barnard before removing permanently to Europe. He now lives in Saas-Fee, Switzerland. He continues to write, lecture, and receive the highest honors West Germany can offer a man of letters.

ONE DAY, in the year 1940, I was face to face with the decision to do something which seems to be typically American: to enter a completely new profession and earn enough to keep body and soul together. Only then did I learn to know America . . .

To start all over again is nothing unusual for an American. He can do it ten times in his life and never lose his balance. It is at this point that the European immigrant learns his great lesson.

I became a farmer. In this work I had no experience, but great interest. Though it meant hard physical labor it was the only work which allowed me to live in the country and preserve some independence. Secretly I hoped that by living on a far-away farm I would find time for writing again, something that had been impossible, for many reasons, during the first years of emigration. Would I be able to write a book, or a play, or a couple of poems during my “leisure hours” or during the long winter evenings?

I soon learned that those “leisure hours” were wishful thinking, and if I succeeded in writing during this time I did it with bleeding fingers, literally, for the unaccustomed work with wood, heating and milking made my fingernails split, and I wrote only one play, “The Devil’s General,” in the wee hours after sunset or before sunrise.

We had decided to settle in Vermont, a choice which brought sceptical smiles to the faces of people who claimed to know the conditions of rural America. What attracted us to this state was the fact that it is one of the few eastern states where you still find rural scenery, and, above all, where the inhabitants are strongly attached to their native soil. Many Americans declare that the state of Vermont is so antiquated that it is no longer part of the United States, while Vermonters claim that their state is the only one that is left of the real America.

Be that as it may, it was there that we started to farm. The place was an hour away from the nearest neighbor. The farmhouse had been abandoned for the last thirty years. It was near the Canadian border and in winter the temperature dropped almost to minus forty degrees Fahrenheit, and the snowdrifts were piled up high. But the summers were beautiful and at times fertile, unless frost started early or lingered long into spring.

During the first two-and-a-half years I did not leave the farm for a single day. I am not going to bother you with all the labors, setbacks and forward strides we lived through. I would rather speak about the people I met during those years; the farmers, lumbermen, small-towners and country people, such as we would never have met under different conditions. From then on we were no longer transients or summer visitors. We were neighbors under equal terms. Every day that we went shopping or worked or went visiting was full of new experiences for us. Americans, and above all Vermonters, are not eager...
to make friends and to extend to you their trust and confidence. They regard a stranger who wants to stay in their community without prejudice, but with reserve. They expect nothing bad nor anything good to come from the stranger; they just kept waiting . . . to see whether we would come through and persevere under difficulties.

We too were reserved and avoided giving the impression that we wanted to impose on them. Then it happened in the third summer. Two local men came from the village and, after a small drink and the usual talk about the weather, they asked me to join the local Grange. This was an honor which meant much more to me than if I were to be nominated for honorary citizenship or called upon to preside over the United Nations.

Even during the time of mutual restraint we learned a few things about Vermonters. There was the complete absence of what the Germans call Schadenfreude (the English language does not even have a word for this type of reaction), a disposition to laugh clandestinely about people's misfortunes or setbacks. Our neighbors, in all these years, never gave us the impression that they, old-timers and experienced farmers that they were, laughed up their sleeves when we failed in some venture or showed gross inexperience in another. Exactly the opposite was the case. The whole history of America has taught its people that one may get into a situation where he must begin anew and learn a whole new trade. They respect anyone who, inexperienced and inept as he may be, is ready to acquire skills that are not native with him and that he did not learn at school. They do not gloat over your failures, but at the right moment will give you advice which you may accept or decline. That is your own business. I never would have had any harvest of corn during my first year had there not been a neighbor at the right time to tell me about a tar solution with which to coat the seeds to make them sticky so that crows and other wild birds would not eat them up. The same neighbor was ready to accept a suggestion regarding the prevention of certain chicken diseases about which I had read in some scientific journals.

This mutual help and this natural neighborliness is a fundamental American trait, one which can teach us Europeans a lot about living together. Let me add this: the man who helps you in a difficult situation does not expect that you will be forever grateful to him. He only expects you to do the same to him if the situation is reversed. The neighbor whom you get out of bed because your car got stuck in a snowdrift and who will pull you out with his own, will neither scold nor refuse you his help, but he will not hesitate to call on you when he is in trouble. You can rely on him and he relies on you.

From this simple relationship between neighbors springs the core and the basic strength of American social life. I do not mean the society of Fifth Avenue or of the Boston Social Register; I mean the small American community which has kept alive in the countryside of all the states as the cell of a national union, and which forms the moral and partly also the economic backbone of the people. In the face of the gyrations of the stock exchange and world trade, which only slightly affect it, the small community remains a reservoir of people . . . who can resist the ups and downs our world is exposed to constantly.

The small American community can help the European observer in redefining his picture of the American, especially of American women. Our European image of American womanhood is derived from moving pictures, from stories about Hollywood or about American attitudes regarding family and children. Here in Vermont I found the women helping their husbands and, during the war, working in shops or canning fruit in the kitchen, but they painted their nails and did everything to look attractive and trim at all times. This attitude toward life has made me one of the strongest defenders of American womanhood.

Two other important traits of American character which live in a majority of people are tolerance and honesty. This may sound incredible and paradoxical to those who think of America in terms of race discrimination, gangsterism, dangerous conditions in big cities and cheating businessmen. All of these certainly exist, but there is also a different, basic attitude which is characteristic of the countryside and is very strong. Let me give you an example:

For five years my mailbox, that open contraption made of tin and nailed to a post by the country road, stood there a mile from my lonely farm. Every day the rural carrier, a woman, deposited my mail and packages in it, and also things that we asked her to purchase for us at the village, even bottles of beer and whiskey. Often I had no time to go and gather them up before nightfall, sometimes it took two days before I found time to lug the stuff uphill to my place. Never was there the smallest item missing even though many cars were passing on the road. It is also typical of the countryside that you never lock your house, even if you leave it for a long stretch.

In a neighboring community the following incident took place, and it may show the spirit of tolerance prevailing in small places in the United States. A man got drunk and set his house on fire, and the man went to jail. A newcomer might never have heard of the matter. His children went to school while he was in jail and after he came out again. But never did they hear a word said about him or the incident, because people had come to the tacit agreement that the children should not suffer for it. Things like these cannot be forced upon people nor can they be decreed; they must be rooted in their character.

To be sure, there are many bad things in America, things which run counter to our European taste and our cultural conscience. It is also true that a good part of its intellectual life consists of superficial small talk. But there is genuine yearning for knowledge and honest striving for understanding of others. This America of which I am speaking is neither better nor worse than our European countries, but we need not set it against us nor against any other countries. America is different, and yet it is related at a certain level to all countries on this earth, at the level where the basic human language is current, where yes means yes and no means no.
Life at the Top

Keeping the signals straight on the highest spot in Vermont

I'm sitting on top of the world” is generally used to describe a state of mind. But five men who literally live on top, of the Vermont world at least, make up the crew who take turns maintaining a vigil on the WCAX-TV transmitter facilities atop Mt. Mansfield.

The men sleep, eat and work in a comfortable, single-story building located just below the south rim of the "Nose" on the very top of which stands the 116 foot-high TV antenna tower. In addition to making periodic checks of power output and frequency, the men conduct regular inspection and maintenance of the various equip-

by ROBERT L. HAGERMAN
ment. Besides this major responsibility, they also keep a watchful eye on other electronic facilities, in particular the Vermont Electric Power Company's microwave relay communication system, as well as a shortwave radio hook-up with the Burlington studio.

Construction of the transmitter was completed in September, 1954. Signals travel via microwave relay from Burlington to Mt. Mansfield where they are retransmitted with high power output to cover an area of 100 miles radius. Supervisor of the transmitter is Charles Liese of Morrisville.

One unusual aspect of the job, at least in the winter, is the form of commuting to work; by chairlift most of the way, then by skis or snowshoes for the trek up the Nose. In the summer though, the men can drive up the Toll Road right to their doorstep.

Basically it's a pretty isolated life, so the men welcome summer hikers and skiers who come up in late spring to have lunch. Says one of the men, "You get pretty used to the scenery; then something will happen to the weather which is really something to see. For example, once in a while, a heavy cloud cover will sit below the top of the mountain; then it's like being on an island in the middle of a huge lake. Summer thunderstorms can be pretty spectacular, too, but then that's when things go wrong."

The men agree they have all the comforts of home in their mountaintop occupation. "But one of the toughest things," says one, "is to decide what to have for supper."
Opposite page, left: Close-up inspection of transmitter shows only a thin coating of ice built up.
Right: The men also maintain temperature and precipitation records for the U. S. Weather Bureau.
Below: Part of the station's transmission equipment.

Above: The television antenna lies only a few hundred yards above the transmitter building, but on sub-zero days with a howling gale, the daily inspection, this one filmed on a moderate spring morning, can be grueling.
You may have heard the old saying: "In Vermont two move away for every one that dies"—and with the state's long history of migrations, first Westward and more recently to the South, there is something to it.

In fact, by 1860 about 42 per cent of all native-born Vermonters were living somewhere else, and the exodus has been more or less constant ever since.

To Americans in general this means there is a good possibility of having Vermont ancestors they may not even know about. Finding them can be a fascinating occupation and also provide exciting excursions into the historical past: one's own family lore, and into Vermont life.

WHERE TO START

There is just one answer to this: You start with yourself and, with what added information you may have about your parents and grandparents, you work continually backward, step by step, generation by generation.

Let us take a hypothetical situation: You have already questioned older members of your family and all you can find out is that "great-grandfather Benjamin Wilson fought in the Civil War, had a wife named Eunice and eight children, and he lived in Vermont."

There is no simple one, two, three-type of genealogical research. Each problem is different. But an accurate genealogist—amateur or professional—pins his faith on records—probate, state, church, cemetery, Bible, war, land, and on accurate, authenticated family papers. He considers traditions, but does not accept them until they are proven.

Research in Vermont is more difficult than in many states, since, in a great many instances, there is a lack of records. Sometimes the information was never recorded; other times record books have been lost or burned.

Although Vermont has a good concentration of helpful microfilmed records in Montpelier (many of them provided by the Mormon Church), the state has no central registry of deeds, but employs the town system whereby the actual deeds are recorded with individual town clerks.

To go very far in finding a Vermont ancestor, then, it becomes necessary to know the exact town a person was living in at a certain date before land records, for one thing, can be searched. But to get back to Benjamin Wilson:

A shortcut (assuming for the moment that he really was in the Civil War service) would be to search the military records. A quick way would be to write the General Services Administration at Washington, D. C. to see if there is a pension record, and what clues it may give you about Benjamin and Eunice.

The Adjutant General's reports (of Vermont), and the Civil War rosters, to be found in the state archives at Montpelier, may give you enlistment, service and discharge data, and show you where Benjamin was living at these periods.

Suppose you learn from the Adjutant General's reports of Vermont (which are published in book form and available at many libraries) that there was a Benjamin Wilson who enlisted aged 18 at Tunbridge in Company E, 2nd Vermont Regiment. A check of later pension records shows he did, indeed, have a wife Eunice. You are on the right track.

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Now you can cross-check with the U. S. Census of 1850—the first to give the names of all individual members of a family and their dates and state locations of birth. Here, let us say, you find under Tunbridge a Henry Wilson with a son, Benjamin.

This 1850 Census shows Henry's wife was Hannah, and also sons Benjamin 7, Robert 5, Silas 1, and several daughters. There is also a Benjamin Wilson here aged 62, and this may be Henry's father.
So you check the Vermont Vital Statistics to see if you can find this earlier Benjamin. You find a cemetery record for a Benjamin Wilson who was buried in 1861 at Bethel, aged 73 years. That fits pretty closely, and it probably is your earlier Benjamin. But if you have been paying attention to your map you realize that you have changed from Orange to Windsor county. To search earlier, in probate records, you must move from Chelsea to Woodstock. Wills are filed in the probate districts and at the county-seat within the district. Some counties have two districts and Windsor has one district court located at Woodstock and another district court at Ludlow. So here again you must narrow the search to a specific town, if possible, in order to determine the district. It is much simpler, therefore, to check for probate material at Montpelier, using microfilms.

In 1850, to resume, the three generations of Wilsons were living in Tunbridge, and eleven years later your great-grandfather Benjamin enlisted there. Yet his grandfather the same year was buried twelve miles away in Bethel. You may conjecture for the moment, therefore, that the Wilsons settled first in Bethel, and the family burial lot remained there after they migrated to Tunbridge.

Now you can begin checking land records, and probably those on microfilm (to 1850) at Montpelier are the easiest. It is harder to change film reels than to drive miles to check property deeds and probated wills.

Remember that now you are working on a family living in two adjoining towns which are in different counties. To add to the problem: town boundaries have changed over the years, too. So it becomes necessary to know exactly where the town lines were at the particular date being considered.

If you have been adding and subtracting as we have gone along, you will realize that this older Benjamin must have been born about 1788, and that his father could have been a "first settler" in Vermont. You know, too, that the 1790 and 1800 censuses for Vermont are available in book form and are on the shelves of almost every genealogical library.

