

## CHAPTER VII BELGRADE-WINTHROP REGION LAKES

The Belgrade-Winthrop lakes are primarily in Kennebec County, in south central Maine, and form part of the famous chain of lakes and streams which adjoin the Dead River region south of the Moosehead group. Five lakes were regularly considered as the Belgrade Chain because they were directly connected: NORTH, EAST, LONG, GREAT, and MESSALONSKEE. Later the accepted number was seven, SALMON and McGRATH (pronounced "McGraw") having been added.

The first five, by intersecting streams, reach a common outlet by way of the Messalonskee Stream into the Kennebec River. But, by emptying into Great Lake, McGrath and Salmon, actually two parts of one lake now listed as Salmon by the Maine Inland Fish and Game Association, reach the same outlet. Rich geological matter, terminal moraine, runs through the region. Huge boulders left by the last glacial age are prominent in Smithfield, a town between North and East Lakes.

The Abenakis had settled around this territory and were well disposed toward the white people. They made no attempt to create trouble until after the colonists began pillaging and kidnapping. Then the Indians became suspicious and distrustful of white men.

The first white settlers in the area have been identified as Edward Winslow and companions from the Plymouth Colony who came to the region in the fall of 1625. But the first actual settlement there developed in 1774, and in 1796 the township of 250 was incorporated under the name "Belgrade." No one seems to know just why John V. Davis, who may or may not have been the avid traveler that some authors claim him to have been and others deny, gave the town that name.

According to local lore, the first horse brought to Belgrade, by Simeon Wayne, became homesick the night of his arrival and proceeded to swim back across Snow Pond to Sidney.

Other early arrivals at Belgrade were Paul Yeaton, a Revolutionary War veteran who introduced to the environment a surname that still prevails there; Joel Richardson, a bachelor who settled on the north slope of Belgrade Hill and was Belgrade's one draftee for the Revolutionary War, in which he participated by proxy through the expediency of hiring a substitute that he might continue his farming; and Phillip Snow, from Massachusetts, who hunted in and around Sidney for several years. Tradition tells that he was the first man to cross Messalonskee Lake. Local inhabitants still use his last name when referring to this lake. Mt. Phillip, a rise overlooking Messalonskee, perpetuates his first name.

Nearly all of the Belgrade Lake Region was formerly land in Prescott, Snow, and Washington Plantations. Attractive islands appear among the lakes, and the wooded coves almost reach the water's edge. Summer homes frame the shoreline and an occasional farm still exists in the area. The lake beds are rocky and the waters are clear, perfect conditions for bass fishing.

Some years ago, the lakes were stocked with trout and salmon propagated by a local fish hatchery. This factor enhanced the value of the waters to sportsmen of all seasons. A weekly award trophy is currently given to whoever has the largest catch each week during the summer fishing season.

At the Belgrade Lake Recreation Center, a daily summertime adult-supervised Youth Program offers swimming, dancing, shuffleboard, and beano.

The locality appears to have had various names. For instance, in the 1880's, James Lowe was the first postmaster of the local Lakeside Post Office. In 1891, Martha L. Bacon was first postmaster of the Sidney Lakeshore Post Office. And at the shoreline at North Belgrade, near Charles Rich's store, was the Messalonskee Railroad Station.

The town of Belgrade Mills is located on a short stream connecting Great and Long Lakes, and separates the town of Belgrade from that of Rome, settled in 1780 and called West Pond Plantation until incorporated in 1804. It is broken by hills and valleys and has had some superior farms, including three that started in 1944 with Arabian, quarter, and palomino horses. In addition to them,

French's Mountain and Blueberry Hill, high on a cliff, bring tourists to Rome; and the two locations have been developed into a small park by one of the retired army officers who have made their homes in the Belgrade Lakes Region. From the crest of the rise, the view extends to the Camden Hills.

At the turn of the century, the Salmon Lake House, at North Belgrade, was a popular hostelry. This was at the spot where the Salmon Lake waters empty into Great Lake. Open year-round, the hotel was a favorite rendezvous for many hayride parties from Waterville.

In this same period, John Thing ran a livery service from the Belgrade Railroad Station, dismantled in 1962, to various places along the lakes. He had a three-seat buckboard which could carry six or seven passengers, the whole being pulled by two stalwart horses. His carriage had a black top and side curtains that could be lowered and fastened down in inclement weather. His clientele were visitors to Belgrade Hotel, various camps, and steamers serving the many islands, Joyce being most popular according to his daughter, the late Mildred Thing Thompson.

At Pinkham's Cove, about two miles from the station, launches met Mr. Thing's buckboard, which was the sole transit line in the locality. He discontinued service around 1913.

In 1929, The Gables, a lake resort and one of the landmarks of Central Maine between Belgrade and Mount Vernon, was purchased by Elizabeth Arden, the cosmetic queen. She was born Florence Nightingale Graham, daughter of a grocer (one source stated truck-driver) in Woodbridge, Ontario. Giving up her early desire to become a nurse, she left her home town and worked at a cosmetic firm in New York. Her wish was to help women make themselves beautiful, and she started her own business in 1909, adopting the name of Elizabeth from the English Queen by that name, and the name Arden from Tennyson's "Enoch Arden."

In addition to her health resort on Long Lake, an original tract of more than 2,000 acres, she had a similar resort in Phoenix, Arizona. Her clientele at both places included some of the most famous women in the world. Elizabeth Arden beauty creams, make-ups, and perfumes are still sold to millions of women in Canada, South America, Europe, and the United States.

In almost direct contrast to this trade, Miss Arden became interested in farming in the 1940's, bought several farms in the

heart of the Belgrade Lakes Region, and over the years raised cows, Rhode Island Reds, beef cattle, pure-bred registered White Chester pigs, vegetables, and flowers. Milk from her registered herd of Guernseys was shipped to Boston. Feed for stock was raised on her own land under hired management.

In the 1950's, she added a line of Paris creations to her business assets and held the 1954 fall-line fashion show at her Maine resort.

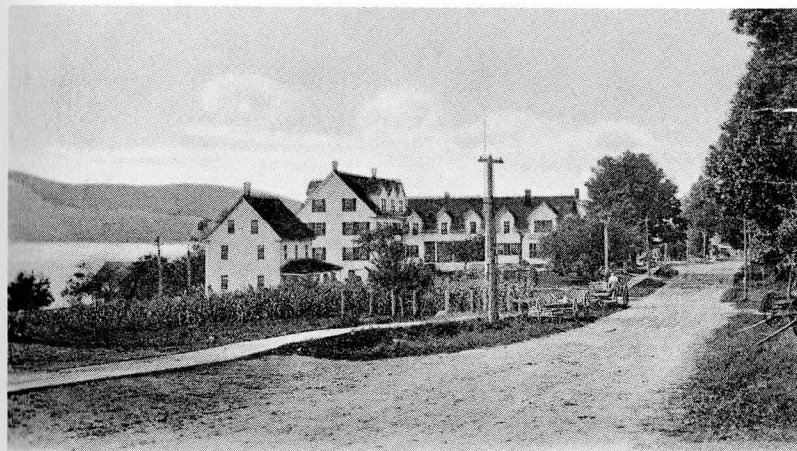
Many of her barns were filled with thoroughbred race horses, another facet of Miss Arden's energy. The stables bore the same name that she had selected for her entire estate, "Maine Chance Farms," and the colors from these stables were worn in several nationally recognized races. Her "Jet Pilot" won the Kentucky Derby in 1947. In racing circles, she was known as Elizabeth Graham.

