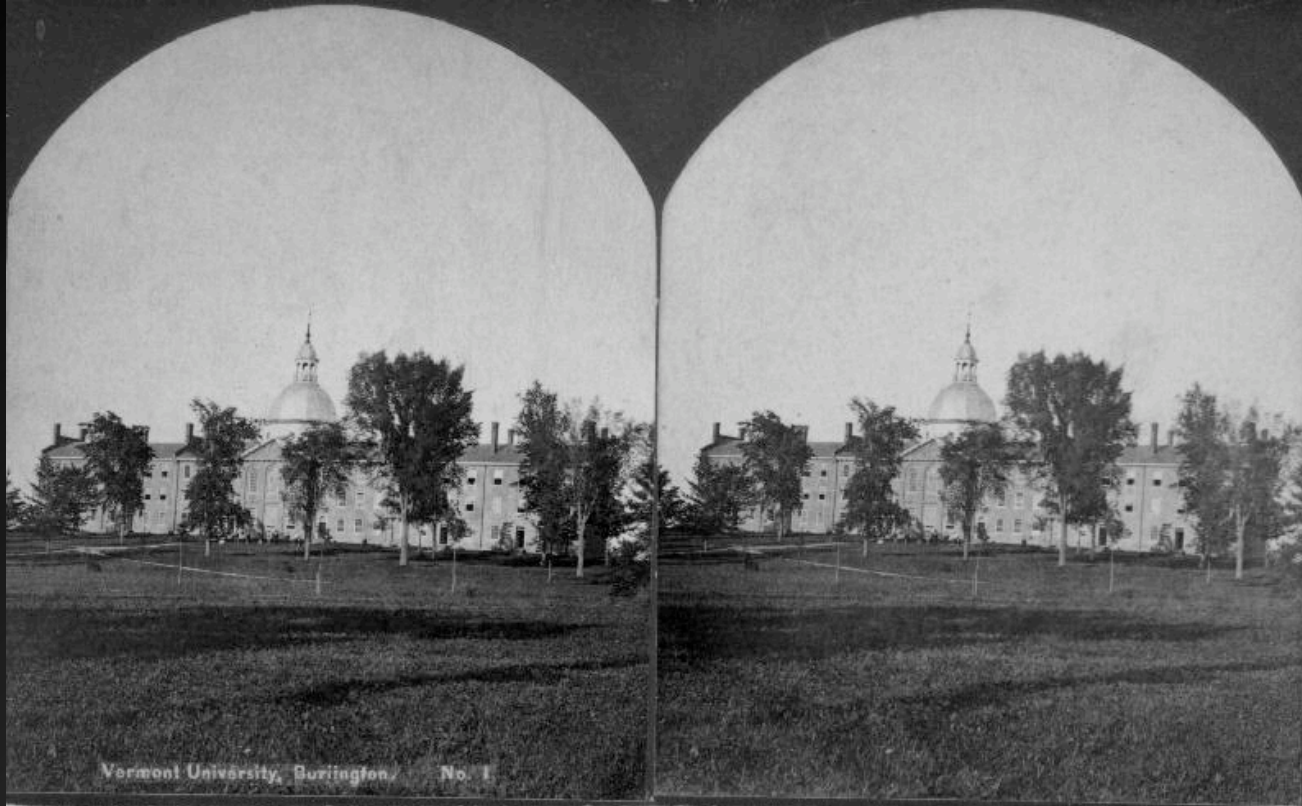


The History of Trees on the UVM Campus

What can we learn by looking? By Loona Brogan



***Old Mill between
1870-1881
LS02854_000.jpg***



Today's view of Old Mill from the same corner, Main and Prospect Streets.

LS02854_001.jpg

All quotes are from text on the Landscape Change Program web site.

When, where, what, who, how...

We can ask these questions about the trees on the UVM campus: who planted it, when and why then, why that tree, where: why there?

