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Cover by Walter J. Heffron
The Postboy admits having nostalgic feelings when he recalls the good old days when they batted out flys on the village green and had foot races along the dusty street. He recalls the joy of walking in the road with little danger of interruption and that not a menacing one.

Well, we just brought this up so that any of our congregation who have had such feelings welling up within them, will understand that most of the changes they have noted are due to an inexorable law of nature and not to blind avarice on the part of the hardy perennial population, which must, after all, make a living somehow. After all, they have loved the country well enough not to have been willing to leave it. Yes, and you'll still find some very quiet neighborhoods along those roads we mentioned in our last quarter's discourse, in Vermont Life.

And speaking of firsts, of which Vermont seems to have had more than its share, the Postboy has been wondering about a very early broadcasting system which antedates radio by many years. It happened in the Postboy's own village and it came about in this manner.

Years ago a dozen or so houses in the village were hooked together by a belt-line telegraph. In each family one or more members learned the Morse code and could thus communicate with the neighbors. In fact the telegraph alphabet was so well known that a favorite sport was standing around in the store of the Postboy's father, which was the Western Union office, and listening to the messages that came in.

Just to show how practical it was, the Postboy's mother knew only a few Morse letters. She knew the store's call letters, four dots for "b" and a dot space two dots for "r." When she was especially in need of assistance, say being scared by a tramp, or when dinner was getting cold, she used the other three letters she knew: f and l and y. FLY would usually bring results.

In time progress hit the town, following the idea suggested in the opening paragraphs, and telephones replaced the telegraph instruments. Since there was little to learn about operating them more people came on and, somehow, New Fowler rigged up the whole circuit so that on some occasions all the subscribers were on at once. That would be the night a concert was advertised. On that night some of the church choir would gather at the pianist's house and with the mouthpiece near them they would render things. Often Nat Canfield, down the valley a mile or more would join in with his cornet and maybe another choir member, from the other end of the village, would join too. Sometimes somebody read something—a poem or a funny story. It might go on for an hour. The Postboy remembers his one and only offering on this broadcast. The Scotch minister of the village church had given him a toy bagpipe and when the rubber bag was inflated the air came out just as it does in a real instrument and the set of noises was equally ungodly. During a lull in a sacred concert, being free for the time of parental authority for some reason, the Postboy let loose with a blast. He was so scared that he hung up at once and did what he had been supposed to do some time before, retired to his bed chamber.

There was one other first, we are sure, on that telegraph line before it went modern. A farmer in the valley was going on that telegraph line before it went modern. A farmer in the valley was going to New York on his honeymoon. Soon after their arrival at their hotel they were somewhat taken aback to receive a congratulatory telegram from New Orvis and his wife. What set the newlyweds back was the fact that the message was in their dot and dash sparking code which the Orvises had worked out as it sped across the wintry valley.
The most photographed spot in Vermont isn’t what you might expect. It isn’t Mt. Mansfield, the marble quarries, Smuggler’s Notch, the Bennington Monument or any of the familiar landmarks which most people associate with the state. It isn’t even a place which most tourists ever see. Instead, it’s a bit of rocky hillside at the foot of Ascutney Mountain, way off the main routes on the road between Brownsville and Felchville. Yet to photographers it’s as famous as any spot in New England. The location has no significance. That isn’t why they go there. They go there because it has some things which make wonderful pictures, not one, but several, and the dyed-in-the-wool camera fan is anxious for that above all else. Probably more good pictures have come out of that one hillside than any other similar area anywhere. It’s a Mecca for photographers, especially those who make a hobby of the art of producing beautiful pictorial photographs.

Go past the place in a car and it doesn’t look very promising. It’s merely a steep pasture with some rocky crags and several clumps of white birches scattered over it, just like a thousand other hill-sides about the state. Yet this one is unique and it is these particular birches which do the trick. There are two or three picturesque clumps growing from the rocks high up the slope and there is nothing a photographer likes to include in his landscapes more than a graceful white birch. Add to that a view down into the valley where the terrain arranges itself most fortuitously into a pleasant composition, one that typifies the Vermont countryside, and you have something which photographers will travel miles and miles to take.

Not only will but have! Once the place was discovered, its fame sort of snowballed. Camera fans would see pictures which others had taken there and immediately start plotting vacation trips to get there themselves. That hillside has been visited by dozens and dozens of them and the photographs they have taken there must total in the hundreds. The spot has become so well known that when any picture of it turns up in a photographic exhibit or a camera club contest, it is immediately recognized as “That place in Vermont where you get all the good pictures.” Its fame has traveled far.

All this popularity had a modest beginning. It started back in August, 1940, when the writer staged a photographic house-party at his summer home in
Ascutney, Vermont. There were nine of us, all avid camera fans, and coming from various sections. Two were from Massachusetts, two others besides myself from Connecticut (I have to spend my winters there) and three from Claremont, N. H. Then to complete the party, we included as sort of a pictorial coach and technical adviser, the late J. Ghislain Lootens, of New York, who was about as noted, as genial, and as popular a teacher of photography as there ever was, and whose death three years ago was deeply mourned by the hundreds who knew him.

The object of this conclave was to take loads of good pictures, the sort which would pass the jury of a photographic exhibit or win a prize in a contest. It was quite a party and one we all like to remember. The people who live around there remember it, too! Small wonder, I guess, when you think of those quiet rural communities where the passing of a strange car calls for a pause. Imagine what happened when the inhabitants saw two strange cars bowling along, then saw them careen to a stop, nine men with cameras spill out and go hustling over to a ramshackle barn or a weather-beaten stump. The more urbane thought it was a five-star murder. The more suspicious thought we were Fifth Columnists. (This was 1940.) The rest thought we were just crazy. Perhaps we were but we had a grand time.

Nevertheless, the real find of the weekend was that birch hillside. The first day we wound up late in the afternoon over in back of Ascutney Mountain. The sun went down and cameras were put away, but before leaving, one of the men from Claremont pointed to a steep pasture over beyond a field. He said he had been up there and thought it had picture possibilities. Half the bunch were lazy and went back to the cars. The others went up for a quick look. They came back twenty minutes later with their eyes gleaming like a bunch of prospectors who had just struck gold. "Boy! there are a dozen marvelous shots up there," was the general opinion.

It was agreed that afternoon light would be best for photographing the location, so next day's route was laid out accordingly. About four o'clock we hauled up opposite that rocky pasture. We asked a nearby farmer if we could go through his field and climb the slope for pictures. "Sure, help yourselves," was the answer. Vermont farmers may wonder why on earth you want to take pictures of a lot of ordinary birch trees in a rocky pasture, but if you want to be that much of a "screwball" at least they don't stop you. It's only some of the city people migrating to the country who put up the "No Trespassing" signs.

So up the hill we went, loaded down with cameras, tripods and gadget bags like a miniature expedition. Once we made the top, our eyes fairly popped. It was wonderful. The ground fell away rapidly right down to the floor of the valley below, and spread out before us was a view of the country which practically spelled Vermont. There were green meadows, white farm houses and big barns, a gravel road, a winding stream and even a covered bridge. Beyond were wooded hills, ridge on ridge, fading into the afternoon light. There were three or four birch clumps along the brow of a rise and any one of them would frame a choice and different view into the valley.

We set up our cameras in a hurry and worked as fast as we could. We went crisscrossing back and forth all over the (Continued on page 60)
Pine Plantation

by DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

Vermont's First Lady of the Pen
prepares a lesson in conservation

THE other day, looking into a far corner of my files, I came upon the following article. It was written at the request of the Country Gentleman magazine twenty years ago. Naturally, since its concern is with something which grows—and rapidly—the situation has changed in the two decades since it was published. I looked from the rather tattered magazine pages in my hand out of the window at the corner of our pine plantation most visible from our house, and marvelled at the fairy-tale transformation of our Vermont hillsides, accomplished by Nature in response to that small, almost casual gesture of invitation made thirty-four years ago.

Why couldn't it, I asked myself, be interesting to other Vermonters to reprint this description of the beginning together with an account of the following installments of that white-pine serial story? Having asked myself that question, I asked it of the editor of Vermont Life.

It was sourly and with doubt that I first read what is written by professional experts in forestry. Their promises of what would follow when you planted forest-trees make me remember forebodingly the smooth promises of books about the poultry business—I do know something about raising chickens.

When we first looked into the subject of reforestation, we couldn't hear of a single ordinary, unprofessional person who had had any experience in planting forest trees, with no more resources in money or information than we had. There was no one in our situation for us to compare notes with. If we could have done this, we would have been spared much uneasiness and probably would have more acres of pines. In the hope of being useful to others, I am now setting down our personal experience for the benefit of any landowner who has—like almost every landowner in the U.S.A.—some pieces of land not fit for cultivation or pasturage, now going to waste.

My folks—those of early days—were among the settlers of Arlington, in 1764. We Canfields have, ever since, owned and paid taxes on the land they bequeathed. The several hundred acres of this land which came to me was a tract of rocky, so-called pasture land. This was so thin a layer of sandy, gravelly earth laying over the bare bones of rock, that by the middle of every August, or earlier, the scanty grass on it was brown and dry. Every thunder-storm caused ominous little eroded gullies in it. Back of this rises Red Mountain with its pleasant leafy-looking green slopes.

This look of Red Mountain was a vision to us, while we looked over our family, hard put to it for cash, had cut the best trees from it and left the poorest; then taken the next best and left the poorest; till there were left only the scrubby, unthriftly survivors of those ruthless raids. Now there had come upon that young pines must be planted just as our family, hard put to it for cash, had cut the best trees from it and left the poorest; then taken the next best and left the poorest; till there were left only the scrubby, unthriftly survivors of those ruthless raids. Now there had come upon that young pines must be planted just as

rills might well show itself not only by singing about them but by taking a little more care of them. We began to investigate the possibilities of planting pine trees. We found excellent books, reports, bulletins, pamphlets on the subject. But none which carried conviction to our total lack of experience.

Quite recently I encountered a cookbook intended for people ignorant of cooking. One of the operations described is how to break an egg, and, using the two halves of the shell, how to separate the yolk from the white. I laid down the book to laugh. It seemed comical to me that anybody should print in a book directions about how to break an egg! But then, I reflected, that had been just the sort of instruction I had been wanting about planting pine trees, and just what I had not found.

In the end we got those instructions verbally from our State Forester. We were simple-mindedly surprised to find that he was glad to visit anyone with waste land to see if it were suitable for replanting. He was pleasant, interested in our small plan, willing to tell us anything we wanted to know. But I was too shy to ask the simple questions which were in my mind. They would have sounded foolish, I thought. Still it was certainly his encouragement which started us off.

There were about twenty acres of that bare rocky so-called pasture land before the scrub woods began. We thought we would start there. The Forester had said "twelve hundred pines to the acre." We wrote to the State Forestry Department ordering ten thousand white pine trees. They cost us five dollars a thousand. Even we could manage that purchase. I had never before had anything to do with any transaction involving so many of anything. Ten thousand pine trees! How would we get them up the two miles from the railway station to our house?

The books and our mentor had said that young pines must be planted just as soon as the frost is out of the ground. In Vermont this usually means the end of April. Some weeks before this, we set out to secure the necessary help. But I tell you, I felt sheepish as we first confronted a Vermont farmer to ask him to come to help us plant pine trees. We might almost as well have said "plant mullein stalks."

We were all still close to the generations who had religiously mowed down with scythes all the baby pines continually crowding their way into upland pastures. Locally, pine boards were selling for about eighteen dollars a thousand. To
plant pines! And in land that could be used for pasturage! Some people laughed outright.

Spring came, frost went out of the ground, though stray drifts of late-fallen snow lay bleakly about. A letter from the State Forestry Department announced that the pine trees had been sent, and with them a young man from the department to stay with us one day to show how the planting was done. One day? We intended to keep him the whole time of planting if we had to chain him up.

The hour of the train arrived; we rattled down to the station over muddy, rutted roads. The forester was there, a long-legged, mackinaw-coated young man. And said he, waving his hand toward three baskets about as big as washbaskets, "There are your pines."

The next morning at seven we stood, eight able-bodied men—six neighbors, my husband and my brother; and two able-bodied women—my sister-in-law and myself—at attention before the young forester. He showed us how the trick is turned. We started in. At the end of the first hour we were perfectly willing to let that young man pass on his way. We had learned how.

This is how we did it. The ten workers were divided into two squads of four men and a woman. The men had pickmattocks. Each woman had hung by a strap around her shoulders an ordinary market basket with a handle in which, their roots imbedded in the wettest of moss, were the baby pines. The men stood in a line, six feet—two paces—from one another. The women stood in front of them about six feet away.

Each man raised his pick, drove it into the ground with one vigorous blow. This sunk it in the whole depth of the blade. Then keeping the blade buried, he dropped on one knee, one hand pressing down to the earth the handle of the pick. This pried back the blade, and opened up a slim little hole about as big... well, big enough to put the fingers of your hand in.

As he kneeled, the man held up one hand toward the woman with the basket of baby pine. She, drawing one of the tiny things from the wet moss, tossed them about six feet away.

As he dropped the roots in, holding the baby pine in one hand, he pulled his mattock blade out of the ground with the other. This let the loosened earth fall forward around the fibrous roots of the little pine. The planter then gave one stamp with his whole weight driving the earth home around the roots. That little pine was planted.

