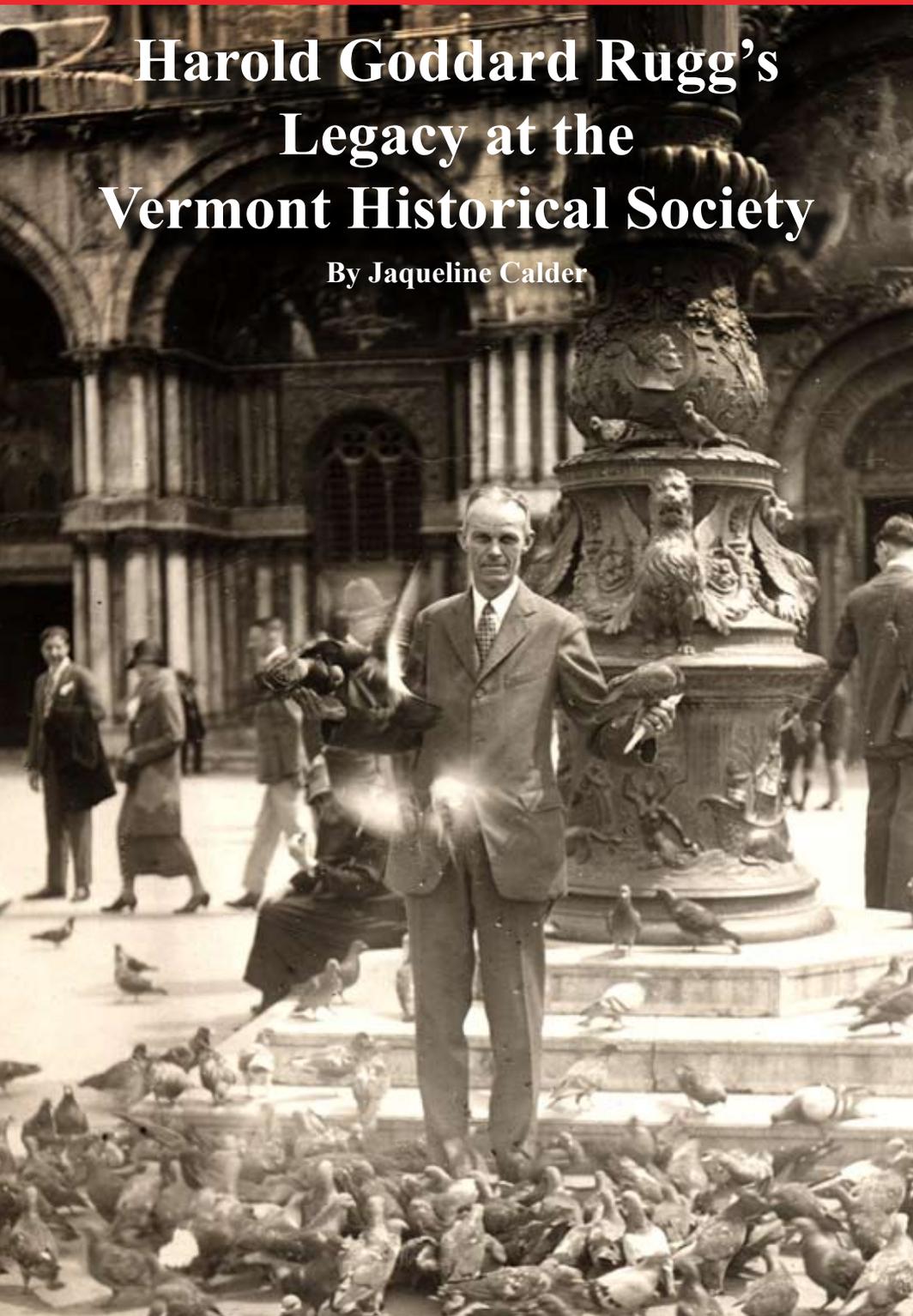
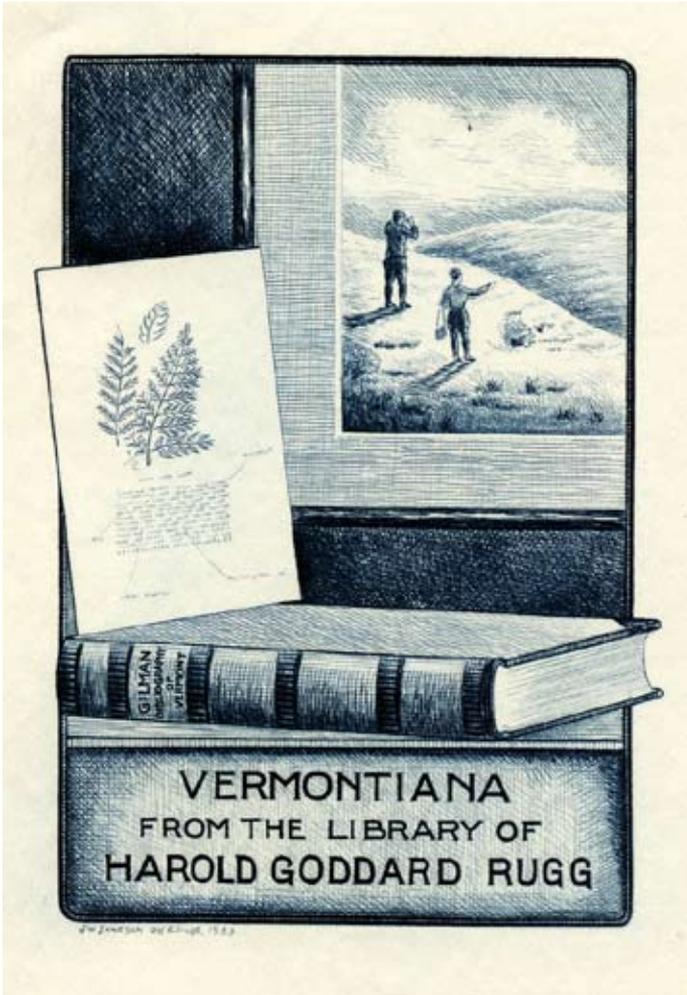


