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Editor: Walter R. Hard, Jr.; Senior Editors: Ralph Nading Hill, Stephen Greene, Murray Hoyt; Contributing Editors: Janet Greene, Samuel R. Ogden; Design: Frank Lieberman; Circulation Manager: Peter W. Sykas; Office Manager: Douglas Bernardini; Photographic Consultant: John F. Smith.

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Published quarterly at Montpelier, Vt., by the Vermont Development Department, Board: Alexander B. R. Drysdale, Carl A. Parker, Richard H. Wadgams, Glendon B. Orne, Walter Foeger, Commissioner: Roland R. Vautour. Per Copy—50c; Per yr.—$2, ($3.50 for 2 yrs.; $5 for 3 yrs.)—Foreign 40c additional per yr.

Printed in U.S.A. by The Lane Press, Burlington, Vt.

Published Aug. 20, 1963
Life in the Creek called Dead

by RONALD ROOD

Photographs by HANSON CARROLL

When you first rest your eyes on Vermont’s largest waterfowl management area, it’s hard to escape the feeling that you’ve been there before. There’s so much that reminds you of places you have visited—if only in fancy—in the past. Except for the lack of odor of low tide and the pounding of distant surf, Addison Dead Creek area could be a patch of salt marsh. With its long expanse of valley bottom stretching out before you, it could be the African veldt. You half expect a giraffe or a herd of zebras to push through the tall grass.

Most of all, perhaps, it puts you in mind of the Florida Everglades. These tall elms that poke up every so often could well be palms or live oaks. Those narrow “leads” through the cattails could be made just as well by alligators or Florida garfish as by quiet Vermont muskrats. And standing on the bridge of Route 17 as it crosses the creek, with water on both sides, you could be on Florida’s Tamiami Trail.

Or so it might seem if you saw the picture in black and white instead of Vermont color, or viewed it on the screen without the benefit of sound. Give it these further dimensions, though, and it becomes unique. Then the Green Mountains flame to the east and the Adirondacks sparkle to the west with just a hint of snow. The cries of hundreds of ducks and geese are backdropped by the buzz-chorus of Fall insects, making their last songs before the frost descends to the valley.

Few who visit these Vermont Everglades turn away disappointed. Spilling out of Addison into the neighboring towns of Panton and Bridport, this Fish and Game Department management area, although interested primarily in the problems of producing waterfowl as a harvestable resource, includes a 70-acre refuge inviolate to sportsmen.

In the refuge you may watch from a special parking ground five types of geese, up to a dozen species of ducks, and many other kinds of waterfowl. At another spot is a public boat-launching area, and here you can back your duck boat or fishing skiff right into the waters of Dead Creek—which is called this, by the way, because it doesn’t normally flow the year ’round. Three earthen dikes hold back the springtime waters to flood a thousand acres of cattail marsh.

Walking on the dikes or canoeing through the reeds, you’ll not see a Florida limpkin, but you’ll probably surprise a great blue heron or an American bittern. You will not spot the rare Everglade kite, but you will be struck by the numbers of hawks in the midst of all this life.

“Just shows you that predators and prey can get along together if they have half a chance for a normal life,” says Robert Fuller, the area’s manager.

Three summers ago, a Sandhill crane caused a traffic jam along Route 17. Tall enough to look many men right in the eye, it hadn’t been reported in Vermont since the 1880’s. Nature lovers from miles around came to see the giant bird. Other traffic tie-ups can occur any time as people stop to look at a doe and her fawns, a swimming muskrat, a puddling raccoon, or perhaps a prowling mink. The strikingly beautiful wood duck, a treehole-nesting species, lays its eggs in neat boxes placed on posts for the purpose in the water. Within hours after hatching, the fluffy babies pop fearlessly out of the nest to land like little corks on the water below.
Over a hundred parcels of land have gone into the making of Dead Creek. Acquisition started back in 1949, and today the entire area covers 2,578 acres. There's an administration house occupied by Manager Fuller and his family.

A few holding pens and ponds take care of injured birds and strays. Maintenance personnel care for the grounds, which are fenced around the “off limits” or refuge portion of the area.

Except for a few pinioned waterfowl, however, the wildlife of Dead Creek knows no fences. At any moment you may start to the sound of hundreds of ducks and geese springing to flight. Few sights are finer than the scraggily V line of Canada geese on an October day. Few sounds are more stirring than their aerial honking. But this, one of Vermont’s eight waterfowl and migratory flyway areas, provides these sights and sounds free. All you have to do is turn down Route 17, one of the area’s main thoroughfares, until you come to the other one—the waters of the Dead-but-Alive Creek.
I was actually in a heated duck blind last fall. Not only heated, but thermostat-regulated so that you didn’t even have to reach out your hot little hand to turn up the heat.

Imagine a hot little hand while duck hunting. In the old days mine used to be so cold I couldn’t have picked up a thousand dollar bill if one had lain there.

Vermont duck hunting in the old days used to demand a stoicism in the face of torture that would have made a Hindu Fakir turn pale. Today a frail little old lady, subject to colds and sinus congestion, could go duck hunting and experience practically no extra discomfort.

The old blind was made up of flat stones, or of cedars woven into a framework. The more lush numbers occasionally had a roof which even more occasionally didn’t leak. Sometimes blinds were built on stilts and you reached them by boat. In a wind, water swished up through the floor with each wave. On a cold enough day your boots and the floor would coat with ice, making any movement while you had a gun in your hand about as safe as Russian roulette.

To pick up dead ducks, if any, you either had trained a dog or rowed out yourself. The dog gambit was fine once the dog’s training was complete. But sometimes you or he would die of old age before you could complete it. In the meantime, with flying ducks sheering off in alarm because dead ones lay in the decoys, your black messenger was likely to sit there with his big limpid eyes looking into yours, his tail wagging, maybe offering you his paw or licking your hand. But definitely not doing any such stupid thing as going swimming in that water. Or if you finally got him into the water, he’d return with the nearest decoy in his mouth wearing the pleased, happy and forgiving look of one who has met with great credit the impossible demands of an unfeeling monster. And he would then shake water all over you.

So you’d row out and get the ducks yourself. And while you were out there you’d see a small flock flying close to shore, obviously intent on decoying. So you’d lie down in the bottom of the boat in the hope that you wouldn’t scare them and that your pal would get a shot. And the
ducks would see you and gain enough altitude so that anti-aircraft couldn’t have downed them. And there’d be an inch of water in the bottom of the boat—which there’s always water in the bottom of a duck boat—which would make its clammy way through your clothing to your skin and torture you throughout the remainder of a miserably wonderful day.

Then there used to be the matter of the care and transportation of decoys. Decoys in those days were amazingly life-like birds carved lovingly from blocks of cedar during long winter evenings. Each decoy had an anchor of some sort attached to its bottom by a hunk of thin rope; for an anchor you used a big bolt or nut or mowing machine guard. You divided up your decoys into the same number of burlap bags that you had hunters, and then you carried them from the car to the duck blind.

You’d try to hold the top of the bag over your shoulder with one hand, pick up your boxes of shells, your shotgun, your spare shotgun, your lunch, the thermos jug your wife sent, maybe even one of a pair of oars, with the other. This could sometimes get out of hand, both figuratively and literally. They once asked an artist friend of mine what he thought of duck hunting and he said, “My word! We carried things!”

For the first hundred feet everything was pretty light and manageable. Then the weight of everything would increase by a sort of horrible geometric progression.

Inanimate shotguns, oars, jugs, boxes, would suddenly come to life and begin to squirm in your arms. Even if you had only one shotgun and one oar, they would strive with all the power of a dowsing rod in sympathetic hands, to form the letter X with each other. Then mowing machine guards, bolts, duck bills, areas of the duck even further south, would begin to gouge. The pain would become excruciating. Boy, was it fun.

What happens now? They use rubber decoys and inflate them when they get to the lake. Your little niece could carry all the decoys you’d need, flat and uninflated, under one arm on a day when she wasn’t actually feeling her best. I even saw one ingenious character using his golf cart to pull two shotguns and a pair of oars upright.

That, you understand, was the easy duck-blind hunting. There was also the “sneaking” of ducks. Sneaking ducks! Now there’s a lost art like livery-stable-managing or street-car-conductoring. And like them, it was the victim of the gasoline engine. Because nowadays if the ordinary duck hunter can’t four-wheel-drive right there, he won’t go there. And he isn’t going to crawl a quarter of a mile on his, if you’ll pardon the expression, belly for the best duck on earth. Never.

There’s plenty of walking and crawling, too. They don’t put bays very close together. After you’ve approached one of them with the caution of a public-enemy about to peek into a State Police barrack’s window, and have found it empty, you’ve got to walk half a mile before you can look into the next one. Chances are you’re wearing heavy boots, long-handled underwear with patio entrance, a couple of wool shirts, and a hunting jacket to carry your shells. You’re also carrying a shotgun. A big heavy shotgun. Sweat pours off you. However, if you didn’t wear that much, you’d freeze to death while you were lying on the snow-covered ground later.

Let’s suppose that in the fifth bay there are ducks. We’ll suppose, too, (though there’s no real reason we should) that when you crane your neck, they don’t turn out to be right down below the bank where you hadn’t expected them and where they have you in plain sight; that you don’t watch them fly away while you stand there in the blue haze of brimstone, a broken and frustrated man.
We'll suppose that they're in the middle of the bay. They are diving for weed roots close to shore. Their position and the diving are, as Madison Avenue duck hunters would put it, plus factors. However, in sneaking ducks there are also minus factors. Big, juicy, garden-variety minus factors in profusion. Always. The minus factors here are that it's an open pasture with no brush, and that the whole works slopes toward the lake so that the ducks can see you and all the pasture at any time.

You work your way back, keeping whatever has been shielding you, between you and the ducks. You circle around behind the slope. Then you move forward cautiously to look over the top, down at the ducks.

Scientists say that a hawk has such terrific eyesight that he can see a mouse from an unbelievable height. Hah! I'd stack a hardened old drake whistler against six hawks anytime. The whistler might be weak on mice, but he could sure see the left eye of a duck hunter stuck cautiously out from behind the trunk of a tree. He could see it three yards further off than your Uncle Ernest used to be able to spot a bottle. Furthermore a drake whistler goes under the theory that if it wasn't there yesterday, this is no place for him.

So you surface behind some grass and an old thistle, and there are the ducks. They pop into sight one or two at a time 'til there are a dozen or more. Then one at a time they dive again 'til they're all under. You have about ten seconds between the time the last one disappears and the first ones start popping out again.

So you pick out another clump of grass and thistles
maybe fifteen yards ahead. The split second the last duck
goes under, you run forward, crouched over, and dive
behind the new clump. You try to become part of the
ground, because there’s no hill to hide you now. You’ve
either got to be mistaken for upland posies or you aren’t
going to eat duck.

They all go under, and you run again. Again you dive
behind your pre-selected cover with a slide that would do
credit to Willie Mays going into second base head first.
Only Willie doesn’t carry a shotgun, the barrel of which
he’s got to keep from plugging. And snow doesn’t scoop
down the front of his shirt. Did you ever lie flat on your
stomach on about a quart of snow between your shirt and
your birthday suit? It’s an experience. Add to this the fact
that you can’t move a muscle, that your cheek is pressed
hard against the cold, snow-covered ground, your opposite
eye is watching ducks through grass blades, your claw-
like hands have stiffened with cold to the point where you
doubt if you could let go of the gun. This gives you some
idea of the tremendous fun that sneaking ducks can be.

They pop out and dive: you run and dive. But their
diving pattern gradually changes for the worse. If it
changes, it’s always for the worse. There now seems to
be less than five seconds between the rear end of the last
duck and the front end of the first. While you’re still
much too far from the water, the two finally overlap.
Then you are stymied.

You decide to inch your way forward from clump to
clump on that part of your anatomy which your wife has
been after you to reduce, moving only when two or less
ducks are in sight.

In spite of a tight belt you scoop snow in at the top of
your pants, snow gets up your sleeves, thistles prick, and
all the time your heart is pounding so from excitement that
it shakes your whole frame and you hope the ducks think
it’s a diesel engine.

Immediately that you begin this new program of loco-
motion, a drake and a hen whistler stop diving altogether.
They’re not sure a clod—that’s you—didn’t change spots
between the last time they dove and this time. They sit
there and look up at you. You lie there and chatter your
teeth at them. The rest of the ducks dive.

You’ve come this far, might as well keep on. But the
inchning forward has to be twice as cautious now. Finally
you arrive, a physical wreck, in front of the bank.
Whistler and whistler’s mother are still on guard. (You
wonder if such a thought, in one who hates puns, isn’t a
sign you’re cracking a little from the strain.)

Now comes the culmination of everything. But don’t
get the idea success is assured. Anything can still happen
and probably will. Your legs can be too stiff to hold you,
or you can fall down the bank. You can trip on a piece of
driftwood on the beach and measure your length. A mo-
torboat can round the point, or a partridge hunter can
appear back at the top of the rise.

And once, after my father had sneaked a flock of ducks
in just this way across a pasture with no cover but a dead
tree at the bank’s edge, with not a breath of air stirring
that tree suddenly let go for no reason and fell with a
crash. The ducks flew away.

But let’s say you’re lucky and nothing evil happens.
You wait ’til all but four ducks—the sentinels and two
others—are under; you don’t dare wait any longer. You
leap up and run down the bank and across the beach to
the water’s edge.

