



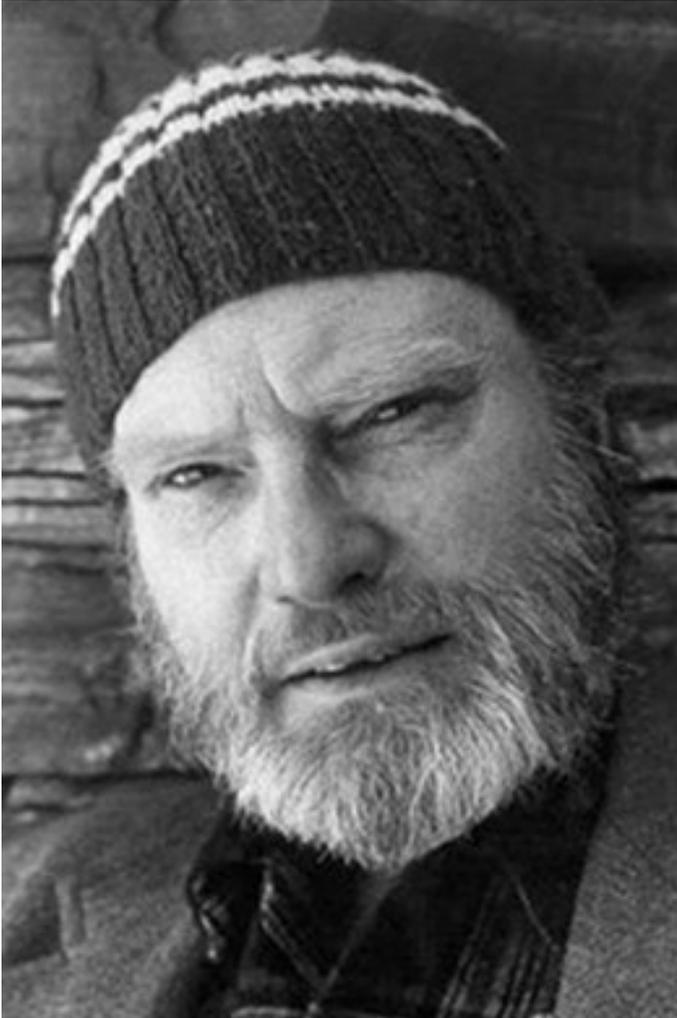
A VERMONT WRITER

BY MARGARET EDWARDS

This column is an offering of The Danforth Library in Barnard and a chance to introduce a Vermont writer who deserves wider renown.

Hayden Carruth

1921 – 2008



Hayden Carruth was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, and grew up in Woodbury, Connecticut—son of a journalist and newspaper editor. He graduated from a Pleasantville, New York, high school, then went on to earn a B.A. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an M.A. at the University of Chicago. A nervous breakdown in 1953 sent him for a year to an asylum in White Plains, New York; and, when he emerged, he came to Vermont.

For his sanity's sake, Carruth would explain, he began to live in rural circumstances - outside of Johnson, Vermont - and stayed for more than twenty years. His most ardent

readers might say that he wrote his finest poetry in those years and that his best work is steeped in Vermont's imagery and atmosphere. In 1979, he moved to Syracuse, New York, and never returned to live in Vermont. He died in the small village of Munnsville, New York, twelve years ago. During his life he wrote 30 books of poetry (many published by small presses) and won many national awards; so it could be argued that he is a writer not obscure enough to deserve inclusion here. But poets are always teetering on the brink of Oblivion, and not many people who aren't poets or poetry enthusiasts are going to nod knowingly these days if they hear the name "Hayden Carruth."

Like most good poets, Carruth could write a description not easily forgotten, such as this evocation of a loon's call: "...that transcends/ first all mirth/ and then all sorrow/ and finally all knowledge, dying/ into the gentlest quavering timeless/ woe."

