

MY LIFE AND MEMORIES

IN

IRA, VERMONT

..//BY

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ARRANGED AND EDITED BY

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IRA, VERMONT

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PREFACE

Many changes have taken place in my lifetime. I believe more than in any other lifetime. My daughter, Dianne, asked me to jot down some of these things so that my grandchildren would know what my life was like in the "older days". I have tried to do this over a period of time and also to leave some of my philosophy and observations with them. So here is my story for my grandchildren:

Christy Perry

Nancy Ladd Hanson

Timothy Perry

Sarah Whiteman Brooks

Ruthie Ladd

Daniel Perry

Christopher Whiteman

I am thankful for all the years through which I have lived with laughter and tears and pray that you, my grandchildren, may all know the joy of serving my Savior, Lord, and Master.

This has been written from 1990 to 1998 as thoughts and remembrances have come to me. I wish to thank Dianne, my wife Alice, Dianne's husband Bill, and all others who have helped to put this together by their work and encouragement.

MY GRANDPARENTS AND MY FAMILY

I was born Ralph Harwood Perry on March 21, 1919, to Walter Charles Perry and Carrie Elizabeth Colvin. My parents were overjoyed because they deeply wanted a son after two daughters. My grandparents were Eben & Ida Perry and John & Eunice Colvin. We lived on the Perry Homestead in Ira on the West Road south of Arden Day's farm. From what I have heard, the roads were very muddy on the day that I was born. Our buggy was too heavy and would have become stuck in the mud so my father drove a horse with a two wheel, one seat sulky to West Rutland. Dr. Fleming then drove it back to Ira to take care of my mother and me while my father walked home. Eleanor Busier, a dear family friend, was there and evidently stayed with my mother for some time. Wilfred Johnston, a farm helper, worked and slept at the farmhouse and he said I cried a great deal of the time. Evidently I did not get enough to eat or I had a pin sticking into me.

One of my earliest recollections was seeing my grandfather Perry in the kitchen with a kerosene lamp. I remember the day he was buried. I threw a tantrum at the last stair in the hallway because my parents were not taking me to the cemetery; it was a cold day in February, 1922. My grandmother Perry always lived with us and she was so good to me; we were very close to her. She was rather plump and it was hard to sit in her lap. Cousin May Seward, on the Perry side through the Squier line, used to come to visit from East Wallingford and Grandma would go over there. Cousin May was the grandmother of Roland

Seward of Seward's Creamery and Dairy Bar. She would make us delicious fried pies; they were good but I do not remember what was in them. Miss Marion Prior, a nurse from Sherburne, lived with us and helped take care of Grandma in her last days; she was very good to her and to us too. My Grandma died on a hot day in July, 1933.

I recall going in a buggy to my grandfather Colvin's funeral in Chippenhook via Mark Fish's farm, over the hill by Rita Weaver's; that was April 6, 1924. Speaking of my grandfather Colvin, I remember visiting him in Chippenhook. He was a big man, had a big belly, and was a great gardener. He used crutches to get to the garden. He would put his chair out in the garden to sit in and then hoe as far as he could reach. He would ask me for pills or for this and that. I got everything he wanted, for which I was properly scolded. I was not old enough to know he was using me to get what he wanted and was not supposed to have.

After my grandfather died, my family went over there quite a bit to see Grandma Colvin and Clayton, my mother's brother, whom we called Uncle Mutt. Mother's other brother was Uncle Cleve who married Francis Herrick. Grandma Colvin always liked to feed us, especially cookies, candies, etc.; but chicken and biscuits were her specialty. Ethel remembers when she cut a Waleco Coconut bar in half and big pisamires came out and how they ran; huge big black ants!! She wondered how they got in there! I can remember going to the living room and playing the old pump organ. This was bought for Mother and was her pride and joy. I believe Raymond Sevigny, Ethel's youngest son, fixed it up and now has it. We also enjoyed Grandma Colvin's old Victor phonograph with a picture of a dog listening to his master's voice. We listened to Uncle Josh records, "Antie Skinners Chicken Dinner", and "The Little Old Ford Rambled Right Along".

As long as I can remember, we always had older people with us. We lived in the same house as my Perry grandparents on Maplewood Farm, next to the

cemetery. Sometimes we would have quite a table full. Mother used to have a hired girl to help with the work. A cousin, John Q. Smith of Rutland, would come to visit. He was alone, deaf, and had diabetes. I guess my Father was kind of his guardian. Joe Squier, Gramma's cousin, was with us often and always puttered around in the barn; my mother had guardianship of him. I do not know why we had him so much but he too was a loner, also kind of grumpy. Florence tried very hard to make him laugh, which sometimes worked.

I had an awfully good family that included Ethel and Florence, my older sisters, and Walter, my younger brother, with whom I had much closer contact. There were four years between the girls and us boys.

My Dad was sick from 1934 to 1936 and kept getting worse. During his sickness, Ethel and Florence were very helpful even though Florence was not with him as much as Ethel. Ethel, a graduate of Massachusetts General Hospital, was a nurse at Salem Hospital and Florence was a student at MGH so they had him in Massachusetts hospitals: Salem and Baker Memorial at MGH in Boston. They saw to it that he had the best of care. During the winter of 1935/1936, Dad went to Florida hoping to improve his health. I was at Mt. Hermon and wanted to graduate in June. Looking back, I should have come home and let Mother go to Florida with him. It was warmer in Florida but damp because they did not use oil furnaces. Dad told about ironing his sheets at night to dry them. Ethel went down and drove him back in the spring of 1936. In the meantime, things did not go well on the farm. There was mastitis and other problems but Walter and Mother kept things going as best they could. Alfred Walker lived in the "red house" and worked many years for us. Ernest Bixby lived with us and helped with the work.

Dad's sickness continued and although hospitalized, he did not improve. He died December 23, 1936 at MGH. I went down that afternoon by train and talked with him. Mother, Ethel, and Florence were already there; he died while we were out to supper. Dad's body was brought home by train on Christmas

day and the funeral was December 27th at the farm house; there were loads of flowers and many people attended. Mother never really got over his death and mourned for years, especially at Christmas time. Dad was fifty one when he died.

Losing our Dad in his fifties was an awful blow to all of us. I personally did not know how serious his sickness was but relied heavily on Ethel and Florence. What did we know about sickness? I was 17 years old and Walter was 15. Florence, in training at MGH, graduated in mid February 1937, about six or seven weeks after Dad died.

Grandma Colvin came to live with us in Ira, in 1937, soon after my father died. She was confined to a wheel chair and needed much care because of her arthritis. Mother felt sorry for her even though Ethel had told Mother to keep Grandma going on her own; consequently she became entirely dependent. I can remember picking her up and carrying her to the car to take her for a ride; or Walter and I would make a chair by locking our hands and arms together and carrying her like that. We took her for many rides and picnics. We went on picnics to Sherburne State Park, lakes, nearby brooks, and Middletown Hill to the old "Everin" place; nights after haying, we would go to the old willow by the brook. Sometimes we would just picnic under the big old elm south of the farmhouse as Gramma loved a picnic and her grandchildren. She died the week that Alice and I were married. I was one of the bearers and recall carrying her on hard packed snow that was over 6' deep in the Chippenhook Cemetery. We placed her casket in a pine box, not a concrete vault as we do today. In the country, folks were always buried in the winter and not placed in vaults. I can remember Art Kelly chopping frozen ground with an axe and having steel roofing set up for a wind barricade while digging graves.

SCHOOL AND FAMILY LIFE

Ethel, Florence, Walter and I had good times together playing school, church, and other games. Remember, we had no television but we did have a radio. Some of our favorite programs were: Amos 'N Andy, The Shadow Speaks, and Art Bagley's early morning program. We had a Victrola with lots of records. For Christmas it was not uncommon to receive books for gifts which we passed around.

When I was 5 1/2 years old I started school in Ira with Mabel Fish as my teacher. She had also taught Ethel and Florence; Walter was taught by Mabel Fish and Harriet Kenyon. Our one room school house, with all eight grades, was very interesting and was built before the church or town hall. All three of my children attended this school with Miss Kenyon. Today it serves as the town clerk's office.

At school we had a big stove heated by the wood that we students had piled in the wood shed. We did this by passing chunks of wood from one to another. We heated up our lunch on the old wood stove which consisted of hot chocolate, soups, corn chowder, and macaroni dishes that were made by our mothers and served by the teacher and students. We had toilets outside the school for boys and girls and later, chemical toilets in the school. Did they smell!! We got our water over to Grant White's, who lived south of the school. We used an open water pail and had a tin dipper when we wanted a drink. We would bring a cup or plate with the necessary silver for whatever was going to be served that day. Pupils would bring milk for soups or cocoa, potato and corn

for chowders, etc. The soup was put together at the school with the older girls helping the teacher get it ready on an old flat top stove. There was no extra water for washing dishes. I remember I finally had a collapsible tin cup that I kept in my desk for drinking water. We finally got modern and had a large stone type jar with a spigot in the bottom to hold our drinking water. Each student had chores to do each day: getting water, cleaning boards, sweeping, and hanging the flag. The older ones helped the younger ones. If anyone was disciplined, the whole school knew it. Ethel remembers the large "ruler" type wooden stick that hung on the wall and was used once, in front of the whole class, on a boy who pulled up a girl's dress. That was a frightening experience and a learning experience for all students in the school. We all learned to work together. We had our Christmas and Graduation exercises at the town hall and the whole town turned out to support the students. Walter and I were pretty good at spelling. I recall Walter winning the local spelling contests and then went on to win the county spelling contest.

After school at night we would have our chores to do; this included filling the wood box, feeding calves, hens, etc. Walter and I were great buddies and had a lot of fun together. We slept over the kitchen, which was unheated. Mother made us nice flannel pajamas and I can remember many nights running to bed and shivering ourselves warm. Sometimes snow would blow in around the windows. Mother kept "pots" under the beds in case of "necessity" so we would not have to go to the outhouse in the middle of the night. Sometimes by morning there was ice in the pots if they were used during the night. We had wallpaper with purple cows that was still on the walls when my children were younger. Walt recently told me that he opened the window at night so we could be tough "men" and show others that we could brave the elements. I never remembered this. No wonder the snow came in and the "pot" froze!!

In our growing up years we had a large wood burning stove for cooking in the kitchen, as everyone did. On this stove all of our food was cooked and a reservoir heated our water. I vividly recall taking a bath behind the kitchen stove and when I stood up, my behind got too close to the stove. It was hard to sit still at the table but I did not really want to tell anyone what had happened. It never happened again though. On Monday mornings the old copper wash boiler was put on the stove to heat water. Then the clothes were washed in the old Maytag, rinsed, wrung out, and hung on the outside clothes line. The washer was run by a gas motor until after 1929, when electric power came to Ira. In wintertime, the clothes were hung on a large folding rack and put on the porch. We also had a wood burning furnace with one register; a good place to dry clothes or warm our feet. The heat was not divided very well into various rooms so the register was a "gathering place".

In those days there were no electric lights or indoor toilets. On cold days no one lingered very long in the outhouse at the two or three "holers". Our farmhouse had a three "holer" outhouse that we entered through a dark alley in our woodshed. It was very scary to go alone at night so we kids sought companionship when we had to go out there. On cold winter days and nights, we bundled up and did not stay very long. Every back house always had a Montgomery Ward or Sears catalog to use until we got modern and purchased regular toilet paper. In 1932, we put a bathroom in the farm house with both a tub and lavatory. What a luxury! Joe Squier still continued to use the back house!

Another incident I vividly remember was when I wanted to go to the cheese factory with the milk one morning, which was not quite a mile away. I had been told I could not go but I followed the wagon my Dad was using to carry the milk. My father broke a branch off a tree by George Fish's and it was used on my bare legs and behind. I imagine my father won that battle!

I have not said much about my sisters; they were rascals! Ethel chased Florence with a dead mouse which would make Florence hysterical. On the other hand, Ethel was scared of worms and bugs which were plentiful, especially apple tree worms. No problem imagining all that went on and getting even!

Both my sisters went to Vermont Academy in Saxton's River where Ethel graduated valedictorian of her class. In Florence's senior year, Vermont Academy became a boys' school; she finished high school at Troy Conference Academy in Poultney, which is now Green Mountain College. Walter graduated from West Rutland High School and then went to Cornell, taking a two year agriculture course. He learned a great deal and his knowledge helped us on the farm.

Ethel, Florence, Eleanor Busier and our dog Jerry used to walk around the square; this was three or four miles on the West Road, down the cross road, and home. They enjoyed it all times of the year. They loved to get someone without walking shoes to walk on the uneven dirt road, especially at night. It was on one of these trips that they came across an animal track which they covered with a pail until Dad told them it was a bear track. It was kind of exciting to them but they did not see the bear. This kind of slowed up their excursions!

I should add that Florence and Ethel were always busy in the farm operation. Much canning was done for the winter months and I remember seeing a picture of Florence as champion 4-H canner in the "Rutland Herald".

We had a police dog named Gypsy that we used to hitch to a hand sled. We would go up to the house south of us, get on the sled, and then my Dad would stand in the road and call him home. This gave us a nice dog sled ride on a snow packed road with hardly any traffic.

We used to take our dark syrup, boil it down, and put it into a wooden tub; this would be sweetening for food. I can remember many times I would dig

out a chunk and eat it as I went up in the pasture after the cows, usually a nightly chore.

I can remember going to the grocery store and coming home with one bag of groceries - some different from today! Sometimes my Father would come home from Rutland late at night with ice cream. He would wake us up to eat it before it melted; what a treat! This was before we had an electric refrigerator.

For refrigeration, the cellar bottom made a big difference in keeping foods cool for summer, even watermelons. We also had a screened standing cabinet which was used for longer term cooling. Florence embarrassed mother when we had guests and cold milk was served; we did not often drink the milk cold. Someone asked Florence if she wanted milk to drink and she replied, "Yes, I drink cold milk when I can get it." She didn't like warm milk. I did not like to drink milk because of improper cooling; chunks of cream floated on top. I guess we have learned a great deal about milk and foods today.

I already mentioned how we did not have refrigeration. On every Thursday George Ladabouche, who owned a market in Wallingford, would pull into our yard with his truck. He would raise the back door, about 6' X 5', and expose us to fresh meat including fish and some vegetables. It always smelled so good. Ice was kept in the bottom of the meat cart to keep the food from spoiling. He would always wave a cloth inside the truck to drive out any flies before closing the door. He used to come for years and it was so much fun to see and visit with him. Mother used to buy fresh hamburg and sometimes hot dogs for our picnics at the brook under the old willow.

I remember mother had a curling iron which she used to heat by inserting it in the top of a kerosene lamp chimney. When it was hot enough, she would clamp her hair, roll it, and hold it until her hair curled. I am surprised to see curling irons designed like hers but heated by electricity. She also heated her flat iron on the wood stove and would have more than one so that when one was cold, the other was hot and ready.

In the 1927-1928 era, the Home Dem Club, with my mother as chairman, instituted a dental clinic in the town of Ira. Two young dentists in Rutland, Dr. Reardon and Dr. Candon, agreed to participate in the program. Each child or family would pay so much and the Home Dem Club would make up the difference in the dentist's charges. I can remember one of these men set up "shop" in our front room with a portable drill run by a foot pedal. After electricity came through our town, he had a motorized drill. Boy, how I hated the drilling to prepare for the filling of my cavities. At any rate it was a big success and continued for a long time. Of course, these clinics were eventually held in their offices; in fact Dr. Reardon was my dentist as long as he was able to practice. It paid off, as that group of students had much better teeth than a lot of their peers. I always appreciated my mother's far sightedness in organizing this clinic. Other towns also established their own clinics. Our own children were cared for by this clinic in the offices of Dr. Bloodworth and Dr. Kelloway.

In 1932, we had our first electric refrigerator and could now have ice cubes and ice cream. What a luxury since I had just had my tonsils out! I always had severe sore throats as a youngster. I can remember my Dad putting sulfur in a paper, rolling it up, and blowing it into my throat; it helped some, I guess. Finally, a doctor decided I should have my tonsils out. I was wheeled into the O.R. on a gurney. A mask was placed over my face and ether was given to me. The last words I remember were: going fine, going fine, going - - . I was some sick afterward but went home the next day. Mother gave me ice cubes to chew and put a collar of ice around my neck. I remember how good the ice cream and cold water felt to my throat.

In September of 1932, I went to Mt. Hermon School for boys. I was homesick the first day or so but after that I was very busy. We each had to work one and a half hours per day to help pay for our tuition. I worked on the farm, in the laundry, in the kitchen, and even made beds. I was there in the

transition period from Dr. Cutler to Elliot Speer when the school became very liberal. In September of 1934, Elliot Speer was murdered in his study. They never found out who did it, or at least were not able to prove who did it. I enjoyed my four years there; it was very good academically but I did not get top marks. I did graduate in four years. It was really a top college preparatory school. It is interesting to note that S. Pressly Blake graduated from Mt. Hermon in 1934 or 1935, and he later founded the Friendly Restaurants which became quite a successful chain. Recently he gave \$1,000,000 to the school for what the school had done for him.

Five miles away in Northfield, there was a girls' school where we had combined social events. The girls came over on a bus for dates, blind or otherwise, while the boys had to walk or hitch a ride. I guess I took part in two or three of these events but it could be a long cold walk. I didn't think the girls were worth it! I was very busy and did not come home weekends, only on vacations.

Thanksgiving was always a big day there. We also had mountain day for the seniors to climb Mt. Monadnock. Another interesting event was the tug of war across Shadow Lake. The juniors were on one side and the seniors on the other; somebody always got wet.

I liked the meals. Saturday night we always had baked beans and brown bread. Sundays we had Chapel in the morning and Vespers in the evening; attendance was required. Midweek, we had a required assembly just before noon on certain days. We had a post office on campus. Outgoing mail was put on a hook at the Mt. Hermon R.R. station and the mail train grabbed it if it was not on a scheduled stop. This station was about two miles off campus.