Instantly the four ducks take off; there’s no chance for
a shot at them. Shaking with excitement and cold you
throw the gun up. You point it at the spot where the rest
of the ducks went under. The gun barrel, from your
shaking, is making figure eights.

The ducks come up all right. From underneath they’ve
seen the bottoms of those sentinels leave the surface. They
explode out of water in full flight like Polaris missiles.
And they do it everywhere except where they went under
and where and when you expect them. Some come burst-
ing out instantly. Others swim under water and then
burst out far away, or to one side—any place to make it
difficult.

You have just three shots. You take what you think may
be the best three shots you’ll get. Hitting a duck under
those conditions ranks for skill right along with playing
“The Flight of the Bumblebee” on the violin. After your
gun is empty, two more ducks burst up right in front of
you, the best shots yet.

Suppose you were successful and did kill one. How are
you going to get him? There’s a ridge of ice along the
shore where spray has frozen. It’s a cinch you aren’t
going to swim. And, duck sneaking being how it is, the
wind is blowing away from shore. Always.

So you throw rocks. The idea is to land the rock just
beyond the duck (but not too far beyond) so that the wash
will move the duck a few inches inshore. And believe me
for this business you need to be Whitey Ford and Joey
Jay and a few others rolled into one. You gain a foot, and
then you land a rock on the wrong side of the duck and
lose six inches of your gain.

So that’s duck-sneaking. Understand, I’ve only
scratched the surface on the items that can go wrong. I’ve
had a gun jam, the first shell misfire, and an eagle come
down and pick up my duck after I’d shot it, to mention
only a few.

Why, in the old days you had to be a marathon runner,
an Indian warrior, an acrobat, a trick shot artist and a
baseball pitcher to sneak them. And you had to be several
of these things as well as an arctic-survival expert to hunt
them from a blind.

They just don’t build duck hunters now the way they
used to.
Focus for Health

by RUTH W. PAGE

Photographs by HANSON CARROLL

If you drew on a map of this country a network of the available medical services in the United States—a sort of medical nervous system of Uncle Sam, in delicate lines and spots—one of the large ganglia indicating a major center of service would be at Burlington, Vermont. This is the only such major center located both in a small city and small state.

Since the city’s population is only 35,531 and the state’s is only 395,000, it may seem surprising that the
elaborate structure of a modern medical referral center should blossom there. Burlington is well located, however, to serve the ill or injured between Boston and Montreal, and it cares for patients not only from Vermont but northeastern New York.

To a rural farmer or shopkeeper the presence of the Mary Fletcher and DeGoesbriand hospitals, the Medical College and the State Health Laboratory in Burlington is reassuring. If he is ill, he goes to his local doctor, who can often treat him in his office. If the doctor decides he needs hospitalization for x-ray, operation or other treatment, he goes to his nearby community hospital which eighty per cent of the time can handle the case readily.

normal, the questionable, the “maybe-'tis, maybe-t'ain’t” case.

In medically-blessed Vermont any family doctor within a radius of 150 miles of Burlington, whose bump of suspicion tells him more elaborate assistance is needed, has only to pick up his telephone to activate the sensitive nerve center at Burlington and put it at his patient's disposal.

But the family doctor doesn't step out of the picture when the referral center comes in; he keeps in touch every step of the way. New findings are discussed with him, and he is the guarantee that the human patient is not forgotten in the maze of machine-produced data. The men and machines at the teaching hospitals are the servants of the family doctor and his patient, and what they learn becomes a part of someone's private medical history, as well as the hospital's statistics.

How it started

The germ of Burlington's phenomenal medical growth was sown when the Medical College of the University of Vermont was established in 1804 by Dr. John Pomeroy. The UVM Medical College was the seventh founded in the United States and the first to be established at a state university.

The College's special personality is partly the result of its controlled size. With a student body of under two hundred, the school's faculty and students have an almost uniquely close relationship. There are 192 on the faculty altogether, or one teacher for every student, although some of the teachers work only part time.

Nevertheless, department heads, top men in their fields who might be several times removed from the students in a large institution, teach regular classes, get to know the students, and offer that sense of personal contact with excellence which turns schooling into education.

Graduates of the medical college express their warm sense of gratitude and affection for their alma mater in hard cash, as well as in occasional lyrical letters to the Vermont press. With a total body of living alumni numbering only 1500, the College received a total of half a million dollars in alumni gifts between 1957 and 1959.

A case of mutual attraction

Where there are medical students, there must be professors who are doctors and researchers. Where research goes on, and the teaching process of modern medicine threads through the maze of knowledge developed the past few decades, advanced facilities must be provided. These facilities and this research in turn attract top-notch doctors, and so the complex grows.
While her floppy dog waits, Robin goes under anesthesia.

Mother receives reassuring news of the operation.

Ear-nose-throat surgeon does tonsillectomy.

Happy ending for a little girl plagued by tonsillitis.

Back with her friend, Robin sleeps peacefully.
Medical College: duty to the whole state

The University's medical college is preoccupied not only with day-to-day work in medical study and care, but with helping the entire state in as many ways as possible. As Dr. Robert J. Slater, dean of the college, says, "We want to do everything possible for rural Vermont, in addition to offering the services of our staff for consultations. Our doctors are in contact with every small community through their affiliation with the State Health department, the Cancer Society, Heart Association, Arthritis Foundation, Tuberculosis Association, and so on.

"In addition to attending refresher conferences held here at the College and in the hospitals, many of our staff participate in meetings held in various areas of the state, serving to bring local doctors in contact with the latest work in their fields, so they can ask questions and make suggestions.

"Because Vermont taxpayers support the Medical College so well, we feel a strong obligation to assist in every possible way the growth of a complete health program. For instance, we have a new Department of Community Medicine, headed by Dr. Kerr White, which is studying every aspect of family care in Vermont. Students work during their four years in medical school with a small group of families, getting to know their medical needs.

"The new Department of Psychiatry is helping to develop the state mental health programs, and in this we work with other state agencies and doctors throughout the state."

New research center

In April of this year, too, the National Institutes of Health made a long-term grant of more than one-and-a-half million dollars to the College of Medicine to set up a new Clinical Research Center at the Mary Fletcher. This new clinic, opened this Summer, receives patients who present challenging medical problems. It keeps them for prolonged study and treatment with no cost to the patient himself. The federal grant pays for the total care of the patient, and gives the doctors and other specialists opportunity to study his illness from every possible angle. This combination of intense research and superlative care is expected to lead to better understanding of diseases which now present real medical puzzles.

Planning future growth

Doctors and administrators staffing both of the large hospitals seek to avoid needless duplication of service and expensive equipment. Each must have the machinery necessary to a community hospital, as both serve the Burlington area in that capacity. To go beyond that, however, a tri-institutional committee reviews plans for expansion at the medical college or either hospital. It studies staff and mechanical needs and tries to allocate services so that time and money are not wasted.

Many UVM Medical College doctors, all connected also with the teaching hospitals, have undertaken successful, pioneer work in various fields.
Dr. R. M. Peardon Donaghy, for example, with a team of neurosurgeons in his department, has been exploring the use of hypothermia techniques.

**Hypothermia explorations**

recall “human hibernation”

Hypothermia means lower temperature. It has been found that at lower temperatures the body’s need for oxygen is reduced, because at six or eight degrees below the normal 98.6 degrees the body lives at a slower rate. Scientists in many places have used this knowledge in various ways, and some of the pioneering in the field is being done at the Burlington medical center.

Suppose a serious accident victim is brought to the hospital. He has received a heavy blow on the head. He is unconscious, paralyzed and can neither swallow nor cough. His bladder and bowel functions are disturbed. He is breathing irregularly. He cannot see, hear or feel. He is living and that is all.

This victim’s damaged brain needs oxygen to survive, yet almost everything about his injury conspires to defeat him. His labored breathing means he is inhaling less oxygen. Inability to cough or swallow traps what oxygen his lungs find available. The lung and bladder condition makes his temperature rise, which in turn makes him need oxygen more.

Hypothermia will reduce the competing demands for oxygen in the patient’s body. Placed between refrigerating blankets, his need for oxygen is cut, as his temperature falls, by one-quarter to one-half. As this goes on he is checked for shock, fractures, the state of his lungs, heart and brain. Blood and other tests are made. Within three hours of his entry into the hospital he is in hypothermia, his fractures are stabilized, any blood clots are removed from inside his head, and if need be the air passages to his lungs are short-circuited.

Many refinements of hypothermia technique are expected, and new devices developed. Some of these will come from Burlington, Vermont.

**Sewing in a microscope**

Dr. Julius Jacobson, now at Mt. Sinai hospital in New York, worked with a team of associates to develop microsurgery techniques in sewing together blood vessels and even nerves. Aided by instruments adapted to microsurgical specifications by a local jeweler, he was able to take the first steps in expanding the process, which previously had been used only in ear surgery.

Dr. William M. Stahl, Jr. and several other surgeons now carrying on Dr. Jacobson’s work are analyzing methods of reconstructing blood vessels as small as toothpicks. A new, double-binocular microscope called the “diproscope” is helping doctors in coronary repair. The new instrument has two sets of viewers, allowing both the surgeon and his assistant to see the operative area at the same time under magnification up to forty times. Thus they can handle sutures of incredible fineness, and stitch delicate smaller vessels without blocking blood flow. The work has been greatly aided by a private foundation. Already many have visited Burlington to see the microsurgery and adapt it to their own medical centers.
Fluothane anaesthesia, which has been used in the recent past abroad, was further developed in Burlington by chief of anaesthesiology Dr. John Abajian and his associates. Four medical centers pioneered in the United States with the new anaesthetic, and, like Dr. Abajian, found it an improvement over older techniques. It is non-explosive and relatively nontoxic. The patient “goes under” quickly and revives without unpleasant after-effects.

Heart surgery

Dr. Donald Miller’s open heart surgery at the Fletcher employs the pump oxygenator, which takes over the job of the patient's own heart and lungs during prolonged surgery. It has been used with increasing confidence in the past four years, and the development of a team of collaborating surgeons, physicians and nurses has brought the complex management of cardiac surgery—one an exceedingly risky procedure—to a point where it can be handled much more routinely.

Research in both major and minor matters goes on constantly at the teaching hospitals, as it does in all major medical centers. Two areas of current research have to do with surgery techniques on the coronary artery, and a study of the value of using blood flow rather than blood pressure as one of the tests of a patient's health.

In the department of radiology at the Fletcher a wonderful new machine, which rejoices in the name of Television Monitored Cinefluorographic Unit, is used for fluoroscopic studies. The patient lies on a table which can be tilted by the doctor, who sits in the adjoining room protected from radiation by a lead-shielded wall and window. He sees the x-ray pictures on a small television screen in front of him, speaks to the patient through a small intercom, while at the same time 16mm. movies are being made of all that he views on the screen. The films may then be examined with other doctors and referred to at any time.

Lester Richwagen, Mary Fletcher administrator, points out that as physicians grow accustomed to using new and complicated techniques, they adopt them for use in community hospitals. This frees the referral centers to continue development of new ideas.

Special therapies

Unusual in a small, rural state is the modern Vermont Rehabilitation Center at the DeGoesbriand hospital, for care of patients sufficiently crippled to need long-term physical therapy to retrain muscles and limbs so they can resume useful and happy lives.

Here, in addition to the doctors, are trained personnel who work with the patient's family during his rehabilitation, therapists who with the assistance of machines help him to learn to tie his shoes, cross streets, negotiate
steps, open doors, and do all the other tasks which the able-bodied take for granted.

In this center's widely-used Speech and Hearing Clinic husband and wife team Frank and Vilma Falc analyze degrees of hearing loss, offer corrective measures where possible, and study speech difficulties with an eye to correction. Here, too, teams of doctors, nurses, therapists and social workers cooperate with the family doctor and with the patient's own family. The "team care" idea in health work is strictly twentieth century. It stems from the necessity of doctors to specialize, in order that each may understand and keep abreast of new discoveries in at least one field. No one now can be an expert in all.

Department heads at the Fletcher stress teamwork ideas, too. The specialists working on a certain case hold frequent meetings and pool their knowledge to plan further treatment.

Parallel to the staff of intensely-trained doctors is the staff of nurses and technicians, many of whom specialize as do the doctors. Most of the nurses are graduates of the Mary Fletcher Hospital school of nursing, just as most of the DeGoesbriand nurses graduate from that institution's Jeanne Mance school of nursing.

Because of the complexity of machines and care now required, certain nurses are specialists in cardio-vascular surgery, some in the care of the critically ill, some in other specialties. There also are trained technicians to baby the complex machinery on which human lives depend.

Everybody helps

Lay members of the community, junior and adult volunteers, assist in non-medical care of patients, from flower arranging to wheelchair-pushing, from information service to clearing dishes in the coffee shop. Gray Ladies act as nurses' helpers. Others volunteer as patient aides, accounting assistants or entertain ambulatory patients.

Finally, Vermonters support the medical center, not only with their taxes which help support the medical college, but with generous personal contributions to both hospitals. Vermonters can truly say that they, too, carry the team care concept of assisting the ill—all the way from home to hospital and back. The individual supports the hospital with volunteer work and contributions. The hospital reciprocates with personal, family-doctor care for each patient.
"World's fastest, fanciest gunslinger, knife and tomahawk thrower" reads the card of Paul La Cross, 47, an affable, energetic native Vermonter. The card reads true, though the only thing Western about the man is that he lives in St. Albans.

La Cross has made his living for 24 years doing the fantastic things with guns, tomahawks and knives shown in this photograph. Many times challenged, he has never been defeated at the fast draw or in any form of target shooting. And he has met the best of them.