These early census records, unfortunately, list only by name the heads of households. The children are shown in age groups and by sex. So we must do some theorizing as to which Wilson family we are reading about.

In 1790 this Benjamin would have been two years old, and in 1800, twelve. If you find only one Wilson family in Tunbridge, and Benjamin fits the age groups in both census records, you can assume for the moment that this is the proper family. But if you find several Wilson families in Tunbridge as well as two in Bethel and another in nearby Randolph, and they all have a male child in the proper age brackets, then you have a lot more searching to do, to learn more about all these Wilsons.

At this stage anything and everything is a clue. Cemetery records at Montpelier, taken from gravestones, can be supplemented by visits to the older cemeteries in Tunbridge, Bethel and Randolph. Names often are repeated in a family from generation to generation, and family plot burials were the rule.

Now, as the trails diverge, is the time to recall that you must accept nothing, you must prove everything, and you must always work back from what you know is certain, generation by generation.

At this point, too, you may assist your search by broadening the range of clues. Look at family Bibles, family letters and diaries. If you don't have any, try to locate them in the hands of relatives. Already you should have checked the Wilson genealogies which are published, to see whether they can help you sort out this Vermont branch. Try the probate court records for wills. They can be maddeningly brief or rich in detail. Generally, however, they are worth checking and may add some valuable information to what you already know.

Now you can check land records, too. The published "State Papers of Vermont" list the early grants from New Hampshire, although few of the original grantees ever picked up their rights in Vermont. The first settlers in a town usually were not the same at all. The 1771-72 New York census for the period just before Vermont's independence might help if the search were in such towns as Guilford or Newbury.

Early land records (scanned on microfilm in Montpelier or examined in the town clerk's office), may bring to light the earliest land purchases in the Wilson name. Don't be too disappointed if these records are missing, for perhaps your earliest Wilson was a tenant or lived with his in-laws. Land records aren't infallible clues, either.

Sooner or later, however, you should be able to fill in the picture of the Wilson family—your ancestors—from the time that the early Benjamin's father migrated to Vermont from down-country. Time limits and difficult areas may suggest you consult with a trained, professional genealogist to complete the picture. Since Vermont was settled spasmodically until the 1760's, any family records earlier than this must be found outside the state—but that's another story.

With your Vermont ancestors now firmly in mind and in notebook (with copious and accurate references as to where you found the information), what else have you gained from these long searches, the poring over dusty papers and documents? You have learned where some of the old family names came from. Perhaps you have found yourself on a beautiful mountainside, beside the cellar hole.
where the first Wilson made his pitch in the Vermont wilderness. You have marveled at his courage and at the fortitude of his children to work out a living here as long as they did, and perhaps you have found the old family burial ground, and later the family’s lot down in the village. By chance you found some distant cousins still living in the town. You have found strong roots in Vermont which are still deep and alive.

**SOURCE MATERIALS**

1. **Vital Statistics**—births, marriages, deaths: Central card file listed by last name in time groups from 1760 to present. Includes copies of some town records (i.e. Middletown Springs) now destroyed. Located in Vital Records Section, Secretary of State’s office, Montpelier.

   Also available in separate town clerks’ offices, often fragmentary, seldom indexed.

2. **Probate Court Records**—wills, guardianships, estate files, adoptions (usually not public):

   Located in Vermont’s 20 district probate offices: Middlebury (destroyed prior to 1852), Bennington, Manchester, St. Johnsbury, Burlington, Island Pond, St. Albans, Grand Isle, Morrisville, Wells River, Chelsea, Newport, Rutland, Fair Haven (early records destroyed), Montpelier, Brattleboro, Bellows Falls, Woodstock, Ludlow.

   Records to 1850 also on microfilm, Public Records Comm., Montpelier.

3. **Cemetery Records**—Gravestone inscriptions compiled in 1911: In card files at Vital Statistics office, Secretary of State’s office, Montpelier.

   In town cemetery commissioners’ record books.

   30 volumes (mostly southern and central Vermont) each individually indexed, collected by DAR, on deposit at Vt. Hist. Soc., Montpelier. Copies also at DAR headquarters Washington, D. C.


   Grantee records in “State Papers,” published volumes at many libraries.

5. **Church**—baptism, membership, marriage, death: With clerk of the church, often fragmentary. Early records were property of the minister and frequently were carried by him to another parish.

6. **Family Records**—Bibles, letters, documents, diaries: Birth, marriage and death data apt to be suspect, should be checked further if not fully documented. Give clues to family relationships.


   Pension records of all wars at General Services Administration, Washington 25, D. C.

   Military Rosters for Revolutionary, 1812, Civil and WWI and federal pension rolls (name list only) for Revolutionary War at State Library, Montpelier.


11. **Special References**—at State Library:

    Most extensive collection in the state of old Vermont newspapers. Old legislative petitions and papers of early governors and councils.

**PROBLEMS AND PITFALLS**

Vital Records in the towns often are fragmentary, destroyed or scattered. Such records at Montpelier derived from the towns and for the early days may be incomplete, especially in the birth category.

Probate searches often reveal the person hunted died intestate (without making a will). Bequests often are to “beloved wife” and no help given with names. Microfilm search is easier than checking original sources in this field and with land records.

Town of residence and date of death must be known to employ probate records usefully. Records of adoptions usually are not public, and other records may be privileged.

Land records are most valuable in establishing dates, places of residence and ownership, but are apt to be deceptive in determining relationships. Few towns have indexed these records.

Family Bible dates often were recorded later; written down by memory. They frequently are unreliable.

Genealogies have not been published for many families, and where they have, the Vermont and other lines often are absent. Such sources should be consulted early, however, to save possibly needless research.

Military records, although usually detailed, are not infallible, since Vermonters often enlisted in regiments of other states. Pension records are a cross-check.

The 1790 Census actually was not made until 1793 in Vermont. Prior to 1850 the head of the household only is named and children are shown by age group and sex only. The 1850 census was the first to give all names, place (state) and date of birth. The 1880 census gives state of birth of each person and state of birth of his father and mother. It also gives the relationship of each person to the head of the household—i.e. wife, son, mother-in-law, servant.

Gazetteers and town histories often name the early settlers, professional men, ministers, merchants, and church members.

County atlases on the town maps show the home location of families then living there—usually the 1840-1860 period. These will aid in finding home sites and sometimes in locating early family burial grounds. These publications must be used with caution, however. Much of the material included was written at the time of publication and unfortunately was not always documented.

**MORE HELP**

The custodians of records, either town, county or state, usually do not have the time nor the staff to conduct detailed searches nor to answer mail inquiries. To assist in these and in general problems, you may want to consult a professional genealogist and researcher. The Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier, and larger libraries in the state maintain lists of such specialists who are available for consultation.
Soapstone makes a comeback:—
it doesn’t stick, it holds its heat and can be cut with a knife.

Soapstone is a granitelike rock (one formed under intense
heat) which later was altered by hot, aqueous solutions
containing silica and carbons. The result was a talc-carbonate
rock, quite soft and greasy to the touch, and one which has
several unusual and useful properties.

Soapstone and its close relative, talc, are found in a large area
of Vermont ranging from Whitingham to Troy. Important
quarries were being operated by 1842, according to Historian
Zadock Thompson, at Grafton, Chester, Bridgewater, Ply­
mouth, Bethel and Troy. By the late 1800s the largest soapstone
quarries in the nation were located at Francestown, N. H. and
Grafton.

Commercial use of soapstone began here in about 1825 when
water pipes, two and three feet long, were cut from three and
four-inch blocks of soapstone and bored hollow. The finished
pipe sold at the amazing figure of 6 cents per foot.

Because of the stone’s great ability to absorb and retain heat,
and its softness which allowed it to be worked easily, it was
used as fireplace hearths and facing stone, as Franklin stove
liners, for foot warmers, stoves, door sills and sinks.

Soapstone griddles were and are without peer in their holding
of long, even heat and in not requiring grease. They are ideal
for cooking eggs, English muffins, fish, pancakes and many
other foods.

While it is still in demand for its originally-discovered
virtues, because of its astonishing heat-absorbing qualities the
old stone may have an exciting future in space travel.

The Vermont Soapstone Company in Perkinsville,
whose origins go back to the middle of the nineteenth
century, has been re-established as a going business after a
lapse of 20 years. Several styles of soapstone stoves are
New shop's old but serviceable equipment all runs at once from original bed shaft, now diesel powered. At right, Clyde Barton operates old up-and-down saw.

turned out at the new shop, along with boot driers and griddles, all well known to an older generation. Franklin stoves are planned. It is expected that flat stock for use as fireplace lining and hearths, counter tops, laboratory sinks and the like may also be developed as the operation gets underway.

The old shop, a Perkinsville landmark for years, was condemned when the new Springfield flood control basin was laid out. Clyde Barton, then of nearby Reading, and Henry Hicks, who had inherited the shop property from his father, got together to reconstitute the business in a new location. The concern is now housed in a building of good size and modern design, but inside is most of the machinery used in the old shop for more than a century. People who know their way around in America's yesterdays, experience a degree of surprise bordering on shock to walk into this modern building and find a pair of up and down saws close to 125 years old still slicing out soapstone slabs as briskly as ever. The new proprietors also salvaged most of the shafting and pulley system which served for years connected to a water turbine, but which now does as well with a diesel engine for power. Great chunks of soapstone are quarried by the firm in Chester and trucked to the mill for working.

As to the products coming from the new setup, they are for the most part as closely tied to America's past days as some of the machinery. Soapstone stoves were familiar to several generations of Yankees who found in the heat-holding properties of soapstone a handy substitute for the cavernous fireplaces of earlier days. You get a soapstone heated through during the evening and it is almost as warm when you get up next morning.

Boot driers, which can be heated "juggling hot" in an oven or on a radiator and then placed inside footwear, dry boots and shoes out efficiently and thoroughly. Skiers are finding them handy to have around. The griddles, which are being made in a variety of shapes and styles and sizes, both steel and copper bound, provide steady even heat when placed over a gas flame or electric grid, and if properly cured, provide a surface to which pancake batter and other material will not stick.

Clyde Barton, his brother and Henry Hicks hope to put soapstone to new and again to old uses, recapturing the popularity which this most versatile stone enjoyed a century ago.
Precious little heed has been paid to Vermont’s old iron bridges. They’ve been overshadowed by their far more famous covered wooden contemporaries.

To the casual traveler, the rusty, bare skeleton framework of an iron bridge lacks the built-in charm of the sheltering covered bridge. Still, in the right setting the old iron spans with their ornate scroll-work, rivet patterns and twanging rods have an appeal all their own.

The number of Vermont’s iron and steel bridges more than fifty years old is small. The state had adequate timber resources, and simply had no real need for metal bridges right down to the present century. Isolated exceptions became objects of curiosity, for most Vermont bridge builders considered any claims of iron’s superiority over wood to be highly questionable.

Unlike the covered bridges, no complete survey exists of the old iron spans in Vermont. They are to be found in the course of back road browsing, with the aid of detailed maps and intelligent guesses. Though few and far between, Vermont still has specimens which are good examples of the “age of iron bridges.” At least two of them are thought to be unique, the only survivors of their type in America.

First of these is a 47 1/2-foot arch bridge which for ninety years stood a little off Rt. 67A northwest of Bennington. This structure is on the plan which General Thomas W. H. Moseley patented in 1857, less than twenty years after the very first iron bridge was built in America (on the National Road at Brownsville, Pennsylvania). A Kentucky-born civil engineer, Moseley started an iron works in Boston to make parts for his unique brainchild out of curved, triangular boiler plate girders. During the years 1863-70 the General and his crews sold and erected over 200 of the patent bridges in fourteen states from Maine to Texas.

Moseley seems to have met with sales resistance in Vermont. Though the graceful boiler plate arches were being erected by towns and counties on every side, only Bennington cautiously decided to try the new-fangled material. They contracted for three Moseley bridges, and they got a good bargain. The span on Mill Street (Ben Mont Avenue) is long gone, but a miniature version of the patent plan crossed Furnace Brook near the “Y” pool until recent years. The third Moseley fabrication crossed an arm of the Walloomsac River just beyond the big covered Papermill Village Bridge off the North Bennington road.

In September, 1958 this short span was replaced. Town workmen loaded the old iron bridge trusses and trucked them over to the Bennington Museum. There they will eventually be re-erected on the grounds as the last known Moseley Patent Bridge in the United States.

Alonzo Briggs fared little better, endeavoring to market his “improved iron Howe truss bridge.” Briggs, a native of Brattleboro, was proprietor of his own bridge business in Springfield, Massachusetts, and mayor of the city to boot. He had exclusive rights for the Howe bridge in northern New England and did well building them, particularly the wooden version of the patent. But town highway commissioners balked at Briggs’ all-iron adaption of the well-known Howe bridge, roughly a series of boxed “X’s” as trusses.

“Gets too blamed cold up here,” they claimed. “Iron’d snap in the first frosty spell!” The years went along and only a handful of tiny iron bridges were erected in Green Mountain valleys.