We all had to have two gym periods per week. I ran cross-country quite a bit but I did not play basketball as I was pretty young. We had a laundry at school but some of my clothes I sent home. When they came back to me, Mother had always tucked in some goodies.

In June of 1986, Alice and I went back for my 50th reunion. We wore name tags which featured our yearbook pictures. Boy, some of the fellows had grown older. It was hard to recognize them! I'm happy to learn that there is a Christian witness now on campus and I think it is growing between the alumni and students. The man and his wife, who are chaplains, are very liberal but they seem to be listening. Recent letters from the Northfield-Mt. Hermon Concerned Christian Fellowship sound very encouraging. These schools were founded by D.L. Moody but have departed so far from the faith. We went into Northfield Auditorium where many great meetings were held with Ira Sankey and others. Today it is actually a ghost building with very little use. I imagine in a few years it will be demolished. It has become more or less a co-ed school with boys' and girls' classrooms and dormitories on each campus - Mt. Hermon and Northfield.

We had a telephone on the wall at our home in Ira. When you wanted someone, you would ring their number; ours was "3" short rings. If you wanted to make an announcement, you just cranked for a long time. This was real handy in case of fire or to pass on a general news item. Usually about twelve people were on the line. A favorite pastime of some people was to pick up the receiver and listen. Sometimes you could hear a clock strike, a baby cry, or someone talking, so it was not difficult to know who was eavesdropping. Sometimes a bit of gossip, either true or false, could be dropped and soon it was "news".

When Alice was in training in Boston and I called her. It was occasionally necessary for the long distance operator to repeat our messages - really not very romantic. Our telephone lines were strung on poles and through trees so that when it rained they shorted out.

Ethel married Vic Sevigny on 4/11/42, and Florence married John Cary on 10/8/38. John Cary passed away on 12/5/80, a very sad day for all of us. Walter played the field and finally settled on Mary Manney. On April 19, 1947, I

was best man and thought for a while the shaky old parson was marrying me to Mary instead of Walt. It was an anxious few moments! Alice was not there because she had delivered Dianne on April 12th. Ralph Jr. was born January 8, 1945 and Arlene on February 28, 1950. I have 3 wonderful children, love them all and their families. Ralph Jr. married Donna Ascoli on October 23, 1971; Dianne married Bill Whiteman on June 14, 1969; and Arlene married Bert Ladd on June 10, 1972. I am proud to be the grandfather of 7 wonderful grandchildren: Christy, Tim, and Dan Perry; Sarah and Christopher Whiteman; Nancy and Ruthie Ladd. On August 12, 1995, Nancy Ladd married Christopher Hanson and on September 20, 1997, Sarah Whiteman married Mark Brooks. I guess it won't be long before our family grows and I will become a great grandfather.

OLD FARM ON THE HILL

The old homestead was perched on a knoll inside the curve of the West Road as it made its way to the Day Farm and eventually down the hillside into West Rutland. The house was situated south of the barns. The kitchen and dining room were heated by stoves and the parlor was heated by small stoves when necessary. Floor registers let the heat go upstairs to bedrooms. Off the kitchen was a "buttery" or milk room with shelves where the milk set in pans for the cream to rise; this was before the separator. I will bet bacteria ran high! Milk was separated here and butter was also made in this room. My father had a butter route once a week in Rutland and supplied certain stores and restaurants. Mother used to make cottage cheese from the skim milk and this was sold with the butter. I remember Prouse's, a leading restaurant, was one of the customers.

On the backside of our barn were three levels or three barn floors. I once saw a picture of it but have been unable to find it. In those days, hay was pitched on the wagons loose. When they got to the barn, they just rolled the hay off into the hay mow. Instead of pitching it higher, they just went to a higher barn floor; very efficient! I imagine it could be quite a trick to back a wagon off the third level! We used a hay knife to cut the hay and take it out in sections. The first floor of the barn was on ground level and housed the stable; the second and third levels were accessed by ramps and were for hay storage.

Water for the farm was supplied by gravity from a spring behind the barn. I still remember the roof over it. In addition there were two springs south

of the house which were used for drinking water; the springs are there today. My dad used to keep a trout in the spring to keep the water clear and fresh. There was also a watering trough in the barnyard for the animals.

It was customary to drive the cows each morning past Russell Fish's, John Smith's, and "Dunc" McIntrye's to a pasture on the Middletown Hill Road. Ethel said at night they were ready to come back. I guess she did this or helped many times. There were maybe fifteen or so cows and they knew where to go and they bothered no one.

My father and Arden Day, our neighbor, used to make maple syrup together or help each other. Ethel remembers one day Arden had to go for repairs and left Ethel with the horses so they would not run away. That was quite a lot of responsibility for a little girl! I guess that is where she learned the responsibility which she has used her whole life. The Days' had sheep, which required woven wire fences. It is interesting to note that a small hole was left so that Ethel could get through and go to Days' but the sheep could not get through! My Dad never liked sheep because sheep got out so much.

The farm house faced the Lincoln Meadow to the east which was all clear land with a nice road leading to it. When the farm was sold, my Father kept the Lincoln Meadow and pasture and added it to our present farm on Route 133.

After my folks moved to the new farm, the old farm did not sell for a while so they rented to Frank Tubbs and his father, Randall or Ran, relatives of ours. Frank had two daughters, Mildred and Eunice; I think their mother had died. We have not heard of them for years. Sometime in the 1920's, the men got into an altercation with a couple of Italians. One night I guess they all had some of their favorite beverages. Two of the Italians ended up dead, which was not an everyday occurrence and was great excitement for Ira. Ran went to prison for life but was let out in his last days because of sickness. I think he took the blame for Frank. I can remember going up Center Street to the jail with mother to take him an ice cream cone. In the 1990's, Ralph Jr. heard a

man commenting that he wanted to find some Tubbs' relatives and he would do "so and so" to them. So Ralph says, "You are looking at one." This surprised the guy some as he had known Ralph right along. It seems the Tubbs men sold a "fresh" cow to these Italians but they had not milked her for two or three days. When the Italians realized she was not "fresh", they went up to get their money back. Ralph Jr.'s account was the first time we knew what their disagreement had been about. So much for that!

Mother also raised turkeys but foxes were something to be considered. Mother put a bell on a special pet white turkey named Pearl. This would help her to locate them in the evening when she would put them in one section of the hen house for the night. I still have one of the turkey bells that she hung on the turkeys to locate them easier.

LIFE ON THE HOME FARM

In 1921, my Dad and his father and mother bought the farm on what is now Route 133. The large farmhouse sat on the west side of route 133 and the barns on the opposite side. It seems Elroy Barker purchased it from Deacon Fish to stay out of World War I. It was in the summer of 1921 when we moved from the hill farm to our new farm. I was about two years old. Several trips were made by horse and wagon to move our furniture, etc. I imagine mother did quite a bit of this work. It was on one of these trips that a barrel of antique dishes fell off the wagon and were broken; many of Gramma's antique dishes were lost. I understand some of these dishes came from Connecticut with our ancestors when they migrated to Vermont. During the moving, I evidently tried to follow mother and got away from whomever was watching me. George Parker, employed by George Lamphere to pick up cream, strawberries, etc. from the farmers, found me and brought me home!

I don't think Grandma Perry was very happy to move off the hill farm to the new farm. It is hard to transplant older people from their old homes to a new habitat. I have seen this happen both ways. Sometimes I know it is necessary, but these people are happier in their own simple home with their families and friends. (That's a free comment.) The hill farm had lots of side hills; the new farm my folks bought was level and on a main road which had advantages, I guess.

We lit our home with kerosene and gas lamps. We later had a generator and batteries in our basement which we used for several years before electricity

came. I remember Dad catching rain water for the batteries and starting the generator when the lights dimmed to recharge the batteries. These were a series of five or six batteries about 3' high, 3' long, and 6" or 8" inches thick with several caps where we added water. This was called the Delco System. When our lights dimmed, we started the generator again to brighten the lights.

When we wanted water, we put a well point on 1 1/4" galvanized pipe with a cap. Then a block of wood held by a handle would be struck by a heavy maul; every little way the pipe would be turned with a pipe wrench. After several days of hard driving, the point would go through "hard pan" and we would have delicious cold water. Of course the vein of water, about 10' to 12' down, was located first by using a "forked or divining stick". You would hold the ends of a "Y" branch securely and the end of the stick would point downwards when over water; unscientific but it worked.

July 16, 1924, my dad had just completed several repairs to the dairy barn, which included new stanchions and cement work. The same night after he had poured the last of the cement, the barn was struck by lightning. The barn had half of the hay stored for winter and of course the lightning ignited it. Ethel saw the light in the barn after a terrific lightning flash and boom! She called my mother and father who had gone to bed.

It seems there was a box social at the town hall the night of the fire, so everyone came down to the farm to form a bucket brigade to fight the fire. I remember Mother telling how she pumped water at the old pitcher pump in the kitchen and her whole body ached. They also pumped from the well under the elm tree besides using barnyard puddles, which some caught in their faces. The bull barn, as we called it, was very close to the burning barn and was on fire when someone threw water sideways and put out a section. They all went at it again and saved the building by just passing buckets of water from one to another. Mother woke me up in the morning and I looked out to see nothing

where the barn had been standing. In the fire, I lost my little red wagon and my tool box which probably included a small hammer and a saw.

My father set up temporary stanchions to milk the cows, by hand, of course. He also went up on Herrick Mountain and cut spruce logs to rebuild the barn. Hallie Lincoln set up a saw mill in the pasture while Archie Flory supervised the building. Everything was done by hand in those days because there was no electricity!! I still recall the high forms that were made for the walls so concrete could be dumped in by wheelbarrow. The cement was mixed with a gasoline engine mixer and gravel was brought in by horse and wagon. The bottom of the wagons were constructed of 3" X 3" planks which would unload the gravel rather quickly when moved or turned over. During this time, my father cut his knee with an axe and was temporarily laid up.

In November of 1924, the barn was completed enough so that the cows could be stabled. I think that was quite a feat as all the work was done by hand with no power tools or cranes available. After the barn burned, we had a milking machine run by a one cylinder gas engine.

Asphalt shingles were used on the barn roof but soon leaked very badly. My dad had a slate roof placed on the barn but the barn was not constructed for the extra weight. The slate roof weighed 20 tons to be exact and was the cheapest roofing to be used in the 1930's. In the late 30's, we had to reinforce the sides and pull the barn back in. We put trusses on each end of the barn that remained until the summer of 1990, at which time the barn was found to be leaning. The cause was the high winds we had the winter of '89/'90, combined with the weight of the slate roof. The top of the large pine tree in the cemetery was taken off with the wind, possibly a small tornado. The insurance covered partial repairs to the barn.

Another time lightning struck the ell part of the house as I remembered seeing weeds and grass all black at the base of the lightning rod. After another hard storm in the 1950's, our gas pump was on fire which I put out with a fire

extinguisher. I'm glad it did not blow! Another time lightning struck on the north end of the house and left an eighteen inch hole at the base of the rod.

When I was small, we raked our hay with a dump rake into windrows; then we would bunch or tumble the hay so someone could pitch it onto the wagons. It was the man's job on the wagon to keep the load square so it would not slide off. About 1927 or 1928, we got a side delivery rake and a hay loader. This was a system of ropes and slats with a tooth cylinder that brought the hay onto the wagon. Sometimes the man on the wagon got his fork caught in the slats, then we would have to stop and bolt in new slats. The side delivery rake was wonderful because as we drove around the field it rolled the hay on its side very evenly and helped it dry; much faster too. The old dump rake dragged the hay together but not very evenly. To unload our hay, we had a "horse fork" hitched to a 3/4" rope. A horse was hitched to one end and slowly brought the fork to the top of the barn where it was carried on a track and then tripped with a rope on the proper mow. About 1940, we installed a lift on a hoist powered by a 3 HP electric motor which worked beautifully. I remember Ethel on the dump rake, raking "scatterings". The fields would have no hay left on them; some different today when there is hay left. In the 40's, Walter and I bought a Case Baler that you rode on. We slipped wires through the slots and the baler twisted the ends to make the bale secure; a two man job, by the way. This was quite an improvement but very dusty.

When filling silos in the fall, it was a common practice for each farmer to help his neighbor. I remember George Fish had an iron wheeled 10-20 International tractor that powered a blower to chop and blow the corn into the silo. This tractor had a pulley on the side which furnished power for the blower. It was quite a trick to belt the tractor and blower together so that the belt would run true. If there was an angle then the belt would come off, especially if there was a large bunch of corn in the trough. The corn would be cut and string-tied in fields by a corn harvester. Maybe three or four wagons would be

drawing the corn and two or three men were in the fields putting the bundles of corn onto the wagon. If it rained it was a pretty wet job. We usually had to set up the blower in a muddy barnyard. One man would be in the silo keeping the silo level with distributor pipes which were a system of pipes joined by small chains and snaps. He would also put in the silo doors as needed when the corn began to fill the silo. I can remember my father cutting corn late at night to have it ready for the men in the morning. Then came the one row chopper that chopped corn in the field and blew it into a wagon hitched behind or drawn next to the chopper. To unload the wagon, there were three 2 x 6s roped together in the bottom of the wagon. The ropes were hooked to a ring that was hitched to the tractor. As the tractor pulled the boards out, the corn fell into a blower which had a trough on springs that could be raised straight up so a wagon could drive through. Later we had a false dash, attached to cables, which was pulled to the rear of the wagon by a ratchet type of machine run by an electric motor. We then went to a forage wagon, with a movable bottom, that brought silage to the front where another movable chain or auger carried it to the side to a circular blower which blew it into the silo. This was a big improvement and enabled me to fill silo alone. Today, they have large tandem axle wagons with high speed blowers for fast unloading and two row choppers.

At silo filling, we hurried from school to tramp down the new corn in the silo. It smelled good and sounded good coming up the pipes. The women were also busy preparing food for six or eight hungry men. Sometimes some of the ladies would come to help if there was a need. I remember one lady caught an old hen around 9 a.m., chopped off its head, plucked it and cooked it in time for dinner! It was kind of exciting to have a crew come in for a meal; everyone took part. Florence remembers helping mother with so many dishes.

Walter was the "horseman" for many years. He used the horses to draw wood from Herrick Mountain and also for haying. I can remember bringing

loads of hay off the Lincoln meadow. We would use a "shoe" on a rear wheel to slow down or help hold back the push on the horses from the wagon. One day, I do not recall exactly what happened, but the load got away and Walter went straight instead of staying in the road. At any rate, the load tipped over but did not hurt the horses or Walt. After that we baled our hay and trucked it down.

Horses were invaluable to us. For instance, at sugaring time we would drive them around the woods to "break open the roads". While gathering sap we could just speak and they would move along. I remember the tedious work of plowing a field, back and forth as the horses pulled the one furrow plow. I can also remember the hours we spent harrowing, back and forth. Today large plows and tractors do it in a fraction of the time. Horses were really a part of our family; there was much sorrow when we had to get rid of one. We kept our horses in a portion of the garage on the farm. We then moved the horse barn into the big barn which is now the milk house. We had four stalls with a hay rack for each to put hay in, also grain mangers and water bowls. I guess after a while milk inspectors were not happy with our set up.

When we had horses we took them over to "Paul's" on the West Rutland road to Rutland, usually on a rainy day, to have them shod, their shoes reset, or new ones put on. We left early in the morning, took our dinner, and waited our turn to get the horses shod. I can still smell the pungent smoke from the hot shoe as it burned a fit into the horses hoof. This did not hurt the horse and was supposed to be a lot better than shoeing cold. It was not an easy job! I can still remember how the blacksmith perspired and he was not a young man either. It was a nice buggy ride traveling to Paul's!

One time I remember that we got a call to stop Bert Fish's team of horses, which had run away with a wagon. I guess my father put his team and wagon across the road at our house to stop them. It was not uncommon to have horses run away.

We always used to have hens and a rooster in their midst. When I was real young, I remember falling down and a rooster stood on my chest and pecked at my face until someone rescued me. I still have the scars. We used to trade roosters with neighbors so that the "strain" would not run out. Every fall, when the old hens were done laying, we removed their heads on the chopping block. We then dipped the hens into boiling water to pluck the feathers and get them ready for market or the table. Mother was fast to cut up a hen and the grandchildren still talk about it today.

Walter had his oxen, which he trained to do quite a lot of work. We also had our animals: horses, Registered Guernsey cattle, and pigs. Walter had hens, too. I remember a black and white Minorca we called "Step-on-it". We took her to the Fair one year and when we got there, no "Step-on-it"! She got out of the crate and we later found her at Libby Johnston's back in Ira. We looked some time for her!

Most every farm had a small orchard and would have barrels of apples in their cellar for winter use. We had Yellow Transparents, Duchess, McIntosh, Maiden Blush, Spies, Pound Sweets, and maybe more. Also on the farm, you would find a cask or two of vinegar, which was used extensively for cooking, pickling, and switchel. My mother served switchel to quench our thirst in the hayfield. To make this drink, mix and chill 4 quarts of water, 1/2 cup of vinegar, one 1 cup sugar, and 1 tablespoon of ginger.

After we put a bathroom in our house, in the 1930's, my Dad did not appreciate cleaning out the "old backhouse" so he would tie the door and nail it shut but somehow it would get opened up again. I think my kids maybe were involved in this several years later.

When my Dad was sick, there were a lot of bills and farm problems. Francis Seward was a real help with machinery and let us have a horse to use, which we needed. He also treated us right with a farm truck. After my Father died, Walter and I farmed in earnest with Mother. I was 17 and Walter was 15.

We had one car and we also had a truck that was necessary for delivering milk and potatoes that we raised for cash crops.

