

Village Life in Vermont

1820-1850

**A History Kit
For Students and their Teachers**



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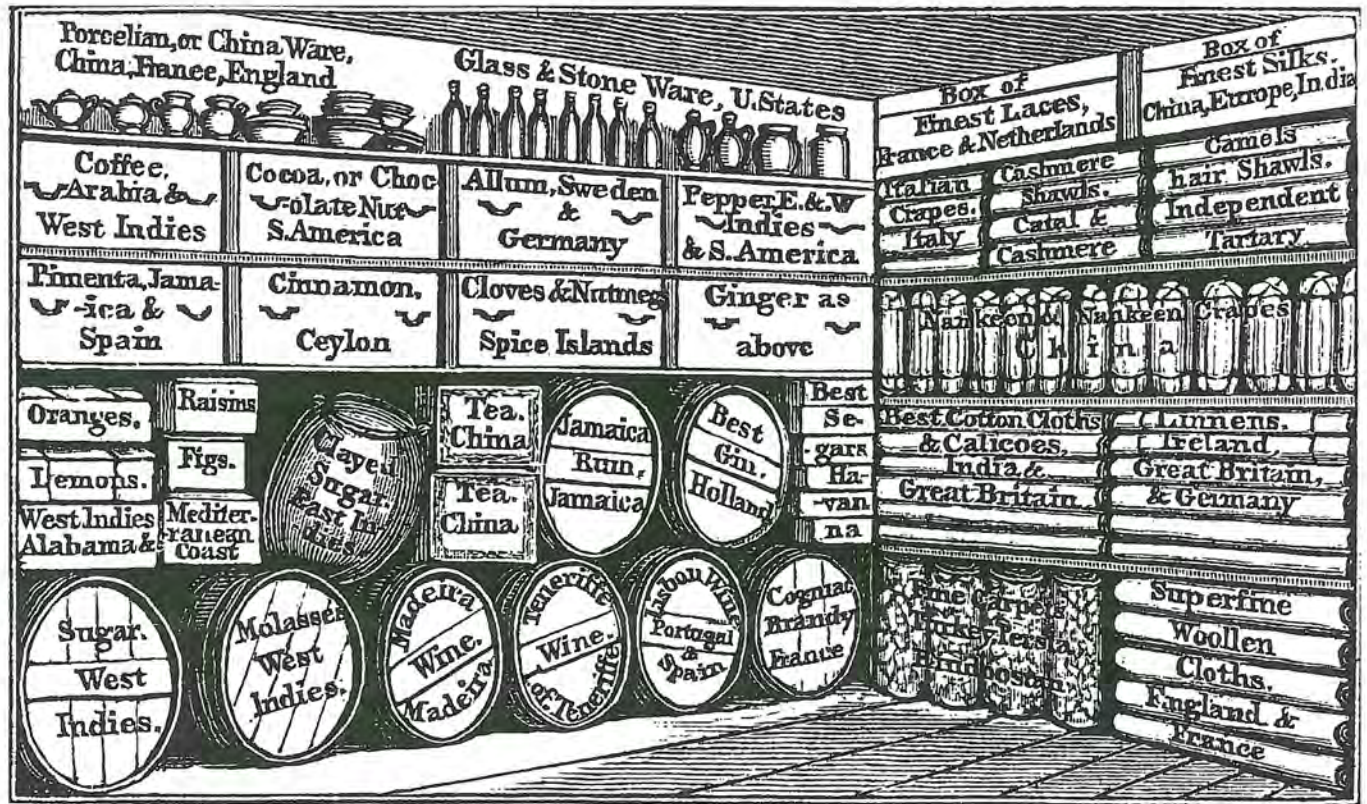


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Using the History Kit

This kit uses artifacts taken from the lives of farmers and storekeepers to illustrate the barter economy, seasonality of work, and expanding world view—key themes in the era of Agricultural Expansion. Included are hands-on activities, stories, reproduction artifacts, maps, graphics, discussion questions, and work sheets that integrate the study of nineteenth-century Vermont with geography, mapping, mathematics, and reading comprehension.

The overall objective of this kit is for students to identify Vermont's era of Agricultural Expansion and analyze it as a period of economic transition (**Standard 6.4**).

In the Farming section of the kit, students will collect and use primary resources to build original historical interpretations by examining a farmer's account book (**Standard 6.6a**); explore different concepts of time through a discussion of seasonal rhythms on a farm (**Standard 6.4a**); and identify the elements of a barter economy (**Standard 6.16a**).

In the General Store section of the kit students will explore different concepts of time through a discussion of seasonal rhythms of a general store (**Standard 6.4a**); distinguish between needs and wants, and evaluate how both are met in a barter economy (**Standard 6.14a**); and use maps to understand Vermont's broadening economy in the era of Agricultural Expansion (**Standard 6.7c**).

For each section of the history kit, the Teacher's Guide provides teaching objectives, a list of related artifacts, images and stories, background information, discussion questions, and student worksheets.



ARTIFACT LIST

Section One: Introduction

Books

- ❖ *The Diary of an Early American Boy*
- ❖ *The Ox-Cart Man*

Section Two: The Farmer

Artifacts

- ❖ Apple corer
- ❖ Butter churn
- ❖ Burlap sack
- ❖ Sacks of seeds and salt



Books

- ❖ *The Frugal Housewife*
- ❖ *Seasons*
- ❖ *The New England Farmer's Almanack*

Illustrations

- ❖ Farmer
- ❖ Clearing the Land
- ❖ Milk to Butter
- ❖ Geese and Chickens
- ❖ Sheep
- ❖ "Ideal conditions for pork production"
- ❖ Unloading at the Asa Knight Store
- ❖ Seasons: Winter; Spring; Summer; Fall
- ❖ Map, Farm Productions by Area
- ❖ Map of New England, 1830
- ❖ Map of Vermont, 1845



Section Three: The General Store

Artifacts

- ❖ Tin reflector
- ❖ Mourning calico
- ❖ Printed linen
- ❖ Wool
- ❖ Cone sugar
- ❖ Salt
- ❖ Luster pitcher
- ❖ Transferware plate
- ❖ Transferware cup
- ❖ Roll of paper (wallpaper)
- ❖ Toothbrush
- ❖ Comb
- ❖ Spectacles and case
- ❖ Seeds
- ❖ Wrought nails
- ❖ Sewing kit
- ❖ Burlap bag



Books

- ❖ *Early American Craftsmen & Their Tools*
- ❖ *The Frugal Housewife*
- ❖ *Historic Communities: The General Store*
- ❖ *Ledger Book*

Illustrations

- ❖ Interior of the Asa Knight Store
- ❖ A Business Transaction, Asa Knight Store
- ❖ Purchases at the General Store
- ❖ Country Store Interior, 1828. From Emma Williard. *Geography for Beginners*.
- ❖ Map of the World, 1830
- ❖ Map of New England, 1830
- ❖ Portraits of Asa and Susan Knight
- ❖ Newspaper advertisements



CARPETINGS.
NEW ENGLISH CARPETINGS
 RECEIVED per recent arrivals, "David Webb," "Vermont Carpet," "The Best," "Imitation," and "Country" patterns.
 A large assortment of new and beautiful carpets.
VELVET PILE
TAPPETRY BRUSSELS
SUPPERINE INGRAIN and DUTCH CARPET.
INDIA
 We have been prepared to exhibit a great variety of styles in an elegant manner. Satisfaction is the universal acknowledgment.
PIECE OF BRUSSELS
LOWWELL THREE PLY,
INDIAN CARPET, — — — — — and various.
PAINTED FLOOR CLOTHS,
SEWING MATTINGS,
LINEN CROCK CLOTHS,
BUCKINGHAM RIBBON, MATS, &c., &c.
 Completeing one of the largest, and perhaps the best assortment of the kind in the United States.
 For sale low for cash or approved credit, by
W. P. TENNY & CO.
 HALL OVER
 BOSTON & NAYNE RAILROAD DEPOT,
 HAYMARKET SQUARE, 1846.

CHEAP GROCERY STORE.
DEBIB & WASHINGTON Corner Salem & 13
 Having this season, have received a large and general assortment of W. I. goods & groceries, at very low prices.
 B. H. Sugar 7, 8 and 9 cts.
 No. 1 Corn 2 1/2 cts.
 Premium State Potatoes 20 cts per gallon.
 New Potatoes — do — — — — —
 Round Potatoes \$1 50 per bush, Cash in 2 cts per bush.
 Size 1 1/2 in. dia.
 Coffee in small bags for Family use.
 Leaf Paper, Tobacco, Spices, &c., &c.
 Prices 1/2 ct. less 25 cts.
 — — — — —
 Did not all kinds, but, for sale, for the
 Family give us a call early for necessary supplies.
 Boston, Nov. 23, 1825. — — — — —

I. V. B.
CLIFFORD & FRENCH
Indian Vegetable Pickings

G. & E. FRICHARD,
 DEALERS IN
 ENGLISH, AMERICAN,
 & WEST INDIA GOODS,
 DRUGS & MEDICINES,
 AND EVERY SPECIES OF
 COUNTRY PRODUCE.

PRESTON, & KEZERS.
 ENGLISH, AMERICAN,
 & WEST INDIA GOODS,
 AND ALL KINDS OF
 COUNTRY PRODUCE,
 BRADFORD, VT.

TEAS!!
 THE PLAN OF THE NEW-LOOK
GENCO TEA COMPANY,
 125 CHATHAM STREET,
 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, NEW-YORK CITY,
 (THE LARGEST TEA ESTABLISHMENT IN THE
 UNITED STATES.)
 Sold in Bradford, Vermont, by
S. T. GEORGE,
 THE SOLELY CHARGED BY
 Boston, Lowell, Concord, Springfield, New-Haven,
 Hingham, Portland, Gloucester, Lynn, Fall-River,
 Concord, New-Boston, Hingham, Fall-River,
 English Wharves, No. 20, St. Of every variety and
 quality. Circular, October 7, 1862.

CHINESE LIQUID CEMENT, for and water proofing
 for China, Glass, and Chinese Ware, for sale by
 Price 25 cents per bushel.

WEST INDIA GOODS.
 A Large supply of all kinds of W. I. Goods and Groceries, consisting of
 W. I. and Sugar House Molasses, Oil, &c., &c., at
 very low prices, at 50 to 60 cents per bushel. For sale
 at every place in the vicinity. For sale by W. W. HARDY.

BONNETS.
 New Millinery and Dress making
W. W. HARDY,
 100 N. BROAD ST.,
 BOSTON, MASS.

