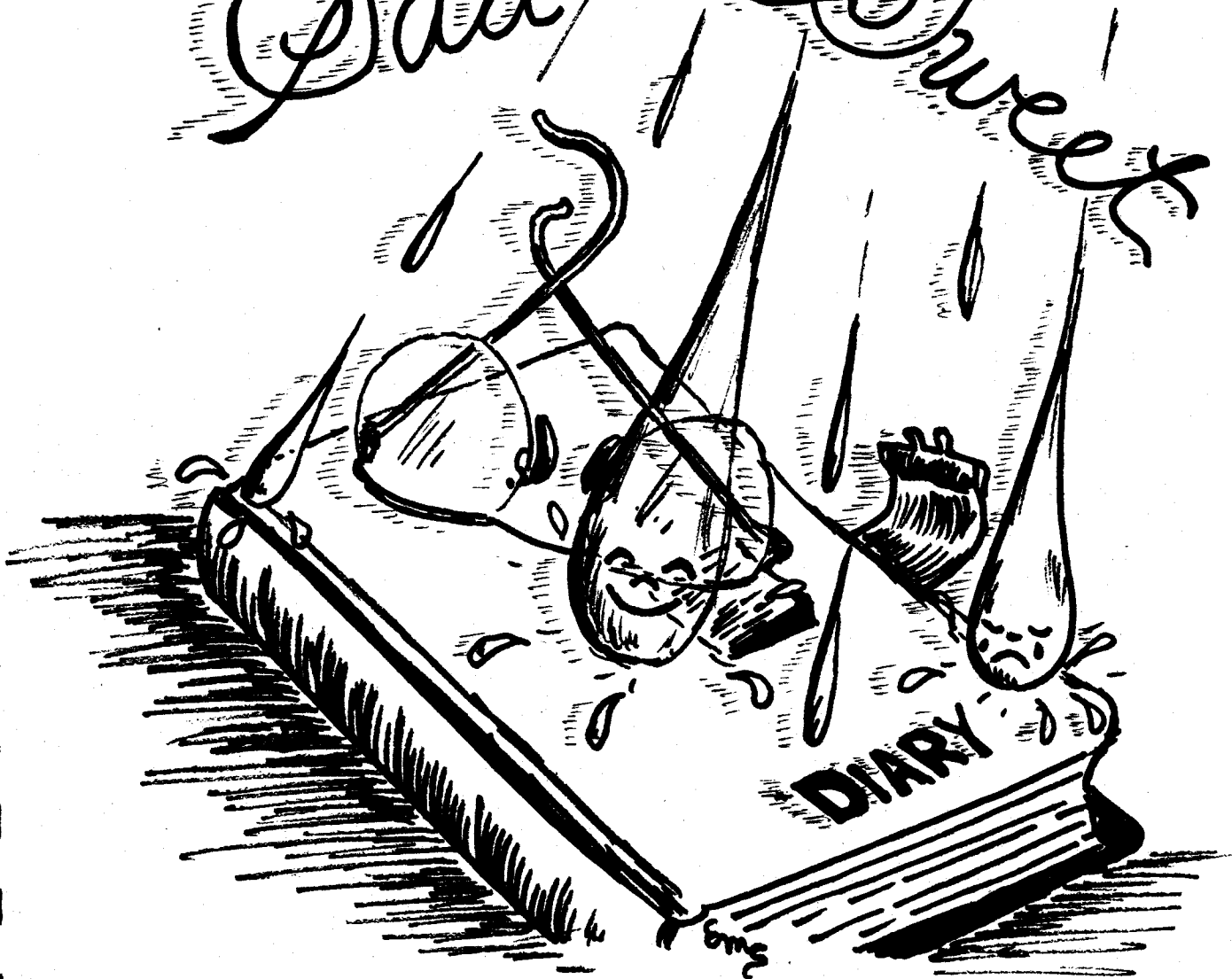


MEMORIES ~

Dad and Sweet



**A LATE THANK YOU FOR OUR GOLDEN
WEDDING ANNIVERSARY AND
REMEMBRANCES FOR THE PAST SIXTY YEARS**

There is nothing nicer to think back to than to remember of having had good fathers and mothers, and ours were among the best. And to remember the boys growing up. Gay and Art, your mother and I are proud of you and your fine families.

I remember when I was a boy. What wonderful neighbors we had. It was so easy to get help in change for work. When threshing rolled around, it was like a celebration. The woman of the house and some neighbor ladies would come out in the afternoon with the coffee pot, baskets of sandwiches, doughnuts and cake. Those days will never be forgotten by us elders.

There are other changes hard to take, like losing our rural school houses, cheese factories, and worst of all, the horses. The neighbors in our rural districts are a lot different now. I have lived on the present farm for sixteen years, and I have some neighbors I would not know if I met them. Years ago, whenever there were no church services, the whole family would visit their neighbors, and they, likewise, would do the same. They would get into a milk wagon, buggy and sometimes a road cart. A few had surreys.



Elve Steensrud

Education, too, has changed a lot. When I was a boy, we had to go out and learn it ourselves. We did not realize what was wrong until later in years. Then it was too late. So I ask you young people. Do not make the mistake I did. Education is the most important thing in ordinary life.

The first threshing machine on our place that I can remember, belonged to my Uncle Arne Steensrud and my father-in-law, Peter Hauge. That machine was hand fed and powered by horse power. The first steam engine was an upright. It looked like a square bottle. It had to be pulled with two teams of horses.

Once while threshing for Ole Peterson, the straw stack caught fire. Ed Bohn hitched his old gray mare on the end of the pole and pulled it out of the holes which were dug for leveling up. That saved the machine.

The women of the house had something to contend with. No washing machine, no wringer, no sewing machine. They never heard of a refrigerator. When it came time for butchering, they had to fry, can or salt the meat for keeps. Some farmers salted and smoked the hams. They made sacks of cheese cloth and lime whitewash. Then they put the hams in the sacks, dipped them in the lime whitewash and hung them up in the smoke house. They kept very well.

Transportation is a little faster. I remember herding a flock of steers ten miles by foot to a stock yard at Blue Mounds. We used to see large amounts of pigs being herded into Black Earth by foot.

The first Christmas tree I ever saw, my father, brother Anton and I walked five miles each way in deep snow to get.

And now, last of all, there is no substitute for good friends and good neighbors.

— Elve Steensrud, Mt. Horeb

VERMONT PICNIC, SEPTEMBER 5, 1975

Everyone here today is here for the same reason—a love for Vermont—where many of us have our roots. If we were to list what it is about our birthplace that impressed us—the thoughts that stay with us—it would be the people we've known for the most part. People living their lives here are lucky—there may well be other places where you can drive 20 minutes west—be lost in a grouse cover or pheasant marsh—or 20 minutes east and listen to the likes of Carlos Moser playing ragtime, but someone would have to show me.

We all have memories that stay with us; I'm going to put down a few of mine from Vermont. One of the earliest is Dad setting me on a horse (Guri?) for Art's camera. A few years later, climbing (against orders) on a light horse with a

brand, "Dave, stay off that horse." Never figured out whether the nose was broken from hitting the hames or the ground.

Grandad Dybdahl digging "Hoot-te-toos" (angle worms) and telling me to hang 'em on a barbed wire fence while I went for a tin can to put 'em in. Grandad Gulson whittling a flute from a green willow and playing "Solveig's Song"—many years later, hearing daughter, Sarah, sing the same song.

Starting school at Steensrud in 1937—"Swing the shining sickle, cut the ripened grain" at the morning sing—admiring Verna Seston's ability at the piano.

Being amazed at the 8th grade boys' inability to keep track of time—they'd drive to Mazo at noon and get back at 1:30.

Running my left hand into the gears on a pump jack—had not Eddie Barsness grabbed the flywheel, half the hand would most likely be gone. As it was, merely a 3-month vacation from the piano.

Grace Skalet showing us the genius of the American poets—after the silage and hay were fed and the herd bedded down on a howling winter night, thinking about Whittier's 'Snowbound', "and from the mows, raked down the herd's grass for the cows." On the way back to the house, checking Sam, the beagle, who taught us the fine points of rabbit hunting. Drying our boots under the stove in Aschlimann's living room.

Seeing two flag poles, 2 school houses for a minute or so after a fast couple rounds with John Handel and the 8 oz. gloves.

Norm Haugen lifting me by the belt into the tenor section—splitting wood for the pot-bellied stove for confirmation class with Hector—Junior Johnson and I having so much "Brilliantine" in our hair that Hector went for a towel after he'd put his hand on our heads at confirmation.

The satisfaction after we'd gotten 1700 bales of prime second crop alfalfa and brome into the barns without any rain on it. The two days Phil and I put in with Arnold and Marian stacking hay bales—Arnold using a pitchfork to load the bales (not the 35 lb. throw bales either!).

Paul Olson in 1941 or '42, when 22's were gold, dumping half a box of 'em into my shirt pocket at a church supper one fall—Nels, who along with Nortie and Specks showed me the hair-standing-on-the-back-of-your-neck world of the pointing dog—talking guns with Sever Skalet—telling me, "sell that pump gun and get a double—if you can't hit 'em with two shots, you don't deserve to get 'em anyway."

Hearing "The urge that is born in the song bird, leads on when the autumn is nigh" sung by

Mom at the choral union sings. Phil and Ethel singing "Den Store Vide Flock" at two grandmothers' funerals—picking wild grapes on the cemetery fence a few years ago and telling Dave and Paul that their great-great-grandad is buried about 15 feet away, right over there.

Eleanor Arneson's "God in Radiance" and this summer, having tall, blonde Naomi conduct us through Little Norway.

I could go on and on—so many Vermont people have touched my life—but we don't want to take all afternoon. John Denver said it as well as anybody—"Thank God I'm a Country Boy."

A FISHING TRIP

The love of fishing was inherent and undying in a great many Norwegian-American settlers and continues among their descendants. The mere fact that one has reached the twilight of life does not deter this love in any way. Other faculties and physical stamina weaken, but this love does not.

My father, Magnus Forshaug, understood this facet of Norwegian-American life only too well. He, therefore, included Halsten Halsten in a number of his fishing trips.

At the time this specific incident occurred, Halsten Halsten was well over ninety years of age, and Dad about seventy eight. As Erling Punswick was unable to go, Dad picked up Halsten, and just the two of them went fishing. It was a very cold autumn day, and the two were dressed warmly.

They rented a small boat and Dad rowed out into the lake to what he felt was a suitable fishing site. Time passed, and the catch was about nil, so Halsten thought he would try his luck in a slightly different spot. He stood up in the boat to throw his line farther out. "Sit down," Dad yelled, "You'll tip the boat!"

Old Halsten continued to stand, wobbling and adjusting his line for the cast. "Don't tell ME what to do," he said. "I was fishing when you weren't even dry behind the ears yet!" Thereupon, he cast out his line, leaning leeward as he threw. Dad jumped to the other side of the boat and managed to keep it right side up—but Halsten was overzealous with his throw, and the body English carried him neatly into the brink. "I can't swim," he screamed as he disappeared from sight.

How Dad ever rescued him and managed to get him back into that ungainly little boat is a feat worthy of Ripley's "Believe It Or Not." However, Dad somehow did just that, and two very cold, wet fishermen drove back to Halsten's home in Black Earth. Halsten's wife, Aasta, drew a warm bath for her husband, muttering, "There's no fool like an old fool." She gave Dad some dry clothes and hot coffee before he made his way homeward.

Results: A slight case of pneumonia for Halsten; a slight cold for Dad; and a firm promise from Halsten never to stand up in a small boat again. Their fishing trips continued.

— Valborg Forshaug Jacoby

CLARENCE AND HIS VIOLINS

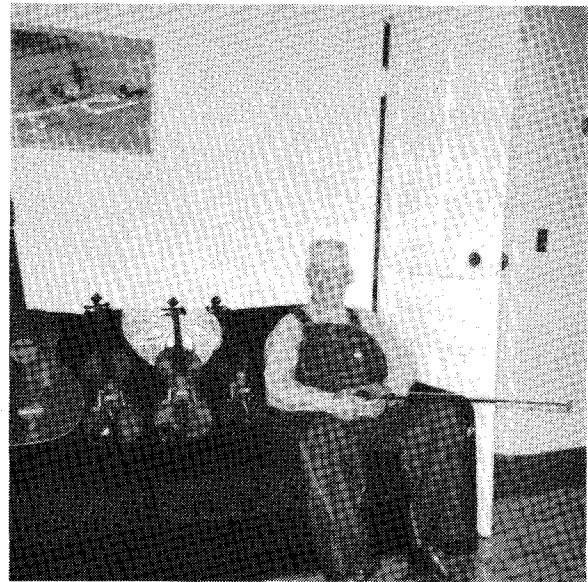
Wood, talent and the touch of the hands of a master created an instrument. The miracle of the seeds, which grew into lovely maple and spruce trees, which in turn were felled to serve a specific function, continues to perform a service. As an instrument of beauty to both eye and ear, it now is in hands of persons who are developing skills and techniques. Their performances on the instrument will enlighten, and bring happiness to performers and listeners.

Clarence Steensrud, son of Gustav and Hannah Steensrud, made several violins in his spare time. With wood, a few simple hand tools, which he obtained from a company in Saginaw, Michigan, he spent many winter evenings at his hobby of violin making. He planned. He carved. He took minute, precise measurements. He glued. He stained. He waited. He polished. Then after weeks and months came the soul of the violin. After the strings, the bridge, the sound post, etc. were in place, the moment had arrived when he would finger and bow a few of his favorite melodies. The thrill of achievement was realized. A unique instrument had been born.

These violins didn't stay in his possession for any length of time. A father came and bought the first one for his daughter, who wanted to study violin at school. As others were made in other "winter years", buyers were soon at his door. He made seven after he reached the Golden Age of 65. All but one of these have been sold. These violins, now in the hands of performers, are a tribute to the generous use of Clarence's talents and love of beauty.

Clarence was drafted into service in the United States Army. He trained at Camp Grant, Illinois. During his infrequent furloughs, his family and friends were delighted when he would "tune up" and play the old familiar tunes. His technique; it reflected the quiet, inner peace which he possessed.

His inherited skill in playing the violin, as well as his craftsmanship is also a tribute to his Norwegian ancestors. His great-grandparents, Arne and Berit Steensrud, together with their family, left Norway on February 24, 1852, to make their new home in America. Among their precious possessions were their Norwegian violins, which they used on many occasions to entertain groups of merry-makers.



Clarence Steensrud

Clarence's craftsmanship soon became known to others. Many people who had come into possession of a "hand-me-down" instrument were made extremely happy when he restored it into a precious keepsake for them.

On May 6, 1972, Clarence and his wife, Bertha, celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary at their home. He had been in ill health for some time, but at the request of one of his guests, he tuned his violin and played several favorite hymns. His willingness to give of himself was always a part of his way of life.

Clarence passed away September 20, 1972, but the good memories will continue to live in the hearts of many.

—Submitted by Mrs. Grant Skalet

AUNT CLARA

This is a true story told by Emma Urness about her Aunt Clara, Uncle Anton and her grandparents, Andrew and Kari Anderson. The episode took place about 1885 on the Anderson farm which is now owned by John Aeschlimann on Bell Road.

Grandpa and Grandma, you know, were real good people and so against alcohol for drinking. They were regular tee-totalers. They were so proper they even sent their daughter, Clara, to a church school rather than to public school. One summer when Clara was home from school she discovered that her brother, Anton, had some sort of keg in the cellar. She confronted him with the fact that she knew he was making home brew in the cellar and that Ma and Pa wouldn't stand for such a thing. However, Anton just laughed, much to Clara's disgust.

In the next few days Clara kept a pretty close eye on that cellar and noticed Anton carrying water

and other ingredients down there almost every day. Finally Clara's curiosity and righteousness could stand it no longer. She decided to find out once-and-for-all what Anton was up to, so she took a cup to the cellar and sampled the mixture. It tasted awful!

Anton, of course, got a tongue-lashing from sister Clara, but he also got the last laugh. "Didn't you like it," asked Anton, "I'm straining chicken manure for fertilizer to put on my plants!"

A MEMORY

In about 1915, give a year more or less, we have a story about this man, Jake DeVries. At that time a wooden toll bridge spanned the Wisconsin river at Sauk. A ruling was in force that all vehicles must cross the bridge at a walk. A fine of \$2.50 was to be paid for any violation.

Jake had a high spirited horse that never would walk; so when he crossed, the horse trotted over the bridge. He was stopped at the other side to pay his fine. Jake handed the guard a five dollar bill and said:

"Keep the change, I'm going back the same gait."

FROM AN OLD VERMONT FARMER

I came to this country in 1914, just one month before Christmas. After breaking waves for ten days we finally made it. Me and my older brother and sister stayed at my uncle's farm in Green County for one month.

My sister stayed with me and my brother, Bob, went to New Glarus, where he hired out on a farm right away. I worked for \$30 a month.

I worked in that neighborhood for eight years. For five years I worked for the same man. I must have been some good, otherwise he would not have kept me that long.

Well, I got married in 1922, at which time a farm in the Town of Vermont on a land contract became available.

Well, we had lots of tough going. The worst came during the depression at which time I almost lost everything.

Elmer Thorson came to my help. He gave me the name of the place to apply for a federal loan which I promptly applied for.

There were a number of farmers that did the same thing.

From then on, things were much better. We'd gotten Roosevelt for president.

As you know, Hoover never gotten around with that second chicken in the pot.

We farmed on that place for 25 years. After our son got married I sold it to him.

At that time I bought 72 acres from Amos Thorsrud on which place we farmed for 18 years.

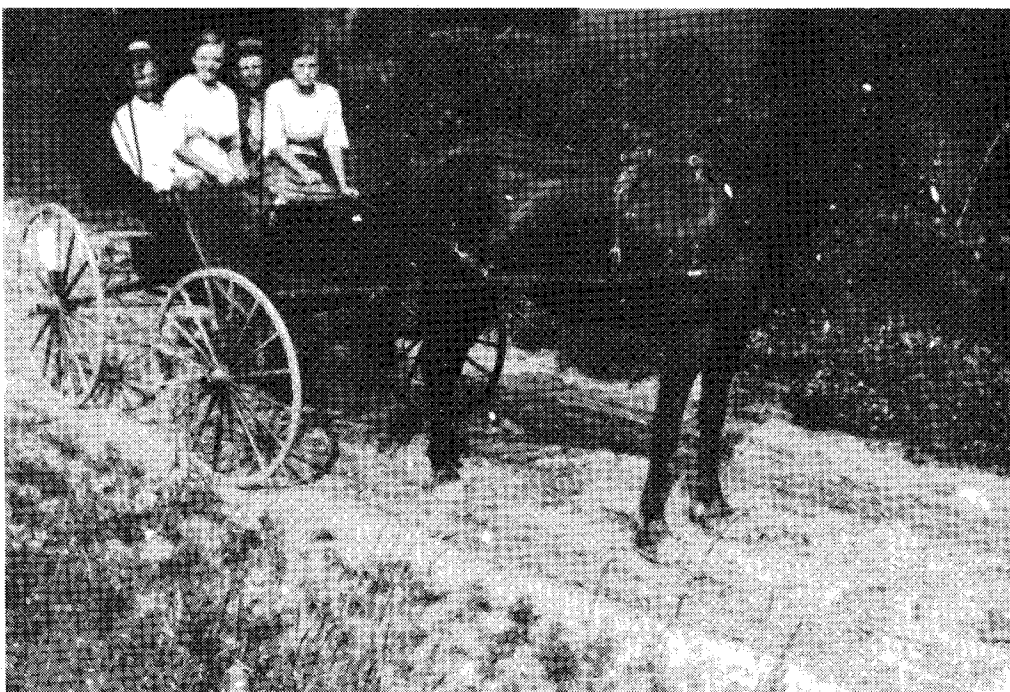
Then we retired to Mazomanie, where we lived for 11 years.

We are now living back in Black Earth at Orval Barsness' tenant house.