Farming was rather tough in the 30's and 40's. We had to diversify to make ends meet. We raised potatoes which we delivered to people's homes and lugged them into their cellars for \$1 to \$1.25 per bushel. Some cellars had low pipes, and I bumped my head more than once. During World War II, we cut logs on Herrick Mountain and sold poplar logs and pulp by the roadside. I can remember cutting logs with a real French lumberjack. With a cross-cut saw, we would cut as much as 3000-4000 feet in a day. We had chores to do, too. Most farmers would cut logs and firewood in the winter. In the summer, we would have town work that included shoveling gravel onto the wagons for a road job. We might have five or six wagons drawing, depending on business and money.

Florence drove the red International truck to Kenny's Creamery with milk early in the morning. Remember in those days we did not have much for heat in the truck and it was cold in the wintertime. She would sometimes leave off or pick up parts at Pat Kearney's blacksmith shop in West Rutland. He was a true heavy built Irishman who could repair anything, had many stories to tell, and was a good friend to us in many ways. He was a blacksmith for the Vermont Marble Company and then opened his own shop on Franklin Street in West Rutland. He could replace a link in a broken chain so expertly that you would have trouble telling it from the others. He could repair our farm machinery but you did not want to tell him that you wanted it immediately; more than one person was thrown out of his shop for doing that. He sharpened and repaired reel lawn mowers and also sold new lawn mowers. He rebuilt a heavy set of traverses for drawing heavy loads of wood. In fact, Walter now uses them on different occasions. He could also entertain my children with Irish yarns. They used to like to go there with me. His son, William, electric welded and was good at it. Pat always told me that when you weld anything, you should reinforce it too. I have thought of it many times when I have seen welds

break loose. His shop was not too orderly but he could usually find a piece of steel or cast iron whenever he wanted it. He made grindstones for many by using reduction gears found in cream separators. His shop tools were cleverly engineered by using old auto transmissions (standard) to furnish power and speed as needed. Everyone marveled that he could run his shop on as little electricity as he did. Of course, he had 220 volt service for his electric welder but all of his lathes, post drills, grinders were ingeniously constructed and powered on 110 volts. He was as honest as the day was long.

It soon became necessary to have our milk at Kenny's Creamery in West Rutland at 6 a.m. That meant I was getting up at 3:30 a.m. and going to bed with the chickens. As I was delivering, I noticed a real neat girl delivering "The Rutland Herald". Boy, she was pretty neat! Her name was Alice Chase. I got to know her and we gradually saw more of each other. She got so she would ride back to her home from where her route ended; thxat suited me! In 1940, she enrolled at the Mass General Hospital to become a nurse. I did not see her very much but kept in touch by means of postage stamp.

FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS, AND OUR TOWN

My grandfather Perry had a saw mill in a pasture back of Bert Fish's, the farm on the West Road behind the school where Clarence and Edith Fish lived. The saw mill burned down, I would say, around 1900. Also in this area there was a brick kiln near the steep clay bank dating back to the 1800's. I have been told that the bricks for the town hall were made here. Much of the land has been washed away by high water.

Ira used to have its own post office, the little house located just north of the town hall. I do not remember it being in operation, but we do have some letters with the Ira post mark.

Some of the home farm land lies on the west road after crossing the brook. I heard tell years ago when there were a lot of trees on each side of the road, that a catamount, maybe a bob cat, jumped down on a man. I do not know the circumstances but the cat did tear the man's clothes. Since then this small grade has been called Catamount Hill. Just beyond this hill is an old cellar hole on your right which at one time was occupied by a man named Yah or Yaw. I never met him but thought I would mention it.

I spoke earlier of a saw mill at the base of Herrick Mountain when our barn burned in 1924. Buck Lumber Company operated a sawmill at this site for several years as well as one behind Ellis Cramton's farm. I can remember going with my Father and holding the burlap bags while he shoveled sawdust into them. We then piled them on the wagon and used this for bedding for the

cows. Today sawdust is loaded into large trucks or trailers and dumped off at the farms.

For years, Ned and Stewart Lincoln operated their sawmill on the West Road. In those days if you wanted lumber, you cut a tree, took it to the mill and had it sawed as desired. We always used a lot of spruce but hardly ever pine as it was too brittle. Today a lot of pine is used. I loved to be around the sawmill and watch the boards come off the saw. The smell of it was great too. When my father was working in the woods, he would quite often bring us "spruce gum" after it had hardened and formed on the tree. It had a nice flavor but it was hard to chew; it made your jaws ache. A by-product of the sawmill was slab wood. Much of this was used for the fire box during sugaring or some of the hardwood was used for heating homes. The Lincolns also had a shingle mill on the same road, opposite Arthur Lincoln's home on the West Road. I do not recall seeing it in operation, but I do remember a boiler of some type in the building.

I also recall how many of our townsfolk "rolled" their own cigarettes. Single thin paper sheets, that came in a pack, were held just right between the fingers making a little trough into which tobacco was applied from a can of Prince Albert, Union Leader, Half and Half, or some other brand. This was rolled together and then sealed by their saliva as they ran their tongue over it. I believe this was a more pure tobacco and it was a common practice.

When we went to school, our teacher used to bring us dinner pails with a handle on it; these were empty containers of George Washington tobacco with patriotic colors on them. I see some of these in antique shops today. George Fish, our teacher's father-in-law, always smoked a pipe but he only smoked this brand.

In the fall, Ira had chicken pie suppers at the town hall; different ones made chicken pies, potato, squash, coleslaw, pickles, rolls, and a variety of pies with cheese of course. It was an annual event, with two or three sittings to

accommodate everyone, and looked forward to by many outsiders. There used to be waiting lines so another door was opened on the north side of the town hall to let folks out rather than working their way through the waiting crowd. I remember having to take milk cans of hot and cold water for the occasion. Guess the whole town took part.

In 1929, CVPS put electricity into our town so we changed to electric lights and electric motors which were much safer and easier to start. I can remember when they put in the electric line. All the holes for the poles were dug by hand or they sometimes had to blast. On cold rainy days the workers would come in our horse barn and play cards until the weather cleared or it was time to go home. The men strapped spurs to their feet and legs to climb the poles and then used a safety belt to work on the poles; no high bucket trucks in those days. In the 1940's, we put electricity in our tenant house and signed a contract for \$2.50 per month, I think, for five years. I guess we used that much electricity.

I can still remember cars having to be pulled out of mud holes in our road system. As long as water stayed in the road there were muddy areas, especially in the spring when roads were thawing; this was known as "mud season". In several places the bottom of the road "went out" and the mud was soupy. Cars could not get through without being pulled out during the worst of it. Now we have ditches and culverts to drain the water away from the road. Blacktop also came along so we do not have so many "mud holes" today. Our main road was first blacktopped in the early 50's.

I used to play with Roland Lincoln and he showed me two old cars that his uncles owned. They had brass radiators, headlights, etc. What a collector's item they would be today - "Old Maxwells"!

Wilfred Johnston told me that he and his brother Ray had a car that might not start in the winter so they would let it roll from their home on the hill to the main road. If it did not start then, they would set a bag of hay on fire

under the motor; by the time the hay burned up, the motor would usually be warm enough to take off. Of course cars were much simpler in those days.

One of our neighbors was George Fish. I remember we went to hear his new radio - the first in town. We had to use ear phones and took turns using them. There was a great deal of noise and static and many times it was very difficult to hear. Ethel remembers going to Fish's for dinner on the 22nd of February. They had cherries for dessert; patriotic on Washington's Birthday. On New Year's Eve they always had an oyster supper and friends came in to celebrate George's and Gert's Wedding Anniversary. I believe they had about 70 people on some special occasions. They celebrated 72 years of marriage together!!

Arden Day was my father's good friend and neighbor to the Perrys. He and his father, Dexter Day, had a lime kiln that was quite a business. The limestone in their pasture was put in a kiln and then a hot fire was burned under the stone. After a certain time, the lime was "drawn off" as a white lime and put into barrels and sold. I have heard how it took two teams to pull the load up school house hill. Quite a lot of wood had to be cut for the fire and quite a few were employed in the whole operation. The remains of the kiln are still there today.

Arden and Russell Fish used to perform with their kilts singing Irish or Scottish songs at Grange meetings or on special occasions; knobby knees and country music were real entertaining. Sometimes Russell's wife, Nettie, sang too.

George Lamphere ran a truck through Clarendon, Tinmouth, and Ira to pick up cream for Lamphere's Creamery. Lamphere would freeze the cream in flush season, the time when the cows first went out to pasture in the summer, and resell it when supplies were short. He did very well at this. He would also drop off groceries for people who could not get to town.

Alfred Walker worked for us for years and lived in the Red House. When his father died there were no roads open so my father went up with the horses and sleigh and delivered his father's body to the cemetery.

Clark Potter was another good neighbor and farmer who stuttered a lot. He was very helpful if we needed help. He had several children: Royal, Dorothy, Robert, Eva, and Marjorie.

We had some very amusing times and characters in Ira. One was "Vine" Branchaud who was a seamstress of sorts. We would pick her up in the morning in Rutland in the milk truck with her sewing machine, unload her, and she would make dresses and renovate old ones. I do not know how much attention she paid as to how they fitted but she helped Mother a lot. She was scared stiff of bugs and really examined lettuce and vegetables to make sure of no bugs. It was fun to see her if she found a bug or a worm, much to Mother's horror. Walter sometimes made things interesting and I think Florence helped when a worm "just happened" to appear one day. Sometimes there was enough work so she stayed overnight. When she was ready to go home, "Miller" came and got her. He was another "Milquetoast" we thought. She certainly was a character but I guess she kept the ladies dressed properly!

Stewart Lincoln told me another interesting story about a man named Byron Cone who lived on Middletown Hill. One afternoon, on his way home, he stopped and visited with John Smith and family. He left there and might have stopped at Dunc McIntyre's. Whether they got to drinking and fighting and Dunc buried him; or whether another man on the Foster Place who drank a lot, met up with him, had a fight, and buried him; no one knows. He was never seen after that day. They used grappling irons in an old well on the Foster place thinking that maybe someone threw him in. It is still an old Ira mystery.

Art Kelly was quite an interesting man. He lost all his fingers on one hand in a sawmill accident, I believe. It was amazing what he could do with that hand. He butchered animals and sawed wood on his homemade saw rig;

an old auto motor supplied the power. He also dug many graves and helped many people who needed him. He did have a bad habit - liquor.

We often found ourselves in strange situations. A neighbor's mother died and was to be buried in Syracuse, New York, but the son had no money for the funeral director to transport the body. Alice said, "Let us load her into your station wagon and I will drive you to Syracuse." Arrangements were made with the funeral home and Alice left with Mr. & Mrs. for the 1 p.m. funeral and made it there without incident. On the way home, the car acted up and the Mr. started giving Alice all kinds of advice. She finally told him to keep quiet as she was having trouble enough. When they reached West Rutland, Homer Browning, the mechanic, did not understand how she got home. I guess the fuel filter was plugged.

Another night this neighbor's wife burst into our house as her husband threatened to kill her with an axe. Guess he had a little alcohol in him. Another neighbor and I went down to get the axe and some of her necessities. He was very apologetic. Later he died and was cremated. At a later date, we buried his ashes in a stone wall back of his house.

The Merithews were a prominent family in Ira, I believe. They had the first automobile in town and I still have the horn from it. They also had the first hot air furnace. In the 1930's, Ira residents were quite disturbed when members of the Merithew family asked Gerald and Grace Merithew Crossman to move their small home to the north edge of their farm. It was located opposite "stage coach" barn on a "not too valuable" piece of land. The Crossmans had three or four children at the time and Gerald was not in the best of health. His home was adequate but nothing fancy. When the time came, the house was put on skids and I think Clark Potter's team of horses was involved. At any rate, the house was moved part way to the northern area of the farm. For some reason there was disagreement over the move so the house was left right in the road and traffic had to go over the lawn of the Merithew

house that winter. Gerald and Grace lived in the big house that winter and I think some of the children were "farmed" out. In the spring, the house was moved and finally reached its final destination but Gerald had a deed to the property this time. I might add that although Gerald had poor health, the family never called on the town for help.

I can still recall seeing the older Crossman boys cut green alders across the brook from us on the Cramton property. Can you imagine a mother with a sick husband and very little money providing for her large family plus using green alder to cook meals? To get more heat out of the green alder wood, one secret was to put the wood in the oven and bake it first. Everyone was real concerned; remember, no electricity, sick husband, no money to speak of! Ellis Crampton was very generous in loaning his team and wagon or sled when they needed them. In spite of being a large family without all the extra material things, this family has made a great contribution to society. Mrs. Crossman was even selected as "Vermont Mother of the Year". She now lives in Rutland at the age of 95. (Grace Crossman died in 1995).

Clark Collins was another interesting man. He married a well educated woman whom he met just north of New York City. He had half interest in an inn there. She envisioned her type of living in New York just being moved to a Vermont Farm! She purchased porch furniture and linoleum for the floor in the large center room. She never sat to enjoy the porch and the linoleum roll was still in the corner when she died 40 or so years later.

Clark was a blacksmith and raised potatoes in our growing up years. I remember seeing his whole cellar filled with potatoes nearly to the ceiling. He delivered them in Rutland with his coupe; maybe 10 bushels at once. Different ones who worked for him, told about him pitching loose hay off the wagon through the door over the horse barn. "Take your time boys, just keep that pitching hole open!" He nearly killed them with his speed even at his advanced

age. He was a man who lived very much by himself but was ready to help out and ready for a brief visit. He never had much to do with town business, etc.

In the 1920's while we were growing up, Eleanor Busier, from Albany, would come to see us once or twice a year and bring the Hessberg boys for whom she cared. I guess the Hessbergs were quite well to do or had more than we did. At any rate, every Christmas we would get a twenty five pound package of hard candies, ribbon candy, chocolate kisses, gum, etc. as a thank you for entertaining their boys. One winter, I went back with them and we went to museums, etc. and I saw a different kind of life. Eleanor took me shopping and somebody bought me a felt hat from Steiffel Brothers, a big name in Albany. We ate more fancy there than we did at home. Both families seemed to like the changes. The Hessbergs did not own a car but called "Henry" to drive them when they wanted to go anywhere. I remember we rode in a big Pierce-Arrow with the headlights set in the fenders. It was quite an interest in those days - a luxury car. In 1931, the Hessbergs took pictures with a movie camera at the farm of all the different people, buildings, and activities. These movies have recently been copied onto video tape and once again enjoyed by all.

The stock market crash of 1929 ruined the Hessbergs but we continued to stay in contact with them. We still have occasional contact with them. In fact, Rufus brought Eleanor up for a short visit three summers ago (in 1990). Albert was an attorney in Albany, kept in contact with Eleanor, and looked after her finances. (Eleanor died October, 1997)

I can also remember when John and Mary Paul and family came from Albany to visit and brought us some red bananas, something new to us. He had a big seven passenger touring car, Willys-Knight, that held us all. Mary Paul was sister to Margaret Everin Dorr and aunt to Eleanor Busier.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the lives of two people who had an impact on all of us. Aunt Margaret was a country girl from Middletown Hill, who wandered to the big city and got a job until Uncle Porter found her,

married her, and made a home in West Newton, Massachusetts. Uncle Porter and Aunt Margaret Dorr (Margaret Everin, my Dad's childhood friend) used to come to Vermont and visit our family on occasional weekends. I can still remember the table full of people and our enjoyment of them. However, I probably had no thought of the food and preparation required.

Uncle Porter was an architect and during the depression he was affiliated with the C.C.C. Camps. These young unemployed men built roads, cleared land, and established what we call today camp grounds and national parks. Uncle Porter had a brother Arthur, who was affiliated with the Albert Richards Co., purveyors of fine meats. The Dorr family also included three sisters: Clara, Emma, and Lucy who were very nice, very proper, and definitely "Boston Blue Blood Stock". Anyway, Uncle Porter was a great sport, he loved the farm, our family and all our picnics on Middletown Hill, at the lakes, or just on the farm. He loved the Rutland Fair and took his vacation each year at that time. He was present when we fitted, moved, or showed cattle. He especially liked riding in the truck when we transported the cattle. He loved horse races and he and Ethel spent many afternoons enjoying the races and picking the winners. It was fun to go to their home in West Newton as they always had something special to eat and then they would show us the sights in and around Boston. Ethel, Florence, and Alice used their home as a "home away from home" when they were in training at the General. They were very special people!!

I think I can safely say that Uncle Porter was my Dad's best friend and we enjoyed his participation in all of our activities; a trait he carried as long as he lived. He and my Dad decided to build a cottage in the orchard where he would feel more free to come to visit. The cottage, set in this orchard atmosphere, was very rustic with a fieldstone fireplace. What times we had here! Aunt Margaret had a four burner oil stove with a portable oven to fit over two burners. The water was carried until Uncle Porter, my Dad, and "Fon" Chambers drove a pipe with a well joint to a depth of ten or twelve feet; what

nice cold water came from this! Of course they had a pitcher pump on the sink to pump all the water that was needed. In later years, we used a back hoe to dig westerly of the cottage and dropped two round tiles at the vein to create a reservoir. At the same time, on the easterly side of the cottage, we installed a five hundred gallon septic tank and leach field. We now had a bathroom with running water powered by an electric pump and water was connected to the kitchen sink. We also dug a small trench from the farm house and buried an electric cable, with is still there today, to get electricity to the camp. We now had water for our cows which we pastured behind the camp. Over the years, Uncle Porter kept making improvements. He even bought an electric refrigerator so we no longer had to bring blocks of ice home for the ice refrigerator. In later years the fireplace cracked badly and had to be removed, which we all hated to lose. Many were the times that different ones of us would camp with the Dorrs for one or two nights. Improvements were made from time to time but we always enjoyed the time spent with Uncle Porter and Aunt Margaret.