PARIS AND NEW-YORK
Millinery Goods,
 selected by hand from the LATEST IMPORTATIONS.
 Also the most of the latest styles of Bonnets, Mantles, and
 Dress Patterns. Also, a variety of Ribbons, which are
 made in the most perfect manner. The styles imported are the
 most fashionable in Paris and London, and are in the
 most perfect and most beautiful manner.

FRENCH AND AMERICAN BONNETS
 of all descriptions, from the latest styles of Paris, by
 the most
Dress Hats for Ladies
 Made to order, and all the latest styles of
 Ladies' shoes cut and made for purchase, in all the
 styles of the season. — — — — —
 Entrance No. 1, "Hobby's Building" — — — — —
 Bradford, March, 1862. 141

A. DAVIS PRESTON has lately received from the
 most
 English, French, German and American
DRY GOODS,
CROCKERY, GLASS AND HARDWARE,
Floor from New Wheat,
FISH, SALT, AND GROCERIES
 of the various kinds usually wanted in Families, which will be
 sold as low as can be had in the vicinity, and, in small lots,
 for the trade, at still low rates. Give your orders to
 Bradford, Ver. 23, 1862. 142





Note: Size and shipping costs limit the materials included in this kit. Teachers should feel free to supplement it with the following items:

For making butter:

- ❖ Cheesecloth & whipping cream

For drying apples:

- ❖ Apples, string, paring knife, apple pie recipe


For barter simulation:

- ❖ Seasonal produce by the pound (apples, potatoes)
- ❖ Bushel baskets
- ❖ Items preserved with salt (salt pork, pickles)
- ❖ Spices (cinnamon, allspice, ginger, nutmeg—imported from foreign countries)
- ❖ Scales (fairness in barter depended on accurate measures of weight. Weight also determined shipping or freight costs.)

For the tin reflector:

- ❖ Candles (the tin reflector in this kit was originally used to enhance candlelight. Because candles are both breakable and consummable, they are not included. Teachers may decide to demonstrate with their own candle. Vermont Historical Society does not assume responsibility for the hazards of using an open flame in the classroom.)





Vocabulary

Volume/Quantities

- Crate* ~ a packing case made of wooden slats
- Gross* ~ Without deductions, OR twelve dozen (12 x 12 = 144)
- Peck* ~ a dry measure of 8 quarts or $\frac{1}{4}$ of a bushel
- Bushel* ~ a dry measure equal to 4 pecks or 32 quarts
- Keg* ~ a small cask; a unit of weight equal to 100 pounds
- Firkin* ~ a measure equal to $\frac{1}{4}$ part of a barrel or 8 gallons
- Barrel* ~ a measure equal to 32 gallons
- Hogshead* ~ a large cask containing between 63 to 144 gallons, or a liquid measure equal to 63 gallons.

Economy

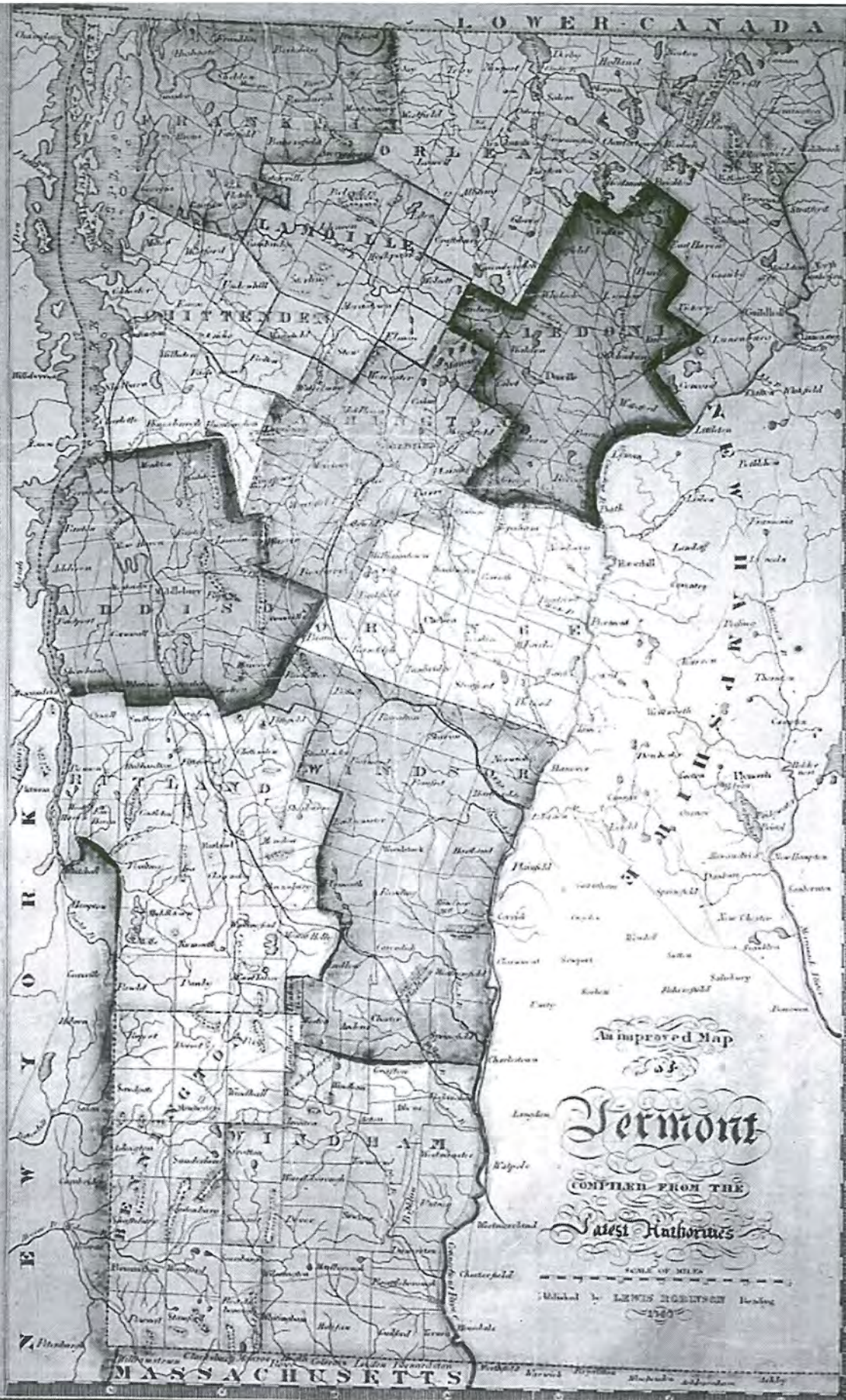
- Urban* ~ relating to the city
- Rural* ~ relating to the countryside
- Seasonality* ~ according to the seasons (winter, spring, summer, fall)
- Barter* ~ to trade for instead of using cash to purchase something
- Ledger* ~ a book in which business transactions are recorded
- Debit* ~ to owe money
- Credit* ~ to have earned money
- Import* ~ to bring in items from another region or, usually, country
- Export* ~ to send locally made items to another region or, usually, country
- Specie* ~ Hard currency, coin money

Miscellany

- Looking Glass* ~ a mirror
- Millinery* ~ items that are sewn or materials used to sew
- Mourning* ~ referring to sadness usually associated with death
- Staples* ~ basic food items such as bread, milk, eggs
- Sundries* ~ miscellaneous; a catch-all term for assorted small items
- 'Do'* ~ abbreviation for 'ditto' or 'repeat'
- Dasher* ~ the plunger in a butter churn




| County | Population | Area |
|-------------------|------------|--------|
| ADDISON COUNTY | 10,000 | 1,000 |
| ANDOVER COUNTY | 12,000 | 1,200 |
| CHITTENDEN COUNTY | 15,000 | 1,500 |
| FRANKLIN COUNTY | 18,000 | 1,800 |
| LAMOILLE COUNTY | 20,000 | 2,000 |
| ORLEANS COUNTY | 22,000 | 2,200 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 25,000 | 2,500 |
| WASHINGTON COUNTY | 28,000 | 2,800 |
| WATERBURY COUNTY | 30,000 | 3,000 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 32,000 | 3,200 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 35,000 | 3,500 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 38,000 | 3,800 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 40,000 | 4,000 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 42,000 | 4,200 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 45,000 | 4,500 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 48,000 | 4,800 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 50,000 | 5,000 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 52,000 | 5,200 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 55,000 | 5,500 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 58,000 | 5,800 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 60,000 | 6,000 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 62,000 | 6,200 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 65,000 | 6,500 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 68,000 | 6,800 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 70,000 | 7,000 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 72,000 | 7,200 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 75,000 | 7,500 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 78,000 | 7,800 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 80,000 | 8,000 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 82,000 | 8,200 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 85,000 | 8,500 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 88,000 | 8,800 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 90,000 | 9,000 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 92,000 | 9,200 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 95,000 | 9,500 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 98,000 | 9,800 |
| WINDHAM COUNTY | 100,000 | 10,000 |



An Improved Map
 of
Vermont
 COMPILED FROM THE
 Latest Authorities
 SCALE OF MILES
 PUBLISHED BY LEWIS ROBINSON Boston
 1840

MASSACHUSETTS



Introduction

Objectives

To introduce the concept of a barter economy and the seasonality of work in the early nineteenth century.

Contents

The Ox-Cart Man

Diary of an Early American Boy

Vermont During the Era of Agricultural Expansion


Vermont during the age of agricultural expansion was a complicated place to live. There were many aspects of daily life to which we can hardly relate, let alone understand: the practicality of a barter or trade economy that worked independent of specie (hard currency); seasonality, or work and life being dictated by the time of year rather than a specific job or occupation; and base-line, self-sufficiency balanced with an appreciation and appetite for worldly goods.

Vermont's landscape was changing dramatically. As more and more land was cleared, farms expanded and moved from a diverse subsistence agriculture to a single-crop, market-driven agricultural economy focused around sheep and the wool they produced. William Jarvis brought the first Merino sheep from Spain to Vermont in 1811. By 1840 there were 1.5 million merinos or six sheep for every person in the state.

Vermont was expanding in other ways as well. In 1823 the Champlain Canal opened, connecting Lake Champlain to the Hudson River. Partly as a result of this new access to the West, Burlington became the largest population center by 1840.

During this period, Vermonters became embroiled in national politics and reform movements. Vermont's Anti-Slavery Society formed in 1834. In 1836, Vermont adopted a bicameral legislature (with a House and Senate) by amending the Constitution. Reformers push for the improvement of education, the abolition of liquor, and the end of slavery in the South.