My sister-in-law and I had undertaken to carry the baskets that day and pass the little pines to the men as they held out their hands for them. We had thought it would be an easy job. But the "pinepasser" must never be out of easy throwing distance from the line of planters and he cannot successfully serve more than four planters, better three. He must keep steadily just so far ahead of them, about in the middle of the line. This is easy when planting over open bare upland. But when struggling over a tract which has been cleared of brush with much slash lying about, or where there are big rocks and swampy places, or patches of villainous old brambles, it takes activity and resolution to keep scrambling. By dark we were all ready for bed.

But proud! No name for it. For the gang had planted five thousand trees—if you could call those absurd little tufts of needles, "about as big as a toothbrush" as the local description went. We soon ran out of open land; and then part of the operation was to clear off in winter ten acres to plant in spring. The ideal land to plant is, of course, poor, abandoned but still open pasture land. Then the first cost is the only cost, and that is almost negligible, as you see. When you have brush land you must fight a little more about it.

One thing we have learned from experience. In our climate it is necessary to clear. Baby pines are amazingly tough. They will grow in dry, poor, thin soil, where you had thought nothing could live. They will do fairly well in rather any sort of shade, nor even of alders or sun there is. But they will not grow under pasture land. Then the first cost is the only cost, and that is almost negligible, as you see. When you have brush land you must fight a little more about it.

It did not seem probable that anything would come of such a tiny effort.

It continued not to seem probable for some years, for those minute specks of green seemed to stand still. A favorite local jibe was "Just look over there and see the Fishers' pine forest," pointing to a bare, dry hillside with nothing green visible on it. We grinned uneasily. On my part I felt as doubtful as anyone.

But for several years—until we went away to France for the first World War—we doggedly planted about ten more acres every year, ten thousand of those absurd little tufts of needles, "about as big as a toothbrush" as the local description went. We soon ran out of open land; and then part of the operation was to keep steadily just so far ahead of them, about in the middle of the line. This is easy when planting over open bare upland. But when struggling over a tract which has been cleared of brush with much slash lying about, or where there are big rocks and swampy places, or patches of villainous old brambles, it takes activity and resolution to keep scrambling. By dark we were all ready for bed.

But proud! No name for it. For the gang had planted five thousand trees—if you could call those absurd little springs, three inches tall, "trees." By the end of the next day our ten thousand were in the ground. Just like that! Yes, the authorities had told us it would take no longer. But I had not believed them. Was that all?

One thing we have learned from experience. In our climate it is necessary to clear. Baby pines are amazingly tough. They will grow in dry, poor, thin soil, where you had thought nothing could live. They will do fairly well in rather dry, swampy tracts if they get all the sun there is. But they will not grow under any sort of shade, nor even of alders or other brushy trash. They don't die, but they spindle slowly up, forlorn, pale, worthless, reminding me of sickly, rickety, slum children.

**CONTRAST between the land in 1914 and in 1925 is apparent from these photographs taken in the same spot nine years apart. Mrs. Fisher's daughter grows with the pines.**

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We went on, I say, clearing and planting ten acres a year, to the tune of good-natured mockery from our friends and considerable inner doubts on my part. I remember sitting down sometimes to look more closely at those insignificant little shoots, wondering if they really could live with no care taken of them. One spot in particular I often visited, a rounded hillock of pure sand and hard-head rocks, on which we had vainly tried to start young apple trees. We had made deep holes, put in plenty of manure and in dry season had faithfully carried water to the little trees. But after a brief struggle they gave up the ghost. What could those poor little puny pines do with such a situation? Look at the photograph just below and see what the poor puny things have done in fourteen years.

The wild flowers are miraculous. You should see the hundreds of pink-lady-slipppers which have moved in. Anyone can figure for himself how much more valuable such land is than the scrappy acres which lay there before. Or rather it would be hard to figure this.

Have they taken, literally, no care? Well, not quite. About six years after the pines were planted, we shared in the panic about the blister-rust calamity. We took counsel with the forestry department and learned what everybody now knows, that blister rust cannot spread without the aid of currant and gooseberry bushes. If they were eradicated the disease could be reduced to a negligible matter.

Could they be eradicated? Why not? A group of people strolling through the woods six feet apart, can spot every wild gooseberry and currant bush. A twelve-year-old child can pull them up. They are hung roots in the air on the nearest bush. There are few of the dangerous shrubs now left.

This is really all the care we have given our pines; all the care anybody can give the independent things. When I think of the million-times repeated nursing it takes to bring up a child or a colt or a chicken, the never-ending effort it is to keep the simplest house in order, the sprayings and prunings and sprayings you expand on apple trees—and at that, there’s always something the matter with them!—I go out and roam cheerfully around in these thriving, upward-thrusting, self-sufficing pine trees which ask no odds of anything or anybody. The very look of them rests me to the marrow of my bones.

They have risen around us like a wave of living green. They have not only lived, they have after the first years of meditative settling down and root growing, fairly shot up into the air, often three feet in a year.

They have done just what the forestry books and the foresters said they would. Purposely planted too close together to allow complete rounded development, they have crowded each other upward and the lower branches are—according to the recipe—dying peacably and dropping off naturally, leaving no scars or knot holes in the fine straight stems. The ground under them is thick in brown needles which soak up and hold water like a sponge. No gullies or washed-out places in this sloping land under our pines, no matter what the rainfall. The game birds and deer have flocked to their thick green shade as to a natural preserve.

Well, that’s the story, the same, only more of it. Better than any words, the photographs of our pine-trees as they now are, tells you how they have been spending their time.

The forester had told us to begin to thin when the trees were about twenty-five years old. At first, these thinnings were used for odds and ends around the place. But, before long, some of them were big enough to send to the saw-mill to make 2x4’s. And a year or so later, the sawyer telephoned that an occasional one would make a few boards. You should have seen me, racing out to welcome the first load of lumber which came from our planted trees. Yellow boards! Real joists! From those toothbrush-sized clusters of green needles.

For six or seven years now, all the yearly thinnings have been big enough to saw. The boards get wider with every year. Many of the trees now make 2x6’s. During the war-years, the thinning, like all non-war-work, was neglected. I didn’t see how we were ever going to catch up. Then our Arlington boys in uniform began to come home from India and France and the Philippines and Germany. They wanted homes, I don’t need to tell you what the price of lumber has been. In talking with some of these young neighbors of ours—boys we had known from their babyhood—we learned that these high prices had halted their sturdy Vermont plan to build most of their own homes with their own hands. There were other young neighbors who needed lumber too. We asked a few of those closers: to us, “How would you like to do some thinning in our pine plantations, and keep the trees you cut?”

No sooner said than done. That best of good bargains which suits both sides equally well. Last winter their axes rang in the slopes above our house—music, it was. Trucks came rumbling up and went away with loads of brown pine trunks.

Perhaps you can put yourself in my place and imagine what I feel when I come across a well-stacked pile of clean yellow lumber, waiting beside the freshly built foundation for a new Vermont home. Or how our pinewoods look to us, their young neighbors, when they wanted homes. We began to see something to look forward to. "What’ll they be, ten, fifteen, years from now?" I wonder fondlty, and, since I will be very ancient when I see them, then, my old age seems something to look forward to.

Epilogue

The AUTHOR inspects her grove in 1932 (left). Above she proudly shepherd's friends through a great pine forest in 1947. Both pictures were taken at the same spot.
NEW ROOTS in the Soil
by Alfred S. Campbell

Scenery, seclusion, serenity—and hard work—make up a formula for contentment for the Campbells

Jim drove up from New York City to visit us on our Vermont farm. He arrived in his shiny Packard, immaculately clad in a dark grey business suit, topcoat, conservative shoes and a new hat. He looked at our beautiful mountains and woodland without comment. He walked gingerly across our meadows, first carefully rolling up the cuffs of his trousers. He stared in unbelief, when we returned to the house, at the sight of his hostess throwing a couple of huge logs into the big chunkstove which heats our living-room. He shuddered perceptibly when we showed him those rooms which we had not yet had time to paint, paper and plaster.

When it came time for dinner, he insisted on our coming with him to a swanky inn twenty miles away instead of taking pot-luck with us. What he thought "pot-luck" would be he was too polite to state, but he probably had visions of roasted raccoon, fried deer liver or squirrel stew; all delicacies which we had described to him with enthusiasm.

As a matter of fact, had he dined at our table he would have had a better dinner than he ate at the inn. There would have been cream of mushroom soup, made from our own mushrooms. Broiled brook trout caught only that morning in our brook which wanders through the pasture. A roast young chicken, from our henhouse, with potatoes browned in the gravy. The potatoes would have been from the huge bin-full in the cellar, grown on the hillside, and the peas, lima beans and corn would have been also our own products, from the freeze locker. We would have brought up from the cellar some of Helen's dill pickles and a jar of her currant jelly. Dessert would have been simple; a homemade apple pie, served hot, with thick cream poured over it. Thick cream is no problem when you have a cow; nor is apple pie at all difficult when apples hang heavily from the boughs of your orchard.

Jim wouldn't stay overnight. Perhaps he feared that the distant roar of Terry Brook would keep him awake. When he wrote his thank-you letter, he ended with these words: "If I had my way, I would build a high fence around New England, and have a law passed forbidding anyone to enter except during the months of July and August. Why anyone wants to live in such a bleak, dismal, desolate part of the world passes my understanding!"

Jim's idea of the perfect place to live is somewhere close to the intersection of Broadway and Forty-Second Street; close to restaurants, theatres, night-clubs, hotels and cocktail bars. A place where there is a taxi waiting at every corner to take him where he wants to go, where the domestic tasks of cooking, tending the furnace, washing clothes and the like are taken care of, painlessly, by specialists. He looks with actual horror at the life we lead; a life which has been so utterly satisfying to us that nothing could induce us to return to urban existence.

It is probably a good thing that people have varying tastes, for otherwise rural areas would be overpopulated or the big cities would be far more overcrowded than at present. We live in the country by preference, just as Jim lives in the city because he likes city life.

We aren't country people by birth. Both Helen and myself were born in large cities, and grew up in them. After we were married, we lived in Philadelphia, Los Angeles and Paris. We had tried for short periods New York, Chicago, London. Everywhere we lived we had grand times, made interesting friends, enjoyed to the full our opportunities to hear concerts, attend the theatre, visit museums and go to parties. But throughout our lives there was a basic urge, an instinctive desire to get away from noise and confusion and the complexities of modern living. The answer seemed to be a home in the country.

We tried a year on an Arizona ranch, a year in the university town of Princeton, a number of years on a small suburban farm. None of those temporary homes completely satisfied us. Now we have what we have always wanted; seclusion, peace, quiet, beautiful scenery, fertile acres for our livestock and crops, the opportunity to earn our bread, quite literally, by the sweat of our brows. Most of all, we have security.

It is quite true that most people would not consider our way of life peaceful or quiet. Wildcats screech at night from the nearby mountains. We interrupt a meal (Continued on page 56)
If you are among the fortunate thousands who annually take a foliage tour in Vermont over the October holiday, you may, as you pass through Chester, come upon a delightful and colorful living picture, an animate sporting print, a corner torn from the canvas of English sporting life, usually associated in this country with the more affluent sections of Virginia, Long Island and Westchester.

This autumnal Vermont pageant is the annual October Drag Hunt and Trail Ride, the highlight of the riding season—Chester horsemen's fond and parting salute to the sport whose hoofbeats will all too soon be muffled by the winter snows.

Riding to hounds in traditional habit has become synonymous with wealth and social position, but I believe it's safe to venture that few of the names of these smartly attired horsemen will be found in the social register. Rather, they represent a cross-section of American democratic life—men and women who have a sincere love of horses and who enjoy riding through the wooded hills and the open valleys of the Vermont countryside.

To clarify the point, let's meet a few of these riders and find out who they are:

There are Mr. and Mrs. James McAdams of Worcester, Mass. “Jimmy” McAdams is an efficiency engineer and Master of the Fox Hounds at the Burkhurst Hunt Club.

“Woody” DuBois of Chester, a well-known trainer and dealer in hunters and jumpers.

“Gene” Heifel, art director in a New York advertising firm and a Woodstock trail rider.

“Herb” Langlois from West Roxbury, Mass., a sergeant in the Boston Police Department and one of the best known horsemen riding in Vermont.

“Ed” Fitzgerald of Windsor, Vermont, tax collector for Uncle Sam in Windsor County.
Others of this cosmopolitan group include physicians of various types, dairy farmers, other professional and small business men, not to mention the sons and daughters of many of them.

The course of a drag hunt, unlike a fox hunt, can be pre-determined. Well before the hounds are released, a rider sets out on the agreed course to “lay the drag,” which consists of dragging behind him a bag of anise, a scent particularly attractive to the hounds. When he arrives at the first check, or designated resting place, he lifts the bag, thus eliminating the ground scent and carries it a reasonable distance to assure the hunters adequate rest between checks before dropping it and again dragging it over the second run of the course. This process is repeated several times until the prescribed course is completed.

When the drag boy laying the scent is well on his way, the hounds are released, put on the scent and immediately hounds, horses and riders are off at a gallop on the circuitous and often hazardous course set by the advanced rider.

The more numerous, if less spectacular trail riders, set off on their own course which is designed to coincide generally with that of the hunters and often the two groups hack or ride leisurely together between checks.

