

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

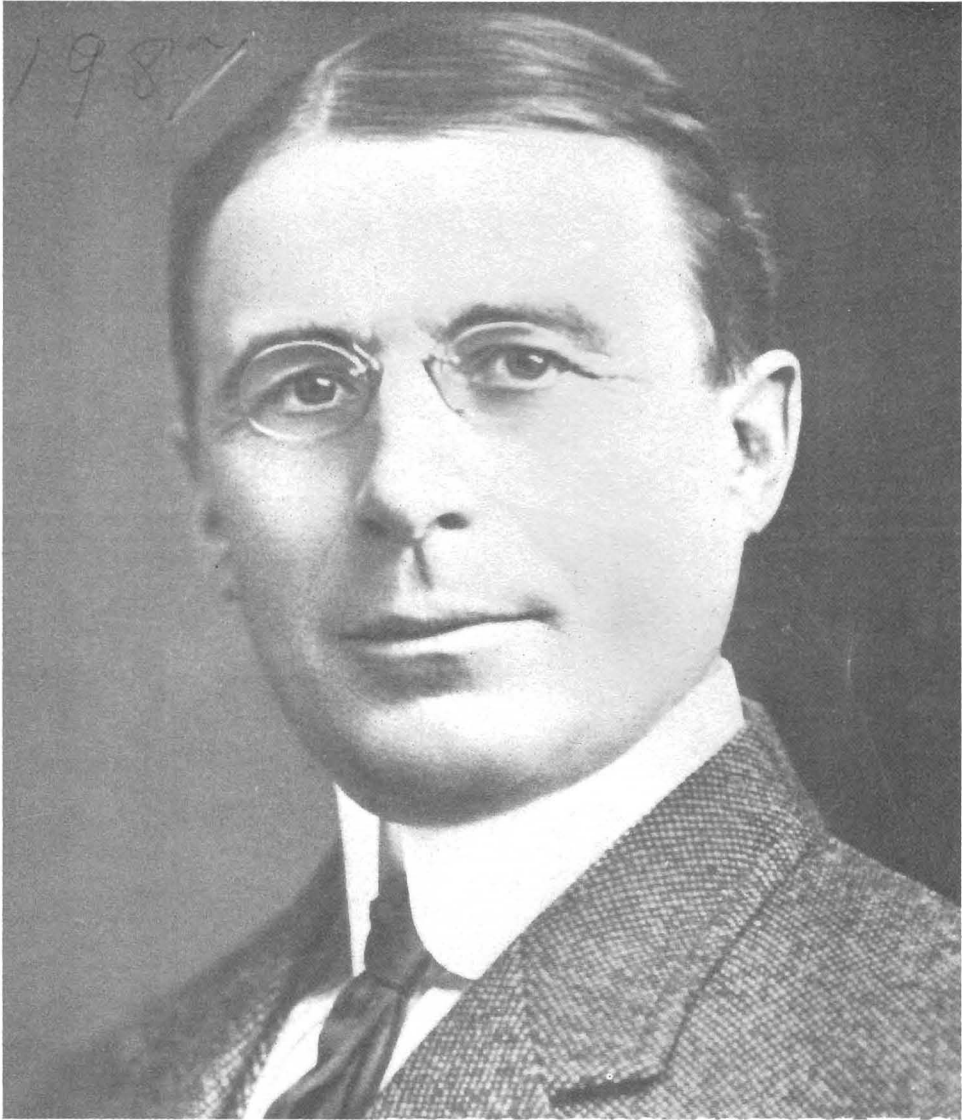
Quarterly

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G. H. Grimm Company
A Maple Industry Leader



G. H. Grimm was born in 1850 and died in Rutland at the age of 64. He was an inventor, marketing genius and business and community leader. The company he founded in the 1880s is still committed to achieving the standards of quality he established.

