

The Story of Stevensville Underhill, Vermont

By
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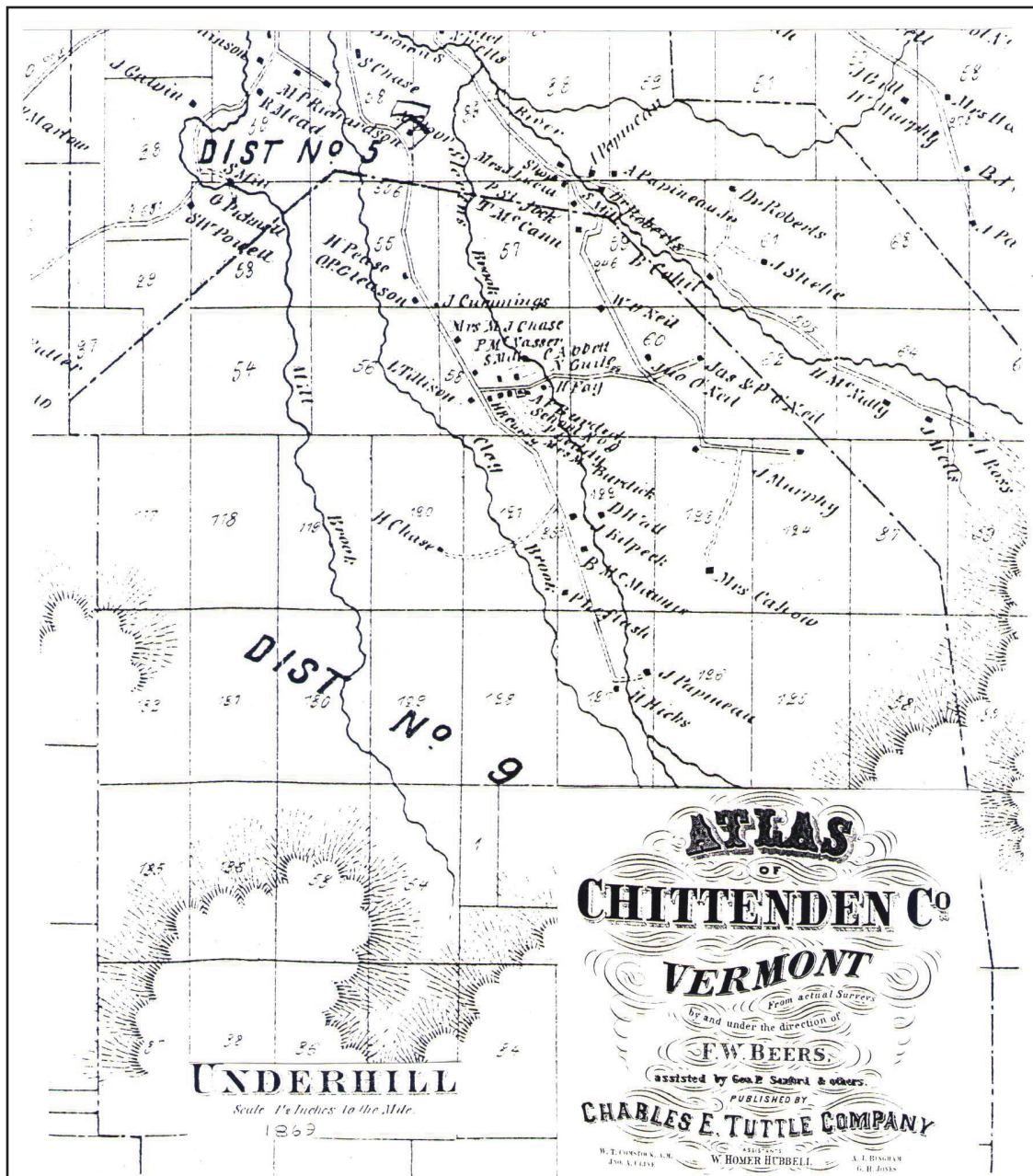
Nebraska Notch, Stevensville Section of Underhill, c. 1940

~~ PREFACE

The physiography of Underhill is a series of parallel hills and valleys which has lead naturally to the creation of individual neighborhood hamlets, each with its own familiar name, social life, and history. The area on Mt. Mansfield called Stevensville took its name from lumberman Luther Stevens, who in the mid 1860s managed two lumber mills and associated logging operations. The sawmills were on a tributary of the Browns River which became known as Stevens Brook. As the logging community grew, it became known as Stevensville and the road to Union Village (later, Underhill Center) on which Luther Stevens built his fine home became Stevensville Road. The brook was later officially called Stevensville Brook.

The Stevensville area was primarily School District #9, which was much enlarged with the addition of some of the lots from the Town of Mansfield when it was split between Underhill and Stowe in 1839. The area encompasses all of the upper watershed of the Stevensville Brook. It includes the Butler Lodge and Taylor Lodge trails, as well as a large section of the Long Trail. A distinguishing feature is Nebraska Notch with Sugarloaf Hill, as well as other spectacular geologic sites. The steep Clay Brook ravine distinctively separates Stevensville from the neighboring hamlet of Beartown, although some of the upper uninhabited area of Beartown appears on the map to have been part of the original School District #9. The Mansfield State Park occupies most of the original Town of Mansfield lots.

