“That frequent recurrence to fundamental principles and a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, industry and frugality are absolutely necessary to preserve the blessings of liberty and keep government free.”

Vermont Constitution

Editor’s Uneasy Chair

Caution—The exciting sport of white water canoeing (shown beginning page 28) is not to be lightly undertaken. Almost every year a tragedy results somewhere in Vermont from inadequate training and safety precautions. It should be remembered that even if a swamped canoeist is not injured or drowned he can survive only a few minutes in the icy water.

The Life—Mrs. Gay’s column this issue is largely concerned with the summer’s musical fare. Details on these concerts will be available from Vermont Life in June. Dates for the various series will appear in our Summer calendar of events.

This Summer’s issue The Quiet Life column will treat mainly with art and art exhibitions. The Fall and Winter numbers will resume detailed examination of new Vermont books and articles.

Labors—Vermont Life’s subscription staff is just now recovering from an exceptionally busy Christmas season. The usual rush was aggravated by the instituting at the same time of a new gift handling system. Henceforth we expect to provide automatically to gift subscription donors periodic notices of their gift expirations. Previously, if accomplished at all, this has been a laborious hand operation.

Back issues of Vermont Life still available are as follows, all at 35c each:

- Spring ‘49
- Summer ‘50
- Autumn ‘50
- Winter ‘50-1
- Spring ‘51
- Summer ‘51
- Autumn ‘51
- Winter ‘51-2
- Spring ‘52
- Summer ‘52
- Autumn ‘52
- Winter ‘52-3
- Spring ‘53
- Summer ‘53
- Autumn ‘53
- Winter ‘53-4
- Spring ‘54
- Summer ‘54
- Autumn ‘54
- Winter ‘54-5

THE COVER
Charles Sargent, 18, is the fifth generation of his family to manage this century-old farm in East Cabot, pictured by Robert Holland. Foreground tree is a peach apple.
A

OUT THIS TIME each year the pulse of Vermonters (especially expatriates) is raised dangerously by "news" reports that Maryland really produces more maple syrup than Vermont—or else that most "Vermont" syrup really comes from Canada.

So we are comforted by a fine new report—Marketing Vermont's Maple Syrup, Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 593, Burlington, Vt. It seems that since records have been kept Vermont annually has produced more syrup than any other state. In 1954 Vermont's crop was 721,000 gallons (half what it was in 1938). New York was next with 378,000 gallons, Ohio third with 123,000 gallons—so on down to Maryland with 21,000 gallons.

Vermont leads in maple sugar too—54,000 pounds, though Pennsylvania is coming up fast with 40,000 pounds. Back in 1935 Vermont made 900,000 pounds of sugar. More than half the syrup made in Vermont today, by the way, usually is fancy grade.

What about Canada? Well, in 1954 some 522,000 gallons of Canadian syrup did come into Vermont, but all of it was used in commercial blends with cane sugars (so labeled by law) or in tobacco products.

How much syrup does Canada make? Hold on to your pride. In 1954 Canada (mainly Quebec province) made 2,422,000 gallons, and Imperial gallons at that. In 1952 the Canadian crop was a whopping 3,470,000 Imperial gallons.

Just short of a million gallons of Canadian syrup are shipped to this country annually. About ten per cent of it is estimated to be Grade A or better.

NOTE IN ANTICIPATION OF CRITICISM: We know "syrup" should be "sirup" but witnessing the Brattleboro Reformer's valiant try at establishing "sirup" some years ago we also bow to their failure.

Every state has its contestants for the Miss America award, but Vermont's aspirant last year, Sandra Simpson of Barre particularly pleased her fellow citizens. Miss Simpson didn't win the final accolade, but she was chosen Miss Congeniality, a title which seemed to mean even more here at home, and further belied the Vermont stereotype—the terse conservative, stern as the granite hills.

While the usual quota of Vermont panthers—black, spotted and tawny—continues to be "seen," another animal, the moose, has put in its appearance with increasing frequency. At least three of them, all bull moose for some reason, mingled with summer and autumn visitors last year. One made his unconcerned trek northward over a period of weeks.

Why was he so tame? Not an animal farm escapee, it is likely (unromantic thought) that he was infested with brown ticks which sapped his strength, leaving him just plain lethargic. Would-be moose hunters are reminded that, with the elk and caribou, this beast is protected until 1962, and probably will gain further reprieve thereafter.

Another visitor has come to stay, apparently. He is the brush wolf or coyote. Inheriting the late Dr. Peach's skepticism about panthers, we suggest that many of the "felines" sighted really are these canines. Though wild panthers are back in Missouri, we'll still have to be shown about Vermont.

END
DONKEYS
If you want to be a popular grandmother, just buy a donkey.

According to donkey breeder Myra Martin of Sutton, Vt., when you mix children and donkeys there's bound to be fun. Twelve Martin grandchildren vacation at their grandparents' farm every summer. Instead of romping through pastures with the traditional collie, they have their choice of assorted donkeys—each with a distinctive personality.

Mrs. Martin says her business of raising donkeys is really a hobby. "I've had donkeys for pets since I was a child—once you've had one you can't imagine life without one." When the Martins retired from New York nine years ago to their dairy farm she decided the space was made to order for a donkey herd.

The Martin donkeys are Sardinians and Sicilians—very aristocratic cousins of the common burro variety. All wear a dark brown cross down their backs—their legacy as "holy donkeys" whose ancestors trotted along Jerusalem's streets in the days of Christ. Sicilians have an edge of a few inches over Sardinians who are about the size of St. Bernards.

Fair time in Sutton and nearby Sheffield wouldn't be complete without a donkey in the parade. Thirty-five-year old Scilla Campanulata, grand old dame of the herd, usually gets parade honors chiefly because she is least likely to sit down on the job. Dressed in her family tartan or the costume of a Sicilian peasant, Mrs. Martin rides in a century-old Sicilian donkey cart. Not an ordinary cart, this historic one is painted in brilliant colors with figures depicting St. George and the Dragon, Madonnas and a series of panels representing Columbus' discovery of America.

Selling her donkeys has never been a problem for Mrs. Martin. Advertising is unnecessary as one satisfied customer breeds another. There's always a waiting list and "coming events" are usually spoken for months before their arrival. Sold only as pets, her animals often go to people who want them "to grow up with the children."

"When I sell a donkey I always want to be sure that it is going to a good home as the children and I have brought them up as pets," Mrs. Martin says, explaining that she wants to be sure the donkey will be well treated.

Donkeys are nearly as easy and inexpensive to keep as tropical fish. Their daily diet consists of a grain mixture containing omelene and bran, two armfuls of hay, occasional licks of salt and carrot and sugar "treats." Climate is never a problem for these adaptable animals; they are equally at home in the Arizona desert heat and a snappy Vermont winter. They simply change their coats from short to long depending on the weather. Heat in their stalls is unnecessary in winter except for the maternity pens housing mothers and their young. Donkeys seem disease resistant so veterinarians' bills are practically nil.

