

"shopping." When the Main Street was crowded, there was a team or a "rig" at every hitching post.

Men bought seeds, nails, spades and sold farm produce. Women exchanged gossip and recipes, while the children ran circles around their elders or stood in mute longing before the grocery candy cases until my Uncle Will, owner of the biggest grocery, gave each one a peppermint or small soft chocolate drop.

The "Vermontville Echo," a weekly newspaper, was read eagerly and the news contents (mostly local and often meager) discussed from all angles.

There were in those papers no gang murders; or teen-age problems; no horrible accidents on the highway; no plane crashes; no reports of rape and kidnappings; no concern over the "Roosians"-- but rather an announcement of the Methodist revival services; the Congregational harvest festival; the huge amount of corn Mr. X had produced on one acre of his fertile farm; Mr. Y's barn raising, "all invited bring your own dishes;" reports of the County Fair at Charlotte; weddings, births, deaths--in short, the overall account of a small peaceful and self-respecting community.

I never saw a drunken man. If there was any drinking, it was well under cover.

All this atmosphere changed with a bang like an explosion when, at the next election, Vermontville voted to allow the sale of liquor! Who was responsible for this nobody ever really knew. But it was suspected that a bunch of young men who perhaps had a penchant for stimulants or fancied themselves as gay reckless sophisticates, yearned for a drink parlor.