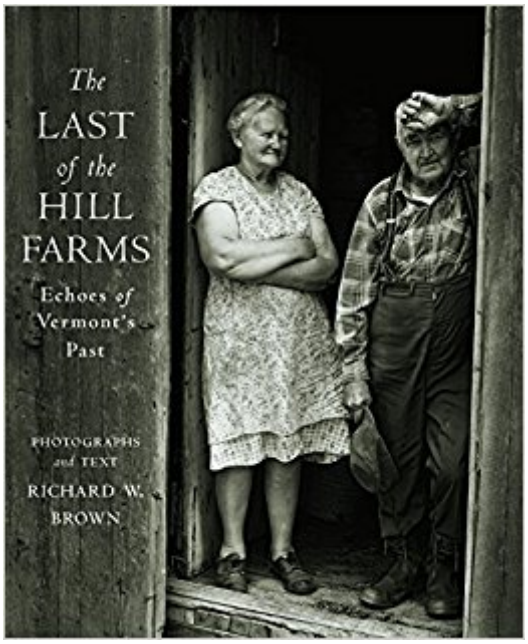
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The Last Of The Hill Farms: Echoes Of Vermont's Past



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Synopsis

In 1968 the photographer Richard Brown fulfilled a romantic childhood dream when he moved to the Northeast Kingdom, a remote corner of Vermont just barely entering the twentieth century. There he encountered a way of life that was fast disappearing, a land of sheep, cattle, work horses, wood-burning stoves, and small family-run farms far removed from the industrial Northeast. Determined to record it before it disappeared, he saw a pastoral vision where, for the briefest interval, a window opened and the spirit of Vermont s past granite hills cleared and formed, hard lives lived and lost, struggle and endurance, a harsh land made starkly beautiful by nature and man was made palpable. He saw the land and also a people whose endless hours of backbreaking, monotonous work were spent with a quiet ferocity and who believed their age-old labors were a struggle waged against time itself labors that might just hold modernity at bay. And Brown did record it, with an 8 x 10 large plate view camera that would have been at home in the hands of Mathew Brady. Not only the hauntingly beautiful landscape but also the people who stayed and worked the stubborn hills and did so with great but fierce attachment. This is, in every way, an extraordinary book, and it is no light claim to say it will stand, along with Agee s and Evans record of the dirt farmers of Alabama, and George Tice s record of the Amish of Pennsylvania, as one of the great odes to an America that has passed before our eyes almost without comment or notice. It is a valiant, indeed a brilliant, effort to make the past tangible, to bring it back to life. These images, and the brief but trenchant text that accompanies them, will stay with you for life. It is among the most beautiful and moving books this company has ever attempted.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Brown is my favorite upcountry artist with a camera. His photographs have such crisp luminosity I think I would recognize them anywhere. --Maxine Kumin, New York Review of BooksHis is an important vision: much of Vermont is still beautiful, but we need to see and appreciate the ideal if we are to preserve it. [His] photography expresses that ideal superlatively well. --Tom Slayton, Vermont Life

In 1958 the photographer Richard Brown fulfilled a romantic childhood dream when he moved to the Northeast Kingdom, a remote corner of Vermont just barely entering the twentieth century. There he encountered a way of life that was fast disappearing, a land of sheep, cattle, work horses, wood-burning stoves, and small family-run farms far removed from the industrial Northeast. Determined to record it before it disappeared, he saw a pastoral vision where, "for the briefest interval, a window opened and the spirt of Vermont’s past - granite hills cleared and formed, hard lives lived and lost, struggle and endurance, a harsh land made starkly beautiful by nature and man - was made palpable." He saw the land and also a people whose "endless hours of backbreaking, monotonous work were spent with a quiet ferocity" and who believed their "age-old labors were a struggle waged against time itself - labors that might just hold modernity at bay." And Brown did record it, with an 8 x 10" large plate camera that would have been at home in the hands of Mathew Brady. Not only the hauntingly beautiful landscape, but also the people who stayed and worked the stubborn hills and "did so with great but fierce attachment."

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