At the end of the course, hunters, trail riders and non-riding hunt enthusiasts gather for a buffet Hunt Luncheon, which is enjoyed in the open beneath the warmly colored maples that slowly shed their crimson leaves through the brilliant autumn sunshine.

To see, or be part of this event, is to add enrichment to your Autumn Holiday. You will turn home feeling with John Masefield “That it is most beautiful to watch—so beautiful that perhaps very few of the acts of men can be so lovely to watch nor so exhilarating.”

The day before the hunt the hunters join other horsemen on a ride to GRAFTON STATE PARK where a steak luncheon broiled and served in the open leaves little to be desired to round out a perfect day.
STARTING FROM PAUL ADAMS' Buttonwood Farm, (left), the hunters are off on the first leg of the hunt, which leads up the Pinnacle and over the Sugar House Trail to the first check at Bailey's Mills.

THE HUNT COURSE (left above) follows the bridle trail along sunlit Lovers' Lane. JAMES McADAMS (top) MFH Burkhurst Hunt Club.

HACKING BETWEEN CHECKS. (Left) The hunters refresh their horses by walking them leisurely over the colorful woodland trail to the next check when hounds are thrown in.

THE TRAIL RIDERS (above) of the Chester Riding Club, whose course follows that of the hunters, emerge from the woods in time to see the field start off.
"All the coloured woodlands are calling to the Chase"

DR. LESTER FELTON (left corner) of Worcester, Massachusetts takes the last jump on the second run of the hunt.

AFTER AN EXCITING CHASE (left) the riders rest their horses in a clearing in the hills above Chester.

A GROUP OF HUNTERS (above) at a standstill. They rest their mounts at Bailey's Mills, one of several checks on the course.
Trails are not dust and pebbles on a hill, 
Nor even grass and wild buds by a lake; 
Trails are adventure and a hand to still 
The restless pulse of life when men would 
break 
Their minds with weight of thinking. Trails 
are peace, 
The call to dreams, the challenge to ascent. . ..
Who breaks a trail finds labor that is rest.

Helen Frazee-Bower

Hours ago I gratefully left behind 
the broad highway and man’s 
habitations. And as I was listen­
ting to the birdsongs and enjoyed the sight 
of flower and tree and the soft rustle of 
the wind, gradually the sense of hurry 
and press has been slipping from me. Once 
again I am walking Vermont’s famous 
Long Trail, blissfully and happily alone.

This time my starting point is where 
the trail climbs out of Clarendon Gorge, 
crosses highway and railway and winds 
up a hill sorely cluttered with fallen trees, 
I soon passed the shelter in its beautiful 
grove of Balsam and Spruce trees, crossed 
the tumbling brook, well on the way now 
toward Governor Clement shelter and 
Killington Peak.

On the bare top of that first hill I was 
rewarded with a beautiful view and later, 
descending into the valley, it was the 
birdlife especially that gave me joy. In 
years to come I am certain that I shall 
associate the Cold River valley with some 
of the most memorable evidences of bird-
life, long after I shall have forgotten the

Heat of the day, the mosquitoes and the 
tough trail.

Gov. Clement shelter was bathed in 
warm evening sunshine when I came out 
of the deep woods into the open clearing. 
It was a most welcome sight, long anti-
ipated and now rightfully won by hours 
of good hiking. There is a clear brook 
neary and on the fireplace in front of 
the cabin it was good to cook my supper. 
Then, the dishes washed and the bedding 
in the bunk made extra soft by the addi-
tion of a few armfuls of fresh balsam 
twigs, I knew I had gained the time of 
day to give myself to the pure enjoyment 
of all that unexploited nature has to offer. 

The sky with the setting sun was a 
symphony of color. The woods nearby 
and the hills further away merged into 
one great spectacle. And not the eyes only, 
but the ears also are invited to the feast. 
The evening song of the birds was like a 
lullaby. There was a thrush, reminding 
me, as I followed his cadences, of 
Browning’s words;

“That’s the wise thrush; he sings each song 
twice over, 
est you should think he never could 
recapture 
That first fine careless rapture!”

Once more I realized how these few 
lines expressed so much of what many of 
us seek in these beautiful and lonely 
places and hope to find again: The first 
fine careless rapture . . . something we may 
have in a lifetime possessed but once or 
twice; something our daily work and 
everyday experience is apt to destroy or 
at least bury under the manifold assaults 
of the crass outside world on the inside 
self.

The next day dawned clear and 
beautiful and after a leisurely breakfast I 
was headed northward and upward. For 
a time it was windy, but a perfect day 
for hiking, clear, sunny and not too hot. 
It might also turn out, I hoped, to be a 
day for some good thinking.

It always surprises me to be asked,
when I am telling of the Long Trail and my lone wandering, what I was thinking about during all those long hours, days sometimes, without human companionship. The answer usually is: That all depends. It depends on the particular conditions of the trail; on whether new sights attract my attention; it depends on the weather, but probably most of all on the mental condition in general I started out with. Sometimes the few days on this or some other trail have been my escape, pure and simple, from the pressure of the workaday world, the job, the people around me; escape into the simplest form of living and into partaking of those things which nature spreads in such luxurious bounty before us; enjoyment of that superior feeling of almost absolute independence.

Not to be waited on, not having to wait on anybody; carrying on one's own back all that is necessary for the satisfaction of the needs of the body; chopping the wood that cooks the simple meal; cutting the branches that provide a soft 'bed' for the night; to some, all this is silliness, and to some of us it is part of a grand ecstasy. Hiking the Long Trail is my recreation. Let the fisherman wade his shady pools and brooks; let the hunter follow the game in the deep of the forest; let the Youth Hostelers pedal their bicycles over the wide country-side. Vermont has to give everyone according to his taste. But give me the Long Trail to tramp on. Hiking the Long Trail combines admirably real solitude with elementary shelter and comfort. It provides wide views that challenge the imagination and again it creates the feeling of closeness to all things in nature. Hiking the trail is good for the body as well as for the soul; good for the body because the shelters are never too far from each other. There is no need for strenuous overexertion, you don't have to be a youngster to take it (I am over 50 myself), and yet each day finds you further along, a mountain conquered, a new shelter gained and the senses sharpened for more.

The mere, but complete, separation from the fretting and exacting life among the multitudes is tremendously helpful—a sort of overture. Once the lungs have been filled with the clean Vermont mountain air and the eyes have been washed with the cold, clear water of the Green Mountain streams, real re-creation can begin. Here in Vermont, where the mountains are not too majestic and yet demand respect, and where contemplation is mingled with exaltation, I am blessed with that most precious experience: I possess my soul in peace.
have reached Cooper Lodge. What a
grand location and what a fine lodge! The
hillside here is steep and over the top of
the young spruces and balsams the view
out of the window is sweeping. I recon-
noitered around a bit in the little meadow
below the cabin and was delighted to find
so much color: deep-orange hawkweed in
profusion, visited by many butterflies;
sedate patches of bunchberry flowers
with their pure white bracts, like petals
spread on top of the bright green leaves.
During the afternoon, there seemed to
be some thunderstorms up and down the
valley, but by evening the sky was bright
and clear again. So I sat myself near the
window, and with the beautiful view in
front of me, did a little reading, a lot of
thinking and a bit of writing.
Dusk and dark have come. From far
down the valley a few scattered lights
send a cheery greeting, a few hoot-owls
answer each other not far off and after a
long, last look at the starstrewn heavens
and a silent prayer of thanks, it is time
to turn in.
The night was quiet and warm and
only the noise of a few porcupines dis-
turbed my sleep. All during the morning,
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that is more than satisfying. Later I was alone again. Thankfully I was thinking over these last few days and what they have given me.

I went out seeking and I found: peace of mind and joy for eye and ear, happiness in small things along the Long Trail and inspiration in wide, challenging views. And when, reluctantly, I had to turn down into the valley again it was with the firm resolution that I shall come back. Come back for more of the blessings that are to be found on the Long Trail and in Vermont’s Green Mountains. END
A new use for old farm buildings has been discovered in Southern Vermont. Americana goes to college high up on Potash Hill in the Green Mountains.

In the yesterday-town of Marlboro, just a piece above Brattleboro, on the Molly Stark trail, an abandoned farm house makes a dormitory and a cavernous barn houses class rooms and dining hall. A school store and student lounge are born in a carriage shed and in the old horse barn, with walls straightened and foundation strengthened, horse stalls have become book stalls. The barn is a library now.

Walter Hendricks* dreamed this up. After fifteen summers shuttling back and forth between Chicago and his six-hundred

Hendricks (right) meets with his “Creative Writing” class, which includes students from Hawaii, Norway and Spain.

OPERATION
At Marlboro, Walter Hendricks demonstrates anew YANKEE INGENUITY—IN EDUCATION
Potash Hill

By FLORENCE THOMPSON HOWE

Marlboro Town was once heavily populated with farms. Now the sweeping view from the campus shows only woodland. A small farm on the edge of the sunrise in Vermont's wooded hills, he decided to found a college in this dramatic wilderness where one can sit indoors and hear Brahms on the radio, or step outside and hear a bob-cat or stalk a deer. Now Dr. Hendricks is President of Marlboro College. His board of trustees list is studded with such names as Robert Frost, Dorothy Thompson, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Daniel Catton Rich of Chicago's Art Institute, and George F. Whcher of Amherst.

Somewhere around a hundred students duffed into this exciting adventure in what Dr. Hendricks terms "a community of learners," on September 16th when Marlboro College entered on its second year. This summer they've been going to auctions, buying furnishings for another farmhouse recently acquired, and, even while the leaves turn, the plumbers are putting in the showers that a boys' dormitory needs about as much as the Saturday baked beans from the old Vermont farmhouse kitchen.

Work is going forward on the old blacksmith shop, too. It is to house the editorial and production offices of the Marlboro Citizen, the community newspaper.

It has taken just about a year for Marlboro College to get going. A year and plenty of the Vermont variety of hard work on the part of local workmen like Luke Dalrymple, Noah Daniels, Lester Whitney, and Walt Radcliffe. Some of these men walked the two miles over and two miles back from the village of Marlboro in "mud" time. They worked mighty long hours a day to make a spic and span chemistry lab out of a cow barn that used to house twenty head of cows.

It has taken money too.

"Without a million dollars?" Robert Frost asked, when his friend and former student, Walter Hendricks told him he was going to start a college. "That's the way a college ought to be started," Robert Frost said. "Now what do you want of me?"

"I want you to be a trustee." Frost is a trustee. And a host of other people, interested in this down-to-earth, shirt-sleeve approach to education, have put a shoulder to the wheel. The Hendricks' neighbors, Rudolph Serkin and Adolph Busch, internationally known musicians, gave a concert which reaped some $3,500.00. The Ladies Aid Society of the town sponsored

* (Amherst, A. B.; University of Chicago, A. M.; Northwestern University, Ph.D.; Director of Humanities at Illinois Institute of Technology; Head of the Department of English at Biarritz-American University and General Editor of University Classics.)
A square dance which added another $100.00. Other friends gave money, some five, some five hundred dollars. Some people loaned money, and the local bank shouldered a mortgage. Marlboro College got started.

Ask Walter Hendricks why he wanted to give up the security of a top flight job in the established educational groove for the struggle and hazard of starting a college within earshot of nothing save the deer and the bear and the partridge. Watch his face light up and you'll know. He had an idea.

The Hendricks had spent fifteen summers on a six hundred acre farm in this all but deserted mountain top in Southern Vermont. During the war, while Head of the English Department at the American University established by the Army in Biarritz, Dr. Hendricks saw villas transformed into classrooms, hotels into barracks, a gambling casino into a library and theatre, faculty into figures of unguessed character, and boys into men.

If it worked in Biarritz, why wouldn't it work in Marlboro? Why not give a few young people of today a set-up and stimuli similar to that which challenged youth in the 1700's and 1800's in this country, and produced the American republic?

To put it academically, in his own words; “Marlboro is interested,” says Dr. Hendricks, “in democracy not merely as a subject, but as an objective. It is interested also in helping a student to develop in himself a personal feeling of usefulness.”

To this end Marlboro College wants to be small. A “community of learners,” not divided into administration, faculty, and students. Everyone, president, carpenter, teacher, cook, dean, or student—whether freshman or senior—has an equal voice in the community. All help to elect a moderator for the bi-weekly town meeting, and three selectmen. This town meeting puts democracy into action and helps to run the college.

Marlboro is housed fittingly in wood and white paint, in the modest, “early American” manner. No Gothic. No stone. No flying buttresses nor ivy covered cloisters. The campus is altitude, solitude, and view! No fraternities, but much real, fraternal feeling. Setting up tables for the church Fair; searching for hunters lost in the woods; building a ski run: the boys work.

The college is helping to rebuild the village of Marlboro and Marlboro is helping to build the college.

Providing the students with personal contact with men and women of character and achievement in their various fields of endeavor is an important part of the college program. In the small isolated group it is possible for the students to have personal conferences with and come to know these “visiting associates” of the College, as they are termed. Marlboro students are bound to share an enriching experience in the friendship of their visitors whose names include Peter DeVries of the New Yorker; Vincent Sheean, Dorothy Thompson, Adolph Busch, Senator George Aiken, Rudolf Serkin, the pianist; John Farrar, and others.

