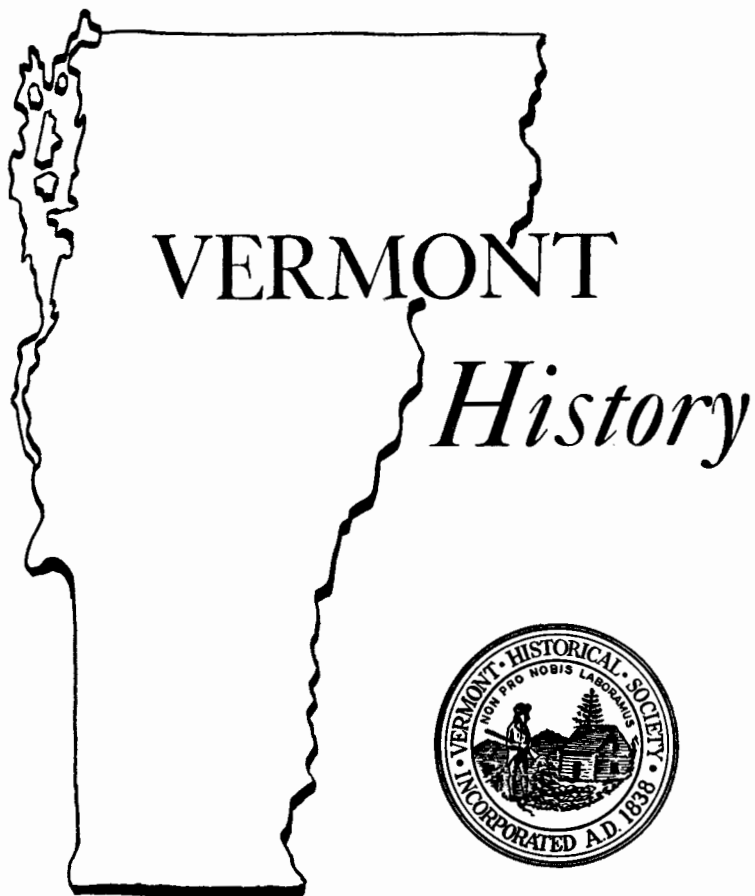
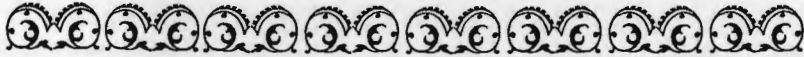


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“Thirty-five years of studying the book trade in several countries have yet to show me a comparable town with a longer or livelier publishing tradition.”

## BOOK TOWN: A Historical Sketch of Publishing and Printing in Brattleboro

By BARROWS MUSSEY

### 1.

**A**LTHOUGH Brattleboro as a book-publishing center has never rivaled Boston or Hartford on an absolute scale, for its size it has at times been very impressive. And it has maintained this character longer than any place in northern New England, with a bow to Concord, New Hampshire, for magazine preeminence. Printing has plainly marked the town since 1805.

Authors began to settle in Windham County by 1787; nowadays you'd have trouble even listing those who at least summer there. But oddly enough, the local publishers have rarely issued the work of the local writers. They do so today more often than they did; still, it is no unkindness to say the two groups have thriven separately rather than jointly.

The alliance has been much closer between printing (the manufacturing end of the book business) and publishing (the planning, financing, and marketing of what gets printed). By 1805, furthermore, big-city publishers began calling on Brattleboro printers to produce books for them. In this century such orders have provided the chief livelihood of the local shops.

Until after the Civil War, retail bookselling and publishing in America, as in England, were usually conducted on the same premises by the same people. Ownership of a bookstore was likely to be the

distinguishing mark of what we call a publisher as against a printer of stray books.

Brattleboro now has one of the few such regular combinations in the country again (of course many bookshops issue occasional volumes for special reasons).

Thirty-five years of studying the book trade in several countries have yet to show me a comparable town with a longer or livelier publishing tradition.

## 2.

Any story of books in New England from the Revolution on must start with Isaiah Thomas, who was born in Boston in 1749, and died at Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1831 after a career that circumstances will hardly allow any future American publisher to match.

He rode from Boston with Paul Revere, then moved his printing shop to safety in Worcester. There, after the Revolution, he printed and published the *Massachusetts Spy* newspaper, books ranging from the Bible to *Fanny Hill*, and contended as best as he could with the early printers' most constant production head-ache by starting paper mills.