A Vermont Collector's Story

Harold Goddard Rugg's Legacy at the Vermont Historical Society

By Jaqueline Calder





Bookplate of Harold Rugg. Printed and engraved by J. W. Jameson, 1933. Rugg collected bookplates and during his lifetime worked with artists to design three of his own. Jameson is considered one of the finest artists working in the medium during the early 20th century. Illustrated on this plate were the three loves of Rugg's life; hiking, ferns, and books.

Cover photograph: Harold Rugg in Europe (Italy?) in the 1930s.

All of the illustrations in this catalog are pieces from the Harold Rugg collection at the Vermont Historical Society.

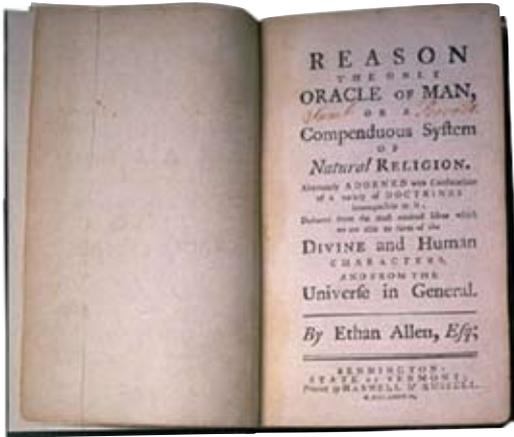


Harold Goddard Rugg circa 1940.