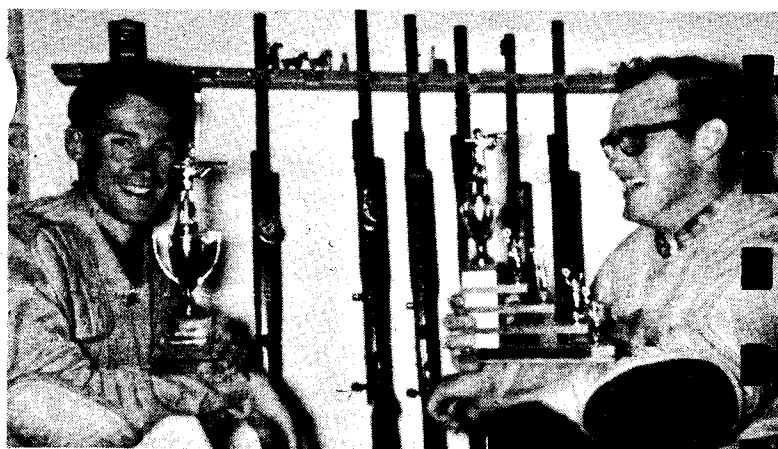
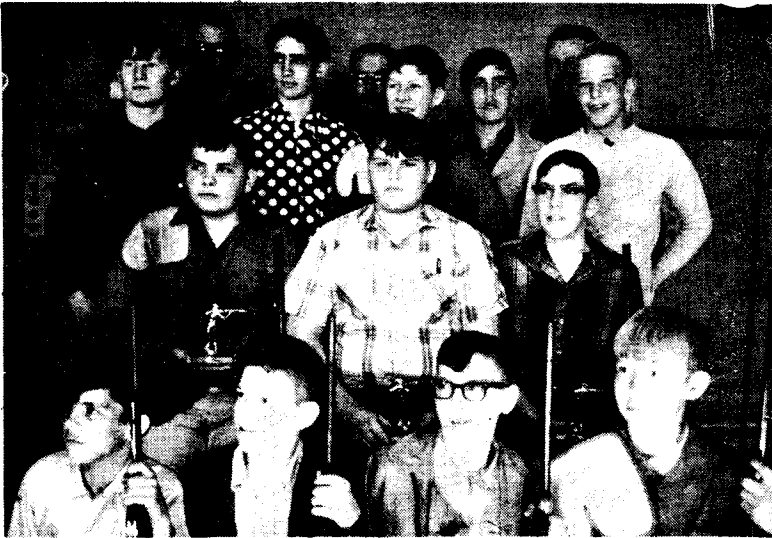
— Ernest Aeschlimann

VERMONT RIFLE CLUB

The Vermont Rifle Club which meets regularly the last Saturday of each month has been in continuous existence for more than eighty years. The names of some of the original shooters have not been determined at this writing, but the following



Jake DeVries, Myrtle Lee Mickelson, Alfred Erickson and Martha Urness.



Above left - Ron Lamberty is shown with the 1968 Team Championship trophy, while at right, Cal Tollefson holds the 1967 Team Championship trophy.

The 1968 Vermont Junior Rifle Club is featured here. In the front row you will find Brian Lawler, James Schultz, David Schultz and Rolf Forshaug. Second row shows Brian Turk, Roger Hillebrand and Wayne Stabnaw. Third row members are John Urness, Clarence Obright, --- Forshaug, Gail Lawler and Rick Hillebrand. Back row members are Cal Tollefson, assistant instructor; Virgil Turk, instructor, and Phil Skalet, leader.

names have been established as members of the early club: J. P. Moe, his son Jorgen Moe, Carl, Alvin and Anton Anderson, Adolph Field, Torgrim (Tom) Field, Sever Skalet, H. G. Halsten, Martin

Venden, Rev. S. Gunderson, Ole Dokken and others.

The man probably the most influential in the founding of the club, was a church decorator named J. P. Moe. It was he, who in 1896, drew his friends and competitors together. At first they had no special meeting place, but time and place was determined by the members.

It has been told that J. P. Moe and Torgrim Fjeld (Tom Field) enjoyed an intense competitive

Vermont Rifle Club 76 Years Old . . .



This picture of the Vermont Rifle Club, 1968, shows first row, Virgil Turk, Dave Haugen and Mel Holterstrum. Second row members are Danny Church, Ted Church, Frank Fisher, John Haugen and Phil Skalet. Third row pictures Grant Skalet, Harold Norslien, Dennis Norslien, Cal Tollefson, Ron Lamberty and Jack Wilkinson. Missing when picture was taken were Gene Turk, Almond Anderson, Ron Bohn and Brian Turk.



The Vermont Rifle Club in the late 1950s is shown in this picture courtesy of Maurice Skalet. Standing in the back row are left to right - Almond Anderson, Virgil Turk, Halsten Halsten, Dennis Norslien, Jorgen Skalet, Elmer Shult, Calvin Tollefson, Russ Pope, Jerrold

Moen, unknown man, Bob Figi, Jack Wilkinson, and Ralph Loishner. Kneeling, front row, Grant Skalet, Phil Skalet, Don Standish, Ted Church, David Parrell, Claude Standorf and Elmer Magnuson.

spirit and skill. Oftentimes a "tie score" had to be settled by "shot by shot" performances. Tense moments followed until one emerged a winner.

Their early targets were made from inch thick board. The shooter would take his turn at shooting, then a "plugger" would go to the target and spot the holes made by the bullet. After the mark had been spotted and recorded, he would hammer in a

wooden peg to fill the hole. Both target and plugs were homemade.

The rules were agreed upon and adhered to by the members of the club. At first, the informal rules would not permit "sighting-in". Today each shooter is entitled to sight in his gun for the day, but a limited time is not allowed after 2:00 p.m.

It is J. P. Moe who is credited with the in-



The Vermont Rifle Club was originated in 1892. This 1901 picture, courtesy of Maurice Skalet, shows, standing left to right, Jorgen Moe, Peter Brager, Peter Halsten, Halsten G. Halsten, Anton Anderson and Carl Anderson. Sitting, left to right, are Ole A. Lukken, Tom Field, J.P. Moe, Adolph Field, Joseph Field, Alvin Anderson and Sever Skalet.

(Note: Peter Brager is the only surviving member pictured.)

vention of the present target. At first, the bullseye was a 4 inch circle, and the distance away from the target was 100 yards. Later this was changed to a bullseye of 8 inches and the distance 200 yards. It has remained thus for many years. The bullseye of 8 inch diameter is encircled by concentric rings two inches apart, the bullseye scores "9", and the rings score 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. This target and system of marking is still used today.

As each bullet finds its mark on the target, the "pit-man" holds a scoring disc centered over the bullet hole for five seconds. Then he holds the disc on one of the spokes of the scoring board to indicate to the scorer, as well as to the shooter, the results of each shot. The hub of the board is valued at "9" points. The spokes indicate values from 8 to 1. Starting with "1" at the position of 1:00 o'clock and moving clockwise with the top center spoke valued at "8". The scoring indicator is easily seen from the club house, where the secretary sits and marks the score earned on each shot.

The club has a traveling trophy. A shooter who wins three consecutive shoots is entitled to keep it for his permanent possession. The winner must then be the winner for five consecutive times to win it permanently the second time. The first winner was Jerrold Moen in 1940. He is now trying for the sixth consecutive win.

Since the early 1930's, the site has been a permanent one. Deep up the valley on the Sever Skalet farm, the members decided that even a crude cabin would provide shelter from the elements. So, with birch poles for framing, tar paper and slabs for covering, a crude shelter was made. Unfortunately, this cabin burned to the ground.

The present cabin was soon erected with all members pitching in and helping in whatever way they could. A more permanent and satisfactory cabin has been erected. This time home-sawed lumber was used for framing, but the siding was purchased. With the erection of a chimney, this has proven to be very adequate.

The early organizers and members of the Vermont Rifle Club were immigrants from Norway. Second and third generations of the founders, as well as some of their friends, are members.

The tradition of honoring Norway's Independence Day still exists. The Saturday nearest to May 17th is a big event for the club. Special prizes are awarded to the top winners that day.

This club has been an instrument for fostering competition and companionship. Safety has always been stressed. Sportsmanship and comradery have been the results.

CLARENCE ELLWOOD

We hear a story about this man, Clarence Ellwood.

He has recently been married and had purchased a farm. The banker, Mr. Donkle, was informing a Black Earth man who had money to invest, to keep an eye on that Ellwood farm. A young man had bought it and would never be able to pay for it.

About 20 years later, Mr. Donkle visited Black Earth. The fellow whom he had advised to be on the alert for the farm to be up for sale, told Mr. Donkle, "I want you to see the place you thought would be lost."

They drove up the Norwegian Valley, and there it was! All the buildings were new and every one painted as only Clarence Ellwood would have it, immaculate.

Mr. Donkle was astonished, "How did he do it? Did he inherit money?"

Mr. Hacker answered, "No, just hard work and good management."

SOGABOTOMEN

The Norwegian word "Sogabotomen" may not mean much to many of the people in Vermont Township today, but prior to the Civil War it meant home to my maternal grandparents, Arne and Thora Haugen-Mikkelson, and my paternal grandparents, Knute and Margreta Gesme.

To those of you who may be interested in this piece of Vermont history and are not of Norwegian heritage, the word "Sogabotomen" translated is "Saw Valley," named this because of a saw mill located in the valley.

To be specific, "Sogabotomen" is that portion of Vermont extending from Tyrol Basin down that picturesque valley where county road JG joins J at Gallagher Bridge, then proceeds north past the mill pond site. A portion of the mill dam is still visible.

Getting back to the history, it was in this area that these pioneer immigrants lived most of their lives. In comparison with today's standards it is quite evident they had many hardships. They traveled by foot or oxen to the Federal Land Office in Mineral Point to file their land claims. While building their log houses and barns they lived in dugouts in the side of the hills for shelter until their buildings were completed. The authenticity of the above fact was the writer's 80-year-old mother, who pointed out a depression on the hillside just south of Gallagher Bridge where her parents' dugout had been. Her parents moved from this dugout the day before she was born which was 120 years prior to December 1977. There are still log

buildings remaining in the area that originated in Saw Bottom Valley.

As one travels the highways and byways among the hills and valleys of Vermont Township, it is easy to give credibility to the slogan—See America First.

—Respectfully Submitted, Gay Gesme

MEMORIES OF THE GLENN FRAME FAMILY

We have been residents of Vermont for 37 years. I (Fern) was born in the Town of Arena to Mabel and William Smith, spent my first 14 years there, went to Blue Ridge School and one semester to Arena High School. Then my parents moved four miles south of Mt. Horeb. I then went to Mt. Horeb High School. I married Glenn Frame in 1938. He was born in the Town of Brigham to William and Mabel Luder Frame. He went to Walnut Hollow School. He then worked for Frame brothers on the farm until the year before we were married. He worked for Rick Grinde at the time we were married. We worked for my parents one year, then went farming in Vermont on the "Old Luder Farm"; there we stayed until we moved to our own farm known as the "Old Froh Farm". We have lived here for 36 years. David was born at Grandma Frame's house in 1939. Donna was born at Grandma Smith's house in 1941. Steven was born in Madison in 1953.

At the time we moved to Vermont in 1941, David was one year old. We had no electricity, water was pumped by hand or with a gasoline engine. We milked 16 cows by hand.

Hogs were also a part of the operation. They really scared me. One day when Glenn had gone threshing a huge stone slid on a young pig. The sows really went wild. I tried to move the stone but couldn't, so I called Mayme Deneen. She couldn't help, but suggested I use a pry; it worked, but I never did get over my fear of old sows.

My first impression of Vermont people was bad. My first visitors were Joe Kelliher and Frank Rielly. On the day we moved in, they knocked on the door to look over the new neighbor. They looked all right! Just stood there and grinned. They introduced themselves and we became life-long friends, after we got to know them; and they were good neighbors.

Our first year was very lean. Our largest milk check was \$80.00 We got half of that. We were paying \$15.00 to a loan company for the farm we had bought in Section 30. We had a few chickens so we didn't have to buy much meat; of course, we

got cheese at the cheese factory. We ate a lot of pancakes too. I had a good garden and canned a lot.

When Donna was about two, our cheese factory was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. After that, our milk was hauled by Adam Hefty to the Beath Valley Factory. When that factory closed, his son-in-law, Orval Barsness, hauled the milk to the Half-way Prairie Factory. When they closed, our milk was hauled to the Midland Cheese Factory. A few years later, our milk was hauled to the Walnut Hollow Factory. Hauling costs were too high so we started to haul our own again, this time to Elvers, to Curtis Perkins and later to Delbert Rikli. We finally converted to bulk with no more milk cans! These cans were heavy when full of milk or whey.

Rural schools stopped running about the same time as the small cheese factories. It was inevitable. The state was so busy making them better that the rural people could no longer meet their demands. Teachers wanted more conveniences. Costs were overwhelming. Our school needed a new well and septic system. The heating system was outdated. Though our school was the last to close, it held out as long as it could. We lost our last neighborhood social function!! Steven was in 5th grade when the school closed.

I was called to jury duty in 1963, I was not selected to serve on even one case. It was very interesting though. A second chance came to me when I was called seven years later. That time I was on a new case almost every week. I taught Sunday School from 1958-76. I've been on the election board from about 1965-77. Glenn was assessor 1963-77. I also act as substitute cook at Mt. Horeb schools since 1966.

Our life has not been easy, but it has been fruitful and satisfying. Our farm originally was 102 acres but we have expanded it to 475 acres.

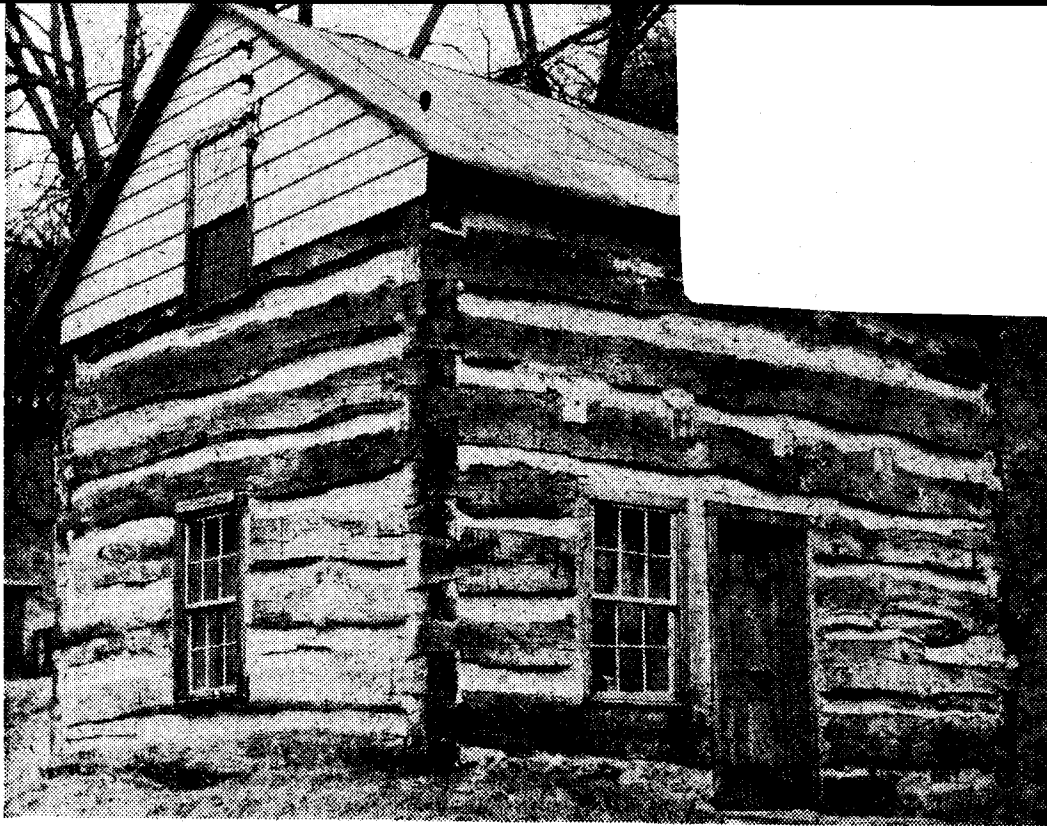
—Submitted by Fern Frame

A STURDY REMNANT OF PIONEER DAYS

A century-old log cabin of Wisconsin pioneering days, which has been occupied continuously since it was built sometime between 1848 and 1850, sets under the shelter of wood covered hills in the Black Earth area.

Alexius Baas, columnist for The Capital Times, who has made a study of the log cabin, said that if it is ever given up as a home, the state should acquire the century-old structure as a museum piece and "memento to the pioneers who built it."

Baas said the cabin is presently owned and occupied by Norman Sale, a veteran of World War II, who farms the 42 acres surrounding the cabin.



THE CENTURY-OLD LOG CABIN shown above has been occupied continuously as a living quarters since it was constructed during

Wisconsin's pioneering days. The cabin is located in the Black Earth area off Highway 78 and is occupied by Norman Sale, a veteran of World War II. (Photo by Tom Barlet)

The cabin may be seen, Baas said, by taking Highway 14 through Middleton and Cross Plains to the eastern edge of Black Earth, then turning south on Highway 78 to a cheese factory where the town road intersects. Baas said the motorist should turn left at the cheese factory and follow the town road for several miles.

Baas said he obtained his historical information on the cabin from Mrs. Mary Wilkins, who lives in the neighborhood; Elmer Severson, road patrolman for the Town of Vermont for 14 years, and Sale.

"As is often the case with very old dwellings," Baas said, "no one seems to know the exact date of the construction of the cabin. The concensus is that it was built between 1848 and 1850. Equally hazy is the identity of the man who built it, although Mrs. Wilkins, who has lived nearby for 55 years, is fairly certain that it was put up by a Mr. Andrew Jergenson.

"Upon Andrew Jergenson's death the cabin and its 42 acres passed to his son, also named Andrew. The next owner was Edward Jergenson, son of the second Andrew."

Baas said the cabin walls are of solid oak, most of them better than 12 by 12 inches thick. According to Sale the logs came from trees which had grown on a hill southwest of the cabin.

"The trees," Baas said, "were cut down and rolled down the hill. The builder had no horses so

he and his neighbors carried them to the building site by hand.

"These pioneers apparently had no saws. The shaping of the logs was done entirely with axes even to the making of the massive dowels which hold them in place. The original ax marks are still to be seen. I looked in vain for nails. Mud was originally used instead of the mortar that now fills the spaces between the logs. I wonder how the builders lifted the heavy oak logs in place, especially when they got to the upper tiers. The story of their work would be fascinating, but it died with them."

"I was lucky on my last visit in finding Mr. Sale at home," Baas continued. "He invited me in and I stepped back from 1953 to 1848. There are two rooms in the cabin—downstairs and up. I should say their dimensions are about 12 by 15 feet. A ladder-like stairs leads from the lower to the upper floor. The upper floor is the bedroom. The lower floor serves Mr. Sale as a combination living-dining room and kitchen.

"A sizeable chunk stove provides heat and there is also a cook stove. In a far corner stands an old-fashioned chest of drawers and cupboard. It looks as old as the cabin and would be a treasure in the eyes of an antiquarian.

"A sizeable table with chairs balance the cupboard and under the west windows is a comfortable lounging chair. Running across the ceiling

from side wall to side wall are the supports for the upper room flooring. These consist of four hand-hewn oak timbers six inches by eight inches. Age has hardened them as it has the oak timbers of the walls to a consistency of iron.

"The original covering to the roof has been replaced by roofing paper. A slab of cement leads to the single door by which the house can be entered. These are the only signs of modernity.

"Back of the cabin, a few yards up the gentle slope which leads to the encircling hills, are the sheds and barns which house the cattle and their feed. These are fine modern buildings built many years after the cabin. Most likely the original out-building were of logs.

"Whoever chose the site for the cabin chose well. It nestles under the shelter of wood-covered hills that protect it well from the cold northwest winds."

AN INTERESTING LANDMARK IN VERMONT, "RUSTESPRINGEN"

There is a landmark in Vermont along Highway 78 which was a stopping off place for travelers over a hundred years ago. It is a spring which bubbles out from under a big rock by the roadside. This is where they stopped, going to and/or coming from Black Earth, for the "pause that refreshed."

In the beginning of the years of 1880, Black Earth was the market place for many commodities. People from Springdale, Blue Mounds, Mt. Horeb and Perry came to buy and sell. Their "horsepower" was in need of water and rest. This spot provided both. Johannes Ruste was the owner of this piece of land which later became the possession of Mr. Helland and now is owned by the Clifford Norsliens. It acquired the name of "Rustespringen" in the olden days and even though the ownership of the land has changed, the name is still known to many.

In the beginning the water flowed freely over the road, but now it flows out through a culvert.

In those early days, Black Earth as well as many other small towns had an overflow of saloons. So alcohol was among the various purchases that were made available to these travelers. They tried desperately to ward off the temptation to "taste" just a little bit before they got to Rustespringen. Then the horses were given a chance to rest and to get a drink of water. I'll let you use your own imagination as to what the men did. Anyway, it was often times said that the horses fared better than the men. The horse only got wet on the inside, but with a few too many nips, the men got too heavy and fell into the spring. So they got wet both on the inside and the outside.

Horse trading and disagreements led to fist fights. Little do the Illinois weekenders, as they hurry by on their way to the North, realize the historical significance to the big rock.

ELVER'S HALL

One of the older buildings standing is the Old Elvers Hall building which is about 110 years old and located at the intersection of "J" and "JJ". At one time this was a saloon, store, mill and post office. Farmers from a large surrounding area brought their wheat to be ground into flour. A hundred years ago, a local person would go to the Mt. Horeb Post Office twice a week and bring mail to the post office at Elver's where it was picked up by the people living in the vicinity.

In about 1896, Vermont had their first daily mail carrier. A few years later, the first party line telephones were installed.

Many good times were enjoyed in the dance hall, saloon and post office. Elvers Creamery was nearby. Jim Hoff was the first cheesemaker.

GRANDMA KELLIHER

A story told by Josephine Kelliher Trainor about her Grandmother Kelliher. (She couldn't get along with the rest of the family so she lived alone on a small farm with a cow and a few chickens.)

Her eyesight wasn't good and she saw a man alight from his buggy and open the gate and drive through. Thinking he wouldn't shut it, and the cow might get out, she let him know in no uncertain terms that he should shut the gate. Then reaching in the pocket of her bloomers, under her dress, she got out a pipe full of tobacco and lit up her pipe. When the man got up close, to her surprise, it was Father Rhomer, a young priest from St. James making a parish call.

Tom Reilly also told about times he was asked to buy pipe tobacco for old Grandma Kelliher and sneak it down to the farm for her.