Vermont during the era of Agricultural Expansion was one of change. This kit focuses on the daily, material lives of Vermonters as they worked to sustain a living, trading with each other and the larger world.



Money and Wages in Early Vermont

Some of the activities in this kit encourage students to compare cash values. It is important to remember that species (or coinage) had a different kind of value in mid-nineteenth century Vermont than it does today. Money was rare. Few items were purchased with cash-in-hand. Barter, or the trade of services or products, satisfied a product-rich and cash-poor community. There were no overhead costs such as electricity, heating oil, telephone, insurance, or car payments added to the values of products. Thus, it is not possible to translate exact dollar amounts to today's dollar-value. With this in mind, a few comparative costs are listed here to give an IDEA of values. Out of context, however, these amounts are only relative figures.

In 1832, the average laborer earned about \$.75 – \$1.00 per day. Workers were often paid in goods and services rather than cash.

| Occupation | Daily wage |
|---------------|----------------|
| Agriculture | \$.50 – .75 |
| Shoemaker | \$.75 – 1.00 |
| Cabinetmaker | \$.75 – 1.00 |
| Harness maker | \$.80 – 1.00 |
| Cooper | \$.75 – 1.00 |
| Blacksmith | \$ 1.00 – 1.50 |
| Printer | \$ 1.00 – 1.50 |

The average wage earner could earn up to \$175–\$350 per year.

REMEMBER this is an economy that does not usually work in actual dollars.

Question: Why would a farmer or laborer earn more money during the late summer? What service would be in demand? This is a good opportunity to discuss the concepts of supply and demand.



The Farmer

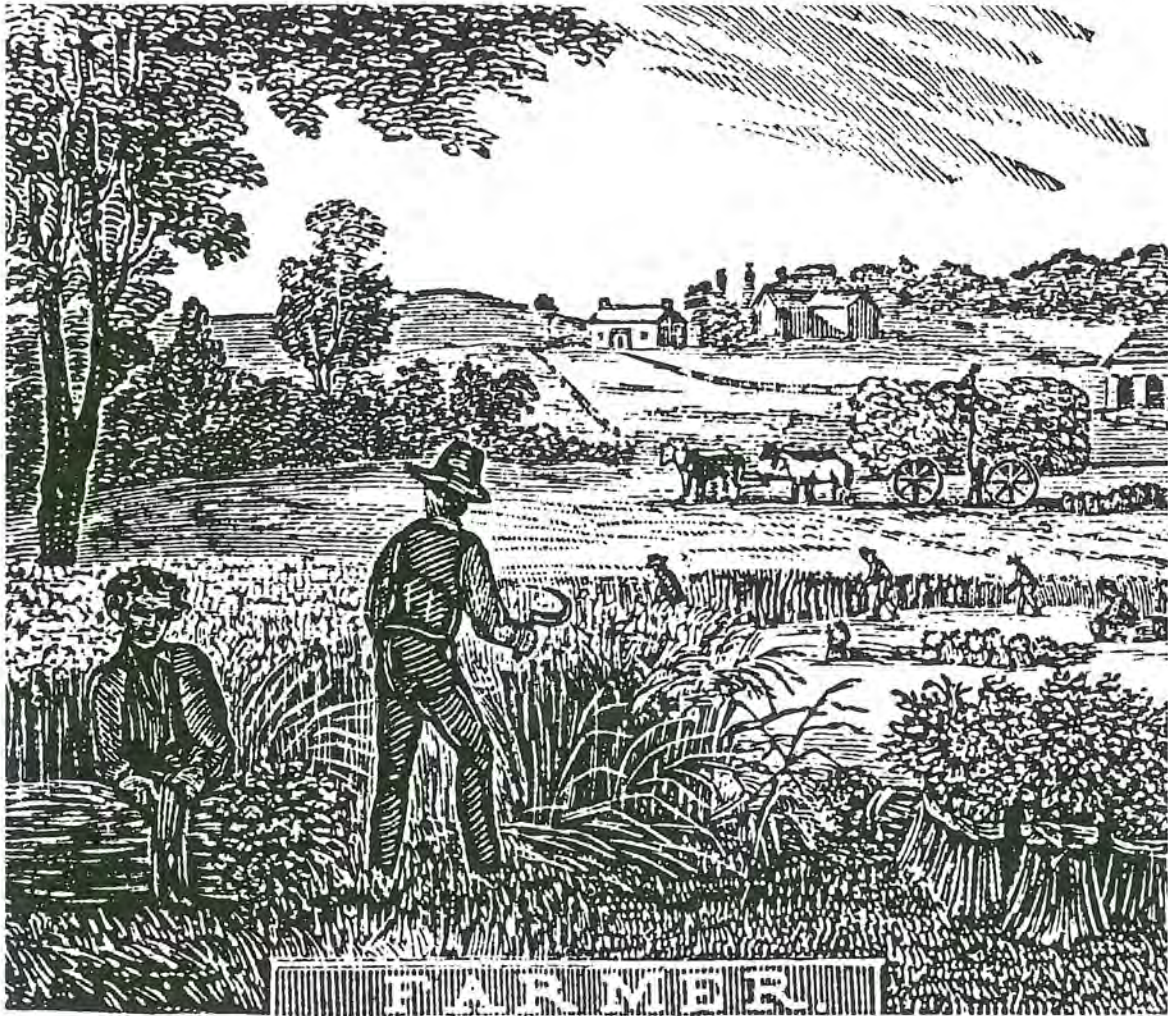
Tied to the seasons, Vermont farmers were lynch pins in mid-nineteenth century society. In 1840, four out of five Vermonters were farmers. Whether providing for family, trading services for crops, or bartering goods and livestock with the local merchant, the farmer was at the hub of the social and financial wheel. Yet, with an opening market place, shrinking land opportunities, and lures to follow migration westward, farmers were at a critical junction. The Kent family of Calais were predominantly farmers. They raised wheat, corn, chickens, hogs, and sheep; produced butter, cheese, potash, and maple sugar; spun wool, preserved meats, and pickled vegetables. They lived according to nature's seasonal clock. These goods fed and clothed the family. They were also used in exchange for goods and services not found on the farm. The George Kent family offers an example of the role of family farms in Vermont's changing nineteenth-century landscape.

The General Store

Vermont general stores illustrate three driving forces in mid-nineteenth century life in the Green Mountain state: a barter economy, the seasonality of life and work, and expanding world views. General stores stood at the crossroads of their communities. Towns first chartered in the New Hampshire Grants in 1761 drew ambitious families principally from Massachusetts and Connecticut to Vermont. By the 1770s, general stores offered goods for trade and sale from settlers' home towns as well as seaport cities such as Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Boston, Massachusetts, and New Haven, Connecticut. By the mid-1800s, large tracts of land had been cleared for farming, livestock herds thrived, ferries and turnpikes connected towns and farms, and Vermonters as well as other New Englanders were ready to take their place in a world economy.

Reading and Discussion

Depending on the age of your students, read either *The Ox-Cart Man* or *The Diary of an Early American Boy*. Discuss the types of work done on the farm and the seasonality of the work. Introduce the concept of a barter economy. Examine the role of children in these two stories. Are they separated and apart from the adult world or integrated with it? Describe children's responsibilities. What does a "family economy" mean?



Section Two: The Farmer

Objectives

Students will:

Standard 6.6a

- ❖ Identify the elements of a barter economy.



Contents

Artifacts

- ❖ Apple Corer
- ❖ Butter Churn
- ❖ Burlap Sack
- ❖ Sacks of seeds and salt

Books


- ❖ *The Frugal Housewife*
- ❖ *Seasons*
- ❖ *The New England Farmer's Almanack*

Illustrations

- ❖ Farmer
- ❖ Clearing the Land
- ❖ Milk to Butter
- ❖ Geese and Chickens
- ❖ Sheep
- ❖ "Ideal conditions for pork production"
- ❖ Unloading at the Asa Knight Store
- ❖ Seasons: Winter; Spring; Summer; Fall
- ❖ Map, Farm Productions by Area
- ❖ Map of New England, 1830
- ❖ Map of Vermont, 1845

Worksheets

- ❖ George Kent's Account Book
- ❖ George Kent's Account Book: You be the historian
- ❖ "The Teamster's Trouble"
- ❖ Price Charts for Boston and Woodstock



The Kent Family of Calais


The Kent Family of Calais, Vermont, were first, and foremost, farmers. Drawn by the availability of farm land, Remember Kent left Rehoboth, Massachusetts, in 1798 and headed north. A year later, he married Rachel Bliss, the daughter of another Rehoboth family who had also emigrated to central Vermont.

Most of the people in Calais were farmers. Of the 171 “Heads of Families” included in the 1820 United States Census, 147 were principally farmers. Many of these farming families augmented their agricultural activities with small industries, creating an interconnected web that allowed the community to be, if not self-sufficient, then capable of providing the basic ingredients for daily life.

The Kent family set a good example. Remember and Rachel Kent accumulated land, erected buildings, and with their eight children had financial interests in a sawmill, brickyard, shoe and boot shop, harness shop, blacksmith shop, and general store. The geographic center for these activities was known as Kent’s Corner (which still exists today). Each member of the family played a vital role in the family economy from planting, tilling, and harvesting, to processing, preserving, and storing. The time of year determined activities. Some work was so labor intensive that multiple families helped one another to accomplish all the work at hand, especially, when it was time to cut hay, harvest ice, or boil sap. Responsibilities on a family farm often fell into male and female roles. There was tremendous interdependence; no one task was more or less important than another but each was crucial to the other’s success. Caring for crops and livestock was directly related to processing their respective goods. Bread came from wheat; butter came from milk; wool came from sheep; linen came from flax.

George Kent’s Account Book

Just like businesses, farming families such as George Kent’s of Calais, Vermont, kept account books to record credits (the amount someone earned from the farmer) and debits (the amount someone owed the farmer). Account books were the official financial records of a barter economy. Included is a facsimile page from George Kent’s account book with a typescript and student worksheet. The worksheet asks students to “be the historian.” They are asked to reach conclusions about whether or not accounts were always settled evenly in a barter economy (they weren’t) by adding up the credits and debits. They are also asked to come to some conclusions about Jabez Mower, one of the men with whom George traded. By examining the evidence, they should be able to see that Jabez was not a farmer (in fact he worked as a shoemaker in a local shop) because he had to purchase numerous staples from George. They should not be able to make a conclusion about Jabez’s marital state. Jabez had George’s wife or daughters make numerous suits of clothing, indicating that he might not have had a wife, yet the clothes were made for someone besides Jabez—perhaps his children. In actuality, Jabez was married with several children.



