MEMORIES AND STORIES OUT OF THE DIM AND DISTANT PAST

BY

ROLLIN P. WHITE

TO MY VERY FINE FRIEND

HANNAH TRACY MAECK

THIS LITTLE COLLECTION OF STORIES AND MEMORIES HAS BEEN PREPARED FROM THE DIM AND DISTANT PAST FOR MY VERY DEAR FRIEND AND COMPANION OF MY YOUTH, WHO, BEFORE HER MARRIAGE TO B. HARRIS MAECK, WAS MISS HANNAH TRACY BEST REMEMBERED BY ME AS ONE OF THE LOVELY GIRLS OF MY YOUTH. I FELT QUITE FLATTERED RECENTLY WHEN SHE CALLED AND ASKED IF I COULD WRITE A FEW STORIES OF THE DAYS OF LONG AGO WHEN WE WERE BOTH YOUNG TOGETHER. THESE FEW STORIES AND MEMORIES ARE A RESULT OF THIS POOR EFFORT ON MY PART.

Buena Vista, Va.,
April 1, 1969.

Rollin P. White.

OUT OF THE PAST

OUR HIRED GIRL

When I was a small boy on the old Vermont farm in Shelburne Village where I was born and brought up we had a French Canadian hired girl named Julia Thomas. One day Julia became weary with well-doing, tired of her job and she complained to my mother about her work, describing her troubles in the following words: "Cook, cook, wash dish, set tab all tam." Julia was a good cook, excellent help in the house and a fine example of the traditional "hired girl" of a generation ago when hired help on the farm was something of great necessity and the hired help was treated about like members of the family.

We had a neighbor who lived next door to our village homestead. His name was Charlie Whitney, and he was cordially disliked by the cook and the hired men because he was always interferring with their work, carrying tales about them and adding no pleasure to theirlives. My mother also had very little use for old Charlie, but he was an old friend of my father, neighbor of long standing and he and my father were very companionable. One day Charlie came over to our house to get a quart of milk. My father had a good dairy and always had a supply of milk and he dispensed milk by the quart to any neighbor with a tin pail who would come and get it. Incidentally my father said he could make very good money selling milk for 3¢ per quart, and that is what he charged neighbors who came to buy milk at our kitchen door. But the prevailing price charged by Lawrence Kelley, who delivered milk in the village, was 5¢ per quart.

On this occasion charlie came over to our house to get his quart of milk. Now Charlie had spells, fainting and falling and when he had these spells he would call for " Tiny and the whiskey," Tiny was his wi

wife. After Julia had poured Charlie's milk he started for the door, perhaps a little too fast, and by the time he reached to back porch he had one of his spells and down the steps he went pell mell, head long, milk flying in every direction and over him. When he pulled himself together he was calling for Tiny and the whiskey, "Send for Tiny and the whiskey." After the women had gathered around him and ministered to him as best they could, Paul Lavelette, one of our respected and trusted men said, "All Charlie wanted was for the women to pt him and give him a drink of whiskey."

WINTER SLIDING.

The following incident is lifted out of the dim and distant past. While passing a quiet and remeniscent evening at home recently I went up into the attic and dug up an old diary which I had scarcely read since it was written some 50-odd years ago. After reading one entry in this old diary and realizing the topic was a seasonable one I read it aloud to my wife who said it was worth including in the few reminiscences I am digging out of the past for the perusal of Hannah Tracey Maeck, a friend of very sweet memory. So here goes this incident for better or worse, but let the diary tell the story. I have copied it verbatim without change or correction as written in long hand, with pen and ink by a 24-year old boy. Here it is:

January 1st, 1910, NEW YEARS DAY. Well this is New Year's day. I am sleepy tonight and will give an account of this strange and singular state of my self. Last night we christened the traverses by going over to Rigg Barn Hill. Ruth West told us to come over sometime soon so we took this opportunity for going over. Ruth, however, had such a cold that she could not come out but we went to the Hill and did the deed anyway. Our party consisted of Mary and Hannah Tracy, Daisey Russell, Lela Van Vliet, Henry Tracy and Roy Thorp and myself.

Henry's and mine. I hitched Tony to the cutter and the traverses on behind. We arrived at the top of the hill and all seven of us piled on the traverses with room to spare, but not without expressions of fear, skeptisism, doubt and outward emotions of various kinds. Some said "Good bye, others daid "Hurray, let her go. And go she did.

Roy gave her a goodshove and we were off. I had the ropes but did not kno for sure whether I could guide her safely to the bottom or not, for I had never given her so much as a trial run. It was a bold way to christen the traverses, that, by piling on a precious load of damsels, shoving off and throwing ourselves to the mercy of speed, a snowbound path and dangerous elements on all sides. But we were started now and there was no way of stopping this strange cargo of half a ton or more of human lives. But now we were gaining speed faster and faster, this tremendous load was gathering speed at every moment. I looked down in front of the front sled and saw snow and ice flying backward as we gained momentum. The treds, too, beside the road seemed to be flying at a terrific speed, and every moment we were gaining speed. As I leaned heavily on one rope or the other to take the curves I could feel the load behind me twitch and lurch one way or the other as tho the traverses wanted to dump us into the ditch. So the only thing I could do was to take the curves at a very wide angle, which I did and made broad sweeps so as to lessen the terrific side strain.

Now we were in the steepest part of the Hill with practically no curves ahead, but with a straight dive down to the bottom of the hill. Can I hold her to the road or will I lose control and let her go dashing into a tree beside the road? Can I hold my seat? Will my feet stick to the steering brace, or will they slip off? These were questions I was asking myself during these breathless moments as we went dashing down thru the dark but beautiful woods at this fearful, brethless speed.