As a boy Paul was better than a good shot, but guns were never more than a hobby with him until one day he saw an exhibition of trick shooting at a carnival. He decided he could do just as well or better, did, and set there-upon to his career. He performs on television, at fairs, rodeos, circuses, sports and Wild West shows; has doubled in movies for shooting and knife-throwing scenes.

Paul's reflexes are extraordinarily fast. His record for the timed fast draw is 7/100 of a second. This means that on a given signal he must reach for and draw his .45, cock it, shoot and hit his target in less time than it takes to blink an eye. But reflexes are not the whole story—the rest is constant practice and hard work. All this calls for great discipline and devotion to his trade, and enormous physical stamina.

Along the way Paul has dabbled in many other things—organized and ran his own carnival, operated his own night club, had his own photography business. Currently, besides his gun and knife slinging, he is business manager and advance man for Continental Carnival.

Wife Beatrice and daughter Paula claim their work is easy—all they have to do is stand still or be spun on a wheel to have knives and tomahawks thrown at them. None of this makes them the least bit nervous. They never have been hit, although once or twice the knives have pinned their clothes to the backboard. Fifteen-year-old Paula is a crack shot in her own right. The other two children, married and gone, have made Paul a seven-times grandfather. But it will be a long time before the old rocking chair gets this grandfather. He is, after all, a Vermonter.
Bottom left: A .45 bullet has grazed and lighted match in wife Beatrice's mouth.
Top left: The deuce of diamonds is split in mid-air by rifle bullet.
Top: A small water-filled balloon is hit from rifle sighted by mirror.
Lower right: Paul throws knives around Paula, whirling on "Wheel of Death."
Center: Fast-draw artist Paul's record is 7/100 second, with accuracy.
Top right: Rapid-fire rifle shoots Indian picture in less than two minutes.

Picture was taken in multiple exposure with 4 x 5 view camera in large, darkened room with flood and strobe lights. It took five hours to make.
This is November

Photographed by Sonja Bullaty and Angelo Lomeo

Not yesterday I learned to know
The love of bare November days
Before the coming of the snow

ROBERT FROST
And silence, like a poultice, comes
To heal the blows of sound.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

AUTUMN 1963 • 19
We saw leaves go to glory,  
Then almost migratory  
Go part way down the lane,  
And then to end the story  
Get beaten down and pasted  
In one wild day of rain.

ROBERT FROST
The frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

ROBERT FROST

The terrors of the storm are chiefly confined to the parlor and the cabin.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON
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The Hues of Mid-Autumn

The location of this and the following ten pages of color photographs are given on page thirty-three.
REPORTS:
On Music’s Children

SAMUEL R. OGDEN

To music lovers everywhere the present burgeoning of musical interest is a source of satisfaction. A growing liking for good music is shown by the ever-mounting sales of classical records and by the increasing number of civic orchestras. But in spite of this apparent cause for rejoicing all is not well.

A great change has taken place in the last thirty years. Symphony orchestras, many of them supported by public funds, are springing up everywhere. In addition, within the public school systems all over the land there is an ever increasing emphasis on the development of marching bands.

But orchestras, which should play an important part in the cultural life of our country, cannot survive without a supply of competent players. High school bands are not the means whereby this problem will be solved. Tubas, trombones and saxophones find little place in the literature of classical music, and marching band pieces do not qualify as great music.

This briefly is the background to a pair of extremely interesting Vermont musical developments, designed to cope with the orchestra player shortage.

The growing lack of string players was a matter of deep concern to Dr. Alan Carter, head of the Middlebury College music department and founder of the Vermont Symphony. And the difficulty which talented and interest-
ed kids experienced in obtaining either instruction or instruments—other than within the scope of school marching bands—distressed Gunnar Schonbeck, professional musician, composer, instrument maker and now member of the Bennington College musical faculty.

Both Carter and Schonbeck were determined to improve what seemed to them a serious situation. Each was lucky to find help and support. Carter found Stanley Eukers of Plantsville, Connecticut and Schonbeck found George Finckel, fellow music faculty member at Bennington.

My first visit was to the North Bennington music store which is the nucleus of Gunnar Schonbeck’s musical activity. A nice looking young girl, who turned out to be Mrs. Schonbeck, directed me to their home. “Just walk in,” she said, “and stamp on the floor, for he will be in the cellar workshop.”

For a while we talked together in Schonbeck’s living-room. Then we descended to the shop where he makes and repairs musical instruments, something he has been doing since high school days thirty years ago. Hanging by its scroll from a wire was a fine ‘cello made by the famous old Boston umbrella maker whose name I have forgotten. An ancient and battered valve trombone lay on a bench. There was an antique lute, an experimental trumpet, a viola with its back off—item upon fascinating item, each in some stage of construction or repair. I discovered that Gunnar could make or invent or repair any instrument not too big to get into his shop.

As we talked and the impressive measure of his musical experience was revealed I found that in no other place where he had taught—at Smith or Wellesley, at the Longey School of Music in Boston or even in the Army—could he find the combination of circumstances that would allow him to do what he felt had to be done.

The only way music can become a truly living thing, he (continued on page 34)
About this picture

First Snow on Camel's Hump,
Huntington—Stephen Warner.

Stephen Warner's Camel's Hump view was shot during a sudden break in the weather during a generally dreary Fall color period in 1957. His location was near the junction of the Huntington and South Hinesburg roads. It was filmed on E-1 Ektachrome with a 4 x 5 Speed Graphic using 127 mm. lens and Pola screen.

Prints for Framing

This is the first in a series of large seasonal color pictures which will appear in Vermont Life. Unfolded prints of the scene, carrying no backing printing, are available at 60c each, plus 20c postage and handling cost.

Autumn Color in this Issue

Page 25—Pomfret—Arthur Griffin
Pages 26–27—Vernshire—Jack Breed
Page 28—Grafton—Arthur Griffin
Page 35—South Woodstock—Lud Munchmeyer
Pages 36–37—South Peacham—Winston Pote
Page 38—Plymouth Union—Richard R. Frutchey
feels, where each will be able to play the instrument of his choice, where the making of music is paramount, is under conditions which permit no restrictions for lack of music or instruments or instructors—and where financial considerations can be forgotten. The pupil must sit next to and play with the master, serving an apprenticeship.

Here at Bennington College Schonbeck found such favorable conditions. The delightful music store on the tiny green in North Bennington now serves the double purpose of commercial establishment and a catalytic agent. For here, Gunnar swears, people come and shed their timidity and inhibitions to an extent they never could in a formal music studio or salon.

I drove there one horrible Saturday-morning when all the roads were a glaze of ice, expecting to find no one. But I was wrong! Two kids were playing clarinets with Gunnar, transposing an 18th Century trio sonata for strings by Pachelbel. Then a group of four came in: a boy of seven or so and a girl a bit older, these with plastic "tonettes," an older girl with a tin fife, and a girl of perhaps ten with a recorder. They sat down before a blackboard upon which Gunnar wrote their parts. Then, with infinite patience, he counted and tuned and explained. Out of this unlikely combination he drew music, which, while it might not entirely charm the ear, did entrance the soul. When these were finished a brass group came in—two boys with small trumpets and a housewife with a trombone. So the fascinating pattern unfolded.

These Saturday sessions are open to everyone, and they run all day long. You need bring nothing but your devotion—no money, no music, no instrument. If you have the desire, all else that you will need will be supplied. Here, with this tiny shop as its center, and with Gail and Gunnar Schonbeck and George Finckel supplying the stout hearts, is an unique musical development which has been going on more than two years now, and which probably has no exact counterpart anywhere else on earth.

Besides these Saturday programs, in which some sixty or seventy area youngsters take part, there is a Tuesday evening session for brasses, and on Friday evenings the strings come into their own. On Thursday evenings two high school string quartets gather and all play together. As though this were not enough the Bennington Music Guild has been formed and is sponsoring more groups at four high schools of the region.

Not long after the Bennington experience I went to Middlebury to meet another dedicated musician and teacher, and to listen to the Green Mountain Fiddlers. On this Tuesday afternoon Alan Carter and I slipped into the Community House annex and quietly sat down as seven boys and two girls drew their bows across their violins. These sweet, earnest faces, the graceful postures of six to ten-year-old bodies, the enthusiasm and understanding of the middle-aged teacher, the group of mothers with assorted kids who sat and listened, formed a picture I shall never forget. But most incredible of all was the sound that these kids made. It was truly astonishing, large and full and, as they played in unison, remarkably true in intonation.

Here were strings for you! And as they read the notes on their stands one could tell that this was no bored routine. This was true participation and joy of accomplishment. The feeling was even more distinct when, after supper, we listened to the three separate sections—the violins, the violas and the 'cellos, play together. With just a bit more than a year behind them the music that these kids were making was astonishingly good, and they were having such fun at it. One piece, a merry dance, their conductor Stanley Eukers let them repeat over and over. And as it was repeated there seemed to develop an almost hypnotic involvement in which the players became literally infused with the music. They were in the midst of a true musical experience.

There were fourteen of them playing—seven violins, three violas and four 'cellos—and after a piece by J. S. Bach which followed the dance, they went to work on a Concerto for Strings and Orchestra by Vaughn Williams, which in due course will be given as a concert piece with all the groups playing together. It is obvious that the Vermont Symphony will have its strings.

This Eukers-Carter method was evolved in 1957 after a discussion in Middlebury of the scarcity of string players. Stanley Eukers, who was a musician and teacher in Connecticut, went home determined to put the plan in effect. He set up his group there, the Red Barn Fiddlers, and after he had worked with them for two years, the Vermont Symphony Association brought Eukers and the kids to Vermont for a series of concerts and a WCAX television program appearance. This tour proved to be such a success that the Association decided to underwrite a similar group in Vermont, this to be known as the Green Mountain Fiddlers.

Since October 1961 Eukers has been traveling back and forth each week between Connecticut and Randolph, Vergennes and Middlebury, Vermont, where pupil-parent-teacher groups have been established. Plans are now under way for more groups to be established. The Fiddlers are helped by the Vermont Symphony Association which pays Mr. Eukers' salary and supplies the instruments.

There are other exciting musical activities in Vermont besides these. I know of such in St. Albans, Brattleboro, St. Johnsbury and Chester. But these two seem somehow unique. There is a good bit in common between these operations—the one in Bennington and the Green Mountain Fiddlers. Each starts with the pure love of music as its motivating force, and neither one excludes any child who has no more than that.
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“Massachusetts wanted to obtain unemployment insurance reports from a Mr. Frost.”

My Business with a Poet

by JAMES W. McLAM

ONE MORNING in September, 1955, my boss called me to his desk. One of my duties as a Vermont Department of Employment Security field auditor, is to call on employers who have failed to submit quarterly reports on time.

“Next time you work the Middlebury area, try to clean up that Ripton case,” he said. “Pick a dry day. You may have to get back into the woods. Employer is probably operating a pulp or lumber job.”

I had scanned the assignment that morning. It was a request from Massachusetts concerning a “delinquent.” Massachusetts wanted assistance in obtaining delinquent unemployment insurance reports from a Mr. Frost.

The following week I checked the records of a Bristol employer, and completed a couple of Middlebury assignments. After lunch I drove to Ripton. I stopped at the general store because I had discovered that country stores are a prime source of information, and because there are not many places in Ripton—population a very scattered 131—to stop for information.

One room was both store and postoffice. Storekeeper and postmaster appeared to be one and the same. He was putting behind the mailboxes. I walked to the store side and he followed. That’s what I wanted. When postmasters and storekeepers are one and the same, they are apt to be much more talkative as storekeepers. I bought a candy bar. We talked of weather and deer hunting.

Then I asked, “Do you know a Robert Frost who has a pulp or lumber job up this way?”

He scowled, closed one eye and sighted me with the other. I felt as if he were squinting at me through the sights of a high-powered rifle.

“No, I don’t know a Robert Frost in the pulp or lumber business. I know Robert Frost the poet.”

I managed to ease my embarrassment by saying that I had thought Mr. Frost the poet lived in New Hampshire, and by handing the man the Ripton assignment memo. He read it, gave me clear directions to Frost’s home.

Then he said, “Now, you will probably not see Mr. Frost. Mrs. Morrison is his secretary. She takes care of all his business affairs. Mrs. Morrison is the one for you to see.”

I agreed wholeheartedly. I thought, “I don’t want to face such a famous man on such a mission. He’s probably temperamental and grouchy, may even kick me off his place.”

I thanked the storekeeper (I later learned that he was M. Edson Day and that his wife was officially the postmaster) and started for my car.

At the door his parting words were, “Of course, if you do happen to see Mr. Frost, you will find him a very nice gentleman to talk with.”

“Maybe,” I thought. “But Mrs. Morrison is the one for me to see.”

Following directions, I soon came to a house at the end of the dirt road. It was an ordinary house. A woman appeared at the kitchen door. She replied in answer to my question, “No, Mrs. Morrison is in Massachusetts.”

In a brave voice, hoping Frost, too, was in Massachusetts, I inquired, “Is Mr. Frost here?”

“Do you have an appointment?”

“No.”

I was relieved. She would not let me see him.

But I had no sooner thought that than she pointed past the house and said, “Follow that path up through the field. You will find Mr. Frost at the cabin.”

I marched, wishing Massachusetts would track down its own delinquents. After a few steps I heard barking.

“Ah,” I thought. “He’s got police dogs. I wish I had my leather gloves.”