His chosen method of expanding his business was to send out former apprentices to outlying towns with printing equipment and stock for a bookstore, and set them up as his partners. In this way he had branches at Boston, Baltimore, Albany, Troy; Windsor and Rutland, Vermont; and Walpole, New Hampshire. It almost seemed as if there were hardly a publisher of the post-Revolutionary generation who had not been either an apprentice or a journeyman at a Thomas shop.

Both of Brattleboro's first printers went back to Thomas through their masters, one at Greenfield, Massachusetts and the other at Walpole, New Hampshire.

In his later years Thomas wrote a *History of Printing in America* that can never be superseded, because most of what modern scholars know came from it; he gave his collection to found the American Antiquarian Society, probably the first true temple of historic learning in the country (and now greater with each passing year).

## 3.

Four writers emphasize the point that living authors did not greatly concern the Brattleboro publishers of the last century.

Royall Tyler (Boston 1758-Brattleboro 1826) wrote the first American comedy to be performed (1787), the first American novel (1797) to be reprinted in England, and was a Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme

Court as well as a leading citizen of Guilford, Vermont (1791-1801), and then of Brattleboro.

He and Thomas Green Fessenden were Joseph Dennie's mainstay in getting out the *Farmer's Weekly Museum*, published by Thomas and partners at Walpole from 1793 to 1807.

Joseph Dennie (Boston 1768-Philadelphia 1812), the most successful magazine editor of his time, made the *Farmer's Museum* nationally famous with his "Lay Preacher," helped by Tyler, the Elliot brothers of Guilford, Vermont, and T. G. Fessenden. He bitterly regretted that America had gained its independence from Britain. "That false, and flatulent, and foolish paper" was his phrase for the Declaration of Independence.

Samuel Stearns, M.D. LL. D. (Paxton, Mass. 1741-Brattleboro 1810), an even higher Tory, made almanacs for Isaiah Thomas, taught the art to a nephew, Asa Houghton of Dummerston (whose almanacs were usually published in Keene, N.H.), but could get only a fragment of his medical lifework published, in Walpole.<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Green Fessenden (Walpole, N.H. 1771-Boston 1837), the eldest of the brothers who put Brattleboro on the book map, was a lawyer, humorous versifier, and editor in London, New York, Brattleboro, Bellows Falls, and Boston. Nathaniel Hawthorne, who boarded with him, wrote an affectionate obituary.<sup>2</sup>

To Joseph Tinker Buckingham (Windham, Conn. 1779-Cambridge, Mass. 1861), who started his apprenticeship at Walpole with Thomas & Carlisle and finished it at Greenfield, Massachusetts, with Thomas Dickman just as Ben Smead left to start printing at Brattleboro in 1797, we owe much of what is known about the Walpole and Greenfield shops.<sup>3</sup>

The eccentric wandering bookseller-preacher Amos Taylor (Groton, Mass. 1748-after 1813) published two pamphlets jointly titled *The Bookseller's Legacy* in 1803, while he was operating out of Whitingham, Vermont, but all his known publications were printed in Keene, New Hampshire; Greenfield, Massachusetts; Bennington and Manchester, Vermont; and Troy and Utica, New York—anywhere but Brattleboro.<sup>4</sup>

During the book heyday of Brattleboro, three prominent authors lived in the vicinity at various times, none of whom made any significant contribution to local publishers' lists.

1. Cf. John C. L. Clark, *The Famous Dr. Stearns*, Worcester, Massachusetts 1936.

2. Cf. Porter Gale Perrin, *Thomas Green Fessenden*, Orono, Maine, 1926.

3. *Specimens of Newspaper Literature*, 2 Vols., Boston 1850; *Personal Memoirs and Recollections of Editorial Life*, 2 Vols., Boston 1852.

4. Cf. M. A. McCorison, *Amos Taylor*, Worcester, Massachusetts 1959.



Abner Kneeland (Gardner, Mass. 1774-Iowa, 1844), a friend of Emerson, Theodore Parker, and William Lloyd Garrison who was jailed for blasphemy in 1837, preached at Putney in 1797 before turning Universalist; his spelling books were published in Keene, New Hampshire, and Bellows Falls.

Almira Hart Lincoln Phelps (Berlin, Conn. 1793-Maryland 1884), a sister of Emma Hart Willard, the pioneer in education for girls, married a leading lawyer of Guilford, Vermont, where she lived from 1831 to 1836 before moving to Brattleboro (1836-1838). Her schoolbooks on the natural sciences sold in the hundreds on hundreds of thousands for fifty years. A number were issued in New Haven; her husband's lay law manual appeared at Amherst, Massachusetts.