These days we find ourselves at the end of autumn, and Carruth knew how to do justice to its beauty:

*Once more by the brook, the alder leaves
turn mauve, bronze, violet, beautiful
after the green of crude summer; galled
black stems, pithy, tangled, twist in the
flesh-colored vines of wild cyclamen.
Mist drifts below the mountaintop
in prismatic tatters. The brook is full,
spilling down heavily, loudly, in silver
spate from the beaver ponds in the high
marshy meadows. The year is sinking...*

Those are the first lines of his "Once More," and it is hardly fair to quote only part of a poem. So here is a poem complete, entitled "The Cows at Night":

*The moon was like a full cup tonight,
too heavy, and sank in the mist
soon after dark, leaving for light*

*faint stars and the silver leaves
of milkweed beside the road,
gleaming before my car.*

*Yet I like driving at night
in summer and in Vermont:
the brown road through the mist*

*of mountain-dark, among farms
so quiet, and the roadside willows
opening out where I saw*

*the cows. Always a shock
to remember them there, those
great breathings close in the dark.*

Carruth - Cont. front page

*I stopped, taking my flashlight
to the pasture fence. They turned
to me, where they lay, sad*

*and beautiful faces in the dark,
and I counted them—forty
near and far in the pasture,*

*turning to me, sad and beautiful
like girls very long ago
who were innocent, and sad*

*because they were innocent,
and beautiful because they were
sad. I switched off my light.*

*But I did not want to go,
not yet, nor knew what to do
if I should stay, for how*

*in that great darkness could I explain
anything, anything at all.
I stood by the fence. And then*

very gently it began to rain.

In all his poems, Carruth maintains his distance from rural life, no matter how emotionally immersed in it he lets himself become. Part of the power of his work is its authentic detachment, this poet's instinctive bow to the fact that he has a background that precludes his ever being a true farmer. The natives, however, are the people who most fascinate him. Carruth writes long poems about them, and perhaps too often indulges his outsider's urge to portray them as caricatures.

"John Dryden" (in a poem of that name) is a man called "Dry"—"not dumb," "only crazy"—who is a ne'er do well. Dry "hasn't worked four consecutive days/ on any one job in fifteen years." We read of Dry's various exploits as he tells them in his own words: "...how he fell in a cellarhole at blackberry time/ and landed on a bear—I says, "Whuff, ol' bear,/ get you away from me," and then I climm the hell/ out of there..." At this point, Carruth interrupts the poem to say: "...have you noticed/ I can't talk about him without talking like him?"

Another discursive poem, "Johnny Spain's White Heifer," is more of the same, a portrait of another Vermont eccentric, a farmer without much interest in farming who's been put in charge of the town dump. Johnny "could take/ whatever he wanted from the accumulated junk/ and sell it. Trouble was he mostly didn't/ or couldn't sell it, so it wound up in his/ barnyard." And this comic turn, born of an interest in exotic types, and written in elaborate, well-observed detail, is too close to smug teasing to be good poetry. But it's instructive to see that out of these misfiring sketches arises Carruth's brilliant portrait poem entitled "Marshall Washer," one

of the best poetic tributes to a seventh-generation Vermont hill farmer that you can find. It is a long poem that, given constraints, can be quoted here only in small part. The whole poem has a resounding majesty.

*...I see a man with a low-bent back
driving a tractor in stinging rain, or just as he
enters a doorway in his sheepskin and enormous
mittens, stomping snow from his boots, raising
his fogged glasses. I see a man in bib overalls
and rubber boots kneeling in cowshit to smear
ointment on a sort teat, a man with a hayfork,
a dungfork, an axe, a 20-pound maul
for driving posts, a canthook, a grease gun.
I see a man notching a cedar post
with a double-bladed axe, rolling the post
under his foot in the grass: quick strokes and there
is a ringed groove one inch across, as clean
as if cut with the router blade down at the mill...*

Marshall Washer farms alone, because his wife has died (of an ailment modern medicine could have fixed) and his children have left—not just the farm, but farming life—for better prospects elsewhere.