Just now Potash Hill is a beehive of activity. Along narrow, winding wooded roads lights twinkle again at twilight from the many paneled windows of long-deserted farm-houses. The faculty is busy painting and papering; making homes. Alan H. Paine, Mathematics (Gorham State Teachers College B. S.; Columbia University, A. M.; Army Signal Corps) dug the cellar hole and poured the cement for his house. He has put up his own frame work too, and is doing his own decorating in his spare time. His pretty young wife, Adrienne, a Brooklyn girl with her Master’s in chemistry, is helping him.

Nature spreads a giant petit point in flaming reds and golds and greens over the mountains this Fall. Marlboro boys are hard at it too, building their college. They've found a new use for the old gray farm buildings in Vermont. Looks like they're aimin' to turn out folks about like the folks who started this country.

VERMONT TRANSFORMATION

—Photos by Martha Burleigh
Benz Plagemann conducted the seminar on the short story. Section of his new book on his battle with polio appeared in Life.

Ludwig Lewisohn, novelist, biographer and Brandeis University professor, confers with a student on a writing problem.

Edmund Fuller, who threw over Manhattan editorship to farm in Shoreham, now freelances as novelist and critic.

Staff joins with visiting consultants and lecturers for afternoon round-tables. Here Roger Strauss of Farrar-Strauss expounds on "Avant-Garde" writers. Left to right, Edmund Fuller, Benz Plagemann, Ludwig Lewisohn, Strauss, John Farrar and Walter Hendricks.

Fiction Writers' CONFERENCE
Photos by Earle Newton

Under the direction of John and Margaret Farrar, founders of the older Bread Loaf meetings, the first Marlboro Fiction Writers' conference took place August 14-27. Seminars on the novel and the short story were supplemented by afternoon roundtables and evening lectures by nationally known writers and critics.

Conferences on the lawn provided staff with opportunities for exchange of opinion on belles lettres. Classes were indoors for better organization and concentration. Left to right, Mrs. Walter Hendricks, Plagemann, Mrs. Plagemann, Lewisohn and Mrs. Roger Strauss.
ROADSIDE HISTORY

Travelers now read the story of Vermont as they ride

Vermont tourists this summer for the first time got a special introduction to "roadside history." As the result of a year's vigorous work, the Historic Sites Commission has placed at strategic points along Vermont highways a series of over sixty new historic markers, telling interesting, important and often dramatic stories from the Vermont heritage.

These markers are not the usual bronze plaques on a boulder, weathered to near illegibility and stuck off in the middle of a field of tall hay. They are double faced, cast aluminum plates mounted on seven foot posts. The plates—of deep green with gold lettering and surmounted by the state seal—are set at right angles to the road, so that traffic passing in either direction can get a clear view of the text. Its wording is planned for the maximum readability, and is framed in newspaper style, with a head, a subhead, and finally a concise story. And unlike the conventional marker, the large words are set in both capitals and "lower case"—the type to which the average reader is accustomed from years of reading books, magazines and other printed material. The old custom of using all capital letters hardly contributed to legibility.

The purpose of these markers is not primarily commemorative, but informative, according to Earle W. Newton, Commission Chairman. While they are placed as near as possible to actual historic sites, they are limited to major traffic arteries and are placed at the roadside for best tourist visibility. Many therefore specify that the history being related was "2.2 miles northeast" or "3 miles up route 161."

The basic aim behind the green and gold markers is to give the traveler an introduction to the rich historical heritage of the Green Mountain State, and to assist him in making historical tours—an increasingly popular summer and fall pastime.

Subjects celebrated by the signs are birthplaces and homes of famous statesmen, inventors, writers, and other illustrious sons of Vermont, battle sites, historic houses, forts, pathways and the scenes of well remembered events. In addition, at the major gateways to the State visitors receive their first introduction to the markers. On or just back of the state line stands one welcoming the traveler with a brief introduction to the countryside he is about to enter.

Key man in the erection scheme is Abner Coleman, Traffic Engineer for the Highway Dept., which has put up the signs. First year involved many patient checks as to location, visibility, and uprightness.

As a guide to these markers—and to the historic tours they make possible—the Commission has prepared a special
SUNDERLAND
Allen families lived here
Ira Allen lived on this site by the Sutton Hill and as Treasurer of the state. He organized the state's first bank, the正常
Sunderland Bank, here in 1807. He was known for his
preaching "Crises of Reason" in 1792. To his widow, his second
wife, he presented the first copy.
GATEWAY MARKERS greet incoming tourists at the state line and tell something of the countryside into which they are entering; guide booklet, illustrated in color, and with brief sketches based on the subject of each marker. Additional material on such historic spots as Old Bennington and other already well marked sites is also included.

A relatively new agency, the Historic Sites Commission’s work extends over a much wider range of activity than merely that of preparing historic signboards. Under instruction by the Legislature it has begun the long, slow job of working with the people of Plymouth to preserve that small center as a shrine to the memory of its native son, Calvin Coolidge. Almost every building in it—the store (his birthplace) the home, the old Coolidge farm, the Church, the adjoining Wilder house—as well as the cemetery where Coolidge lies quietly with his beloved son—have associations with the Yankee President.

Also under consideration are measures to improve the site of President Chester A. Arthur’s birthplace, and to promote the establishment of “gateway museums” of Vermontiania at all the major entrances to the State. Already in Middlebury, Burlington, Bennington and Windsor there exist such museums or historic houses, attracting thousands of visitors annually. The Commission also has jurisdiction over the Hubbardton Battlefield, the site of the only battle of the Revolution fought in Vermont.

The Commission has, moreover, joined hands with the Vermont Development Commission and the Vermont Historical Society to produce under the direction of Robert Flaherty—famed “father of the documentary”—a motion picture on the Vermont heritage, adapted from the recent book The Vermont Story. An account of the filming of this movie will be published in a subsequent issue of Vermont Life.

The membership of the Commission—including the Director of the Development Commission, the Director of the Vermont Historical Society and one appointed member, plus the State Forester as Executive Secretary and the Commissioner of Highways as Advisory Consultant—is indicative of the close relationship of its work to that of other government agencies dealing with both development and historical activities.

Present members are Harris W. Soule, Vrest Orton and Earle Newton, with Perry H. Merrill as Secretary. Kenneth Holmes, Professor of History at Green Mountain Junior College, has served periodically as a research investigator in preparing copy for the markers and supplementary material.

None of the Commission’s present members visualize the scope of historical work as limited to its present activity.

By the words of the 1947 Act establishing it, the Historic Sites Commission “may designate and mark historic sites and buildings by appropriate markers, may receive public and private contributions and acquire on behalf of the state with the consent of the governor, by contract, purchase, gift or lease, real and personal property and rights therein of Vermont historical significance and manage, preserve and develop the same for the use of the public.”

That’s a fairly tall order, for a body without any permanent staff whatever, and one of the smallest budgets of any state agency.

HIGHWAY CREW, supervised by Commission Chairman (left) erects first of the new markers late in 1948. Over fifty now dot the highways.

END

KEY to map opposite →

2. Guilford: Royall Tyler.
5. Whitingham: Brigham Young.
10. Bennington: Gateway from N. Y.
15. East Dorset: First Marble Quarry.
18. Rutland: Old State House.
22. Poultney: Greeley-Jones.
23. Fair Haven: Matthew Lyon.
24. Fair Haven: Gateway from N. Y.
29. White River Jct.: Gateway from N.H.
30. Plymouth: Calvin Coolidge.
31. South Royalton: Joseph Smith.
32. Fairlee: Samuel Morey.
35. Williamstown: Thomas Davenport.
37. Montpelier: Museum.
42. Addison: Chimney Point.
43. Middlebury: Emma Willard.
44. Vergennes: Maedonough’s Shipyard.
45. Ferrisburg: “Rokeby.”
47. Burlington: Gateway—Steamboats.
48. Winookski: Fort Frederick.
49. Richmond: George F. Edmunds.
51. Stowe: Mt. Mansfield.
52. Cambridge: Smugglers’ Notch.
53. Danville: Thaddeus Stevens.
56. Guildhall: Gateway from N. H.
58. Derby Line: Gateway from Canada.
60. Fairfield: Chester A. Arthur.
62. Highgate: Gateway from Canada.
63. South Hero: Ebenezer Allen’s Tavern.
64. Grand Isle: Log Cabin.
65. Isle La Motte: Fort Ste. Anne.
Mount Equinox, while not so spectacular as Camel's Hump nor so high as Mansfield, is regarded by Vermonters who live in sight of it with a profound feeling that approaches affection. And, rising above the charming village of Manchester, Equinox has probably received more aesthetic adulation than any other eminence in the state. From the time Rockwell Kent lived on the mountain and painted it, to the present day when the Southern Vermont Artists Association holds an annual show under its shadow, this beloved mountain has furnished inspiration to both those who delineate it with brush and pen, and those who love it because it is an integral part of their daily lives.

Many legends have been told about the origin of its name, but it has now been clearly established that Equinox is from one of the two Indian words Akwanok, or Ekwanok, meaning, appropriately enough, "The place where the top is." The name became official...
when James Whitelaw was Surveyor General of the Republic of Vermont and asked the towns to gather data for a state map. In 1796, he published the map showing Equinox Mountain correctly placed.

Mount Equinox lies in a region rich in Vermont history. Ethan Allen lived on its eastern slope and settlers very early cleared their upland pastures on its sides. The first trails or roads were built on the north and south elevations into Southeast Corners and Beartown, two little hamlets long since abandoned. In about 1860, Frank Orvis and a group in Manchester built a wagon road from Beartown Gap to Lookout Rock, directly above the village. This road, which did not start from the bottom of the mountain nor reach the top, was approximately four miles long in which distance it gained approximately 1,600 feet in altitude. From this point, the summit of Big Equinox, as the highest crest is called, could be reached by a foot trail. The wagon road fell into disuse about 45 years ago.

It was not until 1939 that a start was made on the first motor road to top the mountain. Dr. J. G. Davidson, internationally famous organic chemist, and president of the Carbide and Carbon Chemicals Corporation of New York, became interested in Vermont and thought he might like to buy a summer home. Touring the state, he discovered nothing that seemed just right. But, on his way back to New York, he drove through Manchester and, of course, fell in love with Mount Equinox. Finding that a large parcel of wild land was for sale on the mountain itself, he bought the tract and later built a house in the gap known as Southeast Corners, at an elevation of 2,016 feet.

To bring in materials for the house, he was obliged to improve the old wagon road to the gap. He settled into the house and often, for a holiday hike, laboriously climbed the other 1,800 feet to the mountain top. The idea struck him one day that a toll road might be built so others, as well as himself, could enjoy the unparalleled views to be witnessed from the summit. The first segment of the road was built in 1941 up to Little Equinox, 3,320 feet. During the war, work had to be abandoned but, in 1946, more land was acquired and, during 1947, the road was finished in four months from Route 7 to the very crest of Big Equinox 3,816 feet above sea level. It was opened to the public in the summer of 1947.

The road is never less than 24 feet wide and, in many places, is much wider. The maximum grade in only one
or two places is 14% while the average grade from bottom to top is a little less than 10%. There are several parking places along the way where breath-taking views may be enjoyed. From the toll house to the summit of Big Equinox, the road climbs approximately 3200 feet in a distance of about 6½ miles. This is a greater climb from entrance to summit than is made by any other toll road save one east of the Mississippi. From the top on clear days, Mount Royal in Canada may be sighted in the magnificent northern vista, New Hampshire at the east, New York at the west and, to the south, the state of Massachusetts.

Being a scientist, Dr. Davidson has accomplished things up there on the mountain that are of unique interest wholly apart from the skyline road. Having always dreamed myself of making nature work to provide me with many things I have still to buy, I was immediately impressed with the manner in which Dr. Davidson has courted nature on Equinox and, without injury to the wild scenic beauty of the western slope, has harnessed forces that have always been there to provide him with food, heat, light, power and independence.

One of these ingenious devices is the hydroelectric power plant. Naturally, one does not find on a mountain top wide rivers and great rushing streams. But there were springs and a small stream you could jump across. Down the west side, he dammed this little trickle to fill a pond 45 feet deep. Laying a 1 1/2 inch penstock down the mountain, he now has water dropping 750 feet into the powerhouse. By the tremendous weight of this water he builds up with a hydroelectric generator about 150 horsepower 24 hours a day. This method of generating electricity from a long fall of water is uncommon in New England where the topography allows the erection of low dams across fairly broad rivers.

The day I was there we went around looking at barns, garages, storehouses, repair and machine shops, the sawmill and other buildings. Dr. Davidson kept turning on all the electric lights in each building, since it was a cloudy day. When we left the buildings, I would feel constrained, being a Vermonter and frugal, to remind him he had not turned off the lights. But when he reminded me the juice cost nothing because it was made from water running downhill, I realized the real meaning of it. This was further enhanced when I saw on the walls of every room of the house and in all the barns, sheds, mills and shops small metal boxes about 1 2  inches wide, 1 8 long and 4 thick. These furnish constant, thermostatically-regulated direct electric heat, all from water running downhill. I think perhaps here is the only cow barn in the country heated by electricity and, I am sure, the only

Families can now enjoy a breath taking view by stepping out of their car.
Vermont’s lovely white birches adorn the road.