From its early beginnings over 180 years ago as a logging community with several sawmills, a wood products factory and a group of about 30 working families with an attractive schoolhouse, to a short-lived period of sheep and potato farming, then for more than 50 years an often described “exclusive” summer colony as well as a winter ski destination, it has evolved into a full time residential suburb which includes a drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility. The evolution was man-made, as the natural habitat was altered over the years.



~~ THE LOGGING COMMUNITY

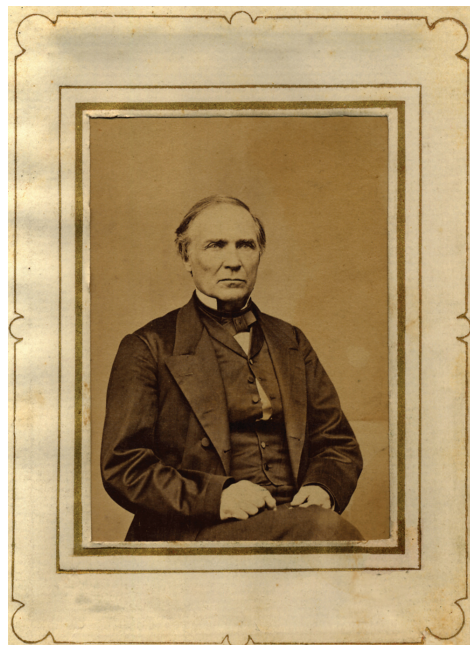
The historical ecology of the Upper Stevensville Brook Watershed has been studied and documented in great detail for the Vermont Department of Parks and Recreation by forester Charles V. Cogbill (ref. 1, June 1996). A copy of his preliminary report is in the Town vault. The following history of logging is primarily summarized from his work.

The Town of Mansfield was chartered in 1804, straddling both sides of the mountain. From the beginning it was an unviable economic and political arrangement. The lots were usually associated with absentee landowners with no real interest in developing the property. In fact, the lots were not used and were effectively unowned. For the next 20 or 30 years the lots near the Underhill side were obtained at vendue sales for back taxes by nearby residents. In particular, one Azarius Williams accumulated rights to over 3000 acres on the mountain. As the market for lumber spread with the increase in Vermont population in the early 1800s, the spruce timber on the easily accessible west side of the mountain, together with the availability of water power, drew the interest of business investors. Clearing began as early as 1827. In 1836, Azarius Williams sold his forest land, including the Stevensville drainage, to David Read of St. Albans, who accumulated more acreage and took as partner, John Wheeler of Burlington, for his 'self estimated' 15,000 acres in the region.

To solidify their claim Wheeler and Read had the land surveyed and confirmed ownership of 8376 acres in Mansfield. Then in 1838 these entrepreneurs bought some fields in Underhill (later Maple Leaf Farm) from J. Lee and J. Brown and built a sawmill on the property (1840). Shortly thereafter, they sold interest in the mill along with 3500 acres of land to Henry P. Hickok, a lumber businessman from Burlington. Hickok took on Luther M. Stevens as a junior partner, with 1/3 share. Stevens moved to Underhill Center in 1843 to found the logging village of Stevensville and manage the Underhill mills. His name was given to the Stevensville Brook, Stevensville Village and the main road to Underhill Center. He also built a fine home on Stevensville Road which has a long history and is a residence today. (ST 157).



Luther Stevens Home c. 1845



Henry P. Hickok

In 1839 the Town of Mansfield had been dissolved by the Vermont Legislature and lots were divided between Stowe and Underhill - after considerable argument. All of the watershed of the Brown's River tributary, later called Stevensville Brook, went to Underhill, except for a small piece of the northeast corner near the Forehead which later became part of Stowe.

The Hickok and Stevens partnership built a second sawmill on the now-called Stevens Brook, just over the old Mansfield line. In 1856 the partnership rented the upper mill to C.H. Woodruff for 8 years. They also leased their land to be harvested by local farmers, but "such as timber not to be cut faster than the land is fitted for cultivation." (Early sustainable forestry.)

By the end of the 1850s Stevensville had two sawmills, a shingle mill, and a measure factory. At least 30 families were working in the sawmills and woodworking industries. The community had a handsome school with a belfry. The Forbush Steam Mill at the falls on the Stevens Brook had about 10 employees manufacturing peck measures, cheese and butter boxes. Unfortunately, the mill burned down in 1861 and was not rebuilt.

In 1859 the 'upper' Hickok and Stevens sawmill, with one circular and one upright saw is recorded as cutting 60 thousand feet of board and box materials. This seems to be the high point of activity at the upper mill, for in 1864 Hickok and Stevens sold much of the mill lot and adjacent land to farmer, Hiram Hicks. Then, in 1865 Luther Stevens moved to Jericho, where he became a well respected and active member of the community. His move seemed to indicate the end of the Stevensville village.