THE FIRST LAMPS IN BLACK EARTH

Three lamps were on sale in Black Earth about 1858. They were on display in Mr. Erickson's store. Mr. Ole Vik bought one of them. He lived across the street from the old village hall where the park is now located.

Mr. Vik was the father of Mrs. Halsten Peterson (Ada). The Petersons lived on the farm now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Melder Bordson. They were the parents of Mrs. Joseph Barsness.

When Mrs. Peterson (Ada Vik) was about seven years old, her father bought one of the lamps. Mr. Erickson kept one and the third one is unaccounted for.

When the lamp arrived in the Vik home, there

was much excitement. Of course, they were afraid that it might explode. It was placed in the center of the room on a table. The father warned the family to stay as far away as possible, cover their eyes and get ready to run out the door if it blew up. The lamp was lit, and it brought new joy to a family that had never used anything but candles.

The lamp is 13 inches high with a brass pole and green marble base. The kerosene bowl is clear glass, and the original chimney is perfect. Fortunately, it was never electrified which adds to its value. It is interesting to note that this was before the Civil War.

Mrs. Frances Murphy, daughter of Mrs. Barsness, had the lamp for many years. She gave it to her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Richard Bentley, who collects antiques. Last summer, when the electricity was off due to a storm, they used the lamp just as their pioneer ancestors had. The three great-great-grandchildren were thrilled that they were able to share in this great experience.

—Story submitted by Miss Mattie Urness

MEMORIES

A man came to the Vermont chairman for a permit to shoot firecrackers for a 4th of July celebration at his farm home. He had been to the District Attorney for permission, but was told that the only ones who could grant such a permit would be the Town Board.

The Chairman asked him, "Where did you get them?"

He answered, "That's my business."

The Chairman said, "Well, as long as you brought them in illegally, you'd better fire them off the same way."

Jim Olson told the story of going to the Monahan home, which was located between Glenn Frame and Lewis Shower homes—long gone and only the depression in the earth where the home once was, remains. It seems the Olsons needed a little pig (ancient garbage disposal) and heard the Monahans had some. So, as a small boy, he and his mother walked some eight miles to the Monahan home to get the little pig and carried it home in a basket. Mrs. Olson was a grandmother of Jack Trainor.

A group of young men, Elve and Clarence Steensrud, Jack Simley and Joe Dybdahl were coming home from Cross Plains at about midnight one evening. Rounding a curve they found a young man they knew in a brand new Dodge. He had

missed the bridge, and his car was hanging between its concrete wings. There were cases of beer in the back, and the young fellow had been enjoying too much of it.

He asked the fellows, "Just give me a shove and I'll get out of here."

Clarence said, "Just leave him there. It's the best place for him; he can't hurt anyone there." And they left.

Andrew Anderson (of the Anderson brothers) told a story about how a bully was taken care of in the early days. It probably happened in the 1880's, when he was seven or eight years old.

A young fellow was attending Sandridge School, who was bigger and stronger than the other children and enjoyed tormenting them.

One day they decided to gang up on him. They got him down, held his hands and feet and proceeded to beat him up. Little Andrew wanted to help, so he picked up a heavy piece of wood and pounded the poor fellow in the stomach. He had knocked the wind out of him so they worried for awhile that they had killed him.

The bully never caused any more trouble.

Many stories are told about practical jokes people played on one another. If one played a trick, the other, of course, would retaliate. Two brothers were great at this and had been bothering their neighbor. He knew they had bought a new horse-drawn hay mower and were planning to mow their meadow on the following day. During the night he had visited their meadow and driven the biggest spikes he could find all over it. The next day he sat up in the hill watching them, enjoying their trouble.

A favorite trick and a very mean one, was to go into a farmer's field late at night with a cow bell. When the farmer, thinking his cows were in the corn, would get closer, the trickster held the clapper of the bell and ran to another spot in the field. It could be quite exasperating. He should have had a savage dog.

School boys at Steensrud School had enjoyed playing tricks on their neighbor whose land they crossed on their way from school. His grain binder had been left in the field. They took the twine and

walked around the binder with it until the ball was unwound, laughing all the while they did it.

Herman Fesenfeldt at Black Earth told about selling Hans Gilbertson a hay mower. Hans complained that it wasn't operating properly and wanted Fesenfeldt to come and see what was wrong. He suggested Hans would need to hook the team onto the mower. Hans said he wouldn't need to do that, and pulled it himself!

When Tom Gallagher's mother, Hannah, was a hundred years old, she had the misfortune of breaking her hip. When the doctor told her she would not be able to get up and walk again, she said, "My goodness, am I to be a cripple all my life?"

A fellow by the name of Johann Timanson had a great talent for composing songs and lyrics. He had composed a ballad with a verse about every family along his drive to town. As he passed their home, he sang the verse about them. They were not usually complimentary.

Peddlers were common in those days. They walked through the country with heavy packs on their backs.

Sol Levitan, who much later became treasurer of our state, was one of these as a young man. He had stopped at my grandmother's home, and they had bought some dress material from him. When he was measuring it for them, my Aunt Annie questioned his way of doing it and said,

"Se hos han toiye det!" (See how he stretches it.)

His answer, "Ja, han toiye." (Yes, he stretches it.)

That young Jew knew his Norwegian.

After Levitan became treasurer, he was heard to make the statement, "It pays to be honest. I've tried both."

TRIBUTE TO THE INVENTOR

Herman Barsness was born, reared and lived his entire life on the Barsness homestead in Vermont.

He married Otelia Erickson, also of Vermont, and to them were born nine children.

Grandpa Herman was always busy, not only

with his hands, but also with his mind, trying to figure out new and better ways of doing his work.

By 1915 he succeeded in inventing, perfecting and patenting the Barsness Stanchion. He and other partners, including his brother Edwin, formed a company and erected a fine brick building in Black Earth for the purpose of manufacturing and selling all articles of barn equipment. They held a grand opening and a dance for celebration.

(My own Grandmother lived next door to this plant and my sisters, contemporaries and myself were fond of scampering through the building. I remember Art Showers welding iron pieces and the sparks flying like crazy. I guess what we liked best was running to the loading platform to watch the "Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul" go clanking or clattering past. The train fascinated us young 'uns from the boon docks!)

Lots of orders, lots of work, but a decade or so later the depression came along and like many other enterprises large and small, the business failed and the doors closed.

(Several years later the building was bought by someone and dismantled and the younger generations don't even know it was ever there.)

The barn on the farm burned and the family came close to losing the homestead. It was nip and tuck but Herman was able to save it.

The greatest blow of all was the loss of their daughter, Cora, who passed away after a long illness at age sixteen.

Lots of heartbreak and monetary losses but the show (life) must go on.

To keep food on the table, clothes on their backs and young hands occupied, Grandpa and his sons tried other pursuits, too, besides their dairy farming.

They planted beans and sold them to a canning factory. The whole family was involved with seeding, harvesting and processing tobacco, if and when the weather cooperated.

Also, Grandpa and his boys mixed cement, poured it into forms for staves and erected many silos in this area; a slow and difficult process.

Herman was also a carpenter and he built the brick house on the home farm.

The young people of the family became quite adept with musical instruments. Marvin, Orval, Mildred and Marvin Huset played for many a lively hoe-down during the thirties. That good old mountain music! (But maybe I'm prejudiced.)

There were other joys too. Children and then grandchildren came home to visit. Grandma was a good cook and baker and she always had some excellent foods to serve us all.

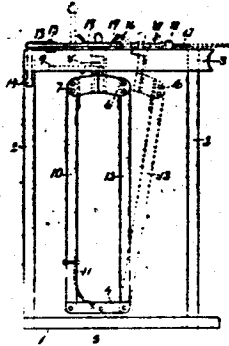
Herman and Otelia's children were: Albert,

1,142,185. CATTLE-STANCHION. HERMAN J. BARNES, Black Earth, Wis. Filed Jan. 14, 1914. Serial No. 812,169. (Cl. 119-148.)

1. In a cattle stanchion comprising a frame, spaced uprights and a bow for securing the cattle, a plurality of straps disposed on top of the frame and extending forward thereof, apertures in the outer ends of said straps, a rod extending through said apertures longitudinally of the frame, a plurality of hasps or latches spaced along the rod and hingedly mounted thereon, set collars between the knuckles of said hasp adapted to secure said hasp in position on said rod, angular wings extending upward from said hasps adapted to raise said hasps when the loose member of the cattle securing bow comes in contact therewith, and closing over said loose member when its upper extension coincides with an aperture in the bottom of said hasps.

2. In a cattle stanchion, the combination with a sill, spaced uprights and top ribbons forming a frame, a bow for securing the cattle, a casting attached to the stationary stanchion member and extending upward and forming

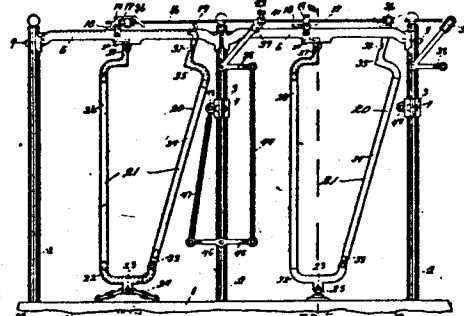
the left half of the upper trunnion to a point sufficiently below the cap on the right half of the upper trunnion, to permit the insertion of one prong of a link through a hole in the top of said casting, a link comprising a rod disposed upon a block and bent downward at right angles at



both ends, the front end disposed within a hole in the top of said casting and the rear prong passing downward through a hole in said block thereby holding the said casting and block in operative relation to each other, substantially as described.

Patents
Copied from
Dayette Vol. 214
Page 350
Dayette Vol. 215 - Page 406
Science and Engineering
Library - 215 N. Randall St.
Madison, Wisconsin

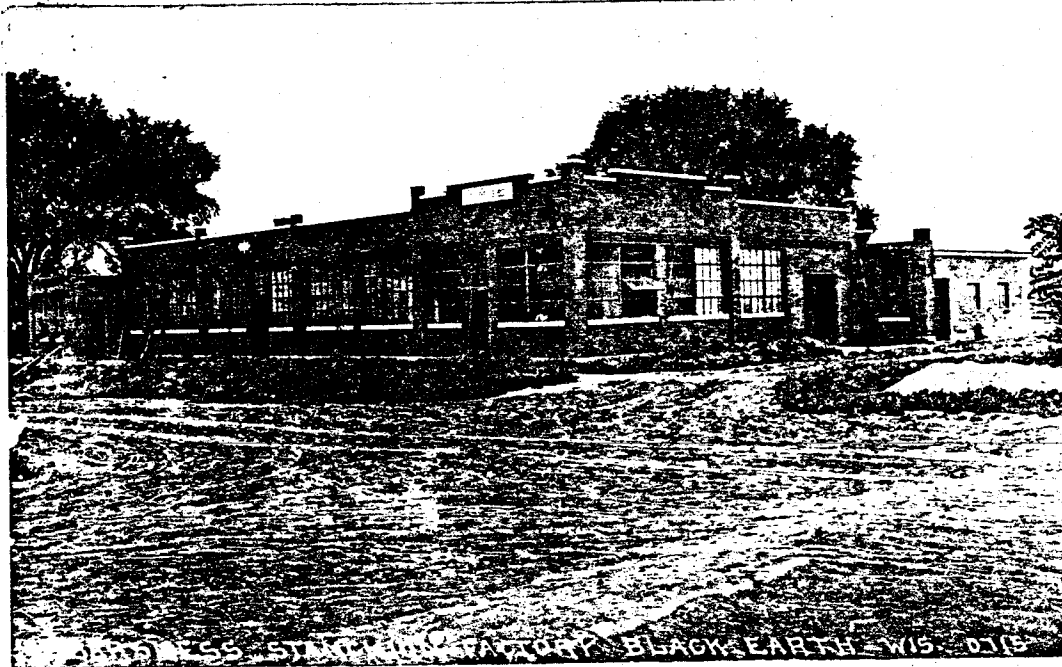
1,138,616. CATTLE-STANCHION. HERMAN BARNES and EDWIN SAMUEL BARNES, Black Earth, Wis. Filed July 23, 1914. Serial No. 852,710. (Cl. 119-148.)



1. In a device of the kind described, in combination with spaced uprights and a bow for securing cattle, a metal girder connecting each pair of uprights, said girder comprising a top plate, a longitudinal slot in said top plate, a lug a distance from the inner end of said slot, a link disposed in said lug, a side plate depending from each side of said top plate, a bracket extending laterally from one of the side plates adapted to support a rod in sliding engagement therewith, a shelf between said side plates at the lower edges thereof and integral therewith, and approximately intermediate their length, a notch in the rear end of said shelf, a semicircular bearing formed in the front end of said shelf the center of said bearing being the longitudinal center of said girder, semicircular vertical plates at the extreme ends of said girder adapted to be bolted to the posts as described.

2. In a device of the kind described, a combination with securing cattle, a means for connecting the tops of spaced uprights, a rod carried in said connecting means, a double member of the said rod and moving connected to the other member therefrom, the lower end of the first member being connected to the said post, the lower end of the second member pivotally disengaged from the rod, a rod pivoted to the lower end of said tubular member in sliding engagement with a connection clamped to the post substantially as described.

3. In a device of the kind described, in combination with a frame for connecting the tops of spaced uprights, a bow comprising side members at the top and bottom and provided with curved upper members, a link extending a distance beyond the ends of the side members, a portion of a plate in sliding engagement with the other side member, a notch in register with the side member to slide past each other at the ends of the portions aforementioned, a casting adapted to secure the said bow in position, as described.



Gladys, Ralph, Ruby, Cora, Marvin, Orval, Mildred and Harvey.

Grandpa Barsness passed away in 1950 and Grandma died in 1962.

Their descendents at this date number well over one hundred.

I understand the Barsness Stanchion is still being made and sold by a northern Wisconsin manufacturing plant.

— Dolores Hefty Barsness

PAPER CLIPPINGS WITH NO DATES

Jacquelin Bohn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Bohn, was stricken with polio when she was 1½ years old.

As far as we know, Waldie Bohn, Vermont, is the only farmer in this vicinity who can boast of having triple calves. The calves were born a month ago and were taken to market here Monday. They were from a Guernsey cow and weighed 100 pounds each.

Two families in the Sandridge School were stricken with scarlet fever. They were the Waldie Bohn and Elmer Mickelson families. Lyle Mickelson died.

Mr. and Mrs. Ray Bohn lost a nice team of horses by drowning when they slipped off the bridge on his farm, which he was crossing with a load of manure.

SKALET SKI SLOPE

The hills of Vermont lend themselves to many types of activities. Grant Skalet, with the help of relatives and kind neighbors, cleared away brush, stones and weeds on the north side of a hill on the farm. When the snow fell that winter, a rope tow was installed. It was powered by an old Massey-Harris tractor. This made it easy for the skiers to reach the top of the hill for the invigorating ride down.

The activities on this hill could be likened to that of a kindergarten class. It was here that many relatives and neighbors took their first step in ski boots and the rest of the paraphernalia which now seem so necessary. Many have had a chance to try out their equipment and techniques on this hill. As they acquired confidence, they were able to enjoy the more elaborate facilities of nearby ski resorts.

The group of the Black Earth Grade School, who chose skiing for their "Mini-course", enjoyed the opportunity to use this hill to try out their "snow-legs".

Fourteen members of the Riverdale High

School Ski Club enjoyed a Saturday of skiing on this hill. It gave them confidence and enthusiasm to enjoy a fantastic weekend of skiing at Hard Scrabble near Rice Lake.

— Submitted by Grace Skalet

DESCRIPTION OF FARM PURCHASED BY WALDIE BOHN AND WIFE

Cyrus Woodman purchased a farm from the state and sold it to Samuel Latimer on February 10, 1852. Many transactions took place over the year. The 38th transaction took place October 25, 1915, when Waldie Bohn and wife bought it from Mike Mickelson. The 39th transaction was when Roy Bohn and wife bought it from Waldie Bohn in July of 1946.

The land is described as follows:

"NW quarter of the NW ¼ of Sec. 21 and the NE ¼ Sec. 20 and the east 25 acres of the NW ¼ of the NE ¼ of Sec. 20 and that part of the SE ¼ of Sec. 17 which lies south and west of the highway running through said 40 acres tract and containing about 5 acres all above described land being in Township 7 North Range 6 East and contains in all 110 acres of land more or less.

DOVER AND INDIAN TRAILS

From 1850-1855 Dover was a trading post and social center for the English settlers of the area. It had two general stores, one drug store, two blacksmith shops and postal service. Besides going to Dover to buy dry goods and groceries, the people went there to collect mail and papers from England or some distant state. The young people gathered at the village to attend dances.

In 1855 the railroad was rapidly extended from Madison, west toward Mazomanie, bypassing Dover, to Arena and westward. Dover became a deserted village.

In the Black Earth newspaper (Dane County News), December 18, 1975, we found an item from "One Hundred Years Ago." "The Village of Dover, without a store or postoffice, has been give up at last as a Metropolis-ville, but there is another glimmer of light. C. F. McCartie, of Kilbourn has purchased the hotel property in Dover and will keep it open to accommodate the travelers."

Sawle's mill was near Dover and the farmers from Vermont continued to have their grain ground there for many years.

Our early history, written by Judge Elisha Keyes, describes a highway which was traveled by stage coach in the 1830's, before there were any white settlers. We read that the highway traversed Vermont Township from Pokerville in Blue Mounds Township to Helena, west of Arena. It must have

been what later became County "F" past Brigham Park in a northeasterly direction to join "FF" at the point one time called "Peculiar," then through to the village of Dover. People who were traveling probably stayed at the Dover Hotel.

Two of our town roads, "Indian Trail" and "Blue Mounds Trail" were named for the original Indian trail walked by the Indians on their way from their campgrounds along the Wisconsin River at Sauk and Mazomanie, to Blue Mounds where they held their ceremonials.

They came up "KP" from Mazomanie, turning west on County "F," the Indian Trail, joining Blue Mounds Trail at the original Steensrud School crossing. The trail picks up County "F" again in Mounds Creek Valley and from there leads to Blue Mounds.

AFS STUDENT

In 1967 we, the Bill Curkeets, hosted an AFS student from Santiago, Chile. Victor Meneses Meza was a boy of 14 — a bit young to be an exchange student — but he was bright, soon learned English and seemed to enjoy school. He had an eye for the ladies in true Latin tradition. His father was engaged in manufacturing, leather goods being the product. They were members of the upper middle class, and we learned from Victor that Chile was in social conditions where we were in the 1800's. The peasants were very poor and still used oxen for transport. Very few owned cars at all, and those who did were in a class far above the majority of the people. Victor enjoyed life, especially festivals, which came with much greater frequency in South America and he thought we were all killing ourselves in the U. S. with overwork.

"No wonder Americans get rich" he said, "all they do is work, work, work."

It took him some time to get used to our food, yet I could not extract recipes from him regarding the kind he was used to, though I surely tried. He refused medical aid for minor ailments preferring his tried-and-true bicarb of soda, but did accept help (free) from the Dane County services for traces of tuberculosis, a disease still rife in some countries; and went home with a year's supply of medication; instructed by Dr. Wilkie to distribute some of the stuff to younger members of the family.

After the loss of election by Pres. Fries (whom the Meneses Meza family backed) I did not hear from Victor, and finally quit writing fearing I might somehow compromise him or the family in a political way.

MEMORIES

by Mildred Froh Husted

I was the youngest of 12 children. My mother passed away when I was 9 years old. Our fondest memories are those of living on the old Homestead, where Glenn Frames live now. We thought it was paradise and it was, in comparison to what manner the children in the inner cities grow up in now-a-days. We loved to roam the hills and valleys, picking wild flowers, nuts and berries, each in their own season.

Christy and I were good playmates. One time while roaming the pastures the bull came after us. Ted and Christy climbed a tree but I was too small so they pulled me up with them just as the bull got there. We stayed in that tree until it got dark, when the cattle went home.

The boys used to find and cut bee trees, where the bees had a storage of honey. One time Christy got stung on the temple and on the opposite side on the chin. How it swelled up! It gave his face a horrible expression. On that day a peddler came to our place and seeing Christy in pain with his terribly swollen face, he became frightened and after one look he jumped into his wagon and whipped his horse for a fast get-away. He left a great cloud of dust for as far as we could see.

One day our parents, with Mr. and Mrs. Dan Ryan, with the team and surrey went shopping in Mt. Horeb for school clothes for the children. The Ryan children stayed at our place to play. As I recall, a meat peddler stopped by, but of course we didn't dare buy without our parents permission. However, as he left, the door on his covered wagon was swinging open. Christy said "I'm going to grab that wiener!" He did, but little did he know that he had hold of a string of wieners (about 2 dozen). All of us kids shared with a lot of giggling and great enjoyment as the wagon disappeared from view. You can be sure our parents never knew about that!