They had a son, Porter Jr., who was about Walter's age. Pete always took part in our activities and was a good sport too. He had a rather severe case of arthritis but was still very active. We also enjoyed the friends they brought up with them who were willing to rough it and participate in farm activities. I can remember taking a load of potatoes down to Boston. Evidently my tires were not suitable for the load or the trip. It was most discouraging as I had several flat tires on that trip! Pete finally married Terry Mingace who had a lot of zest for living. This was very good for Pete because she got him out doing things. After Uncle Porter and Aunt Margaret passed from the scene, Pete and Terry modernized the camp with an addition for a bedroom, new kitchen, a new bath, partial concrete floor, an electric water heater, and electric service from Central Vermont with their own meter. Oh, yes, they had a telephone installed too.

Stores were quite a novelty in Ira; there was only one. I can

remember going to Mrs. Eva Cramton's and buying bread for Mother. Later the store was moved to her son's home, Charles Cramton, who operated the "Checkerboard" and sold gas, oil, groceries, penny candy, ice cream and gum in the house.

One Fourth of July, Uncle Porter and my Dad went down and bought fireworks. "Kiddy", as we called him, dug out some 6" firecrackers, just special. At night we would shoot them off. I remember one that went up in the air and exploded, then came back down on Uncle Porter's bald head. That brought a big laugh! Below his house next to the brook, he had a picnic area and tables where we would go on some Sundays. Later he went into the egg business and had chicken houses. Sometime later, a flood swept the buildings off their foundation and caused a lot of damage. He also had a small truck garden and peddled his vegetables in Rutland.

As a small child, I can remember the Coombs' house burning just south of the Collins property on the east side of the road. Hallie Lincoln took a 38-40 rifle out amidst other things and laid it on a stonewall. Jake Coombs took it into his house and later sold it to me for \$15.00. I shot two deer with it; one of which Vic Sevigny loves to tell about. Bill Whiteman wanted one of my rifles, so I gave it to him and then it passes on to Christopher. My 30-30 rifle really went to Ralph Jr. but Dan is taking care of it for him. When the Coombs' house burned, there was quite a large family so they moved across the road to the hen house. They fixed it up and later Bill and Belle Pickett moved in and lived there for years. They adopted John Blanchard who married Ruth Matteson, daughter of Violet Coombs. They have now made the property very attractive.

Bill Coote with his children and wife, Beverly Walker Coote, daughter of Alfred Walker, worked for us on the farm for several years. Bill was the type of guy who could do most anything but had never tried farming before. He was different from most help. After he had been with us for a time he came to explain how he was earning more money than he ever had before in spite of his

small weekly paycheck. This was because he paid no rent, used no gasoline to travel to work, purchased no milk or potatoes, and at times, meat was supplied along with free wood for heat. Living and working on the farm does have some advantages.

Llewella Day's barn burned one night. We had a thunder storm a day or so before and we believe lightning struck it and it just smoldered. I remember Stewart Lincoln was visiting up there and his car burned up before he could move it.

On another cold night in January in the 60's, I think, Bob Johnston's barn burned and he lost all the cattle in it. Barn doors were iced shut that would have let them out, but the fire was so fast and hot nothing could be done. I can still hear those poor cows bellowing. We think the fire started from shorted exhaust fans but it is a guess. One night, in October 1973, I was standing in my living room and I saw Bob Johnston's hay barn, just south of our farm, all ablaze at one time. We are sure that was arson.

I do not think that I have mentioned anything concerning our fire department. All we had was a fire warden, about five or six water pack pumps to be carried on your back, and half a dozen fire rakes which were similar to a hoe but had four rugged mowing machine sections on the end to dig in the dirt and cut roots and vines. One fire I remember vividly was on the mountain, east of the East Birdseye road and west of the Monahan farm where timber had been cut off. We drove as close as we could to reach the fire. We donned these pack pumps which held about five gallons and were equipped with a hand pump to direct the water on the fire. When we used it up, we had to go to the nearest water supply to refill which was usually at a much lower level. Sometimes a jeep was able to get to us with more water. How wet our backs were from perspiring or from the leaking, sweating water tanks! I recall one night we spent on the mountain on patrol duty, knocking down fires that would keep blazing up. If my memory serves me right Dick Crossman, Marcus

Fish, myself, and possibly Stewart Lincoln were on duty. Marcus kept us entertained with his stories; Dick told us how much more he enjoyed his time with us than being at the high school graduation with his junior class. Sometimes these fires would last for several days and many turned out to subdue them. It was a tired but sweaty job but it had to be done. Fire traveled underground during a dry spell and would break out in different locations especially with a little wind.

I would like to mention Rutland stores that I remembered in early years, especially the "Combination Cash Store". We could go from Merchant's Row, through Fishman's variety store, and out onto Willow street through this store. At the meat counters, chickens would be hanging from hooks (I do not know whether they had been drawn or not) for your choice. The clerks wore white jackets; some wore stiff straw hats, political type, and straw wrist cuffs to protect their clothes from grease while cutting your meat. The floor was covered with sawdust to catch bits of dropped greasy beef. When you paid for your groceries, the money was placed in a cup attached to a spring loaded switch. When the switch was pulled, the cup was sent to a higher level where the cashier made change, if necessary, and returned it to that station. Ross Huntress, a department store, also had the same system; no rows of checkout counters. Guess other stores also used the same system. Murdock and Durkee used to be on Merchants Row; Percy Woods, a quality grocery, was on Lincoln Avenue.

Banks included Clement, Rutland Savings, Marble, Rutland Co. National. All had grills in front of the cashier; no one could jump over the counter! Rutland Savings used to serve milk, crackers, and cheese during June which is "Dairy Month".

RECREATION

In the 1920's and 1930's, as kids, we enjoyed sliding down a hill very much. We would go up in the sugar woods on top of the hill then belly down on our sleds. When conditions were right, we used to go almost to Clark Potter's. "The lane" was then in use and the Gilmores, who lived in the Red House, used this road for access to their home. The lane came out beside Fish's, now Blackman's, garage. We tried skiing but I never attained the rank of a good skier. Our skis just had straps in which to place our boots - very simple.

It was not uncommon to have sliding parties; the roads would be packed with snow and no sand was put on the roadways. One night, in the winter of 1940, Ethel and Walter were sliding on school house hill with probably ten or twelve others. I was not in the party because I had a severe sinus infection. At any rate, as they were all walking back up the hill one of the sliders came down alone. Everybody tried to move but he hit Ethel and gave her a very bad compound complex fracture in the leg. On her way to the hospital she had Arden Day pull on her leg to apply traction. At the hospital, she chose a young surgeon, Dr. Layden to take care of her. The big bone was broken twice so she was put in traction in the hospital. When the nurses bumped into it, it hurt Ethel terribly. Dr. Layden would not let anyone touch the dressings. She was laid up all summer and then some. At that time she was taking a special course in public health nursing at Simmons College in Boston. To make a long story short, she went back to the General (MGH) for evaluation and the report

was an excellent job of setting and healing of the leg. It was a rough summer for her but she finally got back on to her leg. No loss but some gain, eh Vic?

Remember, when we were young, there was no television and very few radios. There used to be a lot more visiting with the neighbors. The standard question was: "How are your hens laying?" At night, we played games like dominoes, checkers, flinch, and croquignole. Also we had a board about 3' X 3' with games to play on each side. We used that an awful lot; another gift from the Hessbergs.

Card parties and grange meetings were more common. I can remember our grange put on plays and we would go to other towns in the back of Clayton Fish's milk truck to present our play; sure, we had a canvas but it was cold so we bundled up. During the winter months this was quite popular with different granges and lots of fun. The grange also had a Christmas party and a "sugar-off" party with doughnuts and pickles. Syrup was put in a copper boiler on top of the wood range. A chunk of salt pork was tied to a string attached to each handle and we went upstairs in the grange hall for our meeting. Whenever the syrup would boil up to the level of the pork, the grease would "drop the boil". When we had finished our meeting, both we and the "sugar on snow" would be ready. Each sugar maker would donate syrup; there were quite a few maple sugar producers in those days.

On Saturday nights many people would go to Rutland and shop; Saturday was the big shopping night and you could meet many people that way. Clayton and George Fish finished milking early that night and would drive around the "block" until they could find a parking space on Center Street. Of course, there were always movies in Rutland and usually square dances in various places. A famous dance hall was at Lake Bomoseen where a big silver crystal ball kept turning; it was an open pavilion and cool too. Many big name bands played there like Dorsey, Whitman, etc.

I cannot forget to mention our "swimming hole". This was in Ellis Cramton's pasture next to and south of our night pasture. The brook curved around a slate ledge making deeper water for swimming. It was all spring water, slightly above freezing. After a hot day in the hayfield or just wanting a swim, that is where we would head. It was cold water but you felt wonderful when you came out. We Perry kids were used to it but visitors sometimes had a hard time adjusting. Today, many speak of the experience of swimming there. My children spent many long hours there, too, many years later.

Halloween used to be quite an event and many pranks would be played on that night. Many hay wagons would be outside on the farms; remember, there were more farms in our day. We might find another farm wagon in our yard and ours would be gone. Sometimes buggies or buckboards would be put on someone's barn roof and backhouses might be tipped over. If a group wanted to settle a grudge with someone, this was the night to do it. It was kind of comical to see what had happened during the night when we got up the next morning. Boys and girls alike were involved; ask some of them today!

Let me speak about the box socials - a way to raise money. The ladies would fix their box lunches in all kinds of fancy ways and then they were auctioned off for the best price. You had to eat with whomever's box you bought. Some of the younger fellows would have it arranged for a special bow or marking on the box so he could eat with his "girl"! At times someone else caught on to the scheme and would raise the bids to make him pay more. Sometimes you might get a box that you might not appreciate eating. It was a lot of fun anyway and I was always careful of my bids!

CARS

Our first car was an Overland Touring car. I can remember coming up Chapman's hill and my father would open the "cut-out" to get more power. I can still hear it roar.

The next car was an Oakland. We probably got it in 1923, because I remember the top had some blisters where the hot embers fell on it before it was removed from the barn floor when the barn burned. I can remember my father jacking it up for the winter and putting the battery in the cellar. We used sleighs and buggies in the winter. I heard tell how they would carry an axe to chop the ruts so they could turn out for another vehicle.

We had side curtains for the car so that when it rained, we would raise up the back seat and quickly put on the curtains to keep the rain out. Of course we used chains on our wheels a lot when we drove in early spring or fall to keep from getting stuck in snow or mud. We had hand operated windshield wipers that worked when the driver reached above the windshield and moved a lever back and forth, thereby moving the wiper to clean the windshield. Every auto in the 1920's and before came with a hand crank which was necessary before the age of "self-starters". We had to watch out for a "kick-back", which could break your thumb, so we held that crank tightly.

In 1928, my father got an Oldsmobile sedan with windows that would roll up. We kept that until we bought a 1936 Dodge, four door sedan, for about \$900. At this time my father did not feel good. I had just gotten my license so I did most of the driving for him which I enjoyed but he did not. Of course Ethel

and Florence were driving the car but Mother never did. Mother just drove the horses and she was very good with them. I can recall many rides with her in our new Concord buggy.

I have heard tell how folks would drive their horse and buggy or sleigh to West Rutland, put their horse in the livery stable, and then take the trolley to Rutland or Castleton.

I bought an old 1926 Dodge from Kiddy Cramton and had a lot of fun driving it around. I wish I had kept it. I also had a 1929 old Essex that I registered and drove when Ralph Jr. was a baby; I sold that after a while.

MT. HERRICK

Mt. Herrick's 2700 feet lies in Ira. The Perry family has owned about 200 acres on the mountain for many years. During the 1930's, my Dad bought, at a tax sale, about 900 acres owned by the Veroning Lumber Co. Evidently, before the redemption time of one year was over, Mrs. Pauline Abraham of Rutland acquired title to this property either by hook or by crook and had it surveyed. Her survey left the Perry family with very little acreage. On the mountain, the Johnson Lumber Co. purchased the standing spruce for \$3 per cord, I believe. There was some understanding that the lines would be determined and the wood paid for on that basis. Mother hired the same man to survey that Mrs. Abraham had hired. He searched titles and I helped him survey our 200 acres. The summer we surveyed on Herrick Mountain, I remember how dry it was. There was very little water on that mountain except in some of the mud holes; believe it or not, they were refreshing. Evidently, the lines overlapped and a compromise was made; our line went on the west side of Herrick Mountain and we lost the top of Little Mountain. I do not know how fair it was but the attorney recommended this rather than get into an extensive litigation. I can remember counting and scaling the piles of pulp to ascertain which were ours and which were Mrs. Abraham's. This was done in November and December. Each stick was punched by an iron leaving a "J" mark for Johnson lumber.

The pulp company was very organized. A woods foreman, Pat Chisolm, marked out the roads which were grubbed out by hand with a "grub hoe". The trees were cut with pulp saws by each man. On the base of the mountain, now

owned by Vic and Ethel, they built two barrack type dormitories, a big cook shack with a kitchen and office building, horse barns, and a blacksmith shop. We ate there several times while surveying and found that the meals were very good and filling. When snow came, they brought the wood down with drays and horses. A dray consisted of two long poles laid on the front runners of a sled. On these poles, bolted together by four foot 2 X 6's, approximately two cords of wood could easily be laid on the dray and brought down to the truck for loading. At the steepest parts of the mountain, the loads were let down by attaching a rope to the dray and the other end was put through a slot in a stump. A lever was attached to let the rope slide through as slowly as was needed to lower the dray. The wood was then piled in an area between the buildings and the road leading to Middletown Hill. Trucks would pick up the wood and take it to the pulp mills. This wood was all loaded and unloaded by hand. Some of the sticks were pretty big and heavy and were all cut into four foot lengths. This was a clear cut job and afforded many nice views. The wood choppers would carry water to drink in glass gallon jugs. For a couple of summers, we had fires on the mountain because the jugs magnified the sun's rays and set the dry soil and cones on fire. This is when we used five gallon pack pumps strapped to our backs to pump a spray onto the fire.

CVPS put a wind meter on a peak south of Little Mountain. Callo Day rode up on horseback either daily or every other day to read the meter. I guess it did not prove practical.

My Dad used to tell about Nick Jordan, an old Indian, who lived almost halfway to the top. He cut hay on the clearing at the top and brought it down in bags on his horse. The foundation to his shanty is still there in a junction of the road to Herrick and Little Mountain. Now I have learned that Nick used to go to see Margaret Everin Dorr on the Middletown Hill Road. I do not know much more than that about him but it is good to know he was not exactly a

hermit. My father also told me about another native who would go up and find enough lead to last him until he needed more money.

There is something strangely beckoning to that old mountain. Even the younger generations enjoy it. Oh yes, we took one of the buildings and built a horse shed for our horses while we were cutting poplar in the 1940's. Vic took it and made a cabin beside the brook. Kay Crockett's sister, Esther, and John Steinburg spent their honeymoon there. We, Kay, Ellsworth, Vesta, and the Perrys, welcomed them with a "horning" the first night. We quietly snuck up to the building and suddenly and loudly hit a large circular saw, that we carried on an iron pipe, with a hammer. What a fright!! Today Jason and Norman Sevigny and buddies have rebuilt the cabin into a real nice hunting camp. This pulp camp was in the same location where Hallie Lincoln had his mill to saw timber for our new barn in 1924.

In the 1960's and 1970's, Bernie Poczbud went in and cut logs. He put in a road and culvert so that the log trucks could go in quite a ways. The higher elevation has slower growing trees but on the lower level they grow pretty fast. At this time, no timber has grown to amount to anything where the clear cutting took place in 1939. It did not come back to spruce.

I do know that timber sales do not take care of the tax increase that we are getting; our "land-use" program is what enables us to hold on to it today. People are welcome to hunt and enjoy it but "out of staters" seem to buy and post their land. I should also add that different roads lead over adjoining landowners property with no written right-of-ways. This system has been used in this way for years and years which the law recognizes; but someone will probably come along with a "high-tech" lawyer to challenge these rights we have enjoyed with our neighbors.

One moonlit night in March in the 70's, Walter was visiting with Ethel and Vic when they wondered how sap would run on Herrick Mountain so they went up and tapped a few trees. I do not think they ever went back. They had

fun but Mary did not think much of it. Of course this decision was made around 8 P.M. and it must have been an hour walk to get there. They still reminisce about it! Walt, Vic, Ethel - moonlight tapping!

SUGARING

Maple syrup was a cash crop. My dad was always fussy with his maple syrup and I remember how he crated and shipped it to various places. In our farming days, we were always careful to keep our storage tanks washed after each run. We made a quality product and repeat sales and demand proved this. Today I notice that syrup marketed under "Milky Way Farm", our home farm, bears the seal of excellence.

During the war, O.P.A. (a government agency controlling price) set the price of syrup at \$3.39 per gallon. We used horses to gather sap and break roads in the spring. As a younger child, I can remember bringing each load of sap all the way to the sugar house. This was slow business and tough on the horses. Then my father got twenty foot lengths of galvanized pipe which we laid from the sugar house to the sugar woods. It was very important to have unions and tees with plugs so we could drain it before it froze. I have seen many splits when it was not properly drained. That was quite a job to screw them together each spring and then put them away. Later, when the plastic pipe came on the market, it was sold in rolls. We used a lot of it and the rolls were much simpler to handle.

I bought a crawler tractor after a while, which was a great help. However, you had to get on it to move it from one location to another; unlike the horses that you could just speak to and they would go by themselves.

We tapped the trees with a bit stock until the gasoline tappers came along. My gasoline tapper is now in the Maple Museum in Rutland at the Fair

Grounds. This tapper was worn on my back and had a flexible hose for tapping. Probably it weighed 25 to 35 pounds but when night came, after walking through all that snow, I was one tired guy. That was some different from what we use today. After tapping a hole in the maple tree, we would pound a spout into the tree and hang a tin bucket on the spout.

Later we used plastic sap bags. It was easy to see what was in them but they did not hold as much as the tin buckets. Chipmunks would chew the bags and plastic tubing sometimes to get a drink of sap. In later years, plastic tubing came along to carry the sap from the trees to the storage tank in the woods. I tried this but I guess I did not do it right so I sold it. Today most everybody uses it and it saves a lot of time.