As the loggers cleared the land of trees, some hillsides became grazing lands. In 1840, according

to records, there were more sheep than people in town. Hiram Hicks on the farm at the end of Stevensville Road raised sheep. Sheep raising attracted young men from Ireland, who knew a lot about grazing sheep. In 1841 a young man from Ireland named Daniel Wall arrived in Stevensville, via Shelburne, along with a fellow countryman, Patrick Green, with whom he went into partnership. They logged on the mountain all their lives. In 1847 Peter and Margaret Leddy came to Underhill from Ireland, also via Shelburne. They settled in Stevensville, where Peter started a farm, adding acreage little by little until he had a fine agricultural operation - and nine children. The Leddy Farm dominated Stevensville and has played several important roles over the years. (Descendants of Margaret and Peter Leddy later became prominent in Burlington politics and there is a fine city park which carries the name.) Other families from Ireland came and settled early in Stevensville, including the Wells and O'Neils, Patrick McCaffrey, J. Murphy. Some became farmers, others worked in the woodworking industries.



Mount Mansfield, 1860. Oil on canvas. Charles Heyde

~~ LOGGING BOOM

The logging activity in Stevensville was relatively quiet from 1865 to 1879. Then a huge change occurred. With the arrival of the Burlington and Lamoille Railroad in Underhill in 1875 and the building of large steam mills in Underhill Flats, North Underhill and Pleasant Valley, in addition to the Underhill Center steam mill (1869), logs could be cut and transported in amounts undreamed of in the days of water-powered mills and ox cart transportation. Hickok and Stevens disposed of their mill property in Underhill in 1879. In 1880 Anson Field bought the remaining rights to the 'Mansfield Mountain land' (2000 acres) from the heirs of J. Wheeler. Nine years later that land was sold to L.F. Terrill and G.E. Terrill, merchants and lumbermen in Underhill Center. Logging then began in earnest and clear cutting was the order of the day. In 1897 the Terrills had bought the stumpage of "all timber, both hard and soft, standing, lying or growing forever on land" in the Browns River drainage north of Stevensville Brook. That year together with logger G.M.Knight, who operated the steam mill in Underhill Flats, they shipped thousands of board feet of lumber to mills as far away as Burlington. Then in 1898 the Terrills sold their operation to W.H. Martin of Royalton, Vt. He moved to Underhill, but within six years he sold out to C.H. Green (descendent of Patrick Green?) who in turn sold 2100 acres of "wild land" and stumpage to the Champlain Realty Company, a subsidiary of the International Paper Company. Cutting was intense. In 1905 the sawmill and lumber business was said to be the leading industry in Underhill. In the 1903-1908 timeframe there were extensive fires in previously cut stands north of Stevensville Brook, which extended down as far as 1600 ft. A 1915 map does show some second-growth hardwoods in the Stevensville area, presumably resulting from early farm clearing, And there were still some small farming operations in the area.

~~ STATE OWNERSHIP

Mount Mansfield State Park was established in 1914 with the acquisition of former Mansfield land on the Underhill side of the mountain from Ralph and Louise Case. In 1929 the State of Vermont added approximately 1238 acres from Champlain Realty. The Vermont Department of Forestry and Parks has managed the logging operations in a professional, sustainable manner, compatible with the recreational uses of the park. Over the years the size of the Park has grown with acreage which has been donated or purchased on both sides of the mountain. On the Underhill side of the mountain, the Grand List currently (2013) shows 6035 acres in the State Park. UVM owns 160 acres of fragile tundra on the 'Chin'.

~~ LOGGING SUMMARY (ref. Cogbill)

The upper Stevensville Brook drainage has been intensively used for forest production for over 150 years. The lowest reach of the valley near the confluence of the two branches of the brook was an early sawmill privilege and the site of several small farmsteads in the early 1800s. Activities associated with these properties extended up to about 1700 feet elevation and included clearance for cultivation, pastures and the cutting of woodlots for farm consumption. The vast majority of the watershed, however, was used for timber production, initially feeding the water-powered mills, then the larger steam-mills in Underhill and Jericho. Through time, separate ownerships of this timberland, held in large blocks following the drainage, correspond to four periods of logging interest. Hickok and Stevens did an initial cut for spruce. Terrill brothers did a short, intensive cut of the remaining softwood, their operation exceeding growth replacement. Champlain Realty began the removal of hardwoods. The Vermont Department of Forests has since actively managed the site for continued production through site improvement and periodic harvest of both soft and hardwoods.



Underhill Center and Stevensville, 1924

~ ~ VILLAGE GENTRIFICATION

In spite of the extensive logging in the Stevensville section, the part of the mountain accessed by Mountain Road, which paralleled the Browns River, attracted hikers, health seekers and scenery appreciators early on. Trails were cleared on the mountain as early as 1847. The first Halfway House was built beside a large spring on the Mountain Road in 1850 and the Summit House settled under the 'Nose' in 1858. There were bridle trails as well as hiking trails across the mountain. When the Burlington and Lamoille Railroad arrived in Underhill in 1875, the trip from Burlington became much easier and the hotels in Underhill and Riverside thrived. Many famous people came to climb the mountain, including well known writer, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who stayed at the Hotel Mansfield in Underhill Center with his daughter and wrote about their Mansfield experience with appreciation. In 1910 the Green Mountain Club was organized by James P. Taylor. It started clearing in 1924 for a trail from Camel's Hump to Mt. Mansfield. (Over the years the trail grew and grew into the extended 'Long Trail', the length of Vermont.)