*Marshall's sorrow is the same as human
sorrow generally, but there is this
difference. To live in a doomed city, a doomed
nation, a doomed world is desolating, and we all,
all are desolated. But to live on a doomed farm
is worse. It must be worse...*

Carruth explains: "The hilltop farms are going./ Bottomland farms, mechanized, are all that survive." And he expresses the wish that he could somehow buy Marshall Washer's precious acres and farm them himself—"but I am too/ ignorant in spite of his teaching." Even the old farmer's grief is beyond the poet's range of expression, as Carruth acknowledges in the poem's last lines:

*...I cannot smile
his quick sly Yankee smile in sorrow,
nor harden my eyes with the true granitic resistance
that shaped this land. How can I learn the things
that are not transmissible? Marshall knows them.
He possesses them, the remnant of human worth
To admire in this world, and I think to envy.*

A copy of *The Selected Poetry of Hayden Carruth*, with a forward by Galway Kinnell, is to be found in the poetry section of the Danforth Library of Barnard. This book contains all of the poems quoted in this article, as well as many more.

NEW ON-LINE DISCUSSION FORUM

A new on-line forum for discussion of various topics has been opened by Heather Surprenant at <https://barnardspeaks.createaforum.com/index.php>

All Barnard residents are welcome to join the forum.

OBITUARY



Virginia Manny Lancaster, a long-time resident of Barnard, VT, died at the Terrace in Woodstock on October 14, 2020 at age 91.

She was born in 1929, in New York City, to Walter Roy Manny and Lorraine Craven Manny. Her older brother Walter "Frere" Manny was killed in an Air Force training accident at the start of WWII. She outlived her three older sisters, Lynne, Lynnette and Mayfield, and her younger brother James.

As a child, Virginia spent many summers with her grandmother, May Field "Gummy" Craven, on the family farm near the end of Lakota Road. She also spent time with her father in New York, racing 30-meter world-class sailboats out of Larchmont and learning to ride horses at the Armory in Manhattan. Sailing and horses remained dear to her, as she taught all her children how to ride and sail. Virginia was also a swimmer, tennis player, a golfer, and a skier. She hunted birds with her father, played numerous card games and having learned how to drive under her father's tutelage, never lost the call of the road, making several trips across the US with her husband and children. She also drove tractors, motorcycles, snowmobiles and ATVs, particularly in support of her children's activities. An avid cyclist, she completed the Ragbrai, an annual bicycle ride across Iowa.

As a young woman, her family connections in Woodstock lead to a chance encounter with Herbert D. Lancaster, who had recently retired to a house in Prosper. Herbert thought well of Virginia and he later introduced her to his son, John S. Lancaster. The consequence of this meeting resulted in the marriage of John and Virginia in 1952. The newlyweds spent their first year together working on the Craven farm raising pigs and chickens. In late 1953 they bought the Ted Green farmhouse on Lime Pond Road in Barnard, where they lived for over sixty years, until Virginia become a resident of the memory care unit at the Woodstock Terrace.

Virginia's started her career as a Complaints Clerk (Public Relations) at F.A.O. Schwarz on 5th Avenue, in New York. She went on to raise pigs, chickens and a cow while farming. She worked in newspaper journalism, then at Lancaster and Sons, a retail clothing store. After 1960, she decided to raise and train horses at her home in Barnard. She was a substitute teacher, as ski instructor and the hill manager of Sonnenburg Ski area. With her husband's help, she started an alternative school which for eight years was run out of their home in Turkey Hollow.

To become a better teacher, Virginia earned a BA in Education from Goddard College, which capped her previous education at Rye Country Day, Brearley, Miss Halls and a History of Art program in Florence, Italy. While earning her BA, Virginia, with her father's assistance, spent three months in Europe with her sons Richard and Justin. She extensively researched the alternative education system in England and that eventually led to the starting of the Turkey Hollow School, where her children Gina and John H. completed their elementary and high school education.

She also tried her hand in politics. She was a Representative of the Windsor 2-1 district for one term, losing her reelection bid and, two years later, a Senate race. Shortly after that, she served as a Selectman and then an Auditor in Barnard. In an effort to help inform the townspeople of the important issues of the time, she started publishing the Barnard Bulletin which was sent to each household in Barnard free of charge.