Miss Arden died in 1966. Her resort at Belgrade Lakes continued to operate as a beauty salon until 1970, after two disastrous fires, July 1969 and July 1970, had destroyed some of the buildings. The spacious summer home remained intact. In July, 1971, the property was sold to Synercap Corporation, for more than \$500,000. Almost immediately, 400 acres, the main house, several cottages, maintenance facilities, and recreational areas were put up for re-sale.

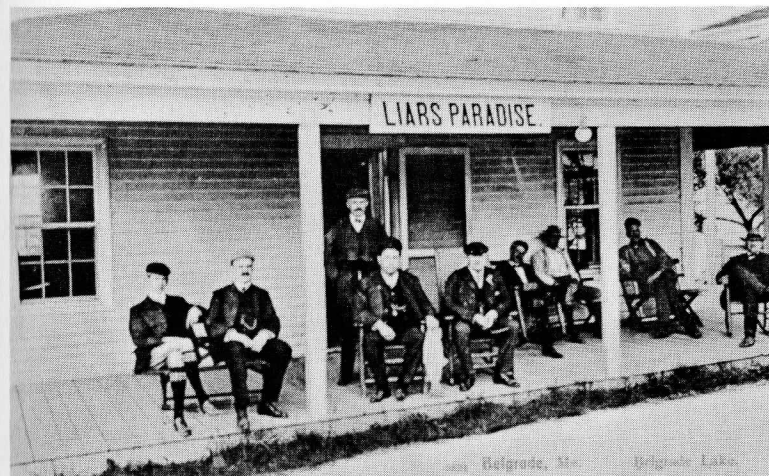
Another self-styled farmer of the region was William Paris Blake, who bought a farm extending from Salmon Lake on the west to Messalonskee Lake on the east. He raised thoroughbred Hereford cattle and Southdown sheep.

A third distinguished person who maintained a summer home on the Belgrade Lakes was Horatio Adams, who visited the locale for more than half a century and eventually reached an age of 101. As a boy, Mr. Adams saw his father make America's first chewing gum, on a kitchen stove; and Horatio's fortune became secure when he sold the Adams' rights to the Chiclet Company for several million dollars.

A fourth famous individual who owned a summer estate on the Belgrade Lakes was Justice of the New York Supreme Court, the Honorable Joseph Force Crater, whose disappearance on August 6, 1930, remains one of the nation's outstanding unsolved mysteries, and whose name has become synonymous with any unfounded disappearance. Suspicions linger that political corruption in New York, his destination from Belgrade Lakes that summer morning, played a key role in the tragedy. The entire story is vividly detailed in *They Never Came Back*.<sup>36</sup>



*The Central House, Belgrade Lakes.*



*Liar's Paradise, Belgrade Lake.*



*The Gables, Mount Vernon.*



*Maine Chance Farm, Mount Vernon.*

In 1939, the Belgrade Region had 32 hotels and sporting camps plus 12 boys' and girls' camps. In that year, the residents of all the lakes in the chain decided to cooperate for tourist trade. Previously, each lake had been advertising only for itself. The organization and its subsequent publicity promoted both the lakes and the State of Maine. The Kennebec Fish and Game Association originated under this plan and cooperated with the Belgrade Lakes Guides' Association and the Messalonskee Camp-Owners Association. A booklet indicating roads and route numbers included the names and locations of all hotels, a procedure which proved to be productive.

NORTH LAKE, or POND, northernmost of the Belgrade Lakes, extends from the southwestern part of Somerset County into Kennebec County. Its area is 2,115 acres with a maximum depth of 20 feet. Because the lake is so shallow, it provides only warm-water game fish. Facilities for sailing, fishing, and hunting, plus housekeeping units, are excellent along the three-mile lake.

The Pine Tree Camp for Crippled Children, organized in 1945 and sponsored by Maine's Easter Seal Organization, is located on North Lake. There are two four-week sessions, beginning the last week in June, with accommodations for 50 boys and 50 girls, ages 8-16. Each cabin has shore frontage; and as there are no steps, it is easy for children in wheelchairs to propel themselves in and out of the lake.

GREAT LAKE, in Kennebec County, is the largest lake in the chain, although less known than Messalonskee. It is situated partly in Belgrade and partly in Rome, is four and a half miles wide, and has a nine-mile irregular shoreline. It empties into a half-mile stream that runs into Long Lake.

The interconnected waters of Great and Long Lakes provide many miles of waterway for canoe and boat travel. Currently, the lakes are stocked with young fry by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Game. New rules and regulations on the taking of both fish and game, primarily as regards the number allowed each sportsman, and the restriction to fly fishing, are being enforced.

Great Lake offers smallmouth bass, inch for inch and pound for pound the gamiest fish that swims, according to some fishermen. Square-tailed trout, pickerel, and perch are prevalent in the lake, which is a favorite spot from the last of April to the end of October because of the absence of black flies.

It was on Great Lake, in 1905, that one of the earliest girls' camps in the United States, Camp Abena, was founded by three

Hersom sisters, natives of Belgrade. The camp director, Miss Hor-tense, was a prominent teacher in a private school in Washington, D.C.

Also on Great Lake was one of the earliest boys' camps in the nation, Pine Island Camp, established by a Dr. Swan.

The mail boat on the lake carries passengers as well as mail along its 60-mile trip. It is said to be one of the very few such mail delivery transportation systems in the United States, with service on Long Lake at Naples providing a similar set-up through two of the summer months.

Great Lake offers a wide choice of tourist accommodations, from motels to camping grounds.

The East Jamaica Shores Neighbors Association, made up of camp owners on Great Lake, is a non-profit organization, formed in the early 1950's to maintain and improve the neighborhood. An annual meeting serves to make plans for outings during summer months. Members maintain and finance nearly a mile of roadway to their cottages. Name signs are at the head of the roadway; flowers are sent to ill associates; Sunday papers are distributed for the asking.

The organization was instrumental in limiting individual catches of trout and salmon for better preservation of these fish.

LONG LAKE, in Kennebec County, is said to have a deeper pool for midsummer smelting than does any other Maine lake. Seven different towns touch its shores; and numerous islands rise from its waters, including Shute, Indian, Pine, Oak, and Hoyt's, which is the largest, being two miles long and from one half to one mile wide.

The landing at Belgrade Lakes Village is the most prominent launching and landing site for the annual Belgrade Lakes fishing derby. On the shore of Long Lake, just beyond the village, stood the popular Belgrade Lakes Hotel, whose genial proprietor, Charles Hill, was one of Maine's best-known innkeepers. The hotel, built in 1903 on a high elevation slanting down to the water, and expanded around 1910, was a favorite convention center. The 100-room inn burned during 1956, a year that saw many fires of suspicious origin in the village.

On Long Lake, too, was the elegant summer property of Col. Marston Bograt, noted chemist. His estate is now one of the best breeding farms in Maine for Arabian horses.

MESSALONSKEE LAKE, an Abenaki name meaning "white clay here," is in Kennebec County and is probably the best known among the Belgrade Lakes. Folk etymology provides a legend to fit the name in the story of White Faun, an Indian maiden who loved a brave named Black Hawk. Her warrior-lover died, and she was reputed to have mourned herself to death because she was "Missy Lone Squaw." A different authority claims that the name was once Muskalog, meaning "giant pike," a cruel, greedy fish in the area.

Helen Larsen gives a third version in which Red Wolf was spurned by White Faun, followed her and Black Hawk after their wedding, caught up with them, killed Black Hawk with a tomahawk, and rushed to grab White Faun.<sup>37</sup> Her terrified cries and loud splashings after she dived to her death in the lake, aroused the revelers of the wedding party. Red Wolf stood transfixed as they rushed toward him, but a sudden earthquake tossed him into the waters before they could reach him. His last shouts were "Messalonskee! Messalonskee!" which gave the lake its name.