And Jeremiah Greenleaf (Brattleboro 1791-Guilford 1864), whose father may have led Dr. Stearns to settle in Brattleboro, was school superintendent of Guilford; the first edition of his *Grammar Simplified* appeared at Brattleboro in 1819, but the second and many later reissues bore New York imprints. It seems a reasonable guess that he had to pay for the first printing himself.

#### 4.

Late in 1797 Thomas Dickman (who had worked for Isaiah Thomas and bought a printing outfit of him) sent 21-year-old Benjamin Smead from Greenfield to start a paper at Brattleboro: the *Federal Galaxy* ran from January 6, 1797, to January 1803. (A paper in Putney started six days later, but died in 1799).

It was undoubtedly printed on an old wooden press of the kind used by Benjamin Franklin and Isaiah Thomas alike. To print one side of a sheet took two, sometimes four hard pulls on the lever; an English iron press that delivered 300 impressions an hour was a sensational novelty of 1798.

Smead printed, along with the newspaper, only one book of any consequence, a 200-page *Treatise on the Military Art* in 1798. Royall Tyler had given his two-volume novel, *The Algerine Captive*, to Isaiah Thomas's ex-partner David Carlisle at Walpole in 1797. It enjoyed quite a success; but Smead could hardly have handled it even if given a chance.

When Ben Smead suspended his paper, he left Brattleboro without a Federalist organ—a sad plight for a county that had rather preferred British rule to Ethan Allen's.

So Thomas Green Fessenden's youngest brother, William (born at Walpole in 1779), passing through town on his way to look for a

journeyman printer's job in New York after a year of newspaper publishing at Vergennes (where he had been burned out), was just what the respectable element needed.

Before he could get a second-hand outfit from Boston he used Smead's—the type a fine Transitional face akin to those favored by some of the best printers today; and after only five weeks' hiatus the *Reporter* appeared on February 21. (Fessenden apologized, saying, "Not a Font of New Type can at present be obtained in Boston.")

The first number of the *Reporter* advertised, "FOR SALE, *At the Printing-Office, in the store lately occupied by Capt. Jones. A HANDSOME ASSORTMENT OF BOOKS & STATIONARY,*" which ran for 56 lines, starting with "LARGE Octave Bibles . . . with Apocraphy;" and going on through "Spirit of the Farmer's Museum" to "&c. &c."

Here books made their real entry on the Brattleboro scene.

Late the following year came the first important volume from William Fessenden, the 300-page *Science of Sanctity*, by his father, Thomas Fessenden, the Walpole minister; 1805 brought the first job printed in Brattleboro for an out-of-town publisher, Isaiah Thomas, Jr., of Worcester and Springfield (a Walpole acquaintance).

The year of 1807 was momentous: Denman's *Midwifery*, over 470 pages; Jones on the *Law of Bailments*; Pope's *Essay on Man; Life and Adventures of Ambrose Gwinett*. And on October 8 a dynastic event: Fessenden married 19-year-old Patty Holbrook, the oldest child of a leading Brattleboro merchant.

John Holbrook (Weymouth, Mass. 1761-Brattleboro 1838) got into publishing late in life through the back door. He learned surveying from British officers during the Revolution, went to Newfane, Vermont, as a surveyor and storekeeper, married a daughter of anti-Ethan-Allen champion Luke Knowlton, and moved to Brattleboro as soon as he had accumulated his first \$1000, in 1795. His company, later Holbrook & Porter, was prominent in the flatboat business between Brattleboro and Hartford, Connecticut. He regularly advertised West India goods for sale.

His first dip into the book world was a side issue: the firm of Holbrook, Fessenden & Porter bought in 1808 the State of Vermont rights to Noah Webster's *American Spelling Book*, which had lain with Anthony Haswell of Bennington and then with a publisher in Troy, New York. The lexicographer made his living for many years by leasing this backbone of American education to local printers scattered around the country. One supposes Holbrook & Porter provided the capital for the new son-in-law to grasp the opportunity. It was a good buy; royalties

paid for 1810 covered 67,000 copies. That would be a lot of spellers in Vermont right this minute.

Brother T. G. Fessenden came to town in 1809 for a three-year stay as newspaper editor.