This impressive panorama to the east is typical of the views from the top.

One of the several mountain parking levels.
place where the pigs may bask in cold days right under the warm rays of an electric heater.

"But," I said, looking at the dam, "what happens when the water freezes in the winter and the ice becomes three feet thick . . . doesn't it push on the dam and raise hob with the gate?"

"It doesn't freeze around the gate," Dr. Davidson said and then explained how he had again utilized a principle of nature to good advantage. Finding a spring on the slope above, where water never dropped below 45°, he piped this water down to the pond and caused it to run over the penstock near the dam. Therefore, the water never freezes over this area.

Up there in the cloudland farm, there are cows, sheep, horses and pigs being fed from specially prepared and fertilized mowings and pastures over 2,000 feet high—cleared land that never before had been considered proper for cultivation. In the sawmill, lumber for building is sawed by the same power of water running through that 750-foot drop. Dozens of house motors are run and machine and repair shop powered by the same free force. What with all manner of mechanized farming, clearing and road-building equipment, it looks as if Dr. Davidson might achieve something approaching complete independence—if he could only find a salt mine and drill an oil well for gasoline.

Dr. Davidson has used his Vermont place to experiment with all sorts of things that he or his company is interested in. The floors of his kitchens, bathrooms and laundry are all covered with "Vinylite" tile, a plastic produced by his firm. After these floors had been in use for about five years without trace of wear, another idea struck him. Customarily, the floors of cow stalls are concrete but this is hard on the animals' hoofs and particularly hard on their knees when they rise from a recumbent position. Just as an experiment, Dr. Davidson covered the concrete floor of his cow stalls with bright green "Vinylite" sheeting cemented to the concrete. The covering has been in place for about seven years now without trace of wear and it has been completely unaffected by the excretions of the animals. Parenthetically, there has never been a case of sore hoofs or "knobby knees" among Dr. Davidson's animals and the insulating value of the "Vinylite" covering has made the stalls more comfortable for the animals in the wintertime.

Both Dr. and Mrs. Davidson love animals—almost too much. The whole place is dominated by the personality of a big Norwegian elkhound named appropriately Mister Barbo. In Vermont, Dr. Davidson always wears a bright red "feudin'" hat that is part of the local scenery. In fact, the red hat, Mr. Barbo and Dr. Davidson seem to be inseparable up there in their highland retreat.

But Dr. Davidson is too much of a scientist and internationalist to think that any of us can escape the responsi-
ibilities of the world we live in. I believe he is doing, and will continue to do, these things on Mount Equinox not to create an escapist’s Shangri-la but more for the sense of personal accomplishment that comes when a man proves to his own satisfaction that things which most everyone said couldn’t be done, are being done.

I don’t mean that Dr. Davidson has done all these things without plan. Having spent several days with him on the mountain looking at the innovations he has brought to Equinox, I am inclined to believe that this is one of the longest range plans ever set into motion by a private individual newly come to Vermont.

Some day, unless I miss my guess, Dr. Davidson will make it possible for the state of Vermont to inherit permanent benefits from this all-consuming interest of his lifetime.

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Sky Line Drive starts at the Toll House on Vermont’s main north-south Route 7. The road shown here is only the beginning of a six mile scenic climb.

Map shows full length of Drive. Four parking areas provide outstanding views on way to summit.
On the right, these barns house machine shops, garage, living quarters, and work rooms. On the left is the saw mill.

Dr. Davidson, in red hat, explains the workings of the Pelton water wheel and hydroelectric generator.

The cows stand on a Vinylite carpet, and in a barn heated by the electric unit on the wall at right.
From the summit, looking south, the Green Mountain range vies with the Taconic to provide this beautiful backdrop.
What is a Country Neighborhood?

By Gladys Dimock

Photography by Isabelle Stark Cole

A country neighborhood is made up of land, people, and a spirit—and the most important of these is spirit. Without spirit a community is only a geographical area with a few people living on it, but with spirit a community comes alive—comes to be a warm, living thing—in fact it becomes a neighborhood. This does not mean that every man loves his brother. There may be feuds and often are—they even help to liven things up now and then. There is plenty of gossip and some backbiting, naturally. But if anyone in the neighborhood is in trouble through sickness or accident or just plain hard luck, all hands turn out to help him.

The experts tell us that the true neighborhood is becoming a rare thing in this country because four out of five people now live in cities, and in cities the pressure of too little space and never enough time means you may not even have a speaking acquaintance with the family next to you on the same floor of the building in which you live. The experts are probably right, but they must

Continued on page 60

In a country neighborhood everyone joins in the preparations for a BarBQ. Here a big mixed vegetable salad is put together.
Friends at the local hardware store built the nine-foot pan to fit inside a twelve-foot evaporator (borrowed from someone’s Spring maple sugaring equipment) and the huge cover to hold in the steam.

After the beef had steamed for thirty-six hours the large cover was removed by a group of husky men and the beef hoisted from the improvised arch and carried to a nearby table for serving.

This young heifer weighed 340 pounds and dressed off at about 300 pounds. It was obtained from Riley Bostwick of Rochester who raises Angus cattle and allowed selection from the pick of his herd.

Marshall Dimock, left, removes the trussing. A large burden, well distributed, falls heavily on no one and a BarBQ presents an opportunity for tightening the bonds of neighborliness and friendship.

Over three hundred lined up for this benefit BarBQ held in a lovely pasture with a rim of shade trees and a brook. The price of the tickets was one dollar, with children under six at half price.

Eugene Rhodes of South Woodstock, who has a hobby of restoring old houses, serves the succulent beef to the eager line of friends and neighbors who stand with plate in hand patiently waiting their turn.
By W. Storrs Lee

In the Sheldon Museum kitchen at Middlebury the fire is ablaze and the long table is spread for supper. Your great-great-grandmother has just stepped from the room. The huge dutch oven where she baked her gingerbread and pearmins is still warm. The red checked cloth and the fresh bouquet from the kitchen garden brighten up the table. Her spinning wheel waits in the corner. The cradle is ready at the edge of the hearth when Susan wakes. The enormous tip-top table is cleared and already converted into a chair for great-great-grandfather—or yourself. You can make yourself at home in the chair to study the array of old china or thumb through an old recipe book.

Local museums for decades had such a stuffy cast, a don’t-touch showmanship, and a dead storage atmosphere, that another half century will be required to shake the onus from the public mind. Museums have somehow seldom made good copy, but across the nation, without much publicity, without much lay commendation, and frequently without too much patronage, local museums are coming into their own—museums generally unknown and unrecognized fifty miles from their front entrances, chuckled about by citizenry who never have bothered to cross the park to use the entrance, but irrepressibly advertised by those who have.

Successful local museums defy any attempt at institutional classification. They are all different—as different as the Alamo in San Antonio is from Ticonderoga, Marineland in Florida from the Dinosaur Museum in Utah, Monticello in Virginia from the exquisite and unexpected Museum of the Plains Indians at Browning, Montana. They all depict a way of local life and that is about all they have in common. The particular emphasis may be archeological or zoological, historical or artistic, sociological or geological, but they bring to life some phase of the local past or attempt to represent the best that a given locale produced. The local museum need not be

SHELDON MUSEUM

Middlebury’s past lives again in this unique storehouse of the treasures of its colorful heritage

The Museum Building
compared with the great museum efforts like the Metropolitan, the Natural History, Chicago, Springfield Village, San Francisco, or even Sarasota. These institutions, with great wealth at their disposal, brought together their displays from the far corners of the globe; the local museum drew from a limited region in which it is centered.

Typical of the local institution which was content to preserve its own regional archives is the Sheldon Museum at Middlebury. Virtually everything in it once hung on the walls, rested on the floor, hearth and shelves, or was used by some citizen of the village or county. All has been arranged coherently and effectively into model rooms of the nineteenth century. When you step into the Museum you turn back the calendar to 1890, to 1850, to 1810 and 1800. It is Middlebury's past brought graphically to life, but it is also Vermont's past, for the kitchens, the parlors, and the woodsheds of homes of Brattleboro, Windsor, Burlington, and Putney were not dissimilar from those in Middlebury.

In the parlor, all the time-honored restrictions against occupancy except for weddings and funerals are off. It isn't encouraged, but no serious objections are raised if you sit down at the old spinet and play a hymn. You may study the hand-penned commentary in the family Bible, or, if your ancestors were Vermonters, dig up the homely truth about them in the collection of town histories. The portrait over the fireplace is one of the original Green Mountain Boys, Gamaliel Painter, father of the town, pioneer from Connecticut, soldier, miller, educator (though he never went beyond common school himself), industrialist, farmer, judge, legislator, horsebreeder. The mantel and trim for the fireplace itself are rare black marble locally quarried, locally cut and polished. The candle sconces once illumined controversy in the town hall; the ingenious grandfather clock was manufactured a century and a quarter ago in Rutland; the huge green glass bottles were produced at Lake Dunmore; most of the crockery in the recessed Pompeian red cupboards came from England, but it was once proudly and precisely displayed in Middlebury china closets, and some of the sugar bowls and platters undoubtedly have yet to see actual table service. The Windsor chair in which you are sitting came by ox cart from Connecticut, and generations of Vermonters sat in it before it was crowded out of a dining room by the arrival of a suite of gorgeous light oak from Grand Rapids.

On the top floor is the counterpart of this parlor—a frankly Victorian sitting room, decorated with a bold tongue in the cheek, and the pleasantest departure toward humor in the Museum. It is complete with prickly horseshair sofa, marble top tables, bulging gilt frames, Franklin stove with Gothic doors, an assortment of Godey's Ladies Books, hussock, sewing machine, pompous kerosene lamps, the songs mother used to sing and the piano she played them on, as she sat with bustle protruding behind, and the keynote for the room is set by a display of much too gorgeous hair wreaths. This, too, in the late 1800s represented Middlebury—and Vermont.

There are two bedrooms in the Museum, and although they depict the same period, the contrast is as strong as between the Victorian living room and the old parlor. The Sheldon bedroom has a four-poster, canopied with handsomely patterned homespun from a Middlebury loom. A Middlebury artist is responsible for a primitive water color of a symmetrical flower arrangement—one of the most prized possessions of the Museum. The furniture is gracious and fitting, and the objects of art in the room are some of the finer items given by members of the Sheldon family—except for the cat on the hearth, a stuffed sleeping cat so life-like that visitors either reach to stroke it fondly, or whoop upon discovery that the animal has no purr. Henry Sheldon, founder of the Museum, was so devoted to it, that he had no other than the eminent Dr. Albert D. Mead stuff it for posterity. It has posed on the same hearth for over half a century—comfortable and apparently indestructible.

The other bedroom is borrowed from Old East College. In the bulky bed with its cord stays and husk mattress, Aaron Petty, the first graduate of Middlebury, might have slept; he might have studied at the high desk, and packed his belongings in the heavy wheeled chest. His Mathematics, Greek, Latin and Philosophy books are on the shelves, the utensils used for his surreptitious drinking are much in evidence, and his conception of pin-up girls are framed on the walls along with contemporary maps and authentic evidence of student and administrative extra-curricular activity.

In arranging the Museum one of the major problems was where to display a dozen footwarmers that kept the feet of Congregationalists warm before stoves were admitted to the church, an assortment of lanterns, an excess of kitchen utensils, rolls of old hand-blocked wall paper, boxes of buttons, scores of half-filled bottles from an apothecary's shop, half a hundred hats, buttons, tools, posters, letters, and countless other objects of interest in duplicate, triplicate and quadruplicate. The logical answer was found in creating a village store and post office, and the result is one of the most popular features of the Museum. The cracker barrel with the homemade checker board on top is set up within easy range of the sawdust-box spittoon. Even the cast iron stove is authentic—made in Middlebury. And if Daniel Chipman or Emma Willard stepped to the counter to call for their mail they would find a letter waiting—addressed to them well over a century ago.

There are half a dozen other rooms of equal interest, but the ones described are representative. An arsenal is attractively arranged with close to a hundred flintlocks, rifles and muskets, many of which saw action with the exploits of Ethan Allen and Seth Warner. On the walls of the spacious halls are innumerable portraits of early citizens, of great interest because of the personalities represented, but of major interest as brilliant examples of the art of transient painters, including men like Benjamin F. Mason and A. G. D. Tuthill. The assortment of Indian relics, long ago gathered from camp grounds in the vicinity, includes a few arrows which must have missed some of the pioneer stalwarts whose likenesses gaze down from the walls. And in the woodshed are enough tools—plows, adzes, churns, hoes, flails, presses, augurs, saws,—to supply a whole pioneer village. In
the barn is an assortment of vehicles ranging from a sleigh and doctor’s gig to the hand pumper that helped douse many a Middlebury conflagration, and the carriage in which President Munroe once rode in state down Main Street.