*Maine Indians* contains another story of the environment. Kay-o-do-ras, meaning "Little Sister of the Eagle," was the daughter of an Indian chieftain. The shores of Messalonskee were the proving grounds for braves and maidens who had reached the age of 13. Their challenge was to swim across the lake. Kay-o-do-ras courageously started out but was caught in a sudden violent storm. An eagle swooped down, held her high above the rough waves, steered her to the opposite shore, and there left her. Having completed her course, Kay-o-do-ras turned in time to see the eagle circle and then rise high upward in the sky.

Messalonskee Lake, famed fishing grounds of the Red Man, covers an area of 3,510 acres. The waterpower of Messalonskee Stream, once known as Emerson Stream, attracted most of the early settlers. In the shallow parts are small and largemouth bass, perch, and pickerel. In the deeper part, which has a 113-foot maximum depth, lie salmon and brook trout, some of record size.

In the environs of Messalonskee Lake are the 48-foot "Cascades," which some persons consider to be one of the most beautiful falls in Maine.

An item of interest along the lake's shores is the *S. S. Sootie*, originally a conventional motorboat, now converted to steam and complemented by the rebuilding of and additions to its structure. It is non-polluting and quiet running, and is known as "The White

Ghost of Messalonskee." Its owner, Lawrence E. Brown, an ex-railroad man, has carried out the theme of railroading days at his lakeshore home; and the *S.S. Sootie*, when not making the rounds of the lake, is moored in Choo Choo Cove.

At the outlet of Messalonskee Lake lies the town of Oakland, which the Indians called Taconet, or Tacconet, the best-known translation for which is "a place to cross." Since their era, the town has been known as Kingsfield, Winslow, Waterville, and West Waterville. It was incorporated in 1873 and named for the abundance of oak trees in the locality.

Oakland has a 185-square-mile drainage shed, and no other Maine town can match it for surplus water in dry seasons. Also, the waters are so warm that ice never troubles water wheels even in the coldest of weather.

Superb water power has made the town an outstanding manufacturing center. Jonathan Coombs built dams, sawmills, and gristmills in its earliest days; and seven factories were operating on Emerson Stream (Messalonskee) at one time. One manufactured the well-known Fairbanks Scales; others, such items as axes, scythes, tools, chairs, and settees. The chair and settee factory, active until 1892 at least, was started by Joseph Batcheldor, whose son later became its head. Currently, the Cascade Woolen Mill is the only one in operation.

Oakland, easily accessible from Interstate 95 for those drivers going to summer homes and camps in the area, is where Dr. Paul Wiggin developed the nationally-known New England Music Camp, in 1937. It offered summer instruction and recreation for both boys and girls from many states. Hundreds of visitors enjoyed the famous Sunday concerts held in the Bowl-in-the-Pines. After the death of Dr. Wiggin, in 1969, a corporation took over the camp. In February, 1970, the Maine State Legislature passed a joint resolution commending the New England Music Camp for its third-of-a-century contribution to culture and education.<sup>39</sup>

CHINA LAKE, in Kennebec County, and the adjacent town of China, owe their names to a very old and mournful hymn, "China," a favorite among early Maine settlers and mentioned near the beginning of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *The Pearl of Orr's Island*. The first settlers at China Lake were Ephraim Clark and his wife Miriam. The chances are that they encountered Abenaki Indians, members of the Norridgewock tribe, who once had a camp

on the west shore of the lake, where arrowheads and stone axes may still be found occasionally.

Near the old campgrounds of the Abenaki, a friendly, non-belligerent group, is a large heart chiseled out with ancient stone implements, on the surface of a granite boulder on a lovely, wooded promontory. According to the story told by the Quaker writer Rufus Jones, the Heart bears the following legend.

A young and fearless Abenaki chief, Keriberba, was as religious as he was daring. He learned under the guidance of Father Rasle to assist the priest at the church altar. He always attended the annual feasting held in Damariscotta, a gathering at which all Eastern Indian tribes convened, to consume bushels of clams and oysters along with such delicacies as wild duck, venison (in season), all sorts of berries, corn, and pumpkin. While there, Keriberba met, on one occasion, a lovely maiden, Nemaha, whom he wooed and won. She returned with him at the conclusion of the festivities.

Nearing the end of their homeward journey, they stopped for a clambake at the site of what is now known as Indian Heart Rock. The attractive spot became a sort of symbol of their mutual affection. When they reached the Indian village, they were married by Father Rasle. Facing the altar during the ceremony, standing hand in hand, both were impressed by a picture of the Sacred Heart, indicative of Christ's presence and His eternal love. As the young bride gazed at the painting, she decided to form a group of maidens and call them "The Sisters of the Sacred Heart." This she did.

Some time later, the entire Indian village was nearly wiped out in a surprise attack from a party of soldiers from Boston, led by a Captain Moulton who had been instructed to drive out both the French and the Indians. Father Rasle, who had often led his own people into similar attacks, was shot while defending his property.<sup>40</sup> Keriberba and a few of his friends were among the lucky ones who escaped.

Seeking their wives after the onslaught, Keriberba and his band found Nemaha and her "sisters" on the promontory near the huge granite boulder; and with the maidens was the precious picture of the Sacred Heart. An immediate decision was made to settle at that spot by the south end of China Lake, under a canopy of pine that boasted more than 100 years' growth. Thus did Keriberba again become a chief, leader of this small band of survivors. Nemaha was delegated as protector of the beloved painting, for which a

shrine was built and in front of which morning and evening prayers were intoned.

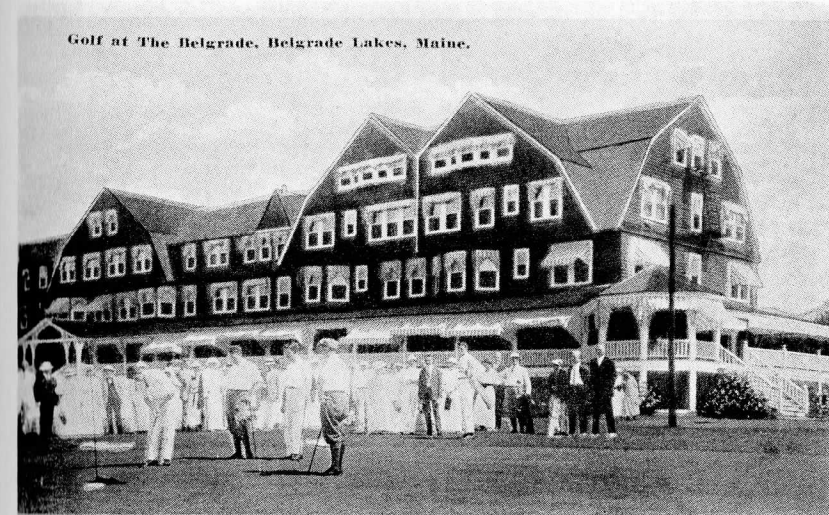
One evening Keriberba happened to speak more loudly than usual the words "le sacre coeur" (the sacred heart) and echoes returned fourfold. But to Keriberba and his band this was no echo. It was a voice from the sky, from the Great Spirit himself. From that time on, standing by the granite boulder, the band repeated the phrase each night, and the words echoed and re-echoed throughout the village before it slept.

In time, Nemi, as Keriberba called his wife, and the other wives raised a new generation. The little Indian settlement on China Lake was a happy one, until one night a heavy storm, sweeping across the waters, brushed the small shrine and the painting into the tossing waves, which turned the precious picture into mere pulp. The next morning, bowed by grief, Keriberba undertook the task of cutting a facsimile of the heart out of the rock, and the boulder itself became the stabilizing factor for the little tribe which once again lived in peace and happiness.