As for personalities, Sardinians and Sicilians are noted for gentle, friendly dispositions with a mischievous twist. They like to poke their noses into your pockets looking for sugar surprises. More than once while entertaining friends the Martins have had an uninvited guest peer in.

(Continued on next page)
their living room window. A wily donkey has managed to un latch the pasture gate.

"Donkeys are curious and intelligent," Mrs. Martin will tell you, flouting the popular notion of a jackass's stupidity. Every donkey is a thorough-going extrovert and eventually adopts a special pal in the herd. They all enjoy the heifers who are their pasture mates, but keep a weather eye out for marauding deer stalking the donkey salt licks. The Martins' hilltop location, nicknamed "Lost Nation" by Sutton villagers because of the wilderness beyond, is a favorite deer haunt. Spring and fall, the Martins occasion-
ally see one of their donkeys kicking up its heels in pursuit of a bounding deer.

Martin donkeys have traveled all over the country to their new homes, mostly by rail or truck. One lucky fellow traveled deluxe, though, when his new owners drove up in their station wagon and gently loaded their pet into the back.

Comments Mrs. Martin with a laugh, “I’ve often wondered what the other motorists on the Jersey Turnpike thought when they saw a long-eared passenger staring at them from that rear window.”
Recipe For Fun:
TO DONKEYS ADD KIDS
Does he have to stalk me?

How much do you weigh, young man?

No fair! Two against one.

How To Get
On A Sicilian Donkey

But once you're on there's no guarantee you'll stay on.
The Four Corners of Vermont

By

Richard Sanders Allen

Photographs and map data by author
Windy political orator might easily promise to bring improvements “to every corner of Vermont!” But to fulfill that promise to the letter he would have to hike to one corner, wade to another, swim to a third and do some skin-diving to arrive at the fourth.

As a child, perhaps you were thrilled when you stood alongside a boundary marker, and sensed yourself in two states. Seeking out corners is an even more enjoyable adventure. There is a fascination in standing at the “farthest reach” of any state, and geographers will tell you that Vermont is one of the few states in the East which has four fairly clear-cut corners. The true corners of the state are in some rather out-of-the-way locations, but even a casual visit or “armchair trip” to one or two will give you a better conception of the geographical layout of Vermont.

Let’s begin with the oldest established corner, down at the southeast. This angle was set up two centuries ago as a result of the royal decrees of English kings who doubtless cared very little just where in the American wilderness it was situated. George II took time out from consideration of a new war against Spain in 1740 to put his name to one proclamation. He informed the squabbling governors of his provinces of New Hampshire and Massachusetts Bay that the line between them extended due west across the Connecticut River until it met with “our other governments.” Governor Belcher of Massachusetts made certain of the boundary by running a survey of it the following year.

Another royal decree in 1764 made the “western banks of the river Connecticut” the boundary between the provinces of New Hampshire and New York. Since this easternmost portion of New York, after much tribulation, finally became Vermont, the intersection of those 200-year old lines is today the state’s southeast corner.

From the village of South Vernon, a road leads across the railroad tracks to a small farm. From here can be seen a large monument, or “witness mark” of polished granite. This is suitably inscribed with the facts establishing the corner, and the names of the commissioners and surveyors who agreed on this point.

The actual corner, however, is in the Connecticut River, down a steep bank and some 582 feet from the witness mark. It is a copper bolt, set in the apex of a granite monument, which in turn is embedded in a six-foot block of concrete “at or near the ordinary low-water line” of the Connecticut River. This bolt has long been obscured by the water-power operations along the river.

Far up the Connecticut River is a spot in the town of Canaan about two miles east of Beecher Falls. Here, unmarked amid the slippery round stones on the west bank...
of the Connecticut, is the northeast corner of Vermont. If you take off your shoes and wade about in this area, you are bound to stand on the actual spot.

Again, up on the bank beside the road is a granite witness stone, telling of the final settlement of this corner in 1934 by a boundary commission under order of the Supreme Court of the United States. The corner is the tip of a small tract of land called "The Gore," which juts like a stabbing finger into the back of New Hampshire.

On many sketch maps of Vermont, the northeast corner is incorrectly shown as a point where the states of New Hampshire and Vermont meet with the Province of Quebec. Actually, the place where all three meet is a shallow riffle in the middle of Hall's Stream at the edge of the village of Beecher Falls. Here it is possible to splash about barefooted in two states and a province.

Beside the road that runs north along the east bank of Hall's Stream is an old International Boundary marker, placed there in good faith a hundred and fifteen years ago when it was expected that the Canadian line would extend on to the Connecticut River.

A journey ninety miles to the west along the unfortified boundary will bring you to the northwest corner of Vermont. This is on Lake Champlain in the Town of Alburg, north of the Alburg-Rouses Point Bridge. At one time this was a lively spot. Here was a "line store" and tavern, where both American and Canadian goods could be bought and bartered. A wharf and warehouse at the lakeside docked boats of both countries to transship cargo. The set-up made the spot a perfect smugglers' roost. It was often referred to as "Rum Hole."

One morning in 1837, Benjamin Mott of Alburg went up the road a mile to get a pound of tea for his wife. At the store on the line he got involved with rebellious Canadians and went along to take part in the "Battle" of Odelltown. Captured, he was transported to the British Penal Colony in Australia. Ten years later he returned, first stopping by the "corner store" to bring home the pound of tea.

About 1860, the Canadian farm adjoining the store was owned by John MacCallum, who didn't care for the lawless goings-on at the dock. When chance presented itself, he bought the whole place. Some of the buildings he moved to his farm and some he tore down. For his hired help, he built a square two-story house at the corner site. This house, weatherbeaten now, and used as a summer cottage by MacCallum descendents, presents a rather startling sight as you approach it on the road that runs along the border. The shiny boundary monument stands practically on the front doorstep, and the house is squeezed between it and the reedy shore of Lake Champlain. Half the taxes on this property go to Alburg, Vermont, and the other half to Noyan, Quebec.

The marker itself is larger than those generally found along the Canadian line, and is among those cast in the old iron furnace which stood in Troy, Vermont. It states that the boundary was established by the "Treaty of Washington" (the Webster-Ashburton Treaty) of 1842. A Canadian crew renewed the monument fifty years ago. As for the actual northwest corner, it is to the west in the deepest channel of Lake Champlain, half a mile out and at least twenty-three feet down.

A hundred and seventy miles south of Alburg, the mountainous southwest angle presents a more difficult objective to one bent on visiting the four corners of Vermont. This spot is reached by means of a trail running north along the ridge of the Taconic range from the top of Petersburg Pass on Mass.-N. Y. Rt. 2. The trail leads to the locally famous "Snow Hole," a fissure where ice stays all year 'round. At an unmarked point which can only be ascertained by reckoning from topographical maps, the searcher must strike away from the trail to the left, and comb through the woods to the marker which is "near the brow of a high hill descending to the west."