Farm Products and Services for Barter

Seasonal harvest and processing were critical for family subsistence but also provided items for trade. Where specie or coinage was rare, trade or barter became the valued means of acquiring goods and, sometimes, services. This held true within communities but also reached over town lines. Farming families traded their home-made wares for both domestic and foreign items such as molasses, salt, cotton, tools, and dishes. Below is a sampling of items valued in trade.

Potash

Potash was a staple in Vermont's agricultural economy. Potash is the ash produced from burning trees. It is different from the charcoal we associate with burning wood in that it is burned in kilns to a fine, powdery ash. Potash and pearlash were used in the production of soap, glass, and textiles.

Trees covered Vermont's eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century terrain. Trees had to be cleared and their stumps burned in order to farm. This produced potash and, in a more refined state, pearlash. Trees were already scarce in southern New England, England, and continental Europe. Vermont's surplus potash was traded for city- and foreign-produced items such as silk, rum, and spices. Potash was packed in barrels, shipped by wagons or sleds, and sold by weight.

Larger tracks of cleared land led to more fields for crops and grazing. This allowed for larger farms and greater numbers of livestock (such as sheep). This clearing of land led to agricultural expansion.

Butter and Cheese

Virtually every Vermonter had cows. A steady milk source supported a strong butter and cheese industry. Vermonters exchanged their home churned and packed butter for items such as medicines, books, pencils, and clothing. Cheese in wax-sealed rounds kept for weeks. It was used to establish credit at a store or used to barter for other goods. In September of 1830, storekeeper Asa Knight of Dummerston shipped 6,098 pounds of cheese to Boston, trading it for items such as salt, dishes, tea, and 'plumes.' Even in the height of the merino sheep craze, butter and cheese brought 30% more income to Vermont than wool.

Butter and cheese were staples in trade. They were also heavy and expensive to transport over long distances. Butter was stored in tubs; the cheese in cheese cloth and, sometimes, wax, then transported by wagon.

Livestock

Vermonters kept a wide assortment of livestock on the farm. Cows produced milk and by extension cream, butter and cheese. Geese and chickens provided feathers, eggs, and meat. Sheep supplied the farm family with wool and mutton. Hogs were low maintenance animals that provided pork, bacon, and hides. All of these animals helped to feed or cloth a family. In quantities, they were the objects of barter.

Cows/Cattle



Butter was a staple in the local, state, and national household. Making butter or cheese were good ways to preserve fresh milk, especially when the weather was hot and milk plentiful. In 1830 several thousand pounds of homemade New England butter and cheese found their way into world trade routes. Even in the mid-1800s farmers sent their butter to the city in exchange for manufactured goods or foreign items that arrived in city ports. Butter and cheese did not spoil as quickly as milk, and though relatively heavy, was easy to pack. It was easily transported several hundred miles (for example, from Vermont to Boston).

Beef

Beef cattle were butchered on the farm and the meat salted and preserved. The hides were traded with a local tanner for processing into leather. Beef cattle were also 'driven' (walked) to the city where they would be sold for cash or credit.

Geese/Chickens

Geese and chickens provided eggs, feathers, and meat. It did not take long to 'grow a chicken' and so the investment offered a short turn-around. Merchants Baxter & Steele of Sharon, Vermont, sent 'crates of geese' and 'bags of chickens' to Boston in exchange for textiles, stoves, combs, or plows. Each November, Asa Knight would gather flocks of poultry to join the 115 mile parade to Boston. The flocks of chickens and turkeys on the road had "no established halting places When the shades of evening reached a certain degree of density, suddenly the whole drove with one accord rose from the road and sought a perch in the neighboring trees. The drover was prepared for such a halt and drew up his covered wagon beside the road where he passed the night."

Sheep

William Jarvis brought the first Merino sheep from Spain to Vermont in 1811. By 1840 there were 1.5 million merinos or six sheep for every person in the state. Vermont's mixed terrain suited the small, four-legged livestock; from hilly, rocky pastures to lowland meadows, merinos flourished in the northern climate. Addison County alone counted 370 sheep to the square mile. The sheep population was densest in the Champlain shore towns from Benson to St. Albans, and towns along the Connecticut River from Westminster to Thetford. Compare the following statistics of Vermont-owned livestock in 1840:



Horses : 62,000

Swine : 131,000

Cattle : 384,000

Sheep : 1,681,000

The introduction of sheep to the Vermont farmstead increased the average size of a farm (primarily for pasture) and directed farmers to single crop production: wool. Merinos grew premium quality coats that were sheared every spring for high profits. By 1840, one hundred small wool factories operated in the state, producing a valued export product. Farmers traded raw and spun wool with merchants and factories. Later in the century, Vermont wool would clothe thousands of Union soldiers.

Not all farmers could afford the fancy Mediterranean breed of sheep. Many farmers kept 'grade' sheep (unimproved breeds) that were still well-suited for mutton and mid-quality wool. Even in 1840, the total value of wool sales at average prices was only sixty-four percent (64%) of the value of the butter and cheese made on the farm.

Raw wool and spun yarn was boxed and transported by wagon to the nearest factory or merchant. In some instances, sheep were also driven to market, especially for mutton.

Hogs

Hogs, swine, and pigs provided a hearty supply of easily preserved meat. Pig hides produced durable leather. Once tanned and curried, it was stained and used for shoes, boots, harnesses, and yokes. Hogs were staples on the family farm but were also highly desirable at market. In Sharon, Vermont, shopkeepers, Baxter & Steele acted as middlemen. They arranged for farmer's hogs to be 'driven' (walked en masse) to Boston where they would be slaughtered and sold at market. Baxter and Steele would give the farmers credit at their store according to how much the hogs sold for in Boston. The weight of each hog was noted in the ledger book. In this way, the farmer could establish credit at the store based on the hogs' weight and expected value.



George Kent's Account Book

Worksheet

Just like businesses, farming families such as George Kent of Calais, Vermont, kept account books to record credits (the amount someone earned from the farmer) and debits (the amount someone owed the farmer). Account books were the official records of a BARTER ECONOMY. This is an example from a farm account book.

Jabez Mower worked for and traded with George Kent

Credit

(the amount George paid to Jabez for work and products)

Debit

(the amount Jabez owed to George)

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <p>April 1837 by one harrow \$ 3.50 by Jerry & horses one day \$ 1.50</p> <p>April 1838 by Jerry & horse one day \$1.50 by fifty saptubs at \$.07 \$3.50 by seventy pounds of oats & peas</p> | | <p>May 1837 to one ___ hay \$.60</p> <p>June 1837 to making military spencer for Jerry \$.75 to cutting pantaloons \$.13</p> <p>Oct. 1838 to making coat & I/2 yd. cotton cloth \$1.57 to cutting spencer for Johnson \$.20 to making surtout for Johnson \$2.50</p> <p>April 1839 to making suit of clothes for Johnson \$4.25</p> <p>April 1839 to Jackson with oxen & cart half day \$.75</p> | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

Vocabulary:

Surtout—a man's overcoat

Pantaloons—pants

Spencer—a short coat or jacket

George Kent's Account Book Continued

May 1847
by one day shearing sheep \$ 1.00

May 1848
by one pig \$ 1.25

Jan. 1840
to cutting Coat &
vest for Jerry \$.38
to sixty five pounds
of corn \$ _____

June 1841
to horse to draw manure \$.50

June 1847
to four bushels potatoes
at 34 cents per bushel \$1.34

July 1847
to one bushel potatoes \$.34
to one bushel of oats \$.40
to fifty cents cash \$.50
to one bushel of corn \$.83
two turkeys \$ 2.40

28
 June 1837 John Morgan B^d
 by horse & wagon to the meeting house 26
 by horse to woodbury back hut 10
 Feb 27 1838 by one dollar & fifty three cents 53
 Feb 27 1838 this day record & settled all book, act 7 83

John Mower B^d

Oct 17 by Johnson four days 2 00
 Apr 9 1838 by one harrow 3 50
 Apr 08 by ferry & horse one day 1 50
 by fifty saplings at seven cents 3 50
 by seventy pounds of oats & peas
 May 20 1847 by silson one day sheering sheep 1 00
 1848 by one pig one dollar twenty five cent 2 50
~~by one bushel of oats forty cents 40~~
~~by fifty cents each, in the morning 50~~
 May by one bushel of corn 4 50

10 7 5

Jabes Mowee De

| | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------|
| May 1837 | to one hundred of hay | 60 |
| June | to making military spencer for Jerry | 15 |
| | to cutting pants trousers | 18 |
| Oct 1838 | to making coat for self & 1/2 yd of cotton cloth | 57 |
| | to cutting spencer for Jerry | 20 |
| | to making six trout for Johnson | 2 50 |
| | to three nobs of thread for the above | 18 |
| Apr 28 | to making suit of cloathes for Johnson | 4 25 |
| Apr 1839 | to Jackson with oxen & cart half day | 0 75 |
| Jan 1840 | to cutting boat & vest for Jerry | 0 58 |
| May 20 1840 | to sixty five pounds of even by Day | |
| | to heads grass for six pigs | 0 30 |
| June 1839 | to horse to draw manure from Dana Barn | 50 |
| May 8 1840 | to two bushels of oats at thirty four cents the | 67 |
| June 1840 | to four bushels of potatoes at 34 cts per bushel | 1 34 |
| July 1841 | to one bushel potatoes | 34 |
| | to one bushel oats forty cents | 40 |
| | to fifty cents cash by billion | 50 |
| | to one bushel of corn | 83 |
| | to turkeys | 2 40 |
| | | 18 54 |
| | | 10 75 |
| | | 57 9 |



George Kent's Account Book You be the historian: Worksheet

1. Based on the evidence from the account book, do you think that Jabez was a farmer?

To answer the question, look at the evidence by making a list of what Jabez "bought" from George.

2. Did the Kent's neighbors always pay their bills or were there outstanding debts between neighbors?

To answer the question, look at the evidence by adding the Debit Column (amount owed) and Credit Column (amount earned). Did this transaction even out?

3. Do you think that Jabez was married?

To answer the question, look at what Jabez "bought" from George in June, 1837, October 1838, April 1839, and January 1840. Who do you think actually made these things? How could you find out for sure?