Then the white men came literally to the very borders of the Indian homes. After consultation beside the Sacred Heart Rock, the discouraged, peace-loving Indian band chose to move away rather than engage in battle with their neighbors; and ultimately they joined the Abenaki who dwelt at Passamaquoddy Bay. Even today the sacred heart carving stands as a tribute and memorial to the gentle tribe of Keriberba, and reminds observers that in time Stephen Jones and his brother Eli brought to the same site a band of Quakers, as silent, as humble, as peace-loving as had been Keriberba, his Nemaha, and their faithful followers.

A familiar figure around the twelve-mile-long lake in the 1800's was Rufus M. Jones, affectionately called "Our Rufus," a native of South China, born on January 25, 1863. He was an acknowledged "Small Town Boy," the title of his autobiography. In 1878 he attended Oak Grove Seminary, which later became a girls' school.

Quakers had been prominent at China Lake since 1797 when his ancestors first settled on the east shore. His Uncle Eli, an outstanding speaker, was his idol. This fact undoubtedly influenced Rufus to become a leading historian and philosopher. Another member of his family, his grandmother, was an interesting character: elder of the church, mother of eleven children, smoker of the T.D. pipe three times a day, and a life span of 93 years.



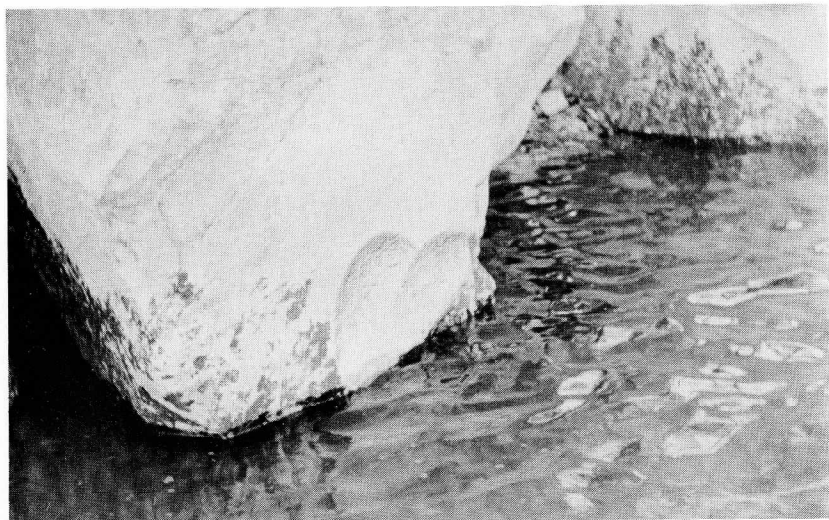
*Golfing at the Belgrade Hotel.*



*Butterfield Store and Post Office, East Vassalboro.*



*Monument to the Clarks.*



*Indian Heart Rock.*

Although Rufus took his religion seriously, he was not a subdued Quaker boy. He often played hookey from school and he was not averse to swearing now and then. One instance of his leadership, which led quite afar from his religion, was his entangling with some local merchants who persisted in acquiring large hauls of fish by putting nets across the entire lake. Rufus and his pals reconnoitered one night, surprised the fishermen, fired a few badly-aimed shots from some old muskets and a revolver or two, and surrounded the fishing culprits when they landed ashore with their hastily-pulled nets. Promises of no more such wholesale fishing were extracted, and there ended the only known story about pirating on China Lake.

Rufus was particularly fond of telling humorous anecdotes. Dean Emeritus Ernest Marriner, of Waterville, Maine, who knew Rufus well, recalls a typical tale told as only Rufus Jones could tell one. A commercial traveler, new to the region, was driving a livery team through the Maine countryside. Amazed at the seeming length of the hill that he was slowly ascending, he stopped beside a resident who was mowing bushes at the roadside.

"How long is this danged hill?" queried the traveler.

"There ain't no hill; you've just lost your hind wheels," the mower retorted.

Dean Marriner points out that this was a typical Rufus story because he usually tried to make a memorable point with his tales. This one was meant to impress the fact that "the fault, dear Brutus, is in ourselves."

A traditional Jones family saying, still in use, is "Thee'd better go round," meaning "You'd better be safe than sorry." This, too, stemmed from a Rufus anecdote. His grandparents were to follow by sleigh that of their son Eli and daughter Peace en route to Pond Meeting House. When the young folks reached a section of rotted ice, the horse plunged through, and only by profound luck was the sleigh returned undamaged to firm ice. At that point, Eli shouted back, "Father, father, we've come across. Thee'd better go round."<sup>41</sup>

Rufus Jones authored fifty-seven books as well as countless articles and editorials. He was a reformer in his Society of Friends and edited two of their publications, *Friends Review* and *American Friend*. He served as chairman of the American Friends' Service Committee from 1917 until his death in 1948.

China Lake has been likened to a long-legged boot with China



at the top, South China at the heel, and East Vassalboro at the toe. At one time, Everett Farnsworth ran the *Freda*, built about 1913, between the three townships. The so-called "Twenty-Mile Drive" was a favorite recreational trip at the time.

Of the several springs and few brooks which feed China Lake, Tannery Brook is possibly the most noted as it comes out of forest growth and drains a large bog known to be an accumulated surface of sod, brush, and moss. All of this presumably covers a submerged lake of 40-foot depth and an underground waterway.

About two miles up the waters is Round (Birch) Island. This attractive location was once supposed to have contained gold. There was a rumor that the island would belong to anyone who slept on it for one night yearly over a span of fifteen consecutive years. As might be supposed, Rufus Jones was among those who first took the challenge, even though the "gold" turned out to be merely a large quantity of pyrite, colloquially known as "fool's gold."

Bradley Island is the only one located near East Vassalboro. Bill Bradley, proprietor of the Revere House around 1900, opened a "Chowder House" on the island. He transported tourists in his own steamboat which he beached in the winter for the use of skating parties. Skaters would start a fire in the boiler and warm their chilled toes. Unfortunately, during one of these rest periods, the fire managed to spread beyond the confines of the boiler and ruined the mahogany interior of the cabin.

About the same era as Bradley's Chowder House, yacht races were popular on the lake. The usual winner was *The Swallow*, owned by Richard Mott Jones, Rufus' son.

Today, overlooking the lake, rests a huge boulder with a bronze tablet attached, which contains lines from Gray's "Elegy":