Harold **Goddard Rugg**

(1883-1957) was a librarian, historian, naturalist, gardener, world traveler, outdoorsman, mentor and Vermont collector extraordinaire. I first heard about Harold Rugg in 1990, my first year at the Vermont Historical Society, during the VHS celebration to mark the end of cataloging his extensive library bequests. It had taken the library 43 years to organize Rugg's gift to the library. At the time, Marcus McCorison, then librarian and president of the American Antiquarian Society and a former colleague of Rugg's at Dartmouth, stated that Rugg was second only to Gertrude Mallery as a collector of Vermontiana. The size of the library gift alone was staggering. After Rugg's estate had been settled in late 1957, 188 boxes arrived at the library. The exact numbers have never been exactly determined, but librarian Peggy Abbott wrote that she had handled 11,000 books and pamphlets, including approximately 400 almanacs; also 3,600 broadsides, 270 pieces of sheet music and over 200 periodicals (*Vermont History News*, Nov.- Dec. 1990, p. 116). There were also dozens of maps. In addition to the library collection, Rugg also gave over 2,000 artifacts to the museum, which were cataloged and

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Ethan Allen's *Reason: The Only Oracle of Man or a Compendious System of Natural Religion* (Bennington Vt., Haswell & Russell, 1784). One of the thousands of rare books donated to VHS by Rugg.

placed with other VHS collections. Many times as I worked in the library I would pass Rugg's photograph sitting on top of the file cabinet, VHS's only public nod to our greatest benefactor. All of the staff working in the library or museum know of Rugg's collection, but no one really had the time to put his entire story together and put the collection in context. Who was Harold Goddard Rugg? How did he accumulate these collections? Why did they come to the Vermont Historical Society? I decided late in 2007 to undertake the project and attempt to answer those questions. It's been a daunting yet rewarding task, and though I've become an in-house Rugg expert, I've only scratched the surface of the life of this multifaceted man. Through this booklet, I hope you'll come to appreciate the scope of what he achieved in his lifetime and the significance of his donations and bequests to VHS.

My research began with the extensive Rugg papers owned by VHS. Several document-sized boxes include family genealogy and photographs, as well as personal correspondence, research notes, newspapers, and ephemera. A Google search on Rugg revealed that his personal diaries were at the Rauner Library at Dartmouth College. After reading another online article I realized the magnitude of this undertaking. In his account of Dartmouth College's library collections, Philip Cronenwett, former Special Collections Librar-

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ian at the Rauner Library, wrote: “It would appear that in each century of the college’s history, there is one figure who stands out as critical to the library and, in particular, to the development of the special collections. In the 18th century, it was Eleazar Wheelock; in the 19th century it was Isaiah Thomas; and in the 20th century it must surely have been Harold Goddard Rugg.” The online collections catalog of the Hood Museum at Dartmouth lists over 300 objects donated by Rugg. Other Rugg materials or related collections are owned by UVM, and future research needs to be conducted at the Hartland Historical Society, the New Hampshire Historical Society, Historic New England, and Norwich University. So I emphasize again that this is just the preliminary work on Rugg.

– *Jacqueline Calder, Curator
Vermont Historical Society
October 2008*



Vermont Farmhouse, woodcut, 1927 by J. J. Lankes. In addition to acquiring several prints by Lankes, Rugg also had him design one of his personal bookplates.



S. Londonderry, Vt.

H. Shokler /ings

South Londonderry, Vt., etching, circa 1940 by Harry Shokler. South Londonderry was the hometown of David Rugg, Harold's father.

Harold Goddard Rugg's Legacy at the Vermont Historical Society

Harold Goddard Rugg was born in Hartland, Vermont on January 21, 1883. His father was David Fletcher Rugg (1852-1900), the town doctor. His mother was Julia Augusta Hager (1853-1925). They had been married for two years when Harold was born, and he was their only child. David Rugg was well-educated; he graduated as valedictorian of his class at UVM, attended medical school at UVM, and



Harold Goddard Rugg at age three.

took some classes at Dartmouth medical school. Julia went to Mt. Holyoke College for one year. Both had been raised in towns near Hartland: David in South Londonderry and Julia in Proctorsville. David Rugg was a respected member of the Hartland community and in the mid-1890s, served as Hartland's representative to the State Legislature.