After my mother died, my sister, Mary, did the housework. She also worked for the Andrew Berge family when Obert, Beatrice and Russell were small. My brother, Christy, went into the Navy, which left our Dad, Ted and me to run the farm. What scrub farmers we were compared to what the farmers do today! I loaded the hay bare-footed while Dad and Ted pitched the hay up to me. (No haying machinery then except the mower.) Our corn was planted with a hand planter, then hand cultivated. Dad hoed the center of the row while Ted hoed one side and I did the other. We would get scolded by Dad if we happened to chop off a corn stock. Of course, I did just that very thing. While Dad was still scolding, Ted and I

were hoeing ahead of him, I accidentally chopped off another one. Knowing I would get more scolding, I quickly dug a hole in Dad's row and "planted" the cut off stock! When he started to hoe around it, it fell over. He never knew that he didn't chop it off! But Ted knew. I certainly got a disciplining from him. I had to chop kindling, carry in his wood and water and do every chore he asked me to for quite a while, or he'd tell Dad. I learned my lesson. I never again gave anyone reason to demand extortion from me!!!

We had great companionship in Vermont. Everyone was friendly and always ready to help anyone in need of anything. We had good times together, with parties, card playing and dancing in the homes. When the hay lofts got empty there were barn dances with kerosene lanterns hanging high for the light. Ted was the "Caller" for the square dances and there were many of them. Mary chorded on the piano while Martin Newman, her husband played the violin at those house parties. Those were wonderful carefree days. Nobody ever locked their homes. I doubt if they even had a key. Nobody ever left a neighbor's home without having had a meal with them. Everybody shared each other's joys and sorrows. Nobody seemed to worry over money, everyone was kind and content.

Our happiness was found in each other's homes and we didn't miss what we didn't have.

How the times have changed! However, one thing never changes, girls still love the boys the same then as they do now.

I was married quite young and had a lovely daughter, Pricilla (call her Pat). She was selected "Queen of Truax" in 1943. She also was one of the six remaining in the American Beauty Contest, in Chicago in 1944. In 1945 she married Bill Stein in New York City. Their only child, Daniel, spent many (most) of his summers with me in Monona Village. During these summers several visits were made to the Willie Frame home and the old Homestead.

One night when Danny was staying at the Frame home a bee got into the boys room. Danny ran downstairs to sleep in the parents room to be safe from the bee. Vernon and Tom and Dannie spent their days fishing and hunting bugs and snakes. He brought many live snakes home to care for. One time he brought home a hide from a rattle snake. With the help of the library we got it tanned and it is still one of his prized possessions.

Dan is now 30 years old and a dedicated Surgical Gynecologist in St. Petersburg, Florida. His wife, Carolyn, and he live in the suburb of Seminole a short distance from my home where my new husband and I moved in October of 1975.

Carolyn teaches French and Classical Music and is also an interior decorator of creative designs.

Since I married Arthur Hustad and moved to Florida, my daughter, Pat, and her husband, Bill, expect to move nearby in 1977. Then my family will be living near each other like my brothers, Christy and Teds, are.

ROCK HOUSE MEMORIES

By Hannah Wilkins Dale

In the early 1900's, there were July 4th celebrations held on top of "Rock House". "Rock House" was the name given to one of, if not, the highest points in the Township of Vermont, perhaps in Dane County. It is located on part of the Wilkins farm homestead about four miles south of the Village of Black Earth going south on County Trunk J. The family named this hill "Rock House" because of its height and the fact that the opposite side from the ascending side was a solid rock wall with trees growing near the lower wall. You wouldn't climb down this side. In fact, one of the family animals had fallen off this top and was killed. The stone is probably mostly sandstone. At the bottom of the steepest side is a sand pit from which many loads of sand were hauled to be used in the construction of the Vermont Lutheran Church. There was a road leading around the hill to the sand pit. Many other people around also came there for sand.

Standing on the top, we could look down on the tops of the trees growing beneath. That is the reason it has been given the name "Treetops". A new large family dwelling has been built up there now, and "Treetops" is their home. But to us it will always remain "Rock House". The stories about the celebrations on July 4th were remembered and told to me by my brother, Ted, who is over eighty years now. He said he remembers it well because he was there.

Several other Vermont people still living, who took part in the celebration remember it, too. Halsten and Martin Haugen, who joined land with Rock House, came to my father and asked if they might have a celebration up there. They had several activities such as a refreshment stand where they sold ice cream (probably homemade) and lemonade. They also built a bowery for dancing to the music of the Vermont Band. Some of the older band members at this location were: Martin and Halsten, Sever Skalet, Ted Tollak and the Field boys. My brother remembers that Ted Tollak played the drum. There might have been others. It was necessary for those driving their horse and buggies, to tie up the horse to the trees and walk up the steep incline. They probably picked some "black caps" and "black berries" on

their way as that was the season for them. Many pails of berries have been taken home from that berry patch. Sometimes we would meet our adjoining neighbors there too. There seemed to be plenty for all.

At the refreshment stand, Ted remembers Anna Brager Larson as the attendant. Martin Steenrud was a jolly one who kept the place lively.

To get to this hill they came through the Wilkins yard around the barn to the field road which lead through the "Cut". The "Cut" was a road cut through stone with steep sides, to make it easier to haul loads of hay and other machinery up to the fields.

Finally, as the youngsters grew older, they decided to locate on another hill, not quite so steep. This was on the hill we named "The State Forty". They must have bought it from the state. This was easier to get to and was located south of the Wilkins dwelling place. At that time the hill was quite heavily wooded, but it's now a bare hill. There, they also had a band with several new members. They had the bowery for dancing. They had the usual refreshment stand with lemonade and ice cream. Another activity was added. It was the "Pounding Machine" to test their strength. It is often seen at celebrations in this day too. Some of the band members and instruments played were: Amon Brager, cornet; Alvin Brager, slide trombone; Carl Anderson, cornet; Elvin Anderson, clarinet; Eugene Anderson, snare drum; Alfred Steensrud, bass horn; Arthur Gulson, cornet; Martin Peterson, ?; Seymour Gilbertson, cornet; Emanuel Walstad, leader of the band.

These celebrations went on for a few years until the band dissolved and went other places to live and work.

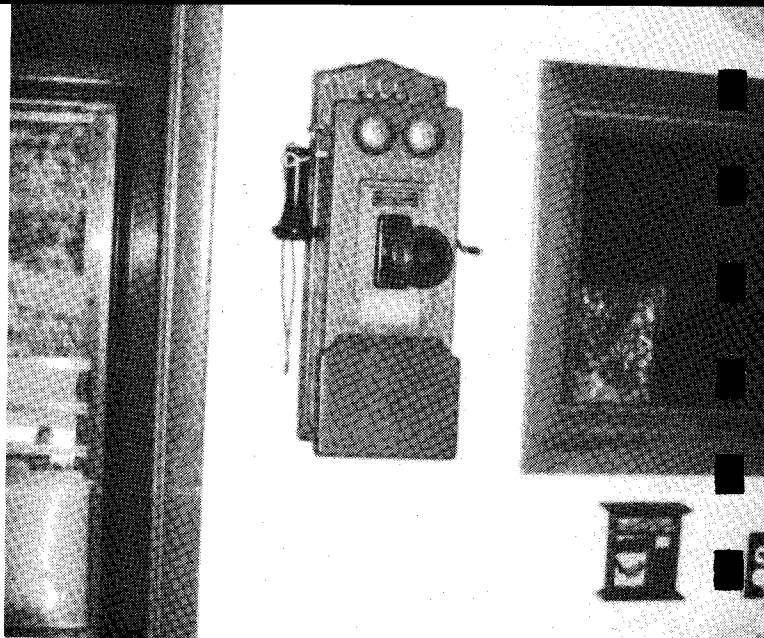
THE TELEPHONE COMES TO VERMONT

The Black Earth Telephone Company was organized in 1905. First officers were: A. B. Thorsrud, Walter Drake, H. W. Harrop, Andrew A. Mickelson, George Gulson and Wallace Coldwell.

The switchboard was located on the second floor of the present Simley Store. It was moved in 1937 to the building which had been the Black Earth State Bank; from Art Gillette. He conducted a barber shop there after a new bank building was constructed.

Managers over the years were: Charles Watzke, Bill Kahl (killed in 1923 while working on the telephone lines in the Town of Berry), his brother, Bert Kahl; Robert Hazeltine and Orland Haydon.

Names of earliest operators could not be deciphered, but Ruth Hodges (Mrs. Glen Knowles)



Telephone

had served since 1914, a total of 46 years; Adeline Knudtson had put in steady daytime hours for 28 years, and Mrs. Gerald Hodges (Myrtle Hodgson) for 24 years. Many others have served well.

Mrs. Hazeltine (Leona Marguette) succeeded her husband as treasurer, later becoming vice-president.

The telephone being such a very new piece of equipment, made the line man a very important person in our lives. We remember especially the first one, Charlie Watzke, who often had to be called for help. It was a simple matter to ground those telephones, and with as many as twenty people or more on one party line, it often happened; sometimes in plain mischief. One day the line was grounded so no rings could reach the switchboard; poor Charlie drove his team all day, only to find one of the parties had hung the wire on the windmill. When checking the lines, he stopped at each home, called Central and asked, "Did the ring come in all right? Ring up by here, once."

By the time Bill and Bert Kahl and Bob Hazeltine were taking care of our telephones, they had been improved considerably; also, the men were then driving automobiles.

Public announcements were made with a long ring on the telephone, quite a convenience.

Rubbing could be an interesting pastime, but it was also a nuisance. With too many receivers down, it was hard to hear the other party; besides, you needed to have a listener in mind when conversing.

A friendly helpful operator was appreciated by everyone. Adeline Knudtson, Ruth and Myrtle Hodge knew everyone on their lines and were always helpful. Now we have impersonal recorded voices.

A CHILDS DAY — 1911

by Grace Stoll

Preparation for this visit was started early in the week, when father decided the moon and the weather foretold that it was time for the fall butchering, so mother wrote a penny card to grandmother, who did not have a telephone, and had to go downtown to the post office each day for her mail.

The real bustle started Saturday afternoon when several blocks of wood, without slivers on the outside, were brought into the house to start warming for the trip. Late in the afternoon water was brought from the well and put into the washboiler on the back of the stove to heat for baths, and the little ones had their baths and their head and hair washed and dried behind the wood-burning heating stove in the parlor, before supper; as they usually went to bed soon after supper.

Some fine split wood was put in the oven early to dry for a quick starting fire in the morning, becomes dry early in the evening and is taken out and put beneath the stove. The oven was packed full with the smooth blocks of wood.

Mother got out a large woven basket with a handle and started packing the goodies from the butchering. A bowl of fresh liver was first to go into the basket, next was a two quart jar of fresh milk, and a quart of buttermilk, and a pat of butter, as grandmother's cow always stood dry during the winter months. It made grandmother's chores easier to do, and it was much cheaper to have the cow milking on the green grass pasture.

Next a lump of pork sausage, a two quart pail of fresh lard and a large lump of the cracklings, those crisp brown bits left after lard has been rendered. Grandmother enjoyed these as she added them to her sauerkraut and fried potatoes. Then a few ribs and a couple of slices from the tender pink meat from the back and beside the basket was placed the hogs head frozen since the butchering, to await this trip.

From this, grandmother would make many meals. The crown piece from between the ears and jowls made a good salt pork or bacon. The ears she singed and washed and boiled in a pickle for cold meat. From the bony part of the head she trimmed out the nostrils, eyes and the ear canal, split the head, saved the brains to roll in cornmeal and fry them for a tasty meal.

After all the variety meats were removed, the head was put in a deep kettle and boiled until tender. To all the bits of meat, after boiling, was added spice, salt and pepper and corn meal to make a scrapple or head cheese. This made her

many warm suppers or breakfasts. Big brother went down to the cellar and brought up a pail of apples.

This done and supper and chores put away, came the older children's turn to bathe before the kitchen range. Everyone went to bed early, as all must get up early, as cows must be watered before leaving for the day. The shoes drying under the stove were either blacked or greased with tallow, giving them all a fine Sunday glow.

Sunday morning came, crisp and cold, but clear and bright. The sleigh was cleared of the dump planks and the box from the lumber wagon placed between the stakes and filled partly full of clean bright straw. Breakfast eaten and cleared up, the cows back in the barn and children bundled from top to toe, and all those not having overshoes, having heavy socks pulled over their shoes for warmth; the straw in the wagon bed covered with a couple of the oldest and darkest colored quilts; and the chunks of wood brought from the oven; the team was hitched to the sleigh, wearing the string of brass bells put there by father, while mother placed everyone and her packages and basket to her satisfaction in the sleigh. With quilts over everyone, with the horse blankets going on last; mother and father climbed onto the spring seat and the trip was started. Taking about an hour to go the five miles to grandmother's house, songs were sung and much wriggling of feet went on before we arrived at grandmothers. At last we were there and what a welcome we had, with each one getting a hug and a kiss from grandmother, fresh and crisp in her skirt length muslin apron.

Father took the horses around to the side of the house away from the wind and with the horse blankets over the harness and buckled fast, the quilts were laid over their backs for extra warmth. The chunks of wood were thrown onto grandmother's woodpile, and into the house we went. And what smells! Grandmother, wanting dinner ready when we arrived, had butchered a rooster left over from the summer, and she had made a large jar of crisp white cookies seasoned with home grown caraway seed, giving off delicious smells whenever they were moved, and a spicy brown cake made from sorghum. Dinner was soon served and king of the table was that huge platter of fluffy golden potato dumplings cooked in chicken broth.

After dinner, the baskets of meat were put in a cold room and dinner dishes done. While some of the older children ran down to the mill pond for a slide, the little one, drowsy after the cold ride and the warm meal took a nap.

When the sun came around and started to

make long shadows, the children were dressed and packed into the sleigh that had been warmed by the clean bright sun. Covered by the quilts and blankets warm from the horses, we were ready to go home. The horses, cold and frisky from the long standing, made quick time on the road, and the bells gave off a lively jingle, while mother led in some songs on the way home. What a welcome from old Shep, who jumped into the back of the sleigh and licked the face of each child as he came to them, in his joy of their arrival. Chores were soon done and mother sent everyone off to bed with a big bowl of bread and milk and apple sauce. Tomorrow morning another week would start.



Vermont Baseball Team

(Left to right): Elliott Mickelson, Clarence Sweum, Jake Baumgartner, Anton Steensrud, Melvin Severson, Banford Olson, Martin Olson (three ???), Selmer Severson (on right end).



Wisconsin Society
For Ornithology
(Symbol)

The passenger pigeon was once extremely common throughout the Township of Vermont. These birds nested in large colonies in trees; often as many as fifty nests in one tree. They were not only common in Vermont Township, but the entire state and nation as well.

The birds were hunted for food. My friend's great-grandfather told of the many meals these birds supplied for early Vermont residents. "The pigeon breasts were salted down, then dried like venison. The breasts were strung on a string to dry. These were daily taken to school for lunch with bread. Coarse, fresh breasts tasted fine."

The birds were a threat to the farmers' crops; as fast as the seed was planted the passenger pigeons were there to eat the seed; many times following behind the farmer as he planted. The birds were hunted therefore to protect the crops as well as for food. Wagon loads of passenger pigeons were taken to Madison to sell. All over the state as well as the county, these birds were hunted to complete extinction. The last great nesting in the state was in the late 1870's. The passenger pigeon is considered completely extinct since 1914. The bird was about 16½ inches long, the male was gray tinted with greenish brown above and was wine red on the breast and white on the abdomen. The female differed from the male in having a grayish brown breast.

The Passenger Pigeon is the name of the official publication of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology. A drawing of the passenger pigeon is used on the symbol of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology.



Brager Family Guests
 at the Gulson Home, 1912
 (Left to right): Waldo Brager,
 (Fresh Air Girl), Alvin Brager,
 Clara Gulson, Gay Gesme (with
 gun), Julia Gulson and little
 sister Gladys, Anna Brager,
 Erland Brager (little boy), Thora
 Gulson, Viola Gulson. Two in
 back: Clarence Haugner and
 Chris Larson.

**Vermont Crowds on a Picnic in
 Blue Mounds Park, 1912**
 (Left to right) Seated on the
 ground: Marcellus Paulson, Clara
 Gulson, Clara Halsten, ? Lee,
 unknown, Myrtle Lee, Mabel
 Peterson, Martha Urness, Dora
 Espeseth, Ella Norslien, Selma
 Urness, George Espeseth. Stand-
 ing on their knees: Ream Turk,
 Andrew Lee, Alfred Erickson,
 Emil Erickson, Theodore Wil-
 kins. Back row: Clarence Haug-
 ner, Julia Gulson, Geneva Espe-
 seth, Mabel Halsten, Thora Gul-
 son, Ida Thorsrud, ? Johnson,
 Jake DeVries, Seymour Gilbert-
 son, Joe Barsness.



Vermont Girls at Blue Mounds Spring
 (Left to right): Ada Barness, Martha Urness, Selma Urness,
 Clara Halsten, Dora Espeseth, Clara Gulson, Ella Norslien,
 Ida Wilkins.



Vermont Cheese Factory

Front row, left to right: Joe Barsness, Gille Barsness, Mrs. Carrie Broughton, Miss Carrie Broughton, Mrs. Henry Norslien, Mrs. Otto Sale (Hazel Norslien), Henry Norslien, Carl Anderson, Ream Turk, John H. Barsness. Back row:

Harald Norslien, Nels Espeseth, Sylvester Amble, Eric Espeseth, Anton Anderson, John Wilkins, Herman Barsness, Osten Espelene, Frank Turk, Andrew Anderson, Halsten Peterson, Albert Dybdahl.



Silver Wedding at George Gulson's in 1912

Children: Emma Paulson, Hannah Wilkins, Lenore Sylvester, Clifford Thorsrud, Raymond Lee, Otto Wilkins, Arthur Wilkins, Cora Lee, Frances Barsness, Lillian Thorsrud, Esther Moen, Irene Moen.

First row: (Betsy) Mrs. Ever Mickelson, Thora Gulson, Clara Gulson, Annie Gulson, (Inger) Mrs. James Gesme, Mrs. Thomas Lee, Viola Gulson, (Tonetta) Mrs. George Gulson and George, (his sister Mattie) Mrs. Halsten Brager, (Sarah) Mrs. Martin Mickelson and Martin, James Gesme, Kari and Andrew Anderson, Earl Lee.

Second and third rows: (Alma) Mrs. George Moen and Gladys, (Emma) Mrs. Anton Severson and baby, (Maria) Mrs. Henry Wilkins, Bertha Mickelson, Guri Espeseth, Ceo Gesme, (Hilda) Mrs. Sever Lee, (Mathia) Mrs. Carl Paulson, Julia Gulson, (Mary) Mrs. Anton Mickelson, (Marit) Mrs. Andrew Erickson, (Annie) Mrs. Rudolph

Sylvester, Geneva Gulson, (Julianne) Mrs. Ole Moen, Alice Paulson, Arthur Gulson, Joachim Brager, Laura Wilkins, (Mable) Mrs. Joe Barsness, Myrtle Lee, (Maria) Mrs. Andrew Docken, Ida Wilkins, Mattie Anderson, (Mathia) Mrs. Andrew Mickelson, Jacob DeVries, Jens Shamo, Angus Thorsrud, Palmer Paulson.

Back rows: Sever Lee with Stanley, Alvin Brager, Henry Wilkins, (Nellie) Mrs. Halsten Halsten and Halsten, Gilman Mickelson, George Espeseth, Amos Thorsrud, Andrew Anderson, Tollef Halvorson, Chris Larson, Amon Brager with Erland, Ole Moen, Carl Anderson, George Moen, Anton Mickelson, Carl Mickelson, Andrew Erickson, Herman Mickelson, Anton Severson, Carl Paulson, Rudolph Sylvester, Theodore Wilkins, Isaac Gesme and Clarence Mickelson.

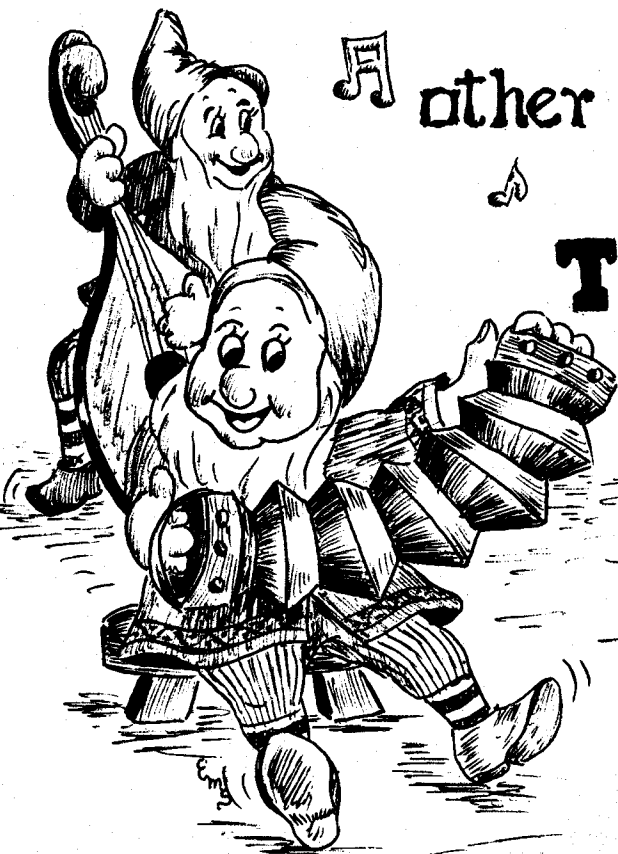


and

SMØRGÅSBORD

other

TIDBITS





Jeff Sonnenberg, boy archaeologist shows off bits of ancient pottery which he, his brothers and his friends discovered on the Sonnenberg farm last fall.