This marker, 2337 feet above sea level, shows signs that a woodchuck desired to make his home at this corner of the state, but gave up digging when he encountered too much rock and concrete. The granite shaft does not indicate that it is on a corner, and is simply designated as the "No. 2" monument of a Vermont-New York survey under the State Acts of 1812. Here at last you can actually perch with dry feet, and contemplate that you are in the exact corner of the state, with 9,564 square miles of Vermont land and water spread out before you.

Finally, should your appetite for state corners still be unabated, there is the VT-MASS.-N. Y. corner to be visited, a little over a half mile east of the southwest corner shaft, but nearly a thousand feet down the mountainside. This is one of only four three-state (or province) corners in New England where the spot falls on land.

This one should be approached from one of the southwest hill roads that branch out from Pownal. Several paths will take you near the monument. Fifty years ago it was described as on "an open easterly slope," just west of a private road. Today the "open slope" is covered by full-grown trees, while old roads and lumber trails crisscross the mountain. Although it is a stiffer climb, the surest way of reaching the tri-state marker is to strike up the brook behind the summer home of H. E. Langworthy, and follow the wire fence that marks the edge of Massachusetts' Hopkins Experimental Forest.

In 1814, the three-state marker was a "red or black oak tree," (the surveyors weren't sure which!). Today the monument is a square granite post embedded five feet in the ground. It bears the state abbreviations on three sides and the flat top is scribed to indicate the intersection of the lines of the states. Want to have parts of three states under your thumb? The hole in the center of this post is the place to do it.
IT IS NOW A HUNDRED YEARS since the following announcement appeared in the Vermont Journal:—

"Treasury Department, Dec: 16th 1856. Proposals will be received at this department until the 16th day of February A. D. 1857 at 9 o'clock A. M. for the construction of the Post Office and Court House authorized to be erected at Windsor, Vermont . . . ."

But how many people who go every day to mail their letters know that this is the oldest Federal building in the United States that has been in continuous service and has undergone no major changes?

Beneath the vestibule is a small, poorly ventilated block consisting of three cells and a gloomy, so-called “recreation room” which served as a Federal prison. The very solidly constructed outer walls are built of granite and are thirty-four inches thick. The cells are six feet wide, eight and-a-half feet deep and nine feet high. They are separated from each other by double walls two bricks thick that have sheet metal between them. The double, solid steel and latticed doors were removed in the scrap metal drive of World War I. Now the cells are used to store garden tools and hoses, rakes and clippers, but the whitewashed walls still carry memories of imprisoned men.

The top story above the Post Office consists of the Court House and Judge’s quarters which are in use for about three weeks a year. The ground floor is used entirely for Postal activities except for two rooms which are occupied by the Department of Internal Revenue.

In these times when the trend is to eliminate historic landmarks and replace them with streamlined chromium-plated buildings, it is refreshing to find that in Windsor, at least, some attempt is being made to preserve these links with the past.

END
Modern architecture in Vermont? Why it's the same as modern architecture anywhere else," said Bernard Kessler, a leading architect from Bennington.

Only my first thought as he said this was an instant denial. I had been going from one to another of the nine houses on these pages and by the time I reached the fifth I had begun to be astonished that all of them had one feature in common and that was something each of them equally owed to Vermont: a setting of extraordinary natural beauty. But as Mr. Kessler went on I realized that doubtless he was as aware of this as I.

"In building a house here, as anywhere else," he said, "the architect must take into consideration the personal wants and preferences of the owners and then, most important, the house must fit into and take advantage of the site."

There ought to be another word. In Vermont, 'site,' with its usual three-quarters of an acre or so connotation, is something of an understatement. For example, the nine houses I photographed were chosen on the basis of architectural interest alone yet five of them are set high on the side of a mountain or hill with views which would be as hard to describe as they are to exaggerate. Three are surrounded by evergreen groves on the banks of Lake Champlain, the Adirondacks rising in the distance. The ninth stands on the site of an old marble mill, overlooking its own tree-bordered pond and private waterfall.

But so much for what kind of sites and scenery Vermont can provide for its buildings. What many persons must wonder is what kind of scenery a lot of these "modern" houses are going to provide for Vermont. Much of Vermont's particular charm derives from the rightness, the suitability of its lovely old buildings—the way in which they may be seen to belong. It's to be hoped, certainly, that there will always be, as there are now, the enduringly beautiful, often barn-big New England farmhouses, but with increasingly frequent discoveries of new materials, fresh concepts of household convenience and constantly rising building costs—for those who want to build today, more often than not something else is indicated. So, beginning with the foregone conclusion that the Vermont countryside is something to feel pretty protective about, it follows that these new buildings which now and in the future are likely either to deface or to adorn it are a subject of considerable interest to us all. It might even be said concern, for more and more of Vermont's green meadows, as well as the sides of highways approaching towns and cities, are being dotted with graceless developers' houses which most persons, including many of the present owners, have looked on as not entirely desirable but as an economically necessary modern compromise. Perhaps they are, although the individualized and soundly architected houses in these pages begin at as little as $12,000.* Still, it might be argued, there's not much to choose from, generally speaking, between a trite white or pink or blue rectangle with breezeway and picture window and a dome-shaped, glass-walled affectation. Leaving, for a moment, the particular houses in the photographs aside, so-called modern architecture has come in for a lot of this kind of criticism. Probably because so much of what goes by the name has been so very bad. Let's see what some of Vermont's architects themselves have to say.

"Granted," says Dan Kiley of Charlotte, "the last 50 years of industrial revolution left architecture no better than stranded in confusion. Previously the builder had no choice but to use traditional materials and the outcome on the whole was pleasant. Then a superabundance of new, synthetic materials became available and their unskilled and indiscriminate use resulted as often as not in junk. Architecture now, though," he went on, "is not just a matter of flat roofs and a lot of glass. A house is something which must be related to space, to gardens, site. All good architecture comes from the same fundamental concepts. Right now modern architecture is attempting to get back through the mess of the last half century or so to those same basic principles."

I spoke next with William Cowles of Shelburne who developed Mr. Kiley's theme and began by saying that the houses I'd pictured "are not 'modern'; they are houses."

*Something should be added to this figure as the house is as yet imperfectly insulated, for use in summer only.
James Parton House
Dorset
Architect: Carl Koch

This house was built in 1946 on an old marble mill site. All the marble used in construction of the house, retaining walls, terrace and walks was found on the premises. The old dam was rebuilt to make possible the balanced interest between the waterfall and the building.

John French House
Woodstock
Architects: E. M. & M. K. Hunter

This house is situated on the side of Mt. Tom, overlooking Woodstock. The living room was curved outward to take full advantage of a 180-degree view. "Treillage," (the intersecting boards), is to heighten contrast.
The white marble floor and fireplace are striking features of the Parton house. The fireplace serves to divide the two sections. The dining room is on a lower level.

French house uses diffused lighting outlets in the ceiling of the living room. They throw all their light down, leaving the ceiling relatively dark. This serves to reduce the room's appearance of height, yet allows the ceiling to be uncluttered.
Plate glass walls bring the beauty of the waterfall and large pond beyond into the living room.