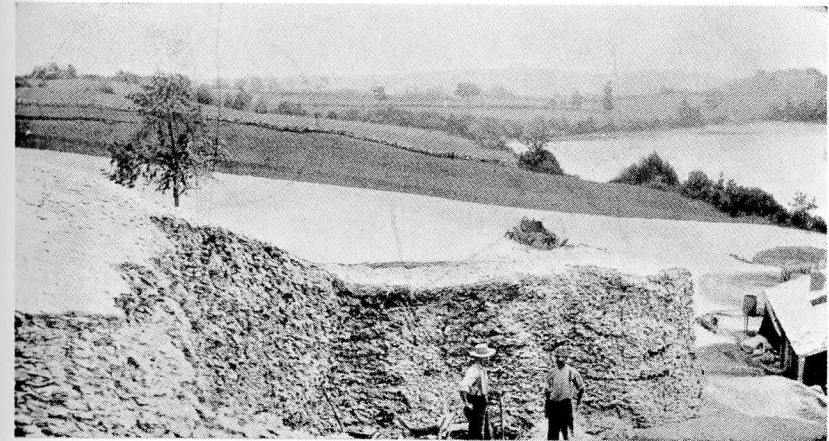
RICHARD MOTT JONES

1842-1917

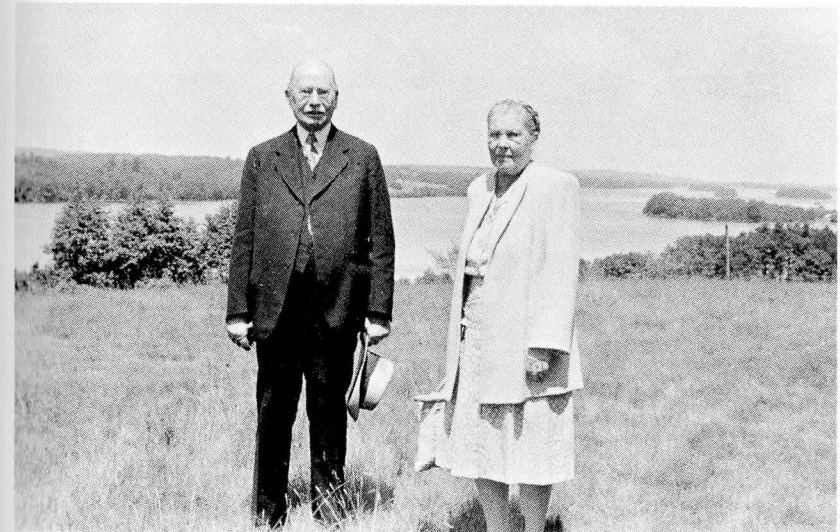
"E'en In Our Ashes Live  
Their Wonted Fires."

Dr. Jones and his wife left their "fire" in the form of a mission founded in the Holy Land. The institution remained active long after the death of the good doctor.

Another religious sect along the shore is that of the Baptists who in recent years have acquired some 2,000 feet of shoreline. In deference to the establishment of a Baptist Center on the lake, the



*Ancient Shell Heaps at Damariscotta.*



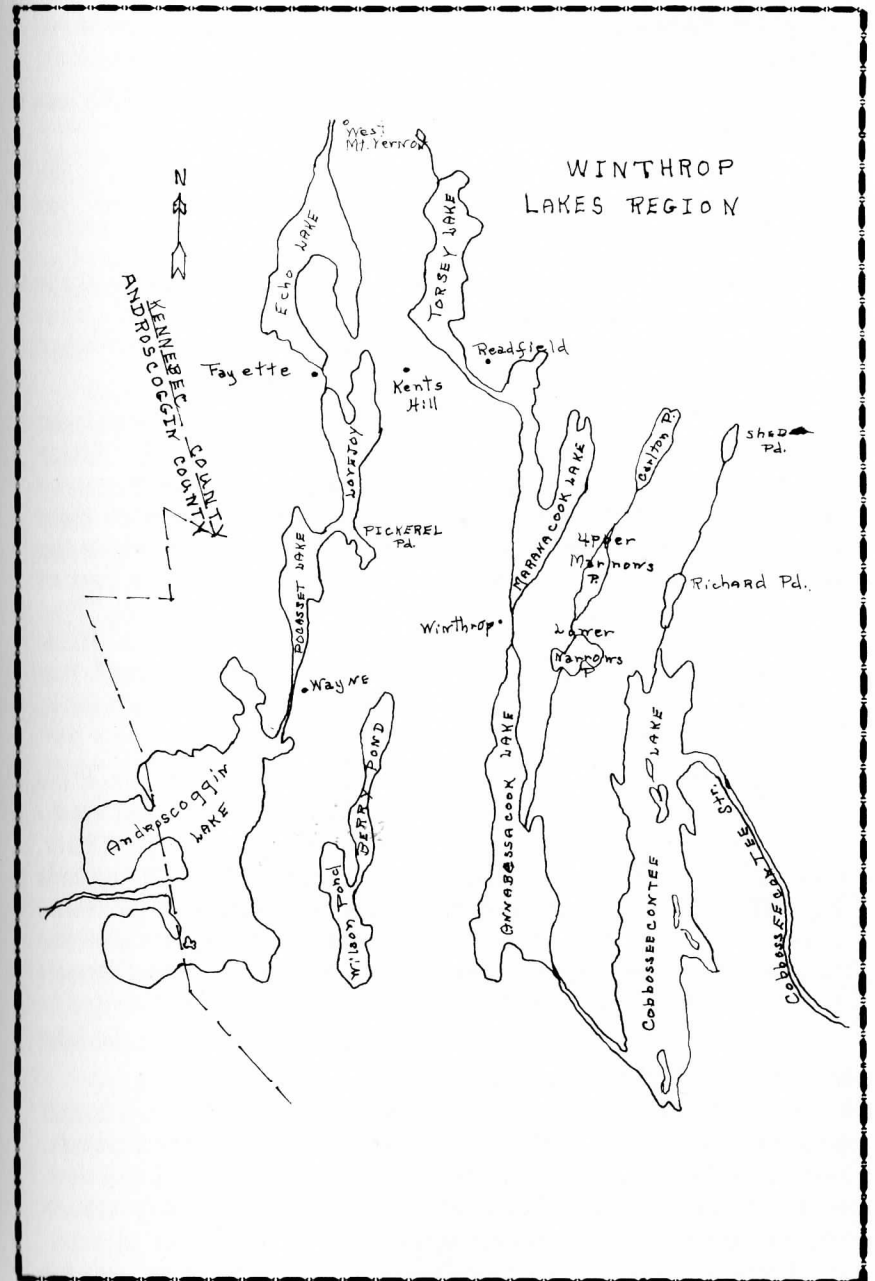
*Rufus and Elizabeth Jones, 1947. Their daughter, Mary Hoxie Jones, now owns this lakeside property.*



*Birthplace of Rufus Jones.  
Picture taken before 1886. Rufus' father sitting on doorstep.*



*Sir Charles Hotel on Lake Maranacook.*



American Baptist Men held their 19th annual conference, 1968, at China Lake.

Camp Teconnet, located on one of the China Lake islands, was established by La Salle Seminary, but has long been in disuse.

A local event of no small proportion, sponsored by the Lake Sportsmen's Association, is the season-long contest, with prizes, for catching all major species of fish of record size.

The town of Winthrop, once known as Baileyville because of the extensive Oil Cloth Works run by Charles M. Bailey's Sons, claims the largest part of two rather large neighboring lakes in Kennebec County, MARANACOOK and ANNABESSACOOK.

LAKE MARANACOOK lies southeast of the Belgrade Lake Region and was once known as Chandler's Mill Pond. Teddy Roosevelt liked to roam there with his guide, Bill Sewall, whom he once hosted at the White House after a friendship between them had begun in 1902. In 1923, Camp Roosevelt was founded on the lake, to offer boys 8-16 years old an opportunity to enjoy a part of Maine and to exercise self-reliance under capable guidance. The Camp Director, Ray Watkins, was once athletic coach at Bates College, Lewiston, Maine, and later at Colgate University. Bill Sewall provided the nature talks. In 1928 the camp was moved to Pleasant Lake under new management.

Lake Maranacook became popular during the 1800's when the Maine Central Railroad purchased the surrounding land and established an enormous picnic area. Various organizations met there, especially Sunday Schools, G.A.R., and Grange. Political gatherings were numerous and lured such dignitaries as Secretary of the State, James G. Blaine, later Maine's Presidential candidate; Governor Nelson Dingley, Jr.; and State Senators William B. Frye and Robert Hale. Governor Carl Milliken stood at the speaker's rostrum in more recent times. Great crowds would sway up and down the lake side, awed and inspired.