Meanwhile, with the clear cutting of the forests, the demise of the sawmills and woodworking factory, by the turn of the 20th century the hamlet of Stevensville was dying. The schoolhouse was abandoned and fell into disrepair. Families moved away. The few small farms were unsustainable, for sheep grazing had moved West and potato starch was no longer a popular commodity. But many Burlington residents who enjoyed the grandeur of the mountain (and could see it from where they lived) were attracted by the unspoiled simplicity of the Stevensville area. Early on, in 1913, Judge Henry Shaw bought the Papineau and Carvage farms on Stevensville Road. The Carvage house had burned, but there was a large barn (in need of repair) on the farm and the small barn with the Papineau house had a magnificent view of the mountain. The 'Shaw Barn' became 'The Place' where Fanny Shaw served tea for friends to enjoy the view, and ping pong was played on rainy days. Judge Henry's sister was also named Fanny. Fanny Laura Shaw had married engineer Willard Pope and moved to Detroit, but she so missed Vermont that she enlisted her brother to buy her a piece of Stevensville. In 1913 he bought for her the 100 acre Richardson Farm, just up Stevensville Road. (With the advent of the U.S. entry into WWI, the Popes did not see the property until 1919.)

Dr. Lyman Allen, who was Dean of the UVM Medical School, bought the former Forbush Mill prop-

erty and created a summer swimming pool where the large rock dam for the mill had been. When the Popes took over the Richardson Farm, they sold a small acreage from the property adjacent to the Allen land to their friend from Rhode Island, George Benedict. His son, Grennie, (Grenville) who later took over the property, was for many years a much-loved Dean at Andover Academy in Massachusetts. Levi Smith, President of the Burlington Savings Bank, bought the former Hicks farm at the very end of Stevensville Road in 1923. It then had an unspoiled view across Lake Champlain to the Adirondacks. He named it 'Road's End' and so it has been called ever since. (In 1966 Life Magazine sent a reporter to live with the Burlington Smith family for an extended time to write up the history of this interesting and distinguished Burlington family. The articles appeared in four issues of Life Magazine in late 1966. A 1929 photo of the family standing at the front door of 'Road's End' was featured.)



Levi Jr., Julia, Frederick, Levi Sr., & Robert
at Roads End

The substantial Leddy farm had been sold in 1915 to Napoleon and Agnes Couture. In 1927 the Coutures sold the bulk of the property to Dr. John Wheeler. and his wife, Julia Warren Smith, a sister of Levi Smith. (Dr. Wheeler was a world renowned eye surgeon, especially famous for his operation on the then King of Siam). The Leddy Farm then became known as 'The Wheeler Farm'. On the hillside section on the south side of upper Stevensville Road, the Wheelers built a large log cabin with a fine view of the mountain. The cabin was built by local craftsmen, using logs and stones from the property. The large stone fireplace was particularly handsome. Most of the furniture, too, was made by local carpenters from trees harvested from the property. The Wheelers called it 'Sprucewood'. A similar, but smaller guest house was built across the road overlooking the Stevensville Brook. A clay tennis court was added and the brook was dammed to create a swimming hole, (which usually had to be rebuilt after the spring floods.) It was a grand vacation complex.

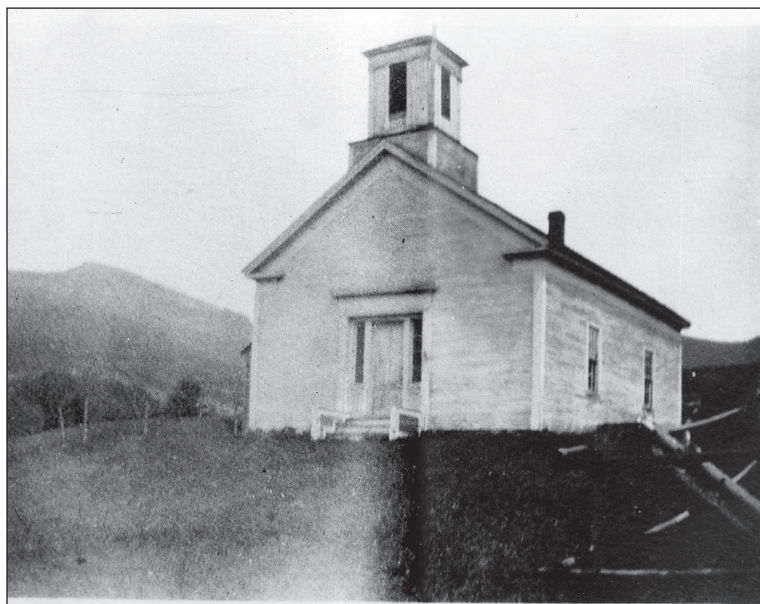
Other family members, including the next generation, as well as friends who came to visit, bought Stevensville land and became summer neighbors. The Wheeler's daughter, Martha Barker Montgomery, bought the O'Neil farms at the end of the Stevensville annex. Miss Patterson, Dean of Women at UVM,

bought the former Wells farm, adjacent to the Wheeler log cabin. Janet Beebe, sister of Grennie Benedict and married to an Army General, bought a large farm up the road, adjoining the Wheeler Farm. Dr. William Aycock, a public health expert on Infantile Paralysis, (the scourge of the time), whose wife Eleanor was Henry Hickok's descendant, bought the former Tillison farm across from the former Stevens homestead. They planted spruce trees and added a clay tennis court.