G. H. Grimm Company

A Maple Industry Leader
Nearly a Century of Leadership

by ROBERT F. MOORE

In the 1880s in Hudson, Ohio, Gustaf Grimm started his business. But when he came to Rutland, Vermont, in 1890 to sell his maple syrup-making evaporator, sales were so good he decided to open a factory in Rutland. He selected a location on Pine Street, where he manufactured the sap boiling, wood-fired evaporators and wood-burning stoves.

Business continued to do well, as he won award after award for his equipment. So in 1900 a new factory of four stories, 50 feet by 150 feet, was built on the Pine Street location. This building is still in use.



In this picture the main building is the new factory built in 1900. To the left of the main building is the first manufacturing shop. To the right is the dress shop originally owned by Grimm Company.

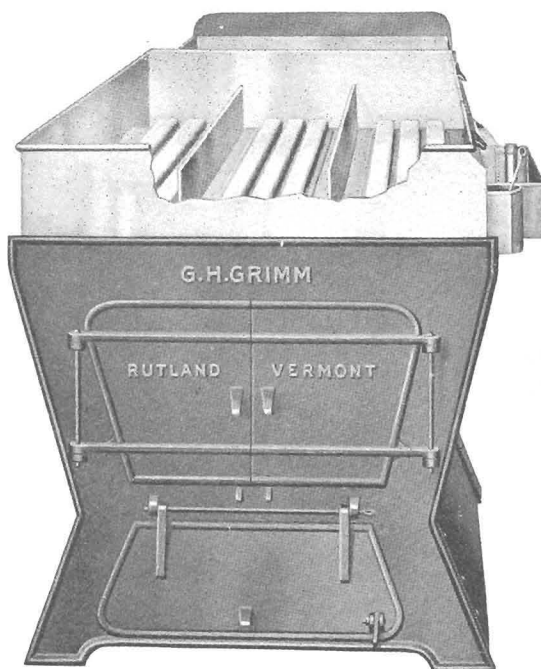
With his background as an engineer, Grimm continued to design improvements of the maple syrup evaporator. At the same time he kept in close contact with his present and prospective customers. So Grimm in the early 1900s frequently travelled by rail or horse, or horse and buggy.

The Grimm Company kept a team of horses that was used to deliver equipment to the railroad station for shipment. The location of the factory site on Pine Street to the railroad depot was ideal, less than a quarter of a mile.

As part of its quality commitment, the company was also involved directly in processing maple syrup. Often it took in maple syrup as trade for equipment. It bought syrup by the drum, paid by the pound and processed it at the factory. The syrup was boiled with steam for recanning the liquid and for making sugar cakes.

Because of the company's high standards, it supplied syrup to some of the prestigious food companies in the country. The S.S. Pierce Company of Boston, for example, frequently received railroad shipments of syrup from the Grimm Company.

And because of the successful design features and the increasing awards for the quality of the syrup, the Grimm equipment was in constant demand. The Champion Evaporator replaced earlier flat pans which were slow in boiling. The Champion had a reverse flow feature and raised flues or corrugated pans. The reverse flow helped to remove from the pans the deposits of lime, or "sugar sand," which is still a hazard to all sugar makers. The raised flue gave more pan area for faster boiling and more area for heat exchanges.



Champion Evaporator patented in 1886. First raised flue evaporator which increased the heating area for faster evaporation.

Because of the demand for the machinery and products, the company expanded. A Montreal plant was soon opened, operated by cousins of Grimm. It became known as Dominion Grimm. It still makes maple syrup equipment, but is now owned by other people. The Champion Evaporator was patented in the United States and Canada. The 1909 price list shows the capacity for sorghum and maple syrup. A four foot by twelve foot evaporator, complete with arch and heavily coated tin pans, was \$130. An evaporator with copper pans, was \$165.00. Sugar makers were constantly trying to speed up boiling, since it was necessary to boil away 40 gallons of water to make one gallon of syrup.

A 1909 price list shows a factory in Rutland, Vermont, Hudson, Ohio, and Montreal, Quebec. Since much of the business seemed to be in the East, the Ohio plant was closed about 1920.