The cabin came into sight. “That doesn’t look like a poet’s cabin,” I thought. “Make a good hunting camp.”

Peering through the porch screen door were two dogs, breed unknown to me, but their small size shrank their threat to zero. A man appeared, but the doorway didn’t fit him.

“He doesn’t look like a poet,” I mused. “He’s too big.”

He leaned toward the little dogs and gently spoke to them. I could not hear the message. He wheeled around and went into the cabin; the little dogs followed.

I placed my business card in the palm of my hand and held it in my pocket so as not to fumble when I faced him. On a chair near the door rested a wood-handled brass bell, the kind farm women use to call menfolk from fields, and country
school teachers use to signal the end of recess.

I wondered if he used a code system. Maybe one bell called Mrs. Morrison; two, the hired man. "Maybe when I tell him why I came he'll ring for the hired man to escort me off the premises. What's taking him so long? Maybe he's going to ignore me."

In two or three minutes—it seemed longer—he stepped out and stood silent, as if to say, "The deck's clear. I've done my part. I've come half way. Next move is up to you."

I stepped forward.

"Mr. Frost?"

He nodded. I knew it; I just wanted to test my pitch. I handed him my card, explained briefly my task, emphasized that this was entirely a Vermont favor to Massachusetts.

Frost said that he knew nothing of the matter. The storekeeper had been right. Mrs. Morrison was the one for me to see. She attended to all such details. He mentioned a Cambridge address, suggested that "those Massachusetts people" contact her after November first. She would answer all their questions.

Noting the street address, I realized I had not been chewed by dogs, he had not ordered me off the land, nor had he growled at me. I recalled the storekeeper's parting words but I was not absolutely sure yet.

So I put my hand on the latch as if to leave, then said, "Mr. Frost, when I left Montpelier this morning, I did not know I was coming to see you. I thought I was going to call on a Mr. Frost in the pulp or lumber business."

He showed a comfortable smile and replied, "There have been times when I have wished I was in the lumber business.

I said, "I thought you were living in New Hampshire."

He replied, "Frost drove Frost out. I did live there, but one year we had a frost every month of the year. That was too much frost for Frost."

By word or motion he invited me into the cabin. We sat, and I felt called upon to inform him I knew nothing about poetry. If he had invited me in to discuss literary matters I wanted him to understand that my knowledge of the subject was very limited.

"Mr. Frost," I said, "since high school I've read few poems. On the way up here from the store where I learned I might see you, I tried to recall some of your poems. These three came to mind: one about birch trees; one about a stone wall; one about a man with a hoe."

He looked pleased as he said, "You pass your examination very well."

He then told me of a recent occurrence. A business man accompanied by his daughter, a college freshman, had come to visit with him. During their conversation the man had remarked that his daughter was a great admirer of Frost's poetry.

"I asked her which of my poems were her favorites." He paused, then with a grin continued, "She could not name one." He thought it a good joke. I agreed. He had just told me I had passed my examination very well. Later I learned my score had not been too. "The Man With The Hoe" is by Edwin Markham.

Frost inquired about my home. I told him I lived in Barre. He told me he had recently visited a graveyard in Barnet, or Peacham, and had stopped on route and admired the Robert Burns statue on Barre's Spaulding High School campus.

"That was a nice thing Burns' friends did for him," Frost said.

He had also been interested, he said, in the granite memorial of the Sleeping Sentinel, William Scott, the Groton soldier pardoned by Lincoln. It stands opposite Scott's birthplace off U. S. Route 302 just west of Groton.

"Do you have a family?" Frost asked.

I told him of my wife, Louise. "She enjoys poetry, and when she had the use of her hands she often wrote little poems for her own enjoyment and for my pleasure. She has multiple sclerosis. I think Elizabeth Browning's poems are her favorites. Elizabeth Browning, too, conquered fragile health."

Frost rose and went into the other room where the little dogs were. Maybe he'd bring them out. I looked around and decided that Frost didn't read newspapers. There were none; only books—many books—on plain bookshelves which lined the wall. And there was one magazine: Vermont Historical Society Quarterly.

Had I known I was that day to visit America's most loved poet, I might have prepared intelligent questions, or memorized lines from his poems.

"That might have pleased him," I thought. "But it's too late now. Wonder if he believes in God? Or what he thinks of unemployment insurance. What do poets think about anyway? I guess they just mostly dream. Is Frost on the Ripton checklist, or does he vote in Massachusetts? Is he Republican or Democrat? I discarded that as a subject of conversation; he might be a Socialist. Finally I gave up trying to think of any intelligent questions. It occurred to me he might just like to visit with someone who came without any questions, without rehearsed dialogue, with no ulterior motives.

The sun pleasantly warmed the cabin. I felt warm and content, and I experienced no awe that I was the guest of a man whom coming generations will honor. I was just visiting a friend—who might well have been a pulp and lumber operator.

When he returned, I said, "Mr. Frost, this is a nice place. Looks like good deer country."

He acknowledged that he liked it. He talked about the countryside, the forests, the trees, the hills, the pastures full of stones. As he talked I knew that he had seen on hillsides, and in forests, worlds my eyes never viewed.

In his hand he held a book. "Perhaps he will read one of his poems," I thought. "I hope so. I can with pride tell friends that one afternoon I sat alone with Robert Frost and he read poems to me."

But he handed the book to me and said, "I'm sorry this is damaged. I've used it in my campaigns. It's the only one I have here. Perhaps your wife will like it."

I asked him if he would write his name in it. He took the book, and with pen from his shirt pocket wrote, "To Louise McLam, with best wishes from Robert Frost, Ripton, Vermont, Sept. 19, 1955."

With stumbling words, I thanked him.

He asked if I was of Scotch descent, and said his mother had been born in Scotland. "As a boy I lived in Ryegate," I told him. "Ryegate was settled by Scotchmen. And because of their fondness for oats, one of the first mills for grinding oatmeal in America was established there."

I also told him of the Scotch Covenanter Church in North Ryegate, one of two still active in New England. Until a few years ago, admittance to The Lord's Supper at that church was by "token" distributed to the faithful the previous day. This was a custom handed down from the time Charles II tried to eradicate the Covenanter Church from Scotland.
Frost said that he had few relatives in this country. He had been very pleased by a recent visit from a cousin from New Zealand. He related some experiences at Dartmouth and Amherst, then went on and told me about teaching at a private academy, north of Boston. There was no high school in the academy town. Local students attended the academy. The town paid their tuition.

"We taught Greek and Latin at the academy," he said. "Every so often the town officials would threaten to withdraw support and to send their scholars elsewhere. The townspeople wanted the teaching of Greek and Latin discontinued and replaced by more practical subjects."

With a fatherly expression on his face Frost paused a moment, then continued, "The faculty always complied with the wishes of the town officials, but when things quieted down we went back to teaching Greek and Latin."

Of all he told me, my imagination was tickled most by his reminiscences of the academy town's postmistress who was very interested in the Boston Transcript's weekly page devoted to genealogy.

"She was always tucking little notes in my mailbox," Frost said. "I guess she thought I ought to know more about my ancestors." He paused a moment and concluded, "She was a busy woman; a friendly little woman too." (I've since searched his poems and found one which expresses esteem—and exasperation perhaps—for that friendly postmistress.)

I glanced at my watch. It was time to go. The poet accompanied me to the door, and there raised his hand wide open, shoulder high. I obeyed the signal to stop. He went to the shelves. He ran his fingers over a stand of books as a small boy runs his fingers over the piano keys. He removed one and, without a word wrote in it, "To Louise McLam from Robert Frost."

The paper-back "Anthology of American Verse" had his picture on the cover. I do not actually remember thanking him. But Louise would cherish these books always, even though she could never hold them in her hands. Nor could she focus her eyes sufficiently well to read his poems. I would read them aloud, and this second book I would hold at just the right angle and distance and she could see his picture. I would tell her that Robert Frost had sent his picture and best wishes.

As I said good-bye I thought, "That was a nice thing Elizabeth Browning's friend did for her. She may have had multiple sclerosis too."

At the mailbox I had a choice—to go home the valley way, or over the mountain. At the top of the mountain I stopped. The sky was clear; the sun lighted distant mountains. Cattle fed in far pastures.

I looked at the book Mr. Frost had used in his "campaigns." I saw that he had placed four neatly torn pieces of white paper as bookmarks at certain passages. They still mark the pages he designated to remind me of a most memorable afternoon.
The old Peavine’s whistle, now three decades silent, still lingers in the memories of many in the White River Valley.

A Whistle up the Valley

by WES HERWIG

The rails are long gone, but the slow trains of the “Peavine” line still rattle through in the memories of the White River countryside.

“Through the valley of the White,
Winding in and out of sight,
Run two streaks of iron rust,
Loved by few, by many cussed.
And along this rusty way,
Creaking, groaning, crawl each day,
A few old cars they don’t dare load,
Condemned long since by a better road.”

The White River Railroad was never an important cog in the nation’s transportation system, as may be gathered from the foregoing lines by a bard who was its contemporary. Its last train chugged off into the sunset thirty years ago, and its right of way has long since been reclaimed by nature. But its shrill whistle will echo long through the folklore of the narrow valley it traversed.

Crossing and recrossing the sparkling stream from which which its name derived, the White River Railroad stretched its nineteen miles of light iron between mountain-girt Rochester and a connection with the Central Vermont at Bethel. In its time, and in its locale, it touched the lives of everyone—and the pocketbooks of many. Serving faithfully, if sometimes fitfully, its little trains played a colorful role in an exciting era of economic and social development in Vermont.

Rochester had long visualized a highway of steel up the valley. Talc, in abundant quantity, was lying in the hills. Marble and granite were there, ready to create great buildings. Timber and farm products sought expanding markets. Only a railroad was needed to ignite the fire of growth and prosperity.

Railroad fever had hit the area as early as 1875 when a proposed route was surveyed, but this initial effort failed. Enthusiasm flared again in 1896, and a group of leading businessmen obtained a charter for a rail line. Two years

Engine No. 2, which served its youthful years on the Maine Central, is running up the valley at its top operating speed of twenty miles per hour.

The author acknowledges the kind assistance of Fred Tuttle and Laurence W. Leonard in assembling photographic material.
later they succeeded in interesting H. G. Burgett, who had built an electric railway from Stowe to Waterbury, in promoting the venture. With promises of financial aid, Burgett organized the **White River Valley Electric Railroad**.

The “electric” idea was dropped almost at once, and a reorganization later deleted the “valley” from the corporate title, but to valley folks the railroad was always the *Peavine*, by reason of its twisting, winding course.

Burgett got off to a valiant start. He ordered eighty-five carloads of rails, imported four hundred Italian laborers and in 1899 the project began moving out of Bethel. The route required so much fill and terracing, so many trestles and bridges, that the company reached the end of its money long before it reached Rochester. At Gaysville, one third of the way, construction came to a halt.

A score of up-valley citizens pledged $17,000 to move the work along. But when the rails neared the next station at Stockbridge these funds, too, were depleted. The construction gang headed for other parts. The company quickly passed to the hands of a receiver.

The towns of Rochester, Stockbridge, Pittsfield and Hancock, and some private individuals, had guaranteed the builder a subsidy of $55,000, on the Yankee condition that the line should be in and operating by December 30, 1900. When the receiver, Rufus Sawyer, took over, time was fast running out on this offer. Determined not to lose the bonus, Sawyer managed some shrewd financing and started a big push towards Rochester.

Winter struck early in 1900. Blizzards and sub-zero temperatures made the work extremely difficult and slow. Torches burned along the right of way and track crews worked into the winter nights laying the last four miles of ties and rails on top of the snow. The first train shrieked a note of triumph just three days before expiration of the bonus limit.

The one-car inaugural special was drawn by engine No. 45, the once-proud and now aging “Governor Smith,” bought from the **Central Vermont** for $1000. Bedecked with flags, it carried a group of local dignitaries on a round trip to Bethel. Silver spike ceremonies were held at Rochester, and thunderous dynamite blasts rocked the countryside to signal realization of the dream.

But with construction difficulties at an end, the infant railroad began a struggle for existence. The line started off doing a lively business, but physical defects caused by the hasty completion became increasingly evident by Spring. And the bonus money Sawyer had counted on for improvements was withheld by the towns. They claimed that the railroad was not “substantially built and thoroughly equipped,” as stipulated, by the deadline date.

“Passengers over the road tell of the ‘dee-lightful,’ and possibly dangerous, sensation felt when the ballasting of ice gives way and allows passengers to feel the drop to terra firma,” the **Rochester Herald** reported.

Under steady traffic the roadbed and equipment deteriorated rapidly. Derailments became commonplace. Trains were always late—often six to twelve hours behind schedule. Trainmen often worked 100 hours a week to keep cars on the tracks and the trains running. Passengers found their trips far from prosaic, as evidenced by this news item in 1901:

“This morning the train started out with a small stock of water that sufficed to carry it to Cobb bridge. Here a hillside brook was dammed and passengers and trainmen constructed a line of wooden troughs to run the water by gravity into the tender. The plan was successful, but the train was quite late getting to Bethel.”

About this time appeared a many-versed poem, “Rhyme of Rochester’s Rickety Railroad,” the anonymous author later revealed to be the son of a local minister. It expressed
public reaction to the crumbling service. Quoted in part at the beginning of this story, the ode tongue-lashed the harrassed line further:

“The lame old train leaves Bethel
On schedule time they say,
It gets to Stockbridge near to night
And Rochester next day.”