The year 1810 was noteworthy on the upper Connecticut. James Wilson of Bradford, Vermont, engraved and published the first American globes. Consul William Jarvis brought the first merino sheep (the Vermont trade-mark long before maple syrup was localized) to Weathersfield, where he bought Francis Goodhue's farm. Goodhue went to Brattleboro with \$30,000 in gold, and bought John Holbrook's property. (The next year he joined two Fessenden brothers in starting a paper mill.)

Holbrook moved to Connecticut to look after his flatboating business. Probably he waited until October 1, when his 16-year-old daughter Sibbel Lane married William Fessenden's 34-year-old brother Joseph, a paper-maker from up Royalton way who had settled in Brattleboro.

John Holbrook and his wife Sarah Knowlton Holbrook (Newfane, Vt., 1767-Brattleboro 1851), contributed two sons-in-law and later two sons to the Brattleboro book trade.

Simeon Ide (Shrewbury, Mass. 1794-Roxbury, Mass. 1889) came to work for William Fessenden as one of the 16 journeymen kept busy printing the Webster Speller in 1813. He spent 1815 in his father's disused smithy at New Ipswich, N.H., printing the first New Testament issued in New Hampshire, from type set by his 11-year-old sister.

Coming back to Brattleboro in late 1816, he ran throughout 1817 the first Republican (i.e. Democratic) paper in the Federalist village, the *American Yeoman*. His later career at Windsor, Vt., and Claremont, N.H., marked him as one of the most impressive yet lovable characters in the whole history of American publishing.

One of his Windsor apprentices later invented the platen job printing press; another became president of Dartmouth.<sup>5</sup>

When William Fessenden died of apoplexy at Northampton, Mass., during a sleigh journey that had taken him to Hartford in early 1815, his business was said to have doubled the size of the village. According to a historian, "Venerable men who attended the funeral . . . have told us, that never before or since that time, has the death of any person caused so universal sorrow in this place."<sup>6</sup>

T. G. Fessenden sprang into the breach at the newspaper again as editor for the rest of 1815 and 1816. And John Holbrook came back

5. Cf. Louis W. Flanders, *Simeon Ide*, Rutland, Vermont 1931.

6. Cf. Henry Burnham, *Brattleboro, Windham County, Vermont, Early History . . .* Brattleboro, 1880; Mary R. Cabot, *Annals of Brattleboro*, Brattleboro, 1921, p. 237.



from Connecticut to take the burden of the business off his widowed daughter's shoulders.

On August 15, 1815, the *Reporter* carried a two-column front-page ad by Holbrook, inviting subscriptions to a quarto Family Bible in \$4, \$7, and \$10 versions, "going to press immediately."

But it was a year before the big Bible could actually be had. (A smaller one, also issued in 1816, was a juvenile condensation by T. G. Fessenden.)

The process of stereotyping—casting whole pages from plaster molds instead of keeping the type standing—was introduced from Great Britain to New York about 1812. By 1820 it was widespread. It meant that printers no longer set up a few pages of their limited type, printed, then distributed the type and started setting again. And they could print smaller editions.

By 1816 a big New York printer had set up the Bible and was making sets of stereotype plates for sale. One went to John Holbrook, who became a deacon in the newly organized Congregational Church almost exactly on the day he issued his Bible. (A Universalist adversary later argued, ". . . On what are the vast pretensions of Deac. Holbrook founded? . . . I know of none, unless it be that he has printed a splendid edition of the Bible!")<sup>7</sup>

If Deacon Holbrook firmly supported the Bible, certainly the Bible supported him. He was in his 9th edition by the end of 1817; variant issues of Bible and New Testament followed year after year.

Son-in-law Joseph Fessenden (Walpole 1777-Brattleboro 1835) became a partner in 1820. By 1828 the Bible plates had apparently been sold up the river to Woodstock, and Holbrook & Fessenden used a new set from another New York stereotyper.

In 1820 the shop had seven presses, three in operation; eight men, three women, four apprentices. The business was capitalized at \$20,000; it used 2000 reams of paper a year, worth \$6,650, paid \$3000 in salaries and \$5000 in incidental expenses; and Deacon Holbrook (a hardened publisher by now) complained that sales were dull.

By 1824, however, Brattleboro "East Village was said to be the richest . . . of its size in New England. Paper was manufactured here, in the Holbrook paper mill, to the amount of ten or twelve thousand dollars, and in his printing and bookbinding establishment business was done to the amount of twenty to twenty-five thousand dollars annually."