The Museum has been open to the public with its present arrangement only about ten years, but it had its start over a century ago when Henry Sheldon was given a Roman coin. The coin gave him the usual collector’s itch. He assembled more coins, thousands of them, and years ago presented them to Middlebury College where they are now housed in the Library. From coins he branched out into books and documents, and from books and documents into everything with a hint of age or local sentiment. His hobby crowded him out of a modest home into one of the largest old houses in the village with twenty spacious rooms and an attic the size of a small auditorium. His gathering instinct from that time on knew no bounds. He never missed a county auction, and for a dime or a dollar would pick up anything that was slow to move under the auctioneer’s hammer. People loaned him pictures, chairs and pianos for storage and promptly forgot about them. Fortunately the heyday of his operations was during the late 1800s before villagers discovered that antiques were antiques, when crude homemade Windsors were being replaced with machine-made mission, when it was unfashionable to be old fashioned. Sheldon capitalized on it and literally filled every cranny of the house to overflowing. Before his death in 1907, the Museum had been incorporated and placed in the care of a Board of Trustees, but the founder was never equipped with a furnace. The result was that the Sheldon Museum is a summer museum—closed to the public from the date of the first frost to Memorial Day—and the Trustees are in the embarrassing position of having to keep in cold storage a two hundred thousand dollar collection nine months of the year, when a five or six thousand dollar additional investment in a heating plant would more than treble its usefulness.

The Trustees have large ideas for developing the Museum into a local and state mecca once this enormous handicap can be overcome. They are cognizant of the fact that enthusiastic interest in history begins at home. With the Museum open during the winter it could be used by school children and college students for casual observation as well as research. But the emphasis would continue to be on keeping the Museum alive. They hope that work on some of the crafts and skills displayed in the Museum can be revived during the winter months, that the five-foot loom which has been idle for the best part of a century can be put back to work, that the library may be used, that the fifty thousand manuscripts of Vermontiana may be better catalogued and made available to historians and researchers, and that other rooms may be used for display and exchange of homemade weaving, knitting, woodwork—any craft or art in which citizens may care to indulge. Our ancestors did not call them crafts, most of their creative manual work was on the necessities of living, but they knew the satisfaction to be gained from creative manual work, and one of the greatest contributions local museums across the country can make is to encourage their descendants not only to look at examples of the old skills, but also to develop a comparable one.

As with other regional museums, probably less than twenty per cent of the local townspeople have ever been inside. The hundreds of visitors are mostly transients or summer guests perhaps duly bored with an over-solicitous host. People from every state of the Union and all its territories have been there, as well as from most of the European countries, Central and South America, China, Japan, the Philippines and West Indies. Oddly enough, Vermonters are a relative minority, but the out-of-staters leave with enthusiasm, insist that their friends visit the Museum too, and do critiques for their newspapers like the following from the New York Times:

“A unique and delightful museum where the history of this old college town and the record of the folkways of all New England may be visualized today in the homely terms of the tools its people used, the clothes they wore, the furniture and embellishments of their homes, their books, games, carriages, medicines, the essentials of human existence, and the trivia as well.”
The pace changes when you get to Vermont,” a guide-
book says. In my experience, it speeds up. The reason
you can never get your neighbors to work for you is
because they have so much business of their own.

There is almost no place where time and pace count so much
as in a country auction, and Vermont has the fastest-talking and
sharpest-eyed auctioneers in all of bustling New England.

A country auctioneer has to know almost as much as any
farmer in his audience, and he needs the talents of an umpire and
a cheer-leader besides. You have to be much more of a fellow to
succeed as a country auctioneer than as one of the grandees who
wield the gavel at great book auctions, or introduce a popular
radio hour by rattling off tobacco prices. The real country
auctioneer is, first, the friend and neighbor of two or three
counties. Then he has to be a shrewd judge of livestock and real
estate; he has to put a name to every queer tool and household
utensil that comes out of the barn or the house window; he has to
know something about antiques, particularly in the Northeast,
where old things crowd every attic; and on top of all this he
must have a way with a crowd.
Such old-time Vermonters as Gibby Gallup, Jim McDonald, and Dan Perry, realizing that a farmer’s time is money as well as anyone else’s, have developed auctioneering into a high-speed entertainment where you can fill your barn, feed your stock, furnish the tool-shed, and replenish your wife’s cupboards, sometimes at the rate of three sales a minute throughout an afternoon.

The auctioneer is one colorful and engaging figure who is in no danger of disappearing from the American farm scene.

Consisting mainly of Antiques and Heirlooms of the Denison Family, occupants of the “Old Denison House” since 1815, a partial list of which is as follows:

- Victorian Sideboard
- Mahogany Clawfoot Sideboard
- Swellfront Mahogany Sideboard
- Marble-top Center Table
- 2 Mahogany Sheraton Canopy Beds
- Mahogany Seigh Bed
- High-poster Mahogany Bed
- Empire Bureau with birdseye maple front
- Highboy Base
- Square-leg Stand
- Crib
- Empire Couch with roll back and arms
- Spool Bureau
- large Clothes Press
- Spool Towel Rack
- Wash Stands
- 2 Dressing Tables
- Lady’s Victorian Chair
- Windsor Bow-back Chair
- Grand Piano
- Crock Mahogany Fraise Mirror
- extra large Picture Mirror with original picture
- 2 Empire Clocks
- Decorated and Cuckoo Clocks
- Iron Band Hammered Brass Kettle
- 2 large Ham
- Apple Press
- 3 piece decorated Tilted Set
- large assortment of Old Picture Frames
- several Old Chairs
- Old Baby Carriage Frame
- lots of Old Glass Dishes and Crockery
- number of Old Books
- Old Sewing Machine
- Sewing Machine
- Kitchen Range
- Hand Sked Wheelbarrow
- many other articles too numerous to mention.

D. A. Perry & Son, Auctioneers
Hugh Whitman, Agent

Starting at 10 o’clock A. M.

SAT., AUGUST 17

“OLD DENISON HOUSE”
Royalton, Vermont

Terms Cash

For the story of the famous Denison Auction, turn over→
A Picture Story by Charles DuBois Hodges

COUNTRY

Young Mr. Perry (above), of D. A. Perry & Son, Barre auctioneers, gets the “Old Denison” House auction off to an interesting start by offering a wooden cheese-box. Note the beautiful, original fluted column at the left.

Among the more useful items up for sale was a rugged hand sled (upper left). The sled aroused plenty of real interest, but finally went for only forty cents.

The noon meal, picnic fashion, is an integral part of the country auction. And even before the noon recess, business begins (lower left) for the jolly fellows selling hot dogs, coffee, sandwiches, and pop on the premises.

A striking contrast between the architectural detail of the early 1800’s (this old Royalton home was occupied by the Denison family in 1815) and the styles of today is captured during the process of the sale. (Below)
Auction

A successful bidder (above) accepts the clothes drying rack she has just picked up from the auctioneer's clerk, while natives and curious onlookers inspect her prize.

A homemade candlerack is the object up for sale (upper right), but the crowd will bid much more enthusiastically for the table on which the candlerack is exhibited.

There are probably no art treasures among the pictures to be sold, but the living room scene (lower right) does give an idea of what can be expected at a country auction. Inspecting the offerings for a bargain to seek in the bidding is a large part of the fun at these sales.

The dining-room view (below) also suggest the wide variety of articles which had to be disposed of. After 22 years of litigation, complicated by varied interests of over 900 Denison descendants, the estate was settled by this auction.
Some VERMONT Ways of Life: By Vrest Orton

Hobby Horses

In coming to live in Vermont from other states, many people are finding it advantageous to do some bold swopping. They are swopping a lot of things they could and did formerly buy for money, for things in Vermont they can enjoy without buying. A recent example is how Fritz Howe, his wife Midge, and three little daughters settled in Randolph.

Fritz, a young chap of 33, was sales manager of a mid-western concern, supervising a sales force of 400 men, and travelling all over the country to do it.

Having spent summers in Vermont, he intended, someday, to 'retire'. But that was, he thought, in the dim future.

Then one day last summer, weighing the pressure of his high-pressure job, and the fact that his family was growing up without his being home much, he decided not to wait for the undiscernable future but to come to Vermont at once. He and Midge did two weeks of intensive exploring and finally found Randolph. Since making toys for his own children had always been a hobby, he decided to make hobby horses for a living. They bought an empty, long un-used stone blacksmith shop, sadly in need of repair. All alone the two pointed up the stones, laid floors, fixed the roof, set glass, scrubbed and painted, and now, the old 1780 blacksmith shop has come to life again, 179 years later.

But instead of stomping live horses, the place is full of charming little wooden fellows. They are made of Vermont wood, handpainted and finished, and on rockers—all ready for the children to ride.

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Vermont Laws of Compensation

Fritz Howe swapped a big job, and big money for a little job and less money but there were some intangibles that changed hands too. I'll let him tell you what they were in his own words. He says:

"Although we live in a small community, we have a good school, a fine hospital, a supervised playground, and enough opportunity for the so-called 'culture of the cities' through occasional plays, concerts and even the regular Vermont Forums, to more than satisfy our needs. We have the hills for free recreation, the friendliness of a small town, the opportunity to be a real part in affairs of our town and state, and best of all, we have a home life that makes us a family again—a way of life that can not be purchased.

"And this doesn't say all the things that are most important about living in Vermont . . . it doesn't cover the thrill of clear, cold mornings or the thrill one gets from walking downtown and speaking to everyone on the street . . ."

"Yes, we have gained everything . . . coming to Vermont."

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Freedom of Thought

We Vermonters still keep up our reputation for an ornery independence of thought. We brag that nobody is going to tell us what to do! New evidence of this virility comes to hand almost daily. The most recent and delightful evidence of this trend, (which can sometimes be the kind of independence that actually is against our best monetary interests) is the case of the Vermont manufacturers of women's dungarees. They do not make anything larger than a 34 waist measure! No Sir! Why? Because they don't think women bigger than that should wear dungarees! Can't help but admire them!

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Round, Firm and Unpampered.

The Hoisington's are an old Vermont family up Windsor way . . . been farmers for generations. But James Hoisington and his son Sumner are not at all like some old line rural families who hew to the same line and resist change. They have changed the products of their farm to pheasants, and in a short time have become the largest such enterprise in Vermont and next to the largest in New England.

After having supplied these luscious game birds to game clubs and private groups in New York and thereabouts for years, James and his son have now started to pack these round firm bodies so prized by gourmet, into a gift package and are selling pheasants by mail.

The birds are packed in balsam boughs, cones, and bitter sweet, and arrive with a bright red ribbon about their necks.

This all started in 1938 when Summer had his hobby of pheasant raising raised to a commercial pursuit when a game club in Connecticut insisted that he raise 125 hens for them for shooting purposes.

Now he has about 1800 birds to care for, and unlike the pampered soft birds raised by the battery system with no room to exercise, Hoisington's birds, I am told, are not docile, but gamey. Therefore, they provide to the connoisseur of the culinary arts, a flavour approximating the wild creatures brought down on the wing.

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Are You Willing to Give Up?

A newcomer to Vermont told me that when he decided to settle here, he made a list of all the things he had in the city which he knew he could not get in Vermont. Then he made a list of all the things in Vermont he could not get anywhere. The latter was the longest list.

But the thing that helped him reach a decision to leave the city was this: he found that, upon mature and honest analysis, he was willing to give up about 95% of the things on the first list.

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He Tried.

Here's an old Vermont saw, probably repeated around every cracker barrel. But it's good—especially to show how we feel about humor. A noted humorist was giving a humorous lecture in Vermont once and his manager, noticing that no one in the audience even smiled, thought something must be the matter.

He went out and as the people were leaving the hall, mixed with the audience. He then heard one Vermont whisper to the other,

"You know, I had all I could do to keep from laughing."

Readers are urged to send to Vrest Orton, Weston, Vermont, notices of unusual new businesses and ways of earning a living which have news and human interest value. Mention here in no way constitutes endorsement by either Mr. Orton or Vermont Life.
The HOWES of RANDOLPH make hobby-horses in the old 1780 Stone Blacksmith Shop

In the spray booth (left), the horses are painted bright reds and blues.

Anthony Mazzolini (right), Fritz’ helper, assembles the horses.

Mrs. Howe completes the job by painting spots on the horses.

The old stone shop now sports a bright red trim.
THE Covered Bridge IN VERMONT

Pictorial Glimpses of an Architectural Institution
Marshfield on route no. 2

North Springfield
W. J. Bryant
LYNDON
Photo by Robert D. Wild

GREEN RIVER
Photo by Derick
This unusually detailed map of several of the state's outstanding Covered Bridges was executed by C. Roy Morse, of Boston. It is reduced here from its original 20"x 24" size. Full size prints suitable for framing may be had from the artist or from the VERMONT BOOKSHELF, State House, Montpelier. ($1.00)
Night had come and I was still in the woods. I had been too absorbed in my first deer hunting to start home when I should have. And now an awareness of my position struck and checked me.

With a new alertness, a new excitement, I looked up. There was an overcast with the last daylight showing through, and the bare tops of trees stood out coldly against the sky. Everything was wet. There was no sound but far off to the right the aggressive roar of an inflamed stream. It was not legal to shoot deer at this hour anyway; the first day of the eleven day season was at an end.

It had been a long day for me. It had begun, according to plan, at four that morning. I had reasoned that hunters entering the woods in the valley at dawn would start the deer moving. To get back on the mountain, deer would have to cross a dirt road on the slope above the farmhouse that had become my summer, and was now my autumn, home. They would prefer to cross the road where the woods offered the greatest protection. I felt sure of this; and the remains of a deerhunter’s blind at that exact spot added to my confidence. I had reached this blind before dawn. I had sat in it, growing steadily colder behind a barrier of wet, decaying paperboard, for five hours, waiting in vain for a buck to step out of the woods across the road. During the rest of the day I had hunted the beechnut ridges back on the mountain, walking quietly or sitting motionless. I had shot a snowshoe rabbit and jumped two deer, but the deer had been does. And now it was night and I was still in the woods. There was nothing to worry about if I did not break any bones or run a twig into an eye; but the woods at night stir in a man the sediment of his primitive ancestry. More like a hunted animal than an armed man I worked downhill carefully, keeping the roar of the stream well within hearing on my right, until I came out on the road below the old blind, and headed home.