Historic pictures record elements of a society's abilities, style and beliefs by showing the architecture, clothing and technology at a specific moment in time and place. Many pictures show plants— especially the large, woody plants we commonly call trees— and can also tell us about the people who preceded us here. Every tree embodies many stories. Let's look at what they can show us.

Artistic and actual renderings

**“Esther Munroe Swift writes
2005-4-17: Abby Maria
Hemenway's Vermont Historical
Magazine for Chittenden
County has an engraving of
UVM's Old Mill that is very
similar to the one shown here...
the main difference being that
her's has a tree which partially
obstructs the view of the
steeple on top of the building.”**

**Old Mill building at the
University of Vermont**

(No Date)

LS02903_000.jpg

*Look closely at the far left of the
stereoscope, and at the paths*

**Illustration of Old Mill Building
at UVM (1849)**

LS00914_000.jpg



Trees have their own history

Notice the big tree left of center: is that the tree Esther Munroe Swift says Abby Hemingway had in her engraving? It looks to be growing about where the Ira Allen statue stands today...

Old Mill has a dome and is not renovated. That would make the picture at least how many years old? If that tree were alive today, it would be at least 75 years older than that.

LS02843_000.jpg This stereoscope is not dated.



Old Mill has had a facelift. Can we tell if that big tree is still alive in 1893? Why or why not?

“The man stands between two large trees but there are many smaller trees filling the whole of the green. There are also smaller bushes and conifer trees dispersed throughout the green.”

University Pl. from southwest of green

(1893 exactly)