1909

— OF —

PRICE LIST

CHAMPION EVAPORATORS

AND CHAMPION IRON ARCHES.

Covered by Letters Patent in the United States and Canada.

Sizes.	Capacity for Sorghum in 10 hours.	Capacity for Maple.	Capacity for Sap per hour in gallons.	Price of Evaporators Complete with Arches. TIN, COPPER.	Prices of Arches Only.	Length of Chimney.	No. of Brick required to Line Arch.
2 1/2 x 8 ft..	25 to 35 galls..	100 to 150 trees..	25 to 45..	\$ 60 00 .	\$ 80 00 ...	\$ 30 00 ...	10 ft.... 120
(Corrugated Pan, 30 in. x 4 ft., and three Plain Pans, each 16 in. x 30 in.)							
3 x 8 ft..	33 to 45 galls..	200 to 250 trees..	40 to 50..	75 00 ...	95 00 ...	40 00 .	12 ft.... 120
(Corrugated Pan, 3 x 4 ft., and 3 Plain Pans, each 16 in. x 3 ft.)							
3 x 10 ft..	50 to 65 galls..	300 to 350 trees..	45 to 60..	85 00 ...	106 00 ...	45 00 .	14 ft.... 150
(Corrugated Pan, 3 x 4 ft., and 3 Plain Pans, each 2 x 3 ft.)							
3 x 12 ft..	70 to 85 galls..	350 to 400 trees..	60 to 75 .	100 00 ...	127 50 ...	50 00 ...	16 ft.... 175
(Corrugated Pan, 3 x 6 ft., and 3 Plain Pans, each 2 x 3 ft.)							
3 x 14 ft..	85 to 100 galls..	400 to 500 trees..	75 to 95..	115 00 ...	143 50 ...	55 00 .	18 ft.... 200
(Corrugated Pan, 3 x 8 ft., and 3 Plain Pans, each 2 x 3 ft.)							
3 1/2 x 10 ft..	70 to 85 galls..	350 to 400 trees..	70 to 85..	105 00 ...	133 50 ..	55 00 .	14 ft.... 150
(Corrugated Pan, 3 1/2 x 4 ft., and 3 Plain Pans, each 2 x 3 1/2 ft.)							
3 1/2 x 12 ft..	85 to 100 galls..	400 to 500 trees..	95 to 110..	120 00 ..	148 50 ..	60 00 ...	16 ft.... 175
(Corrugated Pan, 3 1/2 x 6 ft., and 3 Plain Pans, each 2 x 3 1/2 ft.)							
3 1/2 x 14 ft..	100 to 120 galls..	500 to 600 trees..	100 to 120..	135 00 ...	165 00 ..	65 00 ...	18 ft.... 200
(Corrugated Pan, 3 1/2 x 8 ft., and 3 Plain Pans, each 2 x 3 1/2 ft.)							
4 x 10 ft..	85 to 100 galls..	400 to 500 trees..	90 to 100..	110 00 ...	138 00 ..	55 00 ...	14 ft.... 150
(Corrugated Pan, 4 x 4 ft., and 3 Plain Pans, each 2 x 4 ft.)							
4 x 12 ft..	100 to 120 galls..	500 to 600 trees..	100 to 115..	130 00 ...	165 00 ..	60 00 ...	16 ft.... 175
(Corrugated Pan, 4 x 6 ft., and 3 Plain Pans, each 2 x 4 ft.)							
4 x 14 ft..	120 to 150 galls..	600 to 700 trees..	110 to 125 .	150 00 ...	186 50 ..	65 00 ...	18 ft.... 200
(Corrugated Pan, 4 x 8 ft., and 3 Plain Pans, each 2 x 4 ft.)							
4 x 16 ft..	140 to 170 galls..	700 to 800 trees..	125 to 145..	165 00 ..	208 00 ..	70 00 .	20 ft.... 230
(Corrugated Pan, 4 x 8 ft., and 4 Plain Pans, each 2 x 4 ft.)							
4 x 18 ft..	150 to 180 galls..	800 to 900 trees..	140 to 160..	180 00 ...	224 00 ...	75 00 ...	20 ft.... 250
(Corrugated Pan, 4 x 8 ft., and 5 Plain Pans, each 2 x 4 ft.)							
5 x 14 ft..	150 to 180 galls..	800 to 900 trees..	175 to 200..	177 00 ..	226 00 ...	80 00 .	18 ft.... 230
(Corrugated Pan, 5 x 8 ft., and 3 Plain Pans, each 2 x 5 ft.)							
5 x 16 ft..	180 to 210 galls..	1000 to 1200 trees..	200 to 225..	198 00 ...	254 00 ...	85 00 ...	20 ft.... 250
(Corrugated Pan, 5 x 8 ft., and 4 Plain Pans, each 2 x 5 ft.)							
5 x 18 ft..	200 to 240 galls..	1200 to 1400 trees..	240 to 265..	219 00 ..	282 00 ..	90 00 .	22 ft.... 270
(Corrugated Pan, 5 x 8 ft., and 5 Plain Pans, each 2 x 5 ft.)							
5 x 20 ft..	230 to 275 galls..	1400 to 1600 trees..	265 to 300..	240 00 ...	310 00 ..	95 00 .	24 ft.... 300
(Corrugated Pan, 5 x 8 ft., and 6 Plain Pans, each 2 x 5 ft., or 2 Corrugated Pans, each 5 x 6 ft., and 4 Plain Pans, each 2 x 5 ft.)							