I always fired my arch with wood and would make about 30 gallons with a long day of boiling. Alice boiled much of the sap while I was milking or gathering sap; she was good at it and a great help too! Ellsworth Crockett, or someone else we could find, would help her. We would make about 100-175 gallons per year with 900-1,000 taps. Compare this to 1990, when Ralph, Jr. made approximately 300-400 gallons of syrup with 2500 taps, burning oil instead of wood. In 1997/98, Ralph Jr. built a new sugar house on the front of the hillside below the sugar woods and made 600 gallons of syrup with the help of his family. Four generations of Perry's have made syrup on the Perry farm. Many folks do not realize that it takes at least thirty to forty gallons of sap to make one gallon of syrup!

The first evaporator that was on the farm had a stone arch about two feet thick and 2 1/2'-3' high. It had a flat pan divided into 18" sections with small openings in every section at alternating ends. The sap was first heated in a "boiler" tub approximately three feet high and four feet wide with flues as in a boiler. This was on the back of the arch to utilize the fire just before it went into the brick chimney. Sap entered the boiler pan by a pipe from the storage tank; a shut off controlled the depth of the sap in the tub. The heated sap was

piped to the front end of the arch to start its path through the evaporator pans. The depth of sap in these pans was controlled by a wooden plug that we adjusted manually at the front of the evaporator. The thickening sap entered the syruping off pan by means of a siphon.

Later we put in a used Grimm evaporator which had flue pans and 2 1/2' syruping off pans. We had little plugs on long handles to control the sap coming into the syruping off pan. We could draw off on either side by changing plugs. Sometimes we could draw off almost a pail of syrup but it was important to keep track of the level of sap in the pans. We usually had a bucket of cold sap on hand in case of emergency. Today they use reverse osmosis to remove a lot of the water from the sap first.

Ralph Jr. uses the piggy-back system which has an upper pan that preheats the sap first. This is more economical, I think, and does a good job. Of course oil is used for fuel so that when the switch is pulled everything stops. When we boiled with wood, it would take some time for the coals to die down and the sap to stop simmering. We used to boil eggs in the hot sap which gave them a delicious flavor.

The density of the syrup was checked with a hydrometer. If it was too thin when it was packed in the can for marketing, the can would blow up or bulge. If the syrup was too heavy, the syrup would crystallize in the bottom of the can and some consumers thought cane sugar had been added. Maple inspectors were very helpful to have you market a quality product.

When we were kids, my Father would get us all together to wash, stack, and dry the buckets. Then he would take us to the circus parade or the circus. There was a lot more enthusiasm for tapping and hanging buckets than cleaning up afterwards! In the 50's and 60's, our children would be joined by their cousins during April vacation. We made a big day of it by washing buckets with a brush and then rinsing and stacking the buckets so they would

dry thoroughly. When dry, we would stack them together and store them in the sugarhouse in the overhead section.

In the late 20's, we had a gypsy moth infestation in our sugar bush. I guess some government agency set up a pump back of Clarence Fish's and sprayed the trees. They then put a black band of tar around many of the trees on the south side to help control any further infestation. My Father told me that at one time a heavy wind or tornado cleaned out a lot of trees back of the red house. About 1949, I fenced off the sugar bush to keep the cows out so young maple trees could start.

BUTCHERING

When we were first farming, we killed our own cows and then cut them up in the cellar. When we butchered cows, I remember making corned beef and then hanging small pieces on the back of the house to dry; we cut up the rest as best we could for roasts, hamburg, and steak. We also pickled our own corned beef, dried it and had our own dried beef. The hamburg we took to a meat market where they ground it for us. Soon we had cooperative freeze lockers where we could take our meat and have it processed commercially; here it was packaged and frozen - some improvement! Later we managed to have our cows picked up, slaughtered, and processed. This was much better. It was awfully interesting to see the inside of a cow, especially the tripe area where hardware collects. We even operated on cows to remove any hardware lodged in the tripe. If we had an old cow, we would have her butchered and all of her meat ground up for hamburg. When we got off the farm, we missed our good meat.

Most every farmer used to have a pig or two. When it was time to kill, we would heat water in a big iron kettle. When it was hot enough, we would put the water in a barrel and then put the dead pig in to scald it and release the bristles. When one end was done, we would do the other end, pulling it up and down. When the bristles were all removed, we pulled the pig up, dropped the guts out of it, used the fat for lard, and then split the pig in two. When the pig was hung nose down, it was easy to slit their bellies and let the guts out. We would take the fat off the innards and "try" it out for lard on the stove. Some

people cleaned out the intestines and stuffed sausage meat in them, as you see in stores today.

Pig's liver was an awfully good food, especially from a freshly killed pig. We also especially enjoyed the "trout" which was a strip of meat from the tenderloin. We used to separate it but today it goes along with the whole tenderloin. We also cut up the pig in the cellar; put the salt pork down in a crock with layers of rock salt in between; smoked the hams, shoulders and bacon or perhaps rubbed them with smoked salt for a prescribed number of days. I can remember smoking the hams and bacon with corn cobs in a barrel with paper and bags over the top; a pipe held the product being smoked. I have heard of the heat being so intense that a fire started and burned up the hams or bacon. You had to be real careful how you did it.

Mother made our own sausage and either packed it in grease in crocks or we would bag it. We also made head cheese or souse from meat and fat on the pigs head. Later, we had them slaughtered professionally and cut up. The hams and bacon were professionally corn cob smoked. This type of meat was so good.

4-H AND GUERNSEY ACTIVITIES

When we started farming together in 1936, Walter and I were active in 4-H as we had been before. We took animals to Eastern States and participated in various camps and trips. Mr. Bergstrom was always pushing us and he got a group of us young farmers interested in farm accounts, which proved to be very helpful.

In 1939, I was one of four from Vermont State to go to the National 4-H Camp in Washington. We were entertained royally and went from place to place with a motorcycle escort. What a thrill!

Each year the Vermont Guernsey Association held a Parish Show in Montpelier at Mr. Phillip's farm and we had competition from other breeders in the state; for 4-H as well as seniors. When Mr. Phillip died, the Parish Show was moved to Randolph. Our children also participated with their animals; a lot of fun and work but very tiring.

Each year the Vermont Farm show was held in Burlington or Barre and The Vermont Guernsey Breeders would have their annual meeting in February. I happened to be president of the Association and Alice wanted to go but she was about eight months pregnant with Arlene. She had not seen a doctor because she knew he would not want her to ride that far. At any rate, Walt and Mary went with us. We stayed overnight in a hotel and came home the next day. Soon after, she went to Dr. Smolinski and he asked her why she even bothered to come to see him. At any rate, Arlene was born on February 28,

three to four weeks after the meeting. Several who were there and received birth announcements were surprised to know Alice was pregnant.

Mr. Bergstrom persuaded Governor and Mrs. Weeks to give a watch to the top 4-H exhibitors. There was much competition and each year it alternated between a boy and a girl. One year I won a Bulova wrist watch and years later Arlene won one too. There were quite a few from Ira who won it, as I recall.

A large two level building was built as the 4-H building in the 30's, I believe. The building included booths for individual clubs to exhibit; a stage for demonstrations; a display for vegetables, fruits, and canning exhibits; and a food counter where sandwiches could be purchased. Upstairs were dormitories for 4-H boys and girls to stay for the week of the fair. This setup was the same when our children were in 4-H.

THE RUTLAND FAIR AND THE WORLD OF MIRTH SHOWS

Speaking of the Rutland Fair, I can remember when the side shows and amusement rides had their own train. It was complete with flat cars, coach cars, and evidently sleeper cars for all the side shows, roustabouts, and attendants. With all this activity, it was quite a show for us to watch before and after the fair. All the equipment was loaded onto hard tire wagons and then it was backed or pulled all the way back on the flat cars. Francis Seward, our International dealer, would supply them with extra tractors. He would acquire passes for shows and rides but probably not to the "girlie" shows, at least for us.

We kids might get individual passes or a "gold" pass to take our whole group into the fair. That was always a thrill to get one of his passes because our fair "allowance" was usually a quarter; rides would be 5 and 10 cents. Can you imagine living in those metal coaches during real hot weather? I have no idea what sanitary facilities were available but I do know we did not have any showers on the grounds. I do think they had a cook tent on the grounds but I do not know what they did while traveling. They would come to Rutland from the Essex Fair and leave late Sunday morning for the Brockton Fair in Massachusetts. I have often thought of the team work to set up, tear down, load all those wagons, and provide for everyone.

Today concessionaires come with their own trailer campers and go from fair to fair. I have often thought of how those old cars must have smelled, especially on hot nights.

I read recently where circus parades and shows are coming back; the man involved bought some of the old World of Mirth flat cars at a bankruptcy sale. The circuses that came to Rutland also came on flat cars. They usually had bright colored wagons; also, heavy caged wagons for wild animals. The circus was usually preceded by a parade through the streets of downtown Rutland.

Years ago the Rutland Fair always started on Labor Day and schools started the week after the fair. When we were old enough to exhibit cattle in 4-H, I think we were there. I remember we would lead our cattle down to George Fish's where a truck would back up to a bank so we could walk them into the truck. This was usually on Sunday afternoon as everything had to be ready for Monday A.M. We had sheds to keep them in at the fair and some of the fellows slept over with the cattle; the rest of us slept upstairs in the 4-H building. Later on we had our own truck with a tailgate to load our animals; this worked much better. 4-H judging was always on Monday and we had support from Mother, Dad, Porter and Margaret, plus other family members who were present.

A wooden fence with barbed wire on top was around much of the fairgrounds. Some people had a hose turned on them after pulling the boards off and trying to sneak into the fairgrounds without paying. Some went over the top but caught their pants in the barbed wire when they jumped. There were some interesting experiences.

I think in the 30's, the old grandstand burned in July; but they had the new one ready for opening day. There was horse racing and vaudeville for afternoon grandstand attractions. At night the Rockettes from RCA in New York City would perform. After the evening show there were fireworks. Two nights a week they drew admittance ticket stubs from a barrel churn and awarded a new automobile to the lucky one.

At one time, they brought in clay from West Haven to make the race track better for racing; however, with a rainy season it did not prove to be successful. Today, they have more of an all weather track with a lighting system for evening races which now are parimutuel.

Clayton and Mabel Fish had a food counter there for many years; local people made pies to sell. Auto racing and auto thrill shows were on Saturday. That was fun but of course we had to take our cattle home on Saturday.

Thursday was Governor's Day and we had a cattle cavalcade every year and the fair association would give each leader 50 cents as we led our cattle around the race track. When we were parading cattle, we always had a lot of volunteers. Our girl friends and helpers came first to help on Governor's Day and then other people we knew; 50 cents would go quite a ways on the fairgrounds in those days for rides and eats, etc. Things have sure changed in the advent of T.V., better economy, and "progress".

Today the south side of the brook is pretty much the agricultural section; gone are the different farm machinery dealers. I can remember farm equipment dealers were very much in evidence showing off their products and the newer products in farm machinery, milking, and milk cooling equipment. They also had the newest in sugaring equipment. I can remember an international tractor where one front wheel turned so that the tractor kept going around and around in a circle; quite an attraction!

The fair grounds are used very much during the year for rallies, antique shows, lumberjack round ups and many other interesting activities. In the 60's, a working sugar house was built and one can see how sap is boiled. Many fine maple sugar treats are sold here. This is where my gasoline tapper is on display. The Royce Mandigo building, constructed in the 1970's, hosts ice hockey games all winter; this has been a big asset to the community.

MY WEDDING, MY FAMILY, OUR LIFE

Let me tell you about my wedding. Alice graduated from Mass General on February 11, 1943, came home on the 12th, and we were married on February 20th. I had to get married before sugaring started, so it was kind of a "shot gun wedding". We had planned a small wedding, mostly family, and we had picked the lucky ones to serve as our wedding attendants. Alice wore Florence's wedding dress that she used in 1938. At the time of our wedding, my two hands would reach around Alice's waist and my fingers would touch. Everything went off okay but I did have to go outside and wait for Uncle Cleve and family. I knew the wedding could not go on without me so I just delayed it a few minutes.

Lena Davis, Alice's cousin, held the reception in her home which included: cake, ice cream, and punch, as I recall. Alan Davis sent us a cablegram from overseas and Walter Shangraw called from Glens Falls to congratulate and wish us well. The weather warmed and there were icy spots and puddles on our wedding day. Bill Shangraw, Alice's brother, took some pictures but we did not have color in those days. We left with Leland Beebe to catch the "Troy Local" (train) for Albany. I knew this would stop Leland and Marcus from joining together for any jokes.

We went to Albany and on to New York City; we then went to New Hartford to visit John and Florence. We were gone a week and spent most of our \$100. Alice was a wonderful bride and has always been a wonderful wife.

I have written much so that my family and grandchildren would have some idea of the 1920's and 1930's. I would be remiss if I did not mention my wonderful family. My wife, Alice Chase, has been a wonderful helpmate to me. Although she was not a farm girl, she certainly adapted herself to country living. She really saw the birth and wonders of penicillin and the sulfa drugs, which she called miracle cures and rightly so. Her knowledge of the dangers of too much medicine and her common sense knowledge always intrigued me: drink a lot of water, soak with epsom salts, get a lot of rest, give antibiotics a chance to work and do not push just because you feel better. We also used turpentine for different ailments which was an old standby of her mother's.

I believe folks in town appreciated Alice's love, care, and compassion when a member of their family was in need. I also recall when some of our townspeople would call or come to the house and ask her to come because a loved one had died or was dying. She was very compassionate and helped them in many ways at this time. It seems to me that more folks died at home and the funerals were held in homes where possible. If folks were sick, she was always ready to help. People would come to our house or call on the phone for help. I can still remember her name being called in the middle of the night from outside our window and she would go whether for sickness, birth of a baby, or death. Alice always knew what to do and was a great comfort to the families. Dr. Smolinski appreciated her too as she would give shots, change dressings, or care for someone real sick. They always had a good relationship and he could depend on her.

Speaking of Dr. Smolinski, I can remember him going to Russell Fish's on a wood sled to see Emma Gould. Russell met him at the town hall, took him up, and brought him back. Roads were not open for automobiles; too much snow. Another time, I took him to our Red House because someone was sick. This time he stood on the drawbar of the tractor. He took vegetables, eggs, etc. from many of his patients for pay; remember, no Medicare. He was really an

outstanding doctor and you still hear pleasant references to him. I think he really worked himself to death.

People worked longer days then too. When we were first married, Alice worked at the hospital twelve hours, five or six days a week; did her housework; plus anything extra. No wonder she was exhausted!

In 1945, on January 8th, Ralph Jr. was born. We were so happy to have a son and Alice gave him my name. In 1947, on April 12th, a lovely baby girl was born. We were so happy to have a daughter, which we agreed to name Dianne Alice. It was as close as I could get to integrating my wife into the family tree. In 1950, on February 28th, a second daughter came along that we were so happy to have. I always liked the name Arlene and I always loved my grandmother, Ida Perry, so why not continue the name, Ida, in naming this lovely baby, Arlene Ida. Alice's grandmother was also named Ida; Ida Burgess. We have loved them all so much and we now realize their love for us more and more.

In 1945, we lived in the "Baslow" house with Ralph, Jr.; this was less than a mile south of the farm. In the winter of 1947, we moved our household belongings, via a clean manure sled, to the Red House in the meadow behind the farm house. Before we moved in, we spent approximately three months in the big house on the farm waiting for Gerald Crossman to wall paper and for a bathroom to be installed in the red house. It was during this time that Dianne was born.

The next winter, our spring water line froze which left us with no water and no way out because our road was blocked with deep snow. It was rather tough doing the washing, raising kids, preparing meals, and being a home maker while living with water from milk cans brought up from the farm. In desperation, we decided it was not going to warm up enough to thaw our pipes. We hired an electric welding outfit who hooked a wire onto the pipes in the cellar and another pipe near the brook. As long as it was galvanized pipe the

electric current heated the pipe enough to start the water. The secret was to leave it running! Years later we put the pipe much deeper and dug the line by backhoe instead of pick and shovel. You never really appreciate water "until the well runs dry".

In 1943, we had a flood that washed out a bridge just south of our farm and the water was diverted down the main road. We had to place the truck at an angle and used planks to divert the stream down into the barnyard to save our potato field which was in the cemetery meadow. Many other bridges and roads were washed out at the same time. We have had flash floods from time to time that washed out Vernon Fish's road and others.

In 1947, I can remember a flood that completely washed out the road from Hallie Lincoln's to Mehuron's. At that time they put a big shovel in the brook at Clayton Fish's and dug out the channel right up through our night pasture; trucks were used then. I had to hire a drag line to move the brook back into our night pasture because it was washing out our meadow. We did not have permit problems in those days. I then put in a pond for fire protection and irrigation but I guess it has filled in now.

I think, in 1949, Walter went to work for Beaver Brook farm in Wilmington. We bought his interest in the farm through the Federal Land Bank. He had taken the two year Aggie course at Cornell and gained a lot of knowledge; he was real smart too!

After he left the farm, I bought a New Holland baler that tied with twine. I also had to buy a portable elevator. It sure sped up the haying but cost about \$660. I threw my hat in the door before entering because I did not discuss this expedition with Alice first. She was very understanding and helped me get it paid for by custom baling; long hard days though. Those bales of hay were not light and each weighed 40-50 pounds. Grass silage came along after that and was put into silos; this saved a lot of the nutrients. This was much faster but much more expensive for the silos and the necessary equipment.

It was 1949 when we moved from the Red House to the farm house; this is where we lived when Arlene was born. It was that spring that Ralph Jr. and Di had measles and generously gave them to me. In 1964, Di again had the measles and, of course, I too had to repeat the ordeal! I did much better at being sick than the children did and accomplished a more severe production of that disease! I was very sick with them and some folks thought I was going to die. I can remember how much I stunk and wondered how Alice could stand to give me a bath. Never will I forget the care she gave me.