In addition to Moseley’s, only one other firm managed to crack the iron bridge apathy in Vermont. This was the National Bridge & Iron Works of Boston. Dreaming up
The sturdy lattice bridge spanning the West River near West Dummerston looks toward Black Mountain.

five fancy iron truss designs, some good, some bad, this company also commenced taking contracts in the 1860s. Their chief engineer, Charles H. Parker, received a patent on what looked to be the best plan of the lot, an iron bowstring truss bridge, with brace framework high above the roadway to supply lateral support.

A structure on this plan, erected about 1869, carries Elm Street in Woodstock across the Ottauquechee River. Like Bennington’s Moseley Bridge, it is the only known specimen of its type, and each endpost still bears the National Company’s name and “Parker’s Patent” cast on its face. Probably it still stands because a prudent engineer of later years has seen fit to reinforce the old bowstrings with extra trusswork, out of sight down below.

Just a bit upstream is Woodstock’s “Middle Bridge,” one of the first to herald the invasion of out-of-state bridge building companies. This boxy structure of iron beams and criss-crossed rods was erected in 1877 by the King Iron Bridge & Mfg. Co. of Cleveland, Ohio. Bearded Zenas King, proprietor of the firm, held patents for several types of iron bridges, and sent his salesman and erecting crews all over the country. He stood ready to show that his iron bridges were just as good or better than those of wood, stone, and the designs of his competitors.

King’s aggressive selling policies started a regular “war” between rival iron bridge building companies, all vying for endorsement by town officials. After a while there was little choice between the bridges themselves, as they were
usually on well-established standard patent designs, with only surface differences and price as selling points. Questionnaires were faithfully mailed twice a year to the First Selectman of every town.

"Don't Buy a Bridge Without Getting OUR Bid!" read the reply postals, and asked for details of any kind of bridge building that the town fathers might possibly be doing that year. Inquiries would come from King and other Ohio outfits, from half a dozen small-town firms in New York State, and from the great Berlin Iron Bridge Company of East Berlin, Connecticut. Any design could be erected in nearly any place, according to the advertisements, and there were even a few "slightly used" iron bridges available for re-erection, at reduced costs.

The eager-beaver bridge salesmen were no dentists, but they practically pulled teeth to curry favor with everyone in a town that was in need of a bridge. From Selectmen down to Fire Wardens, all were cajoled and coaxed. At least one bridge contract was awarded without any competitive bidding. The finished product bore the names of ten local office holders in lustrous extra-embossed cast iron lettering which did not rust into illegibility until long after they had all passed to their rewards.

"Well, they opened the bids and the Ohio man was 'way high. Next was our bid—$9081.14. And when they opened Berlin's bid it was exactly the same; right to the penny!

"The Berlin man and I were flabbergasted, but the commissioners thought it was funny. Finally one of 'em pulled out a shiny silver dollar, and we flipped for the bridge contract. The Berlin man won, and they built it.

"Later on I met up with him again over East, under just about the same circumstances. That time our bid was just eighteen cents under his, and we got the job. Bridge business was fun in those days. No engineers, no specifications, no bonds and no labor problems. We'd just sell a bridge, load a couple of flat cars with parts, send over a gang of ten or a dozen good men and the town would have their bridge in a matter of weeks."

Examples of the types of spans pre-fabricated and built by out-of-state patent bridge companies can be found in various parts of Vermont. Up West River from Brattleboro is an old, green-painted iron lattice bridge built by the Berlin Iron Bridge Company. This firm, once the largest bridge fabricator in the world, is also responsible for the "parabolic" Douglas Patent iron bridge built in 1887 over the Mississquoi River at Highgate Falls. Below Cavendish is an iron span dating from 1890, whose lofty, fancy nameplate proclaims the builder as the "Groton Bridge & Mfg. Co. of Groton, N.Y."

Still another unique Vermont iron bridge sits above Indian River right in West Pawlet, serving light traffic on the old Rutland & Washington Branch of the Delaware & Hudson Railroad. Erected in 1886 by the Union Bridge Co. of Buffalo, New York, it is probably the oldest through-truss iron railroad bridge in the state.

Railroads were responsible for the expansion of Alonzo Briggs' old bridge company, operating out of Springfield, Massachusetts in the 1880's. After Mayor Briggs died the firm was acquired by its one-time office boy, Richard F.
Hawkins. Mr. Hawkins did business at a time when most of the railroads in the northeast were beginning to run heavier trains and needed to replace their wooden bridges.

To accommodate the heavy workload, the R. F. Hawkins Iron Works established a branch firm out of Saint Albans, Vermont, known as the Vermont Construction Company. Hawkins was an imposing black-mustached man with practical bridge-building experience. Under his guidance Vermont Construction took on contracts all over the state. Random examples of their work can be seen today at Swanton, on Main Street and Spring Street in Montpelier, and on Elm Street in Brattleboro.

Farther afield, the off-shoot company became the tail that wagged the dog, and reversed the process of outside builders coming to Vermont. "Vt. Construction Co." began to appear on the nameplates of bridges in New York, New Hampshire and even down in the home territory of the parent concern, where a sturdy "VCC" bridge still stands on the main street of Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts.

1900 marked more than the turn of the century in the iron bridge building business. In that year nearly all the old companies in the East, including Berlin, Owego, Hawkins et al, were amalgamated into the giant American Bridge Company. Engineering specifications and state and federal regulations were making bridge building a cut-and-dried affair, and the back room palaver for contracts had become a thing of the past.

After the consolidation, only one area firm showed any degree of individuality in building the steel bridges turned out by the draftsmen of the huge nation-wide concern. Contracting with American, the United Construction Co. of Albany, New York put up dozens of steel truss bridges in Vermont, most of which are now well past the half-century mark in age.

Good examples of United's sturdy construction stand at places like Coggman Bridge in West Haven on the New York border, across the state at Newbury on the New Hampshire line, at West Milton spanning the Lamoille, and on Granite Street in Montpelier.

Even though it was a bit late in reaching Vermont, after a century iron has emphatically become the material of the age. Some of the beautiful steel bridges erected under the State Highway system have won citations for excellent design and practicality. But on the shunpikes, though little known and often overlooked, Vermont's older, varied and unique specimens of the evolution of iron bridges are well worth more than a passing glance.

Small iron span, builder and year forgotten, stands near Middletown Springe.
You've got to hand it to the smelt. With more odds stacked up against it than a fish ought to have, it's surprising that it hasn't dropped out of the Vermont scene long ago. Yet it not only holds its own, but even runs to astonishing numbers in favored spots.

This is all the more interesting when you realize that the smelt probably doesn't belong here in the first place. Look in a book of natural history and you'll find it listed as "a salt-water fish, about six to fourteen inches long, ascending rivers and estuaries to spawn." Our Lake Champlain smelt probably were landlocked in the post-glacial period, after the lake lost its direct sea connection to the north. At any rate, they occur in Champlain naturally.

How smelts made it into most other Green Mountain lakes is another question, although a few have been stocked in the past by the Fish and Game Department. They are there, in any event, in Memphremagog, Bomoseen and a dozen other Vermont waters.

Getting here, however, turned out to be just the start of things. Fishermen hadn't used smelt as lake trout bait for nothing. While many small fish stay in the safety of the shallows, the smelt spends much of its time in the cool deeps. So it's nice and handy to the appetite of its huge cousin. And its young are potential fare for almost everything that swims.

Perhaps the biggest hazard, however, is in the early spring. "Smelt really have a big job to do at spawning time," a fisheries man told me. "Those that have made it through the winter have to head for the streams which enter the lake. They gather at the mouth in great numbers. I've seen them so thick that you couldn't tell how far below them the bottom was.

"Then they go upriver to spawn on gravel and underwater objects. The males often go first and mill around, waiting for the females. Lucky for them they congregate at night when most of their enemies can't see them. Otherwise the slaughter would be terrific."

When the masses of smelt have worked upstream spawning takes place. Pressure of the ripened eggs within the female's body is sometimes aided by pressure of the bodies of one or more attendant males. Pinhead-size, they're scattered over the gravel, on stones, on underwater objects.

With millions of eggs lying around like so much sticky underwater sand, the egg-eaters have a feast. Crustaceans, aquatic insects and a host of different kinds of fish find wonderful picking. Day by day the harvest continues even as the tiny young are developing within the egg.

"Lucky thing a 2-ounce smelt can produce up to 5 thousand eggs," my fishery expert told me, "because everything seems to like smelt caviar. I've netted minnows crammed to the throat with smelt eggs."

Finally, in about ten days—more or less, according to weather and water conditions—the fry emerge. Their enemies follow them as they drift downstream to the comparative safety of lake water.

During this period, nature relents a little. She gives them a food sac of a tiny yolk mass from the egg. This remains attached for a few days until absorbed, then they must find the plankton and other minute creatures they use as food. Also, their transparency gives them a protective cloak of near-invisibility.

Hatched in water which was about 40 degrees F. when the eggs were laid, the fry now follow the cool stream
flow out into the lake. Here, instead of minnows and diving beetles as enemies, they have pike, lake trout and perch.

Here now, however, the wheel of nature begins to turn in their favor. As they turn adolescent, they adopt the sleek, silvery, streamlined bodies which show their distant kinship to the salmon. Their mouths develop sharp, backslanting teeth, enabling them to hang onto an assortment of crustaceans, underwater insects and plankton.

Then, when they’re finally large enough, the wheel comes full circle. With almost an averaging gleam in its eye, the now sizeable smelt may turn and snap up the young of its old enemy, the lake trout.

This could all be a case of a simple balance of nature, with one creature serving as a necessary check on the other, if several thousand humans didn’t enter the picture. “You wouldn’t believe it until you saw it,” a smelt fisherman said, “but a city springs up almost overnight when the Champlain ice gets thick enough to hold the fishing shanties. I’m told that smelt make more ‘fishing widows’ per pound than all the other species combined.”

Now the smelt find a new hazard. This is in the form of a hook rigged with a chunk of pork or a slab cut from another smelt’s side, jigging up and down at the end of some 65 or more feet of line. The smelt, cruising around in great numbers, watch the antics of this strange piece of material for a while.

Finally, with luck—good or bad, depending on whose viewpoint you use—the little fish takes hold. Swiftly it is hauled up to the surface, perhaps to reappear in a short time as a fresh slab of bait. Sometimes the fisherman pulls it up so quickly that even if the hook hasn’t caught, the smelt doesn’t have time to extricate its teeth from the bait.

Although the school is often far below the surface, it may sometimes come right to the top, possibly because of an oxygen deficiency. Then its huge numbers become startlingly evident. “I recall my father telling me about a hole he dug in the ice near Ferrisburg,” Cassius Guyett told me. “He was chopping it to get a bucket of water. Just as he punched the last hole through, he noticed that the water was alive with some little fish. In his curiosity, he scooped at them and caught a couple. They were smelt—apparently swimming around by the thousands. So he and a friend scooped away as fast as they could with a pail until there were dozens of smelts lying all around them on the ice.”

Pails, and most other assorted items, are frowned upon now by the Fish and Game Department, as illegal. Smelt are usually taken by angling in Vermont although dipnets or “scaps,” frames of chicken-wire, even bedsprings. The light-shy smelt, caught on the way to their breeding sites, are packed so thick that they cannot escape. But in spite of this blow at their numbers, enough pairs escape to leave a few million fertile eggs behind. And so their populations continue, apparently none the worse for the weeding-out process.

Taking the smelt during their river run is no new idea. It’s a time-honored custom here on the east coast, as well as in west coast and European waters. According to an old account by Captain John Smith, “Of smelts there is such abundance that the Salvages doe take them up in the rivers with baskets, like sives.”

What causes this apparent mania for a fish which is only about twice the size of your thumb? “I don’t know,” shrugged one fisherman. “It’s just a wonderful way to spend a winter’s day, I guess. But did you ever taste a good fresh smelt? It’s awful hard to beat. Nothing tastes quite like it. It’s sweet, somehow, and not fishy like other fish. In fact, it has a pleasant odor, almost like cucumbers, when it’s first caught.”

Various known as “frostfish” and “silver-sides,” the smelt bears the scientific name of Osmerus mordax. But it is most familiarly known from an old Anglo-Saxon term, “smoelt,” which means “beautiful.” This is an apt term for the slightly transparent, silver-green being that lances through the waters of our eastern coasts from Virginia north to Nova Scotia and inland to the Great Lakes. In these latter bodies of water, it spawns on wave-washed shores, especially in parts of Ontario and Erie. “One big mystery of the Champlain smelts, however,” says Len Halnon of the Fish and Game Department, “is just where they spawn. We’ve never found spawning runs in the rivers; yet we find smelt loaded with eggs in water only 40 feet deep. Perhaps they spawn at a considerable depth—we’re really not sure.”

Meantime, in spite of the mystery, fishermen continue to harvest the tasty delicacies. “Take a good ‘green’ smelt, right out of the water,” my fisherman friend once told me, “dip it in egg and bread crumbs, and fry it ‘til it’s brown. Nothing better. Doesn’t taste a bit like those frozen, fishy-eyed, gutted things you buy in the market.”

“You mean to tell me you dip the fish in the batter whole? Just as nature made it—inards and all?” I asked.