LS09637_000.jpg



LS00061_000.jpg

*View of University Place on the UVM campus
looking south, No Date*



Before and after
the great
American Elm

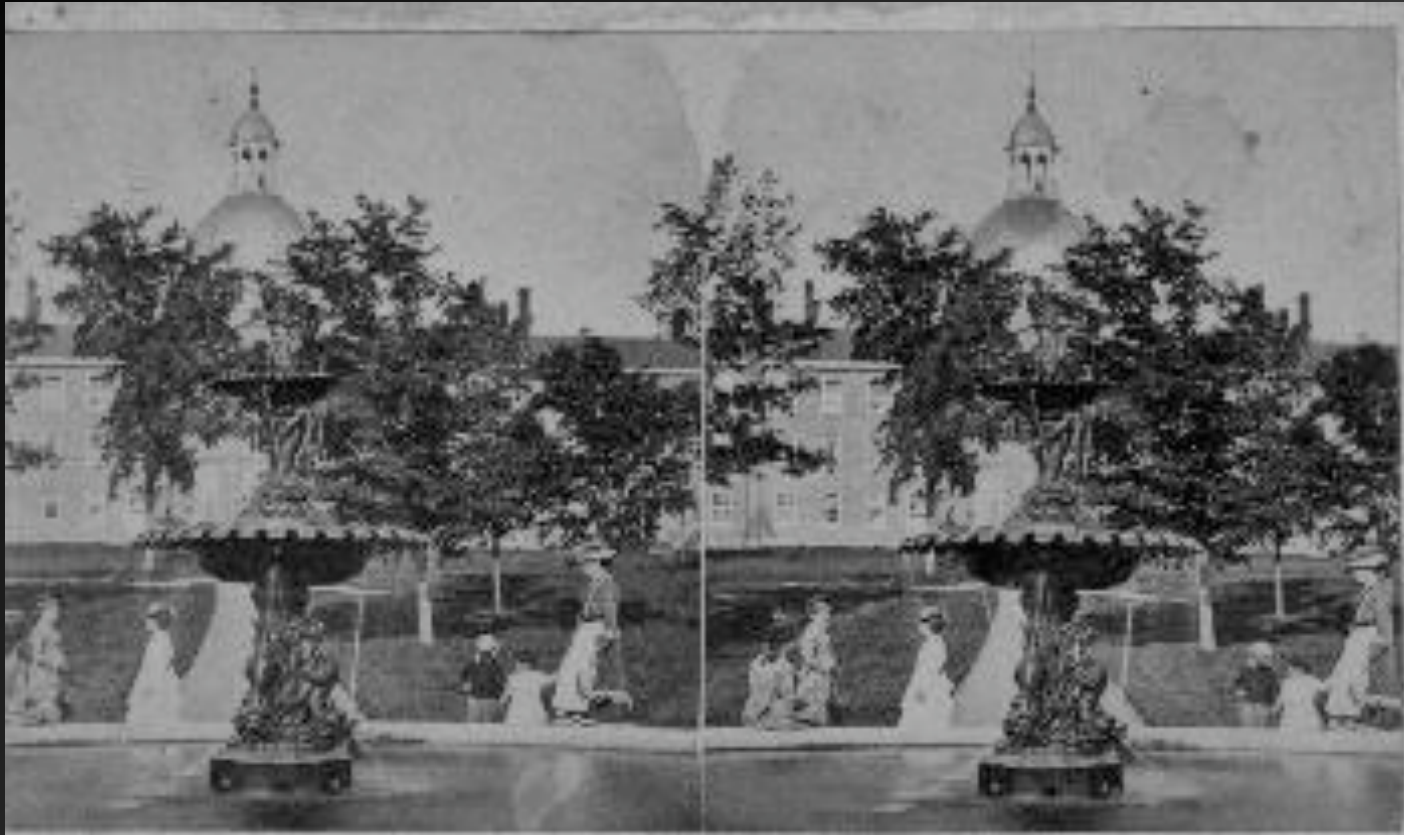


6/14/2000

LS00061_001.jpg

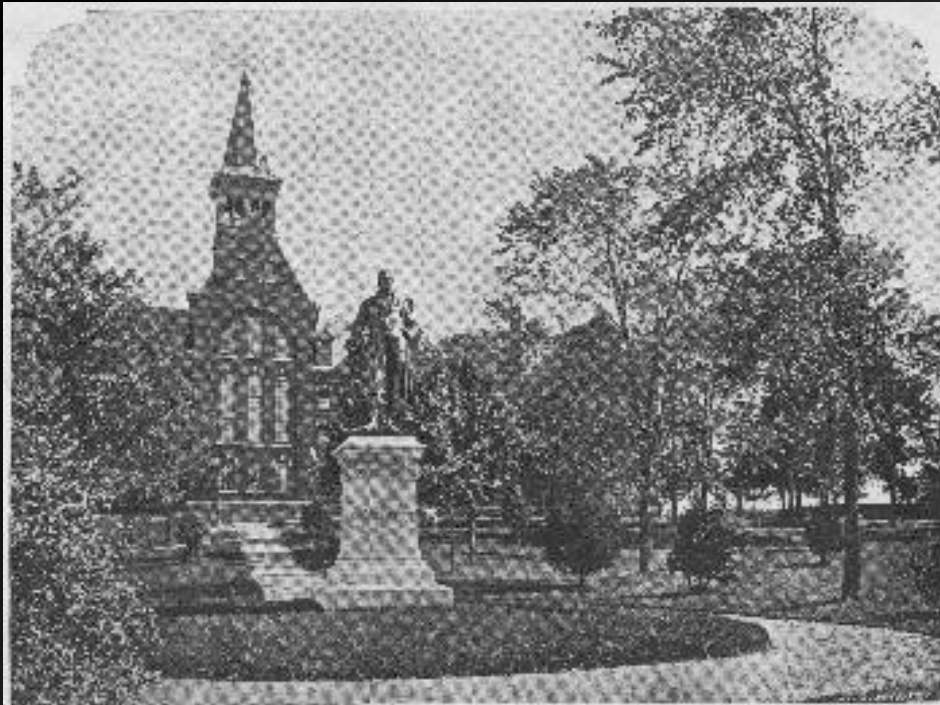
The American Elm is a native tree long present in Eastern North American settlements and villages. It became the street tree of New England and beyond starting in the mid 1800s, when communities began to plant trees. They once towered over many village and town streets, parks and yards. In the 1930s, a fungus spread by a beetle began to wipe out the arching canopies for which they were once famous. UVM's campus had over 1000 American Elms before they began to succumb to Dutch Elm Disease. Most UVM American Elm were felled in the 1960s and 70s, when communities across the continent were having to accept that efforts to save their Elm trees had not succeeded.