I recall having a grain bill of over \$2000 and we just could not seem to get it paid. I talked to the grain store owner, Chauncy Osbourne, about it and he suggested we give him Di for the bill; she often accompanied me to the grain store. This disturbed Di a little until she found out that we would not opt for the idea but we finally got the bill paid. He helped many other farmers, too, and did not insist on C.O.D. when grain was delivered, as many do today.

Right from the start, or as soon as possible, our children were involved with the farm: calves, kittens, puppies, etc. At a young age, they were helpful in the house, in the barn, or in the fields. I gave Ralph, Jr. a 1941 Chevrolet as soon as he was able to drive. I told him to drive it anywhere on the farm and to tinker on it all that he wanted. He solicited anyone that would ride with him and loved to take Aunt Margaret, Nano, and Aunt Eleanor for rides all over the meadows. Today, I still hear stories of getting to some distant meadow and running out of gas and walking his passengers home. He was 13 years old so he painted the number "13" on the door and to this day it is a landmark in the sugar bush.

All the children could drive tractors, cars, or trucks as soon as their feet could reach pedals; maybe they needed a pillow to sit on and one behind their back. I remember Ralph was filling in a pond at the Collins' farm, with a crawler tractor, when some way or another he went too far and he slid into the pond; tractor and all. We pulled it out with a wheel tractor. I think it hurt

Ralphie's pride. I thought it funny to see him sitting there in the water but those things will happen!

While growing up, they never teased for things. They would tell us what they really wanted and we tried to provide it for them. I remember how happy Di was one Christmas when we bought her a second hand bike; not a new one. They wore many "hand me downs" from other children. Arlene was the last in line and never complained. She just looked at you with those big blue eyes and shy smile; oh those blond curls! Alice made many clothes which were worn by the children, either new or remade.

There were 4-H showmanship contests in which our children did very well! I believe Silver dollars were their awards. At the Rutland Fair our children did well exhibiting and in showmanship contests. Most important, they were good sports because "you win some and loose some". Our kids learned what it was to win and lose at an early age. They were all very active in the fair and I believe Ralph and Dianne went on to exhibit at Eastern States exposition. Arlene had a chance to go but refused because of the chance of disease, etc. She did go, though, with a demonstration of some kind.

Later on, when our children were old enough, Alice and I took them to Washington and stayed with John and Olive Crossman Stevens (April, 1959). That too was a thrill and I don't think our children will ever forget that trip. Our family made a couple trips to Michigan to visit the Chase relatives. We went to Boston to the Dorrs' once or twice. That was the extent of our traveling unless it was for a day, locally.

When I was growing up, we always had a six quart ice cream freezer which we used a lot. After we were married, we had many good meals from it. I recall we were going to have a birthday party with the Seignys. The ice cream was all made and on the back step. When we were ready to go, the can of ice cream was gone. It seems that Gene Fowler's dog found it, pulled it out of the tub, and ate much of the ice cream. Gene was some mad at the dog to say

nothing of Alice's wrath. However, she quickly made another "freezer" but I still do not know how she did it so fast. She sure made me a good wife, ready to help out at any time for anything.

Someone wanted to get rid of a pony, much to our family's delight! He was brown and white and named Champ. He loved our kids and we have many pictures of them together. Once in a while someone would mount Champ to try and show off so Champ would just go along and all of a sudden put his head to the ground and heave his rider off.

The Seignys kept horses for the winter from a summer riding stable on Lake St. Catherine. What fun they had! Of course, we had to do the same. The first winter we trucked home a black horse, named Mauve, for Ralph and a white horse, named Sheba, for Di. She was truly a ladies horse and had to learn to tolerate almost anything. This left Champ for Arlene and what fun our kids had with those horses and the many memories they have today. At this time, we still had Helen, one of our work horses. It was so much fun to hitch her to the sleigh for rides. Sheba returned the following winters and was then purchased by Di and became a permanent fixture on the farm. Sheba and Champ became best friends and Sheba was lost when Champ died. Champ lived with us 11 or 12 years and Sheba about 13 years.

I could write much more of their activities in the sugaring operation, school, and church activities but I do not want to be boring. We wanted Ralph to go on to college, but he joined the National Guard and had his own business. Di and Arlene both went to The King's College for two years. Di then went to Vermont College in Montpelier and got a good nurse's training. Arlene went to Cornell Medical in N.Y. City and got herself a good nurse's training with a B.S.N. degree.

While Ralph was on maneuvers in the National Guard, I heard many good reports of what he did from local guardsman; not all his activities were comfortable. One day a heavy cover or hatch on a tank or some military vehicle

came down and hit him on his head. I guess it was serious for a while; evidently discouraged some of the hair roots! They now are all happily married but working hard putting their children through college. We thank God continuously for our children; they all mean so much to us.

In the 1940-1960 era, deer hunting was a lot of fun. We had a lot of deer and more local people hunted; not the influx of hunters that we have today. My first deer I shot in the Potter meadows when we lived in the Red House. I saw them in the meadows and sneaked up on them. That was a nice break and my 38-40 brought him down. My family watched from the window of the Red House as I dragged him down. How excited they were! The second deer was in the meadow back of the sugar house. I shot him three quarters of the way across the meadow with my 38-40 and hit him in the hind leg. He turned and ran towards me behind the sugar house so I shot him in the chest and he dropped at my feet; again my old 38-40! This is the story on which Vic likes to elaborate. My last deer I saw up in the pasture in front of the sugar woods. I went on the tractor, with the manure spreader, to the foot of the hill and shot him with my 30-30. That was an easy drag. You see, deer paid no attention to a tractor but if I had walked out there, he would have taken off. Most every farmer, interested in hunting, carried a gun on his tractor. Many good hunters would stop by each year to hunt and we enjoyed them, even some of the "out-of-staters". "Out-of-staters" have been known to shoot Jersey heifers instead of deer, not knowing the difference.

In approximately 1951, the Collin's estate was settled and after much deliberation, we purchased this farm of 120 acres of woodland and 30 level acres, which we needed to support the cattle on the home farm. The house needed a lot of modernizing; you could even scrape the smoke off the ceiling with a putty knife. We had nothing to put down on it and were quite rudely treated by the local banks. Finally, we went to Proctor Trust and explained our situation to a Mr. Boyce. He loaned us the money on a straight demand note

with the provision that we would pay the interest every 3 months. Also, any logs sold were to be put toward the principal. That's the way we bought it and immediately made an apartment downstairs and later one upstairs. Ralph, Jr. and Di remember the Collin's farm: the butternuts left upstairs to dry; Peg working in the kitchen; the pantry; then Clark alone when Peg died; the sore on his head for which Alice cared; and the oranges he gave to them. The kids took turns making the kitchen pump work and watching the water come out because we had a faucet at our house; this was quite intriguing to them. The Ralph Shangraws, Alice's brother, moved in when he retired and spent some of the happiest years of their lives in the apartment down stairs. The upstairs has been home to many honeymooners as well as some missionaries.

The Ralph Shangraws both died in 1980. The Ralph Matthews moved in and lived until 1987, when they lost their lives in a fire in Middletown. At the present time, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Schwartz, a grand older couple, seem real happy in the lower apartment. They are Ruthie Meigs' parents. (Mrs. Schwartz died November, 1991 and Mr. Schwartz died in 1994).

One drawback at the Collins' farm was the water supply. We drilled a well 500' deep and got about 1/2 to 3/4 gallons per minute. We later found another spot with a "forked stick" and have a pretty good shallow well which we use most of the time. I think it is very interesting to tell about the water at the Collins' barn water trough. It came from a "barrel" spring up in the pasture which was on the east side of the wood road; another auxiliary spring from a rock also supplied water to the "barrel" spring from the opposite side of the road. A "barrel" spring consisted of a wooden barrel dropped into a spring. A half inch lead pipe carried the water all the way to the barn; evidently into a ditch dug by hand. Sometimes the pipe broke and we would have to repair it with special lead pipe connectors. During a hot dry summer, the water would stop running and many times we had to use a force pump to start it again. Today they frown on lead for anything.

About 1960, Alice's mother, Mary Shangraw, finally came to live with us; she was 91 years old when she gave up her home. When Alice no longer had the health and strength to take care of her, she went to live in a nursing home in June, 1965. She died December 24, 1965; 2 days short of 97 years old. My Mother lived in the main house with us until 1956, when we made an apartment for her in the kitchen and old woodshed. These were very trying years as she hated to give up any of her rooms. Prior to 1956, we lived quite a consolidated life and my wife put up with an awful lot. No house is big enough for two women! A true statement that goes down in history. My mother died January 7, 1980, at Ethel's, with Alice at her side; five months short of her 97th birthday.

My Dad had Guernsey cows and he used to get a premium for the quality of the milk. We continued on with them and exhibited them at the Rutland Fair in 4-H and the open show. Probably we missed a few years but it was much fun and work; however not very profitable. As our children became old enough, each had their own animals which they could exhibit in 4-H each year at the Rutland Fair and the Parish Show in Randolph. That calf would be theirs and all its progeny. It was surprising how their little herds would grow. Today youngsters pick out a good animal and it then becomes part of the family herd, so I am told, and not theirs.

There was an ad in the Guernsey Breeders Journal to name a certain bull that was being advertised. I had been following Ideal Farms in New Jersey, so I mailed in the name, "Ideal Farms Superior". My letter was first and correct so I was given a daughter of his, Ideal Farms Superior Pride. This was one of the leading Guernsey farms in the east. That was quite a thrill for us. Alice and I went down and got her but she never produced any heifers for us. Walter and I also bought a bull from McDonald Farm in Cortland, New York. He came into the Rutland Railroad station in a crate, a little over a year old. We always tried to get good bulls to increase our "type" and production. When artificial breeding

came along, it gave us a bigger selection. However, we found that some farms built up big records one way or the other to make the bull sound better than he was. When the daughters from these bulls began producing milk, it proved some bulls to be duds.

Incidentally, the McDonald bull came down with Johnne's disease which was a dysentery type, weight losing disease. The federal veterinarians came in and worked closely with us to keep it from spreading in our herd and others. In fact, we loaded him in the truck and took him to Cornell for treatment and advice. We finally killed him and they took specimens. I guess we contained the disease but it was a scary experience.

I kept my Guernseys until I had to sell the milkers due to my health. I kept the young cattle, as they freshened, until I sold the home farm to Bert and Arlene in 1972. That was when we built our new home on the dump, between the farm house and the red house.

Soon after we moved in, our good friends, the Crocketts, were badly in need of a temporary home, so they moved into our basement apartment. We all had boxes piled up for walls and a lot of things stored in barns. After three years, they moved into the house they built and we have had occasion to help out others who needed temporary shelter. Debbie and Ben Kennedy lived with us approximately six months while they were building their home here in Ira. Di's family lived there for almost six months in 1979, and for two months the summer of 1990.

Following a forage wagon injury, in which Bert nearly lost his life, he developed severe back problems. Later, the home farm was sold but I kept the sugar bush along with the Red House which Paul and Ruth Meigs purchased after living in it for twenty odd years.

For over twenty years we traveled to warmer climates during the winter months by car, van, and motor home from the east to the west coasts and enjoyed every moment of it. In 1971, we flew to Bermuda for one week

attending the Vermont Realtors Annual Convention. In 1984, the convention was held in Hawaii!! We toured the different islands and enjoyed the beautiful tropical land. From 1979 to the present, we spent our winters in Florida and drove to California twice to visit Alice's sisters and other friends on the way. In 1990, we signed up with a tour to go to Alaska for twelve days. We flew from Hartford to Chicago and on to Anchorage; a nice flight and we could look down on the Rockies, glaciers, and acres of forest land. We had the same bus and driver all during our tour. We went to Denali National Park and took the train to Fairbanks where we spent a couple of days; saw much and learned more. We took pictures of Fairbanks at 11 p.m. in sunlight. We then traveled the Alaskan highway through the Yukon to Skagway where we boarded a cruise ship to Vancouver. What a trip! We ate like kings and were treated royally. The ship had fourteen elevator stops and it was confusing when the boat turned around to know where you were. We saw many sights in Vancouver and traveled to Seattle from whence we left for Chicago to Hartford. Bill and Di were there to meet us in Brattleboro where the bus left us off. We will never forget that trip.

I had always heard about the Alaskan pipeline. We stopped and looked it over; that was some undertaking. If it should rupture, it would really pour out the oil. It is inspected all the time by air and foot. They tell us that eventually it will have to be replaced due to corrosion, etc.!

MILK MARKETING AND TESTING

I have not said much about it but when we lived on the hill farm and first came down to the home farm, my folks separated the milk and made butter which was sold to stores and restaurants in Rutland. My Dad would go once a week on his route. Eleanor Busier tells how she loved to go and would hold the horses while the deliveries were being made. We still have the butter press that was used for the one pound blocks. Mother used to make Dutch cheese or cottage cheese from the skim milk left over from separating the cream. This was in great demand at area restaurants. These old separators were bolted to the floor and you turned a big crank; cream came out one pipe and skim milk came out the other. We used to get tired from cranking for so long. Later years these were run by an electric motor. In making butter, the cream was put into a wooden churn which was cranked by hand until the butter separated. We would then draw off the buttermilk which was used as a beverage or for cooking. Then the butter was worked with a fluted roller to "work" all the buttermilk out of the butter. Any surplus was fed to pigs. It stunk some when it soured!

Later, a cooperative was formed and a cheese factory took milk from the local farmers. I can remember going with large thirty gallon milk cans to the cheese factory where it was hoisted up and dumped into large vats. A rennet of some type was applied to the milk that separated the cheese curds from the liquid which was called whey. This was drained off into a large tank and the farmers would take this back to feed pigs and calves. If there was a surplus of

whey or skimmed milk, it was dumped. I can remember seeing the "wheels" of cheese going through the curing process and eating some really strong cheese which would almost make your hair curl. We did not need much to flavor macaroni. I can also remember seeing my Uncle Cleve cutting off about a half pound and eating it right down. The cheese factory was located west of Kiddy Cramton's house (now Preston's).

The Fluid Market, when milk was bottled and delivered directly to the customer, came along and our milk was sold in forty quart cans to peddlers in Rutland. We would cool it in water, cooled by ice which we dug out of the sawdust in our ice house. The ice house was filled in the winter with blocks of ice from Arden Day's pond and was supposed to last all summer. The ice house faced the corn barn door out beside the farm house. (In 1989, Ralph, Jr. helped me move the corn barn to the Collin's farm.) Of course there were no exact standards of how cold the milk had to be. Some farms sold to large milk companies and a truck came each morning to pick it up. Because my Father had Guernsey cows, he got a premium paid by local dealers. Seward's, owned by Arthur Seward in East Wallingford, picked up the milk and each night loaded it onto a "milk train" which took it to Boston. He also owned Seward's Creamery and had a very successful business. His son, Roland, later opened a plant and dairy bar in Rutland which is still operating today. Clayton Fish had a creamery in Ira and sold milk in Rutland during the 50's and 60's.

A big improvement in cooling milk was the development of the milk coolers which were sunk into the floor of our milk houses making it easier to put the cans in and pull them out. They had a compressor and electric motor on top of the tank. Then along came the bulk tanks which were stainless steel and held a two day supply of milk. These were kept cold all the time and pumped directly into a bulk tank truck which took them to country milk plants. Today, tractor trailers with large tanks now pick up the milk and head directly to the large processing plants in distant cities. Incidentally, a sample of

milk from each dairy is taken at each pick-up. If any antibiotics show up in the big tank, it is immediately traced to the farmer at fault by a series of lab tests. Farmers could be responsible for a whole tank of milk so there is an insurance they can carry.

I think it rather interesting to think of the quality products our farms have produced. I have heard much about the demand for butter and cottage cheese that my father sold to businesses and individuals in Rutland. The other day, Vic Sevigny told about when he was small, they would go to my dad's in Ira for extra nice potatoes.

When Alice and I were farming in the 60's and 70's, we consistently won many different "Quality Awards" for clean milk. We were awarded at least two trips by United Farmers to Boston where we were treated royally in seeing the sights in Boston, eating in top notch restaurants, and staying in plush motels. Joe & Zeola Raiche, The LaVictorys, and Tink & Charlotte Moyer were also winners.

If a farmer had a dairy farm, how was he to know which cows were profitable and which were not? Consequently the Vermont Dairy Herd Improvement Association was formed; also, different county associations were formed and a milk tester was hired by each local association. The first tester I recall was Phil Walters. He might have his own transportation or the farmers might have to go and pick him up, as well as all his equipment. The equipment consisted of: the Babcock tester, 36 bottle size; a jug of sulfuric acid; scales; a box for glass sample jars; plus all the things that went with it. Also, he needed volumes of books for computing all the figures involved. He kept track of freshening dates, ear tagged calves, and took a sample of each cow's milk morning and night. In the morning he would use a pipette to put milk in the test bottles, add hot water and acid, and then centrifuge them for various periods of time. This would cause the butterfat to rise in the neck of the calibrated test bottles. He then went to the house to figure the milk and

butterfat for each cow for a month and finally giving us a yearly production record. Oh yes, he would take the milk samples after he was finished and put it on burdocks, killing them in summer time. Today the system is much different; samples are sent away and figures are done by computer.

Richard Gilmore was also a milk tester in later years. While doing his books in the dining room, Alice was in our kitchen washing dirty farm clothes in our washer, which was open and going back and forth: chug-chug-chug. Our daughter, Dianne, was intrigued with the movement and climbed onto a chair to watch. Alice came in from hanging out clothes and saw two little legs sticking out of the washer. She immediately grabbed her, held her by her heels, and drained as much of that dirty water out of her mouth and lungs as was possible - "ugh"!! Alice and Dick were pretty scared to say nothing about Di who cried for quite a while afterwards. God was so good to us for if Alice had not come in at that time we could have lost Di.