(Taken from Dane County News, April 15, 1974)

BOY ARCHAEOLOGISTS UNEARTH ANCIENT RELICS

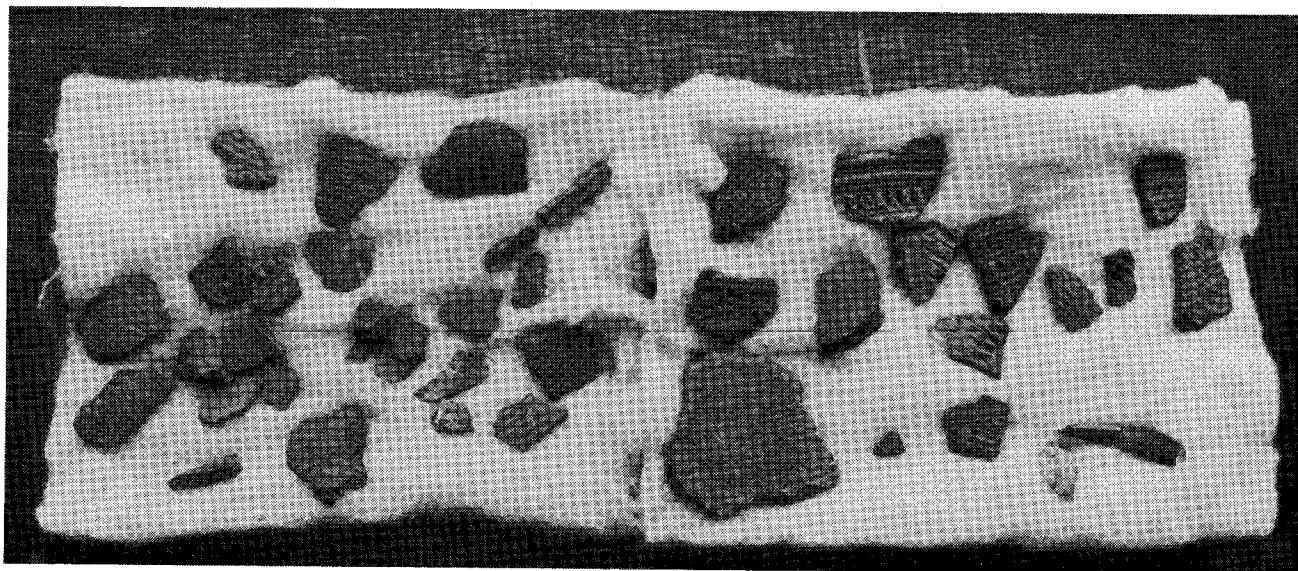
Last August, Jeff Sonnenberg, 11, his two brothers Mark, 15, and Dan, 13, and some of their friends were engaged in an arrowhead-hunting expedition on the Sonnenberg boys' parents' farm. Their search yielded much more than they ever expected to find and drew attention of University of Wisconsin archaeologists.

While searching under a rock shelf, Jeff found a few small pieces of sun-baked clay. At first, the pieces looked very innocent and ordinary, but the boys soon noticed some very straight lines and rows of identical indentations on some of the pieces.

All of the boys began searching in earnest and came up with a large quantity of the clay pieces. Bursting with curiosity, the boys confronted their parents, Richard and Beverly Sonnenberg, with their find. Unable to determine the importance of the boy's discovery, the Sonnenbergs showed the pieces to a University of Wisconsin archaeologist, who informed them that the bits of clay were actually pottery shards, the remnants of ancient food and water vessels made by the Effigy Mound Builders, who lived in this area about 1200 A.D.

While University of Wisconsin scientists' interest in the boys' archaeological discovery continues, local Cub Scouts recently did some exploration on their own to find more evidence of the ancient Indians' way of life. The boys have already found the remains of meals (animal bones) which indicates that the Indians must have been at least temporary dwellers in the area.

These pieces of ancient pottery show the straight lines and indentations which first roused the interest of the boy archaeologists. Archaeol-



ogists say that the Indians who made the pottery decorated their work by tying twine or string around the pots to make the parallel lines visible on these pieces. The rows of indentations were probably made with a sharp stick.

AUTHOR OF 'THE FLYING NUN'

The News-Sickle-Arrow editorial staff welcomed the addition of the writing and picture-taking talents of Terry Versace this week (June 13, 1974).

Mrs. Versace is better known to Vermont residents as Terry Rios, under which name she wrote "The Flying Nun," a fantasy novel which Screen Gems made into a popular television series.

Mrs. Versace and her husband came to Black Earth when he retired from the Army. She has written fiction for about 26 years, and got a serious start in non-fiction when her son, Rocky, was captured by the Viet Cong in 1963. During the time of his captivity, she wrote articles on the POW's for newspapers and magazines.

A year after her husband's death, Mrs. Versace took a job with "Off Duty Magazine" in Frankfurt, Germany. She left that job last week and returned to Black Earth to begin learning the job of a local newspaper editor in preparation for a job she will be taking this fall with "The Pacific Voice," a weekly in Agana, Guam.

Mrs. Versace's published works include 65 short stories translated into several languages, three books, pamphlets, articles, educational film strips and translations from the Spanish and French, all of which, Terry says, "fills out the gaps in a writing career which was pursued around, in and under five children, assorted animals and a fulltime career as an Army wife."



An oil painting done by Dell Mickelson Rindy. The granary and barn are on the Glenn Frame farm. These buildings are believed to have been built by Joshua Harmony, the first settler in Vermont.

OLD VERMONT

If you're fond of woodlands where you can dream, spending some time along a cool trout stream, you're sure to fall in love with Old Vermont.

If you like the sound of a whippoorwill singing its song from high on Robert's hill, you're sure to fall in love with Old Vermont.

Winding roads that seem to beckon you, miles of green beneath a sky of blue, church bells chiming on a Sunday morn, remind you of the town where you were born.

If you spend an evening you'll want to stay, watching the moon along Sandridge way, you're sure to fall in love with Old Vermont.

"The Bards"

The Vermont Bards (left to right: Phil Dybdahl, Bill Brunner and Paul Skalet) entertained Bicentennial Celebration goers with their foot-tapping renditions of some old standard folksongs. They also led the audience in a sing-along.





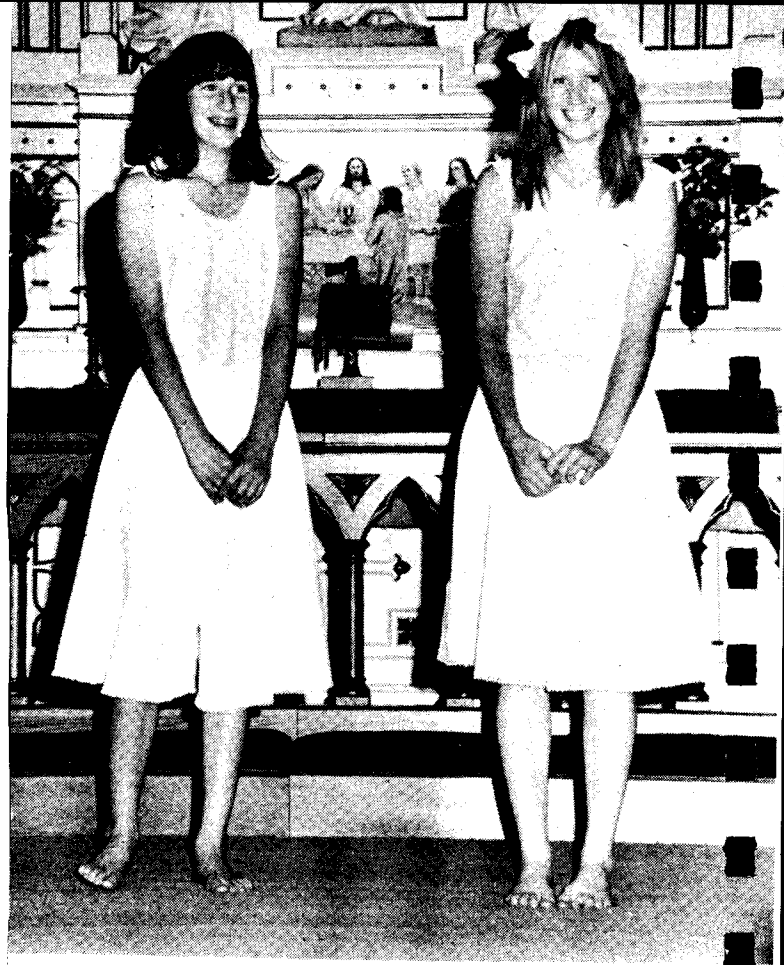
Style show featured at Vermont celebration

Dorothy Kelliher, Betty Rosenbaum and Joan Underwood, three ladies from the Vermont Township, will be among those taking part in the "Styles of Yesterday" style show at the Vermont Lutheran Church on Labor Day Monday, Sept. 1.

The event is part of the Vermont Township Bicentennial

Celebration, which will also include a potluck lunch, with serving to begin at 12:30 p.m. Everyone is asked to bring sandwiches, utensils and a dish to pass.

People with items of historical interest should bring them to the celebration for display in an area which will be provided.



What appear to be simple white shifts, modelled by Julie Schultz and Maria Urness, are actually

fashionable young ladies shortly after the turn of the century - which accounts for the somewhat embarrassed posture of the models.

The year was 1975. All over the Nation people were getting ready to celebrate the 200th birthday of the United States in the next year. We were no different in Vermont — on Monday, September 1, we had our first celebration.



A humorous skit, "Pancake Valley," was written by Bette Johnson for the Bicentennial

program on Labor Day. Captured in action are, left to right, Phil Skalet, Fern Frame and Ray O'Connell.



Scenes showing the devastation wrought by the Ice Storm, March 1976.

EXCERPTS FROM A DIARY

"Monday, March 1 — Came out of house at 4 p.m. to find car encased in ice."

"Tuesday, March 2 — More sleet and ice. Delivered Mobile Meals in Mt. Horeb and had to crawl on hands and knees from car to house. Just awful."

"Wednesday, March 3 — More sleet and ice the entire day."

"Thursday, March 4 — The horrible ice storm of '76 occurred today. We've lost trees all around us — cracking with the weight of the ice they are enveloped in; they crash to the ground with wrenching, racking, noise we will never forget. Can't help wonder about the animals and birds. Lost the electricity at 12:19 p.m. Eating by candlelight."

"Friday, March 5 — In to Mt. Horeb to view the damage. It's frightening. Brigham Park is devastated. Trees, telephone lines and electric wires down all over. Everyone minus electric power, Mt. Horeb and Oregon hit worse than anywhere else. Horrible."

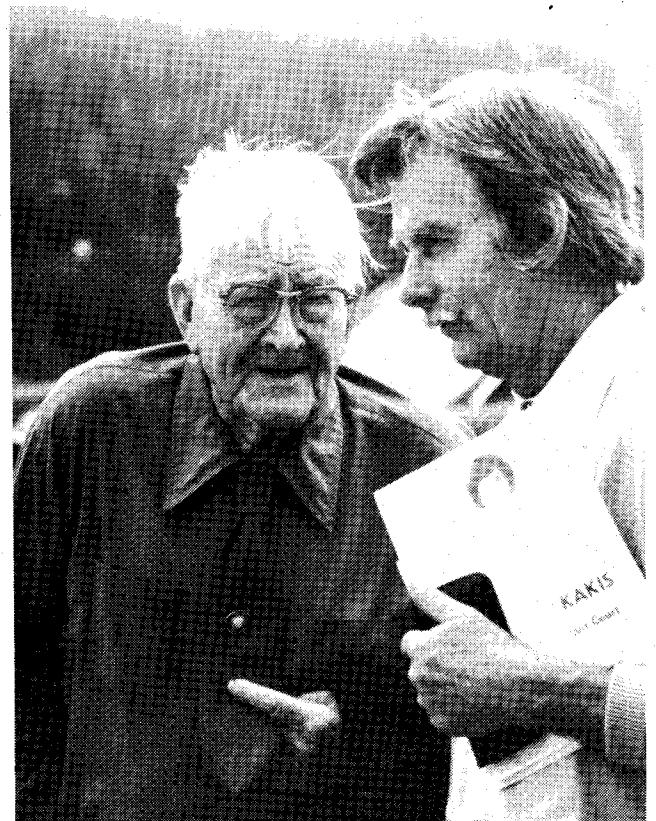
"Saturday, March 6 — Melting ice for water on wood burning stove. Farmers hauling water to livestock. Working from dawn to dark just to keep the house, body and soul together."

"Sunday, March 7 — Drove to Madison for bath, shampoo and hot meal with Mary and Bill who have electricity. Trees down all over, especially the birches. Saw flocks of Canadas. Wonder where they were during the Ice Storm."

"Monday, March 8 — Running out of dry wood and candles. Some people in the area have electricity — hope ours is restored tomorrow."

"Tuesday, March 9 — Men working on electric lines in immediate area all morning — what a beautiful sight — Electricity came on at 3:30 p.m."

Melvin Huset and Forest Johnson at Vermont Celebration, Labor Day, 1976.





Fern Frame with the quilt she stitched for the Bicentennial Committee. It was sold to the highest bidder through sealed bids.



Arnold and Lola Forshaug seated. Viola Dybdahl standing.

Heritage Days

Pictures taken at Vermont Township Bicentennial Committee's Exhibit Booth during Heritage Days celebrated March 27 and 28, 1976. Vermont had the unique distinction of being one of the few exclusively rural townships in Dane County.



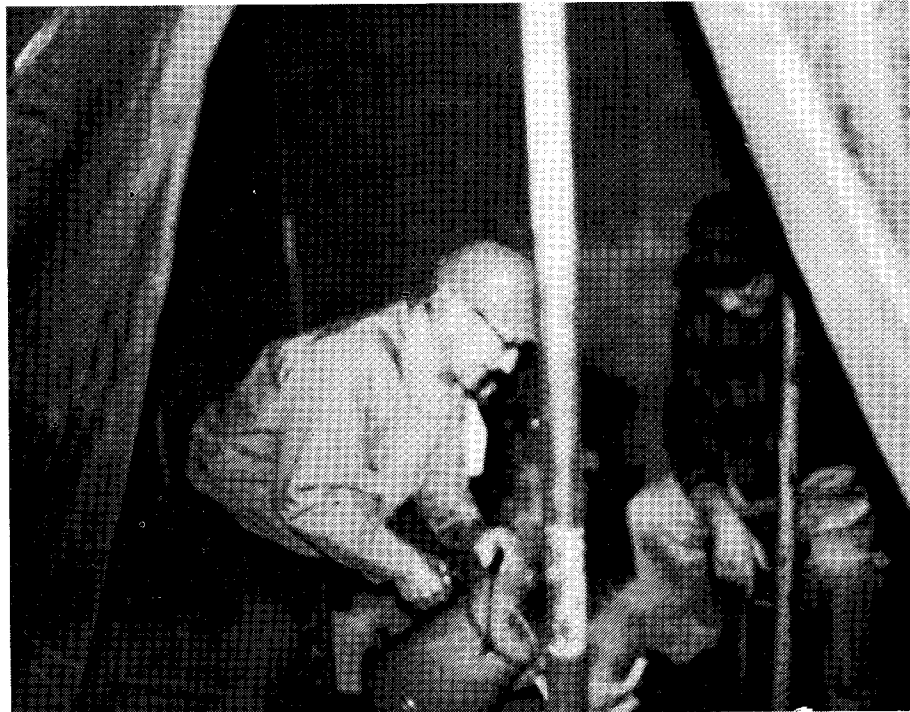
Bertil Johnson showing string games to Renee Reisdorf and Ilene O'Connell.



Ethel, Ingerid and Phil Skalet

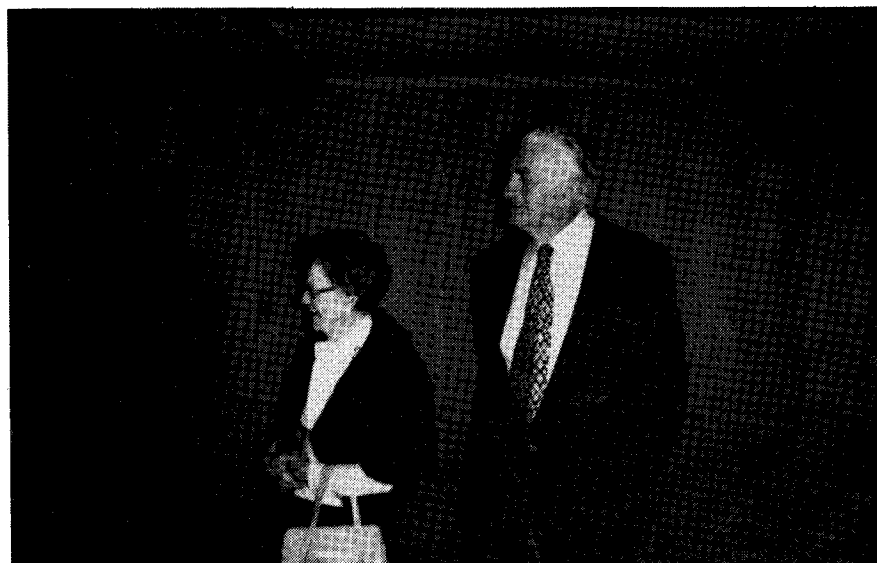


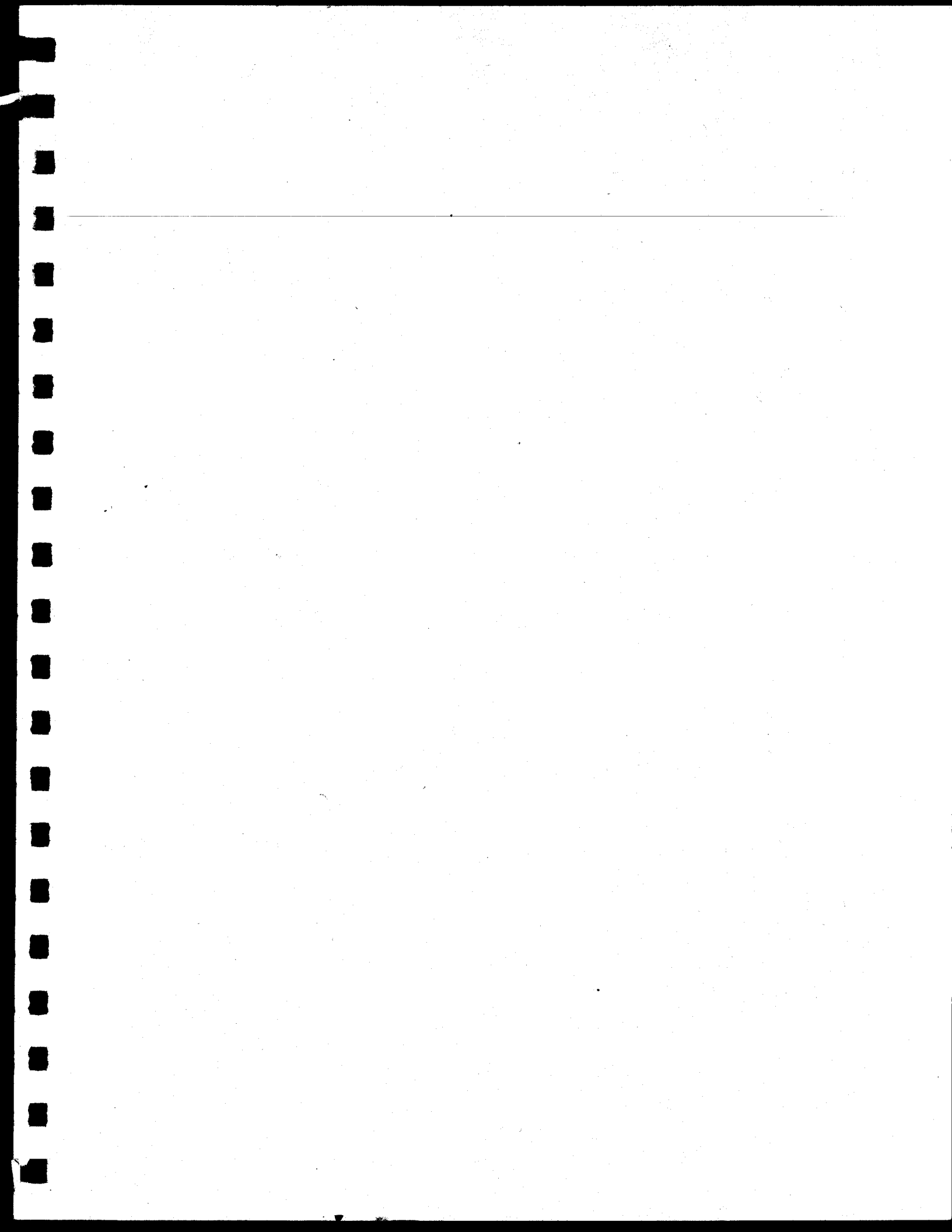
View of Blue Mounds from Forshaug Road.



Elmer Severson and Almond Anderson making coffee for lutefisk supper, Vermont Church, 1976.