Elms Dominated the Landscape



This stereoscope image, “Fountain on the University of Vermont Green (1880 exactly)” LS02863_000.jpg, shows the classic funneling crown of American Elms lining University Place. The image was taken in 1880, and clearly people besides UVM students are enjoying the UVM Green. They were towering trees, which was part of the problem when they began to die in the 1940s and 1950s.

Besides the Elm



LS00064_000.jpg



LS00064_001.jpg

These then-and-now photos show that a variety of trees were planted around campus even before the Elms were decimated, though the visually dominant ones in the old image are young Elms. The people who took care of the UVM grounds chose trees that would survive well— species that can take the abuse of careless passersby, times of drought, & soil compaction from foot traffic... however, species were also brought to UVM for their exotic origins, including a Dawn Redwood planted on the green in 1972 (not shown). Note the old photo shows not the current-day Ira Allen statue but that of Lafayette, which has since been relocated to face north on the green along Colchester Avenue. Since Ira Allen had deemed (and deeded) the green to always be an open place that would be open to the community, it is fitting that the centerpiece of the green would eventually be a tribute to him.

Dan Kiley Honeylocust Grove

Dan Kiley was a pioneering Landscape Architect (1912-2004) whose work can also be visited in Burlington at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, 20 Pine Street (and Pearl).



Campus green space near Votey (1974 exactly)

LS09696_000.jpg



Main Campus Green (2005-06-28 exactly)

East of Cook Science Building

LS09696_001.jpg



(1975 exactly)

LS09707_000.jpg

Where *weren't* they?

Notice (right) the elms lining the north side of Main Street... yes, that's East Avenue on the right, where "the jug handle" now crosses over to Spear Street. *LS00031_000.jpg*

Main Street Looking West (1935 (Nov. 27))



A view looking South instead of West; the eastern end of campus was once a farm: lots of open field for crops.

LS00701_000.jpg Town with Camel's Hump (1902)



LS06585_000.jpg Aerial Photograph of Main Street in Burlington before major development 1959-5-26. Notice: the Elms still line the road west of East Ave.

Use Morrill Hall (upper right corner) to get your bearings.



Main Street Looking West

(6/19/2001)

