

10/14/52 ✓  
(DATE)

Arlington, Vermont  
October 9, 1952

Dear President Burghardt:

I've been toiling away for years at an attempt to interpret Vermont tradition. One of the chapters is to be called "By Their Fruits----" and to contain portrait vignettes of the (not numerous) Vermonters who have become so well and widely known that most people outside of the State have heard of them. Ethan Allen, Justin Morrill, Robert Frost (of course I present him as a North-Country poet, writing for all "North of Boston" people especially), John Dewey and finally Warren Austin.

The John Dewey section was nearly the death of me--such a big subject for a few pages and for a "mere novelist" in Conrad's phrase. I've finally got it down on the page, in a tentative version, and pausing for breath, wonder if perhaps you could take the time to look it over, pencil in hand, and mark down on the margin any impressions which occur to you. I know this is a grotesque imposition on anybody as busy as you. But the subject is one which I'm sure you would wish treated at least with absence of boners or absurd mistakes of interpretation.

It comes after a long book about clauses in the unwritten Vermont Tradition, including such items as a special kind of hatred of dictatorship (coming from their eighteenth-century fight to keep out from the overlordship of the Hudson Valley Lords of the Manor) an instinctive although hardly articulate belief in the need for time for growth--this shown among many other ways in the slowness with which Vermonters admit others to intimacy, their feeling being that intimacy cannot exist without long friendship and familiarity, and the modern practice of treating casual acquaintances as "intimates" is a pretense, and all pretense is poison. Many other clauses in that "tradition" but I won't take your time to read them here. I set down those two only to show that this treatment of John Dewey is set in a special framework of Vermont ideas.

I enclose stamps and an envelope for the return of this typescript, and do beg you, if this sudden pounce on you for help comes at just the worst possible time--just to put the script back into the envelope and send it to me at Arlington. I'll understand, if anybody can!---that there are periods in any busy person's life when even one more thing-to-think-about is the last straw.

With every good wish, thanks for any suggestions you can make and perfect understanding if you don't feel you have time to read it at all,

Dwight (anvil) Fisher

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