At first, the Grimm steel range was made only in Ohio, but when the Ohio plant closed the operation was moved to Rutland. The doors, dampers, and rimmers were made of cast iron. It was an efficient stove with an attached hot water reservoir. This kitchen range did not appeal to the owner as much as the maple syrup equipment and was not a leading item.

When her father was alive, daughter Nella went to New York City twice a week for piano lessons. And her father bought her anything that she wanted. Given her exposure to the city, she learned to talk with men on an equal footing about business, politics, and the stock market. This exposure proved helpful to her later when she ran the Company.

In 1914 Gustav Henry Grimm, the founder and executive officer of the Grimm Company died. So at age 40 Nella May Grimm, his daughter, became the owner and manager. She had been trained by her father who "doted on her to be a perfectionist."

A roaring early morning fire on a cold Valentine's Day in 1920 destroyed the two top floors of the main factory. This did extensive damage to utensils and machinery, but the building was soon rebuilt and business continued.



One of the principal manufactured products of the Grimm Company was the wood burning Grimm Kitchen Range. The range was in production until 1900.



Nella May Grimm Fox who inherited the business from her father and ran it for 37 years.

Ten years later, when she was 50, she married John Fox, her childhood sweetheart, the only man she ever went with. He helped to manage the business for six years, until he died in 1932.

In the judgment of many of the workers at the Grimm Company, Nella Grimm was a good business woman. Harold Merritt was an excellent tinsmith at the Grimm Company and worked for the company from 1930 until he retired in 1971. He confirms that Nella was a very capable business woman. But of course, she also relied on other very capable people. George Cobb, for instance, was an effective manager. Sam Bradford, Charles Bruce, and Harry Braly and Art Hill helped to enhance the reputation of the Company.

The Grimm Company name became the preeminent name in maple sugaring throughout the maple belt, a region considered north to south from Vermont to Virginia and from east to west from Maine to Minnesota.

Even though sugaring itself is a seasonal business, from February to April, depending on the weather, there were sufficient orders to keep the factory humming year round. Many orders were still taken, as in earlier days, with no down payment. Future payments could be made with maple syrup. Later it would be shipped to Grimm in 30 and 50 gallon barrels. It was bought by the pound, and then graded by its color, with its density, or thickness, measured with a floating instrument called a hydrometer. At that point it was labelled Fancy A or Grade B.

1915

MAPLE SYRUP AND SUGAR

If you will give shipping instructions, naming quantity of Maple Syrup Sugar you will require, we will guarantee purity, color, flavor, honest weight, measure. Also prompt delivery from the first runs of Sap.