LS00031_001.jpg

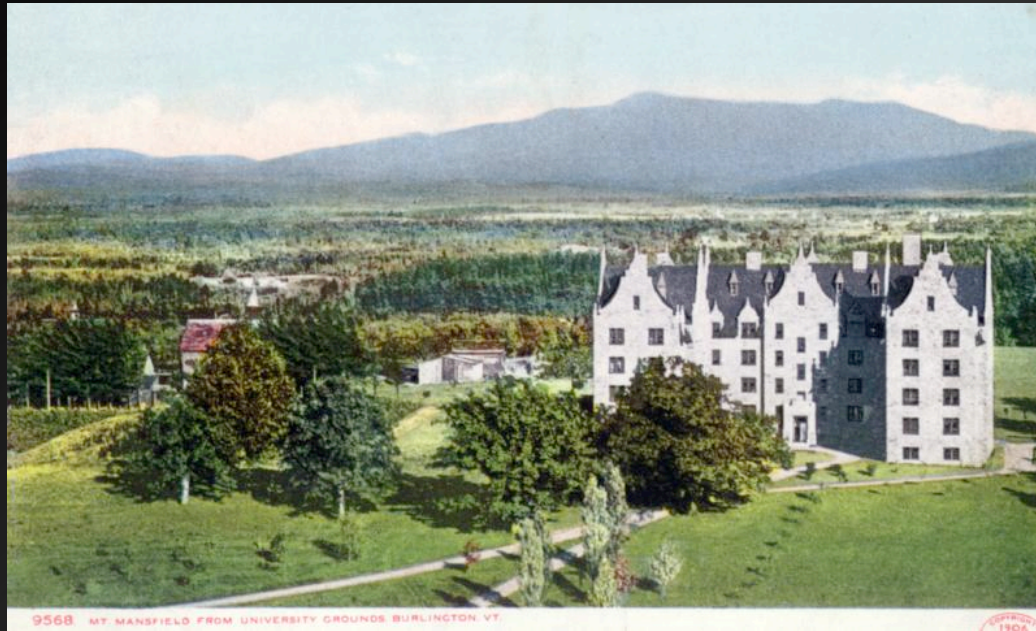
...and today

“The new photograph shows the same road after city development. The old two-lane road is now six lanes. There are sidewalks along the new road. Traffic lights have been added to direct the automobiles and trucks on the road. Trees have grown up to obscure the view of buildings in the background of the photograph. The farm from the historic image is gone and replaced by a parking lot. A water tower is visible above the trees. The hill to the left in the old photo now has University of Vermont dormitories built upon it. All of the elm trees from the old photograph are gone. “



What was here before?

There are apparently no records of the vegetation that was removed from this hilltop to create the University of Vermont, but it is likely that white pine and red and white oak were the dominant species on this slope.



LS09711_000.jpg

Converse Hall and Old Farm

(Postcard) (1909-02-15 before)

Converse Hall from Buckham Hall

(1953 exactly) LS09710_000.jpg



LS09710_001.jpg

Converse Hall from Cook Physical
Science

(2005-06-27)

What is here now?



This is a very (recently) changed landscape.

Changes in the what, why, where...

Some buildings, such as Morrill Hall have more trees now than then.

Two elms are shown in front of the undated postcard view. With their leaves gone, it appears to be late fall or early spring.



6/11/2004: crabapples, maples, and even some exotic species such as Ginkgo grow around the building.

LS00595_001.jpg



No Date, LS00595_000.jpg

Arborists began to discourage monocultures– the practice of relying on the success of one species– after we lost our Elms. Shorter trees became popular with the people responsible for their care and safety, including the municipal and facilities budget managers.

Old construction, new plans underway



Bailey Howe Library Winter Construction

(1960) *LS09769_000.jpg*

Notice the trees growing between the new library and Converse Hall. Some of these trees still live there.

Several of the oaks that lived in front of the library until 2004 were sacrificed to the construction of a new campus center. They were apparently planted after 1960, as they do not appear in the photo above.



LS09769_001.jpg

NE view of Bailey-Howe Library

(2005-06-07 exactly)

This building will soon pass into history as it and several others are demolished to make way for the Davis Student Center. Some of the trees between Marsh-Life Sciences and the library are being protected during construction. (not shown)

Before and after the Bailey-Howe Library, Terrill, and Aiken

Looking North on Main Campus from Main Street

(1960-07-07 exactly) *LS09704_000.jpg*



Notice in the above image the bare field between Hills and the Royall Tyler Theater. Young trees have been planted in the foreground.

How many of the trees visible in the image below are the same young trees we can see in the image to the left from July of 1960?



Looking North on Main Campus from Main Street

(2005-06-28 exactly)

LS09704_001.jpg

Future Campus Plans

As we look at these pictures of the campus's past, we are compelled to think of its future, and of the people who will look back at what we did, or didn't do... where we planted trees, what kind we planted and why...

One day you may seek out your favorite old tree and find an old image of it on the Landscape Change Program's web site, perhaps when it was just a sapling... and wouldn't that be preferable to finding images of great trees that we have lost? One way to minimize this is for the Master Plan for campus to include an Urban Forestry Plan.

Another way to encourage a future campus with cherished old trees is to give the trees their own historic importance now, by choosing to know their past.