I got off my theme. In those years, a good herd average was 10,000 pounds. Today the cows go up to 20,000 to 30,000 pounds per cow, but they do not last that long. Farming has really changed so much in my lifetime. Can you imagine being a milk tester, living in a different house each night, getting up at all different hours, and finishing milking at different times each night. One of our early videos, by the Hessbergs, has a picture of Phil Walters going from barn to house. He had a large family, was a good operator, and was very helpful to the farmers.

CHURCH

Any comments I make about the church or any person is not meant to be in a derogatory manner. It was as I saw it at different age levels.

The first preacher I remember was Mr. Cooper. He had a daughter, Myrtle, who was friendly with Ethel. An older daughter, Cora, married Carlton Gilmore. Mr. Cooper's sermons were very boring to me at the age of four or five! He always wore a black suit and had a big nose which dripped. He wrote "Wonderful Peace" which I now find in many hymnals.

He was followed, I believe, by Rev. George Chambers. He was a great talker and his toes pointed outward. He had a hatchery in the basement of the parsonage and used this for added income. He was very sincere but I never really got "turned on". There was little water at the parsonage so some was carried across the road from Arthur Kelley's spring house. One cold night, he went over after water and found Art Kelley outside the kitchen door, stone drunk, as was his custom. He got him inside, built the fire, and got something hot into him; otherwise Art would have been a goner. One of his sons, Floyd, married Ruth Merithew.

I think he was followed by Mr. Eno who was also a pharmacist for extra income. After he left, he was killed in an auto accident at Mill Village.

We then had Mr. Barter who was here for a few years. He put out the "Valley Messenger".

Albert Parker came and worked for whatever money was in the offering plate. Alanson Fish and his daughter, Mary Roe, were here and the Church

really grew. We had a great group of young people who sang a lot and visited other churches. This era brought an end to suppers to support the church. Most of the young people went on to Christian schools and colleges and several to foreign missions.

I am not just sure of the order of pastors that we had, but in the 1950's the Crocketts came to us just out of Providence Bible College. They were young and fitted in well. He was a good carpenter, farmer, and could do most anything. He helped a lot on the farm. She was a farm girl, an excellent seamstress, and ready for most anything. After 10 years, they went to Ware, New Hampshire.

They were followed by Harold Dodd. He had been a farmer in Central New York State until his only teen aged son was killed in a tractor accident one Easter Sunday morning. He sold out, went to The Bible Institute of New England in Hartford, Vermont, and then came to Ira. He got along here and was well accepted in our farming community. His daughter, Dianne, was a good friend to our Dianne. After six or seven years, he resigned.

Dean, Vicki, and Deanne Baker were here for five or six years. He was very active and did much in building the Ed wing on the church. He brought in some outstanding contractors. How they did work! I think it could be called a successful ministry.

He was followed by Bruce Little who was not farm oriented but a good preacher. He was known for his \$200 suits and patent leather shoes. He wanted the church to replace pews and pulpit furniture, lower the ceiling, replace the stain glass windows, plus other changes for a large sum of money. He would say, "There is a lot of money in this community." This was voted down. He was here about one and a half years and even encouraged a split in our church. I was told his thoughts and views changed with time.

Dave Colwell followed him and led many to the Lord. He was versatile and a popular Bible study teacher in a neighboring town. His wife had an

outstanding teaching ministry; the kindergarten classes she taught were above the "norm". People in the community, as well as most in the church, thought a lot of him. Their third child was born here.

He was followed by Mr. Mudge who had not only been a pastor but Christian school superintendent and had worked in all phases of construction, which proved very helpful. He also had a little age on him and was able to cope very well with some problems in the community. He was active in the volunteer fire department and well received by the townspeople. After ten years he resigned and moved to Connecticut.

The Ira Baptist Church called a new pastor in January, 1997, Eric May along with his lovely wife, Ingrid, and children. He is a wonderful man of God and we are blessed to have him.

One seasoned pastor told me that when he came out of Bible College, he had all the answers but a few years in the pastorate taught him he did not know anything. We have experienced many things with our pastors considering all their diverse convictions and ideas. I personally think a pastor has about the most difficult profession there is; they can be subject to ruthless, cruel, and unchristian actions.

I have not said anything about heating the church. Before my time, two wood stoves were placed in the hallway and auditorium where the woodwork gives evidence of that today. Then long smoke pipes extended from the stoves to the rear of the church where there used to be two chimneys. Can you imagine installing a stove pipe for that length and high enough to be out of the way and still be able to heat the area? The Ira town hall had a chunk stove inside the room and a long smoke pipe for heating. I can also remember seeing the same type of heating system in the old Tinmouth church that burned. We then had a pipe less furnace with a register at the rear of the church; there was also a cold air register at the front of the auditorium.

Wood for the furnaces was thrown in through a cellar window but a miserable set of steps led to the basement. In the 1950's, we excavated under the church. It is interesting to remember that everyone who desired, pledged so much money per week or month but did not have to sign. That is how the job was financed. One night the contractor dreamed that the church bell rang out because some of the cribbing did not hold and the church was leaning. With the excavation completed, we installed a Sam Daniels wood furnace. Rev. Crockett and Rev. Dodd fired the furnace for several years. After I sold my herd, I also served time heating the church. Different families took turns different months in cleaning the church and keeping the fires. We also had wood bees to get wood enough for each year. Finally we had log lengths of wood delivered and then sawed in lengths to throw into the basement. As some of our members got a little older, we had problems in organizing successful wood bees. Today we have oil furnaces which make a steady more comfortable heat, but we are at the mercy of the oil pharaohs which bothers me a little.

We used to have a baptistery in the church until we did the excavation. I recall bringing many forty quart cans of water to fill the baptistery. It was then partially heated with electric heaters.

TOWN GOVERNMENT

Sometime in the early 1930's, my Dad was elected town clerk, a post formerly held by Simon Peck. I can remember my Dad going up to Simon Peck's house and bringing all the town records to our farm house on a sled. Here the deeds and mortgages were recorded by hand and all had to be proof read to insure correctness. My Dad died in 1936 and my Mother, who was assistant clerk, became town clerk. After the March town meeting, I was appointed assistant which lasted about 37 years. I also served as moderator for several years. I did not do much recording but did a lot of proof reading, wrote fish and game licenses, checked the deer reported, and helped Mother as much as possible. In 1943, I even wrote my own marriage license! When Mother could no longer keep up with the responsibility, Alice became town clerk. She had an old large manual typewriter which she used for many years. About 10 years later, she purchased an electric typewriter and eventually bought one with correctional tape, which she still uses. She received so much money per 100 words, plus a little on licenses. She did a great job, but received very little pay. Our daughter, Dianne, was assistant to Alice in the 1970's when she was living in Ira. All three of our children spent long hours with their mother proof reading deeds!

Some Connecticut friends would make appointments to get a license around 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. for the deer season. I recall another hunter who parked in our drive and kept blowing his horn at 4:30 a.m. to get us up. I finally got up and wrote it and then went to the barn to milk. Also, we had

another Connecticut "dude" who went up in the night pasture and shot into the pond. The horses were scared and we were too. He wanted a deer badly. I knew Peter Sesow had one, so I took him up and he bought it after rubbing the blood on his clothes so his buddies would think he got a deer. At least I got him back to his car with his rifle and side arm without anyone getting shot.

Another time, another "dude" shot two small deer in the Collins meadow which upset us all. We knew the vehicle and I got ahead of it and slowed it down while Bill Burger pulled up tight behind him. We held him until the game warden and state police came. We got rid of that "bird"!

Alice was town clerk for 23 years and Alice Raiche took over. She copied and recorded material with a copier because our "hi-tech" lawyers and bankers require endless pages of legal documents. We now live in a "sue" age and common sense no longer exists; it costs to comply with everything and is expensive to the town government. Our town officers serve for very little but are subject to complaints and abuse, so their attitude is: "What is the sense of serving?"

While Alice was town clerk, she had many of the older citizens tell her about town history either by tape or written word. Someday these will make excellent town history.

New England towns were unique in their government. On the 1st Tuesday of March, everyone went to town meeting to elect officers and vote money for operations of schools and towns. For many years, Ira had its town meeting in the afternoon. Different candidates for office would pass out slips of paper with their names on it. Sometimes it got rather heated and we would have to vote a second or third time. Money issues would be settled by voice vote. More people moved into town and it was voted to elect officers by Australian ballot. Thus the town clerk and ballot clerks would be at the hall from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. when town's people came to vote on offices and issues listed on the ballots. At 7 p.m. the votes were counted and town meeting

convened to vote on money matters and other items listed in the warning. Today we see towns having several votes to pass budgets, because it is easy to vote "no" on expenditures without understanding the needs; Australian Balloting gives no opportunity for discussion.

At Town Meeting, we elected clerk, moderator, treasurer, grand juror, and fence viewer for a one year term; auditors, listers, school director, selectmen for three year terms. We also transacted any other business needed. It is interesting to note that the officers served without any, or very little recompense. These were not lucrative offices considering the time and abuse one gets for their work and decisions. Today officials get token recompense. There is so much paper work and so many demands that many towns have hired a full time town manager. I see the need shortly for our small towns to band together to do the same, but under the supervision or advice of the selectmen.

We always elected a road commissioner who would have to buy a truck for plowing snow. In the town report it looked as if the road commissioner was making a lot of money, so someone else would run for the job. It was rather expensive for a man to buy a truck, register, insure, and repair it, so the town finally bought the truck but it did not always get the best care.

At the present time, John Capen is hired by the selectmen to do the road work. He does an excellent job and also keeps the truck in good condition. Like all road men, he gets easily discouraged when people complain if all roads are not passable after a heavy snow or ice storm. These men work all hours to do their job; sometimes over 24 hours straight. As a child, I can remember the winter roads being plowed with a large wooden V-style snow plow drawn by horses and several men riding on it to hold it down. Before my time, they used big rollers to pack the snow.

TOWN HALL

The Ira Town Hall has a most interesting history. The land was deeded to the town on December 21, 1797; Book 2, page 302 of the Ira Land Records: "Know all men " " for the goodwill, we, Benoni Collins and Thomas Collins, have for the promoting Public buildings in the Town of Ira do give grant convey and confirm unto the Town of Ira a certain tract of Land in Ira for the use of Building a Meeting House and School house " " .

This "meeting house" was available for all different groups. Remember in those days there were no buildings for large gatherings. Town meetings were held in large homes as I suppose other groups also met. At any rate, the present town hall has served for town functions plus school, church, grange, family parties, receptions for newlyweds, church suppers, as well as fund raising projects for different organizations.

Dances were held upstairs in the town hall and I recall folks telling about the second floor moving up and down with all the action. I can remember in the 1928-1930's era when our church services were held here while the church was being redecorated. I have already covered elsewhere in this book about the town hall being remodeled and also the present church building.

There were sheds back of the town hall with individual stalls where horses could be tied up and blanketed while their owners attended church, various functions, etc. As stated before, no water was available except what was brought in forty quart milk cans. There was an outhouse for convenience as needed. When we put water in the school, lines were also laid to the town

hall and church. Bathrooms were then installed in all buildings with appropriate shut offs for cold weather.

In later years, I have seen the town hall closed as the floor on the first level was very spongy. This has now been corrected but the bricks and windows are in sad shape. It is truly an historic building and many good times have been held here.

The schools held Christmas exercises here each December which was exciting to all. Each student had a part and we had many practice sections. The birth of Christ was spoken of by recitation or else by the manger scene. After all this, Santa Claus would come with a bag of gifts and jingling sleigh bells. He would tell some jokes on different town people and give out his gifts. Of course we all drew names for presents and the school gave out boxes of candy. I can still see the excitement as the bells jingled and he came up the stairs. All in all it was a merry time.

MARBLE QUARRIES

West Rutland was the home of many marble quarries and mills owned by Vermont Marble Co. and Green Mountain Marble, which were primarily owned by McCormack families. They had a quarry where men were let down to work in a bucket which was controlled by a crane supported by massive poles. There were also other quarries where the massive marble blocks were lifted out. The blocks were loosened by a series of drill holes and then wooden blocks were driven in the holes to separate the marble. Some of the larger quarries had underground railroad tracks to take workers back and forth and bring out the marble. I understand that the quarries extend under much of West Rutland.

Beyond the Vermont Marble Company's office store and mill, where Dad Shangraw and Alice's Uncle Dick worked, was the "True Blue" quarry named for the blue color of the marble. Today it can be located beyond the C.V.P.S. substation. We have a blue marble stand which Alice treasures very much; her great, great uncle turned it as a wedding gift to her great grandmother, Mary Pitts Burgess.

Many buildings in Washington, D.C. and other cities have been built with Vermont marble. Some local samples of beautiful buildings are the Catholic church on the "hill" in West Rutland, West Rutland High School, the West Rutland Library, and other buildings in Proctor and nearby towns. Proctor even has their own marble bridge spanning the Otter Creek. The Proctor Marble exhibit is so interesting. Many homes had marble foundations, marble

sidewalks, and also marble retaining walls. Ira Baptist Church's large front steps are marble.

Clarendon Springs also had a marble quarry and mill. I remember that Clarendon and Pittsford had a rail line that went up there to bring marble back. I still remember going into these mills and seeing "gang" saws, with diamond teeth, working back and forth with water and sand being fed onto these steel saw blades as they cut the blocks into different widths and sizes. Then large overhead cranes were used to move the heavy marble pieces from one end to another or sideways; most practical.

There were many other quarries around; some have been filled in. Danby has the pure white marble. Proctor was the home of Vermont Marble Co. and was the home of many finishing shops.

I remember when there was a lime kiln on the road above the Vermont Marble Company office buildings and store. Later they just ground marble for limestone which was applied to many Vermont farms. These lime plants were closed down and demolished. The marble industry and its history are very interesting but I really have not gone into much detail.

In the 1930's, there was a marble strike in West Rutland. I do not know the issues but I do know West Rutland was never the same. When Vermont Marble left West Rutland, it put a tax burden on West Rutland as they were the largest tax payer. Proctor today is also a high tax town unlike years ago when they were the envy of other towns. The Vermont Marble Co. did much for Proctor which is much different today with the new owners.

REAL ESTATE

In the 1960's, I got my real estate license because I was unable to farm actively and bills kept coming. I was in the group of Realtors who formed the Rutland County M.L.S. We were a small group and I enjoyed working and co-broking with them.

One year we had our Vermont Real Estate meetings in Bermuda; it was cheaper than going to Montreal. We had a chartered plane and stayed at the Holiday Inn. Probably we never would have gone otherwise. Another year, the National Realtors convention was held in Hawaii. This was a two week tour and we went to three islands; we saw and learned much and enjoyed it all but the airplane. There was not enough room for me in the seats, especially when the one in front leaned back in his seat. I was very impressed because something was going on all the time at night. They did not have to lock the doors to hotels or restaurants. This was really a once in a lifetime trip. Incidentally, Alice enjoyed it too. Today as I travel around, I cannot believe all the houses, farms and properties I sold or tried to sell.

I had a few unpleasant experiences, but it's gratifying to see people own their own homes. Many things were done one way or the other to make it possible. Attorneys were necessary and helpful but they do have a way of procrastinating. It is very disturbing when bank officials tell you what they want, but at the last minute come up with something else.

Real estate required long hours, a great deal of travel, perseverance, and patience. You never wanted to spend your commission before you closed on a property. Sometimes they did not close for one reason or another.

One time I had to borrow \$4500. I felt sorry for the buyer and he needed the property badly; he was not in the best of health. I finally paid the loan off. I was healthier than the buyer, but it was not a smart move. I also found out that one could not trust the attorneys. One, in particular, told me he had made his best offer, then he accused me verbally when another offer was above his. I found the almighty dollar was more important than one's word.

Matthew 6, verses 14 & 15, tells us that we must forgive those who sin against us so that our Heavenly Father will forgive us our sins. An interjected truth and thought!

Real Estate meant a great deal to me because at the time there was not enough money to pay all the bills. Alice and I had our own office business and by hard work and long hours it paid off. She was my secretary and also a licensed R.E. salesman. It was gratifying to help people by taking a little extra time, encouragement, and helping them to rearrange their priorities. Most of our calls were toll calls. We did not want an answering machine and 800 numbers were not used as much then. Anyway, we have many pleasant memories of the folks with whom we worked. When M.L.S. began using computers, we thought it was time to drop out and work on referrals.

SPECIAL SAYINGS I REMEMBER

Bachelor's quarters - dog on the rug
Whiskers to blame - no one to hug

 When the moon is like this, it means a dry season and the Indian can go
h because he cannot hang up his powder horn.

 When the moon is like this, it means a wet season and the Indian has to
ha his powder horn and cannot hunt.

Red skies in the morning - sailors take warning
Red skies at night - sailors take delight.

Hang up the fiddle and the bow,
Take down the shovel and the hoe,
For there's no more work for poor old Ned
For he's gone where the good darkies go.

Mares tails and Curdly sky
Neither 3 days wet nor 3 days dry.

Early to bed and early to rise
Makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.

MY MOST IMPORTANT LEGACY

I think it important, in relating about 70 years of my life, to state my beliefs. I came to know the Lord in a personal way while attending an evangelistic program or service at the Rutland Baptist Church. At Mt. Hermon, where I attended high school, we had a "born again" Sunday School teacher who explained God's word in a very dynamic way. I was at Mt. Hermon from 1932-1936. Since then I have learned many more truths from pastors at our Ira Church, visiting pastors, Bible conferences, and my own study of the Bible.

It is a moving experience to accept the Lord as your Savior. Many of the so-called problems of the day would be solved if folks would accept the promise of eternal life and really live for Him. A word of caution: the devil is very active today and desires to lead many back to their old life.

I have seen drunkards turn their lives over to Jesus Christ, along with many others. I think a favorite statement I have heard from one of my friends was: "No one has ever laid in better gutters than I". When he gave his life to Christ, God completely changed him. He has gone on to lead others to Christ. He established the "Fold" for homeless and troubled youths in northern Vermont and the Mission in Rutland for homeless men. This mission was first established to house and feed transients with physical and spiritual food; it is now governed by a liberal board providing physical needs.

