

Anything like a complete roster of the men who were the "backbone" of Vermontville commercial life is not possible but the names of O. G. Stebbins, Willard Dickinson, Wm. Bodine, Daniel Church, M. J. Cunningham, and Frank J. Bailey come at once into the thought, all of whom have passed beyond except Mr. Bailey, who has been the longest continuous resident of the village, retired from business but still mentally alert at the age of 84 years.

Since the early 80's we find the names of C. E. Hammond, Andrew Alderman, George Lamb, Frank Loomis, A. G. Jewell, George W. Browning, Horace L. Curtis, J. B. Stone, Charles and Frank Hull, Chester and Frank Ambrose, S. S. Rockwell, J. C. Downing, David Young, Spencer Allen, Daniel Allen, M. L. Stiles, S. A. Fuller, W. M. Griswold, and John Rhodes to whose public spirit while village president, we owe our present substantially built Town Hall. All of these have left the earthly scene of their labors.

E. B. Hammond, E. D. Barber, W. C. Alsover, C. A. Anderson and E. G. Bowman have played their large part in village life. To Mr. Anderson's activity is due our present fine pavement in the center of the village, while to the enthusiastic optimism of Mr. Roy Mathews we owe in large part the building of our present day fine school building.

There are many others from the beginning up to the present whose names recall those who in a more quiet way contributed to a worthwhile village life. We may mention the names of Fay, Sprague, Lake, Tracy, Hyde, Kelley, Bale, Hanford, Tyler, Morey, Dorman, Slout, Lackey. These fit into the woven pattern of V'tville history for it is not always the brightest threads that tend to a "firm stuff" but the warp which is the background and firm foundation for the weaving, though off times of neutral color.

Only two familiar names - Barber and Lamb - may be seen on Main Street today but the group of people - a list too long to enumerate - who are engaged in our present business activities still cooperate and succeed in keeping Vermontville a popular trading point.

While this record deals of necessity with the general growth of Vermontville in every line, and in which the men of the community played the larger and more prominent part, it should never be forgotten that back of these stood the pioneer women who in silent but staunch loyalty to their men, endured with extreme fortitude and patience all the hardships of life in a new country. Who, amid scanty food at times, lack of every comfort, beset by homesickness, still "carried on". My grandmother, Emily R. Martin, who spent the last fifty years of life in this Michigan town, never until her passing in 1885, was able to quite overcome her homesick longing for the Green Mountains of her native Vermont. All honor to these pioneer women and their equally brave successors!