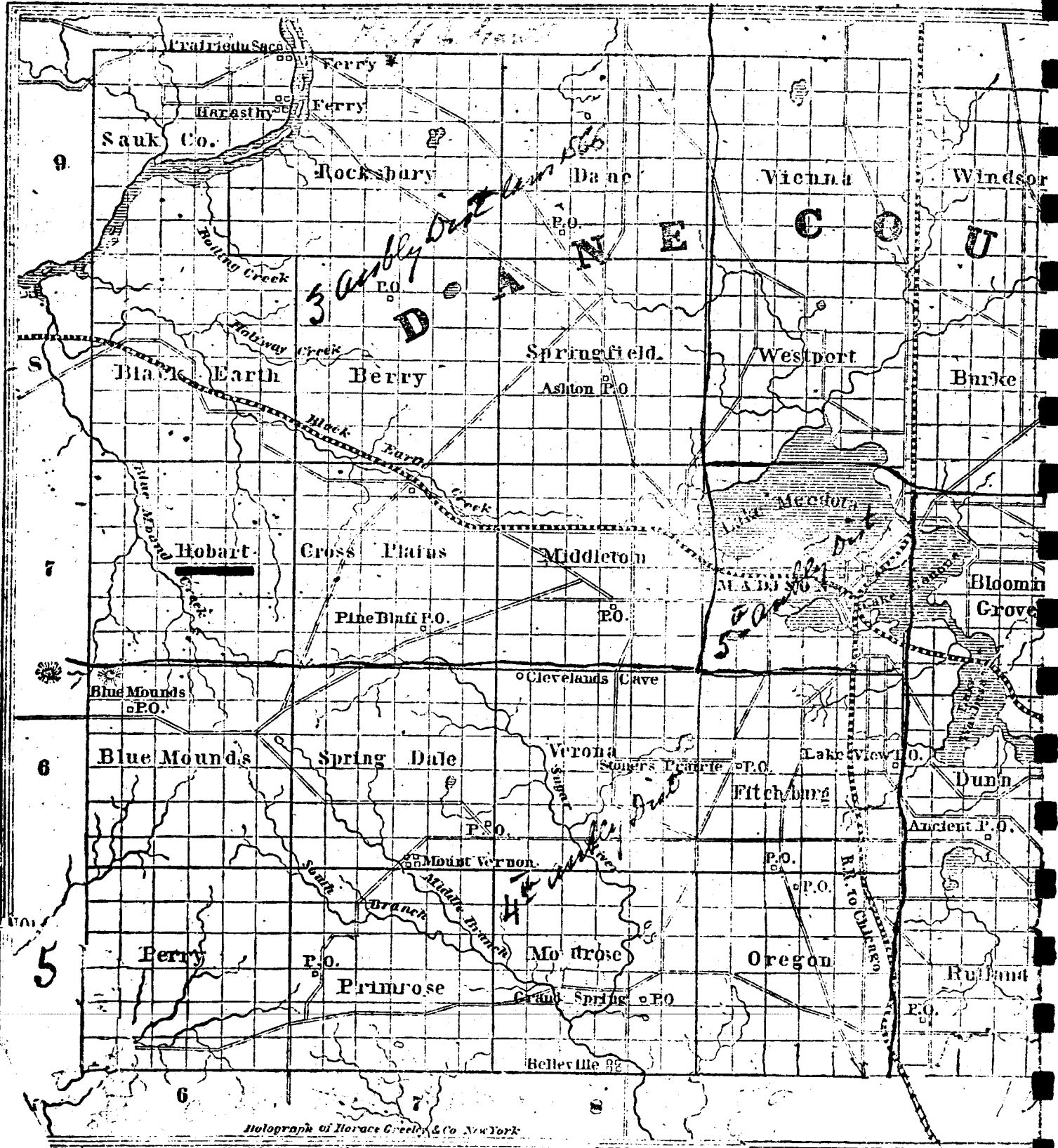
Viola and Joe Dybdahl taken at the 75th birthday party for Joe.

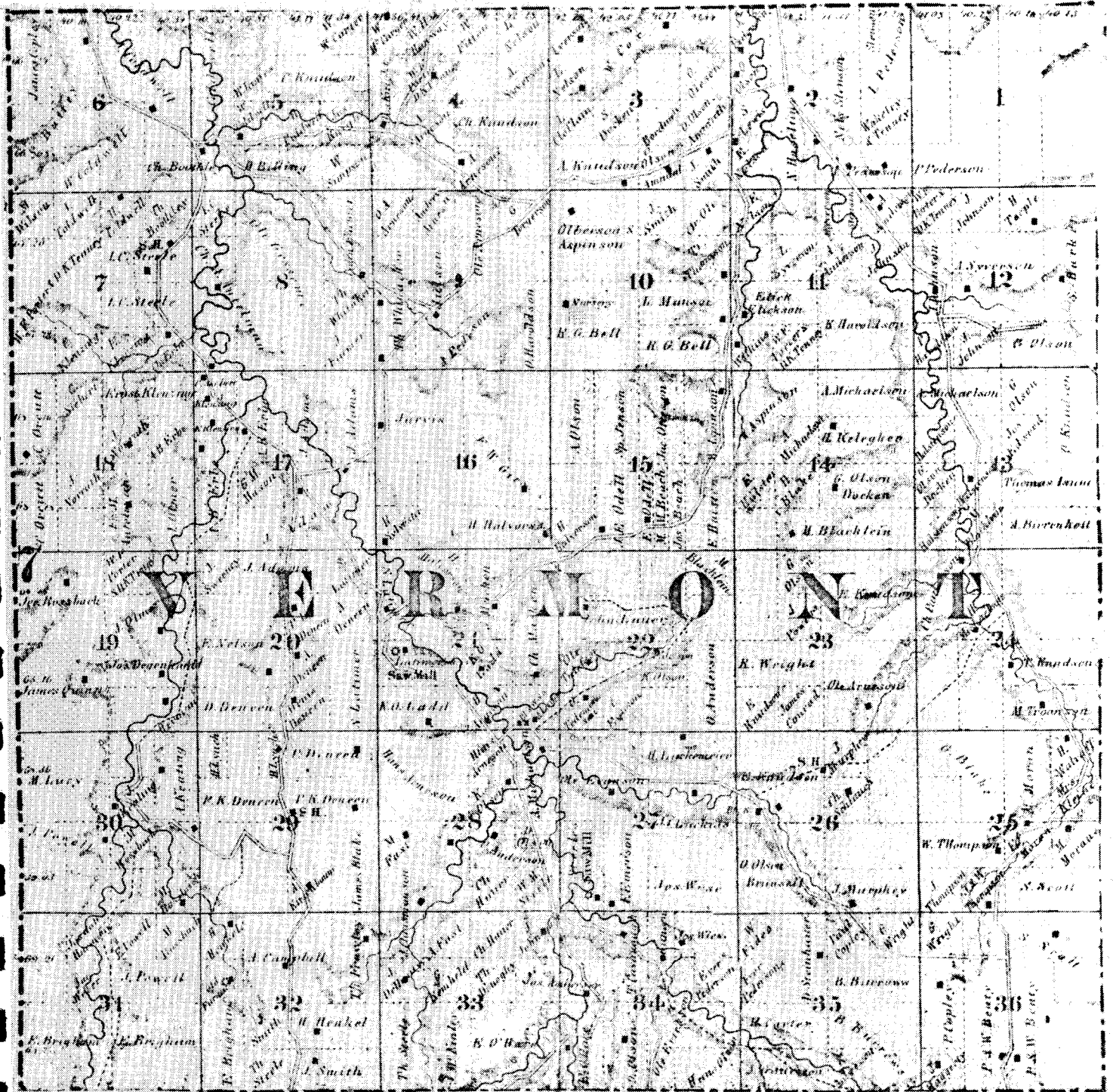




Note the use of the name "Hobart" in Township 7. Its origin is unknown. It appears only on Greely's and Morse's Maps of 1855, instead of "Vermont." Since Vermont was established and named in that year, it may be that the map makers hearing that the new town was to be called Hobart, recorded that before the actual decision was made.

MAP OF DANE COUNTY





A-3 1861—Ligowski Plat Map of Dane County

Vermont Business Directory.

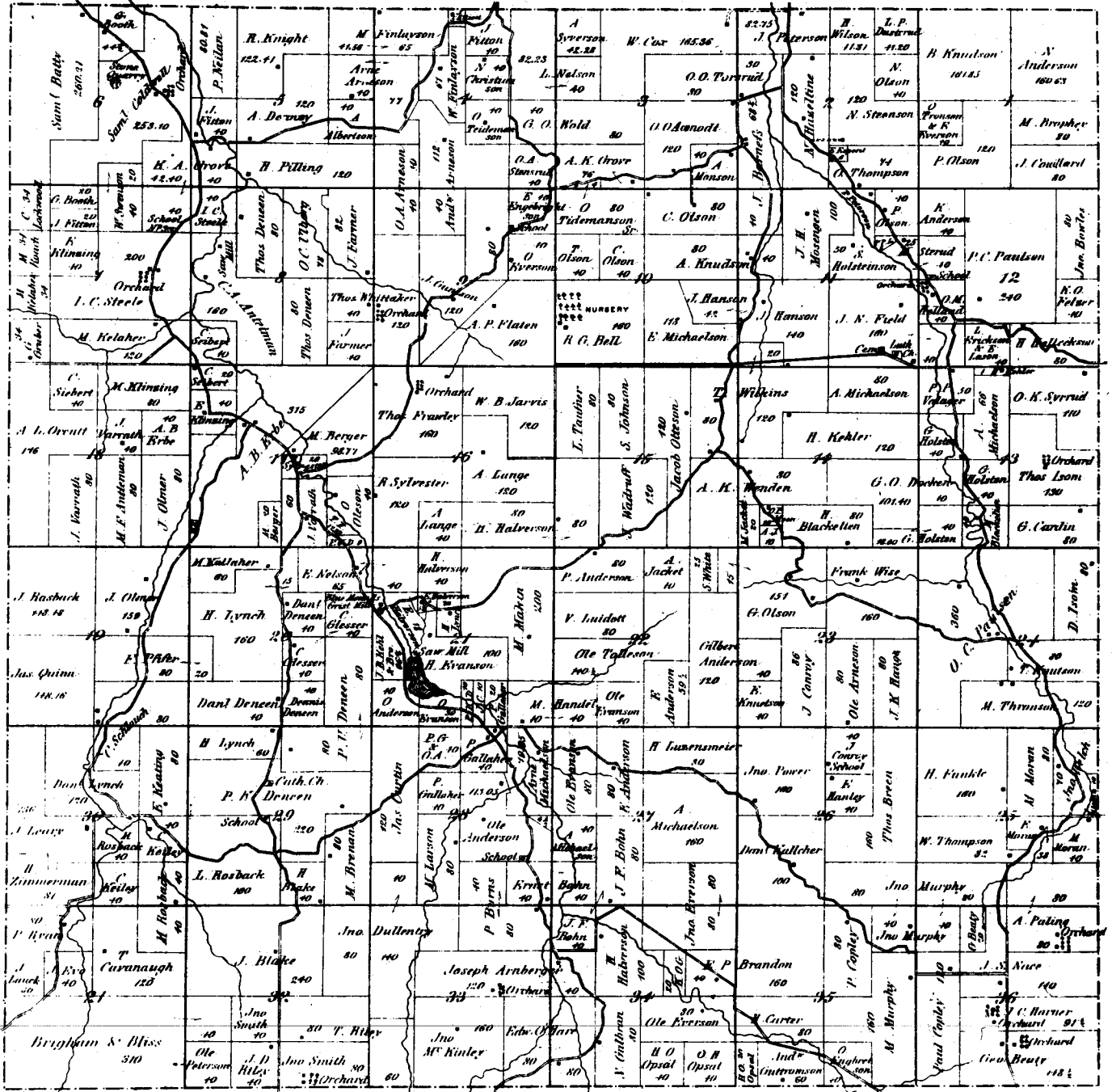
J. N. Field, Pastor of the Lutheran Church. Sec. 11.
O. M. Holland, Teacher. Sec. 12.
Miss M. A. Haseltine, Teacher. Sec. 2.
J. B. Kuhl, Proprietor of the Blue Mount Mills. Sec. 21.

DANE COUNTY ATLAS.
VERMONT

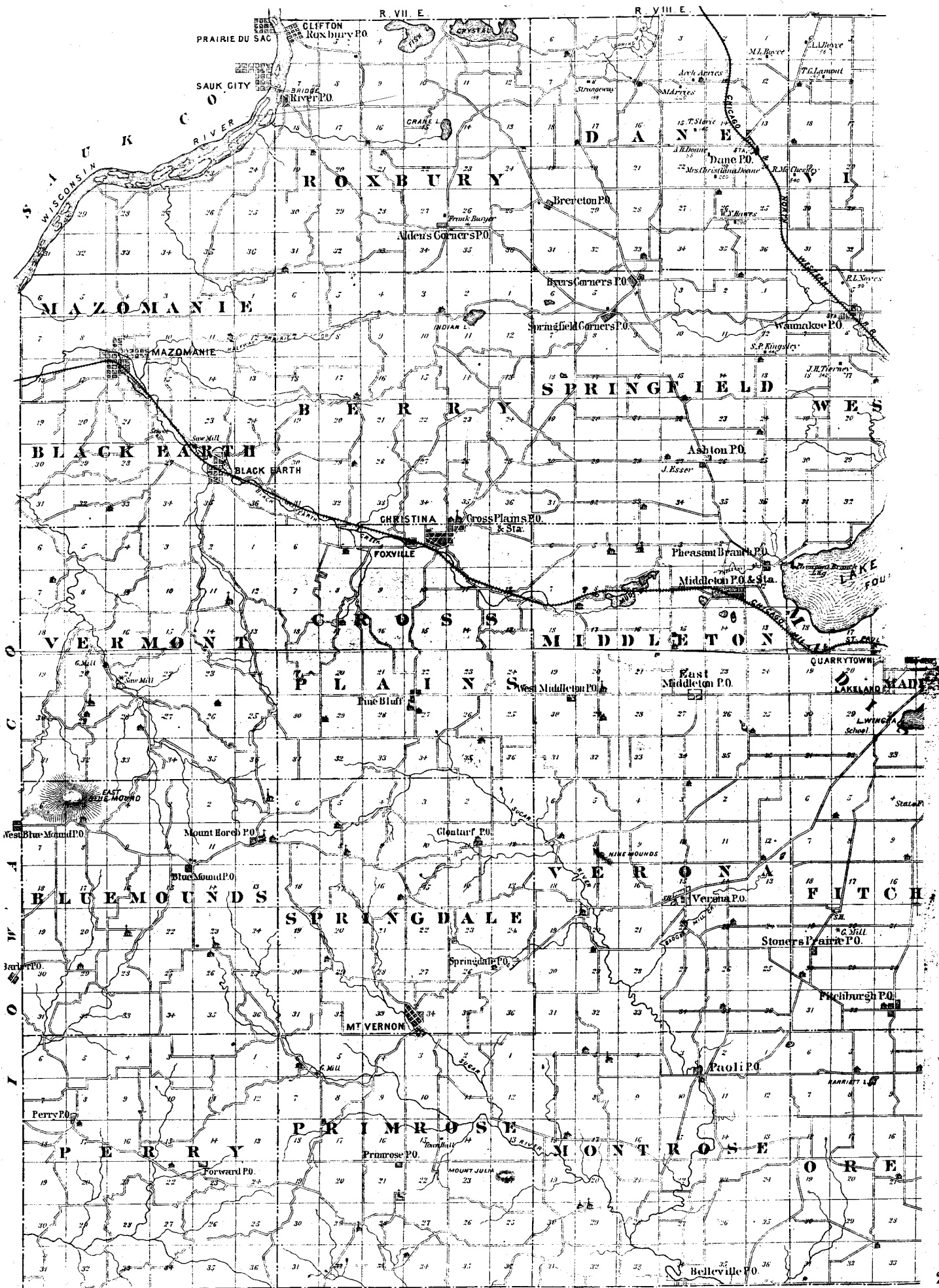
Township 7 North, Range 6 East
of 4th Principal Meridian

B. O. Bell, Farmer and Nurseryman.	Sec. 10.
J. B. Nason, Farmer and Stock Grower.	Sec. 26.
J. Murphy, " " " " " "	Sec. 27.
J. C. Steele, " " " " " "	Sec. 7.
A. Dancy, " " " " " "	Sec. 5.
T. Isou, " " " " " "	Sec. 18.
O. G. Paulson, " " " " " "	Sec. 34.
H. O. Opdal, " " " " " "	Sec. 50.
J. Smith, " " " " " "	Sec. 22.
S. J. Caldwell, " " " " " "	Sec. 8.
J. C. Harner, " " " " " "	Sec. 24.
G. Bosty, " " " " " "	Sec. 26.
M. Throsson, Carpenter and Farmer.	Sec. 24.

Scale 2 Inches to 1 Mile



A-4 1873—Vermont Township Map



A-5 1878—From "Historical Atlas of Wisconsin"

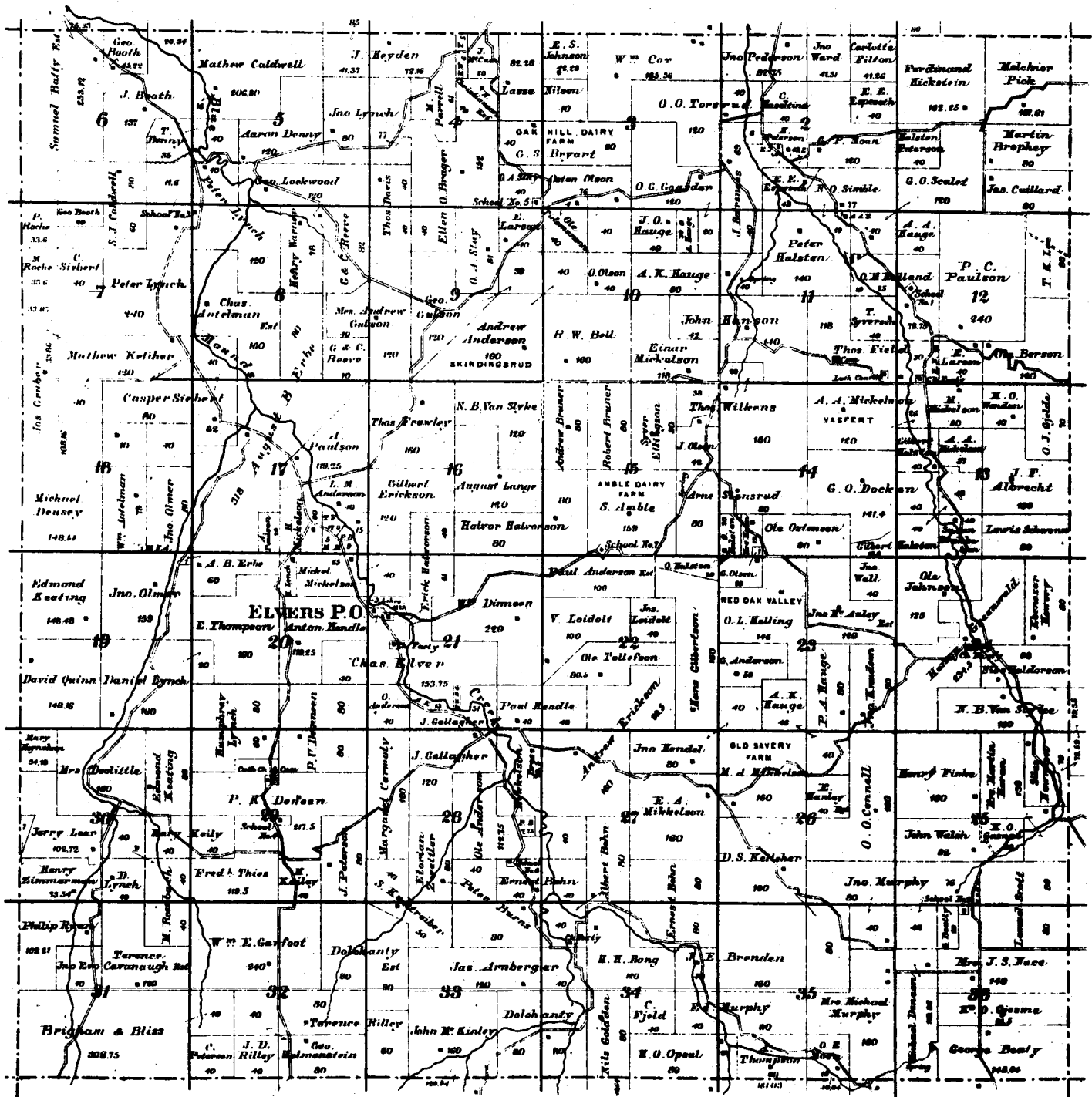
PLAT OF
VERMONT

Township 7 North, Range 6 East

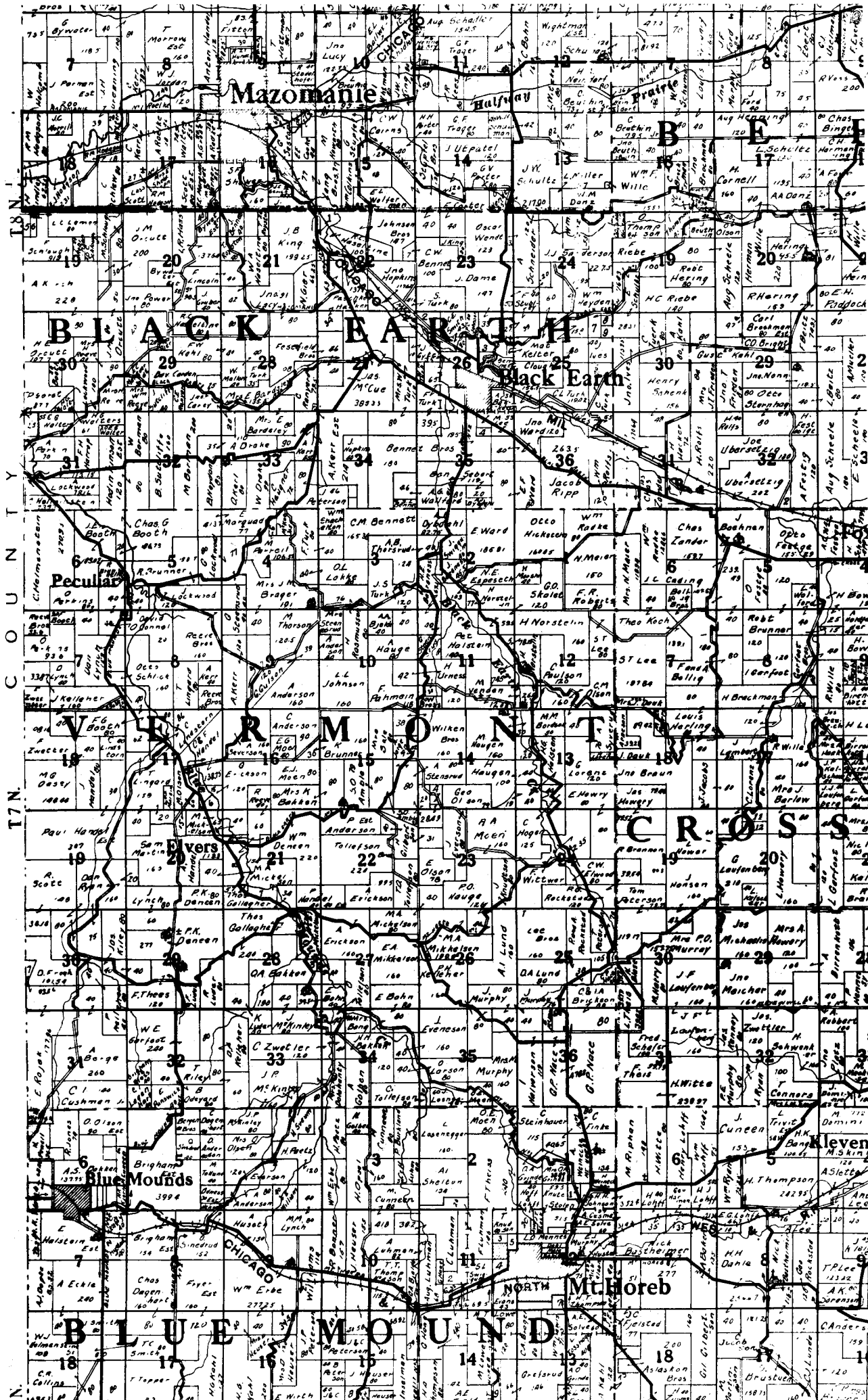
of the Fourth Principal Meridian.