Although her competitive spirit led her to partake in trail rides and horse shows, Virginia was also a willing volunteer. She was a timer for many GMHA trail rides and as a scribe at many shows. She contributed to the Glad Rags effort in Woodstock for many years and she donated her time to the effort to preserve riding trails in Vermont. She was a longtime supporter of the American Buckskin Association, and was a lifetime member of GMHA, IBHA, AQHA, NEHC and VHSA. She managed horse shows at GMHA, Tunbridge and at other locations around New England. For a number of years she was the manager of GMHA.

Virginia is survived by: her husband John; her children, Richard, Gina and James (Justin) Lancaster; her grandchildren, Hugo, Emma, Sonia and Roy Salguero, For-

Virginia - Cont. from previous page

rest, Heather, Mariah and Alessandra Lancaster, and Olga Brevnova; and her great-grandchildren Tony and Paige Salguero. Also surviving are her sisters-in-law, Abigail Manny Patterson and Mary Jane Lancaster, along with her brother-in-law James Drorbaugh. She was pre-deceased by her son, John Herbert Lancaster.

There will be a closed family gathering to spread her ashes some time this fall, and a Celebration of Life will be held in late spring, or summer, of 2021.

The family requests no flowers, but donations in Virginia's name will be welcomed by the Green Mountain Horse Association in South Woodstock, VT, for their riding scholarship fund. The family also wishes to thank the Cabot Funeral Home for their help in this trying time.

The picture of Virginia was taken at the Terrace in Woodstock by Star Lancaster during a visit one summer by Star and her son Forrest.

RESTRICTED GLAD RAGS SALE

Glad Rags will be holding an indoor yard sale, Saturday, October 24, from 9am -2pm inside the Masonic Lodge on Pleasant Street in Woodstock, VT.

This modified sale replaces their fall sale and features a limited selection of items.

The sale will feature: Coats & Jackets; Sweaters; Tops; Shoes & Boots.

**** PLEASE NOTE, WE ARE NOT ABLE TO OFFER DRESSING ROOMS TO TRY THINGS ON.****

Only 12 shoppers inside at a time. Masks required.

Tables will be spread apart to encourage social distancing.

This is a cash-only sale so please come prepared. Bring your own bags.

Proceeds benefit local charities.

Parking will be behind the Masonic Lodge

Check out their Facebook page for the latest info.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/145529065206>

The group is not accepting clothing donations at this time. Please consider giving to one of the other worthy places collecting items.

Questions? Please email Carol, at :

cradice1@earthlink.net

SPRING FORWARD, FALL BACK

Daylight Savings Time ends at 2:00 AM on Sunday, November 1, 2020. Remember to turn your clocks back one hour on Saturday night or Sunday morning.

THOMPSON CENTER DRIVE-THRU FLU CLINIC

The Visiting Nurse and Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire (VNH) is offering a drive-thru flu clinic at:

Thompson Senior Center
99 Senior Lane
Woodstock, VT
Thursday, October 22, 9AM - 3PM

No appointment necessary

*This clinic will be behind the Senior Center building. Please follow the signage and enter at Heritage Condos.

Available for individuals 19 years and older. Please bring your insurance card. Please wear a face mask and remain in your vehicle.

For more information please call The Thompson Center at 802-457-3277 or visit www.vnhcare.org 1-888-300-8853

Pam Butler
Program Director
The Thompson Center~Your Resource to Age Well
Woodstock Area Council on Aging
99 Senior Lane
Woodstock, Vermont 05091
(802)457-3277 ext. 116
pbutler@thompsonscenter.org
www.thompsonscenter.org

LOCAL CRYPTOGRAM

A cryptogram is a code in which one letter is substituted for another. For example, the word "Church" could be written BWMSBW. The letter B would be the letter C and would be throughout the entire message. In this message O=A. The solution is found by trial and error.