I believe in the Genesis account of creation: God created our world in six days with living creatures on sea and land. I also believe in the universal flood which destroyed all living creatures except those that went into the huge ark

with Noah. For 120 years, while he built the ark, Noah preached that there would be a flood to put an end to man's evil ways. Very few listened and they were sure that he was crazy. Then the rains came and completely covered the earth, killing all living creatures except those that were in the ark. The promise of the rainbow awes me as I see God's promise still holds that He will never again destroy the earth by a flood.

I firmly believe the Bible as it is written and have seen many prophecies come to pass that were made in both the Old and New Testaments. I believe salvation is available by believing in Jesus Christ who was our perfect sacrifice, in place of the animal sacrifices that took place in the Old Testament for the covering of sins. God hates sin!

John 3:16 states: "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." That means you and me. That means confession of sins and turning our life over to Him; we call it being "born again". In John 3:3 Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:36 can be very scary: "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." God's wrath, as we read in Revelation, is something we do not want to contend with! The book of Revelation describes that hell is a lake of fire for eternity. This fire will not kill but will torment forever; no death here!

In John 14:6, Jesus speaks, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Being "born again" does not mean joining a church, giving money, doing good works, being baptized, or christened. It means that one realizes that Jesus is God's son and that He died in our place to pay for our sins. We need to come to God in prayer; confess our sins; repent; ask Christ to really take over our lives and make Him the center of it; give up old self-cultured ways and really start a new life. This may be instantaneous or over a period of time. Certainly there will be sin in our lives

but "Christ is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9). God's gift is eternal life through His Son, Jesus Christ, and it is for anyone who believes and accepts this gift. Each person will make the choice to either accept or reject God's gift of eternal life in heaven.

Today we have organizations, various religious groups, and cults promising eternal life by adopting their rituals and doctrines. Some even proclaim that the hub of a wheel is heaven and eternal life, with the spokes offering different ways to get there.

1 Corinthians 6:9 really lays it on the line: "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." That's quite a statement. God's promises are sure!

Recently I heard a homosexual on T.V. say that the Bible was written thousands of years ago and is not applicable today. Boy, what a surprise he is in for! Today, we see our country, politicians, and some news media encouraging homosexuality along with the evil of the new age movement; even within our public school systems and many of our liberal churches. We read how God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of the wickedness of the homosexuals. Other Bible verses relating to the homosexual are: Galatians 5:19-21 and Leviticus 18:22; 20:13. 2 Corinthians 5:10, I think, this is a pretty strong verse for everyone: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." Romans 14:12 bears out the same truth: "So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God." These quotations are not my words but are taken from the New International Version of the Bible.

I am particularly concerned when I see attempts by American Civil Liberties Union and other individuals, who are destroying our Christian culture that has made our country great. Today we see non-communistic Russia craving Christian pastors, teachers, literature, schools, and seminars; just what so much of the U.S.A. is attempting to destroy.

I am equally concerned as I hear people take oaths before the Lord at such times as baby christenings and baptisms whereby the parents agree to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord but have no intention of teaching them God's Word. Also, these words in the courts of law seem to have no meaning today: "to tell the truth and nothing but the truth".

When people are married they make an oath to love, honor, and obey in sickness and in health, for better or for worse, till death do us part. Soon they get tired of each other, have a disagreement, and then run to the divorce courts. (The Bible does make certain exceptions, I believe.) How about our public officials, and each one of us as well, who will have to give account of ourselves to God. Also, every tongue shall give praise to God so why don't we start now!

Today, with all the teenage crimes being committed, I believe we are seeing the results of our judicial system preventing school authorities from disciplining students in their school. Parents are also prohibited from disciplining their own children by recommendations from our human service agencies and our stupid, godless American Civil Liberties Union.

When the Lord calls me home, I will instantly be taken to heaven and be present with God, my Savior and my Lord. It will be my Coronation Day! My desire is that my family and friends will make that same choice.

EPILOGUE

On July 9, 1998, God called my Dad home to be with Him. It is only by the grace and comfort of my Lord that I live without my dear, precious Dad. I know that soon I will be in God's presence and once again see my Dad. It was so important to him that each one he knew would see their need for a Savior and accept God's gift of eternal life through Jesus' death on the cross. It is not enough to believe in God, you must ask His forgiveness and personally accept God's gift of salvation into your life. Ephesians 2:8 & 9: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast." Having this personal relationship with Christ changes our lives so that we reflect God in our lives in all we do and say, directing others to God. 1 John 2:6 says, "Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did."

What a joy, privilege, and heritage it has been for me to be born the second child of Ralph Harwood Perry and Katherine Alice Chase Perry. These past eight years, working on this book with my Dad, are days I will treasure forever. I will end Dad's book with his Memorial Service that was held on Sunday, July 12, 1998. This service immediately followed his burial in the Ira Cemetery. After the service, many people came back to Mom and Dad's home to spend time together. This would have made Dad very, very happy. He loved his home and enjoyed sharing it with everyone.

Dianne Perry Whiteman

MEMORIAL SERVICE

for

Ralph H. Perry, Sr.

At the Ira Baptist Church in Ira, Vermont

On Sunday, July 12, 1998 at 3:00 p.m.

Organ Prelude Mrs. Ruthie Meigs

Words of Welcome and Opening Prayer Rev. Eric May

Hymn "Blessed Assurance"

Duet "Great is Thy Faithfulness"

Sarah Whiteman Brooks and Christopher Whiteman

Scripture Reading 1 Corinthians 15:20-58 (Selected Verses)

Dr. William L. Whiteman, Jr.

Thoughts Ralph H. Perry, Jr. and Dianne Perry Whiteman

Eulogy Dr. William L. Whiteman, Jr.

Organ Meditation "In the Garden"

Mrs. Ruthie Meigs

Message Rev. Eric May

Hymn "Because He Lives"

Closing Prayer Pastor May

Organ Postlude Mrs. Ruthie Meigs

BLESSED ASSURANCE

Words by Fanny J. Crosby; Music by Phoebe P. Knapp

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood!

Chorus:

This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Savior all the day long.

Perfect submission, perfect delight!
Visions of rapture now burst at my sight!
Angels descending bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission, all is at rest.
I in my Savior am happy and blest;
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

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GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS

Words by Thomas O. Chisholm; Music by William M. Runyan

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father!
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not.
As Thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

Chorus:

Great is Thy faithfulness. Great is Thy faithfulness.
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed thy hand hath provided.
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest.
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above.
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth.
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

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SCRIPTURE READING

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the first fruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body.

So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed -- in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true:

"Death has been swallowed up in victory."

Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?"

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:20-58 (Selected Verses; NIV)

THOUGHTS

Ralph Jr. gave a special thank you to everyone for their thoughts, prayers, and love shown to our family. He stayed with his sister, Dianne, as she shared the following:

I want to say that I am so thankful to God for giving me the Mom and Dad that He did. In 1990, I asked my Dad to write about his family and life - in eight years we have worked hard and have put together a book on Dad's life to share with his family and friends. I would like to be my Dad's voice to you now and read a short section from his last chapter.

MY MOST IMPORTANT LEGACY

I think it important, in relating about 70 years of my life, to state my beliefs. I came to know the Lord in a personal way while attending an evangelistic program or service at the Rutland Baptist Church. At Mt. Hermon, where I attended high school, we had a "born again" Sunday School teacher who explained God's word in a very dynamic way. I was at Mt. Hermon from 1932-1936. Since then I have learned many more truths from pastors at our Ira Church, visiting pastors, Bible conferences, and my own study of the Bible.

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I firmly believe the Bible as it is written and have seen many prophecies come to pass that were made in both the Old & New Testaments. I believe salvation is available by believing in Jesus Christ who was our perfect sacrifice,

in place of the animal sacrifices, that took place in the Old Testament for the covering of sins. God hates sin!

John 3:16 states: "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." (NIV) That means you and I. John 3:36 can be very scary: "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." God's wrath, as we read in Revelation, is something we do not want to contend with! The book of Revelation describes that hell is a lake of fire for eternity. This fire will not kill but will torment forever; no death here! In John 14:6, Jesus speaks, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Being "born again" does not mean joining a church, giving money, doing good works, being baptized, or christened.

When the Lord calls me home, I will instantly be taken to heaven and be present with God, my Savior and my Lord. It will be my Coronation Day! My desire is that my family and friends will make that same choice.

EULOGY FOR RALPH H. PERRY, SR.

Given by Dr. William L. Whiteman, Jr.

On March 21, 1919, on the hill farm on the back road here in Ira, Vermont, a son was born to Walter Charles Perry and Carrie Elizabeth Colvin. They named this their first born son Ralph Harwood Perry. At age two, they moved a few miles down to the home farm, here in this beautiful valley, just down the road from this church. Except for a few years when he was first married, dad lived the next fifty years on that farm, until in 1971 he moved across the meadow to their present home.

Dad had many fond memories of growing up on the farm. He had two older sisters, Ethel Sevigny and Florence Cary, and one younger brother, Walter Charles Perry, II. Friday, Di mentioned to Uncle Walt that the bedroom that he and dad shared was very cold in the winter, cold enough so that the water in the basin froze. Uncle Walt responded, "Of course the bedroom was cold, we slept with the windows open. We wanted to show everyone that we were tough!" Dad loved his brother and sisters along with their spouses. He valued their friendship and he would be pleased that he spent his last hours on earth sharing a meal with them.

When dad was five and a half years old, he began eight years of elementary school here in Ira at the one room schoolhouse where one teacher taught all eight grades. In September 1932, he went to Mt. Hermon School for Boys in Northfield, Massachusetts where he graduated four years later. Dad planned to attend college after graduation.

Dad's life changed on December 23, 1936 when his father died after fighting a battle with cancer. Therefore, instead of going on to college, Dad followed in the footsteps of his father, his grandfather, his great grandfathers, and I believe his great, great grandfather by becoming a dairy farmer here in

Ira. First he farmed in partnership with his younger brother, but then in 1949 he bought out Uncle Walt and mom and dad farmed by themselves.

Dad and mom worked very hard on the farm. They were very proud of their prize-winning herd of registered Guernseys. I was from the city, but before I could marry into the family I needed to know the difference between a Guernsey and Jersey, and woe to me if I got it wrong. Dad loved sugaring and he was very proud of his son, Ralph and grandsons, Tim and Dan as they continued this family tradition. Dad was very active in many farm organizations and held leadership positions in most of them.

Early in the 1960's, Dad was no longer able to keep up with the heavy farm work, so he decided to become a real estate broker. Yesterday, at the calling hours, many of you told us how dad helped you buy your first home. There were many times when he would give up a part of his commission in order to help a family meet the bank loan qualifications. At times attorneys and bankers exasperated him, but he loved helping people buy a house they could turn into a home. Just as in farming, mom was his partner, right by his side helping him in everything he did.

Dad loved this beautiful valley, for this was his home. He enjoyed traveling, but he was always anxious to come back here to Ira for this is where his heart was. He was active in the town, serving as moderator of the town meeting for thirty years and assistant town clerk for thirty-seven years.

Dad loved people, all kinds of people and he had many friends. I am sure that many of you could tell us a story or two about how mom and dad helped you and I am sure that these stories would take many hours to tell. Dad really valued your friendships and he would be pleased that you are here today. But as much as dad loved farming, this town, and you his friends, none of these things were the love of his life.

Dad met the love of his life, Katherine Alice Chase, not long after he graduated from Mt. Hermon and began farming. He had to get up at 3:30 a.m.

to take the milk to Kenny's Creamery and on his trips he began to notice, in his own words, "this really neat girl" who was delivering the Rutland Herald. He started to pick her up at the end of her route and take her home. After Uncle Vic saw her doing this, he took her aside and told her; "Nice girls don't ride in trucks with young men. Don't let me ever see you doing this again!" They took Uncle Vic at his word and made sure he did see mom in dad's truck again, mom would duck down and hide wherever Uncle Vic was in view.

Now dad wanted us to laugh today, so let me do something. Dad has a poem that he liked to say that summed up what he felt about mom. I am not sure that I understand this poem, but dad said it all the time. I am going to ask all Bampa's grandchildren to join me and say this poem with me. Now, be sure to join in with me. "Ain't she pretty, ain't she sweet. Bet five dollars she's got pink feet." Thanks kids.

After mom graduated from Nursing School at the Massachusetts General Hospital (bow), they were married on February 20, 1943. Last spring, Di and I had the privilege of helping them celebrate their fifty-fifth wedding anniversary in Florida.

God blessed their union with three wonderful children:

On January 8, 1945 - Ralph Jr.

On April 12, 1947 - Dianne

On February 28, 1950 - Arlene

Later, Donna Oscoli, Bert Ladd, and myself joined the family. I think that I can speak for Donna and Bert, that mom and dad welcomed us with open arms. I might have felt like an out-law a few times, but never like an in-law. They treated us like their own children and we will always be in a debt of love to them for this.

This last 25 years or so, what brought great joy to dad's life was being Bampa to seven grandchildren:

Christy, Timothy, and Daniel Perry

Sarah and Christopher Whiteman

Nancy and Ruthie Ladd.

Dad was also very proud of his two newest grandsons, Chris Hanson and Mark Brooks. Bampa loved you all very much and he prayed for you every day by name. He only wanted the very best for each of you and I hope that you will live up to the heritage that he has given to you.

There are many things that I will think of when I remember dad, but let me share just three with you. First, dad was a man who I respected. I knew dad for thirty-two years and I must say that my respect for dad grew deeper as the years went by. I am not saying that he was an angel, he was a human being like you and me, and therefore he made his share of mistakes and had his failings. But he was a man who kept his word, a man you could count and depend upon, a man who had compassion and cared deeply about people around him.

Second, dad had a real sense of humor. Now, I grew up in the mid-west and Florida. It took me some time to understand and appreciate old Yankee humor. I remember on my wedding day, I was the typical young groom, wanting everything to be just right for my beautiful bride. Well, dad came up to me and asked, "Have you changed the air in your tires yet?" Well, I objected but with a straight face and a twinkle in his eye, dad looked me in the eye and assured me that you could never tell what could go wrong if you didn't change the air in your tires. Off I went to find the pump until Di came to my rescue.

Third, dad was a man of God. When I got up in the morning about the same time dad got up, I always knew where I could find him. He would be in his office, at his desk, with his Bible open, reading and praying for you who are gathered together today. He is now seeing his beloved Savior face to face and I am sure that he has heard the word, "Well done, you were a good and faithful servant."

In closing, I would like to read Psalm 15. This psalm asks the question, "What kind of person pleases God?" I am a very fortunate man for this psalm describes both the men in my life that I call dad, both my father and my wife's father. Let me read this psalm to you in tribute to my father-in-law.

A PSALM OF DAVID

LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary?
Who may live on your holy hill?
He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous,
who speaks the truth from his heart and
has no slander on his tongue,
who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellowman,
who despises a vile man but honors those who fear the LORD,
who keeps his oath even when it hurts,
who lends his money without usury and
does not accept a bribe against the innocent.
He who does these things will never be shaken.

IN THE GARDEN

Words and Music by Austin C. Miles

I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear,
The Son of God discloses.

Chorus:

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own;
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

He speaks, and the sound of his voice is so sweet,
The birds hush their singing,
And the melody that He gave to me,
Within my heart is ringing.

I'd stay in the garden with Him,
Though the night around me be falling,
But He bids me go; through the voice of woe,
His voice to me is calling.

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MESSAGE

Reverend Eric May

It is hot in here and after what has been said, I think Ralph would want me to make this short and sweet. Ralph was a man who said what he thought no matter if we agreed or not. If he liked something he said so and if he didn't he said so.

I have been told and have observed that Ralph prayed for his family, neighbors, and friends daily. He had a relationship with God and wanted others to also.

It's sort of like you find a good restaurant, you want to tell others about it. If you find a good cow, you tell others to buy it or use it. Ralph found something that he wanted all his family, neighbors, and friends to have also, a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

One passage in the Bible I would like to share today is so special, especially one day like today -- John 14:1-6. The first few verses give us comfort and the last tells us how each of us can have this hope and comfort.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Jesus was getting ready to die and leave his disciples. He tells them about this and tells them not to be afraid. "I am going to prepare a place for

you and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come back..." Jesus was going to leave and prepare homes in heaven for those who love him. He is doing this today for those who put their faith in him now. Ralph is in his home that God has been preparing for some time.

Ralph had this hope while he lived and wants each of us in this room to have it also. If he were here right now, I believe that he would say, "You need to get things right with God. Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins because he loves us." (I hit the pulpit a few times, as I believe Ralph would have done.)

There are tracts on the back table that tell us how we can have our sins forgiven and the hope of a home in heaven. Please take one on your way out. Put it in your pocket and read it sometime this afternoon, tonight, or tomorrow.

Verse 6 of John 14, tells us how we can have this relationship with God. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Jesus tells us that he is the only way that we can have a relationship with God. Ralph knew this and wanted all of his friends and relatives to know it also. He might even have shared this with you himself.

The tracts on the back table explain this. Please take one when you leave. Maybe you have a friend or relative that needs to hear this message. Take one and give it away. That's what Ralph prayed for and that's what he would want us to do today.

BECAUSE HE LIVES

Words by William J. Gaither: Music by Gloria Gaither

God sent His Son they called Him Jesus.
He came to love heal and forgive.
He lived and died to buy my pardon.
An empty grave is there to prove.
My Savior lives.

Chorus:

Because He lives I can face tomorrow.
Because He lives all fear is gone.
Because I know He holds the future,
And life is worth the living,
Just because He lives.

How sweet to hold a newborn baby.
And feel the pride and joy He gives.
But greater still the calm assurance.
This child can face uncertain days,
Because He lives.

And then one day I'll cross the river.
I'll fight life's final war with pain.
And then as death gives way to victory.
I'll see the lights of glory,
And I'll know He reigns.

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