DANE CO. WIS.

Scale 2 Inches to the Mile



A-6 1890—Vermont Township Plat Map

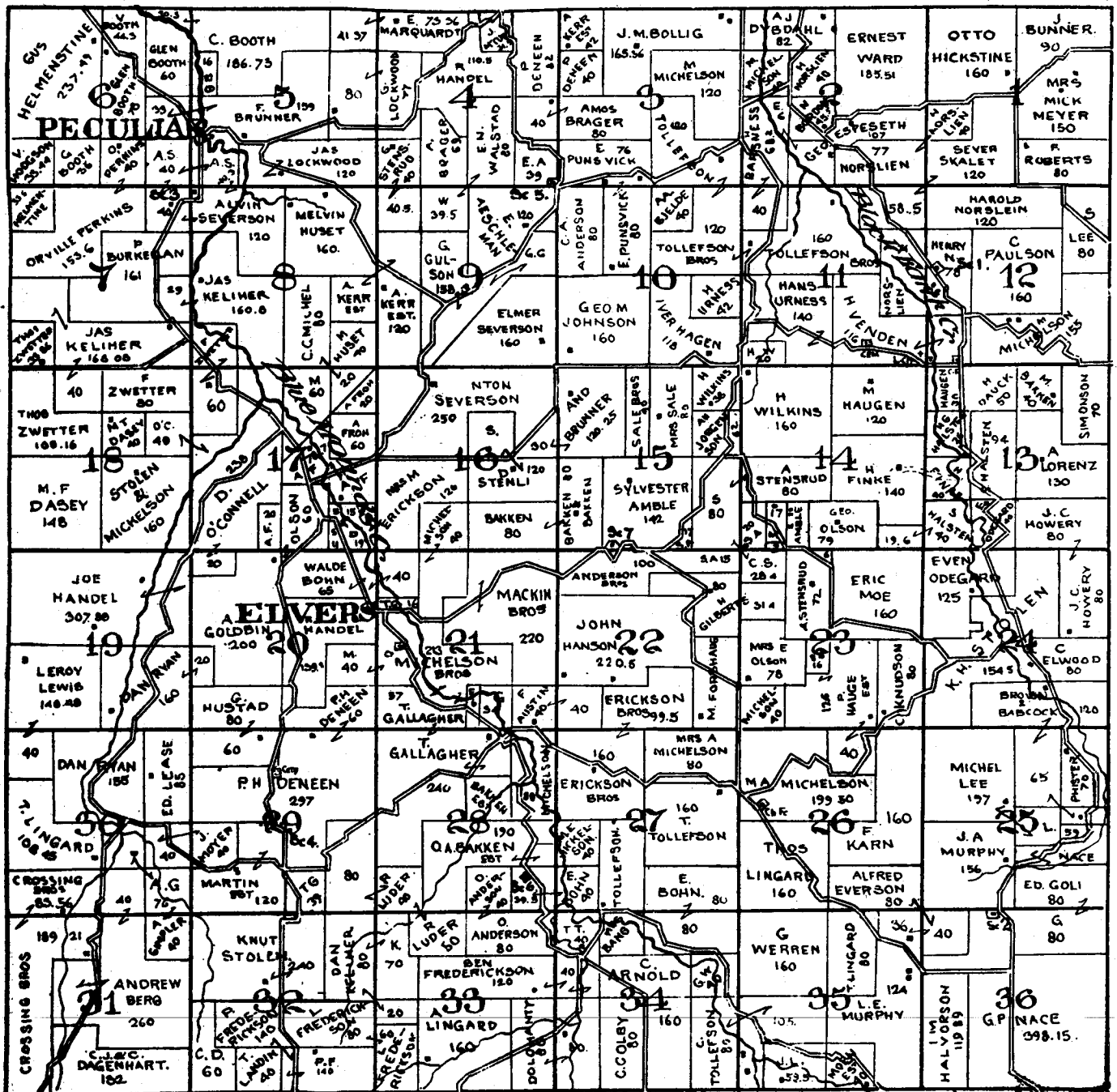


A-7
1914—
Vermont
and
Surrounding
Area

VERMONT

Township 7 North,

Range 6 East



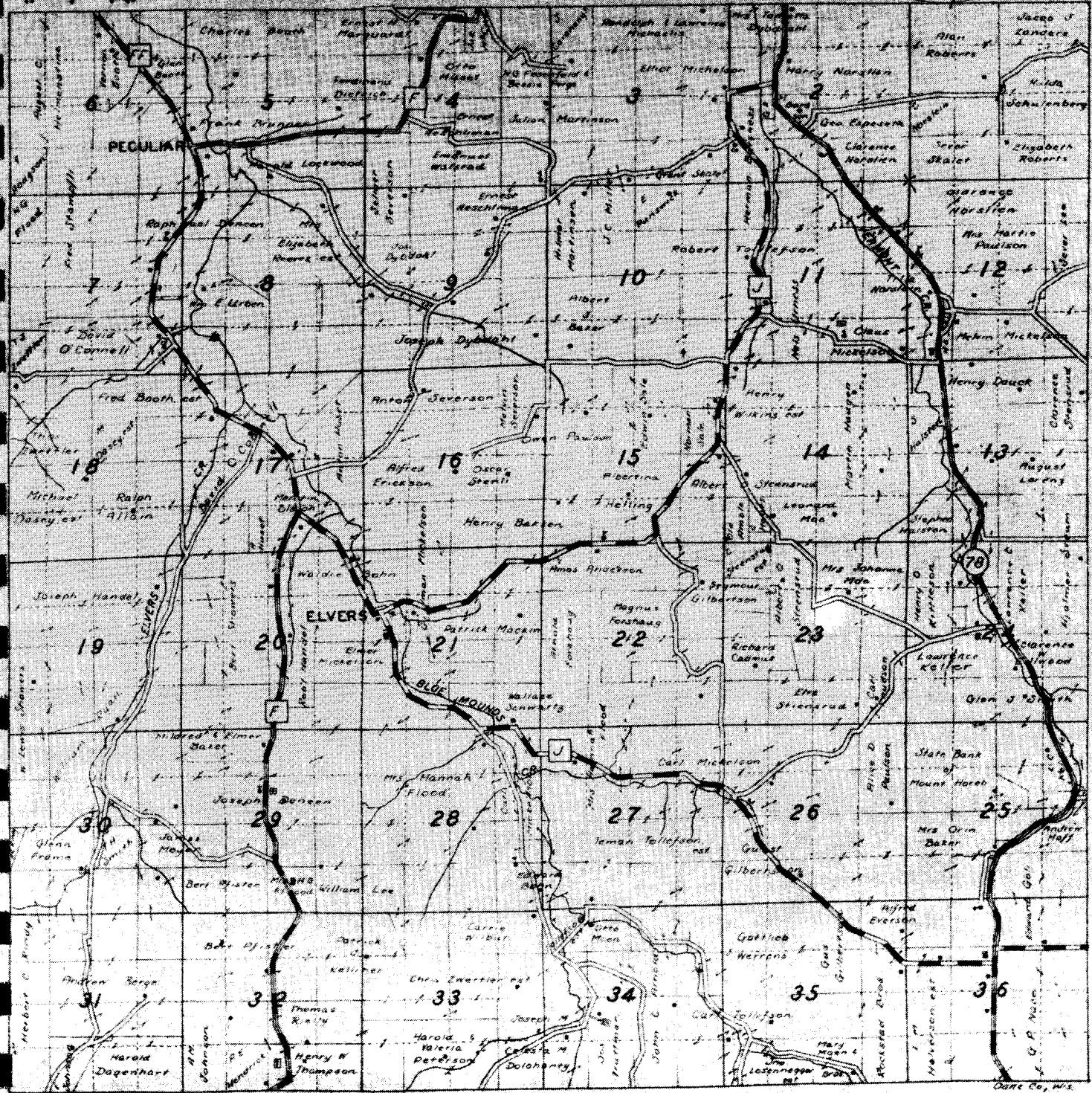
A-8 1926—Vermont with neighborhoods called Peculiar and Elvers

T 7 N

VERMONT

194 R 6 E

MAP NO 15



© 1947 ROCKFORD MAP PUBLS

Dart Co., W.V.

A-9 1947—Vermont

GLEANINGS FROM FAMILY HISTORIES BLEKKERDALEN & VERMONT SETTLEMENTS

There are very few Norwegian settlers in Southern Wisconsin as well as other settlers in Northern Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa who have not heard of "Blekkerdalen" (Black Earth). The largest part of the settlement was in 1857 in the Township of Vermont. The railroad was built through the Village of Black Earth; and this little town became the destination for many Norwegian immigrants. Many settled in Black Earth and Vermont while others continued north and west to Minnesota, Iowa and the Dakotas. (Translated from Decorah Posten issued 12/2/1924.)

The Winnebago Indians, a peaceful tribe, were there before the white man. Of the numerous Indian Mounds in the area, the most prominent was the site now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Louis Schlick. It was a "man mound". It covered about 700 feet. The body was about 100 feet and the legs about 600 feet long; the arms were stretched out 330 feet. It was on an average of 4 to 5 feet high. The flood waters, the plow, the digging of the cellars were instrumental in destroying it; no thought of preserving it as a memorial.

South of Black Earth is a broad valley leading toward Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin, with branches leading off in other directions. The Englishmen were not interested in these narrow valleys but the Norwegians loved the rich valleys and hills. They felt at home in this new country with its homelike surroundings.

Most of the following information was translated from the Norwegian language taken from the "Decorah Posten 12/2/24". Many Norwegians came to the Springdale area and by word of mouth heard of friends who had settled in Vermont Township. The first known Norwegian settlers in Vermont were: Knut Sjurson, Knut Saevre, Velkin Herbjørnson and Ole Aamodt. Saevre was from Hallingdahl, Herbjørnson from Sogn and Ole Aamodt from Tinn, Telemarken. They settled in Vermont about 1849 or 1850, Herbjørnson's descendants (the Wilkins family) stayed on, but Knut Saevre moved away. Ole Aamodt had no descendants to carry on. He was called "scrubben" (wolf) because of his appearance. A bridge near his former place was known to some of the neighbors in the area as "Skubbebrua" (a wolf bridge) now called the "Thorsrud bridge".

Of interest was the custom of the Norwegian immigrants to use the home place name together with their given name to their new property. An instance of that custom is: Martin Mickelson, son of Arne Mickelson bought the place owned by Knut Saevre in 1892 and for some time he was known by his acquaintances as "Martin i

Saevre". His son, Gilman, tells that he and his brothers and sisters were known as the "Saevre Kids". It is evident this custom continued for some time among the earliest immigrants; the estate name with the given name is engraved on their monuments.

Among the first Norwegians to settle in Vermont were from Valdres, and their many friends and relatives from Hedelen, Begnadalen, from Bagn in Sør Aurdal, settled throughout the hills and streams of Vermont. Arne Vasfaret, son of Mikkell Vasfaret, was married to Kari Gulsdatter Vestgrov Haugen, the sister of Jorgen (Jørn) Vestgrov Haugen. (The Vestgrov name was the estate name neither could use since by the law of primogeniture it had all been inherited by their older brother, Harald). (Jørn) Jorgen Haugen emigrated in 1848, two years before Arne Vasfaret and had settled in Vermont as had Paul Anderson Huset, the father of Elliot, Amos, Andrew and Mattie Anderson. Gulbrand Dokken from Begnadalen has previously settled in Albany, Wisconsin.

How the early settler communicated was a mystery, but somehow Gulbrand Dokken learned that Arne Vasfaret settled in Vermont Township in 1850; also that land could be purchased there for a small price in 1852, so he decided to locate there. He walked to Blooming Prairie but did not find Arne Vasfaret there; then he walked on to Springdale Township, where several Norwegian families had settled and there they knew of a family that had settled in Vermont at the foot of a big round hill. He kept up the search and finally one evening he was very happy to see smoke coming from a log cabin in the distance. As he approached the cabin he recognized the voices of his old friends, the Vasfaret family. He was warmly greeted and they became neighbors.

Arne Vasfaret's parents, Mikkell and Bergit, emigrated two years later with another son, Harold. He lived but a short while in Vermont Township, then moved to Blue Mounds. Arne had three children, Gabriel, Anders and Bertha. Their story is in the Mickelson family history (see page 155).

Gulbrand Dokken married Paul Anderson Huset's sister, Olaug Andersdatter Huset. They had five children: Christopher, Bertha, Ole, Andrew and Olia. Ole and Andrew operated the farm several years. Andrew married Marie Rustebakken, daughter of Nuub Rustebakken. She operated a dress shop in Mt. Horeb and there she taught many Vermont girls to be expert seamstresses. Bertha and Christopher died. Ole married Alma Hannevold late in life and moved to Black Earth. Olia married Simon Lee, they lived for awhile in Stoughton, then moved to the State of

Oregon. Andrew had two sons, Clarence who died in Europe during W.W. I and George who was married and had one son, Clarence living in Madison.

These three, Arne Vasfaret, Jorgen Haugen Gulson, Gulbrand Dokken, all settled in the neighborhood of Vermont Lutheran Church. The cemetery is on land that once belonged to Arne Vasfaret.

Kristian Vestrum from Hedalen was among those who emigrated in 1853. He married Kari Stugaarden, also from Hedalen. Their children were Albert, Carl, Anders, Laura and Kari (Mrs. Oistad); Emma (Mrs. Albert Thompson), Ida (Mrs. T. Fossage), and Carl. Carl Paulson operated the home farm and was married to Mattie Lee Kulengen. Their children were: Marcellus, Alice, Palmer and Emma Amos. Mrs. Paulson had three brothers: Kristian, Knut and Sever, also an older sister, Anne Rue Thompson (grandmother of Milford Thompson of Mt. Horeb).

Ole Olson Thorsrud, Bagn, born 1835, came to America in 1852. He decided to settle in Vermont in 1856 and married Anna Eid, who came from Hedalen. On his way to America, he was on the "Ogdenburg" steamship that sank on Lake Erie. Many of the passengers died; he went down but came up and his clothes caught in the water wheel and he was rescued. He had three children: Amelia, Amos and Olaus.

Ole Flashaugen from Hedalen with brothers, Anders, John and Ole Breden (Dølvesbreden) emigrated to America in the early 1850's. The three Breden brothers settled in Springdale Township; Ole Flashaugen settled in Vermont. He married Thora Hain. When Thora died he married her sister, Ingeborg. They had several children and the oldest son became a farmer. This Flashaugen family is the origin of the Tollefson families in Vermont.

Among Valdres people who came to Vermont in 1852 were Peter Brager from Hedalen. He left Norway in 1850 and came to Manitowoc, Wisconsin. He lived there for two years before moving to Vermont where he lived until 1861 when he sold his farm to Pastor John Field and moved to Springdale Township. (Peter Brager was the grandfather of George Brager and Mrs. Ed Collins of Blue Mounds).

Ole, Knut and Ellend Brager came to America in 1851. They all served in the Civil War. Ole died in a hospital in Madison, Wisconsin, soon after his discharge from service. Knut lived for awhile in Vermont but in 1875 moved to Clear Lake, Iowa. He passed away in 1924. He was married to Sigrid Olsdatter Omsrud. Ellend Brager was married to Mathea Amundsdatter Flaten. He lived in Vermont

until he died in 1890. Three more Brager brothers came to America: Peter, Halsten and Christopher; also three Brager sisters came: Kari, Gunbjør and Marie. Kari married Anders Anderson Skinningsrud who lived in Adams, Green County, Wisconsin. Later they moved to Vermont Township and bought Amund Flatten's farm. Gunbjør married Martin Sjørem. Marie married Hans Hanson Sag. Nuub Rustebakke married Olaus Gopelrud. Nuub's nephew, Amund Rustebakke, emigrated to America in 1866, was married to Guri Olmhus, they had 12 children. They lived in Black Earth for awhile, then moved to Minnesota and North Dakota. Nuub Rustebakke lived in Vermont until his death.

In 1857 a great number of people came from Hedalen and Begnedalen to Vermont, namely, Anders Huset, Aamund Flaten, John Midtmoen, Store Ole and Paul Huset (father of Elliot, Andrew, Amos and Mattie Anderson). Another son of Anders Huset was Christopher Anderson Jørenby, who was the father of Mathea Jørenby. She married Benjamin Shetne and they settled near Friendship, Wisconsin. Their grandson, Orville Shetne, is on the faculty at Wisconsin State University. Another daughter of Anders Huset, Olla was married Christopher Bjørneby and they lived in the Vermont area.

John Urness, a veteran of the Civil War, and John Hjermundson (Barsness) were among the first settlers in Vermont and both were farmers. Hjermund Barsness married Seri Nelson and they had twelve children, six sons and six daughters. The son, Nils, died at an early age as did their daughter, Hannah.

Ole Throndsen Simley (Simle) and his wife, Ingrid Meiningen, settled in Vermont in 1869. They were from Hillesbygen i NordAurdal. They were a well known and honored family in Norway. Ingrid was involved in religious instruction in their home area as well as in distant areas. They made their home in Vermont. Marie was married in Norway to Sergeant Toften Ulsnes and they came to Vermont a year before her parents. Thrond married Gjertrud Johnson Lindelien and they moved to Mayville, North Dakota. Their daughter, Ida, married Pastor O. J. Kvale. Ingrid married Peter Johnson Dybdahl and they lived in Black Earth until they moved to Stoughton, Wisconsin, later to Decorah, Iowa. Kari, unmarried, lived in Black Earth. Marie married Ole Granum and lived at Amery, Wisconsin. Bertha, unmarried, lived in Black Earth and Vermont and taught Bible School for many years. Nils married Karen Bjelde and lived in Black Earth and Vermont. Marit married George Freeman, a businessman in Black Earth. Iver married Annie Skinningsrud and they lived in Black Earth. For a time, Iver was manager of the

Patron's Mercantile Co-op, cashier at Black Earth State Bank and also an Insurance and Real Estate Agent.