After walking perhaps half a mile I saw the yellow lights of a car coming toward me. The car drew to a laboring stop and I recognized Forrest Manning, our town
clerk. It was to Forrest that local hunters reported the deer they killed, as required by law; and he had earned that distinction—Forrest had got his buck sixteen successive times.

"Any luck?" he asked. "See anything?"

"You bet. I've got a beautiful rabbit.

What about you?"

"I got a buck over on the other side of the valley," he answered casually. "A nice one. Two hundred seventy-three pounds."

It was a modest statement. His buck was enormous. It was the heaviest he had ever killed and one of the heaviest ever reported in Roxbury.

The next morning I was up again at four, stiff but full of excitement and determination. I crossed a field in front of the house, entered the woods and started slowly up the mountain in the dark, ramming into branches, stumbling over rocks, wading through frost killed ferns, until I reached an abandoned apple orchard. There, clumsy in layer after layer of woolens, I sat under a hemlock for three hours with 8 x 40 binoculars and a carbine on my lap, watching an area that was trampled like a fairground by deer. The dawn was beautiful though rainy, but I saw no game. That afternoon I went back on the mountain again. I did not even jump a deer. And the next day it was the same; I sat in my maple orchard in the morning and hunted on the mountain until dark and saw no deer. That evening two Roxbury boys, Leon and Theron Thurston, dropped in, and I sensed that my stalemate was at an end.

Leon is restless and impulsive. Danger follows him everywhere, and sometimes it overtakes him. It wrecked his bicycle. It set his truck on fire. It turned another truck over on him. It even wrecked a train he was on. And now he wanted me to hunt with him. Well, it was all right with me; I have a weakness for boys like that—and for Theron too. Theron is a born woodsman. His feeling for the woods has the quiet ecstasy of a religious experience. At fourteen he landed Roxbury's record trout, a square-tail weighing over five pounds; and once he killed his buck with a twenty-two.

That evening we three worked out a plan. For Leon still-hunting was out of the question. It was decided that I was to wait in the blind on the back road just as I had done on the first morning. The boys were to start in the valley and work up toward me through the woods. Maybe they would shoot a deer on the way, and maybe they would drive one onto me.

It was below freezing that next morn-
The snow was falling on the fields.

"At least six had crossed the fields," Theron said.

"I was out again before dawn," Theron added.

"The prospect of hunting on snow was so exciting that I was out again before dawn trying to see where the deer had been."

Theron, between styes. When deer have been raiding a landowner's vegetable garden all summer long he has few misgivings about shooting one in the fall.

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round the house, or corners of the fields. They had been everywhere. And now they were gone, so gone that the tracks were almost impossible to believe. Fascinated, I tracked wildly up the hillside, through the maple orchard, through the abandoned apple orchards, through hemlock, birch, poplar, and brush, and burst out onto the back road near the old blind. "Two armed men were standing on the road, facing me, ready to shoot quickly. Their car was down the road. They had jumped out leaving the doors open."

"A deer just crossed here," one of them said.

"How long ago?" I asked. I knew I must have driven it ahead of me.

"Maybe five minutes."

I wished them luck and went on down the road. Tracking was fun; but that was not, it seemed to me, the best way to hunt deer even on snow.

By Monday the snow was gone. I slept later than usual that morning; I was to pick up the boys at seven. Half dressed and in bedroom slippers I started the kitchen stove and threw a log onto the hot embers in the furnace. It was growing light quickly, and after a bowl of cereal I got up from the kitchen table intending to finish dressing, and glanced at the clock. It said quarter to seven. Something drew my attention to a window on the left—some change in the familiar scene of road, rolling field, woods and distant mountains. I saw a dark, compact object. I thought it was a bear.

My hunting equipment was laid out on the dining room table. In a businesslike way I got the binoculars. Looking through the window and stormwindow I saw a grazing animal, its legs and head hidden by the rolling ground. As though sensing my presence it raised its head and pivoted its big, stiff ears. It was a deer, and had antlers.

Still businesslike, I hung the glasses from my neck and went back for my gun. By the time I reached the window again the buck had stepped behind a knoll. He could not come out without my seeing him, so I took advantage of that moment to open the front door, which I did with great care—quite soundlessly, I felt certain. But the deer had heard and was off, not in panic but at a steady gait that brought him out from the knoll going away toward the far corner of the field. I stepped down, raised the gun, and, aiming carefully for the right haunch, very, very carefully, swinging with the moving animal, I squeezed off.

The report echoed and re-echoed among the gullies and mountainsides. The deer cringed as though startled, and kept on; but he turned now toward the road. The shot had been a long one but quite possible and he had been fired without flinching; and yet, so far as I could see, it had been no more effective than a well aimed blank cartridge. There seemed nothing to do but shoot again. I fired quickly. Then I fired again, and again, always at the moving target.

It was like shooting at a shadow. Empty casings kept falling in and around the doorway. The deer, doubling back, vanished again behind the knoll. He came out where I had first seen him, crossed the road and lay down in thin brush on an embankment. Amazed to find my gun empty, I turned to go back into the house and reload—and remembered there were cartridges in my watch pocket. I filled the chamber and magazine and walked down three stone steps toward the deer. That was a mistake; he got up as fresh as ever and bounded over a rise. I sent one more shot at him before he vanished.

Then I ceased to be businesslike. I bolted just as Leon had done. I ran down the
road, up the embankment, up the rise, and stood shaking and winded on the crest. Below me a gully ran through a narrow field. I saw the deer turn from this gully and head for the woods. But when he tried to climb he was done for; he lay down in the field, his head up, and looked curiously around. I sat down, braced my elbows on my knees and looked through the binoculars to see if he still had antlers. The binoculars were useless, with my shaking hands I could not hold them steady enough. The absurdity of my misgivings about antlers came to me and I lifted the gun, aimed as carefully as I could—the distance was then about ninety yards—and fired. Instantly the head went over and down.

As I ran up, a shiver went through him. He was a five point buck, ideal in size, and his tongue was the color of ashes. His belly was as white as ermine but the hair was long, heavy and stiff. His side was the brown of the autumn grass he lay on. His back was darker. The points of his antlers were worn sharp and white. He had been hit four times by 30-30 solids, three times fatally, and once through the neck without striking bone. The first shot had ranged up through the haunch and on and on into him until its force had been spent. It had not come out. He had carried it all that way. I stood there.

"Poor old boy," I said.

There was a knife on my belt. I tried to stick him in the throat, to bleed him, but the knife somehow would not go in. I was still only half dressed. Thinking the buck was dead, I took hold of one antler. He shook his head as though to get the horn into me; then life left him altogether. With the strength of a madman I dragged him back over the rise and across the road to the house. There I left him and staggered through the doorway with a pain in the chest and stars bursting before my eyes.

When I was dressed I brought out the station wagon, opened the two back doors, and, backing through the car, dragged the buck in after me.

It was seven-fifteen when I reached the Thurston place. As I drove up, Theron came out ready to hunt. He was smiling.

"Look," I said. I opened the back door of the car. "Right in front of the house. . . . Right in front of the house!"

Theron's smile broadened.

"That's deer hunting for you," he said. "That's just how it goes."

"It's all luck," I said, as though apologizing.

"I'll go and wake Leon."

Leon came down the steps rubbing the night out of his eyes.

"Gee, will you look at that!" he said. "Come to the village with me while I report him," I said, and laughed—it wasn't a rabbit I would report to Forrest this time. "I'm going to be so cool; I'm going to be as cool as though I did it every damned year, as though it was just nothing, absolutely nothing!"

Theron started toward the car. "I guess you won't want to go hunting today, then, since you've got your buck."

"Me? Who says I won't? I can still drive one out, can't I?"

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Deer are one of the State's natural resources and hunting regulations are designed to control the size of the herd which is now about as large as the State can support. Below are the author and his buck.
New Roots in the Soil
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

to run out with the shotgun and bring down a hawk which is menacing our chickens.

Our doctor is fifteen miles away, and emergencies arise which make a mad dash over country roads to his office imperative. We are awakened from a sound sleep by the thunder of hoofs on the frozen road, and rise from our warm beds to head off stray horses, intent on breaking into the hay-barn. These frequent events are part of our life. They are not hardships; rather they furnish a welcome interruption to a routine which might otherwise become monotonous.

When worries come, or we are depressed, we have only to climb the high hill above the hemlocks and stand looking down into our peaceful valley and its surrounding mountains. Then our problems shrink to their normal proportions, we are filled with peace and contentment, and return to work out a solution calmly and thoughtfully.

Years ago, we were living in Philadelphia. My salary was adequate to support us in a small apartment, to pay for our recreation and amusements and to add weekly to our savings account. Without warning I became ill and went to the hospital. The rent went on. So did the gas bills, the water bills, the bills for electricity. Food still had to be bought and paid for. Doctors and hospital bills were devoured our savings in a few weeks.

Helen got a job, but even with what she earned we were falling steadily behind. When I left the hospital, weak and unable to work for a long time, we were penniless and heavily in debt. It was a terrifying experience.

It may be that our desire to get away from city life stems back to those months when we were entirely without security. Now, if illness strikes, we have our home, rent-free. There is always a reserve supply of food in the cellar, the freeze-locker and in the cupboards. Water comes, by gravity, from our own spring. All heating of the house and cooking is done by means of wood stoves, with the wood coming from our own mountain. Eggs and milk are always available, our own potatoes, canned vegetables and fruit and other basic foods stored for winter months. We eat well, better than most city families, and at slight expense.

When we butcher one of our pigs, we render out enough lard to last many months. We smoke our hams and bacon, put some of the fresh meat into the freeze locker, pickle more of it and make sausage and scrapple. That's all routine stuff which we have taught ourselves to do, and it is far less trouble than one would think.

Geographically we are isolated, yet friends drive long distances to visit us. Our church is fifteen miles away. After early service we always have a number of invitations to breakfast. Our car, fifteen years old, still gets us to those places which we wish to visit. When we can, we will turn it in and get a pickup truck, which is a practical farm vehicle for most purposes.

We work hard. Helen and I and our son made thirty tons of hay last summer.

Morning's Catch at Terry Brook

We had no modern machinery; and only one horse, an old mowing machine, a hay rake and a dilapidated wagon. Lacking a cornplanter we planted our ten acres of corn by hand. We cultivated it with our one horse, and cut it and shucked it by hand. Our acre and a half of vegetables and our acre of potatoes were all worked by hand. We cut big birch logs and sold them to the mill. We cut the twenty cords of wood which it takes to heat the house. All this, in addition to the daily chores, left us time for recreation.

We found time to fish for trout in Terry Brook, which wanders through our pastures, to hunt for deer and bear in season, to run a trap line, to go on picnics and to do a surprising amount of entertaining.

In the midst of the heaviest toil there are always compensations; a curiously-shaped rock, a brand-new wild flower, the sight of deer bounding uphill as we approach the fields, a porcupine eating his way around a tree, a skunk walking confidently and proudly along the road while we make a detour. There are lovely sunrises and sunsets, starry nights when the cool breeze is heavy with the scent of pine, the bright flashing of birds' wings at dawn, the mountains' blanketed with snow seen from our living-room windows.

Food never tastes so good as when we have come in after a day of heavy toil. A single slice of bread, a baked potato, a dish of carrots, simple basic foods like that, acquire a flavor which is utterly satisfying. Wild berries with the dew still on them, drenched in heavy cream, are something to dream about, and even the last little apples, hanging frozen on the bare branches of the orchard, have a brand-new taste.

We can be very casual about dress here. In the summer, shorts and very little else furnish a working costume. For other occasions, well-worn and frequently-patched dungarees, old sweaters and heavy shoes are all that we require. "Dressing up" for a party or a shopping trip is fun after that.

I am not advocating a universal back-to-the-farm movement. Many people would not enjoy our life; others would be unable to stand the isolation. For those who have the same urge we had, to have their own farm, large or small, I suggest that they visit, for at least a week, some friend who has a fairly crude setup in the country. Studying the daily lives of their host and hostess will give them a very definite idea of what to expect.

Lack of finance prevents a great many people from taking up rural residence. Around here, a great many farmers, in the off-season, commute daily to towns where there are factories. They earn enough during a few months to buy a new tractor, additional livestock or to pay off a mortgage, and still find time to do their morning and night chores.

The problem of schooling for children is solved in most communities by school busses, which take the pupils to consolidated schools daily and return them in late afternoon.

We think we live well. We are well-nourished, healthy and strong; our senses sharpened to the point where we draw the last bit of pleasure out of our lives. We are investing what we make from crops and other products, investing it in more livestock, in improvements to the house and barns, in farm machinery. Our home is constantly increasing in value, although carpentry, plumbing and the like are occupations we carry on ourselves, with very little outside assistance. Best of all, we feel that we are producers, in a world where every day there is an increasing number of consumers. Our roots have gone deeply into the soil in the short time we have been here. No more transplanting for us, we have found the right environment at last.