"O GXL UOZQ OFK J LOCTXU OCKMF BPX
XUFX KG BPX COTX OMU LOQ BNXOBXU
BK BPX WNDMWP OMU NDQBCX KG
CXOSXQ LJBP XOWP QBXH J ROUX. BPX
OWKDQBJWQ KG BPJQ QXOQKM ONX
UJGGXNXMB OMU OCC QKDMUQ, MK
ROBBXN PKL PDQPXU, ONX OQ
WNJQH OQ ODBDRM OJN."

- XNJW QCKOMX

The CRYPTOGRAM answer is on next page.

NEWS FROM BARNARTS

BARNARTS PRESENTS

IT CAN'T HAPPEN HERE by Sinclair Lewis

BarnArts will be performing our final show of IT CAN'T HAPPEN HERE on Sunday, Oct. 25. The performance will be a tribute to Jeff Tolbert who passed away on Thursday, Oct 15. Peter Mendes will be reading the role of Doremus Jessup for this final production.

Sun, Oct 25 - Lyman Point Park, 167 Maple Street, White River Junction - 2pm. Bring chairs & blankets.

Directed by Maureen Hennigan

Starring: Erin Bennett, Andy Carmichael, Larry Fuller, Aaron Michael Hodge, Joanna Pejouhy Kell, D. Gene Kraus, Amy Leavitt, Peter Mendes, Will Moore, Daniel Naranjo, Daniel Patterson, Chris Peirce, Jim Schley, Yael Taylor, Linda Treash

Sliding-Scale Donation: \$5-25

Sinclair Lewis's 1935 satirical novel, written while living in Barnard, is adapted for the stage and performed "radio drama" style in an appropriately distanced but fully live version by a BarnArts touring ensemble. The populist buffoon Buzz Windrip unexpectedly defeats Franklin D. Roosevelt for the 1936 Democratic nomination. Windrip wins the election, declares martial law, and begins eliminating his adversaries. The story's hero is Doremus Jessup, a battle-worn Vermont newspaper editor who decides to take a stand and use the press to fight tyranny, getting him locked up in a military prison. The story is set in Vermont and full of local Vermont characters: humble and egotistical revolutionaries of all types to fit the 1930's class turmoil. A daring "What if?" that examines risks to American democracy, relevant 85 years ago and hauntingly relevant today.

All Covid-19 safety guidelines are followed in these performances. The performers are distanced at mics and the audience is required to wear mask and maintain 6 feet of distance. The audience is required to follow Vermont cross-state travel restrictions.

BarnArts Center for the Arts
PO Box 41
Barnard, VT 05031
www.barnarts.org
info@barnarts.org
802-234-1645 (voice mail)

CRYPTOGRAM ANSWER

"A few days ago I walked along the edge of the lake and was treated to the crunch and rustle of leaves with each step I made. The acoustics of this season are different and all sounds, no matter how hushed, are as crisp as autumn air."

- Eric Sloane

DANFORTH LIBRARY NEWS



The Danforth Library is Open!

Wednesdays from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to Noon.

COVID-19 precautions: masks are required, and the capacity is limited to three people including the librarian on duty. If you prefer curbside pickup, please call ahead and we'll pack up your order and have it ready for you to pick up in our foyer (802- 234-9408). Our high-speed Wi-Fi also remains accessible from outside of the building for anyone who needs it. The Holway Community Room remains closed at this time.

New Books:**Essay/Fiction/Poetry**

Helen Macdonald, *Vesper Flights: New and Collected Essays*

Barbara Kingsolver, *How to Fly (In Ten Thousand Easy Lessons): Poetry*

Elena Ferrante, *The Lying Life of Adults*

Sue Monk Kidd, *The Book of Longings*

Non-Fiction/Memoir

Hilary Mantel, *Giving Up the Ghost: A Memoir*

Dennis Baron, *What's Your Pronoun?*

Bob Woodward, *Rage*

Children (age 10 and up)