One of the first prerequisites for this house was that it be easy to open and close up. One solution was the use of anti-freeze in the radiant heating coils under the floors.

"The architect's problem today," he continued, "is to provide, as always, a building in which the family may carry on all its different activities and enjoy all the moods of personal relationships; from affectionate gregariousness through routine living operations, sulks, individual retreats, tête-à-têtes between two-year-olds, twelve-year-olds and thirty-year-olds. The house must be a base of operations from which the family sallies forth into the community and to which it returns, weary, elated, in victory, with tail between legs, or merely with the groceries. A family is a dynamic organism, always changing its relationships, its activities, the ways of using its building. A house for a 1956 family is faced with a problem of environment as different from the Edwardian or that of the 'Twenties, for example, as a Brewster-bodied phaeton is different from a Ford station wagon. But the problem itself, of providing the family with a building that will contain it and its activities is just the same as ever."

Mr. Cowles, father of six children and architect of his own house, may be admitted to have more than academic knowledge of his subject.

The architect's problem then—designing a dwelling to meet the needs of the family—has remained the same. Why, if this is so, has architecture undergone so much apparently radical change? Because, according to Mr. Cowles, the tools (or materials and methods) and the aesthetic are different. Speaking from my own experience, I said that most objections to modern architecture were on grounds of the aesthetic.

"That," said Mr. Cowles, "would be because the aesthetic changed faster than living habits. Living habits change slowly and with tremendous inertia. But the aesthetic can change upon whim. It did. It changed all over the place; it wobbled; it asserted; it confused itself. It went square; it went white; it chromed; it stuccoed; it cantilevered; it glassed. It went round, hexagonal, up and down, side to side. Then it caught up with itself."

"Because architects are just as concerned with beauty as anyone else, Dior included," he answered. "Besides, people are beginning to like beauty again—" He hesitated, then went on to say, "Or else architects are producing it again—"

Which does come first? I asked.

"Who knows," he answered.

But in any case, and whoever may be said to be responsible, I think that the photographs in these pages are evidence that in Vermont there are houses, new (if I am not permitted to say 'modern') houses, in which that beauty exists. These nine are representative. They are houses at home in Vermont.
Dr. Shepard Quinby House  
Fayston  
Architect:  
Robert Burley

The stripped hemlock siding and flat-pitched roof contribute to the chalet effect of this house, which is set in the mountains near Mad River Glen ski area.

Dr. Robert Marshak House  
Springfield  
Architect:  
Carl L. Bausch, Jr.

This house is built high above the town of Springfield and overlooking the Connecticut River valley. Because of other housing it had to be located somewhat below the hill crest. Its long, reaching shape was indicated to answer needs of view and privacy.

Pennington Haile House  
Norwich  
Architects:  
E. M. & M. K. Hunter

To take advantage of the fine view across the Connecticut River valley, the main rooms (living and bedrooms) were raised from the ground. The first floor contains study, dining room, kitchen and utility room. The house itself is divided into four levels. It is a design meant for a bachelor client who needed a comfortable house with quiet in which to write and space to entertain.
Large windows of the Dr. Quinby living room frame a view of three valleys. Like the Haile house, the living room is on the upper floor. Small sitting room, guest room, a bath, a workshop, and garage are on the lower level.

Kitchen and living room of Quinby house are divided by a fieldstone fireplace. One fireplace opening may be enjoyed from both rooms.

The Haile living room with its hard, slightly angled walls and soft surfaces, was planned for its fine acoustical properties.
View of the Cowles home in color shows the entrance side. Beyond is Lake Champlain. The living room, dining room and kitchen wing is to the left (see floor scheme below) and is not shown. This is the circular bedroom and children's wing. The children's playroom and bedrooms are seen at the extreme right of the picture. The finish is redwood. Vents are located under permanently-closed windows. Entrance and play courts are sheltered from Lake winds.

Diagram of the Cowles property (below) shows the Lake shore at the top. Entrance road is just below the sketch. House faces generally westward toward the Lake and lies on a slope above it.
The Coctles’ fireplace separates the living room and dining areas, is made of slate sculpings. This, the living room side, uses a raised and extended hearth.
In their wing the Cowles children have a more than a quarter-circle playroom with fireplace (not shown). Doors open from playroom into the pie-shaped bedrooms, one for each child. Bedrooms are equipped with cork floors, built-in dressers, beds and desk-worktable units.

Dining room has slate flagstone floor. Hooded fireplace by windows back up to the living-room fireplace, shown on the preceding page.
This is an example of an old house extensively remodeled, which yet retains its original charm. The front is divided into a series of screened and unscreened porches which look out on Lake Champlain.

Kitchen-dining room of the Bridgman house is divided by vertical lattice from the living room.

The large living room of the Bridgman home, which combines several original rooms, opens onto the screened porches and looks toward the Lake.
This house overlooks the valley and farms below. The living room is on the upper floor to take advantage of the view. Front of house includes a cantilever porch. Every other upright is a structural member. Others are dividers and supports for glass panels.
This summer home is on the shore of Lake Champlain. The living room, kitchen and dining room are combined in one large unit. Contrasting building materials to lend interest are used together with a fireplace (at far end) which is an adaptation of the Franklin stove.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR-PHOTOGRAPHER: Damon Gadd, a Yale '49 graduate, studied languages for a year in Geneva, then worked for the Hawaiian Visitors' Bureau. With his wife, Sara, furnishing the writing part of the team, he did two years of freelance photography for Black Star and Kosmos Press in Europe, the Far and Middle East. The Gadds moved to Vermont four years ago, until recently also operating a ski lodge in the Mad River Glen area. Their home is now in Fayston, where Mr. Gadd is working currently on a photographic book about Vermont.
VERMONTERS ARE KNOWN for a lot of things, and not the least for their inventiveness. Ever since the first U.S. patent was granted to Vermonter Samuel Hopkins a profusion of gadgets and machines has been hatching in the minds of men from the Green Mountains. There were the carpenter’s square, the electric motor, the steam caliope, the globe, the elevator, the time clock, the electric locomotive, roller flour mills, to name a few. Nobody but the patent office knows how many inventions Vermonters have registered. M. J. Revive of New York, however, has a unique private collection of some of them. Four of his intriguing examples are displayed here. END

SELF-CLEANING RAKE, an early example of Vermont automation, was patented in 1876 by Virgil W. Blanchard of Weybridge. The tine cleaner, attached by spring steel to the handle, offers valuable possibilities in the mind of any gardener who knows the habit of rakes to clog.

VENTILATED RAILROAD CARS, an early attempt at air conditioning, was patented by Wellington Sager of Colchester in 1875. Essentially the mechanism called for an air intake in front of the locomotive. Thence the air was piped to the tender and in hot weather passed through an ice chest. A fan, powered by belts to the tender wheels, forced the cooled air by pipes into the passenger cars following. In winter a coil linked to the locomotive’s fire box heated the air. When the train was stationary a small auxiliary engine run by locomotive steam, was used to drive the ventilating blower.
GUN IN YOUR HAT was patented in 1916 by Albert B. Pratt of Lyndon. The helmet, capable of disassembly to serve also as a cooking pot, housed a semi-automatic, gas operated pistol of unique design. The wearer, sighting through the dangling hook, blew into the tube held in his mouth, and thus discharged the weapon. Trap doors allowed a clip of bullets to be inserted and empty shells to be extracted.