End
"Opportunities"

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

VL22. An experienced photographer is interested in commercial or industrial work and enthusiastic about scenic photography. He is looking for the right opportunity here in order to satisfy a years-old desire to make his home in Vermont.

VL23. A Brooklyn College graduate is interested in contacting anyone who needs an experienced newspaper man. Is interested in reporting, magazine editing, book publishing, even publicity or advertising. Once he thought nothing was nicer than Christmas in Connecticut. One vacation in Vermont made him change his mind and now he would like nothing better than to spend his life in Vermont.


VL25. What can you do with a man who forsook the handsome patrimony of Vermont birth and childhood to go away to school in Massachusetts and to college in Connecticut, then served thirty years in the Army,—in France, Germany, the Philippines, and Japan, as well as in some fifteen of the United States,—but who finally repented, confessed, and reformed, and so retired voluntarily, and is working his way back to Vermont via a two-year tour as Registrar at the University of Massachusetts at Fort Devens? After all this heightened vagrancy—seeking after false gods—he wants to return to his native state with his family, and is ready to dig his way in. What can you do with someone like this?

VL26. Young couple, one a graduate of Cornell Agricultural School, wants to work on a dairy farm where they can use some of their own initiative. Both have had lots of farm experience and can use tractors, horses, milking machines, know dairy cattle and have done work in sugar orchards. Would like to help some one just starting in farming to build up a profitable business.

VL27. A college graduate, married, with broad experience in merchandising, and publicity wants nothing more than a home in Vermont. He is adaptable, could adjust himself to varied fields and is quite interested in hotel and resort work.

VL28. A young married veteran with six years of practical restaurant experience who has completed a two year course in Food Management at the Stockbridge School of Agriculture of the University of Massachusetts would qualify for a position in the steward's or managerial phase of a restaurant or similar work in a hotel, resort or institution. He is willing to start lower down the ladder in a first class place if it offers opportunities for advancement and a starting salary to provide a decent living.

VL29. Year round resort area of some 300 acres operating as a riding club in summer and a skating, skiing and sleighing club in winter is looking for a new owner. The location is beautiful and includes excellent hunting country, trout stream and pond, half finished lake, and a 600 foot ski tow. Three houses have been built but there are sites for a hundred more. The present owner would like to retain an interest in the development.

VL30. One of Vermont's busiest architects needs an architectural draftsman right away. He has run into a blank wall in consultation with the usual sources. Here is an opportunity for a man to really live as well as to help a born Vermonter who prefers life here to existence in the city.

What is a Country Neighborhood?

Continued from Page 37

not forget that although most Americans now live in cities, most of the land is still in the country, and that those who live on it still know how to be neighbors. The story here is how one small country neighborhood with lots of good will and a little hard work, put on the best feed in five counties for more than three hundred people—a barbecue, in fact, that seems likely now to become a permanent institution staged in a shady pasture every August.

Our neighborhood consists of a few miles of back country road crossed by a few miles of another. We are only a handful of families, and the schoolhouse at the crossroads has been closed for many years. But fingers from our neighborhood stretch out to take in families many miles out of another. We arc only a few false starts, then a good lead, and finally a drive to So. Woodstock on a cold rainy day where a search finally brought us to Eugene Rhodes, quietly and

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delightedly restoring a beautiful old brick dwelling in that village. Seems that's a hobby of his. He's a tall, friendly man who confesses to better than seventy years but you have to take his word for it.

It seems that fifty years ago Gene Rhodes attended some barbecues (they were more common then than now) and could not agree that a roasted animal, rough on the outside and raw within, was anything to praise. So he devised a cooking method of his own. It involved huge pans, big enough to take a whole beef. Did we realize what we were getting into? Well, no, we didn't. What was needed? Gene told us. He had known of three different sets of pans. Those formerly used at the Tunbridge Fair had burned out long ago. Another set at one time was at East Wallingford, and the third had been used at Windsor, all a good many years ago.

Finding the pans proved to be the toughest job of all. A trip to East Wallingford revealed that the pans there had been destroyed. Inquiries at Rutland for possible substitutes were fruitless. Another trip to Windsor led on to Newport, N. H., (on a very hot day) and ended in frustration. Home again, we finally exercised that good Yankee trait, ingenuity. We took a twelve-foot evaporator pan and asked our friends at the local hardware store to build a nine-foot pan to fit inside it, plus a huge metal cover that would set down over the whole business. The lower pan was to be filled with water, the second with the whole beef on a rack, and the cover would fit tightly enough so as to keep the steam in. Metal was still scarce at that time, but the job was done and the price substantially shaved.

For a couple of Sundays before the event a number of us gathered at the grounds—a lovely pasture, with a rim of shade trees and a brook—where we built a big arch for the beef, and two smaller ones on which to cook potatoes and coffee, respectively. Also we built a line of twelve-foot serving tables, gathered a cord or so of fire wood, and drove a line of posts parallel to the tables so as to be able to string a rope to keep people in single file.

Meanwhile tickets and posters had been printed and distributed, supplies bought including 2 sacks of potatoes, 50 loaves of bread, a bag of onions, and five pounds of salt pork for the dressing; and bread, butter, coffee, cream, sugar and salt; and the ice cream was ordered. In addition there was to be a big mixed vegetable salad, but that came out of our own gardens. The price of the tickets had been set at one dollar, with children under six at half price.

On the day before the event the gears meshed and things started to move. We fetched the beef from a freezer plant where it had been hanging for a week. Gene Rhodes arrived and he and a number of helpers prepared the dressing in big wash tubs, and stuffed and trussed the beef. By mid afternoon the fire was going, the beef was on and a cloud of steam was issuing from around the edges of the pan. All night the beef cooked and soon it began to smell pretty good. A few neighbors gathered to help pass the time and then went home to bed, but Gene Rhodes and his assistant stayed awake to tend the fire and keep the lower pan filled with water. The next morning final preparations were completed. Arrangements went off without a hitch right down to the last trip of the truck picking up food, utensils, an extra table or two, and passengers along the way.

Promptly at 12:30 the cover was taken off the big pan,—the beef was lifted out and placed on the first big table. The crowd had begun to gather. The tables had been dressed with sheets and all the food was ready. At one o'clock we rang the dinner bell and before the hour was out, 350 people had been served all they could eat. The beef was the best that most of us had ever tasted and the dressing, prepared according to Gene's own rule, was the work of sheer genius.

The rest of the afternoon was spent in entertainment. That year we had engaged a group of cowboy singers who used an improvised microphone, the back of a truck as a platform and put on a zany kind of show that the crowd loved. The following years, however, we substituted community singing and informal games and contests—including a tug of war and a soft ball game—which seemed to be just as welcome. By five o'clock everybody had gone home to chores and nothing was left on the grounds except the arches and the tables.

This then, is what a neighborhood spirit can accomplish. A large burden, well distributed, falls heavily on no one. And the achievement goes considerably beyond the best dinner of the season and good entertainment, because it includes a chance to work with your friends, to visit with them and the whole community on the day itself, and a tightening of the bonds of neighborliness all along the line. It seems a pity that city folk can't do something like this once in a while. They might enjoy it.

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**GUN CLUBS**

A PICTURE STORY BY

George H. Eaton

When the first pioneer placed an inquisitive foot on the land that is Vermont, it is safe to assume that he was preceded by the muzzle of his long rifle. The spirit of the pioneer still lives today in Vermont as is evidenced by the numerous rifle clubs which are found throughout the State. The Vermont State Rifle and Pistol Association encourages the formation of local clubs and sponsors both indoor and outdoor State Championship matches each year. Riflemen and hand gun enthusiasts from other states come to the numerous matches to compete for the prizes and to enjoy a Vermont vacation.

PICTURES, opposite

1. **THE FIRING LINE.** That's where the pay-off comes. You shoot well or you don't. And always—"to miss is mystery."

2. **BEHIND THE LINE** are the kibitzers, the dopesters—and the talk is guns, gadgets, ammunition, scores—surrounded by guns, gadgets, ammunition and scores.

3. **THE SMALL-BORE RIFLE** is a precise instrument; hence the rifleman is a perfectionist. He takes pride in his gadgets which, he believes, enhance his skill.

4. **Of course, someone has to do the work and the boys in THE TARGET TENT have a thankless job. But with a good crowd around even changing targets is fun.**

5. **RIFLE SHOOTING is not for men only.** This young lady turns in scores that give the men something to worry about.

6. **EVERY MATCH draws a few champions hunting new laurels. Paul Neuland of Morrisville, 1947 Vermont State Indoor Champion.**
Brownsville Birches
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top of that ridge, taking first one thing and then another and using up film like mad.

Yet the more we looked, the more one thing became obvious. There were a host of varied shots about the place, views, close-ups, trunk patterns, tree designs, and everything else the camera hobbyist so dearly loves to take. The only trouble was that most of them needed another time when the light or the sky would be different. There wasn’t a man who didn’t make a mental note of half a dozen shots he wanted to try another time, but do you think he pointed out all these possibilities to the rest of us? Not on your life! He merely thought to himself, ‘I’ll slip back alone sometime and pick off these other shots.’ So keeping our ideas to ourselves, we let the sunlight fade. The weekend was over and we scattered.

Most of us took the first opportunity to return, too, only the “payoff” was that we all picked the same day! That was a gorgeous Sunday two weeks later. Separately and secretly we started out to nab those shots the others had missed. One arrived, two arrived, three arrived, and by the middle of the afternoon six of the original nine were back there. The other three thought about it but New York and Connecticut were too far away. Each new arrival would come puffing up the hill, expecting to enjoy the place by himself until he popped over the rim and was confronted by the assembled multitude. He’d grin sheepishly and assure everyone he was just out for the fresh air. He wasn’t trying to slip anything over on the rest of us—not much.

From there on it was anybody’s game. The original group brought their friends and their friends brought other friends, till the film pack tabs eddied around the rocks like autumn leaves. Fortunately the owners of the hillside were friendly people, indulgent and understanding in the ways of the camera fan. All who have been there are grateful for their generosity in allowing us access to their land.

It wasn’t very long after the initial discovery that some of us tried our efforts on the salons. Salons are a measuring stick for photographers. These are exhibitions of photographs, usually international in scope, and nearly always shown in art museums where they are sponsored by camera clubs or by the museums themselves. Amateurs and professionals alike are eligible, and hundreds, even thousands of entries come from all over the world. These entries are passed before a jury of well-known photographers and artists who select a small percentage for hanging. Thus when a picture is accepted for one of these salons, it is a proof of distinct merit. It’s always a thrill for the maker when a new one “gets in.” That is just what happened to the pictures taken on that pasture hillside. The first ones sent out were accepted for hanging with amazing regularity, and started to attract a good deal of attention. One of the first, called “Vermont,” was by Ralph E. Day, of South Hadley, Mass. This was so successful that it went to thirty or forty salons without being rejected. A couple of others were quite successful also, including one by the writer entitled “The Long Valley.”

LOFTY LANDMARK by Newell Green

There were several more by still others, and for the next few years there was hardly a salon which didn’t hang at least one picture taken at “the birches.” Sometimes it was two or three which always had visitors scooting back and forth across the gallery to make comparisons.

From the salons, these pictures were published in photographic magazines and annuals. More saw them, admired them and wanted to know where the spot was. Strange it should have been this one bit of pastureland to attract attention when there are so many lovely scenes throughout the state, but the views and vistas which please the eye, seldom make the best pictures, or even any picture at all from the standpoint of an artistic composition. Here things were just right, not just for one picture, but for a variety of them, so that anyone with an urge for serious picture-taking wanted to try his hand and see what he could get at that extraordinary spot.

If gas rationing hadn’t come along in 1942, the owners might have had to charge admission in self-defense. Even so, the place was such a magnet that photographers used their precious A coupons to get there. When rationing was over, the parade started again. Every summer finds new people seeking it out and old ones back for another try.

One of the earlier visitors to the place was John W. Doscher, who lived in New Jersey at the time and was well known as a pictorialist. He happened to catch one of the birch groups in the right light for a striking picture he called “The White Trees.” It was widely exhibited. After the war, Mr. Doscher moved to nearby South Woodstock where he established the noted Country School of Photography. Now all of his students invariably get to the birches at least once during their courses, thereby adding still further names to the long list of visitors. That list, incidentally, includes nearly all of the well known pictorial photographers in New England and many from other sections.

The years have taken toll on some of the picture set-ups which first made the spot famous. Underbrush has grown up, the covered bridge has gone the way so many have to go, and storms have broken trunks and branches. But even though the compositions change, there are still countless opportunities for the imaginative photographer. It’s that sort of a place.

Artists and painters may have their Motif No. 1 in the famous fish shack at Rockport, Mass., but for photographers visiting Vermont, Motif No. 1 has turned out to be “The Brownsville Birches.” Through their photographs, the beauties of this one particular hillside have circulated throughout the country for thousands to see.
TO TOUR VERMONT IN AUTUMN

It's GREAT

VERMONT
BEAUTY CORNER OF NEW ENGLAND

DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, VLF STATE HOUSE, MONTPELIER, VT.

PRINTED IN U. S. A.
NE PRESS, BURLINGTON, VT.