He looked at me as if I’d asked him who he’d voted for in the last election. “Of course,” he said without batting an eye. “Don’t have to add a thing. They’re good enough as it is.”

I have my own ideas about uncensored smelt. But on one thing, I will agree with him. No matter where they spawn or how they’re taken, they’re uncommonly well-named—in the old Anglo-Saxon, that is. For they are beautiful—swimming or sizzling. You’ve got to hand it to them.
The fisherman who thinks the smelt is beneath his dignity is suspect. He has taken to the woods with his varnished rod, hand-tied flies (and hidden can of worms) as the result of the traumatic experience in a fishing shanty, long buried in his subconsciousness, when the man sitting at the next hole two feet away caught a bucket of smelt while he got—nothing. On a stream an empty creel can be laid to a wrong fly. In a boat it is conceivable that one’s partner landed all the bass because he happened to be sitting directly over a deep hole. But no excuse will serve in a five-foot-square fishing shanty.

Presented here, that would-be shanty fishermen may recover their honor (by one who has not entirely recovered his) are some pointers sharpened on the whetstone of trial and error.

YOUR SHANTY

It can be a two, four, or six-holer according to your budget and your popularity. You will become more popular after you have built it and very much more popular after it is in position over the smelt grounds. Since you yourself will have to haul it there, perhaps through a foot of snow in the teeth of a twenty-mile wind, construct it of light materials.

Narrow sled runners fastened to two sides under the floor will make transport easier and keep the floor and your feet a few inches off the ice, thus preventing "shanty fever." Runners will also elevate you from the small interior lake created by your stove and, while you are gone, prevent the floor from freezing to the ice. Avoid the embarrassment of leaving your floor on the ice when you remove your shanty for the season.
YOUR EQUIPMENT

In a shanty tightly constructed with two small sliding windows for ventilation, your kerosene stove will perform adequately even in zero weather if you will remember to keep the wick trimmed and not turn it up so high that it smokes. Failure to observe these precautions will result in your reappearance, not as a smelt fisherman, but as a coal miner.

You will need a five-foot iron chisel to cut holes through the two-and-a-half feet of ice that looked to you to be not more than six inches. Bore a hole through the end of the chisel and put a strap through it and around your wrist or waist. Otherwise, when you suddenly break through the ice with a final mighty thrust, the chisel will slip out of your hands and continue to the bottom of the lake. (Unofficial geodetic surveys report that the Lake Champlain smelt grounds are forests of iron.) Make sure, by the way, that the holes you are chopping correspond to those in the floor of your shanty. Miscalculations are easy and are responsible every winter for a lot of blue language.

To remove ice chips from the holes you will need a small kitchen strainer, but remember that this, too, is subject to the laws of gravity. Also your knife, glasses and whiskey, if any.

YOUR TACKLE

Don’t be disdainful of your partner’s humble stick wound with line coarse enough, you think, to land a salmon. There’s likely to be so much stretch in eighty feet of your fancy plastic line that you won’t be able to feel your smelt when he bites, and he’ll have your bait before you yank. Then it’s back to the bait board for you. The old aphorism “Fish or cut bait” must first have been spoken in a fishing shanty. Part of your trouble is that your partner makes the same bait do for several smelt while you are sweating over the production of more slabs. Neat triangular strips of his neighbor’s hide are irresistible to the smelt, not the irregular chunks you have been amputating with your rusty switch blade. Notice how the side of a freshly caught smelt yields cleanly to your partner’s sharp penknife.

The other part of your bait is a smelt’s eye. You do not have to bite it out. The few vanishing veterans who have this special talent will not consider you a novice if you use your thumb. It will take practice to remove the eye without squashing it, but when you first succeed in slipping your hook through the tiny black spot on the anterior side without damaging the retina you will feel as you did in your first pair of long pants.

YOU AND YOUR SMELT

You are now ready to try again. Notice how much line your partner has out and follow suit. Sometimes the smelt are on the bottom and sometimes they are near the surface, and sometimes, like their fastidious distant relatives, the brown trout, they won’t bite anything. In this mood they enjoy sailing disdainfully past your bait directly under the ice, then taunting you with a 180-degree turn and an insincere pass on the way back. Under these circumstances your partner will not be catching any, either, which should console you. But supposing he is? What is the matter with you?

Notice that his stick is always in motion and that the moment the smelt sinks his teeth into his bait, whether or not the hook is set, your partner is able to snake him out in a flash. This is because it is difficult for the smelt, his teeth being arranged as they are, to let go before he is bagged, if he is directly under the ice.

But how is it, you ask, that your partner hooks them on the bottom, eighty feet down, when you are sure he does not always feel them bite? This is something all veterans understand but can hardly explain. It’s part mystery and part sheer metaphysics—something you’ll have to learn. With practice you, too, will know the exact moment that the smelt is opening his mouth and the split second when you must jerk your stick.

Two final hints. If you get so excited when you have one on that you throw your line every which way as you pull him up, you will wrap yourself in a cocoon that even Houdini could not get out of. Above all, don’t stop to light your pipe when you have him on the way up—not if you want to land him and earn a place in the best smelt society.
Sauntering the pavement
or riding the country by-road,
lo, such faces!
Faces of friendship, precision,
cautions, suavity, ideality,
The spiritual-prescient face,
the always welcome
common benevolent face, . . .
The old face of
the mother of many children. . . .

Whitman, Faces

Paul Banse fashions a
miniature deacons' bench. Below
his wife makes a doll's costume.

Dolls from dried Apples—"Lo, such Faces!"

Story and Photographs by
Jeannette Noonan and Joseph Noonan

Some of the most fascinating faces
you will ever see began their lives
in an apple orchard. When carved and
dried by skilled hands, ordinary
apples can be transformed into the
charming faces of old folk. The art of
apple carving is centuries old dating
back nearly five hundred years to the
Iroquois Indians. Pioneers carved
apple heads for their children's dolls,
patterning them after the Iroquois
spirit doll, "Loose Feet." His wizened
apple head made him a perfect mate-
rialization of what he represented: a
kind, happy spirit who was very wise
and very old.

Those early dolls had rigid corn
husk bodies wrapped in Indian blan-
kets, but subsequent dolls became more modern, both in body and in costume. The dolls shown here have flexible bodies which can be bent to perform virtually any task—from stitching a gay patchwork quilt to priming a pitted wooden pump. They are the creations of Sandy and Paul Banse of Skysweep, Craftsbury, Vermont, who have been manufacturing the dolls ever since the nearly lost art excited their interests several years ago. The activities, costumes and furniture of the Banse dolls revolve around country life in Vermont during the early 1800s, as reflected in actual museum items, after which much of their work is fashioned.

Here are basic directions for carving a lively conversation piece, whose dried forms are as endless as your imagination: Select a large, firm, bruise-free apple (the Cortland produces a realistic skin tone and texture, although other varieties may be used with good results). Peel the apple carefully, being sure to remove all the skin, including that around the stem and the bottom. Retain the stem if possible. Then, with a peeler or a knife, smooth the ridges. Determine the broadest side for the face, and with a colored pencil, lightly mark the initial eyebrow-nose line of incision. With a small knife blade, shallowly incise this outline, penetrating a little deeper around the base of the nose. Next, scoop out elliptically shaped eye sockets just under the brows, making the arches the upper boundaries. Mark the apple again, indicating the cheek contours from the outer corners of the eyes.

**How to make faces**

As the author outlines above, you (1) draw the nose and eyebrow outlines in pencil on a firm peeled apple. Then (2) the eye and mouth areas are cut out. In (3) wrinkles are scored at the eye corners. (4) A prospective doll owner inspects a drying head. (5) Before and after compared.
down to the chin area. Scoop out all of this enclosed space, leaving a bold nose and a jutting chin (both will diminish considerably in the drying process). Smooth any ridges or angularities by scraping with the blade edge, and remove all traces of the pencil markings in the same manner. With the tip of the knife blade, slash a good-humored mouth about half an inch long. That completes the basic shaping of the face. However, if you want to add some interesting character lines make a few short, light scores wherever natural wrinkles might appear—around the mouth, on the forehead and at the eye corners. Also, at this stage you may want to take precautions to preserve your creation. Although the Banes have developed secret methods to preserve their doll heads from discoloration and deterioration, you may try the following: submerge the just-carved apple for a few hours in a moderate solution of baking soda and water. Later, when the drying process is completed, you may give it a protective coat by spraying with lacquer, plastic or wax.

Now, the apple is ready for the drying process: If your apple has a stem, simply attach a string (if not, push a wire down through the center of the apple, secure it at the bottom and make a loop at the top. Then, attach a string). Hang it in a warm, dry place to dehydrate. In three or four weeks your apple will be ready to receive such embellishments as clove irises, wire spectacles and a clothed body. Books illustrating the construction of doll bodies and clothing are available in libraries. Finally, fashion and glue on a wig of absorbent cotton and—there it is—an apple-head doll!
Now in the silent downfall of snow, now in the drift and whirl of flakes driven from the sky and tossed from the earth by the shrieking wind, the day’s passage is unmarked by shadows. It is but a long twilight, coming upon the world out of one misty gloom, and going from it into another. Now the stars fade and vanish in the yellow morning sky, the long shadows of the hills, clear cut on the shining fields, swing slowly northward and draw eastward to the netted umbrage of the wood. So the dazzling day grows and wanes and the attenuated shadows are again stretched to their utmost, then dissolved in the flood of shade, and the pursued sunlight takes flight from the mountain peaks to the clouds, from cloud to cloud along the darkening sky, and vanishes beyond the blue barrier of the horizon.

There are days of perfect calm and hours of stillness as of sleep, when the lightest whisp of cloud fleece hangs moveless against the sky and the pine trees forget their song. But for the white columns of smoke that, unbent in the still air, arise from farmstead chimneys, one might imagine that all affairs of life had been laid aside; for no other sign of them is visible, no sound of them falls upon the
ear. You see the cows and sheep in the sheltered barnyards and their lazy breaths arising in little clouds, but no voice of theirs drifts to you. . . .

One day there comes from the south a warm breath, and with it fleets of white clouds sailing across the blue upper deep, outstripped by their swifter shadows sweeping in blue squadrons along the glistening fields and darkening with brief passage the gray woodlands. Faster come the clouds out of the south and out of the west, till they crowd the sky, only fragments of its intense azure showing here and there between them, only now and then a gleam of sunlight flashing across the earth. Then the blue sunlit sky is quite shut away behind a low arch of gray, darkening at the horizon with thick watery clouds, and beneath it all the expanse of fields and forest lies in universal shadow.

The south wind is warmer than yesterday's sunshine, the snow softens till your footsteps are sharply moulded as in wax, and in a little space each imprint is flecked thick with restless, swarming myriads of snow-fleas. Rain begins to fall softly on snow-covered roofs, but beating the panes with the familiar patter of summer showers. . . .

After the rain there come, perhaps, some hours of quiet sunshine or starlight, and then out of the north a nipping wind that hardens the surface of the snow into solid crust that delights your feet to walk upon. . . .

The delicate curves and circles that the bent weeds etched on the soft snow are widened and deepened in rigid grooves, wherein the point that the fingers of the wind traced them with is frozen fast. Far and wide from where they fall, all manner of seeds drift across miles of smooth fields, to spring to life and bloom, by and by, in strange, unaccustomed places, and brown leaves voyage to where their like was never grown. The icy knolls shine in the sunlight with dazzling splendor, like golden islands in a white sea that the north wind stirs not, and athwart it the low sun and the waning moon cast their long unrippled glades of gold and silver. Over all winter again holds sway, but we have once more heard the sound of rain and running brooks and have been given a promise of spring.

Rowland E. Robinson
in New England Fields and Woods, 1896
Burke Hollow, at Evening

Photographer Winston Pote of Lancaster, N. H. recorded this view of Burke Hollow late on a sub-zero February afternoon. Working from snowshoes and against the rapidly failing sunset light, he shot with a 15-inch telephoto lens on a 5 x 7 Linhof Camera using Ektachrome E-3 film. The shutter was set at a tenth second on the expectation the extreme cold would slow it to a fifth second. Aperture was f64 to give depth of field.

Prints for Framing

This is the second of a series of four large seasonal color pictures which will appear in Vermont Life. Unfolded prints of the scene, carrying no backing printing, are available at 60c each, plus 20c postage and handling cost. Previously published was First Snow on Camel’s Hump, an Autumn scene by Stephen Warner.

Burke Hollow’s early union Meeting House is the focal point of the village. It was built in 1825 by four denominations which shared its use. The interior has an unusual barrel pulpit with a choir loft just behind and above it.
Most people consider that skiing in this country really started after the last war, or at best goes back to the building of the first ski tow at Woodstock in 1934, or the pre-War Nose Dive on Mt. Mansfield. For many years before that, however, as Donald Slayton recalls on page 40, a few pioneers were tying on their staves or long "shes" as some called them, and were regularly attacking the snow-clad hills.

Here, commemorating a half-century of Vermont skiing, is a rare photograph (courtesy of Miss Katherine Wilder) of the well-loved and fondly remembered Woodstock painter and hotel keeper, Arthur Wilder. It is titled: "Afternoon Off, Washington's Birthday, 1912."