* * * * *

“The train cannot run when it's icy,
It cannot run when it's slush,
And it isn't very often that
They run the thing, by gosh!”

The verse found immediate local favor, and many an old resident who learned it along with gems from Long-fellow and Whittier can still recite it from memory. The chorus to the poem goes:

“Oh, railroad of the valley,
You are slow, slow, slow,
And ere the robins sing again
You will go, go, go.”

The poet's prediction appeared to be coming true, when on March 6, 1902 the local weekly reported that receiver Sawyer had discharged the help and “the railroad is closed indefinitely.” According to the account, “the train is cornered above a washout at Stockbridge and the roadbed is seriously damaged . . . which makes a very discouraging outlook.”

But Sawyer was a dauntless man. He extracted a new batch of subscriptions from Rochester businessmen and commenced repairs. In May the trains were pounding and puffing up the valley once more. The joyous occasion precipitated another lengthy poetic effort. The lines, revealing that the ridiculed railroad had been sorely missed, closed thus:

“So rose the railroad, to the joy
Of almost all the town,
And those who hate her can go
Away back and sit down.
She means to live; we hope she will.
With all her faults we love her still.”

Floods and litigation plagued the White River line the next several years. A March freshet took out the long Stony Brook bridge in 1903. Until a new one was ready in October, trains from both ends of track met at the site and exchanged goods and passengers to complete the trip. High water in 1904 destroyed six hundred feet of trestle at Gaysville and operations were suspended for three months. Squabbles with land owners over right of way and suits with the towns over the subsidy were continually in the courts.

It looked very much as though the Peavine were doomed, when, late in 1906, the State Railroad Commission or-dered it closed for safety reasons. The loss of service, erratic as it was, soon brought a change of heart in the valley. Rochester voted to settle its bonus case; other towns did likewise. The land damages, involving seventeen parties, were quickly resolved; rehabilitation began. Freight trains got the green light after fifteen weeks of idleness. But it was more than a year before passengers and the U. S. mail rolled again.

A young Dartmouth graduate, Edward S. French, destined to one day become president of the sprawling Boston & Maine system, was named general manager of the White River Railroad in 1908. French had a rude introduction to railroading Peavine style. He was among the passengers aboard a coach which left the rails, pitched down a bank and tipped over. But luck rode the Peavine, too, and there were no casualties.

Under French's guidance the short haul railroad entered a period of useful and profitable service. The roadbed and bridges were put in good condition. Better motive power was procured; a new engine house went up at Rochester. In two years business on the Peavine doubled.

The marble quarry at Rochester, then disgorging tons of beautiful Verde Antique, was a steady shipper. Car-loads of tale, as many as seven a day, went out from the mills, then described as “the largest in the world, nothing in France or Italy excepted.” In season, forty-five to fifty cars of Christmas trees originated on the line. Additional revenue came from the huge granite quarries at Bethel. For a time, Peavine locomotives operated over the Bethel Granite Railway, a six mile spur, bringing rough stone from the hills to the finishing sheds below.

With improvements in roadbed and schedules, passenger trains on the White River enjoyed increasing patronage. More than 25,000 passengers were carried in a year, and as many as 1900 fares were collected in a single day. Appearances of minstrel and stage companies at Randolph's music hall, circus day in Bethel and the State Fair at White River Junction all prompted excursion specials. In its heyday, from 1910 to 1914, the line ran as many as four passenger trains daily.

The White River Railroad might well have been labelled an “uncommon” carrier. Its train crews were friendly and obliging to the fullest. Stopping to deliver a package from the drug store to some wayside farmhouse, to discharge a fisherman at a remote trout pool, or to pick up school children when the weather was bad were all in a day’s work. Waving to Charlie Cloran, veteran conductor, became a firmly entrenched ritual.

When the cars in the “down” train left the rails one morning near Gaysville, a group of women who were to catch the Central Vermont’s southbound at Bethel were thrown into nervous dismay. But conductor Cloran saved the day. Herding the excited females aboard the locomotive, which had held to the tracks, he ordered full steam
Peavine Panorama

A very early scene at the northern terminus, Rochester depot, shows the train crew draped on the locomotive “John R. Tupper,” named for the road’s first general manager. Note link and pin coupling.

Below is No. 5, bought new in 1913, which became a favorite in the valley. Most of the Peavine’s four locomotives and dozen assorted cars came second hand from other railroads. The little gasoline car “Hummingbird” was purchased in 1911 for $4200. It cut both operating costs and running time.

Below is a typical derailment scene from the early years. But perhaps because of slow speed the Peavine never had a fatality.

ahead. A bit dishevelled, perhaps, but on time, the ladies met the connecting train.

Years ahead of custom, the Peavine catered to commuters by instituting a policy of half fares for people who travelled every day. When the line bought a gasoline passenger car in 1911 it proudly proclaimed itself as “the first railroad east of the Mississippi” with such a conveyance. The diminutive, trolley-like buggy darted up and down the valley, earning a name train title: “The Hummingbird.”

A large steam-powered coach was added to the equipment about 1915. Still in the experimental stage, its steam connections burst frequently and its noxious fumes caused passengers no little discomfort. Once, when the car failed to make its stop at Stockbridge depot, the alarmed conductor hurried to the cab to find the engineer slumped over the controls, overcome by escaping gas. The Stanley car had a short life on the Peavine.

The greatest flood since the coming of the white man left a mad welter of destruction up and down the White River valley. The morning of November 3, 1927, revealed that the railroad was in ruins. From Rochester to Bethel hardly a foot of trackage escaped punishment. At Gaysville, where half the village was obliterated, more than 1000 feet of right of way were non-existent. Fixtures from the vanished station were found a dozen miles downstream.

Graphic evidence of the damage was brought back by a survey team: “Next 600 feet of line: rails and ties entirely gone, roadbed washed out from four to five feet deep. Next 462 feet: washed out one foot deep. Track 140 feet off roadbed. Next 420 feet: 45 foot high bank slipped into river. Track in river.”

Weeks of isolation following the flood brought an awareness of the railroad’s real importance. Without heavy transportation, industry was curtailed, and $27,000 in wages were gone in a few months. Farmers, unable to move a big crop of certified seed potatoes, took a $10,000 loss.

Early in 1928 the Rochester Citizen’s Railroad Committee was formed to crystallize the overwhelming sentiment for a restored railway. In a special town meeting,
Rochester voted 346 to 17 to bond for $30,000 to help rebuild. Valley industries pledged $92,000. Businessmen and villagers offered money and materials. Farmers were eager to donate labor and the use of teams and tractors.

News of the brave effort spread. Many, who had never heard of the obscure short line before, wanted to contribute. The daily mails brought checks and pledges of $10 to $1000. Within six months the goal of $160,000 was over-subscribed. In proclaiming the good news, the Herald was stirred to comment editorially:

"It seemed a futile undertaking, but here it is, accomplished. Other stricken railroads have summoned and secured help from the state. Rochester did not even ask it. She has managed the job herself."

It was just turning dusk on January 1, 1929, when Rochester harkened to the whistle which came back. Just 29 years and a day after the first train arrived, two locomotives trailing a handful of cars steamed into the little mountain community as church bells tolled a happy welcome.

For a time the resurrected Peavine was a busy railroad. There was much marble waiting to be moved out. Warehouses and lumber yards bulged with products ready for market. But things were never to be as before.

The financial crash of 1929 and the depression that followed hit the area hard. The talc mines closed; the big mills were dismantled. Soon the marble quarry went unworked, and activity in Bethel granite came to an end. Trucks began taking what business was left. As passenger traffic practically disappeared—only 426 tickets were sold in 1932—operations became limited to one mixed train daily.

Finally, on April 30, 1933, the dispatcher marked up the Peavine's last trip. Without fanfare or ceremony, a tired old train left Rochester and made its graveyard run along the river and beyond the meadows to a rendezvous with the junkman. Once more a valley scribe took up his pen to write about the railroad. This time it would end with a sorrowful eulogy expressing the feelings of many people who would not soon forget the magic music of a whistle up the valley:

"With honor it takes its departure
And we of the White River vale,
Bow our heads in silent tribute
As it goes down its last long trail."

"And if there's a place to go to
After it's had its day,
I hope the station master
Gives the Peavine the right of way."
The Quick Brown FOX

by RONALD ROOD

Illustrations by ROBERT CANDY

He's been known to jump into a picnic fireplace when hardpressed, or to run through a herd of cows. On one occasion, he added a new note to a church service as he dashed through the open door. His ability to outwit his enemies is so well-known that "crafty as a fox" is about as smart as an animal can get. Yet my neighbor on the hill has had one jump recklessly out of the roadside bushes at him, barking like a little dog.

"That red fox sure didn't show much caution. If I'd had a stick I could have clobbered him. He kept jumping up and down and barking that sharp little bark. He was so close that I could see the cat-like pupils of his eyes. It made me nervous, to say the least, because a fox can have rabies.

"I looked around for something to use for a weapon in case he attacked. Then I saw what his trouble was. Sitting by a stump were three little pups. Big black ears pricked up, cute as they could be. They were so interested in their father's antics that they forgot to hide. No wonder daddy fox was upset. He chased me clear down the road.''

There are plenty of tales of the sacrifices made by animals for their young. But, like almost anything else you could name, the red fox may go them one better. Many a woodsman has known of a young, inexperienced fox which was almost run to earth by an enemy until its mother dashed ahead of the very jaws of death at the last moment. Then, while her little one got a much-needed rest, she soon led her tracker harmlessly away.

Life begins for this sharp-faced little wild dog early in April. From four to nine blind, helpless "kits" are born in an abandoned woodchuck burrow or beneath the roots of an old stump. New England's rocky soil being what it is, and foxes being somewhat less than enthusiastic about digging dens of their own, the same spot may be used for years. Also, more than one vixen may occupy the same burrow. However, marital lines are strictly drawn; foxes apparently have one mate for life or at least for the current season.

After three weeks, the kits begin to appear at the entrance to the den. They romp like puppies. Oddly, the
den entrance is usually exposed for all to see. “For several
summers there’s been one a few hundred feet from the
front of our store,” Donald Brown told me. “The Lincoln
people often watch the pups playing up on the hill right
in broad daylight. When visitors ask what they are, I
can see they don’t believe me when I tell them they’re
real wild foxes.”

At first the dog (male) fox does most of the grocery
shopping. He is joined by the vixen as the family gets
older. As the kits growl and pull at the food, the ground
becomes a regular play pen, strewn with bones and litter.
Then the parents begin to drop food a little distance away
so the kits have to search for it. Finally the return of the
parents is a signal for a regular little hunting party. Thus
the kits rehearse for the same thing in the real life that
soon will follow.

By late summer, the kits are quite well grown. They
begin to trade the woolly light puppy fur for the glossy,
dense coat of the adult. The black “stockings” they wore
as babies are somewhat less conspicuous.

Though the usual color of *Vulpes fulva* is reddish-
yellow or fulvous above (hence its name), and whitish
beneath, there are many variations. One kit may be a
normal color while its litter-mate may be a “cross-fox”
(red-brown with black on the shoulders). There is also a
yellow fox, of a tawny lion color. The rare black fox is
merely a valuable color mutation, while the silver and
platinum are most prized of all.

“The highest price ever paid for a skin of any kind in
this country,” according to a fur dealer, “was eleven
thousand dollars—for a single platinum fox skin. And a
breeding pair of silver foxes once went for thirty-five
thousand. Of course you don’t see fur prices like that any
more. And most fox pelts are ranch-raised, because they
can be taken in their prime.”

As soon as it gets its dense winter coat, the red fox
begins an almost endless struggle—to keep it on its own
shoulders. For years the little 10 to 14 pounder has been
the quarry of tons of hunters, hounds and horses. Nor does
it always come out second best. On one celebrated hunt,
100 marksmen took part. Result: two men hit, not a fox
touched. On another, nine hounds were lost when the fox
made a sharp U-turn at the edge of a cliff.

Add to these an irate poultry farmer with a shotgun,
a trapper with his careful “fox sets” and a farm dog out
to show who’s boss, and you can see why a fox which
lives more than ten years is a real old-timer. Vermont has
no closed season except for pursuit with dogs.

“They get as much fun out of life as any animal I know
even if everybody’s against them,” the fur-dealer said.
“They will make a fancy trail for a dog to follow—up on
fences, down the middle of streams, apparently through
culverts though they've really jumped up on top. Sometimes they'll cover twenty miles. Then they'll circle back to watch the dog at work.

"I used to make my rounds by horse and buggy in the old days," he continued. "There was a little fox that always followed me for about a mile, probably about the limit of his own home territory. When I stopped, he'd stop. When I started up, he did the same. Like a little shadow. Or like a little dog. Maybe the first pet dog of a caveman was a sort of wild fox."

Doglike, too, the creature that the French trappers called Renard often visits clumps of grass and fence posts, leaving a spot of urine as a memento of his passing. The next fox to come along dutifully adds his own scent to the base of the tail supply further odor. Sometimes farm dogs will follow a fox trail, investigating each signpost and solemnly joining the club in turn. In fact, there are cases of actual friendships built up between Rover and Renard. Apparently, however, no fox-dog litters have ever been proven.

Foxes have been known to play with cattle in the fields. They run around and around just inside the fence, with the cattle after them. The cattle could run faster and so could the fox. It seems to be just a game on both parts.

Admittedly, however, the red fox sometimes enters the farmyard for a less commendable purpose. Finding a bonanza of a hundred sleeping chickens or turkeys, it finds itself unable to resist. The next day the farm is on the warpath to avenge a dozen hens. Soon the red fox finds a price on its head.