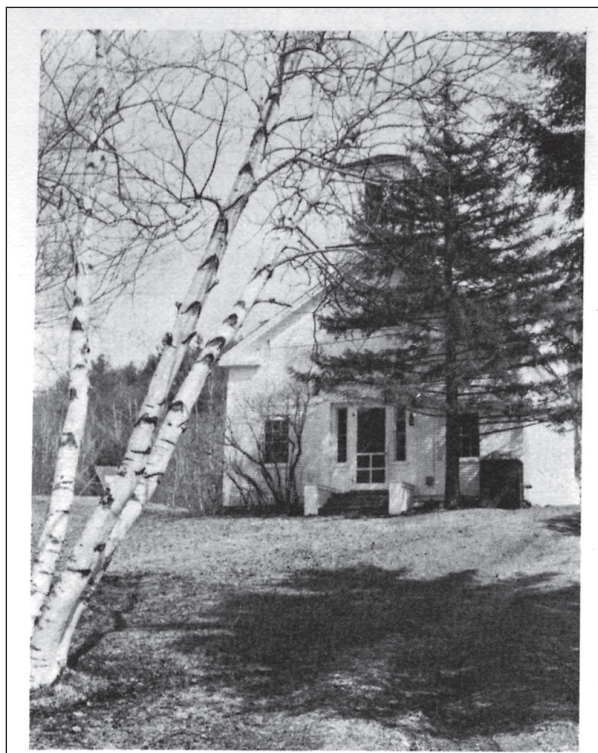


Mary Elizabeth Aycock, in front of the Aycock camp on Stevensville Road, 1920

Dudley Morris, artist and teacher at the Lawrenceville School in Princeton, bought the abandoned schoolhouse and remodeled it into a fine vacation home. Sadly, it was burned by an arsonist in the late 1970s. The land was donated to the neighboring Maple Leaf Farm. The Howard family, bankers from Long Island, bought the Tardie farms. One by one, Stevensville properties were acquired, mostly by people who all knew each other and were inter-related by family, college or business association. It was a very tight social community. Local people were engaged to help with summer entertainment and winter maintenance.



District Schoolhouse #9, c. 1900



District School #9
Morris Renovation, c. 1960

Meanwhile, John and Edna Shannon had bought the former Stevens homestead and created a popular vacation boarding establishment, where vacationers moved in with steamer trunks and stayed for weeks at a time. It was also popular for overflow guests of the vacation home owners. Local girls helped with the maintenance and meals. (Mrs. Shannon was said to be a demanding employer.) Some of the vacationers also ended up buying Stevensville properties for seasonal homes. In 1939, after the death of her husband, Mrs. Julia Wheeler sold the bulk of the 'Wheeler Farm' to the Shannons. At the same time she sold smaller lots to the adjacent Allens and Beebes in order to enlarge their properties. The Shannons sold their former vacation boarding house to the Comstocks, a young couple from Massachusetts, who planned to continue the business. According to the agreement, the clientele came with the property. For some reason, much of the clientele moved to the new Shannon establishment, leading to an unhappy court case, which dragged on for several years.



Shannon's Boarding House, c. 1925

For the summer vacationers, hiking the mountain was the main attraction. There were many beautiful sights to explore. The Long Trail from Camel's Hump to Mount Mansfield which had been created in 1924 was improved during the 1930s by the CCC. They also cleared some other spectacular trails and improved the camping area on the Mountain Road. The younger generation of 'summer folk' had enchanted summers, exploring the mountains and brooks, playing tennis, swimming in dammed up (very cold) brooks, riding horses, playing in old barns on rainy days. And they had lots of parties, as did their parents. The summers included tennis parties, evening 'singalongs', cocktail hours, fine dinners, continual social life.



Dr. W.L. Aycock painting, 1944



Leigh and Herb McArthur, 1965
(Dr. W.L. Aycock's granddaughter and son-in-law)

~~ REFORESTATION

A major determination of the older generation, much influenced by the conservation ethic, was to re-plant the denuded hillsides. With seedlings provided by the State of Vermont, doctors and engineers, lawyers, professors and bankers personally planted groves of white, red and scotch pines, firs, spruce, black oak. By 1946, photographs of the mountain began to show small growing trees. Unfortunately, monocultural planting leads to untoward consequences and in the 1950s many white pines in Vermont, and New York, as well, were

struck by 'blister rust'. Entire groves died almost overnight. The disease was carried on gooseberry bushes, so there was a great effort to eliminate that source of the problem. Some of the red pine was afflicted by "ring rot" and the wood was only good for 'chips'. (70 years or so later, many of the surviving trees had matured and needed to be harvested. Others were being removed by the third generation in order to restore the views.)

~~ NEBRASKA NOTCH

The scenic highlight of Stevensville is Nebraska Notch with its Sugarloaf hill in the middle. The name is associated with the Nebraska Valley on the Stowe side of the ridge. While not as dramatic as Smugglers Notch, it has its share of spectacular scenery, including cascades and falls in Clay Brook, which defines 'Stevensville' on the South.