4. Fill the burlap bag with potatoes. How many pounds does it hold? How many bags of potatoes do you think Jabez bought from George?

5. Though many farmers owned sheep, chickens, and hogs, it was more expensive to keep horses and oxen. What did it cost to rent a horse for a day? An ox for a day?

6. What could you conclude about a farm's economy in early Vermont? Did a farmer produce all the food and clothing for his family? Did he ever have surpluses? Was the farmer the only member of the family producing goods on the farm?



Farming Activities

1. Make Butter

You will need:

- ❖ Butter Churn from the kit
 - ❖ One pint whipping cream (not supplied)
 - ❖ A yard (or so) of cheesecloth or sheeting (not supplied)
- a. Thoroughly wash and dry both the churn and the dasher.
 - b. Place the churn on a dishtowel with a low stool in front of it.
 - c. Pour the well-chilled cream into the churn.
 - d. Gently pound the milk with the dasher (the plunger) in an up-and-down fashion, consistently until butter forms.
 - e. Scrape out the butter.
 - f. Squeeze the butter through the cloth to remove the excess buttermilk. (at this point the butter might also be pressed into a wooden mold with a pattern and chilled.)
 - g. Carefully wash and dry the churn and dasher.
Please put them back in the kit CLEAN AND DRY.

To help the time pass, have the student recite and pound in time to:

Come butter come,
Come butter come,
[Johnny] stands at the gate, [substitute student's names]
Waiting for a butter cake,
Come butter come.

Discussion Questions:

How long did it take to make the butter? How much butter did you make from one pint of cream? How much did it weigh?

How long would it take for a farmwife or child to make enough butter to feed the family and have enough to trade at the general store? If eight pounds of butter was worth \$1.00, what could you trade for it at the store?

Farming Activities

2. Drying Apples

You will need:

- ❖ apple corer from the kit
 - ❖ apples (not supplied)
 - ❖ string (not supplied)
 - ❖ paring knife (not supplied)
 - ❖ *The Frugal Housewife*
 - ❖ an apple pie recipe from today (not supplied)
-
- ❖ Using the apple corer, core the apples; peel and cut them into thick slices with the hole in the middle.

 - ❖ Pass a length of string through the apple slices.

 - ❖ Hang the apples to dry. It takes about three weeks.

 - ❖ When they're dry, try storing them in paper bags until spring and use them in a recipe. Soak them in warm water until they are soft and use them as you would fresh apples in pies or sauce.

Discussion Questions:

Look for apple recipes in *The Frugal Housewife*. Compare the apple pie recipe from page 67 to an apple pie recipe from today. How were/are things measured? How were/are the pies baked? What ingredients are the same/different?





Farming Activities

3. *The New England Farmer's Almanack*, Windsor, Vermont, 1828

These little books hung from hooks in virtually every farm kitchen. They provided lots of information such as weather predictions, tides, phases of the sun and moon, court days, advice, and essays. Organized by the calendar, each month has two pages: world, national and historical events are noted on the left; weather, astrology, lunar phases, and tides are noted on the right. Poetic phrases and predictions are printed in italics.

Discussion Questions:

Find the month of April. List three historical events.

What catastrophic event happened in late November, 1814?

What weather is predicted for haying in mid-August?

Look at the month of May. If you were a farmer, when would you plant your crops? Early or late in the month?

Look at the cover. How much did this almanack cost?



Seasons on the Farm

Today, when we go to the grocery store, there is always a supply of fresh fruit, vegetables, fresh breads, and meats. What is not fresh is available frozen. Fresh food, year round, and frozen food were not available to mid-nineteenth century Vermonters. The time of year dictated meals and nutrition.

In the summer and fall, fresh vegetables, fruit, and meat were enjoyed at home as well as sold and bartered at market. Food preservation during these seasons was important in order to supply enough food for families in the dark, cold winters and late springs.

Salt was critical for food preservation. Pickled vegetables, salted meats, dried fruits, and stored root vegetables sustained family diets from December to May. Dried beef hung in linen bags from kitchen ceilings; bacteria was unknown. Potatoes, turnips, squash, carrots, and other root vegetables were stored on large flat trays in cellars. In early June, the first crisp lettuce leaves were a welcome contrast to boiled dinners.

Seasons on the Farm Activities

1. Using the two pages of debits and credits extracted from George Kent's 1840s farm account book, discuss the structure, the benefits, and limits of seasonal barter.
2. Make copies of the transcribed pages from George Kent's account book omitting the months. Ask the students to identify in what season each transaction occurred. Remember that they progress chronologically through the year. For your reference, this debit account begins in March of 1843 and ends in December.
3. How much does Kent pay for a day's work?
4. Using the booklet *Seasons*, list activities and expectations for children in the seasons. Is it all work? Look carefully at the back wrapper (or cover). What were the two ways Vermonters could purchase this book? In what quantities?
5. How much is a pound of cheese worth (see Debits, Dec. 1843)? Does this seem like a small or large amount? Compare this to the value of butter in March, 1843. Which item has a higher value (which is fresher)?

Seasons dictated daily work. Seasonal activity might involve:

In the Spring

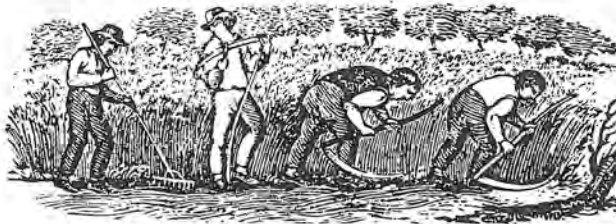
Busiest season on the farm



- ❖ Boiling sap (early spring)
- ❖ Tilling the field
- ❖ Planting the field
- ❖ Lambing and birth of other young stock
- ❖ Repairing fences

In the Summer

Cultivating crops



- ❖ Hoeing and cultivating fields; keeping weeds down
- ❖ Shearing Sheep
- ❖ Haying first (and best) cut of hay
- ❖ Pasturing livestock (sheep, cattle, hogs)

In the Fall

Harvest season



- ❖ Second and, possibly, third cutting of hay
- ❖ Harvesting of vegetables and
- ❖ Processing and preserving fruits and vegetables
- ❖ Building and repairing fences
- ❖ All ground ploughed that will be seeded in the spring
- ❖ Slaughtering
- ❖ Splitting wood

In the Winter

Quietest season



- ❖ Tending livestock
- ❖ Logging
- ❖ Pot and pearl ash kilns at work
- ❖ Moving piles of stones for fencing
- ❖ Harvesting ice
- ❖ Maintaining and upgrading outbuildings
- ❖ Spreading manure

Seasonal Trading on George Kent's Farm

Annual Credits:

Payments to George Kent

Examples of how people paid off debts when they had little cash. To simplify reading this document, add the word "earned." For example, the first entry can be read: "In January, earned \$1.00 by making an oxen yoke."

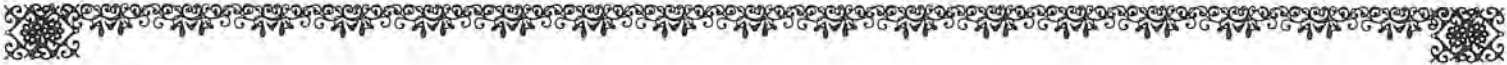
| | | | |
|-------|---------------------------------|--------|--------|
| Jan | by making one oxen yoke | | \$1.00 |
| | by cutting coat and vest | | \$.38 |
| Feb | by keeping lambs six weeks | | \$2.70 |
| March | by chopping wood two days | | \$1.00 |
| April | by fifty sap tubs @ | \$.07 | \$3.50 |
| | by one harrow | \$3.50 | |
| | by chopping at the door | \$.50 | |
| June | by half day washing sheep | \$.34 | \$6.00 |
| | by two days sheering sheep | \$1.50 | |
| | by one day making fence | \$.67 | |
| | by two days work haying | \$1.50 | |
| | by 2 days shingling | \$2.00 | |
| | by tin wire | \$.90 | |
| | by two hats | \$.25 | |
| July | by six dollars cash | | |
| Aug | by two days haying | \$1.50 | |
| Sept | by one day harvesting | \$.67 | \$6.00 |
| | by two calves | \$5.50 | |
| | by one days work on water works | \$.75 | |
| Oct | by one day shoveling manure | \$.50 | \$6.00 |
| | by picking apples | \$.50 | |
| Dec. | by one day work on your shed | \$.50 | \$6.00 |
| | by butchering hogs | \$.75 | |
| | by one day thrashing | \$.50 | |

Seasonal Trading on George Kent's Farm

Annual Debits:

Examples of what George Kent bought or owed others. To simplify reading this document, consider "to" to mean "owe." For example, the first entry may be read: "In March, 1843, George Kent owed fifty-eight cents for four pounds of butter @ 12 1/2."

| | | |
|-------|----------------------------------------|--------|
| March | 1843 to four pounds of Butter @ 12 1/2 | \$.58 |
| May | to eleven bushels of potatoes | \$1.83 |
| | to two & half days work @ .75 | \$2.87 |
| | to use of your horse - 1 day | \$.34 |
| | to one week board | \$1.00 |
| | to fourteen pounds salt pork | \$1.40 |
| June | to nine bushels potatoes | \$1.50 |
| | to wagon to Montpelier | \$.34 |
| | to one bushel of corn | \$.75 |
| | to one day hoeing potatoes | \$.67 |
| | to one-half day hoeing potatoes | \$.25 |
| July | to one bushel of corn | \$.75 |
| Sept | to half bushel salt | \$.50 |
| | to two quarters of mutton | \$.50 |
| | to one bushel of corn | \$.75 |
| | to one day making Cider | \$1.00 |
| | to horse drawing cider from mill | \$.25 |
| Oct | to one day digging potatoes | \$.50 |
| | to one & 1/2 days work on Hog Pen | \$.75 |
| Nov | to mutton of one sheep | \$1.10 |
| | to barrel of Cider | \$1.13 |
| Dec | to horse and sleigh three times | \$.50 |
| | to drawing grain with oxen & cart | \$2.00 |
| | to 23 pounds of Cheese | \$1.38 |
| | to two bushels of oats | \$.50 |



“How did they get there?”

Turnpikes and Trade

Value is dependent upon availability. In the mid-1800s, availability was determined by where one lived, natural resources, and the time of year. Those living on the seacoast had access to fish and maritime-related items such as rope and salt. Those living in Vermont had access to lumber and potash from trees, livestock and agricultural products. In western Vermont, marble and slate were valued products.

