



'School trip in the snow' Barre, Vermont 1920-1940 LS 05162

The tracks of skiing through three Vermont mountains

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a glimpse into skiing's past

This scrapbook will provide a glimpse into the history of alpine skiing in the state of Vermont. Skiing has had a tremendous impact on the lifestyles of Vermonters and the economy and landscape of this state. It will follow the development and transformation of three mountains: Burke, Stowe and Killington.



The snowy road to Stowe

Stowe, Vermont

LS 06994

before the tracks emerged:

three mountains before skiing



Mount Mansfield from the valley before ski trail

Stowe, Vermont 1907-1915

above: LS 11692

Before alpine skiing emerged on Mt. Mansfield other tracks did- a road was constructed to the top of the mountain in 1870 for horses and later adapted for automobiles in 1920. Guests often stayed at the Summit House, later named the Mansfield Hotel.



LS 10579

before the tracks emerged:

three mountains before skiing



Burke Mountain and rural road
Burke, Vermont 1930-1940

LS 08991



Dirt road leading to Mt. Killington

LS 00716

Killington, Vermont 1907-1915

Burke is located in a very rural part of the state of Vermont and is described by Jules Older as a 'mountain surrounded by abundant beauty and little else.' The mountain remained relatively untouched, with the exception of a devastating forest fire that nearly deforested the mountain at the turn of the century. From Killington peak in 1763 Reverend Samuel Peters christened the state of Vermont and the mountain remained in contention as the highest peak in the state for decades.

before the tracks emerged: three mountains before skiing



Fire tower on the top of Burke Mountain

LS 03741

Burke, Vermont 1930



Road with view of the mountains

LS 01029

Killington, Vermont 1900-1910

Early development for both mountains was slow- including a fire tower for Burke Mountain and a road to the base of Mount Killington.

fresh tracks:

three mountains and the beginning of skiing



Stowe hosted its first Winter Carnival in 1922 and, along with an ice acrobat and sculptures, the town created a ski jump. A decision that, literally, propelled Stowe to the forefront of alpine skiing.

Ski jumping at the Stowe Winter Carnival

Stowe, Vermont 1922

fresh tracks:

three mountains and the beginning of skiing



The Mansfield Hotel 1930-1945

LS 11457

A combined public and private effort was needed to create most ski resorts including Burke, Stowe and Killington. In 1933 Craig Burt, the owner of the Mansfield Hotel, and Perry Merrill, the director of the Vermont Forest Department, persuaded the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) to build a trail down Mt. Mansfield. Stowe's first trail was named

fresh tracks:

three mountains and the beginning of skiing



Parking lot at the top of
Burke Mountain

Burke, Vermont

1930-1940

LS 03117

Burke Mountain had a road and two trails built by the CCC in the 1930s, including Wilderness and Bear's Den, both still in use. Land for ski mountains were often bought by or donated to the Vermont Forest Department and later developed by private investors.

early days:

three mountains and the development of skiing



Burke Mountain on opening day

Burke, Vermont



1956

Left: LS 10768 Right: LS 10769

Burke Mountain developed by thirteen local business men incorporated as 'Ski Burke Mountain!' The group received an appropriation from the Legislature to create ski trails designed by 'trail design master' Charles Lord. The mountain officially opened in 1956.

early days:

three mountains and the development of skiing



Skiers on a chair lift

LS 10735

Stowe, Vermont 1958



Skiers on a double rope tow

LS 10732

Killington, Vermont 1958

The development of Stowe continued throughout the 1940s and 1950s, marked by the introduction of the chair lift in 1940 and increasing expansion.

Killington, originally purchased by the young Pres Smith in 1958, began as a small, rural mountain.

early days:

three mountains and the development of skiing



Eager skiers awaiting their lessons

LS 10734

Killington, Vermont 1958



Skiers in a lesson at Spruce Peak

LS 10736

Stowe, Vermont 1958

Throughout the 1950s skiers began to flock to the sport, and programs such as Killington's Gradient Learning System expedited learning to ski. In the early 1960s ski resorts and their coupled towns were expanding at a rate far greater than that of towns without ski mountains.

early days:

three mountains and the development of skiing



Killington expanded unlike any other mountain: when the mountain opened in 1958 it was one hill. Today it is composed of six different mountains covering 77 miles of alpine ski terrain. The town of Sherburne had a 1038% increase in the housing units in its community from 1960 to 1970.