Harold Rugg attended local grammar schools and went to high



Harold Rugg (back row left) with unidentified friends, circa 1905.

school in Ludlow at Black River Academy. In 1896, he served as a messenger (today called a page) at the Vermont State Legislature, living with his father in Montpelier during the session. He enjoyed reading, hiking, riding his bike, birding, gardening, and being with his friends and family. He also collected geological specimens, stamps, coins, historic relics, and autographs. He began his lifelong work of collecting Vermontiana in the late 1890s, seeking authors' autographs and asking them if they would send him an example of their work. Many did.

In 1897, family circumstances changed dramatically when David Rugg contracted tuberculosis. Initial treatment began at a sanitarium in the Adirondacks. Unfortunately, his condition did not improve. In 1898, the family home in Hartland was sold to enable Dr. Rugg to seek a cure in New Mexico. Julia and Harold moved to Proctorville to live with her mother. Harold continued to attend Black River Academy and was elected vice president of his junior class. He corresponded regularly with his father (he saved the many letters that his father wrote to him and his mother), who sent him historic and natural materials from the Southwest. In

June 1900, David Rugg returned to Vermont and died. Obviously this was a devastating blow for a boy who loved his father dearly. Though Rugg started keeping a diary in 1899, and would continue to do so for over fifty years, a diary has not been found for the year 1900.

Harold finished his senior year and was accepted at Dartmouth with the understanding that he would need a year of preparatory school. Even though she was struggling financially, Julia Rugg managed to send her son to Philips Exeter Academy in Exeter, New Hampshire. When he was fifty years old, Rugg wrote a brief autobiographical sketch stating that his “sainted” mother “self-sacrificed” so that he could go to these schools. While at Exeter, Harold took full advantage of the social scene and enjoyed skating, basketball, bowling, dances, concerts, and the theater. He traveled to Boston and visited with fellow autograph collectors. In one diary entry, he recounted viewing George Washington’s signature at the Boston Public Library, and in another he wrote about acquiring actress Ellen Terry’s autograph after seeing her in *The Merchant of Venice*.



Harold Rugg’s 1906 Dartmouth College graduation portrait.

Rugg began his studies at Dartmouth in 1902. In 1905, he began working in the college library and found his life’s vocation. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1906 and was hired as the library secretary. Rugg would reside for the rest of his life in Hanover, first renting rooms, and then an apartment on campus. In 1912, he became the executive assistant to the librarian (in charge of the reference rooms), and in 1919 was promoted to assistant librarian. He worked as assistant librarian at the library until he retired in 1953. Rugg loved Dartmouth, and from all accounts, he