By 1825, a web of turnpikes and canals crossed Vermont and New England reducing the cost of shipping goods to and from rural areas. For interior towns this web opened new markets for farm produce.

Canals and Rivers

Butter, cheese, beef, pork, wool, and lumber flowed south by water from western Vermont to Albany and the tidewater via the Champlain Canal and Lake George. Between 1823 and 1833, traffic south to Whitehall, New York, increased greatly: butter and cheese by five times; sawed lumber by more than three times; wool by about fifty times. In the inter-state traffic, most of the wool and half the dairy products were going from Vermont to New York. A system of locks, completed in 1835 on the Connecticut River, by-passed waterfalls to help the region's produce and lumber reach tidal Connecticut. A sailing sloop from Long Island Sound unloaded freight as far north as Brattleboro in 1837.





Roads

Turnpikes led from the canals and rivers to inland hill towns. From Barre and vicinity, eight-horse teams loaded with country produce headed south through the Williamstown Gulf to the Connecticut River Valley and on to Concord, New Hampshire. Southern Vermont traffic concentrated at the Bellows Falls bridge crossing the Connecticut River to Walpole and Keene, New Hampshire. Turnpikes continued on to Concord, Nashua, and, then, to Lowell and Boston, Massachusetts.

From northern Vermont the pattern of highways leading to market was different. A summer road through Dixville Notch offered the Colebrook area and northeast Vermont a means to reach Portland, Maine, via the Androscoggin Valley. The trip took ten to fifteen days.

In the summer and fall 'drovers' pushed east or south with cattle, sheep, hogs, and geese for market. At night they put their stock in rented pastures. On one November day in 1825 the toll-keeper at the Windsor-Cornish bridge on the Connecticut River collected for 920 cattle crossing from Vermont. In the twelve months of 1837 the same toll-keeper counted 13,233 sheep and 2,420 cattle crossing the bridge and heading to market.

Saleable products were heaped on wagons and sleds. In winter, snow made traveling easier as runners slid over the hardpack and rivers. The cold made for natural refrigeration. A load south might contain dressed (or preserved) beef, hogs, fowl, butter, cheese, lard, apples, wool, flax, potash, feathers, and other non-perishables. The return load might include salt, yard goods, spices, molasses, rum, or household wares.

The cost of moving goods was an expensive charge to the producer. Freight charges included rents for night pasturing, tolls for bridges and ferries, feed, and other miscellaneous charges that accumulated in a 10-15 day trip. The country merchant was the key figure in distribution, in charge of the two-way flow of necessities and niceties.



Story: "The Teamster's Trouble"

In this fictional story, a "poor young man" has an accident with wagon and is helped out of his difficulty by George and Frank Milton. The wagoner fears the loss of his customers and tells about his load of goods.

George and Frank Milton were one day returning from school, when they met a boy, who was in a good deal of trouble. He was employed in driving a heavily-loaded wagon, and, on reaching a wet part of the road, where the mud was very deep, in consequence of the heavy spring rains which had lately fallen, his wagon had stuck in the mud; it had not been possible for his team to start it forward; the ground was uneven, and, to the great distress of the poor young man, one of his wheels came off.

When George and Frank came in sight of him, he was standing in the road, not knowing what he should do to get out of his difficulty. He had turned his back on his wagon, as if he could shut it out from his mind, by so doing, as easily as he could get rid of the sad sight. He stood scratching his head, and looking up and down the road, hoping that someone would come to his relief.

He seemed very glad to see George and Frank, when they came up. They stopped, and spoke to him, and asked him where he came from. He told them that he came from the town of X_____, about ten miles off, and that he had been to Boston to get a load, and was then on his way back to X_____. And, "Now, what shall I do?" said the boy. "Here I have a nice lot of groceries for Madam Upland. She is going to have a birth-day party for her little son this week, and sent by me to get the raisins, and sugar, and spice, for the cake; and if I do not get back, what will she do for it?"

"Then there is Master James Neatly. He is a student at the Academy, and I have a trunk of clean clothes for him; and he told me, if I did not get his things out in season for him to dress himself as he pleased for the dancing-master's ball, he could not tell what he should do to me."

"Then I have a case of books for the bookstore. There is a large package of great, brown-looking books for Professor Student, and a small case of children's books, which Mr. Gray, the bookseller, told me to be sure not to forget. There are in it the new Rollo Books; all the little boys in town are wanting them; and then there are some of the Well-Bred Boy, a little new book, which they say will teach all the boys to behave well. I am sure our town boys ought to read it, and the Academy boys, too, for that matter.

"Then I have some fruit trees for Squire Cheerful. He promised me one of the first peaches, and one of the best pears, that grew upon them, if I got them out safely.

“And – dear me! – I have Miss Nicely’s new bonnet, just come from Paris, sent her by her aunt. Now, she spoke to me this morning, as I went by, and said, in her own sweet, pleasant way – ‘William,’ said she. (almost all the people call me ‘Bill,’ but Miss Nicely always says ‘William’) – “William,’ said she, ‘do you go to the corner of _____ Street, and get a band-box for me. It has got my new bonnet in it, just sent to me by aunt Gabriella, from Paris. Now, if you get it out well, and in season for me to wear to the wedding visit tomorrow, you shall have this;’ and she held up before my eyes a bran new quarter of a dollar.”

The boy talked on in this way until he was out of breath. As soon as he stopped, George told him he did not doubt his wagon could be mended again without much trouble. He told the boy that, if he would stay by his horses, he and Frank would run home, and get the men who were at work ploughing in his father’s cornfield, to come and help him, and that he thought they should soon be able to get his wagon fixed again.

The boy thanked them for their kindness, and George and Frank went home. They went to the field where their father’s men were ploughing. Mr. Milton was also there. On hearing the account which the boys gave of the poor little wagoner’s trouble, Mr. Milton directed the men to go to his assistance. He himself walked over to the blacksmith’s, and told him that he was wanted at a little distance on the plain.

Mr. Milton and the blacksmith then proceeded to the spot where George and Frank had met the boy. The men had succeeded in raising the wagon, and restoring the wheel to its place. The blacksmith now used his skill and his hammer, and in a few moments the baggage wagon was in as good condition as before. The boy thanked George and Frank, and all the rest who had so kindly assisted him, and, whistling to his horses, drove on, feeling glad that he should not now disappoint any of his customers, and that he should in due time have his reward from Mr. Cheerful, and his bright quarter of a dollar from Miss Nicely, as neither the fruit trees nor the band-box were hurt by the upsetting.

In the evening, the children were talking over the adventures of the afternoon. As George thought it must be very tedious to drive along such a clumsy, heavy vehicle as this wagon, the fate of which had excited them so much. Some of the children compared its slow, creaking, tedious motion with the speed with which the freight cars on the railroad hurry along their burdens.

BOSTON MARKET.
Prices Current at Boston, for the week ending
WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 4, 1839.
Corrected Weekly, from the N. E. Farmer.

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|------|---|------|
| BUTTER, (tab) | lump | pond, | 17 | a | 20 |
| | | " | 22 | a | 28 |
| CHEESE, new milk, | | " | 10 | a | 12 |
| EGGS, | | dozen, | 18 | a | 21 |
| FLAX, American, | | " | 9 | a | 12 |
| FISH, Cod, | | quintal, | 3 62 | a | 8 75 |
| FLOUR, Genesee, | | cash barrel, | 6 62 | a | 6 75 |
| | Baltimore, Howard street, | " | 6 25 | a | 6 37 |
| GRAIN, Corn, northern yellow | | bushel, | 95 | a | 98 |
| | southern flat yellow | " | 89 | a | 91 |
| | white, | " | 80 | a | 82 |
| | Rye, northern, | " | | a | |
| | Oats, northern, (prime) | " | 45 | a | 50 |
| HAMS, northern, | | pond, | 12 | a | 14 |
| | southern, and western, | " | 1 | a | 12 |
| LARD, Boston, 1st sort, | | " | 12 | a | |
| | southern, 1st sort, | " | 11 | a | 12 |
| PORK, Mass. inspect. extra clear, | | barrel, | | a | |
| | whole hogs, | pond, | | a | |
| POULTRY, | | pond, | | a | |
| TALLOW, tried, | | lb. | 12 | a | 13 |
| WOOL, prime or Saxony Fleeces, | | pond, | 60 | a | 65 |
| | American full blood, washed, | " | 55 | a | 60 |
| | do. 3-4ths do. | " | 53 | a | 55 |
| | do. 1-2 do. | " | 50 | a | 53 |
| | do. 1-4 and common | " | 45 | a | 50 |
| Northern pulled. | { | Pulled superfine, | 60 | a | 62 |
| | | 1st Lambs, | 55 | a | 58 |
| | | 2d do. | 35 | a | 40 |
| | | 3d do. | 25 | a | 30 |

PRICES CURRENT AT WOODSTOCK,
Corrected weekly for the Mercury.

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|---------|---------|------|---|------|
| Apples | | bushel | 25 | a | 37 |
| Beans | | " | 1 25 | a | 1 50 |
| Butter | | pond | 14 | a | 16 |
| Beef | | hundred | 6 50 | a | 8 00 |
| Cheese | | pond | 7 | a | 8 |
| Dried Apple | | | 4 | a | 5 |
| Eggs | | dozen | 12 | a | 12 |
| Flour | | barrel | | a | 8 75 |
| Flax Seed | | bushel | | a | 1 25 |
| Grain; corn | | " | | a | 87 |
| | Rye | " | 95 | a | 1 00 |
| | Wheat | " | 1 75 | a | 2 00 |
| | Oats | " | 45 | a | 50 |
| Hay | | ton | 7 00 | a | 8 00 |
| Honey | | pond | 12 | a | 16 |
| Hams | | " | | a | |
| Lard | | " | 13 | a | 14 |
| Lime | | cauk | | a | 1 50 |
| Pork; whole hogs | | pond | | a | |
| Poultry | | | | a | |
| Potatoes | | | | a | 20 |
| Tallow, tried | | | 12 | a | 14 |
| Wool | | | 40 | a | 50 |
| Wood, Maple, cord | | | | a | |
| | Beech | | | a | |
| | Hemlock | | | a | |





Turnpikes and Trades Activities

1. Read the "The Teamster's Trouble." In this fictional story, a "poor young man" has an accident with his wagon and is helped out of his difficulty by George and Frank Milton. The wagoner fears the loss of his customers and tells about his load of goods.
2. Is there a "Turnpike Road" in your community? Does it still bear that name? Looking at a map of your town, determine its direction (north, south, east, west) and explain why it was laid in that direction.
3. Freight costs were often added to the price of merchandise, especially if items were heavy or were shipped over long distances. Using the price charts for Boston and Woodstock compare and calculate the difference in prices for butter, eggs, cheese, and flour.
4. Farmers and shop owners could transport goods via rivers, lakes or turnpikes. Look at the Vermont and New England maps. Choose the best way to ship the following merchandise and explain why. What time of year would be best for shipping each of these items? (There may be more than one answer. Remember that rivers and lakes freeze in the winter.)