Power printing presses were apparently first used in 1822 at Boston;

7. John Brooks, *Letter to the public in general, and to Deacon John Holbrook, of Brattleboro, in particular, on the subject of endless misery, etc.*, Brattleboro, printed for the author—April 1821.



four of these original presses, invented by Daniel Treadwell and operated by "a team of Canadian horses" behind the Old Corner Bookstore, went to found a (water) Power Press Office at Brattleboro in 1825.<sup>8</sup>

This belonged, however, not to the Deacon or even (officially, anyway) to his son—a few years later in control of the Old Corner—but to George H. Peck, a bookseller, and partners.

At this point the mechanical age began to work its changes on the country book trade. In 1827 came the first steamboats on the Connecticut (not counting Samuel Morey's pioneering success at Orford in 1792); they were never practically important because the railroads diverted attention from them before they really got started. But with power transport, power printing, and stereotyping, the city publishers increasingly preferred to hire Brattleboro or Claremont printers to make schoolbooks from plates under contract rather than, as heretofore, to sell the stereotypes outright.

And of course the country printers' gain was the country publishers' loss (completed, with not more than one or two survivors, by the panic of 1857).

In 1833 there was wild speculation in canals, roads, banks, cotton; then Andrew Jackson withdrew the U.S. funds from the Bank of the United States; and in 1834 the entire New York and Philadelphia book trade verged on collapse.

Still, "in the year 1836 at Holbrook & Fessenden's paper mill, power-press printing office and book bindery, the estimated amount of business done by all branches was \$500,000." Even under Andrew Jackson that was money.

The next three years brought climax and downfall to the Holbrook empire.

John Calvin Holbrook (Brattleboro 1808-Stockton, Calif. 1900), son of Deacon John, presided over its dissolution. In 1829 he became the active partner in Richardson, Lord & Holbrook, who owned what is now the Old Corner Bookstore in Boston. In 1832, "having become tired of the care, perplexities and constant demands of a business requiring so much more attention than his former business in the country, he sold out . . . and returned to Brattleboro, there engaging in paper making, printing and the publication of several large and important works, by subscription, as Jenks' Comprehensive Commentary, the Polyglot Bible and Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge."<sup>9</sup>

8. Cf. John W. Moore, *Moore's Historical, Biographical, and Miscellaneous Gatherings*, Concord, New Hampshire, 1886, pp. 35-38.

9. Manuscript history of Boston booksellers by Melvin Lord, in the library of the American Antiquarian Society.

Speculation was in the air again. In 1836 J. C. Holbrook and Deacon John incorporated the Brattleborough Typographic Company, which combined all the operations from paper mill to retail store, with a hundred hands, and sent an agent to Louisville, Kentucky. They tried to hire Simeon Ide as superintendent, and it might have been better for them if he had not stuck to Claremont. But he did.

The "Typo Company" shares were a speculative object, second to lottery tickets, for a year or so; then the panic of 1837 (the final outcome of Jackson's hostility to the banks) and the younger Holbrook's "want of business acumen" brought failure to the company and to the two deacons, father and son.

(The Jenks *Comprehensive Commentary* and the *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, though still manufactured in Brattleboro for some years, were taken over as publications by J. B. Lippincott of Philadelphia, who has been much admired for his supposed daring in undertaking such expensive projects.)

Deacon John died in 1838; John C. moved to Iowa in 1839. Said his old Boston partner, "Finally after still other changes in business and condition, he became a zealous and useful preacher of the Gospel, obtaining a good settlement and eventually receiving the title of D.D!"<sup>10</sup>

Frederick Holbrook (Warehouse Point, Conn. 1813-Brattleboro 1909), J. C.'s youngest brother, was a partner in the Typo Company, then turned to farming, agricultural writing, and a political career that made him Civil War Governor of Vermont. He is credited with writing a memorial in 1849 that laid the foundation for a U. S. Department of Agriculture.

## 5.

Before the Civil War the Brattleboro book business largely went into hibernation. The 1837 panic lasted seven years. The village had its bookstores, its printers (mainly concerned with newspapers), and its gifted families—the Meads (Larkin the sculptor; architect William R. of McKim, Mead & White; Mrs. William Dean Howells) and the Hunts (William Morris the artist; Richard Morris the architect; Leavitt the traveler), to name only two. Francis Parkman wrote most of the *Oregon Trail* while staying at the Brattleboro Water Cure, a favorite resort of Longfellow, Lowell, Julia Ward Howe, and other grandees from the 1840's through the 60's. But local book publications were few.