LS10009_001.jpg

July 2004

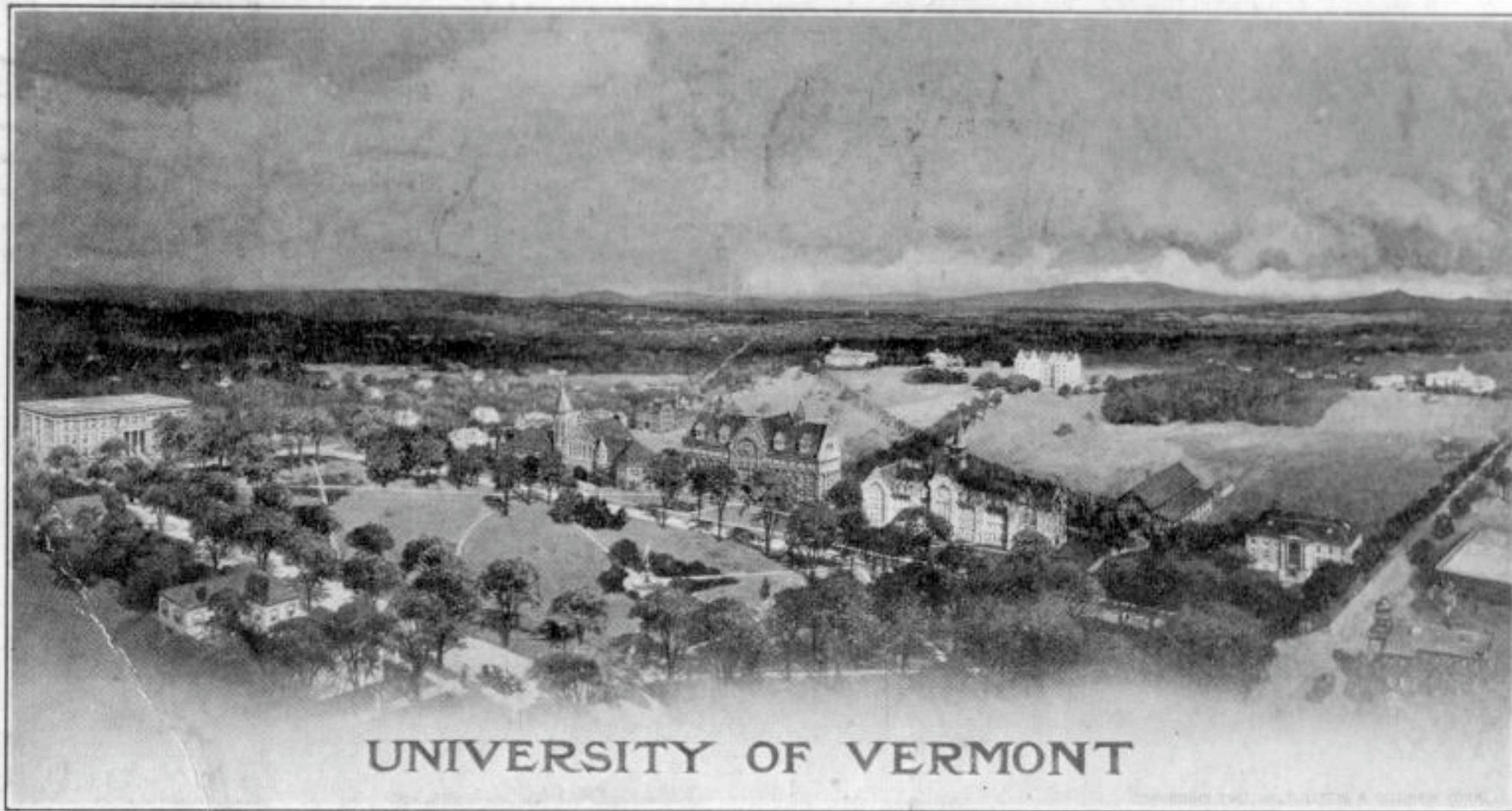


LS10009_000.jpg

Looking up College Street towards Old Mill

1910 postcard

LS09856_000.jpg



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