Jacqueline Woodson, *Harbor Me*

Jacqueline Woodson, *Before the Ever After*

Daniel Nayeri, *Everything Sad is True*

Stay safe and well,

From all of us at Danforth



Trustees: Margaret Edwards, Suzy Hickey, Ellen Miles, Judy Maynes, and Edythe Wright

This Photo by Charlesdanforthlibrary@gmail.com

Phone: 802-234-9408

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PO Box 161 Barnard VT 05031-0161

PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK

OCTOBER 24, 2020

Dispose of your unused, unwanted & expired prescription drugs on Take Back Day

This Saturday, October 24, is Prescription Drug Take Back Day — when you can dispose of leftover prescription and over-the-counter drugs safely at a collection site near you. Website: healthvermont.gov/doyourpart

MEET THE TEAM REMOVING YOUR BARNARD HISTORICAL SOCIETY ROOF

We know you have been keeping track of the project. The gofund me site. is active and the fund is growing. A donation of \$5 or more automatically gives the donor Barnard Historical Society membership for 2021. For those who would rather donate by check -payable to Barnard Historical Society-please send to: Treasurer, Barnard Historical Society, 491 E Barnard Rd, South Royalton, VT 05068. Thank you each one who has contributed already

As you see in the photos Josh, Josh and Levi, the Mathers of J. Mather Construction Company, are hard at work preparing the roof for the standing seam metal installation. Josh II asked where the bell rope was for the bell in the cupola. When we open the building, we'll have him take a tug.



BARNARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION meets the second Monday of the month, 7:00pm, Town Hall.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR zoning@barnardvt.us, 234-9211. By appointment only, no standing hours during due to the COVID-19 restrictions. After hours cell 603-762-5280.

BEES MEETINGS are held at 6:30pm on the 2nd Thursday of each month in the library at the school.

DANFORTH LIBRARY HOURS: Wed 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.; Sat 10:00 - Noon. COVID-19 precautions: limited capacity and masks required. Curbside pickup and access to the Wi-Fi also remain available from outside. The Trustees meet at 5 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month.

SELECTBOARD meets the first and third Wednesday of the month at the Town offices at 7:00pm.

SELECTBOARD ASSISTANT, Rob Ramrath, 234-2911 x 2, Cell 603-762-5280, selectboard@barnardvt.us. By phone at any time, in person by appointment.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR, Rob Ramrath, 234-2911 x 2, Cell 603-762-5280, zoning@barnardvt.us. By phone at any time, in person by appointment.

TOWN CLERK office hours are Monday & Tuesday, 8:00am-3:30pm. Public access is restricted. Call 234-9211 for an appointment.

THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:00pm at the Barnard Town Hall as necessary.

THE BARNARD ACADEMY SCHOOL BOARD meets at 6:00pm at the school on the third Monday of each month.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY Programs to be announced. Questions? email: historicalbarnard1761@gmail.com

BARNARD LISTERS listeners@barnardvt.us, 234-9576. Office hours, except holidays: Wednesday 9:00am - 11:00am; by appointment; or anytime a Lister is in the office.

THE BARNARD ENERGY COMMITTEE meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm at the Town Hall

YOGA CLASSES offered at Danforth Library, Mondays 9:00am - 10:30am with Amanda Anderson. Classes are by donation; for more information contact Amanda@innerliftyoga.com. Yoga Classes are also offered on Thursdays from 9-10:30 with Beth Umba. Contact Beth at: bethumba@gmail.com.

RECYCLING HOURS: Saturdays, 8:00am to 4:00pm,

BARNARD GENERAL STORE, Monday-Saturday: 7am-7pm, Sundays: 8am-6pm.
<https://www.facebook.com/barnardgeneralstore>

BARNARD LISTSERV: to subscribe please send an email to: barnard-subscribe@lists.vitalcommunities.org.

THE PLANNING COMMISSION meets on the first Monday of the month at 7:00pm at the Town offices.

ECFIBER Governing Board meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7pm in 012 Oakes Hall, Vermont Law School. More information at <https://www.ecfiber.net/>