Ten years later from Wilmington came perhaps the first winter sports promotion folder in the nation, although Woodstock dates its winter sports activities from 1892. The surprisingly modern-looking Wilmington skier, shown on page 62, carries the title "Winter Sport Itself."

Nobody yet has claimed that Ethan Allen used skis. Apparently he did his winter traveling by Indian snowshoe. Only his ignorance of the ancient Scandinavian runner, one assumes, saved trespassing Yorkers from being scattered faster than they were.

The modern face of skiing, opposite, shows a mass flight of instructors down a wide trail on Bromley Mountain, itself one of Vermont's first ski developments. This backlit photograph is by Ozzie Sweet.
Frank V. Snyder designed his chalet with Charles Lench, Jr. in Austrian style, inside and out. View through balcony railing, right, shows proximity to base lodge.

Your own chalet, right at your favorite ski area, doubles as a country retreat the year around. This is a new trend in Vermont vacation living—at Magic Mountain, Sugarbush, Stowe and several other ski centers.

The design for the mountain community idea at Stratton was done by E. H. and M. K. Hunter so as to provide two residential areas with all the chalets in easy walking (and skiing) distance of the base lodge. Some thirty-two privately designed and built chalets have been constructed to date; eventually there will be more than a hundred. A chapel, public inns, golf course and lake are being added.

Photographs by Hanson Carroll

SKI CHALETs ON STRATTON MOUNTAIN

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The large lodge, above and below, is owned by Richard Angle and was designed by Lench Associates of Winhall.

Two views above show the Robert Phuff chalet, designed by Alexander McIvaine. Lench Associates designed the chalet below. John M. P. Thatcher, Jr. calls it Maus Haus.
Top Level Skiing

is found the entire length of the Green Mountains, from Pine Top in the south to Jay Peak up near the Canadian border.

Almost mid-way of the state lies the exceptionally photogenic Killington Basin Area, pictured at the left and below. The high chair lift here carries skiers from the base at the 2500-foot level almost to the summit, 4241 feet above sea level.

Well up in the Green Mountains also is the nation’s largest collegiate ski jump, shown at the right, a part of Middlebury’s own Snow Bowl development. Record distance on the Middlebury jump is 204 feet, made by Chris Selbeck in 1961 and tied by John Bower in 1963.
Make-it-yourself schuss-boomers were pounding down the Vermont hills before the pampered ski-bunnies of today were even born

Barrel staves and Rake handles

by RONALD A. SLAYTON

Forty-three years ago in our Vermont neighborhood, the kids spent about as much time under the snow as on top of it. Skiing, the favorite winter sport, was pursued before breakfast, on the way to school, after school, after supper and the full days of Saturday and Sunday. Mother never let us boys wear our skis to Sunday School, however. As in all sports, discussion between times was both learned and violent. Such questions as how many pairs of
socks could be worn at one time, what brand of old inner-
tube was most efficient for holding the skis on the anatomy
and other quasi-scientific material received serious con-
sideration. A review of the sartorial splendor and gear
should be helpful to those who plan to visit such fashiona-
ble resorts as Mt. Mansfield, Mad River or Sugarbush. No,
Vermont has not always been the land of skin tight pants
and laminated skis.

A wool mackinaw, preferably belted, a toque, several
layers of flannel shirts, hand-knitted sweaters, a muffler,
mittens and a large pair of lumberman's boots made the
outfit complete. As an alternate, rubber boots were seen
occasionally. These would quickly fill to the brim with
snow after a few unsuccessful runs. It was not unusual to
wear five pairs of socks. Rivalry existed as to which boy
could get on the most pairs. The toque I wore had
stretched at the edge and on crucial runs often fell down
over my eyes.

The woolen clothing was a natural adhesive surface for
the clinging snow. After a few flights, above or under,
small balls of snow clung to the complete outer surface.
At supper time, we took turns on the piazza, brushing each
other down with a corn broom. Vigor was more evident
than aim in the dim light of the kerosene lamp which
shone through the frosty kitchen window. Meanwhile, the
fragrant steam of turnips and sausage seeped through the
door. Mother said, "For heaven's sake, hang those wet
togs in front of the Glenwood." From the oven door a
blast of hot air reduced the snow to puddles on the kitchen
floor and added to the general cloud of steam.

I remember a wool sweater, knitted alternately by
my sister, who practised the art loosely, and my mother,
who was a tight knitter. The yarn had been resurrected
from an ancient garment and ranged in color from a faded
red to pink. The sweater had a remarkable propensity for
stretching when wet with snow, and at the top of the hill
it usually reached my ankles. Then, after the push off,
supported by miles of yarn, an upright position to the end
of the run was practically guaranteed.

Barrel staves, to which leather or canvas straps were
attached with roofing nails, were considered adequate for
the novice. While these instruments provided great
maneuverability, with rounded and curved bottom, for­
ward movement was possible only on the steepest hills.
The preferred stance was wide, with legs slightly bowed.
Improvements came with skis made from a cheese box.
Strips of the curved container were nailed to the ends of a
couple of six foot boards, or whatever length up to eleven
feet was available. A notch was sometimes cut in the top
of the board to house a continuous toe strap. Nails were
bent over on the bottom to increase speed.
Soon we began to hack skis from solid rock maple and turn up the ends with live steam or hot water. There were two schools of thought as to which was the better method. Some efforts were so successful that the points turned up eight or ten inches. Skis were built without camber, but reverse camber usually set in, producing a deep sag in the middle. Varying degrees of success were evident and occasionally a boy would be seen flying down the hill with one ski riding the crest of the snow like a toboggan while the other was perpetually submerged. It was disastrous to have to forfeit a day’s skiing to rebend a ski that went flat—usually the fate of one who belonged to the “hot water school.”

A single pole could be made from an old rake handle or a fairly straight maple sapling and a large wooden doughnut which was fastened to the end. The pole was used as a braking device and a prop in case of rough going.

Rubber bands cut from inner-tubes were stretched across the heel and over the toe, and the remainder festooned the legs. We kids used to stop at the garage for these inner-tubes, which were a rarity in those days, and on Friday nights we cut up a generous supply to last us all week. This was the first safety binding.

The art of skiing consisted mainly of sliding down a track and walking back up the hill with a ski in each hand. Coming down was a straight line run. Those fortunate enough to have highly turned up points could scribe a rough arc in a hundred foot distance by turning the ankles. The other method of control was the step turn, but the weight of the rock maple boards made immediate obstacles unavoidable. Running into a dog or a tree was considered a minor hazard and did not dampen at all our enthusiasm for the sport. If one applied both hands and full weight to the one long pole he could check, somewhat, the fearful speeds which might be attained. The last defense, however, then as it is today, was the sit down.

One youngster of an ingenious bent attached an old barn door hinge, slightly curved, to the tail of each ski. The thickness of the rough hewn maple on the tail end made possible the insertion of four or five large screws and this cog device prevented the skis from sliding backwards when climbing.

The track was enlivened by the addition of a bump or two. As each boy passed up the hill, he stopped to add more snow until the bump reached a height of four or five feet. We had discovered that a gradual slope to the jump was more desirable, for a sudden upturn could send a boy sailing off toward the moon. Once, a buddy of mine who had a heavy set of maple skis violently upturned at the tips came down the track before I could level off the bump. He was catapulted from the end in a swirl of snow and grew smaller and smaller in the sky. At the summit of his flight, both skis came off with a snap of rubber bands and he plummeted out of sight into the snow. The skis took off in different directions for a half mile run of freedom.

When there was a shortage of equipment it was not unusual to see a boy on one ski or two or three boys on a single pair. The science of one ski flight was developed out of necessity. On the wide skis two or three boys could ride tandem. A few adventurous lads put two toe straps on each ski for passenger service. So, you would-be skiers at the fashionable ski resorts—you who have nothing better than barrel staves and rubber boots, one rake-handle pole, inner tube safety bindings and whose only technique is a staggering step-turn—you need not feel self-conscious. You are simply commemorating an established Vermont tradition.
Descendents of wild and skittery barrel-stave contraptions that enlivened the pre-ski years

Jack Jumpers are back!

Photographs by Hanson Carroll

The jack jumper is related to skis the way a unicycle is to a bike—the rider’s balance depends upon just one instead of two points of surface contact. It appears to defy any reasonable law of gravity.

But the jumper, which in homemade, barrel stave form has been around for a good many years, is a vehicle of fun. It isn’t quite as hard to manage as it seems. Kids take to it in short order, learning to swing their legs when they want to turn. And if you should lose your balance you are halfway down anyway.

Henry Barch of Proctor has been interested in these one-runners ever since he was a boy. Now he is making in his shop Uni-Skis of solid and laminated woods. They come in sizes for children and teen-agers.

Manufacturer Barch, who lives alone in an old family house where he makes the Uni-skis, can often be found out sliding with the neighborhood children or taking a group of youngsters out on a hillside to test-drive some of his new models.
“Smallest ski area in the world”... **Burrington Hill**

Family groups appear at Burrington everywhere you look. Converted barns have become the warming hut and base lodge.

Chet Page feels that knowing how to fall properly is very important for all skiers, especially beginners. This is one of the first things taught in his ski instruction, which is based on a no-snow-plow technique. Right: Page starts beginning skiers off with stem turns.

Story and Photographs by HANSON CARROLL
A great problem in family skiing today is where to go. Who wins the toss—Pop who wants to do the steep schusses and recapture his youth on one of the East’s highest peaks, or the child who simply wants to slide in the open spaces? If Ma is a so-so skier she probably doesn’t care which area as long as the family is together. A large family stirred into the heavy winter crowds at Vermont’s top ski areas often becomes just a lost morsel in the stew. Some large families have remedied this by developing search-and-rescue color ski jackets to enable them to find the dear ones in the hodge-podge of skis, poles and massive crowds.

Chet Page at Burrington Hill, Whitingham, Vermont has an answer to all this. He calls his the smallest ski area in the world with a bow of respect to nearby Mount Snow which with equal audacity calls itself the largest ski area in the world. Burrington caters to families. Practically all adults are seen accompanied by a child. Their hill facilities are moderate, and appeal to all but the top notch skier. Page runs his own ski school which includes a no-snow-plow method and unique instructions in how to fall.

Because it takes a lot to hold a family together on an outing, Burrington also offers ice skating and tobogganing to answer some of the “I don’t want tos” which often come from the youngest. And Burrington has the record of never losing a child.
The short, sad history of Groton’s “bank”
fills a lurid page in Caledonia’s history . . .

MONEY, INJUSTICE and

WILLIAM (BRISTOL BILL) WARBURTON.
Violent tempered man of letters, black sheep of an ancient and respectable British family. Few visitors here have planned so brief a visit yet remained so long.

GEORGE (ENGLISH JIM) GREEN.
Part-time pugilist who side-stepped the long count.

CHRISTIAN MEADOWS.
British-born engraver who took a job in Vermont without knowing that his room and board would be on the state.

MARGARET (GOOKIN PEG) O’CONNOR.
Her melodious voice and skill at the piano proved distracting—when they had to be.

EPHRAIM LOW.
An unsuccessful merchant who wanted some money of his own.

MCLEAN MARSHALL.
Groton blacksmith, whose change of mind spelled bad news for two miscreants.

SAMUEL DRURY, SR.
The “rat council” was his undoing.

WILLIAM (ONE EYED) THOMPSON.
His friendships prompted a joke from the bench.

JUDGE LUKE POLAND.
What he saw in a Danville courtroom prepared him for mischief in Washington.

BLISS DAVIS.
If his ordeal were the common lot of state’s attorneys, fewer lawyers would want the job.

WILLIAM WILSON.
Printer and engraver, turned detective. His motto: perseverance pays.

OSCAR HALE.
Bank of Newbury cashier whose fancy was caught by a safe-cracking tool.

DANIEL WEBSTER.
New Hampshire statesman and orator, who recognized an artist in a crook.

Governors, court officers, rogues and God-fearing residents of Caledonia County, Vermont.
More than a century ago, Groton, in Caledonia County, boasted twice as many sheep as cattle, but the cattle still outnumbered the people, of whom there were some 900. There were seven sawmills in town then and a cloth fulling mill and of course a gristmill. There were two tanneries, two churches and two stores. Although the terrain was rough and the soil stony, Groton produced oats on the order of 13,000 bushels yearly and the maples yielded ten tons of sugar. In short Groton in 1850 was a typical Vermont farming community. Probably, like other small towns, a poor place to come if you didn’t want to be noticed. Certainly not the place if you wanted to mind your own business—and your business was, in the simplest possible way, just to make money.

It was dead of Winter when the five newcomers arrived. First a fiercely bearded figure of about forty, short and broad shouldered, with noticeably piercing blue eyes. He was accompanied by a short stout man battered about the face. They both had British accents. A few days later another Englishman came to town, tall and long nosed, a nervous man obviously, but with a more winning expression than either of his compatriots. It was a matter of sympathetic interest when the tall Englishman one chilly day welcomed his attractive wife and baby. And not long after this the bearded one was joined by a woman in her twenties, apparently determined to become a farmwife despite her looks and her dash and her musical ways.