The KINGDOM
of
WINTER
SPORTS

**Special Trains
Special Fares**
on the

NEW YORK  **CENTRAL SYSTEM**

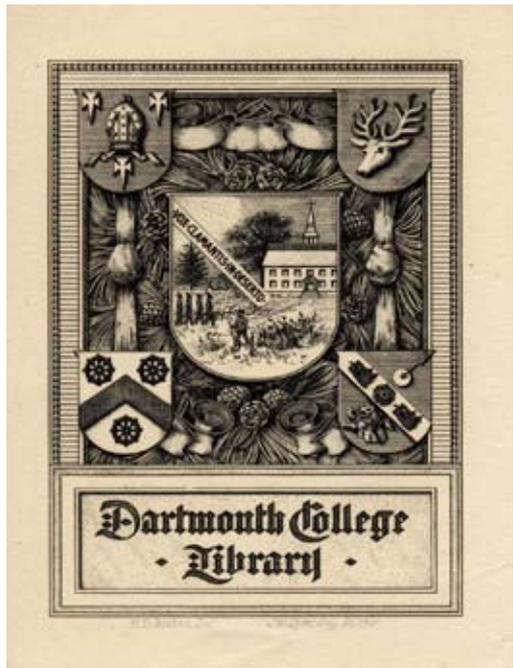
*Wilmington
Stambridge*

A vintage advertisement for the New York Central Railroad's ski trains to Vermont. The top half features a stylized illustration of a skier in a white and red outfit, holding ski poles, standing on a snowy slope. The background is a deep blue sky with white speckles representing snow or stars. The text 'The KINGDOM of WINTER SPORTS' is written in a mix of serif and script fonts. Below the illustration, the text 'Special Trains Special Fares on the' is followed by the New York Central System logo, which consists of the words 'NEW YORK', 'CENTRAL', and 'SYSTEM' arranged around a central emblem. The bottom of the ad has a white background with the words 'NEW YORK' and 'CENTRAL SYSTEM' in large, bold, blue letters. There are some faint, handwritten-style words 'Wilmington' and 'Stambridge' on the left side of the white background.

Broadside from the late 1940s advertising New York Central Railroad's ski trains to Vermont.

was a much beloved colleague and teacher. For twelve years he served as secretary of his class. He held the same position for the local Phi Beta Kappa Society for over 40 years, acted as adviser to The Arts (a faculty student literary society), and as faculty advisor to the Zeta Psi fraternity. For 39 years, he served as the literary editor of the *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*. In the 1920s, he began teaching in the art department on the history of books and printing. He rose from lecturer to assistant professor and finally to full professor in 1947. In recognition to his devoted service to the college, he was given an honorary M.A. degree in 1940. Rugg retired in 1953 but maintained an office in the library.

Though much of Rugg's professional and social life revolved around Dartmouth, he still maintained strong ties to Vermont. His mother lived until 1925, and Rugg visited her and other family and friends regularly. Rugg never married. He had a wide circle of friends and acquaintances and led an extremely active life, both physically and mentally. Travel was a passion of Rugg's, and he visited most of Europe, northern Africa, the Middle East, Mexico, South and Central America, and the United States. He loved to be outdoors in all seasons and hiked with the Dartmouth Outing Club, the Appalachian Mountain Club, and the Green Mountain Club. In addition to regularly climbing



Bookplate for Dartmouth College engraved by J.W. Spencely and printed by M.B. Bisbee in 1907. Rugg worked in the library, was knowledgeable about bookplates, and may have participated in getting this one made by one of the prominent artists working in this art form.



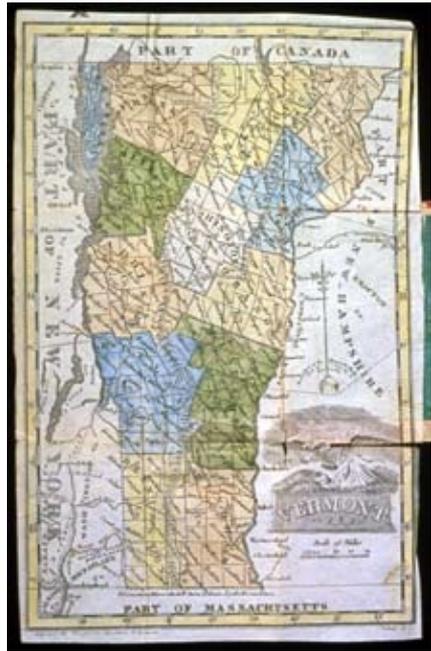
Rugg (second from right) and friends drive through Wawona, a giant redwood tree, in Yosemite National Park in California, circa 1940.

the White and Green Mountains, he hiked the Rockies, the Grand Tetons, the Alps, and the Pyrenees. Rugg was a trustee of both the Howe Library in Hanover and the Fletcher Free Library in Ludlow, Vermont, and president of the Hartland Historical Society. He was also president of the Vermont Botanical Society and the Hanover Garden Club. Rugg was an expert on ferns, and frequently wrote articles on the subject, and even had a fern named after him.