Several states (including Vermont from 1890–1906) have placed bounties on foxes. Often the reward is paid when the claimant presents a fox tail to the town authorities as evidence of a kill. However, bounties have been less than successful on several counts. First, overenthusiastic hunters sometimes forget state boundaries and bring in fox tails from a state which doesn't pay a bounty to a state which does. Second, far-seeing characters who knew a good thing when they saw it would cut the tail or "brush" from a captive fox. Then the 40-inch fox—now only about 2 feet long—runs off to raise more foxes, complete with tails.

Third, bounties aren't that simple an answer to overproduction. "In Wisconsin, where bounties have been in effect for 75 years, foxes are as prevalent as ever," a county agent informed me. "In the south, fox-control campaigns have turned out to be quail-control campaigns, too—by mistake. Foxes hold down rats and mice which, in turn, eat the eggs of ground-nesting birds. Here in Vermont, mice in a meadow eat standing hay. They eat corn in a cornfield. They girdle young apple trees in winter. And a fox will eat a mouse every chance it gets."

A friend told me of watching a distant fox at a mouse nest. "It held its pose for so long that I began to doubt it was a fox at all," he said. "It must have been there for fifteen minutes with one leg raised, poised over that clump of grass. Then it jumped right onto the nest like a flash. It was just waiting for that mouse to make a false move."

Foxes stalk grasshoppers like a cat during their infrequent daytime jaunts, for they'd rather hunt at night. They relish beechnuts, acorns and almost every kind of berry that Vermont produces. They love rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks, woodchucks. Once I saw a flock of pigeons craning their necks out in the middle of a cornfield. There lay a fox as if dead at the base of a corn shock, just waiting for one to come too close. And, in spite of Aesop, they love grapes—sour or not.

For years, the red fox has been kept in check by wolves, coyotes, lynx and bobcats. It also seldom visits the deep forests. Here in Vermont, however, we're short on all the predators named except the bobcat. And we've carefully provided lots of open areas—second growth brush and abandoned farms—which are just to the fox's liking. Trapping pressure has let up, too, with wild pelts seldom worth the taking. Add to this an ability to get along even within city limits (it's been recorded from New York, Chicago and Boston,) and it's not hard to understand why the red fox's recorded range takes in all of North America except for the deserts, southeastern and western coasts.

With living conditions perfect, however, something has to step in, or we'd be overrun with foxes. One powerful check is in the form of a tiny mite. This almost-microscopic creature burrows beneath the skin, causing mange. Two years ago I picked up a red fox in Starksboro, blind, starved and almost hairless with the disease. As it passes by contact, mange weakens the fox and other diseases quickly cut big populations down to size.

Renard is full-grown by the time he is six months old. Then the family breaks up. The fox lives a solitary existence, sleeping almost anywhere the mood strikes him, until some time in February. Then one night his yapping bark will be answered by the cry of the vixen, which has been likened to "the agonized scream of a demented woman." Family duties will begin about 51 days later.

In summer the fox grows fat on all manner of meats and vegetables, often burying what he cannot eat and returning to it later. In winter he will dig for frozen apples, or pounce on a grouse sleeping buried on a snow-drift, or lie in wait for a snowshoe hare. He may even stuff his stomach with gravel and sticks when the eating is poor.

If a dog comes snooping too close, the light-footed fox may lay a careful trail over the thin ice of a nearby stream. Then while his pursuer flounders in the frigid water, he finds a snowdrift and curls around and around until he makes his bed. Carefully he lays that warm, insulating brush over his paws and sensitive nose while his big cousin takes his dampened enthusiasm homeward.
First the sweet or sour apples are shoveled into the old cider press. Photographed by Hanson Carroll

CIDER JELLY

This tasty, native concoction, which is at least as old as New England, is seldom found these days. But Augustus Aldrich in Weathersfield Center is turning out the same fine jelly his father began making in 1882.

Cider jelly starts with the chopping of the apples into a mash—sour or sweet apples, depending on whether mild or tart jelly is wanted. It takes three hours to turn down the old cider press, but the slow action produces a superior flavored cider, Mr. Aldrich feels. One pressing yields about 200 gallons of clear, fresh cider.

A bushel of apples is needed to produce about four-and-a-half pounds of jelly. But first the cider must be boiled down, and here the ratio is about nine to one, which is a lot easier than the maple sap-syrup reduction, which is at least twenty-five to one and often more.

Mr. Aldrich runs his cider into a maple syrup evaporator or conventional design, but with one important difference. Since the cider’s acids would attack galvanized metal the evaporator pan and utensils are made from copper.

The cider is boiled briskly down to the jellying stage, and this is the critical point. Mr. Aldrich confirms his experienced eye with frequent hydrometer readings. Then at the crucial moment, the hot, liquid jelly is poured off into containers of glass or pottery, or into wooden firkins. That’s all. Nothing has been added to the pure apple product.

The jelly cools and sets quickly. Now this delicious and practically imperishable delicacy is ready to embellish hot buttered toast, garnish pancakes or to be served with roasted meats, eaten with doughnuts, used in sandwiches . . . and of course to make the famous cider jelly pies.

Here, too, at the other side of the year Mr. Aldrich makes maple syrup of high quality. His autumn harvest, from the apple orchards, has run as high as two tons of jelly in a season, although most Novemberers end with about a thousand pounds of the mild and tart jellies stored away in one- and three-pound containers.

Augustus Aldrich and his father before him have been making cider jelly the old way for 81 years.
Bill Newhall slowly turns the cider press crank while Mr. Aldrich, above, dippers fresh cider from under the press and at the evaporator, right, takes a boiling sample for hydrometer test. Below he pours hot, still liquid jelly in jars before it sets.

Here are two recipes for Cider Jelly Pies as the Aldrich family has been making them for more than 80 years:

Cider Jelly Pie with Meringue

Mix in top of double boiler:
- 1 cup cider jelly
- 1 cup hot water
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 T. butter
- 2 beaten egg yolks

Heat to the boiling point and add:
- 4 level t. cornstarch mixed with a little water

Continue heating and stir until thickened. Add chopped nuts if desired. Pour into 9-inch baked pie shell. Cover with meringue and brown in hot oven.

Two-Crust Cider Jelly Pie

Blend: 2 T. butter
3 T. flour

Add Gradually: 1 cup boiling water
3/4 cup cider jelly
1 cup sugar

Cook and cool
Add 1 beaten egg
Bake with two crusts
Mistletoe in the Maples

by KAYE STARBIRD

With drawings by ALDREN A. WATSON

This summer I drove by the farm I used to visit as a little girl. I followed the back road at evening over Barnum’s Hill until I came to my grandfather’s place on the river. It was hard to believe the house was occupied by strangers. Outwardly, nothing had changed very much. My grandparents were both dead, and usually that seemed real enough. But for the moment I had the feeling Grandfather was just off doing chores, and I found myself slowing the car, so I could see whether Grandmother was sitting in her red rocker on the north porch. Although the house was smaller than I remembered, the barns and buildings still needed paint, and the lilac tree leaned—as always—against the front door no one ever used. Down in the polished water, the peepers were still singing or sobbing—whatever it is they do—and the old sound reached out and filled the little world of the valley. As I drove by the west meadow, I noticed someone else had planted fruit trees, and they had died again.

I turned the car around down the road at the Bensiger tenant house where the Evie family used to live. I can’t say the tenant house had fallen into disrepair, because it was always like that, with the tarpaper roof sagging and some of the windows stuffed with cardboard. But the grass had finally struggled up through the packed earth dooryard, and the house was empty. GloryEllen didn’t come out—or Myrna or Myron. I knew they wouldn’t. They had been gone a long time, even longer than I; and no one ever knows where families like the Evies go.

Grandmother disapproved of the Evies on sight. We were out on the porch shelling peas the day they moved in, and her initial opinion was one she never really changed. My father’s mother was a thin little hen of a woman, who dressed in patched aprons and house dresses with faded sprigs of flowers on them, and wore her white hair parted in a path down the middle and anchored with two tortoise shell combs. Although she was kind enough, when she found time for it, she had two New England habits which she considered virtues. One was the habit of thrift no longer prompted by necessity, and the other was an instinctive distrust of anything new. She had lived all her life in or around the valley, where change came slowly if at all, and her ignorance of the ideas and people beyond the river made her suspicious of anything unfamiliar. She held on to what she knew, whether it was information or possessions, and it never occurred to her to discard either a warped saucepan or an outmoded prejudice.

Her attic was a musty obstacle course of crippled furniture, worn-out clothing and dusty copies of the Farmer’s Almanac, all quite useless. Sometimes on rainy days I used to climb the stairs, hoping to find some sort of treasure hidden in the clutter. There never was anything. Just rain trying to get in the windows and flies trying to get out. The cellar was in the same state of crowded confusion, with old jars and crocks piled on the dark floor and nicked pitchers hanging from the ceiling—like stalagmites and stalactites that had been there since the beginning of time. When I was little, I thought the cellar was exciting, because it smelled of pickles and doughnuts and sprouting potatoes. But eventually I realized it was simply a dark cave where it was wise to duck your head and be careful where your feet went.

Grandfather was a big quiet man who liked to save things as much as Grandmother. But he never explained why he built new buildings without pulling down the old ones—or why he kept obsolete trucks and wagons and scythe handles. Grandmother was always quoting maxims like “Waste not, want not” and “A box of buttons eats no bread.” The only time she lost interest in quotations...
was when the rheumatiz got her. Then she would sit around saying she wished the Good Lord would take her; she was ready to go. To me, this attitude seemed disloyal to Grandfather, but apparently he was used to it.

"Don't mind your Grandma, Kathy," he'd say to me, "She's jest jawin', She ain't got time to die."

It was hot the afternoon the Evies arrived, and quiet—except for a tree toad whirring in the elm by the porch and a cow mooing and the sound the peas made plonking in the collander. Every time I flipped a pea onto the floor by mistake, Grandmother's face took on a pained expression. I knew she considered my family wasteful—like all city people—and I believe I was unconsciously trying to retrieve my parent's reputation when I scurried after the peas. Grandmother was just saying that eleven years old was time to show a little responsibility, and clinching her point with her own version of the grasshopper-and-the-ant theme, "Sing and borrow, starve tomorrow," when an old pick-up truck clattered by the house filled with beds and blankets and assorted Evies. They were singing.

Grandmother turned her head the way a chicken does when it's listening.

"Hm," she commented through pursed lips. "Looks to be a hard lot. Packa gypsies, likely."

The truck banged down the hollow and up the rise to the Bensiger tenant house. There, the new family scrambled out and started unloading. We could see seven or eight of them darting about like the skipper bugs on top of the river, but we weren't near enough to distinguish their faces.

"Gee, look at all the kids," I said, delighted at the prospect of playmates. "Why don't I go down and help them settle?"

"Them people settles the way dust does, Kathy," Grandmother informed me scornfully. "Not like what you're used to. Look at you. You're all sweat, and your pigtails want pinnin'. Go fetch a hairpin from the commodity, and red up a mite before your grandpa comes in."

I didn't dare argue, so I held the screen door open long enough for a few flies to get in before I let it bang shut behind me. Grandmother hated flies. Then I scooted through the kitchen and sitting room and up the stairs.

When I reached the front chamber, I sat down on the bed and pulled the lace curtains aside in order to get a better view of the happenings next door. Three figures were leaving the yard there and starting to run down the road toward our place. They kept running until they came to the edge of our lawn, and I saw that they were children—two about my size and a smaller one. The older ones were wearing knickers and had bowl haircuts, so I guessed they were boys. But the youngest child had on a dress, and her blonde hair hung straight to her shoulders. All three were barefoot, and I remember envying them, as they slowed to a stop near the mailbox, hesitated, and then dodged like Indians behind the big sugar maple.

They weren't very well hidden, and I studied their various gestures with wonder and interest. After what appeared to be an involved council on strategy, the bigger children pushed the small girl out into the open, and she started to tiptoe around toward the north porch, glancing back from time to time to check on directions and look for signs of approval. The other two made encouraging faces.

I forgot my hair and ran quickly down the stairs, but—even so—the child reached the porch before I did. As I hurried through the sitting room toward the kitchen, I could hear her confident voice greeting my grandmother.

"I know you," I heard her saying. (And to this day I regret that I couldn't see Grandmother's face.) "You're Kathy, the kid that visits here. Mrs. Bensiger said so."

This mistake in identity struck me as so hilarious that I had to stay out of sight until I could finish laughing. Grandmother's chair slid to a stop, and I heard her gasp.

"Sakes, you give me a turn," she said finally in an injured tone. "And it ain't likely I'm Kathy, not with my white hair. How come your ma lets a young one like you come down the road alone?"

"I'm bigger than I was," the child replied. "I was four yestiddy. My name is GloryEllen, and we live here now. We have a lovely house. It's got a pump in the kitchen."

This information didn't seem to impress Grandmother. "Well, your ma shouldn't ought to let you out alone, jes-same," she admonished sternly. At that moment I pushed open the screen door and she added with some reluctance:

"This here's Kathy you were lookin' for."

The little girl was quite beautiful, in spite of her dirty dress and uncombed hair. She had wide-apart blue eyes that looked straight at me.

"Hi, Kathy," she said in a poised, friendly way, as though she had known me for years.

"Hi, GloryEllen," I answered. "What happened to the rest of the kids?"