In the early 1800s a road traversed Nebraska Notch over which teams of oxen hauled produce from Stowe Valley to markets in Burlington. The coming of the railroad through Waterbury ended the usefulness of the road about 1850 and it was subsequently abandoned. However, as early as 1863 an idea surfaced which would have created a scenic circle tour through Smugglers Notch and Nebraska Notch which would attract tourists. Nothing came of it at the time, but the idea resurfaced in publications in 1915 and 1916. Then, the State did improve the Smuggler's Notch carriage road, which had been built in the early 1890s, to make it available for auto travel. The Nebraska Notch road idea came to a head in the 1920s when Edwin W. Henry, who was the Underhill Town Representative and active in the Mt. Mansfield Civic Club, pushed for legislation which would open the road. Nothing happened until 1927, when under pressure from the Civic Club, an appropriation bill was introduced, which would have funded a survey and road construction. However, a group of property owners in Stevensville strongly opposed such a project, wishing to preserve the isolation of the area, and the appropriation bill was defeated. Then in the '30s, State Forester, Perry H. Merrill assigned the Civilian Conservation Corps to create a road across the mountain which would connect the Halfway House with Nebraska Notch. It was planned to push the road through the Notch to connect the northern part of the State Forest with the forest area in Waterbury. With the coming of WWII the CCC was dissolved and only a mile or so of the road had been built. It was visible on the side of the mountain for many years, but the traces of it are now mostly gone.

Taylor Lodge in the Notch is named after James Taylor, the founder of the Green Mountain Club. First built in 1926, it burned down in the winter of 1950-51 and was rebuilt that following fall. In 1971 the GMC began providing caretakers for the Lodge. The trail to the Lodge and the Notch begins at the parking lot at the end of Stevensville Road. It is a favorite for hikers and skiers.

Much time of the Underhill and Stowe Selectboards was spent in the 1990s to resolve an issue between the two towns and the Notch trail with respect to its proximity to the Lake Mansfield Trout Club. Lake Mansfield is an artificial lake dammed in 1899 by some Stowe men. It is regularly stocked with trout and the clubhouse is a social center. With the huge increase in traffic of hikers and skiers traveling so close to the private clubhouse, the members hoped to close off the trail. Since it had originally been an official town road, that was not feasible. Happily, the problem was resolved by relocating the trail through the Notch.

~~ WINTER SPORTS *

In 1937 Lawrence Eagan, whose farm stretched from the Mountain Road to Stevensville Road, set up a gasoline-powered rope ski tow on Stevensville Hill. The ski location had been spotted by Sepp Rusch, a famous skier from Austria, who was designing the ski area in Stowe on the other side of the mountain. The Stevensville setting was called 'The Snow Bowl'. The location was quite special, for it could be raining in Underhill Center and change to snow at the Snow Bowl elevation. A Winter Sports Club was formed in Underhill, new wintertime overnight accommodations were opened, elaborate transportation arrangements were set up, lights on the hill provided night skiing, and the advertising brochures presented a glowing account of the skiing facilities. In February 1941 a ski jump was erected in the State Park to accommodate a large intercollegiate ski meet. Stevensville was a major location for the ski events. The Winter Sports Club had great plans for

improvement and expansion of trails and facilities, but the advent of WWII changed everyone's plans. The men from the CCC were gone, along with every able bodied man in town. During the War, the 'Snow Bowl' did continue to operate, but on a small scale.

In 1946, after The War was over, the Durbrow family bought the former Eagan Farm, now the Underhill Farm. They improved the skiing and parking and called the facility the Underhill Ski Bowl. Bill Durbrow also ran the farm and raised premium Brown Swiss cows. During the next 18 summers, his mother, Mrs Helene Durbrow held Camp Mansfield**, a world renowned school for dyslexic boys, who needed help with reading and writing. The Underhill Farm was a very busy place. The Underhill Ski Bowl was an integral part of Stevensville for 37 years, where many young skiers learned the sport and some went on to World Competition. It closed with great regrets in 1982, a victim of the skyrocketing cost of insurance.

* See Winter Sports Chapter

** See Summer Activities Chapter

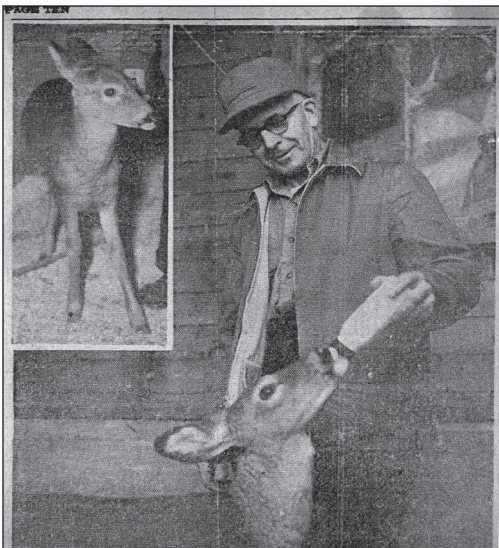
~~ THE McCLELLANS

No story of Stevensville would be complete without the presence of Carl and Louise McClellan. They were among the very few people living year-round on Stevensville Road during the era of the summer colony. They lived directly across the road from the Pope/Trask summer home and helped the summer family with year-round maintenance of the property and summer living.

Nearly all the early farmhouses were built close to the road to minimize winter snow removal and the McClellan farmhouse was indeed close to the road. Winter and summer, the outside lights were on, beckoning friends, as well as strangers needing direction or assistance. The Sam Foss poem, which reads, "Let me live in my house by the side of the road and be a friend to man" could have been written about them. They were always welcoming and hospitable -- and Louise's doughnuts were legendary.