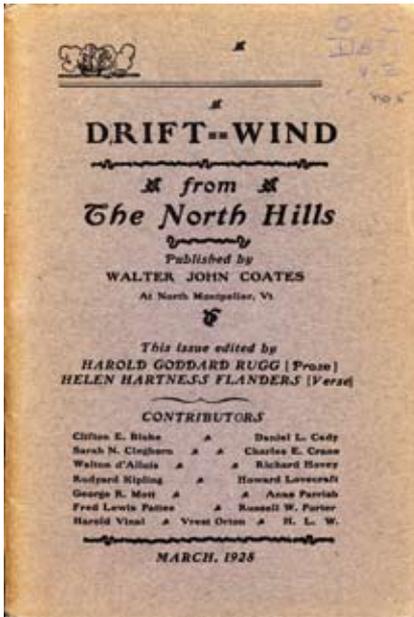
Most important to this discussion is his long-term relationship with the Vermont Historical Society. His membership in the Vermont Historical Society began in 1908; he was elected vice president of the board in 1924, became a life member in 1929, and served as a trustee until his death. Certainly Rugg's bequest is his most significant contribution to the Society, but his active involvement with VHS during the late 1920s to the late 1940s was pivotal to the institution's internal workings and collecting decisions. Rugg spent hours in Montpelier reviewing the library holdings, and as chair of the Library Committee, participated in all decisions about new acquisitions. His good relationship with other VHS trustees, particularly John Clement, John Spargo, and Dorman Kent, may have been key in keeping internal problems of VHS from harming the

institution. But that is a story for another research paper.

VHS certainly benefited from Rugg's position at Dartmouth and his growing reputation as a respected scholar and bibliophile, and vice versa. Long before Rugg became a member of the VHS board, he had begun collecting Vermont materials. He compiled extensive bibliographies and many times found and acquired examples of rare or lost Vermont authors and imprints. He corresponded with authors, asking them for examples of their work for Dartmouth. He did the same with Vermont authors or writers who set their stories in Vermont, collecting obscure information and tracking down writers through family and friends. Rugg was particularly interested in small specialty printing operations, becoming friends with those with similar interests like Walter Coates, Vrest Orton, Paul Cook, and the Dana brothers of Woodstock. As a result of this interest, VHS's library has a fine collection of 20th century Vermont imprints. He kept in regular contact with an extensive network of colleagues and dealers. One of his most important long-term professional and personal relationships was with publisher and book dealer Charles Tuttle of Rutland. Tuttle often contacted Rugg about new acquisitions, not only for VHS, but for Rugg, too. It was apparent that many times when VHS didn't have money to buy something Rugg purchased it for himself. Together they collaborated on a beautiful centennial edition of Rowland Robinson's work, for which Rugg compiled a detailed bibliography of the various editions of the author's works.



Pullout map of Vermont from Zadock Thompson's *History of Vermont, Natural, Civil and Statistical in three parts with an appendix* (Burlington, Vt., Zadock Thompson, 1853).



Driftwind from the North Hills, vol. 2, no. 5 (North Montpelier, Vt., Walter Coates, March 1928). Walter Coates printed this chapbook from the 1920s through the 1940s. This issue was co-edited by Rugg and Helen Hartness Flanders, who asked some of their friends to contribute work to the issue, including Sarah Cleghorn, Charles Crane, and Vrest Orton.

Collecting works of Vermont poets was a long-term interest of Rugg's. He and Norwich professor Arthur Peach co-edited *Vermont Prose: A Miscellany* (1932).