THREAD-ROLLING MACHINE is one of more than forty patents held by Senator Ralph E. Flanders. This one, taken out in 1954 with W. J. Batchelder of Weathersfield, is to cut screw threads in blank bolts and screws from cylindrical dies, working on more than one blank simultaneously. Part of the mechanism employs an unusual energy-storing feature, the work-feed cycle being so arranged that the power of the machine's motor is used all the time. Only one of the eleven patent diagrams is shown here.
A DARTMOUTH COLLEGE UNDERGRADUATE named John Ledyard, Class of 1776, believed that a student at Dartmouth, which then was surrounded by trackless forest and today is lucky to be located on the boundary between two beautiful states, should get out and enjoy rural pleasures. Ledyard enjoyed hunting in the wilderness and living with Indians—without asking permission he took three months off during his freshman year to wander with them—much more than learning Greek and Latin. He believed there was more in learning than listening to professors and reading books.

In the spring of 1773 Ledyard chopped down a pine tree just across the Connecticut River from Norwich,
with the aid of fellow students hollowed out a canoe, and on a warm May evening set forth alone downstream—and never returned. He made only one canoe trip on the Connecticut, but he is recorded as Dartmouth’s greatest canoe man. He became a world traveler, sailed with Captain Cook to the South Seas, journeyed in Europe, Africa and Asia, and tried to cross Russia.

But he left his stamp upon the wilderness institution that could not hold him, and Dartmouth has never forgotten. The students here braving the frigid waters of the White River between West Hartford and Sharon are members of Dartmouth’s Ledyard Canoe Club, which has its headquarters only a few yards from where the famous pine was felled.

Each spring they test their strength and skill against the surging currents, foaming waves and hidden rocks of the river. It can be a sport as dangerous as exciting, so elaborate safety precautions are taken at every turn.

Unlike Ledyard, these white-water canoe men find excitement enough in week-end adventures, and by Monday morning are ready to return to their books, at least until they prove again that youth and a love of adventure cannot be separated.
EMPTY YOUR POCKETS

AIM FOR QUIETER WATER

OFF THEY GO
LANDING BELOW THE BRIDGE

DRY CLOTHES

"STAY WITH YOUR CANOE!"
THE QUIET Life

A review of Vermont books, articles, music, drama and the arts.

By Elizabeth Kent Gay

The music of spring is in the first faint peepings of the frogs, the brooks running free after a winter’s bondage, the thin rustle of leaves in due season. But with the approach of summer our natural music is swelled by man-made tones as the various music festivals begin their concerts.

Painters sometimes complain that the summer landscape in Vermont is too green; inevitably they think of inserting a red barn for contrast. For musicians and music lovers, however, the green hills provide perfect settings for chamber music, for orchestral pieces, for singers, woodwinds, harpsichords. Often the concerts take place inside barns, a happy use of generous empty space which, having served its original purpose long and faithfully, might otherwise collapse and vanish.

Like many of its most rewarding events the music festivals of Vermont require some effort on the part of the participant. Only in Burlington can he lightly decide to listen to a little night music some moon-bright evening and expect to find it on or near the main highway. In most cases the concert will take a bit of finding, a bit of planning.

Perhaps it is logical that the festival farthest off the usual track provides the most beautiful music. Marlboro is a windswept village in the Green Mountains, almost on the southern border of the state. It is the home of Marlboro College, the Marlboro School of Music and the Marlboro Music Festival. Nearby too live Marcel Moyse, his son Louis and the latter’s wife, Blanche Honegger, superb musicians all three, members of the well-known Moyse Trio and founders, with their friend Rudolph Serkin of Guilford, and his father-in-law Adolf Busch, of the music department at Marlboro, the music school and the festival.

With such parentage—for Serkin and Busch as well as the Moyses are among the finest of contemporary musicians—the Marlboro Festival provides nothing but the best. On a Sunday afternoon in August, for instance, the visitor who has driven deep into the hills and round countless curves to reach the college campus where the concerts are held may arrive too late for a seat inside the made-over barn. As he sits with other late-comers on the grass outside, the alternating voices of a Mozart piano concerto as interpreted by Serkin flow over and through him. Another concerto follows—double richness. Alexander Schneider conducts the chamber orchestra in which ardent young artists play with vigorous absorption.

If life were as perfect as our dreams this is how it would be—music, sun like a blessing, leaf patterns stirring in the late afternoon breeze, listeners losing their small difficulties in the magic of repeated sound. In the interval friends greet each other, discuss, congratulate, comment. And this is only one concert of many, for the festival offers its feast of sound each weekend from mid-July to late August. There will be classical and modern works, opera, song cycles, lectures, films—in this coming eighth season—a rich and stimulating repast with something for all tastes.*

Across the ridge of the Green Mountains, just outside the handsome white village of Manchester, the Southern Vermont Art Center last year opened its 27th season with the triumphant inauguration of its new music shed. Like a Viking ship turned upside down the auditorium’s huge plywood trusses span its acoustically excellent space. Folding panels at the sides will be used as additional galleries for the Art Center exhibitions which are now concentrated in the main building.

At the opening concert in Manchester Gov. Johnson and Sen. Flanders, among others, made appropriate remarks and the Vermont State Symphony Orchestra under Alan Carter, with Stell Anderson as piano soloist, furnished a program of Mozart and Milhaud, played with vitality and excitement. Those who had filled their ears with music could then use their eyes to advantage on the state-wide exhibit of paintings and drawings showing in the Art Center, while sampling the punch and cookies generously provided by the committee in charge.

The lavish bequest of Mrs. George Bishop Lane to the University of Vermont for music and other cultural events provided a summer season of special interest with a series of three concerts on Sunday evenings in July and August in the white classic interior of the Ira Allen Chapel of the University in Burlington.

In the first concert of this first series the New York Woodwind Quintet displayed its effortlessly brilliant technique and musicianship in a wide range of pieces. Somehow there seems nothing more appropriate for a mild summer evening than the cool purling notes of flute and clarinet, the speaking voices of the oboe and bassoon. In the second concert at Burlington Richard Dyer-Bennett sang ballads in his unusual style. The Trio Allegro played music from Rameau to Honegger for flute, cello and piano.

Many thousands of tourists make their way each year to the little village of Weston, to visit the country store and the Vermont Guild of Oldtime Crafts and Industries with its water-driven grist mill, its museum and shop. Many hundreds enjoy the plays put on during the summer.

* A picture article on this festival will appear in our Summer issue.
at the white-columned Playhouse on the Green. In its fourth season now, the Sunday Afternoon Concert Series will again be presented by the Weston Community Club.