As I spoke, two heads bobbed up over the end of the porch near the gooseberry bushes, then disappeared again. Grandmother lurched.
“That’s the twins,” GloryEllen said. She caught the uncertain expression on Grandmother’s face and continued in explanation. “Twins is kids that’s both eleven.”

“Twins,” retorted Grandmother, “is also kids that scare a body to death. Tell them to come out.”

GloryEllen walked over to the edge of the porch and addressed the gooseberry bushes.

“I found Kathy,” she announced matter-of-factly, “and another girl with white hair that says ‘come out.’”

Grandmother looked as though she were being plotted against. I knew she was in for a shock when she got a good view of the twins, and I hoped she wouldn’t embarrass everybody by showing it.

The twins stood up and stretched. Then they sauntered around to the steps, as casually as though they had just decided to pay a call on old friends.

“Hi, Kathy,” one of them said. “Hi, Missis.”

The two were even more disreputable-looking than they had appeared from the window. Although they had the same blue, clear eyes as their sister, their faces were smeared and perspiring, and their blonde hair was shaggy and snarled in spite of the bowl haircuts.

Grandmother tried to act natural and hospitable, but the effort was too much for her.

“How in time did you boys git here?” she asked.

One of the boys giggled and hid his face in his hands.

“Don’t mind Myrna, Missis,” the other one said. “She’s laughing because she ain’t a boy. She’s a girl.”

Grandmother took a closer look, and so did I. Myrna stopped giggling and let us inspect her.

“I have a blue satin dress and hairbow,” she ventured.

Grandmother was unreasonable about the nasturtiums. Even though it was perfectly clear to the rest of us that Jamber and not GloryEllen was at fault, we couldn’t convince Grandmother. I think we all realized we were wasting our time by trying. She obviously considered our explanation of pretend-friends an outlandish fiction.

She turned to GloryEllen and said severely: “You know you picked the flowers, don’t you?”

The child held the straggly bouquet tight in one fist and said to herself, “She’s talking to a friend of hers named Jamber. Ain’t she, GloryEllen?”

GloryEllen nodded and went on picking.

“I don’t see anyone with her,” I said.

Myron dropped his voice.

“Jamber ain’t the kind of friend you can see,” he explained, peering at his little sister to make certain he wasn’t being overheard. “GloryEllen made him up. Only she don’t like you to say so. He’s got blue-striped ears and long black hair down to his belly. Sounds awful, don’t he?”

He resumed his normal voice. “Hey, GloryEllen,” he called. “Don’t pick no more of them flats.”

“Myron,” said GloryEllen. “Jamber! You heard Myron! Don’t pick no more of them flats!”

Apparently Jamber didn’t mind too well. GloryEllen tried to excuse him.

“Be quiet,” she pointed out. “He says one more red one is all.”

“O.K.,” said Myron. “But then he’d better quit. Here comes Missis.”

Grandmother was unreasonable about the nasturtiums.

Ain’t you, GloryEllen?”

The child held the straggly bouquet tight in one fist and stoutly shook her head. Then she sat down on the grass and buried her face in the skirt of her dress.

“Please, Missis,” Myrna said, putting an arm around her sister’s shoulders, “leave her be. She didn’t mean no harm.”

“My ma should ought to learn her not to tell fibs,” Grandmother preached self-righteously. “It’s plain knowledge that one falsehood mothers many. Seein’ she’s so ashamed, I won’t say nothin’ more, but she’d best not do it again.”

GloryEllen stayed in retirement, but Myron spoke up.

“She don’t know what ashamed is, Missis,” he said, snapping his knuckles. “She jest feels bad. Ma don’t like you to say so. She jest feels bad. Ma don’t care about them other things.” There was a short silence while he gazed thoughtfully at the backs of his hands. Then he looked up.
“Ever see a wart?” he asked Grandmother.

Grandmother was caught off guard. She opened her mouth to speak, then thought better of it. With an exasperated shrug, she turned her back on us and started down the steps toward the garden.

Myron waited until she was out of sight before he said in a loud, cross tone: “Now see what you done, Jamber! Got GloryEllen into trouble again! You jest say you’re sorry, or I’ll send you home.”

GloryEllen raised her head cautiously. When she saw Grandmother was gone, she mumbled tentatively, in the voice she loaned Jamber: “Em sorry, GloryEllen.”

“O.K.,” Myron said, “That’s better. Jamber says he’s sorry, GloryEllen.”

“Jamber ain’t really bad,” the little girl said, looking happy again. “He only likes them red flars is all.”

We included Jamber in all our activities after that. Except, of course, when Grandmother was around. Myron, who had a native sense of diplomacy, told GloryEllen that Missis was too old to know anything about boys with blue ears, so why didn’t Jamber just sit in the golden glow and hunt for lady bugs when he saw Missis coming. GloryEllen seemed to understand the wisdom of this. Other times, when we were catching tadpoles or crickets, we were careful to get enough for five of us, instead of four. And if we only had four lard pails for blueberries, we’d find a big leaf for Jamber to pick into. He usually ate his berries, anyway.

In the beginning, Grandmother tried to discourage my friendship with the neighbors. She even wrote my parents, but Mother’s reply was a disappointment. She saw no reason I couldn’t play with the Evies, providing they were clean, healthy children.

“Well, they’re healthy enough,” Grandfather commented, when he read the letter. “But I can’t say as they’re any too clean.”

I knew I’d better act before it was too late. That afternoon, I presented the situation, fairly tactfully I thought, by confiding to the twins that Grandmother was the worst person I’d ever known when it came to baths and things. “She thinks everyone has to be clean all the time,” I said. “Otherwise she just won’t have them around.”

Myron immediately saw the seriousness of the problem. That evening, all the Evies began going down to the river to bathe. Every night we’d see them traipsing across the fields about eight o’clock, Mr. Evie carrying the baby, GloryEllen and the twins dancing around Mrs. Evie, and sometimes the two bigger boys who hired out over to Cammville strolling along behind. We couldn’t tell much about Mr. Evie except that he was a tall, stooped man; and Mrs. Evie was tall, too, and didn’t wear shoes.

Although I wasn’t allowed off our property, the three Evies arrived every morning and were around most of the day, so it didn’t really matter. Sometimes they went home for meals, and sometimes they waited outside until I finished eating. Now and then, Grandmother invited them to dinner, giving them odd jobs to do to pay their way. They worked willingly at whatever she suggested, more to be obliging than to earn a meal. Myron never sat down at the table without washing his hands noisily at the sink and drying them with a flourish, hoping everyone would notice. If the children didn’t like what we were eating, they refused politely, saying they reckoned they’d eat later; the food was real good at home.

Occasionally, when they came down, they brought Odella, the baby, in a box nailed onto an old wagon. They’d say their mother was tired and they had decided she needed a little rest. The six of us (counting Jamber) would play house, and Odella would laugh.

When Grandmother realized the Evies were inevitable, like snow or potato bugs, she decided to make the best of the situation and civilize them. She talked Myrna into letting her hair grow and gave her an old pair of my gym bloomers, so she could stop wearing the glass beads for identification. Once when she was cleaning out the clothespresses, she put aside some odds and ends for the children to take home. Among other things, she presented them with a pair of Grandfather’s patched and mended trousers, a green bandana one of the former hired men had left behind, a ruffled blue silk woman’s blouse, and an outgrown dimity dress of mine. Also, a hat with pheasant’s wings on it that we all admired.

“Gee,” breathed Myrna. “Ain’t that a beautiful hat?”

“Well,” Grandmother said, “it’s old style, but the feathers kept good. I thought your ma might like it.”

Carried away by the heady influence of her new gen-
elaborate on each one and whether it had shoes to match.

This one brief fling at philanthropy pretty much ruined Grandmother for any future attempts along that line. When the Evies appeared at the door the next morning, she nearly choked on her coffee, and even Grandfather stopped eating his mush long enough to exclaim, “God-awmighty.”

GloryEllen and the twins were clean and pleased-looking, and I remember thinking Myron looked particularly handsome. He had slicked his hair down with water and was wearing Grandfather’s pants, which seemed to add to his stature. With his natural resourcefulness, he had scissored the pants to the proper length and gathered them in at the waist with a piece of frayed clothesline. The ruffled blouse completed his ensemble, and besides making his blue eyes bluer—gave him a cavalier appearance that was both unfamiliar and intriguing.

The dimity dress was very becoming to GloryEllen, and although it came to her ankles and was pretty wrinkled from lying in the drawer for so long, I thought she looked like a little princess. Myra still had on the boy’s shirt and my gym bloomers, but she didn’t seem to mind. She had brightened her old outfit with the green kerchief, and was wearing the hat with the pheasants’ wings tipped smartly over one eye. As a final, inspired touch, she had put two jar rubbers on her arms for bracelets.

I don’t know what Grandmother would have said if Myron hadn’t spoken first.

“Ma says to say she’s beholden to you,” he announced, speaking for the group and pressing at the places where his hair was beginning to dry out. “Everything fits real good. Myrna plagued for the hat, so Ma said ‘wear it and enjoy it, even if it ain’t too tasty.’”

Later, when we were alone, Grandmother had a number of derogatory remarks to make about Mrs. Evie. But at the time, so far as public speaking was concerned, she was outclassed.

I never tried to change the Evies, because in most ways I considered their habits a lot more sensible than mine. They ate when they were hungry, they slept when they were tired, and they never wore shoes. I realized their grammar was different, but then, so was Grandmother’s.

I recall one evening, when the peepers were throbbing like a great orchestra in the river, and the sky was full of color. We had grown tired of swinging in the hammock and were sprawled out on the front lawn talking. The twins wanted to know what the city was like, and I was trying to describe the buildings and explain how my father was a lawyer and my mother wore long shiny dresses at night. Myrna liked the part about the dresses and had me elaborate on each one and whether it had shoes to match, while GloryEllen discussed fireflies with Jamber, and Myron practiced noises on pieces of grass.

“Don’t your mother miss you?” Myrna asked finally. “Even with all them beautiful clothes?”

“Well, she does,” I replied, “but it’s hot in the city, and she thinks it’s better for me here. Next year I’ll probably go to camp.”

Myrna thought this over.

“I been plannin’ to go myself,” she said, reaching for a blade of grass and blowing on it unsuccessfully. After a minute, she added: “What’s camp?”

She listened carefully until I had finished explaining, then changed the subject.

“You talk different,” she noted absently, trying some more grass. “Is that how they talk in the city?” The grass was too dull and she threw it aside.

“I don’t know. Prob’ly.”

“It’s kind of funny. Still, I don’t know but what I like it. Why don’t you learn me and Myron?”

GloryEllen noticed the omission. “Me, too,” she said. “Me and Jamber want to learn.” She handed Myrna a long, flat grass blade. “Here’s a good one, Myrna.”

“Yeah. Her, too,” Myrna agreed, blowing.

This time she produced a lovely loud cawing noise. “Gosh, hear that!” she exclaimed, delighted. “Thanks, GloryEllen. You was a good girl.”

“I’m not much of a teacher, Myrna,” I began. “But take what you just said to GloryEllen. ‘You was a good girl.’ That’s wrong. What I’d say is ‘You were a good girl.’”

“But Myrna wasn’t a good girl,” GloryEllen said. “It’s me what was a good girl.”

Myrna saw a firefly and started to sneak up on it.

“Go git a jar, Kathy,” she whispered. She turned to GloryEllen. “Sure, we all know,” she said soothingly. “You was a good girl.”

That summer is clearer in my mind than any before and many since. The years keep clicking on and off like colored slides, changing and replacing each other. And the faces in the slides change and replace each other, too. But that one particular picture remains bright and intact, and I can take it out any time and look at a summer twenty years old.

Grandmother never admitted she liked the Evies, even after Mrs. Evie brought the baby and came to call. Mrs. Evie had wide-apart blue eyes, like the children. And, although her hair was graying and her mouth looked tired when she wasn’t smiling, she had a kind of dignity about her. She was wearing a neat house dress, and she had on shoes. Grandmother gave her some strong tea, which she and the baby both seemed to enjoy, and she admired the kitchen and hoped the kids weren’t putting Grandmother out none. The twins kept hovering around, acting proud, especially Myrna.
Grandmother asked if she liked it, there in the valley, and Mrs. Evie said yes. Mr. Evie was good with stock, and they guessed they’d stay on, if Mr. Bensiger needed them after haying.

When Mrs. Evie left, Grandmother remarked, “She don’t seem a bad woman. Maybe I could get her to help cannin’.”

The next day it was raining, and at three o’clock the Evies still hadn’t appeared. Grandmother was complaining about the rheumatiz and wondering why the Good Lord kept holding back, seeing she was ready to go. I couldn’t find anything to do, so I asked if I couldn’t run down and ask Mrs. Evie about the canning. Grandmother’s resistance was low, or else I made her nervous wandering from room to room, because she let me go.

I had never been in the Evies’ house, and I had only seen Mr. Evie at a distance. When I arrived, they were all eating lunch, and the children jumped up from the table to greet me. Although I told them I had already eaten, they gave me a box to sit on and handed me a plate of fried salt pork and boiled potatoes and pigweed. Their house was quite cozy and pleasant, with the coffeepot boiling on the wood stove, and the rain chattering on the roof. Aside from the kitchen, the only room was an adjoining bedroom, but I remember thinking that a little redecorating—like picking up the old newspapers and maybe changing the pillowcases and pushing the stuffing back in the mattresses—would have made it as attractive a home as anyone could wish for. The crib was right near the table, so Odella could stand up and get things she wanted, like the bread on GloryEllen’s plate. This struck me as a very sensible arrangement. I guessed Mrs. Evie must like sewing, because she left the dishes on the table and started crocheting on a red pot-holder.