He compiled a bibliography of the works printed on the Daye Press (now known as the Dresden Press), the first printing press used in Vermont, which is owned by the Vermont Historical Society. He wrote, taught, and spoke about Vermont's early printers and engravers, collecting examples of their works. He wrote about one of those engravers, Isaac Eddy, in *Bibliographical Essays: A Tribute to Wilberforce Eames* (1924) an homage to the respected bibliog-

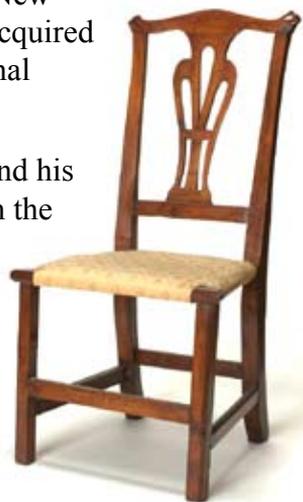
Rugg became an authority on Vermont printers and publishers from the past as well as his contemporaries. He began lifelong friendships with many of Vermont's prominent writers, artists, publishers, dealers, and collectors, including Robert Frost, Sinclair Lewis, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Sara Cleghorn, Sylvia Bliss, Leon Dean, Margaret and Walter Hard, Julia Dorr, Bertha Oppenheim, Helen Hartness Flanders, Charles Crane, Walter Crockett, Daniel Cady, Ralph Nading Hill, Horace Brown, Walter Fahrenstock, Zephaniah Humphrey Fahrenstock, Arthur Peach, Arthur Wilder, and Alice Standish Buel. Many of the books written and personally inscribed to Rugg by his Vermont friends were part of his bequest to VHS, though his extensive Frost collections were left to Dartmouth.



Thetford Academy engraved by Christian Meadows, Windsor, Vt., circa 1855. In 1925 Rugg wrote about Meadows, a talented engraver imprisoned at Windsor State prison for counterfeiting. (*Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, 17:8 (June 1925): p. 657.

rapher and librarian at the New York Public Library. At Dartmouth he was responsible for art exhibits, and since many of the contemporary artists chose New Hampshire and Vermont as their subjects, he acquired many of their Vermont examples for his personal collection.

Perhaps because of his close ties to Hartland and his connection to VHS, Rugg became interested in the work of local historians. Rugg frequently spoke at local historical societies and libraries in both New Hampshire and Vermont but also collected the writing of many small-town Vermont historians. In his collection are many short papers, handwritten and typed, that he solicited from a variety of authors, delivered at local historical societies across the state. There are numerous examples in the VHS library of printed



Chair dating from the early 1800s with carved ears and cut-out splat.



Stoneware water cooler marked "L.W. Fenton, St. Johnsbury, Vt.," circa 1850. Illustrated in Plate I of John Spargo's *Early American Pottery and China* (New York: The Century Company, 1926).

local histories collected by Rugg.

In addition to his book and ephemera collecting, Rugg was interested in glass, ceramics, and pewter. He loved glass in particular, acquiring pieces from around the world with a special love of candlesticks. The glass and ceramics came from family inheritance, careful acquisitions during world travels, and dealers from the United States and Europe. One of the early pioneers in collecting Vermont-made glass and pottery, he used his research skills to track down examples. He placed advertisements in local newspapers seeking information. Once he obtained names, he often tracked down family members and corresponded

with them for information and acquired pieces from descendants of workers or people who lived near the pottery or glassworks. He carefully recorded information and labeled his finds. He corresponded with other collectors and experts on the subjects. He became a friend of Clarence Pitkin, curator at the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Hartford and writer on New England pottery. He corresponded regularly with Vermont pottery and glass collector John Spargo and bought many pieces of Bennington pottery from him. When Spargo wrote his book *Early American Pottery and China* (1926) he used Rugg's Vermont pieces from Burlington, Middlebury, and Fairfax as his illustrations (Plate 19). Rugg's St.



Examples of glass candlesticks collected by Rugg during his lifetime.