PRICES FOR MAPLE SYRUP

XX-One gallon tin cans,	-	-	-	\$1.25
No. 1- " " " "	-	-	-	1.10
XX- half " " "	-	-	-	1.35
No. 1- " " " "	-	-	-	1.20
XX- " quart " "	-	-	-	1.40
No. 1- " " " "	-	-	-	1.25

PRICES FOR MAPLE SUGAR

Two oz. fancy cakes, in one lb. boxes,	\$.25
Four and 8 oz. cakes, wrapped in paper,	.22
One lb. and two lb. cakes,	- - .20
Five lb. and 10 lb. pails,	- - - .20

G. H. GRIMM EST., Rutland, Vt.

The price of maple syrup in 1915 was \$1.25. The price per gallon in 1987 is \$44.90.



Grimm Company's sap spout manufactured by the thousands.

The better grades of syrup were then reprocessed by heating, and finally packed hot into small containers for consumers to purchase. Some of the syrup was cooked a little longer, to remove more water so it could be stirred and cast into sugar cake molds. The darker syrups, or last runs, were cast into blocks and sold to tobacco companies for sweetening chewing tobacco.

About 1935 the tobacco companies decided that it was becoming too expensive for them to purchase the syrup, so the market dwindled and finally became nonexistent. Grimm and other manufacturers developed new markets. They sold the darker syrup to large packers of syrup who used a small amount as a blend in such commercial brands as "Vermont Maid," "Aunt Jemima," "Log Cabin," and others.

One of the major reasons, aside from quality management and staff, that has helped Grimm to survive, has been the size of the industry itself. The industry is relatively small and therefore companies that maintain high standards in equipment and support draw to them intense customer loyalty. In addition, the company has kept a complete line of supplies to sell, often designed by Grimm employees, such as factory made sap spouts fabricated from sheet steel shaped by special cutting and forming tools.

Once the spouts have been pressed into shape, they are treated with a coat of pure tin by an exclusive process perfected by the company. The company has also made from 30 gauge galvanized steel sheets its own sap buckets in the 16 and 13 quart size.

The Grimm shop had large 10 foot long power shears, sheet metal benders, lathes, seaming tools, and many soldering benches. At one time the company made its syrup cans, but this was discontinued when the lithographic or picture can came into the industry.

Nella Grimm Fox had no children or immediate heirs. She was a public spirited woman and in 1947 she gave to the Grace Congregational Church a set of seven bells that can be heard over the radius of a mile.

As Mrs. Fox was aging, she desired to sell the business. Prior to selling the business, sales had dropped each year, due to Mrs. Fox's poor health and her being alone after the death of her husband. In 1951 there were only four full time employees. At age 77, with contacts by Earl S. Wright, a local bank president, the business was sold in 1951 to Robert F. Moore of Rutland and Louis Veale of Montpelier, Vermont. Mrs. Fox said at the time of the sale that she "regrets having to sell the business, but she believes she has found in Moore and Veale successors who will carry on, and, perhaps, expand the enterprise, which was her father's life."

Under the direction of Moore and Veale, and capitalizing on the Grimm name for quality, the business started to improve. However, Mr. Veale became seriously ill after the second year and was able to work only part time. His condition continued to worsen and in 1957 he died.

In 1958 Robert Moore's older son, Robert, Jr., came into the business directly from high school. At that time there were 28 employees. The company began to reestablish itself as a leader in the maple industry. Earlier, the company had begun to diversify. In addition to the division of sheet metal and welding, the company was perfecting a new piece of farm machinery, a revival of the older hay tedder. The new machine had a revolving reel and was drawn by a tractor at a fairly high speed. The tedder, as it was called, was first used by Byron Hathaway of Rutland, who in cooperation with Moore of Grimm Company, helped to perfect the machine. Eight machines were sold in 1956.