"An *Asylum Journal*, the first newspaper published in an institution

10. Lord ms.

for the insane, was edited and printed by male patients from 1843 to 1847, when the recovery of those connected with it concluded the undertaking."<sup>11</sup>

This might even explain the suspension of some organs issued outside.

In 1846 the Brattleboro postmaster issued his famous stamp, whose fabulous rarity is due to the fact that the idea did not catch on. People preferred to let the recipient pay the postage; in 1848 Zachary Taylor did not learn for a month that he had been nominated Whig candidate for president because he was refusing all letters not prepaid, including the notification from the Whig convention.

And 1850 brought the telegraph to a distinctly suspicious village.

Papermaking has put its mark on the town: Canal Street takes its name from the ditch dug for the paper mill that dated back to Deacon Holbrook. Thomas & Woodcock made a national reputation with paper machinery, notably the pulp dresser invented by Samuel G. Foster of Brattleboro.

Railroad traffic to Greenfield, Fitchburg and Boston began in 1851.

Joseph Steen (Brattleboro 1797-1881) was the living link between the old Brattleboro publishers and modern times. Apprenticed to William Fessenden in 1814, he stayed with Holbrook & Fessenden until 1828, put in two years selling pulp dressers in York State, then went into business with bookseller George H. Peck back at home; he was briefly a partner in the Power Press Office, then for fifty years, until his death, the local bookseller, with printing and occasional publishing on the side. (He it was who refused to have the first telegraph instrument in town on his premises.)

In the 1850s bookbinder George H. Salisbury printed and published a book or two (for instance a "Peter Parley" title from plates made in 1832, about the time when the Power Press Office was working for the Boston publishers).

Even such great contemporaries among country bookmakers as John Prentiss of Keene did not actively outlast the 1850s.

J. S. & C. Adams of Amherst, Massachusetts, bought the last 1420 sheets of *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* as a remainder in 1843, and sold them the next year to George and Charles Merriam of Springfield, Massachusetts.

Henry Ivison, one of the great 19-century schoolbook publishers, abandoned Auburn, New York, for New York in 1846, as his predecessor Mark H. Newman had abandoned Andover, Massachusetts, in 1826

11. Cabot, *Annals of Brattleboro*, pp 422.



and his partner H. F. Phinney left Cooperstown in 1856. (J. C. Holbrook had had the metropolitan impulse, but not the publishing knack.)

6.

Now our story takes a sudden jump to the proudly "literary" publishing of the eighties and nineties.

Wolcott Balestier (Rochester, N.Y. 1861-Dresden 1891) grew up largely in Brattleboro, and set out to write novels. But by 1888 John W. Lovell, the Canadian founder of the short-lived "book trust," had sent him to London in pursuit of English authors. Within months he was a literary figure, an archetypical "publisher's young man," hobnobbing with Henry James, Edmund Gosse, Conan Doyle—and Rudyard Kipling. Kipling's engagement to his sister Caroline was announced only after Wolcott's sudden death while in Germany on behalf of his new British partner, William Heinemann.

The Kiplings lived in Dummerston from 1892 to '96, and Naulahka, the house they built (named after the story Kipling and Balestier collaborated on), still stands.

George E. Crowell (Manchester, Mass. 1834-Brattleboro 1916) published *The Household*, what we would call a women's service magazine, starting with 13 subscribers in 1868 and selling out in 1890 with 80,000. He also attracted the successful *Woman's Magazine*, which paused in Brattleboro 1883-1893, run by Esther Housh and her son Frank.

Edwin L. Hildreth (Chesterfield, N.H. 1863-Brattleboro 1950) bought a local printing shop in 1887, and made it one of the best known in the country for fine bookwork. Starting in 1910, it for many years gave the Yale University Press books their characteristic distinguished looks. But it never properly recovered from World War II.

Ephraim H. Crane (Hyde Park, Vt. 1876-Brattleboro 1944) and Howard C. Rice (Worcester, Mass. 1878-Brattleboro 1965) joined in acquiring the *Reformer* newspaper, published by the Vermont Printing Company from 1903 to '13, when this company split off to do book and periodical work. It now specializes in magazines.