At this most inopportune moment the fellow who was behind me holding the lantern dropped it to his side so that it cast no light ahead. For a moment I was scared speechless. The road ahead and the ditches on the side all looked alike to me, one blank dark sheet and I didn't know what moment I might crach into a tree. I lunged back heavily on the ropes so as to keep her in a dead straight line ahead and yelled at the top of my voice for more light. When at last the lanternm man heard my shout above the roar of the grinding crunching creaking runners over the frozen snow and ice and the light swung out so I could see I perceived my front bob to be prcariously near the ditch.

By a quick but powerful lurch on the ropes I turned her course so that she gained the middle of the road again. There we stayed in the middle of the road until we reached the level of the flat below. My eyes were full of water and my heart was in my throat, but never wil I forget the glorious ride that was. We took three more rides down the hill, then we went back to Ruth's house where the kind folks had prepared coffee, hot chocolate, cakes and cookies. Having disposed of these refreshments we watched the old year out and the New Year in. The time was passed with playing games, telling stories, piano and resolutions. We returned to our homes arriving about 1:00 A.M. all declaring the traverses were a great success, and a mighty pleasant evening had by all.

A PECULIAR PEOPLE.

Vermonters are regarded by some as a peculiar people, and we Vermonters never deny this We do not deny that we have certain peculiarities that set us apart just a trifle from others. For instance it is not unusual for Vermont farmers to eat apple pie for breakfast, a custom that will bring smiles and astonishment to our Boston and New York cousins. One bright day in April in the spring

of 1900 my brother, Walter, then a struggling young doctor in Middlebury had planned to go fishing out on lake Dunmore. He and Bert Signor had it all planned, get up early and with this early start make a good catch of trout from the willing waters of this charming lake. Bert was an accomplished fisherman and knew the ropes. He came over early that morning to the Addison House, where Walter, then unmarried, was waiting uneasily for the dining room to open for breakfast. Bert said to Walter in good Vermont vernacular, "Come on over to my house, Walter, an' have breakfast, we'll have some ham an' eggs, a pot of coffee an' some apple pie." An interested bystander, obviously a travelling man from Boston or New Yoak, spoke up and said, "What, apple pie for breakfast?" Bert turned a disgusted glance at the stranger and said, "Course, apple pie for breakfast, what to hell business of yours is it. Com' on Walter." We Vermonters don't deny that we are somewhat individualistic, distinct, (peculiar if you please) But anyone can qualify if he will come to Vermont, live awhile in our state, learn to like the Valley and the Mtns., vote republican, pay his pole tax and have some excentricity. These are the main qualifications of a Vermonter.

"GROWED"UP"ON A VERMONT FARM

As a red-faced boy I simply "growed up" on a Vermont farm. I was awkward as the scrub pine but as virule and strong as the white oak. Any boy, I thought, who played with the girls was a sissy. But I did not stoop to such an effemenate passtime, no sir, I was a man's man, I was a Spartan. But one day a bonnie, buxom, auburn-haired girl smiled at me. I didn't mind very much but when she slapped me on the back and ran away laughing, that was too much, I chased her. Of course I did not catch her but I raised my protest by chasing her.

Time went on, she grew more bonnie, more buxom and I grew more

more observant, more tolerant, until one day in the fall of the year I found myself walking home with this modest, auburn-haired, Vermont f farm girl. It was in the soft twilight of the evening, the gentle dew was touching the flowers with moisture, all nature was kissing the h earth good night. Under the influence of these gentle surroundings, as we reached her farm home this sweet farmer's daughter turned to me and said, "Do you like me?" Did I like her? I had never thought o of such a thing, I was a man's man, I was no sissy. Of course I didn' like her. But things were happening fast in my mind. I had to give a truthful, honest answer which was a part of my youthful training.

I paused a moment stalling for time, then I said, "Would your mother care if I did?" "No," she said, "I'm sure mother wouldn't care." I looked around in search for an answer to her honest question. The earth was brilliant with beauty. The silvery moon was just peeping over the Vermont horizon. That wonderful moon gave me a clue to my answer which was soon to follow. As gently as that beautiful Vermont harvest moon was kissing the earth, and in answer to her honest question I leaned over and kissed that farmer's daughter on her frekled cheek. Frightened at this turn of events she turned and ran into the house. Frightened at the awful thing I had done I turned on mu heels a and ran for home. I didn't stop running until I was half way down theh hill toward home, Then I turned and looked back. When I saw nothing was chasing me except my conscious, I slowed down to a walk and went home.

INCIDNET OUT OF THE PAST.

Recalling an incident out of the dim and distant past, my mother belonged to the old school of staunch Methodists who had very decided principles against the evils of the day. Back in those days the Methost discipline listed some of those evils in which its members

were forbidden to engage. Some of these forbidden evils were dancing, card playing, theater going, horse racing and other worldly amusements. My mother observed all of these to the letter of the law. Up to the time of this incident, which was when she was in her declining years I am confident she had never attended a moving picture, and I felt it my duty to have her see one of these new-fangled amusement things. Altho a pretty loyal Methodist myself I thought she ought to see a moving picture before she died,

So one time when we were sight-seeing in Washington, D.C., we were passing one of these palatial theaters and without any explanation I took her by the arm and swung her into this dazzling place. I marched her quite a distance before she had any idea where she was going, and as her feet sank ankle deep in the luxurious carpet mother turned to me and said, "Rollin, what place is this?"

Remembering what my grandmother once said, 'the truth is not always to be told,' and also remembering that the success of my project depended on a carefully guarded explanation I said, "This mother is the congressional library, com' on." As we sank into the comfortable upholstered seats I did not know whether I could hold mother there if she knew exactly where she was. But in spite of my misgivings I had no further trouble in carrying out my purpose, and my good mother sat quietly thru the show. When the performance was over I said, "I guess we can go now." With her eyes still fixed on the screen she said, "Have we seen it all."