Last year there were four concerts at Weston with Pete Seeger, singer of folksongs, and a variety of chamber music groups. The Playhouse is smaller, more intimate, than the music shed at Manchester, the barn at Marlboro, the Ira Allen Chapel. The chamber music there seems more definitely on a small scale too, full of intensity and intricacy, a personal affair between the listeners and the players.

For a number of years informal summer concerts have been taking place at the Haybarn Theatre of Goddard College in Plainfield—again a made-over barn. Last year Frederick Marantz as director—he is also on the college faculty and directs their summer music center—organized a more professional series, with the local support of the Upper Winooski Music Community, providing seven Sunday evenings of chamber music, piano and vocal programs.

As at the other concert series around the state, the audiences at Plainfield began to know each other, socially as well as musically, especially over the tea and cake that were served after each concert. People who love music, these concerts seem to prove, will not necessarily love each other, but they will recognize at once an interest in common; they will also go far to listen to good music, well played.

In extending its hospitality to music-makers and music-listeners Vermont has made many new friends. The growth in the number of summer music festivals and concert series is a highly pleasing development in our cultural life. On any given Sunday evening a traveler in search of music in Vermont this summer will be able to pick and choose from concerts large and small, complex and simple, in barns or in churches, and modest in price if ambitious in program. Good listening!

NOTE: The Arlington Historical Society informs us that MEMORIES OF MY HOME TOWN, by Dorothy Canfield Fisher, reviewed by this column in the Autumn issue, is out of print. If a second edition is produced later, we shall report it here.

RECENT BOOKS

Nothing Whatever to Do—Elsie and John Masterton

For some years a small advertisement in the classified column of the Saturday Review has been luring guests to an hospitable house in the town of Goshen, near Brandon, Vermont.

“Spring at Blueberry Hill!” it might read, for it varies according to the season, “Pussy willows. Lucullan food. Nothing whatever to do. The Mastertons, Brandon, Vt.” In due course the Mastertons, particularly Elsie, have written a book which tells what goes on around Blueberry Hill while the guests do nothing at all—except pick over blueberries for incomparable jam, shoot alarmingly at targets, fall in love and help out when the inevitable crises of country living beset farm and kitchen—and of course cat unceasingly of Mrs. Masterton’s truly inspired cooking.

This is a gay and courageous book—not even three snowless winters that ended the Mastertons’ dream of the perfect ski area could discourage them for long. Their success story is comfortably non-miraculous, for while the guests do, ‘nothing’ their hosts put in a twenty-five or six hour day to make them contented. As in all the best books recipes are included for the mouth-watering dishes described in the text. The whole thing should make reservations at Blueberry Hill harder than ever to get.

Raising Demons—Shirley Jackson
Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, New York—1957

The mother of the ‘demons’ described in this book is Mrs. Stanley Hyman in the rather bewildering kind of every-day life she pictures here. In other literary appearances she is Shirley Jackson, author of The Lottery, a memorable and terrifying short story and of novels equally strange and penetrating.

The four demons sound uncommonly normal; it is only things that have a way of getting the upper hand in the Hymans’ southern Vermont household: the sneaker that disrupts the family by its disappearance, the 431 clothespin dolls that people a childhood summer, the one carton too many that propelled the Hymans into a new house, the gas from a chemistry set that produced a bright new kitchen.

VERMONT Life 37
Any woman who manages a household knows this impertinent obstinacy of inanimate things—what Paul Jennings calls “resistentialism.” Almost any mother of tour lively children might feel that she could write this book or its counterpart. However, almost all of them are too busy finding sneakers and filling cartons with old baseball gloves to do so.

How does Mrs. Hyman manage to do all that and her writing too? She never refers to her literary self in these pages. We can but admire open-mouthed her talent and her concentration, and while things may bemuse and defy her, her children are lovable and loving, not demons at all.

More Yankee Yarns—Alton Blackington
Dodd, Mead Co., New York—$3.50—1956

No New Englander has been more diligent in unearthing curious tales about his native countrymen or more generous in sharing them than Alton Blackington, formerly of the Boston Herald, from whose TV program Yankee Yarns has been garnered this book and its predecessor of that name.

Let a painter of frescoes in a New Hampshire house vanish mysteriously in deep snow—if anyone can find out his identity it is Mr. Blackington. He is magnetized by unsolved problems; he has a fondness for gentlemanly rascals like Moore, who made keys for robbing a bank vault, in a room in the bank itself; ghosts appear and disappear in these pages, along with cannibal kings, stones with strange markings, enormous amethysts, buried treasure that for once was found with an old map and many another fancy for our delight.

Surely every New England village has some marvel to add to Mr. Blackington’s collection, enough to keep his exhaustive curiosity occupied for years to come. I can think of several I should like explained and authenticated. Vermont should be better represented in another volume to come—unless we are too hard-headed for ghosts, too thrifty to leave our treasure buried.
ANY QUIZ SHOW OPERATORS need a real stickler? Something to throw in for the top money? Well, here it is, right across home plate.

Where was Justin Morgan buried? The horse, that is. Chances are even the experts couldn’t answer that one and would have to settle for the consolation prize of the latest model limousine.

Actually the grave of Justin Morgan has been suitably marked by the Morgan Horse Club, Inc., but it is on a remote hillside in the town of Chelsea and not as accessible as many of Vermont’s monuments.

Exactly 10½ miles north from South Royalton on State Route 110 the motorist can turn right on a dirt road that crosses through a covered bridge and leads to Justin Morgan Memorial Park about two miles farther on. The entrance to the park is marked by a sign, and arrows show the somewhat obscure path that ends in a hillside pasture.

There the Morgan Horse Club erected in 1936 a simple stone on a plot of land which includes the grave of the famous horse. The land was deeded to the club by the late E. L. Larkin and the club has a right-of-way to the 10-foot-square piece of land that contains the marker.

Although visitors might not notice anything amiss, there is a mistake in the inscription on the marker. According to F. B. Hills, secretary of the Morgan Horse Club, the horse’s birth year is incorrectly stated as 1792. Justin Morgan was foaled in 1789. He died in 1821 on the farm which was owned at the time by Clifford Bean. The horse’s last owner was another Bean named Levi. END
PRESENTED HERE are the winning photographs of the Third Annual Vermont Life awards, made in conjunction with the Sixth Vermont Photographers’ Exhibition of the Southern Vermont Art Center at Manchester last summer.

Medal award photographs are reproduced here, three in color and three (including a series) in black and white. Regrettably Honorable Mention citations in color by Louis F. Hechenberger of Dorset, Donald Wiedenmayer of Wallingford and Robert Mesterton of Burlington could not be shown.

Judges for the Vermont Life awards were John W. Doscher, FPSA, FRPS, of the Woodstock Country School of Photography, Dr. Lyman S. Rowell of the University of Vermont and Vermont Life’s editor.