Work on this public picnic area was started on a July 4th and completed on August 4 of the same year. There were lunch stands, seats in the Grove, a speaker's stand, and comfort stations. Later, the Maranacook Hotel was built, a dining room with overhead sleeping rooms. It was destroyed by fire in 1905.

Charles Hotel, located on Craig's Point, referred to also as

"Among the Pines," ran steamer trips to the village of Winthrop. Tallwood Inn also provided boat service.

Hamlet Park was a retreat among the firs and birches. At that time, shore lots were selling for \$1.25 per foot frontage along one section of the lake.

Maranacook is a lake of many bays and coves, mostly fed by springs. Big Pine Point extends from the east shore. In Coy's Cove is Mud Turtle Rock, once a mere boulder on the shore, but now appearing as a mud turtle's head because of raising the water level. Trout, salmon, black bass, and white perch are available in the lake.

It reached national popularity through its boat races and excellent training water for oarsmen who came from all over the country. One of the largest attended races ever held in New England took place on Maranacook when single sculling was at the height of appeal, and such national figures as Plaisted, Gaudam, and Hanlon competed there in championship contests.

In 1971, auto ice races and the annual community skating party were winter attractions.

There are several translations for the name "Maranacook": "where the water fowl rear their young," "place where many deer are seen," "plugged up lake," "deep lake," or "black bass here," to name a few, the last three supposedly from the Abenaki tongue.

On the other hand, folk etymology tells that the name of the lake comes from the fact that an Indian tribesman was boasting of his Mary Ann as a cook (Maranacook) only to be deflated by a rival tribe at a nearby lake which lauded their Anna as the best cook (Annabessacook).

Several steamers were once an important part of the scene on six-mile Maranacook Lake, of such depth that it is the last one in Kennebec County to freeze over.

In the 1800's, Lake Maranacook was the site chosen for the annual State Brass Band Contest, an event of high interest and profound feelings. Prizes went as high as \$500 and were given for tone, tune, precision, and expression. It took three or four days to hear all the bands that entered the competition. Special trolley excursions brought musicians and fans from various close-by towns, and the Maine Central Railroad served people coming from farther distances.

The winner of the last contest, held in 1886, was Glover's Band, from Auburn, Maine.

ANNABESSACOOK LAKE, also spelled Anabasikook, an Abenaki term meaning "place where small fish are caught" or "at the beautiful body of stillwater," is estimated to be between 20,000 and 30,000 years old. Unfortunately, the 6-mile lake is dying unreasonably fast. The rapidity of its decline is such that unless immediate precautions are taken, it will perhaps become a marsh in 20 to 50 years.

The lake receives thousands of pounds of phosphate from various sewerage elements, but over 75% of the 162 lake property owners now belong to an association which is fighting to eliminate the resulting growth of algae. It would take nature thousands of years to accomplish a cleansing. From 1968 to August, 1971, algae control treatment achieved little if any success. A September treatment, of that same year, did, however, produce some favorable results. Future efforts to save the lake are assured.

Boats and wharves become covered with the green growth which, when dry, is not without an odor. A 1968 news item stated that someone's *French* poodle went wading in Annabessacook and came out of the water transformed into an *Irish* poodle. The same article contended that a boy's hair, made green after a swim in the lake, required two days of rinses, soaps, detergents, and other comparable measures to return his locks to their natural color. Some small hope is still held that Annabessacook will not become defunct.

The lake has a large island in the center upon which there was once a hotel with steamer service to Winthrop, a town called the "Interlaken of Maine" because it has 12 lakes or ponds within its confines or along its borders. The island was used later to pasture sheep which used the deserted hotel as a shelter.

COBBOSSEECONTEE LAKE, also listed in the 1971 report of doomed lakes, located entirely in Kennebec County, extends from Theater Island Park at the northern tip to Dismal Swamp at the southern end and has a high reservoir dam at its outlet to the Kennebec River. It is the most widely known of the Winthrop Region lakes and is the southern boundary of the Belgrade Chain. It was the first Maine lake to be stocked with smallmouth bass. In the summer of 1869, 35 adult fish of this species were shipped from New York.



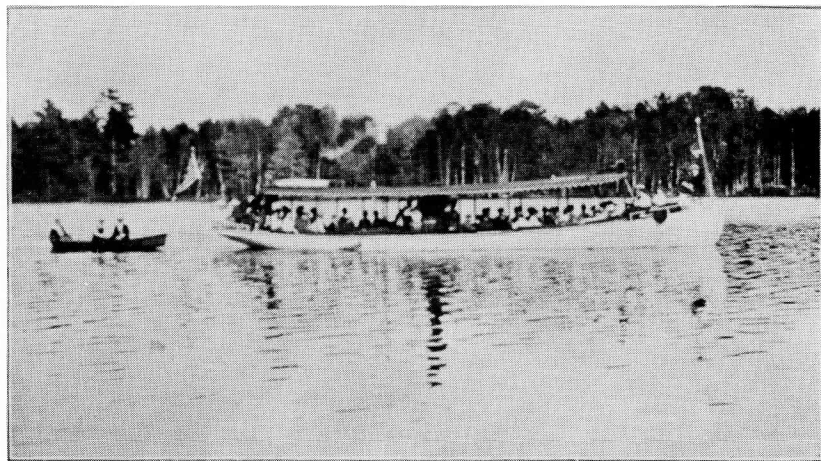
*Waiting for the train, Maranacook Station.*



*Hotel Maranacook and Fountain House.*



*The Mohican Inn, Lake Maranacook.*



*Steamboat Maranacook.*

Sixteen were deposited in Cochnewagon Pond, at Monmouth; the remainder were put into Cobbosseecontee.

Only nine miles long, it has 32 islands and so many rocks, shoals, and ledges that in 1900 *The Cobbosseecontee Pilot* was published, a book of some 70 pages compiled by Commodore Daniel C. Robinson, to help navigation on the lake. It lists more than 60 rocks, shoals, and ledges and gives a description of each.

Among the most interesting names of these dangerous obstacles were Devil's Windrow (a reef), Ladies' Delight High Rocks, Fib Rocks, Muskrat Rock, Rob-roy Rock, Mink Rock, Whalesback Rock, Silver Doctor (an enormous white rock), Roddy Rock, Longfellow Rock, the Hypocrites (several low rocks), the Cherubs (two sharp rocks), Grape Island Reef, Toddy Rock, Steamboat Rock, Egg Rock, Molazigan ("black bass") Rock, and Three Pigs. One listing confines itself to just one word, *Rocks*, followed by the contemporary explanation that they are "on a line from the Turtle to Mrs. Bailey's cottage . . . about half way up."

In a section titled "Entrance to Juggernaut Stream," (Upper Cobbosseecontee), the *Pilot* lists such descriptive names as Pompadour Bend, The Elephant, Jock-Me-Yaw Stream (sometimes shortened to "Jock"), and Lagoon Brook Channel. One canoe trip direction was given as going through Pickerel Alley to Cemetery Brook.

Island names included Beetle Bug and Bluebell, but the most popular of the islands was Ladies' Delight, a small, jagged piece of land. For many years it provided the dream place for canoeing lovers, an idyll shattered by the construction in the early 1900's of the first and, to date, only functioning lighthouse on Maine fresh water. Built by Frank Morse, a Boston marine architect, it was financed by the Cobbosseecontee Yacht Club, the oldest inland yacht club in the United States.