ATTACK ON CIRCUS DAY.

My name is Rollin White, my partner in crime is Cicero Clifford. We both are 11 years old. The year is 1897, circus day in Burlington, Vermont, a very important day to all circus goers within a radious of horse and buggy distance from Burlington, or a circus day excursion on the Central Vermont railroad (later the Rutland RR). All horse

and buggy outfits that day headed for the circus from points south, Charlotte, Ferrisburg, Vergennes, must pass our woodbine fort, on the main road thru Shelburne Village. And behind this fortification, Cicero and I had a good stock of ammunition consisting of small, hard green apples . Now Cicero and I were not privileged to go to the circus that day and so behind this woodbine fort, and with this ammunition we attacked all outfits passing on the road. This was our ~~purpose~~ way of taking our revenge because we could not go to the circus. Why we never got our loocks knocked off by some of these irate circus goers I will never know.

PECK'S BAD BOYS.

This same team of Peck's bad boys discovered a yellow jacket's nest on one of the limbs of the beautiful maple trees that shaded the village sidewalk along Main Street in front of our house. At the south end of the village which is now used by the Shelburne Museum was the residence of Mr. Walter A. Weed, a very fine and respected man of the community. Now Mr. Weed passed our house every day to and from the post office, John Collamer, Postmaster, Mr. Weed a retired farmer was a towering man who walked with a slow and faltering step. He never paid much attention to us small boys and in spite of his dignity and poise impressed us kids ans rather austere and gruff. We discovered that shaking the limb of the tree of the maple tree agitated the yellow jackets and put them on the war path so that when anyone passed that way the passer-by got the benefit of their illtemper and war-like acitvity. Mr. Weed came along one day and ~~got~~ the yellow jackets were on the war path. Now who-done-it I hope will never be known, but a couple of boys were hiding around the corner and as long as we could se see Mr. Weed going up the street he was fighting and batting at the Jackets.

COMMON TRAITS OF ALL VERMONTERS.

We Vermonters are conscious of our common traits of individuality, those characteristics that set us apart just a little from others, and the nature of the state we call our home. Amon ourselves we laugh these off with good humor. But I have known a few Vermonters who have become bored and just a little irked when outsiders come in and comment too freely on the peculiarities of our race, state and people. Vermonters are aware, for instance, that the summer season in the Old Green Mtn State is rather short, and we laugh about there being two seasons in Vermont, "Winter," and "August." I cannot vouch for the accuracy of this incident, but it was related to me that a dear lady summering at a camp on Lake Champlain, came ranting to a patient but somewhat bored man of our community, who had plenty of wit and humor, and said, "Oh, Mr. V.V. I don't see how you stand it here where the winters are so long and the summers so short. "Your summers are very short, aren't they, Mr. V.V," Mr. V.V. Cocked his head one side and he puffed on his chain cigar in meditation he said, "Yes, Mrs. so-and-so our summers are very short, last year our summer was on a Thursday."

RIVER AND HARBOR ON SKATES.

One winter's day back in the gay nineties when the sidewheeler VERMONT was being built at Shelburne Harbor a distance of 8 or 9 miles by river and bay, three boys in the village decided to skate from the village to the Harbor, to take a look at the new boat under construction. Strapping on our skates at the foot of Harrington Hill where there is a bend in the La Platte River, these boys began their long pull in high spirits. With long strides we made the three miles down the river, then the five miles or so down the Bay to the Harbor. We were all in high spirits including our dog Jack who was an enthusiastic member of the party. Also in this party was my oldest brother, Embree, our boyhood companion, Lewie, Van Vliet, the writer and the

long haired collie mentioned above. Down the river we went, whooping and hollering, exploding with vigor and youth. At the mouth of the river we struck out across the bay where the ice snapped and cracked under our weight. To the uniniated this snapping and cracking of the ice a half mile from shore would have struck terror to the heart. But to seasoned skaters, three country boys who knew the river, the bay and the lake it only spelled safety. So on to the Harbor we went

Here we found the VERMONT resting comfortably in the water, or ice, with a channel cut in the ice around the boat to relieve the pressure of the expanding ice against the hull of the boat. This channel was kept open at all times but thin ice formed over the 18-in. channel and while we skaters could see this thin ice and easily step across the channel dog Jack did not see this thin ice and onto it he went, and thru the thin ice into the icy water. But what did it matter we were all young, and to all it was but a huge Joke. We pulled him out and there were no scars except the ice cicles all over his shaggy body. On the return trip home twilight began to overtake us on the short winter's day and the two older boys sent me on ahead, being lean and a strong skater, to advise the folks at home that all were safe, but that the other boys were delayed by Lewie Van, who, tho loved [illegible] all like a brother, was rather fat and stout and found it difficult to keep up the pace on the last lap of 16-mile skating Jaunt.

MEMORIES THAT COME DOWN FROM THE OLD DAYS.

Among the memories that come down from the days of long ago when I was a red-faced plow boy growing up on a Vermont farm which is so true that I will refrain from mentioning the man who was the butt of the joke, but he was a respected citizen who owned a farm out on Shelburne Point. His first name was George and his last name began with

"B". He had the reputation of not paying his debts. Another townsman, Abe Willey, had the reputation of being a sort of half wit, but in spite of this handicap he occasionally wrote poems and rhymes. Now Abe Willey sold George B. a load of cord wood and as you might expect was unable to collect on his sale. Therefore, to even up the score Abe wrote the following epitaph for the tombstone of Geroge B. and passed it around to the boys:

Here lies long Geroge B.-- the damndest rake you ever see.
Be honest he couldn't, and work he wouldn't
And truth like shaddows from his lips did flee.
So we will let him pass and audit the bill
Take nothing from nothing, there is nothing still.