Johnsbury stoneware cooler was used as the book's first illustration (Plate 1). Spargo referred to Rugg in his book as that "indefatigable collector" (p. 175-176). Other collectors Rugg kept in contact with included glass and pottery expert George McKearin and Bennington pottery collector Dr. Charles Green. Spargo called his collecting "hobby-riding," referring to the time he spent in a car driving around Vermont's back roads tracking down information and new acquisitions. Rugg logged hours in his car searching for pieces for his collections, usually combining his trips with visits to friends or participating in his other passions in life such as hiking, birding, and botanizing.



Pewter teapot marked "Smith and Co.," circa 1850. Rugg noted that this had been owned by his grandmother Rugg.

Pewter was another of Rugg's collecting interests. Some of his pieces were inherited from family, while others were acquired to obtain a representative selection of pieces that would have been owned in Vermont. He extensively researched Vermont's only pewter makers, Richard Lee and Richard Lee, Jr. He discovered that they were two generations of craftsmen with the same name when

he found an autobiographical pamphlet written by the senior Lee in the VHS library. His article on the Lees appeared in *The Magazine Antiques* (June 1928).

In addition the items mentioned above, the Vermont Historical Society was the recipient of Harold Rugg's many other collecting interests, including furniture, textiles, currency, historic relics, furniture and architectural hardware, and an assortment of miscellaneous materials. One sub-group of the Rugg bequest that requires more attention are the many family pieces that he inherited from his mother representing the Rugg, Hager, and Rice families of Vermont.

Rugg collected up until the end of his life. He apparently was relatively healthy and continued to travel, even venturing to the Arctic Circle via Alaska in 1955. He died two years later in 1957 at the infirmary on the Dartmouth College campus after a short illness. His will stated that the bulk of his estate was to be divided between Dartmouth and VHS, the New Hampshire pieces going to Dartmouth, the Vermont pieces to VHS. It took several months to sort and box the collection before it arrived in Montpelier. It has taken years to catalog and comprehend the pieces. The collection will continue to provide fascinating research projects as varied and multifaceted as its donor, for many years to come.



Strawberries in a basket painted on velvet by Calista Rice Baldwin of Ludlow in 1819.



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Harold Goddard Rugg manuscript materials at the Rauner Library, Dartmouth College. Harold Rugg diaries from 1901 until 1953 are stored with alumni records. In the card index in the Rauner reading room are listed several Rugg items ranging from personal correspondence to a handwritten autobiography. Most of Rugg's correspondence is filed in many different collections, since as a librarian at Dartmouth, he corresponded with numerous authors. An online search of the catalog turned up over 400 references using Harold Goddard Rugg as the keyword.

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Vermont History News, Vol. 41, No. 6 (Nov.- Dec. 1990). This volume was devoted to Harold Rugg in celebration of the library finishing the cataloging of his collection. It contains articles by Michael Sherman, Marcus McCorison, Peggy Abbot, and Bill Osgood about Rugg and his collections.

Thank You



Vermont Historical Society

Jane Campbell
Paul Carnahan
Claire Gilbertson
Mary Labate Rogstad
Marjorie Strong
Marcie Vallette

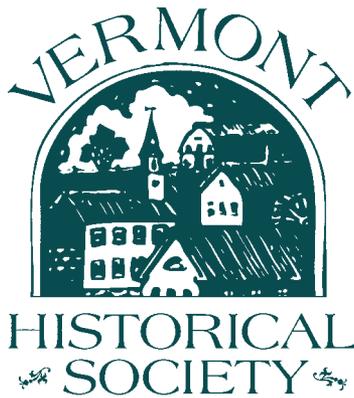
Weston

Robert Brandt
Suzanne Kaiser
Sally Ogden
David Raymond
Al Rogers
Connie Rogers

Special thanks to volunteers Joshua Hayes-High for his photography and Patricia Wiley for her editing assistance.

This publication and an exhibit at the Weston Antiques Show were made possible by a grant from:

The Vermont Community Foundation



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