The lanky Britisher and his wife and child stayed with Peter Paul, Groton carpenter and man-of-all-work. The first two arrivals, with the younger woman, moved to a farm out in West Groton belonging to one Ephraim Low. They all lived quietly, visited the village seldom and made no effort to associate one with another in public. In fact, when two of the men came in for a drink at McLean Marshall’s blacksmith shop, one would make a point of jumping off the sleigh outside the village and strolling in later. To rural Groton such maneuvers seemed fairly extreme, but maybe the newcomers had reasons for being unobtrusive. They had.

No matter how imaginative the speculation as to the occupations and identities of these visitors—and we can assume today that it ranged widely: what could you expect of foreigners who arrive in town in mid-Winter?—it paled beside the truth. For the new arrivals, in order of appearance, were William (Bristol Bill) Warburton, alias William Darlington, British-born burglar already known to the police of both Boston and New York; George (English Jim) Green, burglar and part-time professional prize fighter; Christian Meadows, engraver and thief; Mrs. Meadows, a housewife and mother as modest as she seemed, and a former cabaret singer named Margaret O’Connor who, although she was to pass in Vermont as Mrs. Warburton, was known in New York underworld circles as Gookin Peg.

Thus the good town of Groton became unwittingly the residence of what a newspaper was to call some of the most noted and accomplished rogues in America. But they didn’t come to town to be burglars or pugilists or cabaret singers—but to try, as inconspicuously and effectively as possible, to make money.

The whole thing had started the previous Spring. Ephraim Low, who had failed in business as a storekeeper, persuaded Meadows, then working for a Boston printer, to steal a set of bank note dies with a view to setting up in counterfeiting. Making and passing bogus notes was a popular and even rewarding pursuit, for many banks were empowered to issue their own negotiable bills, and these
were so numerous and so varied in design that the average man couldn't possibly distinguish the homemade article from the real thing. Counterfeits were of two kinds: they were either made from scratch, or were genuine bills from which the figures would be removed and replaced by other figures with more digits. The latter variant of do-it-yourself money was, in the master plan of Ephraim Low, to be the specialty of the venture—informal, ill-designed and wholly unsuccessful—which became known locally as the Groton Bank. Christian Meadows, according to Low's table of organization, was to be engraver and chief printer. Bristol Bill and English Jim Green were engaged to pass the upgraded notes.

But although Meadows was given the leading role in the Groton Bank, Warburton soon emerged as the principal actor. This charming villain—the black sheep, if we are to believe his biographer, of a well-known British family, and an alumnus of the Australian penal colony at Botany Bay—has perhaps best been characterized by Stephen Royce, one of three Vermont governors who were to be involved with his future, as a man "combining with strong and excitable passions a quick and deep sense of what he assumes to be justice and injustice." And from the moment that he set foot on Green Mountain soil Bristol Bill felt that justice was not his, and that the world, in the persons of Northern Vermonters, conspired against him.

Obviously his initial mistake was to leave the city, and the reader who will put up with a brief excursion into some earlier criminal history will probably agree. Bristol Bill would never have left New York if Sam Drury, an Astoria, Long Island, receiver of stolen goods, had not taken umbrage at the role Bill played in what the Police Gazette called the Pandora's Box Case.* It seems that Drury had attempted to eliminate a lawyer of his acquaintance by sending him a package designed to explode when unwrapped. Warburton, together with a man named William (One Eyed) Thompson, had co-operated with the police to dupe Drury into an admission of guilt—

* Bristol Bill was long a favorite of the National Police Gazette, the nation's rowdiest and most popular scandal sheet. More useful, if less entertaining, sources for this study are the contemporary issues of the St. Johnsbury Caledonian and the Danville North Star. However, press coverage of the Groton Bank naturally suffered from the competition of the simultaneous trial, one of the juiciest of the century, of Harvard's Professor Webster for the murder of his colleague Dr. Parkman. Later in the decade Warburton was the subject of a pamphlet biography (which changed its title with each edition) by a Boston reporter named George Thompson who wrote under the pen-name of Greenhorn. More recently, the late Herbert Asbury, in All Around the Town, and Jack Dunne, in a factual article in the St. Johnsbury Caledonian-Record, have given Bill some richly deserved attention.
at a "rat council" as the Gazette dubbed the thieves' conference overheard by police. In retaliation Drury had quickly succeeded in pulling strings to have Thompson jailed; Warburton fled from his wrath—and ended up in remote Groton, Vermont.

Bill was not an insensitive man, and surely must have felt from the beginning that things were not going as they should in Vermont. It became apparent that Low, a failure as a storekeeper, was not cut out to be a counterfeiter either: the printing equipment he had assembled in Groton proved on inspection to be neither adequate nor complete. So while Meadows and Peter Paul, one of the local hirelings, attempted to tinker the old machinery into shape, and while Low hustled off to Boston for spare parts, Bill fumed and observed darkly that he had not ventured into this nowhere just to putter. He still intended, he told someone, to do a job "in great style." Therefore he must have thought his luck had turned when he heard that the State bank commissioners were expected in St. Johnsbury, to collect deposits on shares of the soon-to-open Passumpsic Bank. Here was the job to fill his time and his pocketbook. With a kit of burglar's tools under arm, and with Peg and English Jim in tow, off he went to cash in at last.

He was encouraged further when he arrived at St. Johnsbury's friendly Hull Curtis Hotel. No need to be self-effacing here: the place was teeming with officials and townspeople, relaxing in an atmosphere of ready-made money, and plenty of it. With practiced technique he established Peg in the hotel parlor and, while she entranced the company with song, accompanying herself on the piano, he and Jim went upstairs to rifle the suitcase of the commissioner most likely to have the deposits in his safekeeping. It contained old clothes. With a returning sense of frustration, they searched for the room that held the money—and discovered that it was being watched round the clock by two armed guards. Bill packed up his tools, fetched Peg from the piano, and the trio went back to Groton.

This was the first of the letdowns that Warburton was to suffer during his six years in Vermont. During the next six weeks and in a growing state of disillusionment, he took one or another of his colleagues on visits to banks in Irasburg, Standstead—over the border in Quebec—Chelsea, Montpelier and Danville. All proved to have night watchmen, or at least employees who slept in. At Wells River they did manage to loosen the bank's outside shutters before they were obliged to depart empty-handed. It was more than discouraging, it was unfair. Despite energy, willing help and skills learned as a big-time operator, he was stymied at every turn by a fate as cranky as the Green Mountain countryside.

Indeed, by early March the burglary business in Vermont had proved so unprofitable, and the counterfeiting...
under Low's inept direction so unlikely to accelerate to even a snail's pace, that the partners in crime had had it: English Jim returned to the city, taking with him, Bill was to complain afterwards, his (Bill's) own set of handcrafted skeleton keys. Warburton, by now a very unhappy man, was planning to do exactly the same thing.

But Bill was late. At 10 o'clock the night of March 12 a posse of White River officers knocked at the door of the house where he and Peg were staying and placed the two under arrest. Bill went quietly, but told all concerned that had Green been present the outcome would have been different—a statement which in the light of events, was probably entirely true. Meadows, Mrs. Meadows and the three local confederates—McLean Marshall, Paul and Low—were picked up the same night, together with variously hidden loot that included 115 steel dies valued at more than $1000, a transfer press (for making copper plates from the dies), a printing press, and a single bank note from which the denominations had been chemically removed. Among the burglar's tools was a newly and ingeniously conceived machine to cut a hole in the iron safe door of any bank around. This cutter was to arouse considerable interest at the trial.

The trials of Bristol Bill—for there were actually three of them, not including preliminary hearings—proved not only to be the most dramatic in Caledonia County annals, but were also among the longest. The first hearing was held in Groton. Then the prisoners were moved to Danville, the county seat, where the grand jury indicted Low, Marshall, Meadows and Warburton—the two women were dismissed and Peter Paul had turned state's evidence. Among the burglar's tools was a newly and ingeniously conceived machine to cut a hole in the iron safe door of any bank around. This cutter was to arouse considerable interest at the trial.

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But Warburton's pastimes during his enforced lay-over in Danville were not wholly literary. Ever the professional, he fashioned a cell-door key from an old stovepipe; then, when he was ready to make the break, let fellow-prisoner McLean Marshall in on his scheme. But Marshall feigned a crippling attack of indigestion on the night of the escape, and the next day had a chat with the state's attorney. In addition to telling about Bill's key, he arranged to join Paul in testifying for the prosecution.

Thus when the first trial finally got under way, at 8:30 on the morning of June 12, just two prisoners came in: with Low dead and Paul and Marshall turning state's evidence, only Bill and Christian Meadows were left to face the charges. The courtroom, in the best tradition of tribunal drama, was packed and stifling. Mrs. Meadows, modest and unassuming, and with her babe in arms, sat near her husband, who is reported as "looking scared of his own shadow." Thirty-five-year-old Superior Court Judge Luke Poland presided. William Farrar of Boston, with two other lawyers, represented the defendants; bespectacled Bliss Davis, a local man with a reputation as a no-holds-barred advocate, headed the prosecution staff.

Counsel for Meadows moved straightway that the case be continued to the next session of court, since needed witnesses were not then available. Counsel for Warburton also moved to continue the case on the grounds that the number of counts in the indictment against him was not justified by the evidence produced at the March hearing. Both motions were denied.

The respondents then being arraigned in due form, the clerk read the indictment: possessing plates and dies for the purpose of counterfeiting bank bills on certain banks. A wan Christian Meadows pleaded not guilty. Bill Warburton, the picture of health and confidence, pleaded not guilty in that name, "and as to the other name"—he had also been indicted under the alias of William Darlington—"I know nothing about it."

The jury was empaneled, David made his opening state-
"Vermont is a poor place for deceivers and imposters to find favor when their true characters are once known. This open-heartedness may indeed encourage the approaches of villains, who may for a while conceal their purposes, and be successful. But when once understood, and they will sooner or later come in contact with such as are not slow to understand, retributive justice will follow them with no doubtful pace."

from the Rev. Hosea Beckley's HISTORY OF VERMONT; with Descriptions, Physical and Topographical
Brattleboro, 1846

ment, and called Peter Paul as his first witness against Meadows. Paul told how Low had approached him early in 1849 about his counterfeiting scheme, how Low had lined up the necessary equipment and had found a mysterious "Mr. M." to work it. With such a setup, Low vowed, they would all make their fortunes.

After a witness had told how engraving tools had been found in March in the house Meadows occupied, William Wilson was called to the stand. Wilson was the Boston printer and engraver from whom Meadows had stolen the dies in 1849. He described how he secured the backing of the New England Association for the Detection of Counterfeiters, then spent a year in fruitless search until a sister-in-law of Meadows told him she thought the engraver lived at the end of some railway line up north. Inquiries in White River led him to Groton, he said.

During the cross examination of Wilson occurred the trial's only note of recorded humor. Wilson and Farrar were accusing one another of a friendship with the unsavory One Eyed Thompson when the judge remarked, "very happily" as one reporter puts it, "The gentlemen had better not expose themselves too much here."

Other witnesses told of the mutilated bank note, obviously in the process of alteration, found between the leaves of Low's diary.

There was a stir in the courtroom when McLean Marshall took the stand, for it was known that he, far more than Paul, had been in the inner circle of the confederates. Warburton, who had been busily taking notes on the testimony up to this point, for the first time looked a little less than his confident self. A motion to exclude Marshall from giving evidence being denied, the erstwhile tavernkeeper-blacksmith proceeded to unfold the whole story: the ring had been organized by Low; Warburton and English Jim Green had been hired to pass the notes and together with Meadows and Low, were to share in the profits. When the counterfeiting scheme bogged down and the jimmines and safe-cracking tools arrived in Groton, it was arranged that, as a stop-gap, they all became partners in Warburton's business (i.e., burglary) too. $1000 in genuine bills of small denomination—the counterfeiters' raw material—had been collected, Marshall said, but Low's sister-in-law had intercepted them.

The defense lawyers were on their feet continually to object to such damaging testimony, but the government men were equally determined, and bit by bit all loop-holes were plugged. Finally several witnesses testified that they had seen Warburton, Meadows, Low and the others together at various times. The government rested.

The only witnesses for the defense were three of the White River posse who testified that Warburton and Peg O'Connor had indeed been ready to leave town at the time of the arrest. Neither Bill nor Meadows took the stand.

The arguments of counsel—there were four of them—were long and spirited, according to reports, but were not reported in detail by the local press. "Suffice it to say," one reporter has written annoyingly, "that they were very able and ingenious on both sides." We know now that argument by Davis, "a very sarcastic man" one contemporary described him, must have been particularly telling. During the lawyers' speeches, tears would sometimes come to the eyes of Mrs. Meadows, whose expression, the Caledonian thought, "pleads harder and stronger for her husband's acquittal than evidence or counsel can do."

Judge Poland then committed the case to the jury in a charge that was "fair, impartial and able." The jury was out all night and part of the following morning, finally bringing in a verdict of guilty against both defendants.