HORACE GREELY, FOUNDER OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

Horace Greely was one of the founders of the republican party and Vermont has lived peacebly with that party for a hundred years and more. Vermont is a stronghold of rugged independence, the never-never land ofof eternal republicanism. The republic of Vermont was concieved in controversy and reared in rebellion. It was settled by people from New Hampshire, Connecticut and Mass. If the republican party had acquainted itself with Vermont history it would have known better than to insist on the nomination of Cal Coolidge when he said, "I do not Choose to run." Brigham Young was a Vermonter, and like all other Vermonters was a free thinker and founder of the Morman religion and when he was persecuted and run out of the east because of his religious views he finally landed in Utah and said, "This is the place." Those who have visited the Morman Temple in Salt Lake City tell me it is a right nice monument to a one-time Vermonter. Vermont waged a bitter, protracted fight against slavery long before the Civil War. Admiral Dewey was a Vermonter and said, "Don't cheer boys, the poor devils are

dying," when he destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Harbor.

GOING BACK IN MEMORY.

When you go back in memory a half century or more it is not so easy to pull the rabbit out of the hat, but I recall several Charlotte boys who drove daily from their farm homes to attend the Shelburne High School, or Mrs Deyett's private school. There was George and Ralph Lewis, Harry Van Vliet, Lester Prindle, Gilman foote, Cy Horsford, Henry (Buck) Williams, and others. All of these were around my own age, and then there were girls who came from out of town to attend Shelburne schools. There was Elizabeth Holmes, of brilliant mind, and her sister Maude, from West Charlotte, Ella Smith, from East Charlotte, Ruth and Bertha Fields from Ferrisburg, Clair Hull from Hinesburg, and Claire Beach from Charlotte, also Jennie Thompson from East Shelburne. Now these young ladies did not undertake the hardship of driving the distance every day, as did the boys, but for the most part they roomed in Shelburne Village during the week, some of them at our house, and returned to their own homes on Friday night.

OTHER NAMES INCLUDED.

The foregoing do not include the names of boys and girls who lived in Shelburne township and drove daily from three to five miles to and from school. One of these was a sturdy Vermont girl named Mabel Nezar, who rode her horse daily in the style of that say- side saddle, and stabled her horse in our farm barn during the day. All of these folks were reared in the true Vermont tradition, and did not come up the easy way, Vermont farm life was not the easy life, but it had its rewards. The cold wind-swept Mtns and Valleys of Vermont have produced a hardy race of people, some times cold and calculating, like the climate, but in their line runs a rich heritage from generations of forebears disciplined in the rigors of this great north country. No wonder

Vermont produced a man noted for his silence wisdom and prudence who led out nation into prosperity as Moses led the Children into the Promised land.

HORSE AND BUGGY DAYS.

Back in the good old horse and buggy days my older brother Walter and his boon companion Perry Russell frequently hired a horse and buggy from the village liveryman, John Dubuc, of French Canadian extraction and dialect. In order to lead John out in his broken dialect they would try to jew him down in the price he charged for a horse and buggy on a trip to Burlington. "Now John, they begged, "Try and see if you can't do a little better on your price. "No, no, no," said John, "Maude on de leetle red buggy, a dollar and a half, de least, de least. De more I try de less I can't"

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION.

On my 50th birthday, which is now 32 years ago I took the day off to celebrate in my own way. I lit out in my hiking shoes to walk a mile for every milestone of my life, that is, 50 miles. Could I do it or could I not ? My neighbor, Lawrence Embree, said not, so we staked a friendly wager, he bet no, I bet yes. So down the road I went to Glasgow, across the James River, and on to natural Bridge. Here I had put 15 miles behind me but 15 is a long way from 50 and my arches were giving me trouble. I stopped and phoned to Lawrence Embree, who was betting against me but actually in his heart he was pulling for me, and asked him to bring me another pair of shoes.

This he did and these different shoes relieved my feet greatly, and on I went, headed for Lexington. Now it was about noon, a bowl of soup and 30 miles behind me refreshed my spirit greatly. Here I was only 7 miles from BV but to walk but to hike the full 50 miles I must head south to Cross Roadsand then back to BV. The dogs were not hurting now but the calves were almost letting me down. Could I mak

the next 11 miles. A friend, Gil Agnor passed in his car and asked if I wanted to ride. "No thanks, Gil," I said, "I'm just out for a little hike. Little did he know that I would have given a fortune to have tumbled into his car, But on I went, down to 2 miles per hour now, but I had to win. Old Buena Vista is only 4 miles from home but the longest 4 miles I ever hiked or walked in my life. And darkness was overtaking me now. Long Hollow saw me down to 1 mile per hour and it was shaky business at that. It was dark now and when I met a car I stepped out on the shoulder of the road and braced myself lest I might fall in front of the car. But the Lord takes care of children and fools and at 50, of course, I was no child. Anyhow, I made it and at 8:00 PM I staggered into the kitchen of the Embree home, where I was s staying at that time, at supper and crept off to bed. Only because I am a lifelong member of the Methodist Church did I go to church next day, Charlie-horses were all over my body.

GROWING UP ON A VERMONT FARM.

When I was a young lad growing up on a Vermont Village farm, My brother and I had a boon companion, Lewie Van Vliet, who lived across the street from our rambling farm house. One of the rich experiences of those boyhood days of those boyhood days was to hitch up a horse and buggy and go up on the hill about a mile distant and see the Tracy boys who lived on their family farm. On one of these occasions while playing out in the barn I became engaged in a friendly boxing match with Lewie, when altogether accidentally I gave Lewie a bloody nose. Lewie, however, did not stop but kept coming and crowding his head into my stomach. He kept this position as the friendly scuffle continued with the result that when the scuffle was over Lewie's nose had bled all down my front while he came out unstained.