Carl and Louise McClellan 1966



Faline and Friend, c. 1960

Carl served as an Underhill Selectman and as a State Representative to the Vermont Legislature. He also served many years as the local Game Warden. Raising orphaned fawns was a pleasure of the job. One orphan they named 'Faline' (after Bambi's friend.) The barn door was kept open so she could go in and out, but she preferred being in the house where she was fed on a bottle and enjoyed being petted. She returned to the wild, but for a while would come back to visit, sometimes in company with other fawns who would keep their distance. Then she was gone, to become only a happy memory.

Carl and Louise ran the Ski Bowl for many years when the Durbrows were busy with other projects. Their young son, Stevie, helped, too. Louise ran the warming hut with the snack bar and parents always knew their children were safe and happy. Carl also worked as occasional real estate dealer. A plaque on the new section of the iron fence at the Underhill Cemetery indicates its dedication to them for all they had meant to the community.

~~ WILDLIFE

In addition to the deer which add so much to the charm of the woods, there are other wild animals which make their presence known from time to time. In the 1950s porcupines were a nuisance, especially because they fancied the glue that was used in exterior plywood and chewed on any siding of that material they could find. The State Foresters introduced fishers into the State Park, a well known predator of porcupines. They really did a job and porcupines disappeared for a long time. (Fishers also fancied cats and many pets were lost, too.) Raccoons are common visitors, but amusing as they can be, garbage cans need to be tightly secured. Black bears have made a real comeback and visit as close as a back porch. They are especially attracted by bird feeders and feeding of birds during bear season is not a good idea. Moose and otter reside as well and a catamount has been sighted. Stevensville residents have always enjoyed living with their wildlife neighbors.



E.T. Moore and Friend, c. 1995

~~ MAPLELEAF FARM

In 1956 John and Edna Shannon sold their most of their establishment to Edith Spencer, with some small acreage on the borders going to the Luck family and Janet Beebe. The following year the Spencers gave their holdings to Maple Leaf Farm Associates Inc. This was an organization of Alcoholics Anonymous, which was a beneficiary of Mr. Spencer. The Association set up a 'residential recuperation facility' where men could spend extended periods to recover from alcohol addiction in the quiet countryside under the sheltering mountain. It was called Maple Leaf Farm.

Maple Leaf Farm encompassed large acreage, most of the original Leddy Farm, and there was lots of land on which the patients could roam. One summer a resident brought his horse and pastured it nearby. For many years the 'Farm' quietly fitted in with the local community. As a non-profit enterprise, the Town of Underhill affords tax exemption on the buildings and some of the land.

As the drug scourge began to take its toll on the public in the 1970s, the Farm began to accept people with drug problems as well as alcoholics. The residents became younger. Women were included. Over the years, with State and Federal support, as well as private donations, the establishment has continued to expand its facilities and services.

~~ POSTWAR CHANGES

During WWII summer festivities were mostly put on hold, as well as property maintenance. When the War ended, changes were inevitable. The original 'summer folk' were older and some had passed on. A new generation took over the properties and some parceled off the land for new camps and homes. Betty

Pease, daughter of Judge Henry and Fanny Shaw, sold off the former Carvage Farm. Grace Moore from Philadelphia bought 20 acres, more or less, including a large falling down barn. (Carl McClellan acted as real estate agent and the property bordered his own.) The land was to be a present for her son, Edwin, when he came home from the War. During a Christmas interlude, he had expressed an interest in owning a 'piece of Vermont' and had picked Underhill on the map, sight unseen. Grace and her daughter, Esther, had driven up to Underhill to explore and bought the Pease land without much hesitation.

When Edwin returned from the War, he drove up to see the property. He had envisioned a more remote wooded location. But he was soon off to England to study and did not pay much attention until several years later. In 1948, he looked at it seriously and conceived the idea of taking the old barn apart and using the materials to build a camp on a back knoll where there would be a fine view of the mountain. It was his neighbor, Carl McClellan, who gave him the encouragement to undertake the project.

With the skills of local craftsmen and the use of their hand tools, a 'cabin' was built in parts on the ground like a small barn and raised in one day in the summer of 1949, complete with evergreen totem on the peak of the roof rafters. Nothing had been built in Stevensville for many years, or in Underhill, for that matter, and people stopped on the road during the 'raising' offering to help. It became known as "Eddie's Camp". For many years it served as a winter ski lodge and summer camp for the Moore family. They called it 'The Mooring'. Then in 1967, Edwin and his family decided to move up from New York and remodel the building into a year-round residence. Little did they know they were starting a trend. Except for Maple Leaf Farm, the only winter residents in Stevensville were the McClellans and the Ellis Family. Roland and Mary Ellis had moved into the former Shannon establishment. They had removed the guest quarters from the back of the house and renovated the barn to use for a small business. Roland Ellis built wooden railroad model parts as toys to assemble. The business was called 'Wardie Jay'. They also collected and sold 'ephemera', much of which they left for the Underhill town archives when they moved away, a treasure trove for town historians.