Two brothers of Anders Huset emigrated to Vermont from Aurdalen, Ole Paulson Moen and Paul Overvollen. Ole was a follower of Hans Nilson Hauge, a great revivalist and influence in Norway's Church History. These people were disenchanted with the ceremonials, grand altars, gowns and collars used in the state church of Norway. They had commenced having prayer meetings in their homes and when they came to America they carried the custom with them; they had parochial school in their homes—mothers preparing noon lunches for many children in their community. These people were extremely devout; little children were not permitted to cut paper dolls with scissors on Sunday. One mother was very annoyed with her son when he brought a violin home; it was sinful to play a stringed instrument! But George learned to play "Lov of Tak of Evig Aere" ("Praise To Thee and Adoration"). His mother then decided the violin could not be so sinful if hymns could be played with it. This mother, Thora Huset Gulson, was the niece of the lay preacher, Ole Paulson Moen. He was the father of Gulbrand Moen and grandfather of Ole Moen, George Moen, Ida, Sarah, Isaac and Paul Moen. Ole Moen married Julia Ann Knudtson and George Moen married Alma Mickelson, daughter of Ever and Betsey Mickelson.

Others who emigrated from Bagn, Norway, in 1850 were Ole Eidsbakken, Gulbrand Braatalien and Erick Nybraaten. They were brothers although their names differed. Ole Eidsbakken married Gunhild Thomasdatter Moen. He first came to Muskego but moved to Vermont. Gulbrand Braatalien was the founder of the Gilbertson family (Gilbert being the English version of Gulbrand). Hans Gilbertson married Gunhild Halsten Battomen. They had three children, Hannah (Mrs. Martin Olson); Alma (Mrs. Magnus Forshaug); and Seymour, married to Mrs. Alpha Johnson. Erick Nybraaten was the father of Andrew, Gilbert and Hans Erickson. Andrew married Marit Olson. They had six daughters and two sons. Gilbert married Marit (Mary) Mickelson Gladhaug, they had nine children (names of the children of Andrew and Gilbert will be listed in the family histories). Hans Erickson was married to a local girl, they moved to South Dakota.

Ole and Hans Evenson Haga, or Olmshuseiet, brothers, emigrated 1851 at the same time as Arne Mickelson Gladhaug and his wife, Thora Viken. Ole Evenson married Thora Viken's sister, Johannah, and they had two children, Marit and Even Olson. Marit married Andrew Erickson (mentioned

in last paragraph). Marit's brother, Even, married the widow of Ole Olson Espelien. Their children were Martin and Mary Olson. Evan and his second wife had two sons, Banford and Edwin Olson.

Hans Evenson was called "Hans ved Saga" (Hans with a saw), because he sawed lumber for the neighbors. He also built useful furniture. Mrs. Arne Mickelson was very proud of a chest of drawers he built for her. The valley of "Sagabottomen" was named for Hans Evenson's saw mill.

From the Sogn area in Norway came Storelars, Per Christofferson also known as "per i Knipa". When it was necessary for him to borrow something from his neighbor, he would say, "Jeg er i Knipe" (I'm in a pinch). Also in the group were Johannes and Mikkell Ruste and Johannes Anders Hauge, all settlers in the Vermont Township of Vermont. Johannes Anders Hauge became a farmer, was married and had 15 children: Carl, John, Andrew, Peter, Mrs. Arne Steensrud, Mrs. Anton Bakken, Mrs. John Peterson, Mrs. Nils Haugner, Mrs. Molly Gesme. Several young children died during the diptheria epidemic during the 1890's. They were buried in the woods on Norton Urness's farm, a temporary cemetery.

Although we have very little information as to the destination and history of this list of immigrants who settled in Vermont, it's still interesting to read their names: Halsten Bakken, an uncle of Gulbrand Dokken; Guul Kantom Overby from Hedalen; Knut, Harold, Ole and Peter Brager; Anders Espelien; Gulbrand Sagamoen; Ole Langedraglien; Svein Thompson Lien; Syver Gaarder and family of 13 children; Berit Olsdatter Roang with family of 11 children; Mikkell Blekkelien who decided to leave the Valdres settlement of Manitowoc to settle in Vermont; built a cart on which he loaded his belongings and pulled the cart with its 300 lb. load to Vermont. He was a signer to a contract to build a parsonage for Vermont, Perry and other congregations. His parents, Halsten (1788-1886) and Taaren (1788-1872) came to America to live with him. Mikkell was born 1811 and died 1888. He and the Rev. John Field married sisters.

Arne Olson Steensrud with eleven children came to Vermont in 1852. They spent some time in the Springdale and Blue Mounds area before settling in Vermont. Arne was one of Begnadalen's noted violinists. There are many stories about his "fiddling" ability. Both he and his wife, Bergit, entertained at weddings and other "merrymakings". He also composed some selections which are known in Norway even now as "Steinsrud Laaten". This is a story about a boat with the whole wedding party aboard which sank as it was crossing the fjord. All the people on the boat

drowned but the violin was seen floating down the stream, still playing. Arne and Bergit continued to play for weddings and parties in America also. On one of these occasions one of their daughters died on the dance floor. This caused them so much grief that they refused to entertain after that. It is reported that Arne smashed his violin. Two of their daughters then living in Chicago, salvaged the pieces and took it to Chicago to have it repaired and perhaps placed in a museum.

Ole Pederson Skalet, born in 1790, emigrated in 1861 and settled in Vermont. He married Gunhild Haraldsdatter. They had one son, Peter, born May 22, 1820. Gunhild, his wife died and he married again to Gulborg (Guljør) Rundhaug. They had two sons, Sever who died of a sunstroke while working in a grain field (17 years old). Their second son, Gulbrand (Gilbert) Skalet married Tonetta Strandbraaten. She had three brothers who came to America: Halsten Peterson, Ole Peterson and Gilbert Peterson. Their mother's name was Nordby (her second husband's name, she was first married to Peter Strandbraaten).

Gulbrand and Tonetta Skalet had four children: Sever, Alma, Hannah and Nora. Sever married Dorothea Venden. Their children—Grant married Grace Steensrud; Thora married Welberne Gillette (he passed away in 1938); Jorgen married Mildred Mickelson; Dorothy May married Lyle Underwood; Stephen married Inez Brager; Gilbert and Maurice, both single; Philip married Ethel Grinder; Phyllis married David Bower. Descendants of this family live in Vermont and the surrounding area.

Alma Skalet was a school teacher who in later years was employed at the Farmer's Store in Black Earth.

Hannah Skalet, born May 16, 1881, was married to Joseph Field. They lived in Vermont before moving to Madison. They had four children: Grant, Marshall, Arnold and Esther. In 1976 at the age of 95, Hannah still lives at her home in Madison.

Nora Skalet married Arthur N. Knudtson. They had four children: Nordahl "Bud" Knudtson, Minocqua, Wisconsin; Adeline Knudtson, Black Earth; Dorothy Townsend, Battle Creek, Michigan; Valborg Knudtson, Washington, D. C.

Ole Grøtedden emigrated from Hallingdahl, Norway. Ole and Andreas Eid also came from Hallingdahl. John Dybdahl, who was married to Thora Eid was also in this group. There were many more immigrants whose histories are not available. This source of information, based on recollections of descendants of pioneer families are occasionally contradictory because written dates of newspaper information are scarce or unavailable. Even church

records, the only official birth and marriage information omit female geneology unless connected with a man's name in marriage.

**Norwegians Named on the Monument at the
Vermont Pioneer Cemetery
Section 11, Vermont Township, Dane County, WI**

Mrs. Hans Tomptene – Gunhild Monsdatter Liabakklien, born about 1827 at Liabakkli on the Steinsetre farm in Bang, Valdres, first wife of Hans Arneson Tomptene (also written Tømtitn from Skjersteineige), born 3 August 1824. They emigrated together from Bang in Valdres in 1851, sailing out of Drammen on the sailing ship, *SJOFNA*, 31 May, and arriving in New York 21 July 1851. Hans and Gunhild had two children, Arne b. ca. 1852, and Caroline born ca. 1854. Apparently Gunhild died in childbirth about 1855-57, and the child died also and is buried at the Pioneer Cemetery (see H. Gunderson notes ca. 1946). Hans Arneson was married 22 January 1858, to Randi Eriksdatter (daughter of Erik Knudsen Sevre and Sigrid Knudsdatter), by the Rev. P.M. Brodahl. The 1860 census shows the family living in Vermont township with 3 children, Arne 8, Caroline 4, and Galena (Helene) 1 year old. Hans' children with his first wife were confirmed in Vermont, Arne in 1866 and Caroline in 1868. In 1874 the family was living in Green County, when Jeline (Galena/Helena) was confirmed in 1874 at the York church, and the brothers, Erik and Albert, were confirmed there 30 October 1881. At the time of the 1880 census they were living in York Township, Green County, Iowa, and had the following children: Arne, Caroline, Helenaye, Siri, Erik, Albert, Maria, and Hellen B(ertine). Sometime in the 1880s the family moved to Worth County, Iowa, near Randi's parents, the Sevre's. Hans and Randi lived in Northwood, IA at the time of the 1900 census. Also living with them was a daughter, Mary (probably Maria, born ca. 1869).

Gunhild is Virginia Urness' and Dave Haugen's ggg aunt. (See Valdres Bygdebok Vol B page 529; also the internet - *Digitalarkivet*: Migrants from Valdres 1816-67, and the Solum Swiggum Austreim Ship Index – Roll # 102, arr. No. 977. Census 1860 1880 1900. Blaine Hedberg of the Vesterheim Genealogical Center and Naeseth Library in Madison, WI provided information on this family).

Mrs. Ole Flashaugen – was born Thora Olsdatter Hain, at the Aasli farm in Hedalen, Valdres, Norway. She was the daughter of Ole Anderssen Åsli (1806-1878) and his first wife, Barbro Knutsdatter Midtmoen (1804-1841). They were married in 1830, and had 5 children, the oldest, Tora, born in 1831. Tora emigrated from Norway in 1853 when she was 22 years old. Thora was married in Wisconsin to Ole Tollefson Flatshaugen, who was born 24 May 1828 on the Flaten farm in Valdres, Norway, and emigrated in 1852. Ole is said to have been a woodcutter when he first arrived in this country. Thora and Ole had three children, Mathea b. 1857, Merte (Mary) b. 1859, and Ole b. 1860. Mathea and the mother, Thora, died in 1863. According to the Vermont Lutheran church records, Ole married Thora's sister, Ingeborg Olsdatter, 19 December 1865. Descendants use the name Tollefson. It is believed that **Miss Mattie Flashaugen** was Mathea, Thora and Ole's eldest daughter, who was born in 1857, and died as a child in 1863.

Many descendants, including the Tollefsons living adjacent to the Urness farm where the monument is located, still live in Dane County. (See p. 27 and p. 68 Valdres Bygdebok, Vol. D; Iver Hain article from *Decorah Posten* 19 December 1924; Vermont Township history book 1977, page 178. *Digitalarkivet*: Migrants from Valdres 1816-67. 1860 and 1880 Census).

Mrs. Halvor Bakken –is probably **Ragnild**, the second wife of Halvor Halvorson Bakkin (Nordåkereige). Halvor was born in 1821 in Nord Aurdal, Valdres, and emigrated in 1849 on the ship LYNA , with his first wife, Marit Olsdatter Selseng (born ca. 1830) arriving in New York August 14, 1849. They signed out of the Nord Aurdal congregation 8 May 1849 to emigrate, and came first to Perry. In Henry Bakken's book, *Hills of Home*, it tells: "The Bakkens were not emigrants long before tragedy struck them. Marit died in childbirth, The little baby lived. The little girl was christened Anna Christi. Some time during the first year, 1850, Halvor learned that land was available in the township of Vermont." Halvor moved to Vermont township with his little girl, Anna, and ca.1851 he married **Ragnild**– with whom he had a daughter, Tonetta, born ca. 1852. The 1860 census shows Halvor 40, Ragnild 30, Anne 10, and Tonetta 8, living in Vermont. Ragnild died between 1860-1862 of "quick consumption." Halvor's third wife was Kari Arnesdatter Hardhaug, the young widow of Mikkel Mikkelson Sukke. Kari had emigrated from Hedalen in Valdres in 1861 with her husband, Mikkel Mikkelson, and their 2 children, Mikkel and Anne. Mikkel died just a few years after arriving in Wisconsin, and his widow married Halvor ca. 1862. They had 8 children: Hannah Mathea 1863, Halvor 1865, Halvor 1867, Anton 1869, Inger Maria 1871, Ole 1873, Emma Aline 1877, and Martin 1881.

There are many Bakkens living in the area who are descended from the children of Haaver and Kari. There are also descendants of Kari and her first husband, Mikkel Mikkelson, including Connie Goderstad, and the Husets. (See pages 14 & 18 in Henry Bakken's book, *Hills of Home*. Sør Aurdal Bygdebok Vol D, also new Nord Aurdal Bygdebok which has not yet been published, but information was provided by the author, Bjørn Gunnar Østgard. *Digitalarkivet*: Migrants from Valdres 1816-67. 1860 and 1880 Census).

Mrs. Cecelia Hillestad – was born **Cecilie Olsdatter Gjesme** at the Kvam farm in Hafslø, Norway, 29 November 1823. She was married 19 April 1843 to Amund Andersen Hillestad. They emigrated in 1854 with three children, Brita Amundsdatter Hillestad, Ole Gjesme Amundson Hillestad, and Andrena Andersd. Hillestad. Indications are that Cecelia died in childbirth when a daughter, Olena, was born in 1855. That child died at age 4 in October, 1859 and is perhaps one of the children buried at the Pioneer Cemetery. Cecilie was a sister of Knut Gjesme (my husband's great grandfather), as well as Jens Gjesme, the first *lærer and klokker* (teacher and sexton) in Vermont. After Cecelia died, Amund Hillestad married again. On 7 September 1856 he married Anne Andersdatter Grinde, who emigrated from Leikanger, Norway, in 1854. Together they had at least 8 children. In 1875 they lived in Blue Mounts Twp., and in 1880 I found them in Moody County, Dakota Territory. Cecelia's oldest daughter, Brita, married 1st August Peterson, 2nd Carl Peterson and had at least 9 children, and many descendants. Cecelia's son, Ole, married Gjertrud Rumohr Kjos (also from Hafslø) and lived in Modena Twp., Buffalo Co., WI. They had 9 children and many descendants also.

Information provided by Connie Erickson O'Rourke of Grand Rapids, MN; Ruth Quail, Sinai, SD; Zane Lund, Auburn, Alabama, and Lars Øyane, Luster County Historian, Geilo, Norway. (See Ann Urness Gesme's book, *Look to the Rock, the Gesme Episode*, page 100-101; also 1860 and 1880 US census, 1875 Wisconsin census).

Arne Olson Steensrud – was born in Sør Aurdal, Valdres, Norway, in 1799 to Ole Arnesen Steinsrud (1769- ca. 1839) and Beret Andersdatter (ca. 1774-1867) who was probably from Garthus. In 1825 Arne married Berit Olsdatter Roo (Røang) (b. 1807), and they had 11 children born in Norway (one died there when a year old). In 1851 Arne Olsen, who was the last of the family of fiddlers at Steinsrud, sold the farm in Valdres and emigrated in 1852.. Arne was 53 years old and his wife, Berit Olsdatter Roo was 45 when they left Norway with nine of their children: Anders, Arne, Inger Bertine, Berit, Gunnild, Anton, Siri, Anne Sophie, as well as their 2nd son, Ole Andreas Arnesen Steensrud (b.1827) and his wife Cristine Kristafersdatter Skiftet(b. 1825). Ole A.A. and Christine were married in 1850 and had a daughter (Beret) , but the child died at birth. Arne and Berit's eldest son, also named Ole (b.1826), emigrated in 1853 with his wife Marie Mikjelsdatter Strømmen (b. 1823), and children Arne b. 1847 and Martin b. 1851.

Arne has many descendants in Wisconsin and other states, including Marguerite Parrell who is a member at Vermont. (See p. 91 Valdres Bygdebok C; p. 46-47, also 107. *Sogn og Soge I Søndre Ourdahl* 1984; page 19 *Sagn og Soge I Søndre Ourdal anno 1986*. *Digitalarkivet*: Migrants from Valdres 1816-67. 1860 Census).

Miss Andrine Solve born 1866 – daughter of Erik Eriksen Solvi (Solvei), who emigrated from Hafslø, Sogn, Norway, in 1847, and went to the Koshkonong settlement in Dane Co. In 1849 he married Anne Andersdatter Solvorn from Hafslø who emigrated in 1847. In 1850 they were living in Vermont Ttownship, and were owners of part of the present Urness farm, including the land where the pioneer cemetery is located. In 1866 the family moved to Blue Mounts Twp., to Hodges Twp, Stevens Co., MN in 1876; and to Cyrus, MN in 1899. The Knut Gjesme family came to the Solvi farm when they emigrated in 1854, and it was there in the Solvi dugout that Lars, Dean Gesme's grandfather, was born in November of 1854.

The descendants of the Solvi family have been located in Minnesota. Among them is Howard Sylvester, whose mother was a Solvi of this family. Howard Sylvester lives with his wife, Terry, in Sauk Rapids, MN. They are having a Solvi reunion 14 September this year. (See #797, p.59 in Naeseth's book, *Norwegian Immigration to the United States 1847-48*. Vol 3. 1850, 1860 and 1880 Census).

Lars Monson Haugen or Hagen, was born in Hafslø, Norway, and baptized 23 November 1805. He was known as **Lars Monsen Urnæss** when he emigrated at age 40, leaving Bergen 19 April 1847. He first went to the Spring Prairie settlement in Hampton Twp., Columbia County, WI, a few miles from Sun Prairie. 5 April 1850 Lars married the widow, Anna Iversdatter (1803-1892), and they moved to Vermont Township, where they had the farm next door to Lars' wife's daughter, Anna Haagensdatter, who was married to Wilken Asbjornsen (Wilken's family). Lars Monson was the uncle of Martha Urness, Johannes Hanson Urness' wife.

Lars Monson had no children - but is Norton Urness' , Mary Webber's , Connie Goderstad's and my ggg uncle. He was also the second husband of Wilken Asbjornsen's mother-in-law. (See Gerhard Naeseth, *Norwegian Immigrants to the United States* Vol 3. Also 1850, 1860, 1880 Census).

Halsten Gilbertson (Halsteen Gulbransen) was born at Piltingsruddokka on the Vestre Piltingsrud farm in Begndalen, Valdres, Norway in 1812 to Gudbrand Olsen (1767-1815) and Tora Olsdatter Grimsrud (1774-1863). They were married in 1793 and had 11 children, 10 of them living when the father, Gudbrand, died as the result of injuries he received in a fight with "Hallinguten," a notorious trouble-maker. Halsten was only 3 years old when his father died, and in 1825 his mother married Ivar Sjursen Iljanstad. About 1840 Halsten married Eli (Elen/Ellen) Olsdatter Steinsrudskaret (b. 1817). Halsten was 40 and Eli 35 when they emigrated in 1852 with 4 children, Thora 10, Gulbrand 8, Ole 4, and Gunnild 2. He was NOT the first white settler in the Vermont valley as stated in the township history on page 134, but was among the early residents there. Halsten died before 1860. I found the family listed as Olson in the 1860 Census, where the mother is shown as Eli Olson and the children are Thora, Gulbrand, Ole, Gunhild and Andrina Olson.

There are many descendants in and around Vermont, including the Forshaugs, Halstens, etc. (See Vermont Township history book 1977 - pages 133-135. Pages 704-705 *Valdres Bygdebok* Vol. B., pages 188 and 105 *Valdres Bygdebok*, Vol. C. Page 48 *Sagn og Soge I Søndre Ourdal anno 1984. Digitalarkivet: Migrants from Valdres 1816-67. 1860 US Census*).

Erik Knudsen Sævre (Sevre) is NOT buried here there, but is buried with his wife and numerous descendants at Elk Grove Cemetery near Kensett, Iowa.. Perhaps his name was included on the monument to recognize him as one of the very early settlers in Vermont – or it might have been erroneously selected when the monument was inscribed. Erik Sevre was born in Hallingdal, Norway, about 1804, and in 1851 he left Norway with his wife Sigri age 40, and the following children: Ragndi 20 (2nd wife of Hans Tomte/Tompto), Birgit 18, Knut 11, another Knut 10, Barbo 7, and Erik age 3. They left Drammen on 17 May 1851 on the bark, *CHRISTIANE*, and arrived in New York 11 July. According to the passenger list on the Solem Swiggum Ship Index they were housed "on deck and below deck." The family first lived in Vermont township and later moved to Iowa. Erik Knudsen's son, Knudt E, Sævre, was a pioneer farmer near Northwood, IA from 1868. A grandson, Bertinius K. Sævre, was a teacher at Luther College in Decorah Iowa, and started a number of schools before becoming the editor and publisher of the Glenwood Herald in Glenwood, MN. Another son, Erik, was sheriff in Northwood, Iowa, from 1880-1887, and later a businessman there. Apparently the other son, Knut, was a farmer near Kensett, IA, since 1872. His son, Louis, was a doctor from 1901 in Osage, IA. Wayland Savre said a son, Sam, was also a doctor.

Information provided by Wayland Savre, a retired geologist living in Houston, TX, a direct ad descendant of Erik Knudsen Sævre. Additional information is from Martin Ulvestad's book, *Nordmændene i Amerika*, Vol. 2; also the Internet - Solum Swiggum Austreim Ship Index; and Federal Census of 1860 and 1880).

Prepared by: Ann Urness Gesme, 2119 Lincolnshire Dr. SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403
Phone (319) 362-6910 Email augdghg@mchsi.com -- 18 September 2003