Heading toward the base lodge

LS 10733

Killington, Vermont 1958

early days:

three mountains and the development of skiing



Concerns over Killington's further expansion resided in two prominent arguments: Only five mountains in Vermont rise above 4,000 feet, and three of these are already marked with ski trails. Second, many identify Vermont with a certain quaint New England feel, which a sprawling modern resort village might spoil.

Ski racks at the base of Killington in 1958

LS 10731

becoming an industry: three mountains and the expansion of skiing



Skiers on the trail

LS 05839

Killington, Vermont 1971

Chair to the
summit

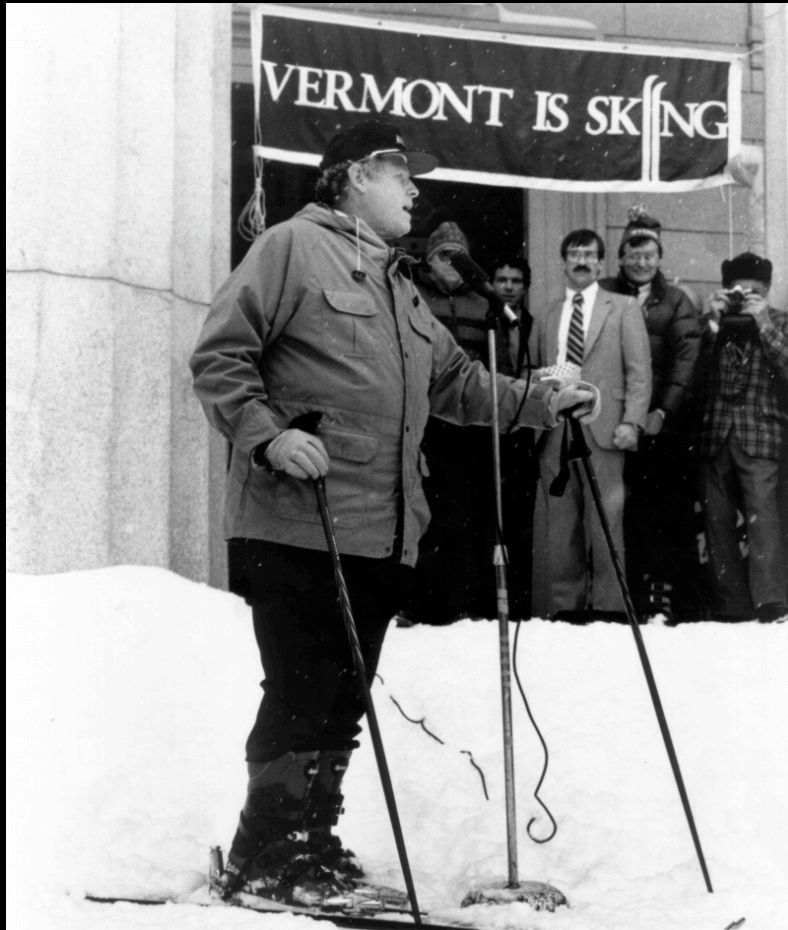
Burke, Vermont
date unknown

LS 07992



“[The] desire to conserve natural resources and preserve a rural way of life sometimes runs counter to the American Dream- the dream of pushing back the wilderness to eke out a living, of pursuing an opportunity and creating a better life with hard work, determination and vision. Carried to an extreme, a contemporary ‘no-growth’ attitude would even discount the historic importance of recreation and tourism as an integral and sustaining component of the Vermont economy.” –Karen Lorentz

becoming an industry: three mountains and the expansion of skiing



Governor Snelling

LS 07994

Montpelier, Vermont 1977-1985



Above: Killington in 1967 (LS 07980)

Below: Stowe in 1968 (LS 05714)



As ski areas and the ski industry continue to expand across Vermont, towns and citizens are called upon to make vital decisions that will effect the future of not only their lifestyles but also their economy, and their landscape.

the mountains today:



Stowe, Vermont

LS 08086

To take a look at what the mountains look like today, click on the following links to their web pages (works only in powerpoint)

[Burke Mountain](#)

[Killington](#)

[Stowe](#)