ON ANOTHER OCCASION.

On another occasion one of the Tracy boys named silas, but whom

we all aff ectionately called Sie, was sent by his father with a message for his older brother, Julius, who was attending the Village High School. Now Mrs. Deyett was the principle of this one-room High School room. M Mrs. Deuett was a teacher of the highest order, she probably did not have her superior in the state of Vermont. Her discipline was of the highest order far above the average; she disciplined not with physical punishment, but with mental punishment, using such weapons as ridicule, sarcasm, contempt, etc. often to the great embarrasment of her pupils. Sie knocked at the door of the high school room and asked Mrs. Deyett if he could see his brother Jule. Mrs. Deyett opened the door wide in her somewhat sarcastic attitude said, "Well, there he is take a good look at him." Undaunted by this rather unwelcome reception Sie took one look at the room full of high school students until he spotted Jule in the back of the room then he shouted across the room full of students, "Jule, father said when you get home, turn the water off in the barn yard, let the bars down so the cows can come up and turn the calves in the calf lot. Is it any wonder that I enjoy a visit back to the scenes of my childhood.

VERMONT BLIZZARDS.

I was too young to remember the blizzard of '88 but well do I remember the next famous blizzard of '98 when I was 12 years old. I tried to get from our house to the village school house 150 yards away, where my brother, Embree, school janitor, had already built the fires for the day. I made it by the hardest that day but no teachers nor pupils arrived for school. Weather conditions had to be pretty bad in those pioneer days when schools were closed, but they were closed that day to the great joy of us boys. This gave us a chance to take in the blizzard and try it out. As in the blizzard of '88 the mail train became

stalled again in a deep cut back of the school house, but the law said the mail must make an attempt to go, so it got stuck in the beautiful snow, 15 feet deep and thare it stayed like a whale mired in shallow water, it courl neither move forward nor backward. It took all day with extra crews to dig that train out of its snow bound birth with shovels by hand. And thru it all the blizzard raged and roared, and oh what a blizzard that was.

POINT OF GREATES EXCITEMENT.

Boy like I wanted to get up to get up to the point of greatest activity and excitement where the train was stalled. In company with my brother we bundled up for the venture, for the uncertain safety of the blizzard. We crept out past the farm barns and thru the orchard. For safety we stuck together, we couldn't see ahead, we couldn't see behind us because of the blinding swirling snow. So for sadety we fought our wa way side by side thru the drifting show and made our way as best we could until we reached the railroad tracks. I will never forget for one moment I stood in that wind-swept railroad yard, I thought I was a gonner. Witl only the strength of a boy I faced the raging wind and swirling snow, unti for one mcment the these elements seemed to pull the very breath out of my body. But I had plenty of fight, I turned my back on the forxe of the stormand stood still in my tracks for a minute until presently I got my breath and I was alright. We went to the station where we got warm and ag again faced the Blizzard until we reached the stalled train. It was in connection with this stalled train that Fred Dubuc, one of our more venturesome village boys, got killed. So perhaps you can understand why the memories of the good old Vermont winters are so indelibly imprinted on my mind. And you wonder why I still love the heartless, Ice-bound country. Alexander the Great sat down and cried when there were no more worlds for him to conquer. I would do the same if there were no more winters to conquer in Vermont. We lived thru them, we fought them, we

conquered them and perhaps that is why I love them.

STROLLING DOWN MEMORIESS LANE.

Strolling down memory's lane the other day I went back to the year 1802 when as a red faced farm boy I got a job that summer of raking hay on the beautiful estate of Dr. W. Seward Webb, known as Shelburne Farms. The haying season on this 4,000-acre estate lasted from July 1st to Sept. 1st, and kept a crew of farm hands busy all summer. Uncle Sam did not require a federal income tax back in those good old days, what we earned was net. We had it all to spend or save,- let your conscience be your guide. In those early days wages were low. Section hands received 90¢ per day, farm hand from $16 to $20 per month and board. Dr. Webb paid better wages in fact he paid $1.50 for labor, $3.50 for teamsters, and $2.50 per day for a man or boy who furnished his horse to rake hay in the summer. Now to a toe-headed boy who was not accustomed to much money this was fabulous, and the hours were so good only 10 hours per day, whereas if I hired out to a farmer there would be no hours at all, just from daylight to dark, about 14 hours, that's all. So I felt like a financial tycoon when at 15 or 16 years of age I was earning the fabulous sum of $2.50 per day for me and my mare named Betsey, of good Morgan stock. And such easy work, just sit and ride the iron rake from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM We still had the pioneer spirit in those early days.

BILL FARGO AND THE GAME WARDEN.

Bill Fargo was a character in our community. I never remember that Bill did any bona fide work but he was a notorious fisherman and fished the willing waters of the La Platte River, down in the flats of Henry Harrington's pasture and out on Shelburne Bay, an arm of historic Lake Champlain. Bill should have been born back in the days of Daniel Boone, for whom he would have been a good companion. Bill never hesitated to use his imagination in concocting tales of his adventures while hunting and trapping during his early days in Canada. He often spun these yarns

around the big iron stove in Tracy, Van Vliet & Russell's general store in the presence of Lewis Vuley, Leander Chauvin and all the rest of us who would listen. Bill would regale the cracker barrel session with his exploits, tales and adventures, true or untrue as the case might be. Of course Bill never admitted that his tales were untrue or even exagerated, but on one occasion Bill was obliged to admit the story was exagerated. I cannot vouch for the truth of this incident but it was related to me that Bill was fishing out on a rock under Allen's Hill when a man came along with rod and reel and hailed him with, "Havin' any luck ?" With his usual bravado Bill volunteered, "Well, not too much today, but yesterday I caught 20 black bass in half an hour right off this same rock. The stranger said, "I guess you don't know who I am, I'm Dr. Webb's game worden and I can have you arrested for fishing on posted land, and for taking Black Bass illegally." Bill replied quickly, "I guess you don't know who I , I'm Bill Fargo, the biggest liar in the town of Shelburne."