Mr. Evie spoke seldom and gently. He was an angular man and twisted—like a branch shaped by the weather. His hands were farmer’s hands, but his eyes were off somewhere beyond the fences. Although I was only a child at the time, I sensed that—where the hurricane could only bend Mr. Evie—the weight of too many things might suddenly snap him, the way ice snaps an apple bough.

Myrna and Myron and I went with Mr. Evie after the cows. Sometimes Mr. Evie would put his hand on Myrna’s hair, and she’d smile up at him. When Myron rounded up a black and white Holstein that had strayed into the woods, he said he didn’t suppose anyone was as good at finding cows as Myron. It was raining pretty hard on the way back, and Myrna said her feet were cold. Mr. Evie looked sympathetic but surprised. He was wet to the skin, but I don’t believe he even knew it was raining.

I asked Mrs. Evie about the canning. She told me to thank Grandmother and say she’d like to help out, but she really had too much to do at home. The children were so pleased with the red pot-holder that she had decided to make a blue and gold one to go with the table oilcloth.

Grandmother never said anything good about Mrs. Evie after that.

“Reg’lar lilies of the field, them Evies,” she liked to comment, “Toilin’ and spinnin’ just ain’t in their line.”

September came that year as always, and I went back to the city. Myron gave me a horseshoe to take for luck, and Myrna said be sure and write. GloryEllen was picking goldenrod with Jamber, when Father put my suitcases in the car, and I said, “Goodbye, GloryEllen.” Her face had a remote, guarded expression, and all she answered was: “Jamber ain’t never seen goldenrod before.”

Grandmother told us later Mr. Bensiger decided not to keep the Evies on; Mr. Evie was shifty-lookin’. Besides, all that mess o’ heathen kids give the place a bad name.

The next summer I went to camp.

I never learned what happened to the Evies. I like to think Myron became a famous diplomat and Myrna a beauty with shining dresses and shoes to match. GloryEllen had all the charm of a great actress, and I try to believe that’s what she is. I know it isn’t true. Probably Myron is out driving the cows in the rain somewhere, and the girls are tired women who got into trouble young.

I doubt if anyone in the valley remembers the Evies. But even if they had stayed on forever, they would still be strangers. For the north people pride themselves on roots that anchor them in granite. And the Evies were as foreign there as mistletoe—clinging where they were blown—but rooted in the wind.
STUFFING makes the Bird

By LOUISE ANDREWS KENT  Photograph by HANSON CARROLL

One interesting thing about turkeys is how they ever got the name. They originated not in Turkey but in America. The first ones were taken to Europe from Mexico by the conquistadors not long after 1500. They might have taken a kind with blue heads. This is a very confusing idea to Mrs. Appleyard. Suppose in addition to broad breasted or narrow you had to choose between red or blue headed! Of course she would choose red. That’s the color her Pilgrim ancestors aimed at. If they shot more than they needed, they sold any extra ones for two cents a pound, thus founding the family fortune—if any.

It would be convenient to buy a Thanksgiving turkey for 40 cents but Mrs. Appleyard realizes that she would have to roast it on a spit in front of the fire, being smoked herself while basting the bird. She turns happily to choosing between a gas oven and an electric roaster. In either she can cook the turkey peacefully by the low temperature method and check its progress by a meat thermometer.

With this method, get your 20 pound turkey into the oven with the thermometer deep in the second joint, not touching the bone, by noon Wednesday. Brush the bird lightly with oil or melted butter. Have the oven at 200°F. By noon on Thanksgiving Day the thermometer should register 185°F. If it reaches that point earlier, the turkey can always be removed from the oven and be reheated for a few minutes just before serving time.

The juices in the pan will make wonderful gravy. On Wednesday, simmer the giblets and neck for 2 or 3 hours. Add the liver the last 20 minutes. Remove gristle from giblets. In a wooden bowl chop giblets, liver and meat from the neck. When you make the gravy Thursday, use . . .

4 T. fat from the roaster.
Pepper, paprika, salt to taste.
1 onion finely minced.
2 c. rich milk.

Put fat in a big iron frying pan. Sauté onion and giblets over low heat till onion begins to brown. If mixture has absorbed all the fat, add another tablespoonful. Blend in flour and seasonings. Stir in the stock. Add the milk slowly. Keep stirring. The gravy Thursday, use . . .

4 T. flour
Pinch of nutmeg.
2 c. stock from giblets.
2 T. minced parsley.

This stuffing is rather on the dry side. If you like it moist, add more milk and another egg but remember that stuffing tends to moisten and swell during cooking because it absorbs juices from the meat. Leave some space for it to expand. Extra stuffing may be moistened with gravy, baked in a casserole and served with cold turkey another day.

CHESTNUT STUFFING

This is Mrs. Appleyard’s favorite, especially since she found out that you can buy chestnuts in cans all shelled and peeled. For a 20 pound turkey use basic stuffing. Reduce seasoning by half so that flavor of chestnuts will be detectable and delectable. Use 48 chestnuts. Break them into four or five pieces. If chestnuts are not available try a pound of cashew nuts, left whole or a pound of filberts and hazelnuts mixed.

OYSTER STUFFING

Mrs. Appleyard has a friend, some of whose family like plain stuffing, some of whom feel that Thanksgiving is illegal without oyster stuffing. She compromises by putting oyster stuffing in the breasts and plain stuffing in the other end . . .

\[ \frac{1}{2} \text{ c. juice from oysters.} \]
\[ 1 \text{ onion minced.} \]
\[ \frac{1}{2} \text{ c. celery, cut fine.} \]
\[ 2 \text{ Montpelier Crackers, rolled fine.} \]
\[ 1 \text{ egg beaten.} \]

Pinch of thyme, pinch of nutmeg.

In a pan big enough to hold the mixture, heat oyster liquor. Add butter and as it melts, the onion, celery, oysters. Cook until butter froths. Remove from heat. With a pastry blending fork, stir in bread and cracker crumbs, seasonings, beaten egg. If you like it very moist, add a little thick cream.

CORN STUFFING

For half the bread crumbs in the basic receipt, substitute corn meal muffins, dried and crumbled.

MUSHROOM STUFFING

For the milk in the basic receipt, substitute mushroom sauce.

\[ \frac{1}{2} \text{ lb. mushrooms, stems and all, cut fine.} \]
\[ 2 \text{ T. butter.} \]
\[ 1 \text{ T. flour.} \]
\[ 1 \text{ c. milk part cream.} \]
\[ \frac{1}{2} \text{ t. nutmeg.} \]


But after all, you may ask, is the aim of the hostess to stuff the turkey or the guests? What else do you serve?

“Oh nothing much,” says Mrs. Appleyard, “Just cream of squash soup with cheese biscuits, hors d’oeuvres too numerous to mention, whole cranberry sauce, candied sweet potatoes, mashed potato, Brussels sprouts in a ring of latticed beets, baby onions in cream and three kinds of pie—or would you prefer Baked Alaska? And don’t forget to heat up the gravy. “Once,” she recalls, “I served this menu to two young couples I hoped would get engaged. They did, only not the ones I’d planned for each other. Judging by their Christmas cards, I think the wives are now busy fixing turkey for eleven healthy handsome children. Happy stuffing to you all.”

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AUTUMN EVENTS

Note: All dates are inclusive. This data was compiled last winter, so is subject to change and not complete. Write Publicity Director, Vermont Development Department, for detailed information, supplementary free list and highway map.

CONTINUING EVENTS

Year Round: W. Brattleboro—Maple Museum.

Until Aug. 29: Bennington—Composers’ Conf.

Until Sept. 1: Orwell—Museum. Stowe—Summer Theater (Thurs.-Sun.). Weston—Summer Theater (Thurs-Sun.-8:30; Sat.-3).

Until Sept. 2: Grand Isle—Hyde Log Cabin.

SUPPERS & BAZAARS


Aug. 25: Barnet—Turkey Sup., 5.
Aug. 29: E. Corinth—Chicken Pie Sup., 5:30.
Sept. 4: Bristol—Chicken Pie Supper, 6.
Sept. 5: Peacham—Church Supper, 6.
Sept. 8: Jericho—Chicken Pie Dinner, 12-2.
Sept. 13: Montgomery—Turkey Din., 12.
Sept. 19: Fletcher—Chicken Pie Sup., 5.
Sept. 23: E. Barnet—Chicken Pie Sup., 5.
Sept. 28: Sheldon—Chicken Pie Sup., 5:30.

Sheffield—Chicken Pie Sup. (Hedding Meth. Church).

Barnet—Chicken Pie Supper, 5.

New Haven—Chicken Pie Sup., Bazaar, 5, 6 & 7.


Oct. 23: Barre—Church Fair (Baptist).


Oct. 25: Reading—Turkey Sup., Old-Time Ball.

Oct. 30: Barre—Church Fair (Presby.).

Nov. 2: Montgomery—Sale, Baked Bean Supper, 5 & 6.

Nov. 3: Shoreham—Turkey Dinner, 2–4.
Nov. 7: Peacham—Church Supper, 6.

Nov. 9: Barre—Church Fair (Congr.).

Nov. 9–24: Newfane—Coffee & Doughnuts for Hunters (Brookline School), 8–3; Hunters’ Breakfast (Fire House), 4–7 (week-ends only).

Nov. 14: Barre—Church Fair, Smorgasbord (Reserv. only: 476–5374).


Dec. 1: Montgomery—Game Din., 12.

Dec. 3: Barre—Game Supper (Presby. Church).

Dec. 4: Barre—Church Fair (Episcopal).

Dec. 5: Barre—Church Fair (Methodist).


SPECIAL EVENTS


Newfane—Flower Show, 2–9.


Oct. 3–13: Bennington—Fall Foliage Fest.


Oct. 5–6: Stowe—Foliage Fly-in (airplanes).

Oct. 7: Walden—Fall Foliage Day.

Oct. 8: Cabot—Foliage Day.


Oct. 10: Peacham—Foliage Day.


Nov. 17: Burlington—Sports Car Rally.
There is at least one harness-maker in Vermont besides Glenn Sanborn of Chelsea (VL, Spring 1963). W. C. King has been at the trade for fifty-five years, operating shops in Hardwick, Craftsbury, East Hardwick, and now in Barton. One of his specialties is the hand-crafting of hopples for pacers.

Mrs. Lilian Mereau of Burlington is the first woman in history to win the Vermont Cribbage Championship.

Russell Fifer, who took part in the 1200-mile cow derby back in 1929 (VL, Spring 1963), has come to light again. Following the bovine adventure he took two trips around the world, graduated from Ohio State University, was associated in several dairy enterprises, and now is in business in Barrington, Ill.

Back Issues: As a result of our recent swap offer Vermont Life now has a very few complete sets of the magazine (68 issues), available at $100 each. A number of previously out-of-stock issues now are on hand, but needed still are copies of the Winter 1954-55 number.

Our Spring issue article on the Hayden Family and the Dale Curse has produced this added information: The Mansion did go back to the Hayden family. William Hanson and his wife (Hayden McClary’s daughter) lived in it for a few years. Mrs. Grace Hanson Hill of Bakersfield, their daughter, has two marble-topped tables which came from the Mansion.

Secondly we learn from the family of William Tripp that contrary to his having sold off the Mansion’s fine furnishings, they went with the house when it was sold in 1922 to the Canadians.

Bad luck followed even the Hayden chattels, however. The Canadians crated up the Mansion’s elegant furniture, including the rosewood grand piano, and sent it by freight car back to Canada. But on the way the train was wrecked and one of the cars rolled down an embankment, completely destroying the contents. This, of course, was the car of furniture from Vermont.

Descendents of William Ward, whose widow’s exotic remarriage was celebrated in our past Winter issue, feel perhaps he was somewhat slighted. Ward, the first Newfane representative (1780) to the Vermont assembly, had the adjoining town of Wardsboro named for him. It was his unexpected death while on a fur-trading trip in Canada which left his estate and his widow penniless.

The all-time DX champion of North America (in the medium wave field) is Henry T. Tyndall, Jr. of Burlington. A DXer makes a hobby of listening for distant and low-powered radio transmissions from all over the world.

Tyndall, who works entirely in the standard 540 to 1600 kcs. band, got his start in 1923 when there were fewer and weaker stations, but when the air was less cluttered. So far he has proof-of-reception from more than 5,560 stations scattered over 126 countries.

Contrary to what the National Observer says, “the most shot-at man in the Civil War” was not a Vermonter. Balloonist Thaddeus Sobieski Constantine Lowe hailed from neighboring New Hampshire.

The 97-year old Bedell bridge between South Newbury and Haverhill, N. H., second only to the Windsor bridge in age and length of the Connecticut River spans, has been closed for some years. This Spring Newbury, which owns the covered bridge in partnership with Haverhill, voted $4,000 toward repair, but from what the Postboy can learn, Haverhill has not followed suit. Full repair of the bridge to allow four-ton loads is estimated to cost about $29,000.

Mystery Picture

The first correct location of this highway landscape, photographed by Mack Derick, postmarked after midnight of August 19th, will receive one of our special prizes. Please use postal cards.

The Summer issue Mystery Picture showed a measuring chain used to estimate the weight of cattle. It is fitted around the animal’s chest, and the metal tags set at intervals show the pounds. Winner of this contest was W. E. Parsons of York, Maine.