Woolen Cloth

Eggs

Potash/pearlash

Logs

Wheat

Livestock

5. Using the *1828 Almanack*, refer to the "Table of Roads." What city is farthest from Albany? In what direction are the distances recorded? What does this tell you about markets?



Section Three: The General Store

Objectives

Students will:

Standard 6.4a

- ❖ Demonstrate an understanding of different concepts of time through a discussion of seasonal rhythms of a general store.

Standard 6.14

- ❖ Distinguish between needs and wants, and evaluate how both are met in a barter economy.

Standard 6.7c

- ❖ Use maps to understand Vermont's broadening economy in the era of Agricultural Expansion.

Contents

Artifacts

- ❖ Tin Reflector
- ❖ Mourning Calico
- ❖ Printed Linen
- ❖ Wool
- ❖ Cone Sugar
- ❖ Salt
- ❖ Luster Pitcher
- ❖ Transferware Plate
- ❖ Transferware Cup
- ❖ Roll of paper (wallpaper)
- ❖ Toothbrush
- ❖ Comb
- ❖ Spectacles and Case
- ❖ Seeds
- ❖ Wrought Nails
- ❖ Sewing Kit
- ❖ Burlap Bag



Books

- ❖ *Early American Craftsmen & Trade*
- ❖ *The Frugal Housewife*
- ❖ *Historic Communities: The General Store*
- ❖ *Ledger Book*



Illustrations

- ❖ Interior of the Asa Knight Store
- ❖ A Business Transaction, Asa Knight Store
- ❖ Purchases at the General Store
- ❖ Country Store Interior, 1828. From Emma Williard *Geography for Beginners*. Hartford, 1826
- ❖ Map of the World, 1830
- ❖ Map of New England, 1830
- ❖ Portraits of Asa and Susan Knight
- ❖ Newspaper Advertisements

Worksheets

- ❖ General Store Activity Sheet
- ❖ Price Code Worksheet
- ❖ Global Economy Worksheet

JUNE 1, 1848.
FIFTEEN DAYS LATER, &
25 PER CENT CHEAPER,
AT KING'S.

HAVING purchased a very large stock of Goods in the month of April, my supply was kept full up to the current month, Consequently my purchases for summer trade have been made at VERY REDUCED PRICES and a LARGER or BETTER selected Assortment cannot be found in VERMONT. I have bought EVERY THING which can contribute to the rational wants of man, and I PLEASUR MYSELF TO UNDERTAKE ANY ESTABLISHMENT IN MONTPELIER.

June 2, 1848.

STORRS & LANGDON have just returned from Boston and are receiving their second purchase of
NEW SPRING GOODS.

1848.

NEW SPRING AND SUMMER GOODS
 AT THE
NEW CASH STORE.

ERTH AND BARRIE,
 HAVE just received and are now opening their full and complete assortment of
RICH & FASHIONABLE DRY GOODS,
READY MADE CLOTHING,
GROCERIES, CROCKERY,
GLASS AND HARD WARE.

Which they pledge themselves to offer at prices that cannot be beat—it being a well established fact that the system of trade, which was commenced, and is carried out by us, viz., Ready Pay and Small Profits—is for the interest of the buyer as well as the seller. Give us a call and we will convince you of the truth of our statements. Grateful for the liberal share of patronage thus far extended to us, we trust that by keeping at all times a complete stock of Choice and Desirable Goods, and adhering strictly to our present Low Price System, to merit a continuance of the same.
 April 1848.



THOMAS MURPHY

RENEWS his thanks to the public for the liberal encouragement given him since he opened his CLOTHING STORE and now ventures to say that his new stock of CLOTHES, CLOTHES, TAILORS' TRIMMINGS, and FURNISHING GOODS,

Just purchased in BOSTON, surpasses any stock ever brought into this County. He has
More than 20 Different Qualities

of
PURE GERMAN BROADCLOTHS,
 of various colors. A Large—VERY LARGE—assortment of
Black German Doe Skins,
 and CASSIMERES.



Asa Knight of Dummerston, Vermont

Asa Knight opened his general store in Dummerston, Vermont, in the spring of 1827. Knight's grandfather had moved to town just before the revolution (1774), and Asa was born there in 1793. He was a local boy, known by his neighbors.

The store was located on the town common and offered residents a wide range of merchandise (today the store is located at Old Sturbridge Village). Rural stores of the 1830s reflected rural realities and urban tastes. They catered to and had stock reflecting the seasons. They also provided customers with raw materials for a wide variety of domestic and farming activities:

| | | |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------|
| reeds | buckram | ribbons |
| wire flowers | silk for millinery | spices |
| raisins | flour | sugar |
| tea | coffee | rice |
| baking soda | carpenter's tools | nails |
| screws | furniture hardware | paints & oils |
| textiles | buttons | sewing threads |
| needles/pins | quills | penknives |
| ink powders | slates | pencils |
| paper | sanders | blotting sand |
| blank books | school books | dictionaries |
| combs | toothbrushes | toilet soaps |
| cologne | spectacles | |

Frequently, a country merchant such as Knight ordered staples from urban dealers with whom he had an established business relationship and waited to make more selective purchases until his own semi-annual trips to Boston, Albany, New York, or Hartford, Connecticut. On those trips, a merchant would replenish depleted stock, purchase or order seasonal goods, and purchase a few perishable luxuries such as lemons and oranges.

Some items were available closer to home. For example, Asa Knight purchased window glass (or lights) directly from a glassmaker in Keene, New Hampshire, and bulk flour from a mill in Troy, New York. He bought agricultural tools from New England manufacturers: shovels from a company in Braintree, Massachusetts, and scythes from a company in Newfane, Vermont.



A great variety of goods were brought to the store by the local community for credit:

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| geese/turkeys | ax handles | feathers |
| wooden button molds | butter | cheese |
| shoes | boots | felt hats |
| beans | corn | dried apples |
| honey | crackers | fish |
| whip handles | stocks | brooms |
| butter tubs | wooden articles | potash/pearlash |
| wheat | pails | churns |

Knight sold some of these goods to local customers; others he stock-piled and took to Boston to sell for cash or exchange for credit. Knight advertised that he had “a general assortment usually kept in a country store” so he did not limit or promise merchandise he might have on hand.

Like most merchants in Vermont, Knight sold and traded on a barter system. Coins and paper money were still uncommon in the rural mid-1800s. Most people traded goods manufactured at home and on the farm for items they could not produce themselves. This does not mean they were ‘poor’ or did not know and appreciate delicate textiles and exotic foods. Indeed, they were dependent on merchants like Asa Knight to make the trek to Boston or Albany to secure novelties from foreign lands in exchange for staples they could produce such as butter, hogs, and potash. Produce, livestock, butter, cream, and other products were sold by weight, thus the scale at the general store was an important measure to fair compensation.






General Store Activity

1. Organize the items in the kit according to their values. Divide the class in two groups. Have one group collect unprocessed (or 'raw') materials such as apples, sugar, salt, wool, etc. Decide how much raw material is needed to purchase particular items in the kit.

An Estimated Price for Artifacts in the Kit (based on the Baxter & Steele and George Kent Account Books):

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Tin Reflector | \$1.00 |
| Mourning Calico | \$0.28 a yard |
| Printed Linen | \$0.40 a yard |
| Salt | \$1.00 per bushel |
| Luster Pitcher | \$0.33 |
| Transferware Plate | \$0.45 for a cup and saucer |
| Roll of paper (wallpaper) | \$0.33 a roll |
| Toothbrush | \$0.10 |
| Butter Churn | \$1.75 |
| Horn Comb | \$0.54 |
| Spectacles and Case | \$0.33 |
| Wrought Nails | \$0.07/pound |
| Butter | \$0.12/pound |
| Cheese | \$0.06/pound |
| One Bushel Potatoes | \$0.34 |
| One Bushel Oats | \$0.40 |
| One Bushel Corn | \$0.83 |
| 1 Turkey | \$1.20 |
| Mutton of one Sheep | \$1.10 |
| A Cow Hide | \$2.50 |



Account Book of Baxter & Steele of Sharon, Vermont

Gentlemen Baxter and Steele operated a store in Sharon, Vermont. In addition to account and day books, they took inventories of their stock. Beginning in the front windows, they listed everything stocking the shelves in 1831. Here is a condensed sample:
(Items in bold are included in the kit)

| Item | Price in \$ |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Whips | |
| 1 dz. suspenders | 2.00 |
| 3 White Umbrellas | 4.50 |
| 1 Looking Glass | 3.12 |
| 2 pr. Worsted Hose | 1.58 |
| 3 pr. Black Silk Hose | 3.75 |
| 4 Snuff Boxes | 6.87 |
| 1 Handkerchief | .88 |
| 5 India Silk Handkerchief | 3.59 |
| 9 Turkey Silk Handkerchiefs | 9.00 |
| 16 yds. Gingham | 3.75 |
| 24 1/2 yds. Mourning Gingham | 7.02 |
| 25 yds. Mourning Gingham | 7.00 |
| 9 1/2 yds. Bombazett | 2.37 |
| 32 1/2 yds. Scotch Plaid | 7.42 |
| 8 1/4 yds. Tartan Plaids | 3.96 |
| 40 1/2 yds. Camblet Plaids | 13.42 |
| 11 yds. French Muslin | 4.40 |
| 1 1/2 yds. Plush Trimming | 3.00 |
| 2 Pocket Books | .67 |
| 5 oz. sealing wax | .23 |
| 25 Composition Thimbles | .68 |
| 38 Thimbles | .76 |
| Needles | 1.00 |
| 3 Toy Watches | .13 |
| 41 3/4 yds. English Gingham | 7.10 |
| 17 yds. American Gingham | 2.38 |
| 99 yds. American Gingham | 11.39 |
| 29 yds. Jackson Stripe | 4.62 |

