

# VERMONT *Life*

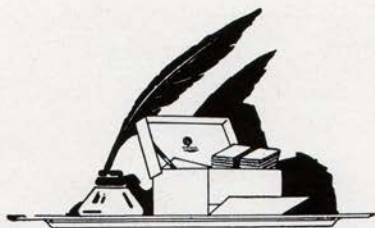
Summer 1954

35 cents





# At the Sign



# of the Quill

A Department of Literary Comment

By ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH

*Loud sound of running water, wherever water runs, falling of a sudden on the car—difference of degree of silence, even in the country, by day and night. At a quarter past eight, birds—mountain-side, the valley, ringing with answering calls. Later (a thrush) a soft musical call from the darkening woods. . . . Spider webs in the air; winged things—moths—flying, a large one fluttering in front of my eyes. Sweet scents. Gurgling, tinkling waterfalls. Quantities of fireflies—hillside spangled—on grassy mound, dancing under the moon. "July" in Stowe Notes by Edward Martin Taber, 1913.*

## Off the Deep End—Again!

FRIENDLY writers to the Quill have tripped me, most of them unknowingly, into impasses and bogs from which I have emerged with, at least, wet feet. I do not know what will happen with this venture, but I am going to see it through.

In a recent *Quill* I suggested that one real way to know Vermont was to visit every town in the state. A note from New Jersey—why is New Jersey, in my experience anyway, the skeptical state?—asked me politely if "You had visited every town in your state?" I promptly checked over my Vermont memorabilia, feeling sure I could lay my New Jersey querist low, only to discover that I had missed the town of Jay. The next weekend, I set sail to Jay, and not only discovered a most beautiful area of the state, but reached a definite determination to settle a few issues.

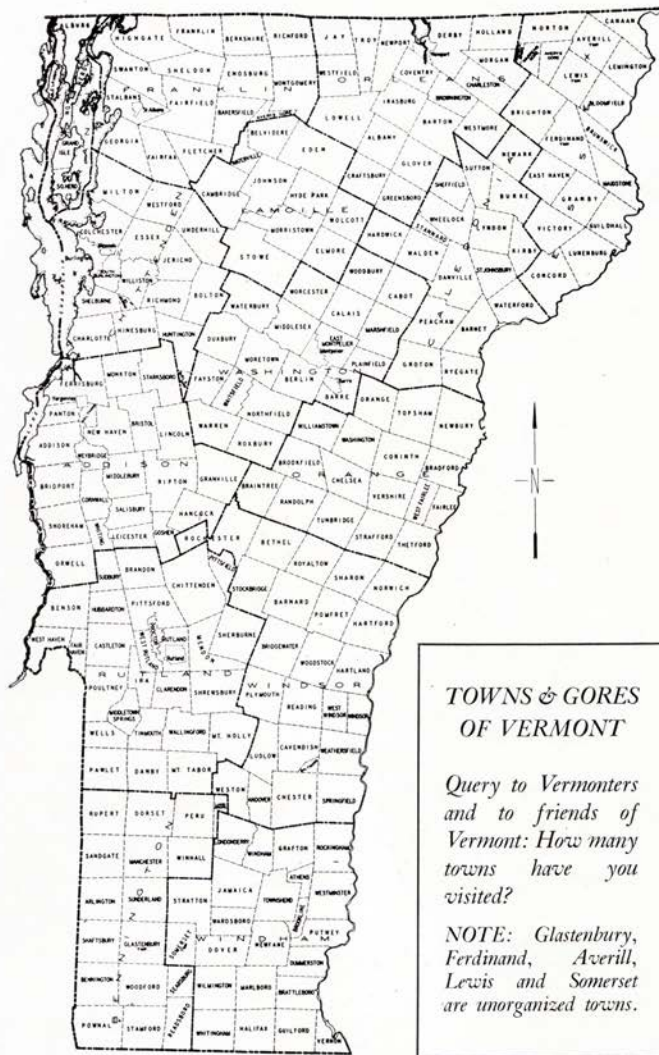
First, let me say that I wager not more than 1000 of the 377,747 Vermonters in this state, can say they "know Vermont," and of that 1000, I'll wager again—note that being part Scotch, I am wagering nothing—that less than 100 have visited every town in the state. Years ago, before

(Continued on next page)



Willard

ABOVE: Straight road and smooth meadows are untypical, but this is Berlin, Vermont.



**TOWNS & GORES  
OF VERMONT**

*Query to Vermonters  
and to friends of  
Vermont: How many  
towns have you  
visited?*

*NOTE: Glastenbury,  
Ferdinand,  
Acerrill,  
Lewis and Somerset  
are unorganized towns.*

hope he does—to himself. The driver who uses his brains will find a drive on a country road through miles of peace and fresh air, into delightful scenery, and among a kindly people—if the driver himself has a regard for the rights of others—worth every hour he gives to such a trip. Vermont from the beginning has been a state of towns, historically and otherwise, and in them and in them only can the real Vermont be found and seen.

Now that that issue is settled, here is the last step. I propose to organize a 251 Club to be made up of Vermonters and others who can show that they have visited, not merely driven through, the 251 towns in the state. We will have an annual meeting in Montpelier each summer and compare pictures, notes and memories, with no speeches; any high-domed or long-winded speaker who shows up will be tomahawked in the best Iroquois style.

At present this club has two members, myself and Huntley Palmer of St. Johnsbury, not a member of that town's Rotary Club; he has convinced me he is eligible. If you can qualify as a charter member, write me in care of *Vermont Life* and give your evidence. If it passes, you are a charter member of an elite organization. December first the rules will change. If interested but doubtful—and I don't blame you—write for hints. Our Vermont Development Commission will start you off by sending you a larger copy of the map shown at left as well as the latest highway map.

the auto, I knew men who had never been fifty miles from their village or farm; now, there is no excuse for a Vermonter's saying that he does not know his state from top to bottom. I brought the idea of this state-wide visitation to the fore in a talk given to the St. Johnsbury Rotary Club; and even in that steadily and wisely growing Vermont community, was met with silence.

Regardless of what these Vermonters do, I still suggest that our summer visitors and others give serious consideration to a plan to visit *every* town in the state. A swift turn from one of our main roads, and you are on your way to the rewarding experience of a lifetime and memories

good until the years are frosty. One of my correspondents wails, "The roads are so full of curves, and no room to turn out!" This is nonsense. Our farmers and their friends have been driving them for years; and the accidents on our roads are on our main roads, not on the country roads; and they, the farmers and the rest of us who like the hill and valley areas, have been turning out for each other for a quarter of a century without damage and without words, except, may be, a few "cuss words" that arise from situations other than road conditions. The driver who expects to slam over the country roads as he does over main roads will get into plenty of trouble—and I