In 1930 Vrest Orton (Hardwick, Vt. 1897) persuaded Crane and Rice to set up the Stephen Daye Press as a publishing imprint for fine editions. He soon moved to Weston, Vermont; but the Stephen Daye Press stayed behind, becoming perhaps the most active American small-town commercial publisher in a "new wave" of regionalism that deliberately favored country towns for editorial reasons rather than

the manufacturing and distributing grounds that had governed the Fessenden and Holbrooks.

John S. Hooper (Castine, Me. 1905) and Marion Rice Hooper (Brattleboro 1908), Howard Rice's son-in-law and daughter, issued 80-odd titles, many on New England subjects, under the Stephen Daye imprint before the War led them to sell the business.

Another creation of Orton's (with John Lowell Pratt, a New York book publisher), the Countryman Press, moved from Weston to Guilford—but in fact operated from Brattleboro—just before the war; it was managed in 1941 by the writer of these lines, moving away soon after.

In book manufacture, the removal of Hildreth to Bristol, Connecticut, created a vacuum that was finally more than filled after several years' eddying.

The Belgrave Press of New York, looking for a new plant location, acted on a suggestion from Priscilla Crane (who had for years represented Hildreth in New York) and moved to Brattleboro in 1950. By December of 1951 the equipment was sold to Alan S. Browne, the newly retired production director of the Macmillan Company in New York, who soon managed the plant for George McKibbin & Son of Brooklyn, but with little success.

Finally a group of Brattleboro businessmen built a new plant on Putney Road, and moved in the old machinery under the name of Brattleboro Industries.

At the end of 1965 Melvin A. Friedman and Keith L. Johns with a group of investors bought what had become the Book Press.

The operation had started with 40 men, three letterpress presses, and four linotypes. It now employs over 700 hands, doing more than \$7 million a year, and a major part of its business is binding—18 million volumes annually. Plans call for a doubling of output; most of the major American publishers are customers for printing or binding or both.

There are also two specialized typesetting plants, American Book-Stratford Press of New York and Eliot Kimble's Publisher's Composition Service.

## 7.

In 1954 Stephen Greene (Boston 1914) and his wife Janet (Madison, Wis. 1920) bought the Book Cellar, a retail shop (the twentieth bookstore, more or less, to open in Brattleboro since Benjamin Smead's a

century and a half before) started by Sam Lincoln, once the well-loved sales manager of the Stephen Daye Press, and his wife Ruth.

The Greenes had a varied international newspaper and broadcasting career behind them. After they moved the Book Cellar upstairs to a new ground floor, the cellar on Main Street offered room for what they had always intended, a publishing business in tandem with the store.

The first Stephen Greene Press books appeared in the fall of 1957. Both (Audrey Alley Gorton's *Venison Book* and Richard Sanders Allen's *Covered Bridges of the Northeast*) are still in print after 11 years.

The Greenes have established themselves as practically the chartered publishers of books on covered bridges. Their other transportation titles run from skiing through horses to ancient automobiles to defunct railroads (there is now a "Shortline Series") to early airplanes.

With no excuse of house policy except high spirits the Greenes grabbed a *Punch* cartoonist calling himself Larry (Terence Parkes in civilian life), and put out four little square paperbacks at a dollar each that have been the biggest unit sellers on the Greene list (and done better than the British edition).

An agreeably ghoulish touch appears in *Over Their Dead Bodies—Yankee Epitaphs And History*, by Thomas C. Mann and Janet Greene, in its fourth printing by 1967.

One book of particular Vermont historical interest has made a good many friends since its appearance in 1965, *A Book Of Country Things*, told by Walter Needham and recorded by Barrows Mussey. It describes in detail the farm crafts practiced in Windham County in mid-nineteenth century as handed down from Walter Needham's grandfather.

Ski books, of course, are a Brattleboro specialty going back as far as the Stephen Daye Press more than a generation ago, and vigorously carried on by the Greenes with special attention to cross-country skiing. With the printing shops (including the small but active Griswold Offset Printing Company) and the Greene enterprises, nearly 1100 people in Brattleboro now work at making books and magazines—a larger number and perhaps even a larger proportion than in William Fessenden's day.

THESE PAGES could never have been gathered without the untiring help of Marcus A. McCorison, now Director of the American Antiquarian Society; Rollo G. Silver of Boston; F. Cabot Holbrook of Dummerston, a great-great-grandson of Deacon John Holbrook; and Stephen Greene of Brattleboro. Valuable material also came, of course, from the Vermont Historical Society.