Color awards went to Miss Reba Kinsley of Montpelier, Leonard S. Kaplow of Burlington and Herbert E. Post of Bennington. Medals for black and white went to Newell Green, FPSA, FPRS, of Ascutney, for two scenes, and for the “Young Fisherman” series to Miss Alouise Boker of Dorset, who also took an Honorable Mention. Edmund H. Royce, FPSA, of St. Albans won two Honorable Mention citations.

Details on the coming Exhibition at Manchester will appear in our next issue. Entrants should write now to Vermont Life, Montpelier, for rules and entry blanks.
Medal Award "How Dear to My Heart" by Reba Kinsley

Wadehill Ski Bowl" by Leonard Kaplow

VERMONT Life 41
Medal Award
"Court House"
by Herbert E. Post

Medal Award
"Upland Winter"
by Newell Green

Medal Award
Photo Journalism
"Young Fisherman"
by Alouise Boker
Medal Award
"Hill Road"
by Newell Green

Honorable Mention
"Georgia Town Hall"
by Edmund H. Royce

Honorable Mention
"Let's Try That Pool"
by Alouise Baker
SINCE THE FIRST EMPEROR of the Chou dynasty ordered himself up a zoo, in or about the year 1100 B.C., people have been educated, enlightened and entertained by animals in captivity. Today, thanks to years of research on animal likes and dislikes, the zoo inmates never had it so good. Popular thinking to the contrary, the great majority of captive animals are much healthier and better fed than those in the wild, and also have a longer average life.

But zoo men still have problems and one of them is that many animals don't have enough to do. Their principal natural occupations—avoiding their enemies and hunting for food—have been eliminated, and boredome results.

One answer to this is to give the animals some simple training and to bring them into close touch, where safety permits, with their human visitors. Thus the animals, while providing entertainment, are also entertaining themselves.

A couple who have put this principle into successful practice are Mr. & Mrs. Bill Green, whose Rare Bird and Animal Farm on the Connecticut River at Fairlee, Vermont, is the scene of these pictures. From late May through October Bill Green stages four shows daily featuring deer, monkeys, elephants and a variety of other more or less tractable actors. And it’s as much fun for them, Mr. Green says, as it is for the visitors.
FARM
Monkeys and youngsters find immediate fellowship. Both come in assorted sizes, enjoy each others' antics.
New friends are waiting
and they meet halfway.
Some are Wise

Or Strong
But the New

And the Strange
Are Fun
IT WOULD SEEM that about all that could be said explaining why Johnny can't read, has been said. Perhaps a look backward, comparing Johnny's environment then with the kind which would have assailed him today, might at least explain why Johnny doesn't read, which is perhaps more fair than assuming that he hasn't the ability, if he felt the need.

To begin with I am quite sure that my own early adventures in the magic world opened by learning to read would certainly have been postponed for some years if I had encountered the innumerable distractions which now assail us from childhood on, offering much that used to come only through books. Honesty demands that I admit the reason the boys and girls who lived on my street did much more reading than is done today was simply because there was nothing else to do.

So I began to recall some of the things other than reading that used to fill in the empty spaces in my day's routine. Of course there were always games but I had to repair to the homes of neighboring children to engage in any such. I do recall some hours of real delight when the sun was too hot to make activity comfortable, in which three pals and I repaired to a tent in the shady orchard and played, of all things, Authors. Some of the names as given might not have been recognized. One of the gang always called for "Autocracked to the Breakfast Table." However in later years those summer days' chance acquaintances of the literary world came to be more than names. Quite likely we took to reading what they had to say sooner than might otherwise have been the case.

There might be a few theatrical productions by home talent to which almost everybody went. In some neighboring towns there were real Dramatic Clubs, as in Arlington, which went on for years, and even had its own club house. I recall one individual in my village who constituted the moving force for stage performances. This was, I am now sure, to offer his stage-struck wife a chance to show her talent of which she had, in her husband's eyes as well as her own, too much to be hidden in any napkin. Perhaps due to a lack of like feeling among the people in the village, who might otherwise have been interested, the supporting casts were almost sure to fail to live up to their name.

The dramas chosen were not always of the Western gun-shooting variety although the use of firearms was not unknown. One play I recall had to do with the machinations of the evil city slicker to win over the beautiful and innocent country girl. On this occasion, as always, it was the uncouth but gold-hearted country youth who saved the day. Somewhere in the process he also gained standing by being called on to protect his own mother. Threatened, as she was, at the right moment this hero rushed upon the stage having all the appearance of a scared rabbit. "Mother" he began and then paused, allowing the promptor to take over for the moment. Then he began again, and recited his manly offer in the same hesitating, expressionless sing-song voice so familiar in school reading classes. "Mother - I - will - protect - your - honor - if - at - the - expense - of - my - life." An over-exuberant member of the audience in the Peanut Gallery responded with a loud "Boo," so frightening the author of the heroic statement that he stood immobile. He gazed at the audience with a sickly smile, which a merciful curtain removed from view.

One circus I recall with a feeling of anything but exaltation perhaps due to the fact that I remember only the arrival in town in the chilly early morning at the railway station to which I had ridden on my bicycle, pedalling like mad lest I be late. I remember the sleepy and very dishevelled and dirty members of the magic party who emerged from various crevices on and between and beneath the cars. No beautiful ladies, no prancing horses,
no shudder-producing lions and tigers as depicted on the posters greeted my suddenly disillusioned eyes.

From billboards I learned from time to time that there were shows of various kinds, usually, according to the bills, showing some man famed in earlier days perhaps as an Indian fighter, who was now serving his countrymen by offering, in bottles, a marvelous remedy, whose secret formula he had learned during a period of captivity among the Indians. These shows were held in the Opera House, two miles from our home and somehow, in spite of plans, I never was able to overcome parental objections to my attendance.

There was one medicine show which I used to see starting out each season from over in New York state. It passed through our village with several gaily painted wagons. In one a tired lion might be seen. Alas it never stopped. I recall one tale of that show, which got its come­uppance for slighting us. It was dragging its way home­ward after a most unsuccessful season and stopped in Danby for three days, in a desperate effort to raise enough cash to get back to New York state. The owner had engaged the local Cornet Band to draw a crowd, offering to let them in on a share of the take. He also sold a magic Elixir, which, Vermont being legally dry, proved attractive to many thirsty ones. As a special attraction he had with him a Dr. Pullen who extracted teeth painlessly. He was a product of a University of Medicine in Paris, France.

On the first night the Doctor offered to extract any unruly dental equipment from any member of the Band, absolutely free of charge. Several of them, made bold by the Elixir, also on the house, took advantage of the generous offer. A short time later the Band gathered together to render a few stirring selections. Only then did the three horn players discover that they had lost their “lip”. Removal of several uppers cut off any possibility of producing the sounds they were expected to contribute. Two snare drums, a bass drum and an uncertain trombone, made so by the too frequent doses of the Elixir, offered a program which failed to be as stirring as might have been expected.

More frequent substitutes for reading were the Church Suppers and “Socials.” Often the announcement would state that there would be an entertainment following the supper. Perhaps the forerunner of the movie, the magic lantern, would present something amusing, entertaining and always elevating.