The tedder, along with Grimm's maple equipment, was shown at the local fairs, and the major fairs such as the Eastern States Exposition and the New York State Fair. The tedder became very popular with farmers since it fluffed the hay after cutting, allowing for faster drying before baling. Since it was the first revolving reel hay tedder, a patent protecting it was granted in 1957.

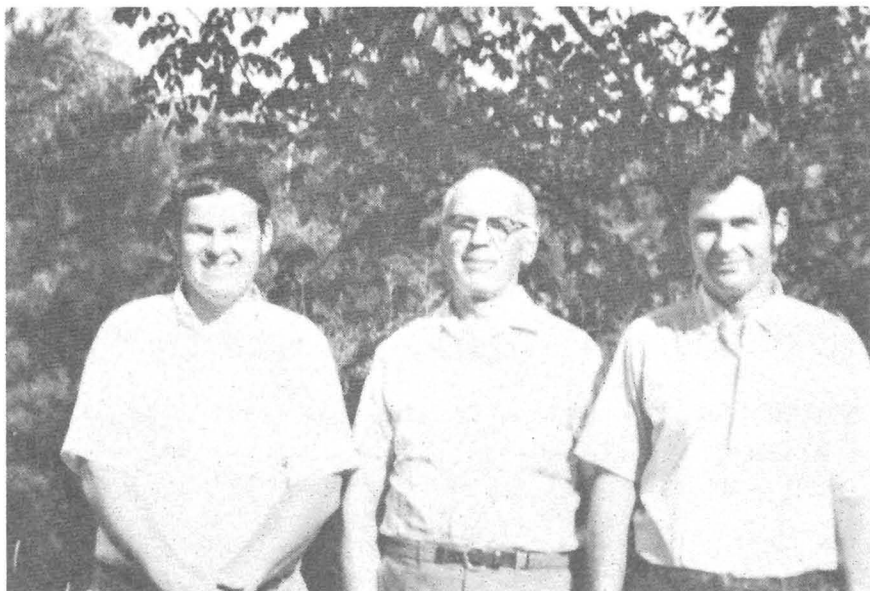
The increasing demand for the improved Grimm maple equipment and the many orders for the new tedder made it necessary to install more machinery in the Rutland factory and hire more people to make the parts. The company was fortunate, at this time, to have in its employ Cecil Duchane and Ralph Smith, two very capable and ingenious craftsmen who also helped to improve the tedder. Because of the increasing demand, the factory was tooled to do all the welding, machining, and assembling of the tedder. The increased popularity of the tedder was shown by the national interest devoted to it in a 1961 issue of the *Farm Journal* magazine.

Business increased through the '60s and in 1964 the Moore family purchased from Carl Whitcomb the Lightning Evaporator Company in Richford, Vermont. Grimm Company hired Harlan Mayhew of Richford and moved his family of four boys to Rutland. Mayhew had been employed by Whitcomb. In the tradition of Gustav Henry Grimm and Nella Grimm Fox, Mayhew was a perfectionist. He eventually worked for the Grimm Company for 22 years and retired recently in 1986. With the acquisition of the Lightning evaporator, the Grimm Company was now making both the drop flue Grimm style pans, as well as the raised flue Lightning model. As a consequence, the company became the only one in the industry to offer either style to its customers.



The first revolving reel tractor-operated hay tedder developed during the ownership of Robert Moore from 1951 to 1984.

In 1964 Moore's other son, Philip, joined the company. The boys had grown up in the atmosphere of the maple sugaring. As early as 1949 the two boys had a small maple operation in the backyard of their home in Rutland.



In 1964 Moore's other son Philip joined the company. From left to right, Philip, Robert F. and Robert L.

Up until 1960 all evaporating of sap (sweet water) had been done by burning wood. At that time fuel oil was only \$0.11 per gallon. It became more practical to shift from wood to oil. So the company made many oil-fired evaporators. However, this operation slowed when the price of oil shot up dramatically to over a dollar a gallon. Many producers, however, liked the convenience of the steady-burning oil evaporators.