Item

Price in \$

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| 71 $\frac{1}{4}$ yds Sheeting | .30 |
| 14 Almanacks | .14 |
| 1 Vermont Gazetteer | .67 |
| 1 Family Physician | .17 |
| 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Dozen Spelling Books | 3.34 |
| 12 Toy Books | .24 |
| 4 Glass Ink Stands | .16 |
| Lot Artificial Flowers | 2.50 |
| 1 pr. India Rubber Overshoes | 1.25 |
| 1 pr. Hipper | .17 |
| 8 Double Bladed Knives | 2.00 |
| 6 Bullet Molds | .84 |
| 12 Small Plain Iron | 1.50 |
| 6 Razors | 1.25 |
| 7 pair Spectacles | 2.34 |
| 2 pr. Brass Candlesticks | 1.83 |
| 3 Sett desk locks | .50 |
| 2 Chest Locks | .17 |
| 1 Sett Brass Locks | .50 |
| 11 Chest Locks | 1.87 |
| 10 Trunk Locks | .42 |
| 1000 Flints | 1.25 |
| 3 Large Hair Combs | 1.62 |
| 4 Toothbrushes | .40 |
| 130 Bushel Salt | 126.80 |
| 200 Slate Pencils | .30 |
| 1 doz. Thayers Pills | 3.00 |
| Brass Padlocks | .58 |
| 3 setts drawer locks | .50 |
| 7 Till Locks | .58 |
| 2 Reflectors | 2.00 |
| 3 pr. Glass Lamps | 1.37 |
| 2 Lanthorns | .50 |
| 1 Box Spanish Sugar | .50 |
| 1 pr. Small Scales | 1.00 |
| 1 pr. Do new | 7.00 |
| 9 Luster Pitchers | 3.00 |

| Item | Price in \$ |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| 6 Blue Printed Teapots $\frac{1}{6}$ | 1.50 |
| 6 Blue Printed Sugar Bowls | 1.00 |
| 12 Set cups and saucers | 5.50 |
| 1 Shaker Churn | 1.75 |
| 7 Rolls of Paper | 2.34 |
| 3 Wash Brushes | 1.87 |
| 2 Shoe Brushes | .13 |
| 5 Shoe Hammers | 1.00 |
| 4 Shaker Brooms | 1.34 |
| 1 coffee mill | .88 |
| 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ English Mustard | .35 |
| 42 Lights 7-9 Glass | 1.26 |
| 1 Box Quality Glass | 7.50 |
| 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ Box 2nd Quality Glass | 29.25 |
| 2 Buffalo Robes | 7.84 |
| 7 Kegs cut nails | 38.46 |
| freight | 4.50 |
| 74th Coffee | 9.25 |
| freight | .57 |
| 56th Ginger | 4.32 |
| freight | .39 |
| 14 Maple Sugar | 1.40 |
| 119 Saleratus | 7.14 |
| freight and keg | 1.00 |
| 1 Box Raisons | 2.75 |
| 13 Pepper | 2.21 |
| $\frac{2}{3}$ lb Cloves | .48 |
| 1 cask Raisons and freight | 8.25 |
| 130 Bushel Salt | 126.10 |
| 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ Barrels Mackerel | 39.96 |
| 1 Bls Salmon | 9.35 |
| freight Mackerel & Salmon | 25.87 |
| 1 Box Havana Sugar | 60.45 |
| freight | 3.00 |
| 10 Bags Fine Salt | 23.75 |
| 985 Codfish | 29.20 |

| Item | Price in \$ |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Lot Old Fish | 7.50 |
| 59 Gallon Rum | 9.00 |
| 39 Gallons Brandy | 44.85 |
| 22 Gallons Gin | 22.00 |
| 30 Gallons Wine | 15.00 |
| 30 Gallons Lisbon Wine | 15.00 |
| H.D St. Croix Rum | 81.00 |
| 27 Gallons Lamp Oil | 21.60 |
| 65 Hysactu tea | 64.35 |
| 44 Pimento | 11.88 |
| 1 __ Molasses | 40.80 |
| freight | 8.00 |
| 168 lb Butter | 21.00 |
| 162 New Orleans Sugar | 17.01 |
| 74 __ Sushon tea | 36.26 |
| 92 H. Tea | 77.28 |
| 192 Bushels Wheat | 192.00 |
| 200 Bushels Rye | 116.67 |
| 600 Bushels Corn | 350.00 |
| Ashes in Potash | 300.00 |
| 10 Barrels in Boston | |
| 12 Barrels Pearlash at home | 350.00 |



General Store Activity Sheet

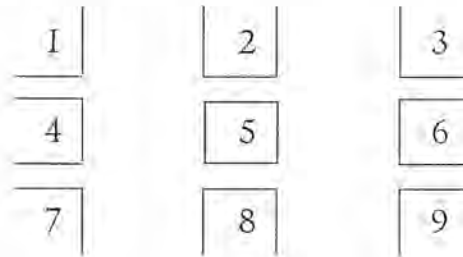
Using the page edited from the Baxter and Steele Store inventory, answer the following questions:

1. Which items might have been brought to the store by a farmer such as George Kent?
2. Which items sold in the store were NEEDED?
3. Find five items sold in the store that were luxury items or WANTS?
4. Find the item being sold with the name of the United States President? (hint: it is a kind of material)
5. How many items are described in terms of the country they come from? _____ List the countries. Can you find them on the 1830 world map?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
6. What item(s) are you surprised to see on the list?
7. What item(s) do you not recognize?

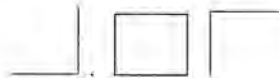


Price Code Worksheet

Some merchants labeled their merchandise with a price in code so that farmers would not know the exact price of a certain product and the merchant would have an upper hand in negotiating a trade. One code used a mark derived from the game of tick-tack-toe:



The lines drawn around each number stood for the digit with an X for the zero. One dollar and fifty-nine cents (\$1.59) would be:



See if you can compute the following coded prices:

1.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| | . | | |
|--|---|--|--|
2.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| | . | | |
|--|---|--|--|
3.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| | . | | |
|--|---|--|--|
4.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| | . | | |
|--|---|--|--|
5.

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| | . | | |
|--|---|--|--|



Seasons at the General Store

Vermont store owners accommodated the seasons in stocking their stores. Customers bought items needed to survive the winter based on credit they built in summer and fall by bringing wheat, fruits, vegetables, and livestock to the store. The following list shows the contrast of merchandise available in country stores at different times of the year.

SPRING

| | | |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Seeds | Agricultural tools | Rubber shoes |
| Fishing tackle | Cotton textiles | Salt |
| Sugar | Spices | Tools |
| Raw wool | Maple sugar | |

SUMMER

| | | |
|----------------|-----------------|------------|
| Bushel baskets | Pails | Straw hats |
| Wagon wheels | Cotton textiles | Spices |
| Sugar | Salt | Tools |

FALL

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------|--------|
| Salt | Fresh produce | Spices |
| Fresh ground flour | Fresh fruit | Corn |
| Empty barrels/crates | Dishes | Sugar |

WINTER

| | | |
|--------------|---------------|------------|
| Salt | Buffalo robes | Furs |
| Woolens | Boots | Dried meat |
| School books | Almanacks | Spices |
| Sugar | Medicines | Pipes |





Seasons at the General Store: Activities

1. Using the advertisements provided, group them by season.
Which items are easily identified with a season?
Which items are available year-round?
Why is raw wool available in the spring and not in the winter?
Why might salt be more expensive in the fall?
2. Go to your local grocery store and inventory the locally produced products.
Ask the store manager what items are local.
Where does the store get lemons? tea? Granny Smith apples?
3. If you have a general store in your community, interview the store owner about his/her business. Here are a few sample questions to begin your conversation:
How long have you owned this store?
How long has the store been in this location?
Has the store had different names?
Do you carry different merchandise based on seasons?
What is the most popularly sold item in spring? summer? fall? winter?
What percentage of local products do you sell?
What percentage of products are shipped in from out-of state?
What percentage from different countries?
From how far away do you order products?
How long does it take them to arrive?
Do you have a credit system?





A Global Economy in the Early Nineteenth Century

Nineteenth-century Vermonters were largely self-sufficient. They could produce much of what they needed at home, but there was a clear consciousness and awareness of a global economy.

Some foreign merchandise was exotic on the dinner table: allspice from Jamaica and the East Indies; ginger from Africa; peppercorns from the Dutch Guianas; coffee from Mocha, Java, and Brazil; oranges and lemons from the Azores; figs, raisins, citron and pineapple from the Mediterranean; sugar from the West Indies; and tea from China.

Some merchandise offered a touch of elegance and refinement in an otherwise hard homespun life: porcelain from France; glass from Germany, Italy, and England; ceramics from England; paisleys from India; silks from China, France, and England; and furs from Russia.

Tea drinking was a refined activity. Fragile teapots, silver spoons, even specialized furniture enhanced the ritual of sipping afternoon tea. In wealthy families, tea was taken daily. For farming families, drinking tea with all the associated delicacies was reserved for special occasions.

Other foreign merchandise was critical to day-to-day subsistence. (Salt from Liverpool and the Tortugas was a staple.) With no refrigeration other than an occasional ice house near a lake or river, good preservation was imperative to having enough food to last through lean winter months. Salt was the main ingredient necessary for food preservation. Without it, many families would have a tough time sustaining foodstuffs through the winter.

Salt was sold in bags or kegs. It was rarely served with pepper at the dinner table because so much was already heavily salted. Meats were soaked in salt barrels, wrapped in cheese cloth, and suspended from kitchen ceilings, pantries, and cellars. Salt was used to pickle beans, cabbage, cucumbers, peppers, carrots, onions, and other fresh vegetables.



A Global Economy in the Early Nineteenth Century: Worksheet

1. Find as many references to other countries in the newspaper advertisements as possible. There are at least five. Fill in the chart

| | Country | Merchandise | Season |
|----|---------|-------------|--------|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |
| 5. | | | |

2. Using the Baxter and Steele store inventory, list all foreign countries used to describe products.

3. Use the world map to find all the countries listed on the 1828 print of a store interior.

What product(s) come from China:

What product(s) come from the West Indies:

What product(s) come from England:

What product(s) come from France:

4. What foods do we eat today that are preserved with salt?

5. Which items in the kit came from countries other than the United States?

6. Locate the figured linen fabric in the kit.

What animals are featured in the design?

What country/ies or cultures are represented?

Is the pattern a factual representation of another culture?

Why or why not?

7. Find the Luster Pitcher in the kit. What is it made of? What is it trying to look like?

8. Find the 'blue-printed' cup in the kit. Describe the pattern. Is it a local scene? A foreign scene?



Appendix:
Additional Activities