I know that many people long remembered a most unusual performance which was put on by a cousin of our family who delighted in getting up things. This night she offered a scene from the then very popular works of Frank R Stockton. This was THE CASTING AWAY of Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine. These ladies and a male companion were, as we remember it, swimming or floating away from a wrecked ship. Waves were produced by the billowing of long green portieres stretched across the space between the scene of action and the audience and given realistic motion by several invisible operators. The three shipwrecked castaways floated and swam between two sets of waves. Meanwhile lunch was produced and there was much interesting conversation which added to the hilarity. Realism was enhanced by the intermittent submergence of one or another of the floating population, by a high wave. The castaway would take that opportunity to plunge his head into a waiting bucket of water and then emerge dripping and blowing.

I have no doubt that some Johnny, intrigued by that performance, hastened the next day to the library to get the book, as now, not so very often we fear, some movie or TV show may spur him to look up the rest of the story.

But when all is said and done I remember most keenly the delight I took in reading in that same tent of a summer’s day, lying on my stomach on the cool grass. Or sitting by a cheery coal fire on a winter’s night when the snow was sifting against the window, warmed inside by the climate of some far-off land where heroes were engaged in mighty struggles. And later, what hours of delight Dickens offered, mixed with the latest Henty book, read sometimes to be sure to be up with the other fellows. And that day when the THREE MUSKETEERS marched into view! Johnny-Come-Lately, you’ve missed something if you haven’t closed your ears to some of the strident calls which assail you on every side, and learned to read just because you want to.
Author Bradford Smith begins the annual rite of tapping out the maples in front of his house.
When spring approaches, pictures of Vermont maple syrup makers erupt in a brief, nostalgic flurry as transient as the sugaring season itself. You see them with oxen or horses in the "sugar bush," collecting sap from the buckets on the trees. Or you find them in the sap house, bathed in clouds of steam as they skim or test the syrup forming in the huge evaporating pans. The whole process looks primitive, mysterious, incomprehensible. The product, priced at $2 a quart or more, seems beyond the capacity of the average man to create.

Yet anyone within reach of a sugar maple—and that means everyone in Vermont—can with a little ingenuity and a good deal of enjoyment add maple syrup to the list of things he can do for himself.

Sap begins to run in the maples at that time of year—usually at the end of February or early in March—when winter lets go its grip for a while, when the sun is warm at midday as it pours down through bare branches, and gardeners study the seed catalogs though gardening is still more than a month away. No one has really enjoyed this season who has not sugared.

One of the nice things about sugaring is that it provides an excellent excuse for being outdoors in those first days of false spring. There will be snow and storms and gray days ahead before winter finally lets go. Yet maple syrup can be harvested before anything is ready to plant. The only piece of special equipment needed is the spile—a metal spout which lets the sap drip into your bucket or jar, and which costs only a few cents.

Sugaring requires thawing days and freezing nights. Wait for a day when the sun shines warm and bright. Then take your spiles, a brace and a half-inch bit and a hammer out to the trees. Drill a hole about waist-high, slanting it upward slightly and boring about an inch into the live wood. Almost immediately the sap will begin to ooze out. The warmer the day, the faster it will come. Drive in your spile and hang a bucket or jar on it, slipping the handle over the metal ridge (or sometimes a hook) designed to hold it. Old canning jars with the metal clamps make handy collectors. Any sort of small bucket with a handle will do. You can even use three-pound Crisco tins, making holes near the rim to accommodate the spile. If you leave the cover on, it will be useful in case of rain.

A large tree can take three or more spiles, small trees only one or two. From a large tree you might expect to get two quarts of syrup, or one quart from a small one. But you'll have to collect from thirty to forty (sometimes even up to sixty) times as much sap as you'll get syrup. We make six to eight quarts a year from the three large maples on our front lawn.

It is possible to boil down the sap in the kitchen. Even doing it on an electric stove costs less than forty cents a quart. But you can make it for little or nothing by using an outdoor fireplace and the waste wood—old branches, crates, or remnants from a remodeling job—that can usually be found around a house. We had a plumber make us a square pan in order to take full advantage of our fire.

Mason jars make good sap buckets if not forgotten freezing nights.
but we have also used large kitchen pans. If you start outdoors, it's a good idea to do the finish-up inside in order to get exactly the right consistency.

Anyway, if you're making a gallon or more, you'll find that it takes most of the day to get the sap down to something that begins to resemble syrup. When the sun goes down and the air has nip in it again, you'll be glad to get indoors.

Once you take your product into the house—and don't be disturbed if it looks a little grimy—you can put it on the stove for the final processing. After it has begun to get a golden syrupy color it's a good idea to strain it through a strainer lined with linen. Then place a candy thermometer in it. At first it will be irritatingly slow to do anything. But eventually the temperature will begin to rise. Now watch it carefully, to keep it from boiling over. When it reaches 217° to 218° (Fahrenheit) you will have syrup. You will also have a nectar fit for the gods, not to be compared to the various products which call themselves maple but are mostly something else. If you like extra thick syrup, cook it until the temperature begins to go above 218°.

From syrup you can go on, if you like, to creamy maple candy or to crystalline maple sugar. If there's snow on the ground, you can make that old-fashioned treat, sugar on snow, by heating the syrup until it makes a hair and then bringing in pans full of snow and pouring hot syrup over it to harden.

However you use the product, you will have had the satisfaction of wresting from nature her first sweetness, her first promise of the year's fertility, her first assurance that the old and indispensable cycle of life is to be renewed. Last to give up in the fall, when they flame up over the hillsides, the maples are first to come usefully awake in the spring. But since their useful season is short, never delay. They will not yield on a cold and cloudy day, and once the nights grow warmer they will quit. Approached, however, with patience and understanding and a little love, they readily yield enough of their tangy, wild yet gentle sweetness to fill a whole year's need.
Fire is started in stone arch, a picnic fireplace in the summer, and collected sap is poured into the pan. As the boiling sap evaporates (left) and approaches the syrup stage, the heat is watched carefully to avoid scorching.

At this critical stage the near-syrup is brought indoors and heated to the exact syrup stage on the kitchen stove, by using a candy thermometer.
Boiled beyond the syrup stage until it waxes or threads when poured, the thick syrup is poured in dallops into pans of packed snow. Everyone helps himself to the chewy, sweet morsels, salted with crumbs of snow. Unthickened syrup (above) is poured into jars to be used throughout the year with pancakes and waffles.

Vermont
Montpelier, Vermont
Gentlemen:
I enclose $_______ for a _________ year(s) subscription to Vermont Life Magazine to begin with
the ___________ number, to be sent to:
(Name & Street Address)
(Post Office, Zone & State)

This is a: _______ Renewal
_________ New Subscription
_________ Gift Subscription

Rate: $1.25 per year in U. S., its possessions & Canada
$1.65 per year in other countries (U.S. funds only)
Please make checks payable to Vermont Life.
“Vermont esteems highly certain human qualities even though they do not conduce to the making of large incomes.”

Dorothy Canfield Fisher, 1932