Oxen were used to haul stones for the tower. Only one animal could be taken at a time on the ferry, and a problem arose when the first ox began swimming back to be met halfway by the ferry bringing the second ox, his mate. Eventually, both creatures were housed on the island for the summer.

The size of Ladies' Delight was reduced when a dam at the out-

let raised the water nine feet, but the light is still in operation from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Blinking lights are also operative from Devil's Windrow (Crow Island Light) and at Turtle Rock (Belle Island Light).

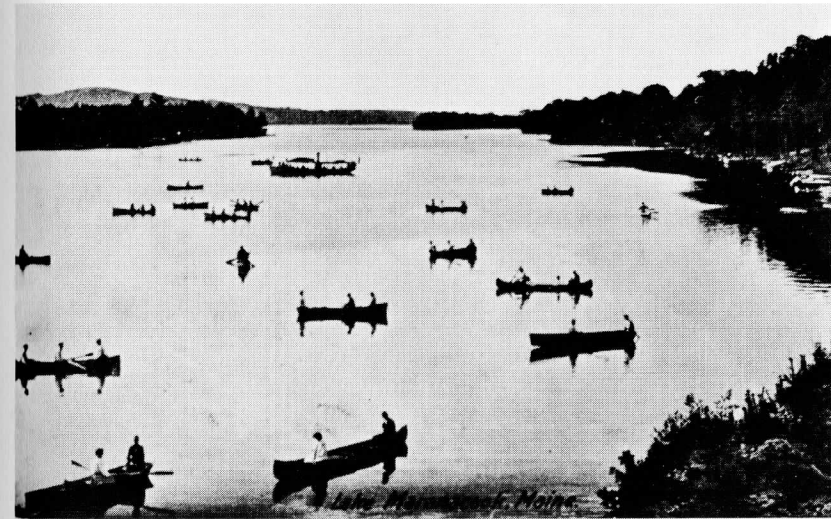
As did Lake Sebago, Cobbosseecontee had its own Pulpit Rock, a huge boulder rising at least 15 feet, close to the path which led "from Longfellow's Meadow, through the woods, to the Longfellow house and the main road."

The Cobbosseecontee Launch Club was organized in 1900 by Daniel Robinson of the Boston Yacht Club. Original membership was 109, 80 of whom were local and the others, from nearby towns. Mr. Robinson had a cottage at Hammond's Cove, and his *The Gretchen* was his delight. In 1904, the club's name was changed to Cobbosseecontee Yacht Club; and since 1908 it has been listed in Lloyd's Register, giving its members a welcome in any yacht club in the United States. After a low ebb during the war years and the depression period, membership rose to over 300 by 1967, a rebirth due in part, at least, to the efforts of the late J. C. Behnke of "Dream Acres," on the west shore.

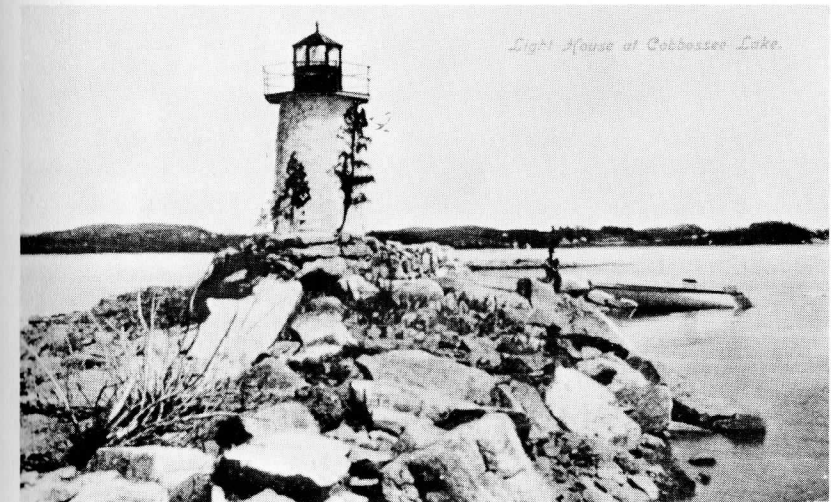
The club has more than yachting on its agenda. It is dedicated to four objectives: to save the lake's pure water and stock of fish; to preserve the natural shoreline; to promote safe boating; and to maintain the lake's buoys, spindles, markers, and lighthouses.

In 1967, the United States Flying Tern fleet met in Maine for the first time. The local yacht club sponsored the sailing championship races on Cobbosseecontee with 22 boats registered.

Yachting was responsible for the yearly regattas on the lake. In 1898 and 1899, nine first-class boats, nine second-class, and five third-class competed. Five canoes, also, were allowed to enter the festivities: *L'Hirondelle*, *Toothpick*, *No Name*, *Petrel*, and *Stranger*. Steam and gas-engine launches were the remaining type of entries. In winter, ice yachting was popular. During Christmas week of 1899, over a dozen iceboats were scudding over the Manchester Bay surface. The majority of the boats were the original design of their owners, and some were so well built that they competed in regattas over a span of 25 years.



*Canoes on Lake Maranacook.*



*Lighthouse at Ladies' Delight, Cobbossee Lake.*



*Idle Hours, Lake Cobbosseecontee.*



*Ice Yachting on Cobbossee.*

The name *Cobbosseecontee* has had many forms and spellings. According to J. W. Hanson, in *History of Gardiner*, the word *cabbassa*, or *Karparseh*, means "sturgeon" and the word *contee* means "region of." A different source states that *contee* means "lake" and that the *Cobbossee* means "salmon." A third source, John Huden, calls it an Abenaki word for "plenty of sturgeon." Fannie Eckstorm agrees that "Kebassee" is Abenaki for "sturgeon."

According to Indian lore, a noted brave is supposed to have gone to the shore of the lake, removed his clothing, plunged into the water, and shouted the equivalent of "I am a cabbassa." Immediately, a large sturgeon appeared, frolicking among the waves; but the warrior's body was never seen again.

Accordingly, the tribe of Cabbassaguntiquokes became the Cabbassas, or Sturgeons, and adopted the sturgeon as their symbol on deeds and treaties. Several Indian relics have been found in the area: bones, arrowheads, kettles, and other war and peace articles. The Indian burial grounds were near the shore where mounds of fieldstones lie, presumably placed at the head and feet of the buried.

A battle is said to have taken place in the area when two Mohawk Indians, who had entered the service of some Eastern settlers in 1723 and were sent to Fort Richmond with Army escort, encountered a band of Abenakis. It is commonly known that when the Revolutionary War broke out, many Norridgewock Indians gathered at Cobbosseecontee Lake for stronger security.

Harvard undergraduates used to come from Boston to Portland by train or steamer, then transfer to Gardiner by boat. From there, the electric trolley ran to the lake, where their campground, "Camp Whiskers," was located. Once in a while a tourist would prefer canoe travel. One such expedition by Harvard students was met by a band of authentic (?) Indians at a lonely spot on the trip. After a display of waving tomahawks accompanied by war whoops, the Indians skulked away. But when the boys came into view of Ox Bow Point, they witnessed an alarming war dance being conducted around a fire. The trembling youths were awed and thoroughly frightened.

The natives decided that their demonstrations had done enough mischief, doffed their costumes of blankets, feathers, and artificial

long hair, and invited the students to eat with them. Ever since then, the site of the trickery has been called Tomahawk Point.

The region still has its influx of boys. For over fifty years the Maine Y.M.C.A. Camp has existed on the shores of Lake Cobbosseecontee. The camp has served an outstanding need for youngsters 8-16 years old to become better acquainted with outdoor living, to develop leadership qualities, and to adjust to society.