By the year 1971 the company had four styles of hay tedders, the first model land driven by tractor. Three others were power take-off models. The latest model covered 16 feet in one pass, and was so different that this model was patented in September, 1973. The hay tedders are now being sold through agents and farm machinery dealers throughout the United States and Canada. In 1973, again because of increased demand for its products, the company bought more land nearby and built a new warehouse for storage.

The company was showing good progress, as evidenced by references to evaporators in Perron's 1972 booklet *Amateur Sugarmaker*. And in spring 1979, *Vermont Life* featured the Grimm Company in four pages of that issue.

In 1972 Moore's older son, Robert, wanted to pursue other interests. He left the company to have his own Moore's Automobile Sales Company within the area. Then in 1982, Moore's younger son, Philip, left Grimm's to own and manage his own business, the "Sugar and Spice," pancake restaurant in Mendon, Vermont.

With the departure of both boys, and because of Mrs. Moore's deteriorating health and his own advancing years, Mr. Moore, Senior, found it necessary to sell the business. The sale was finalized in December, 1983.

The new owners are five local business men: Allen George, William Carris, Baird Morgan, Thomas Hawe, and Patrick Garahan.

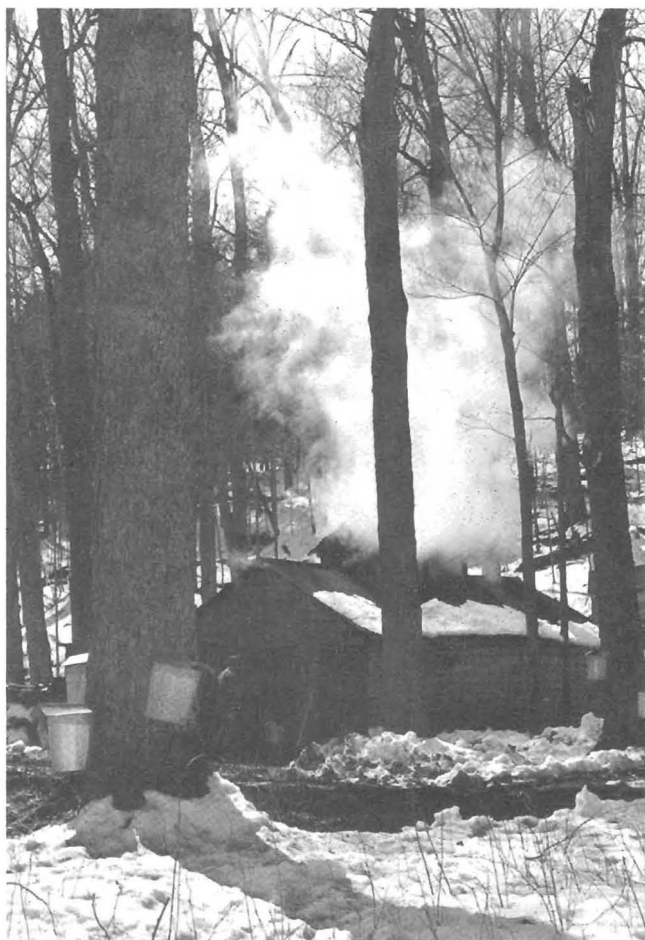
The Grimm Company continues its excellent reputation in the agricultural field for the quality of its products and its services. Having been in the same location for nearly a hundred years, the business is ready for its growth in its second century.

AUTHOR

Robert F. Moore was born in Peacham, Vermont, in 1906. He graduated from the academy there and went on to earn a degree in engineering from the University of Vermont. He worked for the Lane Manufacturing Company in Montpelier and for the Patch Wegner Company in Rutland before assuming ownership of the G. H. Grimm Company in 1951, which he operated for 33 years before his retirement in 1984.

PICTURE CREDITS

Cover: Watercolor by Bobby Atkinson, St. Jauvier, Quebec; p. 91, courtesy Rutland Free Library. All other illustrations from Robert F. Moore.



RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Special one-payment categories are:	Life \$125	Memorial \$150
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Please make checks payable to: Rutland Historical Society
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