Warburton was immediately arraigned again on four burglary counts in connection with his attempted hold-ups. A parade of witnesses identified him with the tools, especially with the giant cutter which Oscar C. Hale, cashier of the Bank of Newbury, now demonstrated. He showed how the point could be driven into the keyhole or
hinges of an iron vault door; then, using this as a pivot, how a hole four inches in diameter could be cut. “I don’t think there is a bank door in the state that could stand up against it,” he declared with relish.

But Marshall was again the chief witness and his testimony was again damaging; he told how the would-be burglars had successively visited many of the banks in that area, and for what purpose. The second trial lasted a day and a half, and Wahrbornton was found guilty on three of the four counts.

At the Danville trials the foreigners were taken to lunch at the nearby hotel, where their appearances were a treat for many who had not been able to get into the courtroom. Even today one Danville resident remembers her mother telling her that Bristol Bill appeared a “rough-looking man” and Meadows “very much of a gentleman.”

Writing of Bill after many years, one onlooker could “seem to hear now, after the lapse of half a century, the rattling of the chains as he shuffled across Danville Green.”

But three days later, when the men came back for sentencing, the lucky ones who got in witnessed the most exciting scene of all. The prisoners entered the courtroom, after being given the usual routine search; and the judge asked if they had anything to say. Bristol Bill certainly had. And if Sheriff Evans would remove his handcuffs, he would consult his notes.

Then he reviewed the history of the trials. Marshall, he said, was an acknowledged perjurer and should never have been allowed to testify. Shaking his finger at Davis, Bill added, “Your pupil, Mr. State’s Attorney, made an appearance on the witness stand creditable to the instructions of his master.” Moreover, Wahrbornton went on, the grounds for including him in the counterfeiting indictment were wholly insufficient. In any case the entire output of the Groton Bank was a single bill from which the figures had been removed; no actual counterfeiting had taken place. The trials, he said, were an outrage on judicial procedure. It was generally agreed that Bill’s presentation was a masterly one.

Judge Poland heard him out, then sentenced each of the two men to ten years at hard labor in the state prison at Windsor.

Meadows appeared to be stricken by the sentence, and his wife comforted him. State’s Attorney Davis crossed to Meadows and leaned down to speak to him.

Suddenly a knife appeared in the hands of Warburton. Yelling “Take that!” he plunged it, from the right and rear, into the neck of the prosecutor. Davis staggered by the blow, fell to the floor. He thought at first that the stem of his glasses had become embedded in his neck but when he realized what had happened, he was heard to murmur “I am killed.”

The courtroom sat paralyzed for a moment as the lawyer, struggling on the floor, attempted to pull the knife out. Then Constable Coffin did it for him. Someone ran up to the Judge, crying “Davis is murdered.” Meadows moved as far from the scene of violence as his leg irons would permit. Bristol Bill stood unmoved while the court officers secured him, and Farrar slipped the handcuffs back on his wrists.

“It looks like you’ve killed Davis,” the lawyer said. Bill’s reply was in character:

“If I could do the same for Marshall, I’d die happy.”

His feelings on this occasion echoed those of another British ruffian with a grievance more than 100 years before. Joseph Blake—or Blueskin, as he was called—was a protege of Jonathan Wild, an icy-hearted and efficient criminal operator who curried favor with the law by turning in those members of his organization whose performance did not come up to his standard. So when Blueskin quarreled with this formidable figure, Wild promptly had him committed to Newgate. On the way to his cell, Blueskin beckoned to Wild as though to speak with him, then cut his throat—from ear to ear” the account specifies—with a penknife. Although the nature of Davis’s wound was different (the knife penetrated to the base of the skull but missed the large veins), the results were similar and equally surprising: both men lived. Wild to end his days fittingly on a Tyburn gallows, the Vermont lawyer to survive to the age of 83.

There was speculation as to where Bill had secured the weapon, a case knife, and how he had succeeded in getting it into the courtroom. It appeared that he had smuggled it from the hotel dining table, had broken off the handle and hidden the blade in a handkerchief which he held in his hand when searched.

Thus, on a note of violence, an end was written to the brief history of the Groton Bank. But the actors in the drama had the rest of their lives to lead, and if none enjoyed such a long old age as did Bliss Davis—at one point surely the worst of actuarial risks—at least their later years were not uneventful.

For William Wilson, the persistent printer, everything turned out pretty well. After safely returning his dies to Boston, he billed the New England Association for the Detection of Counterfeiters for $1113.77 to cover his services and expenses—and collected.

Ten years after the Danville trials, Luke Poland was named Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court. From this important seat he was appointed to fill an unexpired two-year term in the United States Senate, and for eight more years he served in the House of Representatives. During his decade in Washington Poland was chairman of commissions that exposed the Credit Mobilier and the Ku Klux Klan. Perhaps his greatest achievement was to head the first legislative committee to undertake the task of compiling the federal laws.
A copy of this engraving for the diploma of the New Hampshire Agricultural Society, designed by a Franklin, New Hampshire, artist and engraved by Meadows while in prison, was sent to Daniel Webster because of the Webster Elm featured in the center. Webster, then Secretary of State, wrote back: "This is a true resemblance of the tree at my birthplace. Who is the engraver that has done this? We want him at the State Department to engrave some maps." On being told that the engraver was a convict, he asked "Why do you bury your best talents in your state prisons? Is Meadows an old offender?" Webster subsequently wrote Vermont's Governor Charles Williams in Meadows' behalf, but had died by the time the engraver was granted a pardon.

Dartmouth College Library

Christian Meadows had not long occupied his cell in Windsor before efforts were under way to get him a pardon. At the request of the New Hampshire Agricultural Society he engraved a diploma which included the old elm on the Daniel Webster homestead. When the aging New Hampshire statesman saw it, and was informed that its artist-craftsman was in Vermont's state penitentiary, he was moved to ask, "Why do you bury your best talents in your state prisons?" and he assured one of those working for Meadows's release that employment could be found for the engraver in Washington at the Smithsonian Institution, or at the State, War or Navy departments.

But Webster had died when Governor Erastus Fairbanks, on July 4, 1853, not only granted a pardon but contributed $100 toward the purchase price of a house in Windsor for the engraver. There according to a correspondent writing in 1880, Meadows lived "a life of substantial reform" and "died some years ago." Several of Meadows engravings are still in existence, notably a handsome one of the Dartmouth College campus.

Bristol Bill, hustled off to Windsor in "a very complete set of irons," had of course a third trial to face as a result of his attack on Davis. This he succeeded in postponing, to allow the state legislature to pass on the question of change of venue in such cases. Therefore when Stephen Royce became governor in 1854, Warburton was still at Windsor and still untried for the attack on Davis.

In May of 1855, Governor Royce wrote Bliss Davis his estimate of Warburton's character quoted above—that Bill was a passionate man of strong convictions—and went on to say that "when such a spirit is to be dealt with in the way of punishment, it is especially important that he should know his punishment to be just, instead of believing that he is made to suffer under oppression." The Governor pointed out that Warburton had already served a longer portion of his sentence than was usual, and told Davis he was inclined to do one of two things: either release him outright, under condition that he leave the state for good, or have him up for trial for assault on Davis.
The former state's attorney subsequently visited Bill at Windsor, and must have told him that a factor in the case was Mrs. Davis's fear for her husband's life if Warburton were to be released. The next day Bill, a man as we know given to correspondence, wrote to Mrs. Davis. The letter is now preserved in the Fairbanks Museum in St. Johnsbury and could well serve as a model of how to say you're sorry (five years later) to the wife of a man you've knifed in the neck.

"Much respected lady," he wrote, "at the friendly interview which took place between me and Mr. Davis yesterday, I was much grieved to hear that I had been the cause of so much grief and anguish to you and your dear children. And feeling at the present much pain at the thought, I felt constrained to address you on the present occasion, to ease your mind and free it from all suspicion of you and yours ever receiving further injury from me.

"Madam, you may perhaps think, as I fear many others do in this neighborhood who do not know me, only by report, that a being who could be guilty of such an act as I have now to answer for, must be totally lost to every finer feeling that belongs to man. But, madam, such an opinion is erroneous. Wherever I am known (Danville excepted) I have ever been looked upon as a man of good disposition, kind and obliging to all—so much so that even my enemies (or rather persons whose opinions were opposed to mine) loved me. And worthy lady, with regard to women and children, my kindly disposition has often carried me beyond my means, and would do so again if I were at liberty." Warburton added that he hoped Mrs. Davis would accept "the enclosed bauble, not for its worth, but as a token of my friendly feelings towards you."

Mrs. Davis wrote back that she was "somewhat surprised that a man who came so very near depriving me of a beloved husband and my children of their father should claim so tender a regard for women and children." She acknowledged the "token of peace" and sent him in return a Bible. "You will oblige me by giving it a daily perusal and by never parting with it." She subscribed her letter "respectfully yours," then, apparently feeling that this was a less than appropriate sentiment, scratched it out and substituted "yours sincerely."

We will never know, unfortunately, what was Bristol Bill's idea of an acceptable bauble. Nor will we know whether Mrs. Davis was finally persuaded of Bill's kindly nature. On June 6, 1856, Warburton underwent his third trial and was pronounced guilty once again. When the judge asked if he had anything to say, Bill did something he had rarely done before: he remained silent. He was sentenced to seven years at hard labor and fined $1 and costs of $51.63.

Four days later he had his pardon and was gone. Apparently the governor had been given satisfactory assurance that Vermont would see no more of Bill; Bill had long been on record as wanting to see no more of Vermont. At any rate, he dropped from sight. New York police records did not again mention him, and he was replaced in the pages of the Police Gazette by younger, more successful operators.

But Groton's bank, which never amounted to much, and Bristol Bill Warburton, whose visit to the state was a downright failure, have not yet been forgotten in Danville.

Mystery Picture

The first correct identification of these piscatorial church weathervanes, all located north and east of Montpelier, postmarked after midnight of November 18th, will receive one of our special prizes. Please use postal cards.

The Autumn issue Mystery Picture, a highway view on Rte. 105 between Island Pond and Bloomfield, was first correctly identified by Dr. & Mrs. William L. West of Ansonia, Conn.

Photos by Vermont Development Department.
Barber John Rogers of Wilmington is the man to see a need and fill it. In his part of southern Vermont there are a number of communities too small to sustain a barber shop. Yet the male population feeling the need had to travel ten to twenty miles or more just to get a trim.

With a 15-foot trailer fitted out as a complete barber shop and waiting room, Rogers requires only a parking area and an electric outlet to be in business. He starts the week with two days at Wilmington, and then follows the hirsute circuit with a day each spent at Jacksonville, Jamaica, Newfane and Townshend.

Rogers has been a barber for the past eight years, and he knows of one other traveling barber shop. It plies the high and the low roads of rural Scotland.

Photographs by John H. Harris

Clip Joint on Wheels, OR, Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow
On Recent Books

by SAMUEL R. OGDEN

The books before me, without too much forcing, fall into nine categories, of which the first, belles-lettres, embraces two books. Included here is a fine high-spirited bit of spoofing called "Books and Bedlam" written by the lazy (he says so) "genial prop." of the Vermont Book shop in Middlebury, Dike Blair. This is more fun for a dollar than you are apt to find elsewhere, so buy it and take the advice which the genial prop. gives on page nine, which is to visit his elegant emporium and buy the handsome Treasures from Vermont Life.

Seriously included in this category is Elizabeth Isaacs' fine essay on Robert Frost called An Introduction to Robert Frost. This is a three part study of the Poet; of his Philosophy and Practice; and of his Poems. Since having reviewed In the Clearing in this column last winter, I have become more and more involved with Robert Frost's poetry, and for me this intuitive and scholarly and succinct study comes as a delight and a blessing. My only criticism is that Miss Isaacs has not done enough of that which she is so magnificently qualified to do. Has Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening puzzled you? It seems trite, yet the heart is moved. How can this be? This apparent paradox is so beautifully resolved by Miss Isaacs that I want more.

There are two very fine items in the pigeon-hole reserved for nature books: Land Alive by a Vermonter (and a Vermont Life author) and The Valley by a pair of New Hampshireites. Each author has selected a limited area of nature's domain and applying their professional skills as naturalists to the observation of what goes on in these places, they uncover a world more varied and exciting and populous than any layman ever dreamed of. Ronald N. Rood writes of the 150 acres of his farm in Lincoln, and his observations which are directed to young people (his own young 'uns are his collaborators), are keyed to the swinging of the earth around the sun.

The Milnes, Lorus and Margery, have selected a larger field, that of the valley of the Oyster River which flows not far from their domain at the University of New Hampshire. Here the subject matter, much of which has profound and philosophical implications, will appeal to those thoughtful conservationists who find cause for concern in man's determination to subdue nature.

There are five books concerned with history of which March to Saratoga by Harrison Bird is a sequel of sorts to his Navy in the Mountains, reviewed here last winter. It is a fascinating book, though like its predecessor it is marred by a muddy style and by conjectural interpolations which while they may make for lively reading, tend to confuse the reader.

In Thomas Jefferson, Apostle of Liberty, by Marguerite Eyer Wilbur, the "I was there" technique of historical narrative is elevated to its apogee, and I must confess I neither like it nor approve of it. For those who can take this sort of thing and who admire "rich and beautiful prose" this book will prove a treasure trove.