Probably the first controversial issue connected with Cobbosseecontee Lake was in 1700 when Dr. Sylvester Gardiner, a proprietor of the Kennebec Purchase and manager and executive officer of the company, ordered a dam to be constructed at the lake. It inhibited various types of fish that regularly migrated from the Kennebec River and stocked the ponds from which Cobbosseecontee received its water supply. In 1771 a committee of three was chosen to request Dr. Gardiner to make arrangements for his dam to allow the fish to migrate. This request was repeated for several years, but never granted.

Ironically, his refusal to destroy the dam despite heavy pressure has resulted in keeping out the twentieth-century pollution of the Kennebec River. Even so, Cobbosseecontee is bothered by algae, presumed to have originated in Annabessacook, from which a stream flows into Cobbosseecontee. Efforts are being made to eliminate the plants.

Early in 1971 a Cobbosseecontee Watershed was endorsed by the Southern Kennebec Valley Regional Planning Commission. The district would include Lakes Torsey, Maranacook, Annabessacook, Cobbosseecontee, Berry, Dexter, and Wilson among other water areas, with major concerns being purity of water, water levels, and public control of water rights, including dams on outlets and at several lakes.

The Maine Legislature in the spring of 1971 achieved two bills to protect the height and purity of the Cobbossee-Annabessacook Watershed in a determination to preserve the water quality. Grants and loans were to be used to control the water level and to improve the quality of the two lakes.

Construction around Cobbosseecontee Lake was promoted by the Augusta, Winthrop, and Gardiner electric railway, which ran to

various side points. Overnight accommodations in 1900 included those of The Lake House and Lake View Inn, at the Outlet. Hotel Pines was a popular place for political rallies. Each establishment called attention to the pure and "best" drinking water, flowing freely from springs which by analysis were worthy to rival Poland Spring water.

At the southern end of the lake was Prospect House, a year-round inn with a "fine observatory from which a glorious view of nearly the entire county can be obtained."

The Cobbosseecontee House was unrivaled at one time because it was "connected by telephone."

Other summer board and lodging was available on the east shore in a neighborhood settled early by Quakers, who had a meeting house on a hill overlooking the lake.

A drive around Cobbosseecontee Lake was about 18 miles and usually started at Hammond's Grove, site of the first local summer colony. According to the *Pilot*, the Grove offered golf, lawn tennis, croquet, fox hunting, and "Paper Chase" in the summer; and ice-boating, skating, snowshoeing, and rabbit coursing for amusements in the winter.

Hammond and Pine Groves became less popular after Island Park, also known as Theater Island Park, became the focal point for theater groups, band concerts, boat rides, picnicking, and dancing. In January, 1972, the historic dance pavilion was razed.

Pinkham's Grove, a little beyond Island Park, was a base for boating and dancing and general sports. Palmer's Point constituted another amusement center on the lake.

No text on Cobbosseecontee would be complete without mention of Benjamin Vaughan, native of the Island of Jamaica and a "figure" around the lake. He became leader of the Whig Party in the British Parliament but emigrated to Hallowell in 1776 and lived there for 40 years. He bore the title of "rural Socrates" and was visited frequently by scholars and philanthropists of renown. His guests were always treated to a ride to Winthrop Lakes and a lingering stay at Cobbosseecontee, where Socrates would declare that they were seeing the best scenery in New England.



Of the remaining waters in the Belgrade Chain itself there seems to be little of interest. Salmon Lake, once McGrath and Ellis Ponds, no longer has the fish for which it is named but contains brown trout, smallmouth bass, white perch, and pickerel.

ANDROSCOGGIN LAKE, in Androscoggin and Kennebec Counties, contains a small, one-inch diameter freshwater jellyfish not recognized in Maine waters until 1963 but now acknowledged to exist in other Maine lakes. Collections of this harmless fish, the "medusa," have been made only from Androscoggin Lake.

This body of fresh water has borne perhaps the longest number of different names among all Maine lakes. The list includes Ainerescoggin, Amerascoggin, Amerescoggin, Amoriscoggin, Amircoggin, and Amorascoggin. From 1616 to 1793, 12 varying names were assigned to it with meanings of "beaver dam," "great skunk river," "the place where fish are cured," and "the turbid, foaming, crooked snake."

The Caghnagas people of the Anasagunticook tribe once dwelt at the foot of the lake and established a burial ground there.

COCHNEWAGON LAKE, "the place of bears," which were troublesome in the area as late as 1815, or, in Abenaki, "closed up route," is supposedly fed entirely by springs. In the early 1900's, a sawmill, gristmill, and machine shop were in operation at the outlet. A victim of algae, it was on the 1971 list of doomed lakes in Maine even though its springs clear the water after heavy rains and during cool weather.

It has a history of Indian warfare. Aborigine historian Drake identifies the word *Cochnewage* as meaning "a place of praying Indians" or "place of battle," presumably referring to a bloody war between the Mohawks of eastern New York and the Abenaki, when the former made their periodic journeys to Mt. Katahdin for flint and en route killed game that the Abenakis considered their property.

POCASSET LAKE, in Wayne, a lake bearing a Natick name signifying "the stream widens," has an unique burial ground overlooking it, Wing Cemetery, which is circular. The lake itself was first known as Wing's Pond in memory of Dr. Moses Wing, member



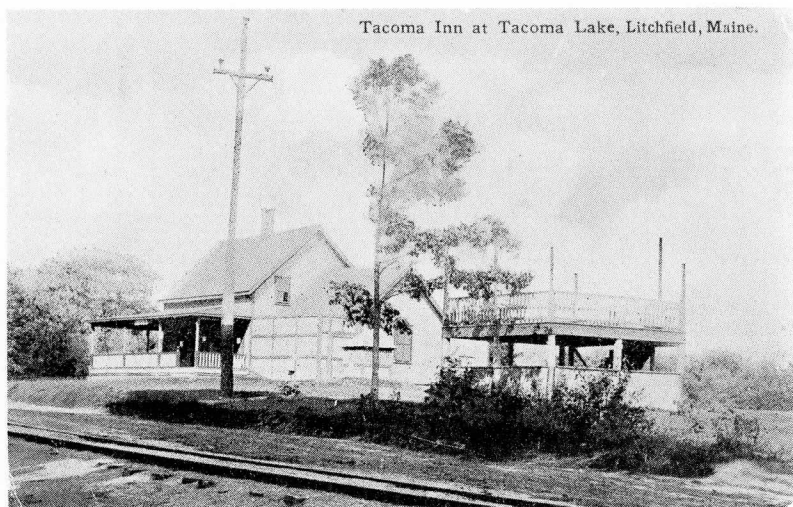
*Pine Island Hotel, Cobbosseecontee.*



*Hammond's Grove and Beach, Cobbossee Lake.*



*Island Park Bridge and Pavillion, Lake Cobbosseecontee.*



*Tacoma Inn at Tacoma Lake, Litchfield.*

of a family of longevity which settled at Pocasset Lake in 1782.

The lake has seven islands, the largest, Hog Island, having served as pasture land for the creatures indicated. The south shore of "The Cape," which extends two or three miles into the lake, has often been used as a baptismal font for a Baptist Church erected at its shoreline.

The TACOMA LAKES bear a Nisqually name more properly associated with Washington State and probably brought into Maine by some traveller. The name means "great white breast." The lakes are also known as Shorey and Sand Ponds, or as Purgatory Pond, so-named by a hunting party besieged and tormented by black flies in the vicinity. A rather narrow causeway separates the two Tacoma Lakes which offer pickerel, white and yellow perch, and brown trout. A recent increase in ice fishing gave fears to the possibility of a diminishing fish population. So far, the fear has proved baseless.