~~ SUBURBAN STEVENSVILLE

At the writing of the first Underhill Town Plan in 1970, seasonal homes in the Town contributed to 13 % of the Grand List. As of 2013, the percentage is a fraction of a percent. Nearly every seasonal home which could be winterized has become a year round residence. In Stevensville, there are only 3 seasonal homes remaining in the community. Miss Patterson had no family and willed her property to UVM to use as a conference or study center. Since, as a non-profit it would not be contributing taxes, she left a financial legacy to the town to make up for lost taxes. The fund was used to purchase the large parcel of land on New Road, which was used for an approved landfill. When the State shut down landfills, the area became the Crane Brook Conservation District and the location for the new Town Garage. (The Patterson camp later became a residence.)

Since 1970 the town population has grown from about 700 to over 3000. The Central School has had two additions. School buses service Stevensville Road. Maple Leaf Farm has expanded its clinical program. Mountain land has been subdivided and many new homes have been built. And since the landfill was shut down by the State there has been regular trash collection. 'Stevensville' is now a residential neighborhood.

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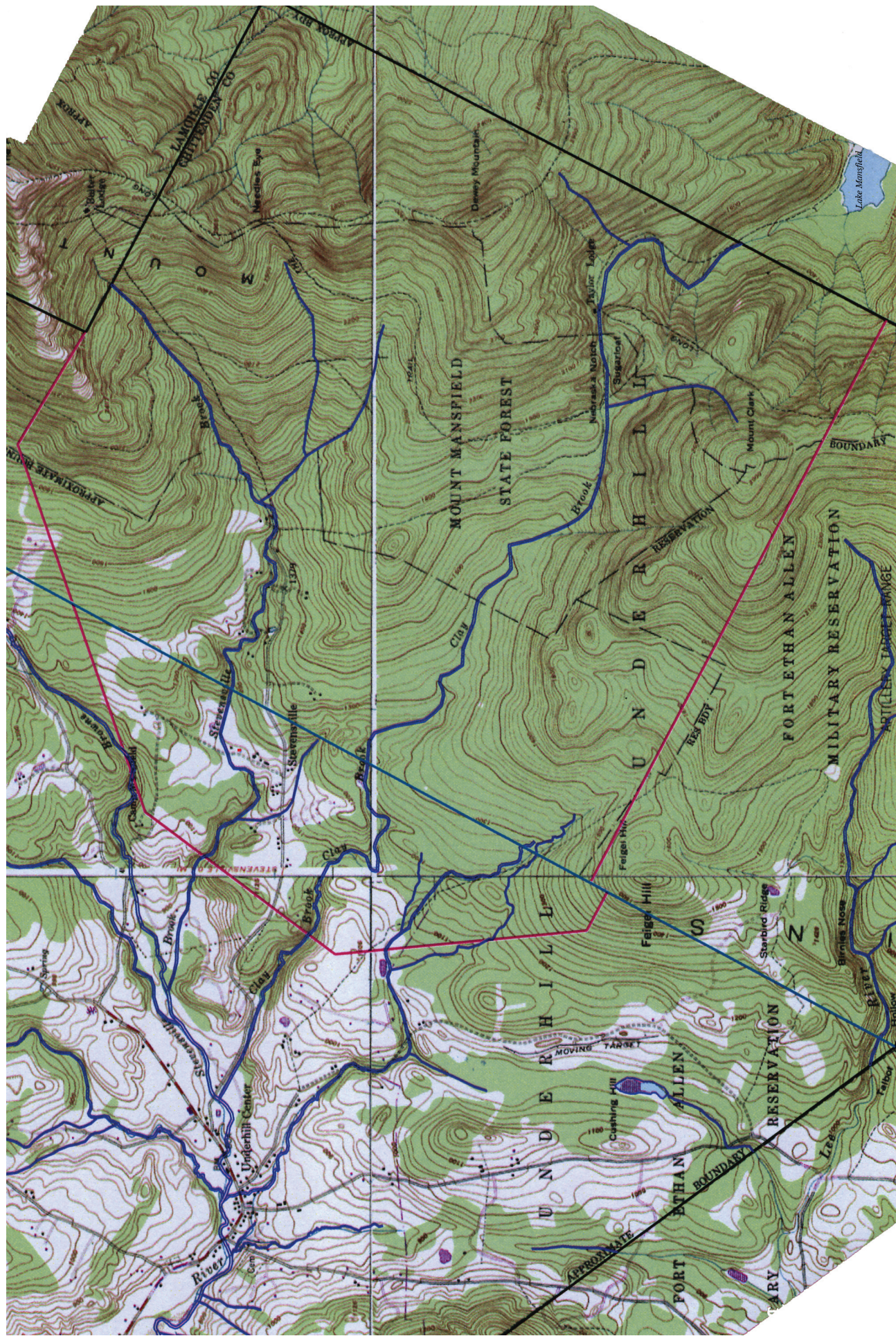
Don Breen (1963); Herbert McArthur (2006); Kika McArthur (2013); Jackie Duffek (2013); Steve McClellan (2013); Elizabeth Moore (2013)

Book design by Kika McArthur

This USGS topographic map shows part of Underhill, including Stevensville, as it appeared in 1948. The boundary of School District #9 has been added in magenta and the schoolhouse is red. The original town line of Mansfield is azure. The town boundary with Stowe and Cambridge is black. The map shows as dashed lines the approximate boundaries of the State Forest and the Ethan Allen Artillery Range. Both areas have since been considerably enlarged. Several trails, including the Long Trail, are shown as dotted lines. Geologic features are identified and the existing buildings noted.



Dr. W.L. Aycock Oil on canvas, 1944



USGS 1948