CLIMBING AND QUIET AT WHITE MOUNTAINS

Beauty of Scenery and Walks Make Resorts in This District Popular With Lovers of Out-of-Doors—Hotels Rapidly Filling

White Mountains, N. H., June 15.—If you have chosen the White Mountains as your objective in your pursuit of summer pleasure, you may sink back into the cushions of your luxurious limousine or friendly Ford, or adjust the angle of your Pullman chair with a little sigh of gratitude. Were you to travel ever so far, you would not find a more inviting, an immense playground more appealing than those sturdy little hills in old New England. They are as full of romance and charm as they are of wooded slopes and hidden streams; there is historic interest for the inquiring mind, geological secrets for the vacationing professor, unending thrill for the lover of the wholesome recreation and mountain climbing, and at all least a system of motor highways for the vast procession of tourists.

It is a long cry from 1642, the approximate date of the first ascent to the summit of Mount Washington, then called the White Hill, to the present day, but the intervening centuries have added scenic wonders to the sturdy pleasures that are invaluable to the lovers of New England's famous vacation land. It is related that Darby Field bore the distinction of being the first to ascend the great White Hill, as the Indians had named it. In company with two Indian guides, he made the trip in eighteen days from the vicinity of Conway.

Darby Field came very near making the last eight miles of his pilgrimage in the company only of his courageous guides, for upon approaching an Indian village in the valley below the Indians refused to ascend the summit. They were in awe of the great White Hill and feared they would perish if they attempted to reach the top. However, Darby Field pressed on his guides took courage and continued.

Ascent Today Is Easy

Today one may tuck in the heavy luncheon, have binoculars in hand and a wholesome assortment of sandwiches and fruit in the lunch kit, and with the whir of the self-starter be on the way by automobile to the very top of the king of the White Mountains, Mount Washington. It will not be even eighteen hours before the return has been made and the splendors of the unfolding vistas have made their indelible impression on the receptive memory. It is one of the most perilous mountain climbs for the automobile to be found in the East, but the thrill of the ascent is all the keener because of it.

Less tiring, but none the less thrilling is the ascent to the Tip-Top House by way of the little cog railway, and here again history weaves an interesting thread in the fascinating train of events, for it was between the years of 1866-69 that Sylvester Marsh, of Littleton, invented and constructed this cog railway, which was the first to be built in the world. Observation cars from Fabyans and Bretton Woods carry the passengers to the base of Mount Washington, where the change is made for the narrow gauge railway and the seemingly perpendicular climb is approached. Jacob's Ladder is that remarkable feat of trestle construction where the grade is nearly 2000 feet to the mile.

The Summit House welcomes the jolly groups from the small train and the automobiles; accommodations for overnight may be had, and for those just stopping "between trains" inviting luncheons are served. On a clear day—and crystal clearness comes for the most part through the cloudless days in September and October—one can see Portland and the Atlantic spreading like a great sheet eastward, on the south Lake Winnipesaukee unfolds to view and beyond often the ranges of the Adirondacks are distinguishable, while turning the glass to the north reveals a wide sweep of the Canadian ranges.

Mount Washington towering above the neighboring peaks is the last to release its winter snow cap in the early summer and the first to don it in the autumn.

Shows Good Sportsmanship

It remains for the explorer of other peaks to make the pilgrimage by horse, burro or on foot, and that there are more exponents of the last named mode of travel is an indication of the good sportsmanship that is becoming every year a greater asset to the outdoor life in America. It has remained for that wonderful organization, the Appalachian Mountain Club, and the many boys' and girls' camps in New Hampshire to establish mountain climbing as one of the foremost sports. Innumerable khaki-clad parties are to be found about the mountains from early June until the leaves begin to drop in the autumn.

Mount Webster and Mount Willard, the sentinel peaks at the northern entrance to Crawford Notch; Kearsarge, that lofty mountain on the east side of the Presidential Range, with its commanding view; the steep and craggy Mount Chocorua to the south, offering one of the most precipitous climbs in the White Mountain region; Moat Mountain, which is reached by way of Diana's Baths, are only a few of the many mountains that afford opportunities to the adventurous nature.

Other mountains offering sturdy climbs in the southern part are Wonnamanett, Whiteface, Whittier, Passconway. Approaching Jackson are White Horse Ledge, Thorn Mountain and Eagle Mountain, and beyond are Mount Wildcat, Carter Dome, Mount Imp and Mount Carter.