OLD MAN FOY AND THE VILLAGE BOYS.

This is the story of old man Foy and the village boys, As the rracks of the Rutland Railroad enter Shelburne station from the south they descend a long hill, on an easy grade, but nevertheless it is downhill. This mile-long hill nade a hard climb for freight trains from the north in those days, but trains coming from the south had a long easy glide from the south into the station. The conductor of the local freight was a man named Foy who was genuinely despised by the village boys who gathered at the station to watch the routine of the local freight as it came as it came chugging and wheezing into the station to unload its freight and do the usual switching. The reason for this hatred was that the old man would never lose an opportunity to play mean tricks on the boys, such as to catch a boy by the wrist and twist his arm or pull his ear until he would writh in pain. It seemed to be Mr. Foy's delight to torture a boy if he could get him in his grasp. Now among the village boys of those early days was my older brother, Walter, Harry and Walter Weed

and Perry Russell. Now these boys wracked their collective brain to come up with some scheme by which they could give old man Foy some trouble.

THE LONG SLIDE.

They would go up to the top of the hill at Meeches Crossing just before old man Foy was due in with the local freight and they would grease the track all the way down the hill so that when the local came rolling over the hill Mr. Foy, or the engineer, would have difficulty stopping the train at the station, and they would be at a safe point so Mr. Foy could not lay his hands on them. So on the day of the great slide they went up to the top of the hill and greased the rails with axle grease for the mile long slide into the station. The scheme worked almost better than they had anticipated. It wasn't long before old man Foy's whistle blew and here comes the local rolling over the hill for the easy mile long glide into the station. But when it gotwithin a quarter mile of the station it was flying like a run-away train down the side of a mountain and past the station it flew. Mr. Will Tyler, the station agent came running out waving his arms and yelling, "Hey, what's the matter with you, aren't you going to stop. But stop she didn't until it got a half mile down the track, across the bridge over the La Platte River on firm rail that had not been greased. Back up to the station came the local with feathers drooping and a worried look on old man Foy's face.

OLD MAN FOY AGAIN.

On another occasiom when my brother Embree and I were very small boys we stood looking thru a farm gate as Mr. Foy came down the tracks to throw a nearby switch. He pulled out a bunch of keys to unlock the switch and as he did so he clutched one of the keys in his hand like a revolver and ran up into our face pointing this key at us. Small boys that we were we were greatly frightened and ran crying back to the house

When my father heard of this he was very angry and spoke out hastily,, "That man ought to have hid head cut off." Not on account of this pronouncement by my father but in the performance of his railroad duties later on Mr. Foy fell under the wheels of his train and his head was cut off.

BACK IN THE OLD DAYS IN BURLINGTON.

Back in the old days when I was attending the Univ. of Vt. in Burlington a great football victory was won by the college team. This was about the year 1907, and this was no ordinary victory, it was colos sal in size, the mgnnitude of the victory was such that theu usual campus bonfire celebration was entirely inadequate, a campus Bonfire was not expressive of the great importance of this victory. Therefore, it was deemed necessary to hold the bonfire down in the heart of the city, in the middle of Main St., in the middle of the car tracks, in front of the Strong Theater, blocking all traffic including the Main St. trolley line. Now of course the city of Burlington, with its 15,000 population was adequately policed and the police and fire department used every effort possible to protedt the interests of the city. But a student body of 350 Vermont boys, intoxicated with victory, full of youth and poor judgement, was something to be reckoned with, something that even a good police and fire department could not easily handle. Fire hose were cut, police were brushed aside and the fire went on in the middle of the street, in the middle of the car tracks, in front of the Strong theater. This City officials had one lastt hope. The Mayor of the City came rushing down, they thought perhaps he could appeal to the reason of the boys, in their victory-crazed high spirits.

MAYOR BURKE TO THE RESCUE.

The Mayor mounted a soap box, mayor Jim Burke, a good mayor, too. He was a blacksmith, of French Canadian descent, not too well educated and spoke with that rich Canadian dialect, but that did not prevent

him from being a good Mayor and well thought of by all. To impress the boys with the importance of his position and authority as Mayor of the city he repeated again and again in his speech, "I amde peoples' choose." But in spite of the Mayor's appeal the celebration went on until the embers of the fire burned out, and the fire in the hearts of the victorious Vermont boys burned low enough so that they went cheering, yelling and satisfied back up Main St. On an other occasion our good Mayor Burke, who always wore red suspenders, was sitting in his office in City Hall, when he spied two comely young ladies crossing City Hall Park in bathing suits. Now back in those early days we were very particular and did not allow any limbs to be exposed, except perhaps the limbs of our apple trees. So Mayor Burke rushed out in his red suspenders and ordered these pretty girls off the street on account of their scanty attire. For this act the Mayor was was criticised rather severely in the newspapers, and A.F. Farnsworth, practising physician, of Rutland wrote the following poem, which appeared in the Rutland Herald:

O, Mayor Burke, O, Mayor Burke,
How can your sense of duty
deprive from admiring eyes
Such scenes of youth and beauty?

Perhaps your red suspenders set
Your aged heart of fire
And gave you visions of our youth
A-wallowing in the mire.

If this be true take my advise,
And bathing beauhäss shun
Where thousands clad in tights you'äl see

Don't go to circuses or fairs,
For here you'll see perform
Fair maids in tights,'twould be a sight
To make you fume and storm.

Don't chase thase innocent maids
From off your parks and streets,
But let them roam and feel at home,
And rest your weary feet.