Three Vermont books remain: Vermont Indians by Thomas E. Daniels, whose notes and studies of the Indians in Vermont have been posthumously published by his wife. As far as I know this brief study is the only thing of its kind in print, and it should prove to be invaluable to all those who are interested in the Vermont Indian story. The history of Fanny Allen, whose father, the old patriot and atheist Ethan Allen, died when she was only four, is told by Eva K. Betz in Fanny Allen, Green Mountain Rebel. Here young readers will discover how this charming and intelligent society girl landed in a convent in Montreal, thus causing her old man to turn over in his grave. Finally, a town history, and a darn good one. Wheelock's early fortunes were deeply involved with those of Dartmouth College and vice-versa. Thus, Eleanor Jones Hutchinson had a good bit more to work with than historians of small Vermont towns ordinarily have, and she makes the most of it. History of the Town of Wheelock is the best small town history that I am acquainted with.

There are some mighty fine items amongst the five books that deal with antiquities. Most beautiful, and more a picture book than anything else in spite of the charming introductory essay, is Samuel Chamberlain's The New England Image. The handsomest court house in New England, the one in Newfane, is present, but my favorite church, the one in Charlotte, is missing. But Vermont's antiquities cannot measure up to our five sister states', so this shortage of Vermont material is to be expected.

The shortage of Vermont material in Chamberlain's book is more than made up for in Herbert Wheaton Congdon's Early American Homes for Today. All of this outstandingly beautiful book, including design and typography, was made in Japan, and what a great piece of work it is. Here are over one hundred fine architectural photographs, all of them of Vermont houses. There is a good bit of talk that goes along with the pictures, some of which I can agree with and some I cannot. My favorite chapter is the last one entitled "Good Wood to Burn," which has nothing at all to do with fixing over old houses.

Mary Earle Gould's Early American Wooden Ware is the sole reference work of its kind, and is thus important. But it is not well written and it is filled with
misinformation. Nevertheless, it is an extremely interesting book whose scope actually includes much more than wooden ware.

For epitaph fans Thomas C. Mann and Janet Greene (another Vermont Life author) have come up with Over Their Dead Bodies, which all will admit is a bully title. Epitaphs leave me a bit cold, but, as this slight volume testifies, there is a deal of human interest and history to be wrung from them. My favorite is that of Brigham Young which is sketched on page 82, in case you are interested.

Finally, a paper bound on Rare Old Covered Bridges of Windsor County by Richard Sanders Allen. Covered bridge buffs will find this a necessary addition to their collection of information, compiled by "the world's number one covered bridge authority!"

Of the three books in the department of nostalgia, one is of the vintage 1947, one of 1913 and one of 1900. Standing in the middle is the one I liked best, Gladys Hasty Carroll's Only Fifty Years Ago. The setting is rural Maine, not far from the coast and not far from the New Hampshire border, and the scene is Mrs. Carroll's ancestral home. The narrative takes one through the months of the year, and events are seen through the eyes of Marcy, youngest granddaughter of the widower George, under whose roof these delightful people are gathered. Among them are Frankie and Vinnie, and with what pleasure does one compare them with their counterparts in Salinger's "Frannie and Zooie." One is inevitably reminded of Sarah Orne Jewett whose books are to be found on the Hasty family bookshelves, and are unread by George, for "George wastes neither time nor eyesight on what a woman made up out of her own head."

This remark might serve as criticism for A Home of Our Own by Gladys Ogden Dimock, except that one is well rewarded by reading two or three chapters starting with "Let the Horse Bother." Mrs. Dimock reveals a fine gift for character delineation and her picture of the blacksmith, Lew, is really great stuff. I wish there was more of it and fewer descriptions of self-induced hardships.

Nostalgia U.S.A., by ex-New York Timesman R. L. Duffus takes us back to his boyhood days in Williamstown and Waterbury. These reminiscences are clearly recalled and movingly set down. Everyone is so scared nowadays of succumbing to that which Walter Pater called the "fallacy of the enchanted distance," that they are unwilling to admit there is anything wrong in Dr. Pangloss' best of all possible worlds. But Duffus has doubts; he says, "People don't question cosmic drives, they merely say O my to them and sometimes describe them as progress."

There remain two excellent how-to-do-it books, one a brief but meaty bit of Vermontiana called Easy Does It Furniture Restoration (The Vermont Way), by William Farwell of Rutland. The other, a really nifty manual of hand bookbinding by Aldren A. Watson of Putney, is beautifully illustrated by the author.

Besides these there is a darn good kids' book. The Oom-pah Horn by Hildreth Wriston tells of a youthful stowaway who gets to go to a wonderful band concert; Common Sense Credit by Charles Morrow Wilson of Putney, the story of credit unions in the United States, is much more interesting than one might expect, and it is told in typical "Readers Digest" style.

Finally there are three cookbooks which I will not attempt to evaluate here. These are The Winter Kitchen by Louise Andrews Kent and Elizabeth Kent Gay of Calais (also Vermont Life authors); Yankee Hill Country Cooking by Beatrice Vaughn of East Thetford and The Vermont Village Cook Book put out by Alpha Press, Landgrove. I can only say now that each is very much worthwhile having, and that Winter Kitchen is much more than a book of recipes. I'm afraid I'm rubbing the shine off "delightful" and "charming," but I can think of no better words to describe the essays which accompany the recipes in the latter book. Oh yes, the Landgrove book is full of nice drawings, and the Yankee book full of wonderful recipes which take me back to my boyhood days on a Pennsylvania farm.
Mrs. Appleyard sometimes disciplines herself by looking over a case full of frozen dinners, thus making herself happy about the humble meal she will have later—the carrot juice, the toasted sandwich of real cheese and real bread, the freshly cut grapefruit. She feels no yearning for the sea scallops (née skate), the seven crinkles of fried potato, the little hollow full of very green peas. How, she wonders, do they measure the peas? By the teaspoonful? Or do they count them?

These dinners do not all look the same: you can easily tell the turkey from the roast beef at a glance. Of course they all taste alike, so it does not matter which you buy. However, there is one plat du jour the frozen-computer chefs have not mastered—the New England boiled dinner. You may not like boiled dinner—lots of people don’t—but you are never going to confuse it with fried chicken or Salisbury steak. Would you like something not synthetic for a change? Then try

**BOILED DINNER** (for 12)

- 6 pounds corned beef (brisket)
- 2 pounds lean salt pork
- 12 small beets, not peeled, cooked separately
- 12 whole carrots, scraped
- 6 small turnips, quartered
- 3 small white cabbages, quartered
- 6 medium onions, peeled and halved
- 12 potatoes, peeled.

No seasonings are needed except a little black pepper from the grinder if you like.

The corned beef is the kind that looks brown, not red, when it is cooked. The pork should have plenty of pinkish streaks of lean in it. Put both into a kettle large enough to hold them and the vegetables, which will be added later. Cover the meat with cold water. It must simmer, not boil. When it starts to bubble, reduce the heat. Skim the broth carefully for the first 10 minutes, then cover the kettle and let it simmer 'til the meat is tender—about three hours. During the last hour add the carrots and turnips. Cook the beets separately.

Remove meat from the broth and set it aside in a warm place. Bring broth to the boil and add onions, quarters of cabbage and potatoes. Cook until potatoes are done—about 40 minutes. Return meat to the broth and simmer 'til it is well heated. Slip beets out of their skins. Have your biggest platter hot. Mrs. Appleyard likes a blue and white one but any cheerful color will do. Place the brisket in the middle. Slice the salt pork and arrange it around the meat. Make small heaps of vegetables, each heap containing cabbage, carrot, onion, turnip, potato and a beet, and circle the platter with them.

Of course if the vegetables all come from your own garden you feel unbearably complacent as you carry in the platter. However, an excellent result can be obtained from vegetables you buy. If no young beets are available canned ones will do. Mrs. Appleyard has heard it rumored that in New Hampshire the beets are sometimes cooked right in with the other vegetables and that in Massachusetts, her native state, parsnips are sometimes included. She does not say what she thinks about these practices.

**RED FLANNEL HASH**

This follows a boiled dinner as a rainbow follows a thunder shower. You may have to cook extra potatoes and beets for it. You need twice as much potato as meat and enough beets to give the hash a good red color. Let's assume you have two cups of corned beet left.

- 2 cups of corned beef
- 2 cups of vegetables from boiled dinner
- 4 cups cooked potatoes
- 4 small cooked beets
- ¼ lb. beef suet
- Broth from boiled dinner

Do not grind vegetables or meat. Chop them in a large wooden bowl. Chop beef first, rather fine. Chop in vegetables, including beets. Chop potatoes in last, not too fine.

Cut suet in small cubes. Try it out in a large iron frying pan until you have about ¼ inch of fat and the suet cubes are golden brown. Skim them out, drain them on brown paper. Put in the hash, toss it in the fat for a minute. Moisten with the broth. Half a cup should be enough. Don't make it too wet. Smooth the hash gently. Cook it over very low heat until it starts to brown around the edge of the pan. It will then be brown on the bottom. This may take half an hour or a little more. Fold it like an omelet and slide it onto a hot platter. Serve it garnished with the beef cracklings and fresh parsley.

Mrs. Appleyard promises you that, like the boiled dinner, this is never synthetic.
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WINTER TIPS—In spite of today’s fine highway maintenance, many still are wary of winter driving in the country. Others could stand a little more caution. To show that it isn’t so bad the Postboy presents this advice:

Getting Ready: Temperatures may dip to minus 30, so your car must be prepared. Antifreeze diluted to zero protection will not do. Equally important is very light oils in transmission and engine. In extreme cold standard oils flow like molasses and the engine won’t turn.

Equipment: Snow tires are almost a must, although cars with a high percentage of weight over the drive wheels (i.e. Saab, Volkswagen, Corvair, etc.) get by. All cars should carry tire chains and owners know how to use them. Carry a small snow shovel in the car. A bag of sand over the drive wheels will improve traction. A good windshield washer charged with antifreeze often is very useful.

Starting: Frost can hamper starting, so keep the car under cover if you can. The ignition should be well tuned and the battery strong. Start the motor with the clutch (if any) depressed, lights off. Warm motor slowly.

Driving: Some roads may be slippery and snow-covered. Slower than usual curve speed is essential, and you must slow well ahead of a stop by pumping the brake pedal gently. The idea is to maintain tire-road adhesion always.

If the back end starts to skid sideways don’t jam on the brakes. Turn the front end gently in the same direction the back is sliding until the car is running straight again. Going up a slippery hill remember to keep momentum and a steady speed. Never apply so much power your wheels begin to spin. If an object looms and you can’t stop, don’t freeze to the wheel and brake pedal. Look for a nice, soft snowbank and ease into it. Chances are you will stop without damage.

Now You’re Stuck: If you’re way off the road or below it, hike for help. If it doesn’t look hopeless apply your shovel until the snow beneath, supporting the car with the wheels dangling, lets down. If you can, back out, or, if you have front-wheel drive, pull out frontward. Dig your car a path so you can get some momentum. Strew some of your sand ballast in front of the drive wheels. If this still is no good, put on the chains.

Rocking: This valued old technique is almost a lost art in these days of automatic transmissions. Your car should have a stick or arm shift with low and reverse positions opposite. Put the car in low and ease forward as far as possible until the wheels spin. Then do the same in reverse. Now shift back and forth faster to catch the momentum of the car rocking in its pit. As the arc gets longer and longer, rock up out of the hole and grind forward (or backward) toward freedom. Friends outside can help with muscle power, but don’t run them down. You may need their help later.

Snow Conditions: Deep snow when dry isn’t as bad as it looks, unless drifted hard. Then it can stop you like a brick wall. Wet snow and slush is the most dangerous, especially for light cars. It offers even less traction than dry ice. If you encounter wet ice, sit tight until a sand truck or a Spring thaw appears.

Snow Storms: Sometimes the headlights’ low beam works better than the high. If the snow is especially blinding and you cannot stop there, try guiding yourself mainly by watching the edge of the road rather than the white cloud ahead. But when conditions are really bad, stop, but beware of carbon monoxide fumes in a halted car. Better yet, if it looks bad, stay home.

Special Notes: Don’t let a lot of snow get inside your car. When it melts it will complicate window fogging. Try to avoid traffic peaks. At ski areas plan to leave a half hour before or after the lifts close. Never drive in the winter without heavy clothing in the car. If you get stuck and have to abandon the car’s warmth for a blizzard, low shoes, bare hands and shirtsleeves will not be enough.

Fancy Work: Vermont’s first figure skating school, run for the University of Vermont by Bob Mesterton, opened its second season earlier this month. Classes are held a weekday evening and Saturday mornings for area people at the University’s big ice arena.

Where did the promotion of Winter sports start in this country? You might guess Lake Placid or Woodstock, Vermont, but our entry is Wilmington. A vintage publicity pamphlet, Wilmington, Vermont, Green Mountain Gateway, containing the early ski photo at left, made its prophetic appearance in this now bustling ski town in 1923.
At Christmas I no more desire a rose
Than wish a snow in May’s new-fangled mirth.

LOVE’S LABOUR’S LOST