VERMONT LIFE IN THE EARLY DAYS.

A typical Vermonter back in the early days was a man or woman

reared in economy, brought up in frugality and these characteristics were bred in the bone and were necessary as a matter of survival. The rich and near rich were not plentiful in those days. A man lived by the sweat of his brow, by his wits and his resourcefullness and most Vermonters had some peculiarity which often stemmed from his habits of thrift, economy, self reliance and honesty. In those early days our neighbor, Mr. Well, was such a man At that time we had no welfare, no social security, no pensions, etc. The only security a farmer had when he became too old to run his farm was what he had saved by hard orkk, thrift and economy during his lifetime. If he had managed to pay the mortgage on his farm he usuall rented or sold his farm and settled in the nearby village where he continued his life of thrift and frugality. Now our neighbor, Mr. Wells, fitted this description very well, for honesty, integrity and uprightness he could not be excelled. And when q we lost our rooster for three or four days and later discovered him crowing and strutting with Mr. Wells' hens my brother, Embree, went over and asked Mr. Wells if he could catch the rooster and take it home. To this Mr. Wells agreed heartily since the rooster had strayed into his flock, and when Embree started home with the rooster under his arms Mr. Wells suggested that Embree might bring a little feed which the rooster had eaten on his uninvited visit. This was done promptly and when we brought a two-quart measure about two-thirds full of chicken feed Mr. Wells said, "Oh, that is more than the rooster has eaten," whereupon he took the measure and relieved it of two or three handfuls of grain and said he thought that was about all the rooster had eaten, which concluded the whole transaction to the entire satisfaction of all concerned.

BAT LESSOR ONND THE TOWN ELECTION.

I had a very good friend back in the goodold days of the gay nineties and the early ninteen hundreds. He was a pretty rough talking

fellow and while I did not like the language he used I thought a lot of Bat Lessor. We always got along asfriend should with a good feeling of comraderie between us, he was a man and I was a boy and as such our relations were very good. Bat lived over in what we called the French Village near Meeches Crossing.

Bat was a teamster and worked over at Shelburne Farms, the Webb rstate, during the summer season, while I also was employed there during the haying season, raking hay with my Morgan mare for which I was well paing. Bat had the most profound, or proficient vocabulary of profanity, I think, I ever heard and while I do not enjoy profanity this story involves a rough or profane expression, and if you can see in it the humor I can see I hope you will forgive my using it here. It was so original, so ludidrous, and as funny as Bat was himself.

This was the year, about 1905, when E. F. Gebhardt ran for town representative against Henry Harrington. Now Mr. Gebhardt was Gen. Mgr. at Shelburne Farms, He was a very austere man, Harsh, dry, stern, distant and reserved. If he met one of his workmen on the street he would not be apt to speak to him, but this ws election year and Mr. Gebhardt was running for office and under these circumstances he was cordial and affable with every one.

On this occasion we were all eating our dinner during the noon hour at the south end of the quadrangle of the farm barn when Mr. Gebhardt appeared among the men to have a cordial word with each one This, of course, was politics and Bat who was present and in the presence of Mr. Gebhardt was loud and vociferous, putting in a good word for his boss. He came out loud and clear with this appeal to the boys so all could hear it, including Mr. G. himself,- Oh hell, boys, let's all vote for Gebhardt this time and next time we'll vote for some other son-of-a-b...." Mr. Gebhardt went away laughing, which goes to show that politics makes strange bed fellows. Mr. Gebhardt won the election

and when the results of the vote were announced Henry Harrington stepped up to Mr. G. to shake hands and offer his congratulations, but he got a frigid reception, Mr. G. had reverted to his former austerity, coolness and reserve. But Henry was elected town representative at the next election and I trust this gave him a degree of satisfaction following the defeat he suffered two years before.

BAT AND THE LIQUOR VOTE.

On another occasion after the state of Vermont had changed its law from prohibition to that of local option the cities and larger towns were getting their liquor stores. Finally it came time in Shelburne to vote on whether or not we would liscense the sale of liqu in our small town, population 1,500. While I was just a boy I went alon with the women of our community, the WCTU, who were bitterly opposed to the idea of a liquor store in our town.

But my friend, Bat Lessor, was loud and outspoken in advocating the sale of liquor in our community. Finally the great day of decision came, the day in which the town voted ofr or against liquor. The temperance had worked hard for their cause and, of course, the liquor people had canvassed every possible vote that could be mustered for their project. I don't recall just how it happened that when the vote was announced that the liquor had won I was in Bat's buggy, headed down the street from the town hall, north, toward Tracy, Van Vliet & Russell's store. But Bat was ring master of this little show, with me a ten-year-old boy sitting quietly in his buggy, Bat was yelling at the top of his voice, "b'god, boys, wee'll have a drink now, we'll have all the whiskey we want. We'll all get drunk and have a hell of a time. Waving his arms and yelling at the top of his voice he was extolling the virtues of whiskey anf the good time we woubd have now with plenty of fire water to drink.

Needless to say this is one time I felt rather embarrased to be

needless to say this is one time I felt rather embarrased to be a part-

to this loud and boistrous pro-liquor demonstration. Nevertheless I still liked Bat and to this day I still hold a high regard for the memory of my good friend, Bat Lessor. The first liquor store was located at Shelburne Falls and Fred Pete was the operator, Bat Lessor was the first customer he had to sample the glories of this beverage, which both cheers and inebriates.

WHEN I WAS A BOY GROWING UP ON A VILLAGE FARM.

When I was a boy growing up on a village farm in Shelburne, Vt., the rector of the Episcopal Church was a Mr. Atwell. He was a very affable, kindly disposed gentleman and had a good sense of humor. On one occasion when I was present amng several others standing around the big iron stove in the general store Mr. Atwell related the following story out of his abundant experience. He said he had a temperance speaker who had come to give a temperance lecture in his church and that he entertained the speaker at his parsonage home. That night for supper Mrs. Atwell had among other things brandied peaches. During the course of the meal Mr. Atwell asked the temperance speaker if he would like just a little more of the peaches. Whereupon the gentleman replied that he did not think he would care for more of the peaches but just a little more of the juice. It so happened that my very good friend, Lewis Vuley, was in the group of men and boys standing around listening to Brother Atwell's story. Now Lewis himself was no temperance man, in fact, on occasion he indulged too freely, had no use for temperance advocates, and so this gave him an opportunity to express himself freely about this story and temperance people in general. So Lewis spoke out promptlu and loudly, "That's right," said Lewis, "that's the way with these temperance people, they all want more of the juice." Altho not much for temperance Lewis was a good worker, a brick mason by trade,but when work was slack he did any kind of work such as cutting wood in the winter, and he and I did many a hard day's

work in the woods together.

ON ANOTHER OCCASION, FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION.

On another occasion when everyone was celebrating the fourth of July in his own way, some went to Burlington totake in the sights and celebrate vardously in the Queen City while others remained at home to celebrate with fire works or a buggy ride to the lake shore. So on this great day my good friend Lewis Vuley went to Burlington to celebrate. Coming home that afternoon on the four o'clock train he was weaving his way unsteadily up the street on the opposide from D. C. Smith's meatmarket, where a crowd of men and boys was gathered. As he passed this gathering of boys a firecracker lared and exploded at his feet. Lewis stopped, turned and took in the situation, crossed the street toward the crowd of boys, with the apparent intention of reprimanding the boy who threw that firecracker. He addressed the crowd standing there, "I'll give any man five dollars if he will tell me who threw that firecracker." A rather large man stepped out from the crowd and said, "Mister, I am the man who threw that firecracker." "Oh," said Lewis, "excuse me, mister, we are all liable to make mistakes,

FIRST ORATORICAL ATTEMPT.

My first recollection of any chaurch activity is of an effort in the old Methodist Church on the village green where my father and mother were devoted members, my father in particular was a very active member in the affairs of the church. My first performance on the great stage of life was in this church at the rather early age of four years, I took part in a somewhat elaborate Christmas entertainment. Back in those early days a considerable emphasis was put on the Christmas entertainment of the Sunday School when gifts were given to each child in the Sunday School, usually in the form of a bag of Christmas candy and an orange, and individual gifts could be put on the tree from person to person. The entertainment was worked up by the teachers and officers

of the Sunday School and a great deal of time was given to training of the children for the exercises held.

I can barely remember at this early age of four years my part which was to march up on the platform, an extension of the pulpit platform, and 'say a piece.' My sister, Anna, had prepered me with a pair of boots and after slipping on these little boots she sent me up from one of the front pews to say the following piece:

Who cares for winter's frosts or winds that rudely blow
I now thru anything can go, in rubber boots.
Fack Frost is pinching at my nose, trying to pinch me thru my cloth
But, ah, he cannot reach my toes, in rubber boots.
I wish I had on Christmas day a thousand pairs to gives away
To boys who are too poor to pay, for rubber boots.

This entertainment was said to be a great success and all the neighbors and farmers went home that night in their sleighs, cutters and pungs, warm and happy and contented with the results of their Christmas entertainment of 1889. I understand this grand old Methodist Church was built in 1873, 13 years before I was born and the legend was handed down to me by my parents that at the time the present church was built the congregation was divided into two schools of thought,- those who wanted to build of stone and those who wanted a frame building. Those who preferred stone were known as stone men and those who preferred wood were known as wood men. The beautiful church now resting so comfortably on the village green stands as a fine monument to the living God, and a great credit to the judgement and wisdom of those who built it.

THE NECESSITY OF A CRANK.

My mother was a crank and she did not deny it, in fact she rather proudly admitted that she was a crank. I heard her relate how on one occasion she went out to get a pail of water at the well near the kitchen door. So familiar was she with the pump at this household well that she did not need to look for the crank but began circling her arm around

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where the crank should have been. She soon found that for some reason the crank was missing and, therefore, she could not get her pail of water. From this dimple incident she made the deduction that a crank is necessary for her to get the pail of water from this ancient family well. Likewise, she concluded that her position as a crank in the field of reformation was necessary to the promotion of the social order. Now her great field of reformation was in the use of tobacco, her position against the use of tobacco was as strong as that of Carrie Nation agains the old liquor saloon. An she did not hesitate to make her position known known in the presence of anyone who violated her ideas of the use of tobacco.For instance, on one occasion as a small boy I remember we were just boarding the lower deck of a Hudson River night boat for the trip from New York to Albany. The deck was rather crowed and we were moving slowly toward the upper deck when mother spied a sign, NO SMOKING. At about the same time she spied a man holding a lighted cigar in his hand. She put her hand gently on his arm and said, "Did you see that sign." The man quickly replied, "I'm not smoking." Just as quickly mother shot back, "But your cigar is."

On another occasion mother nearly broke up the dignity of a staid, Vermont, Thursday night prayer meeting when during the course of her testimony she repeated the following jingle about the use of tobacco,

I don't see how a mortal man fashioned like his maker
Can chew the stuff, or smoke a pipe,
'Till it's old and black and ripe,
Strong enough to kill a cat,
Forty rods away at that.

Brother Goodman, who was our minister at the time, and conducting the prayer meeting, threw his head back in a burst of laughter following the rather untimely recital of this jingle. And somehow I like to think of Mother and Bro, Goodman, both long since gone to their eternal reward, as living in that mansion not built with hands, and perhaps laughing over the simple incident of this prayer meeting of long ago, held in a rear room of the Methodist Church of loving memory

laughing