One of the greatest sights on the east side of the Presidential Range is Tuckerman's Ravine. An immense snow arch, one of the wonders of the mountains, remains there as late as July, and the great slide of snow that finds its way into the streams when the warm air has worn away the arch is a sight that comparatively few persons have the good fortune to see. On the west side of Crawford Notch are the peaks of Willey, Field, Avalon Tom and Willard that are among the favorite haunts of the hikers, and in addition to those of the Presidential Range, Webster, Jackson, Washington, Jefferson and Adams, there are many fascinating points to be reached from Gorham and Randolph, as well as from Littleton, Bethlehem, Whitefield and Jefferson.

At Bethlehem one of the most interesting mountains is Agassiz. Mount Starr King and Mount Pliny are the objectives for the Jefferson community, while the walking contingents at Whitefield have such nearby points as Kimball and Jewell Hills. At Bretton Woods there are many interesting trails well defined through the deep woods of Mount Deception and Mount Dartmouth. Mount Lafayette and Mount Lincoln always attract climbers from those at Profile and Franconia, while the North and South Twin Mountains and the Three Sugar Loaves are rocky heights that the mountain climbers from all sections of the mountains come to climb. The Appalachian Mountain Club has done much to establish shelter camps along the way, and most particularly in the vicinity of Carter and Pinkham Notches.

Forest Preservation

The White Mountains, or the greater section thereof that comprises the largest of the sixteen national forests in the East, cover an area of 827,000 acres, and work of forest preservation that is being conducted by the Government is being promoted in every way by the resorts and camps. There is a spirited campaign on throughout the White Mountains to preserve in every way possible the great forests that were up to a few years ago in danger of extinction. Protection from the insect plagues is a work that is greatly occupying the forestry men today, and the co-operation given by the walking clubs and camps is an indication of the great public interest that the movement has developed.

It was the great steel sinews of the railroad that first opened up the remarkable view of the Saco Valley and Crawford Notch, though the discovery of that marvelous stone gorge dates back to 1771. Here is one instance when the automobile cannot improve on the railroad for opening up some of the scenic wonders, for the motor road winds necessarily along the bottom of the valley, and while it is flanked on both sides with beautiful scenes, it remains for the railroad to give the visitor a real view of the mountains above and the valley where the Saco River finds its way southward to the sea.

From Bartlett on to Crawfords there unfolds a view first of the heavily timbered slopes and later the crags of granite rock that pile one on top of another to great heights. Quaint landmarks can be seen from the passenger coaches and observation cars—the little stone house which old Dr. Bemis, of Philadelphia, had built from stone hauled from Sawyer Rock, miles away; Willey Brook bridge and the site of the Willey house, the view of the Giant Stairs, and then that slow and careful crossing of the great Frankenstein trestle which bridges the greatest gulf in the approach to Crawfords.

"Benny" tells of all this and more many times a day as he exchanges the brightly toned souvenir booklets of the White Mountains for the equally bright coins. "Benny" has been "coverin' the ground" from Portland to Fabyans since he was about sixteen, and he has never tired of telling the tale of how the Willey family perished in that tragic storm that caused an avalanche of trees and rocks to slide down Mount Willey. The family, fearing they would be buried, left the house and started frantically down the mountain; the debris gaining speed as it descended, passed the house, unharmed, overtook and buried the members of the family.

Objectives for Hikers

Franconia Notch, in the Franconia Range, and Dixville Notch, that northerly gateway into Maine are the other large notches to be found in New Hampshire's playground, while on the east side of the Presidential Range are the smaller gorges, Carter's Notch and the Pinkham Notch, which are among the favorite objectives for hikers. In all of the notches there are remarkable stone images that are numbered among the seven wonders.

Scarcely a peak who has been through the Franconia Range but has paid tribute in doggerel verse to "The Old Man of the Mountains," whose profile overhangs the notch from a tremendous height. In years gone by the Indian tribes worshiped this massive profile as the "Great Stone Face." Silhouetted against the sky in Crawford Notch is the clearly defined profile of Daniel Webster, while the first lady of the land can be seen in delicate outline carved from the jagged rocks of Dixville Notch; the discriminating tourists say even the frill of Martha Washington's dainty lace cap is distinguishable. An Indian face and a formation of rock representing a sleeping dog are to be found in other parts of the mountains.

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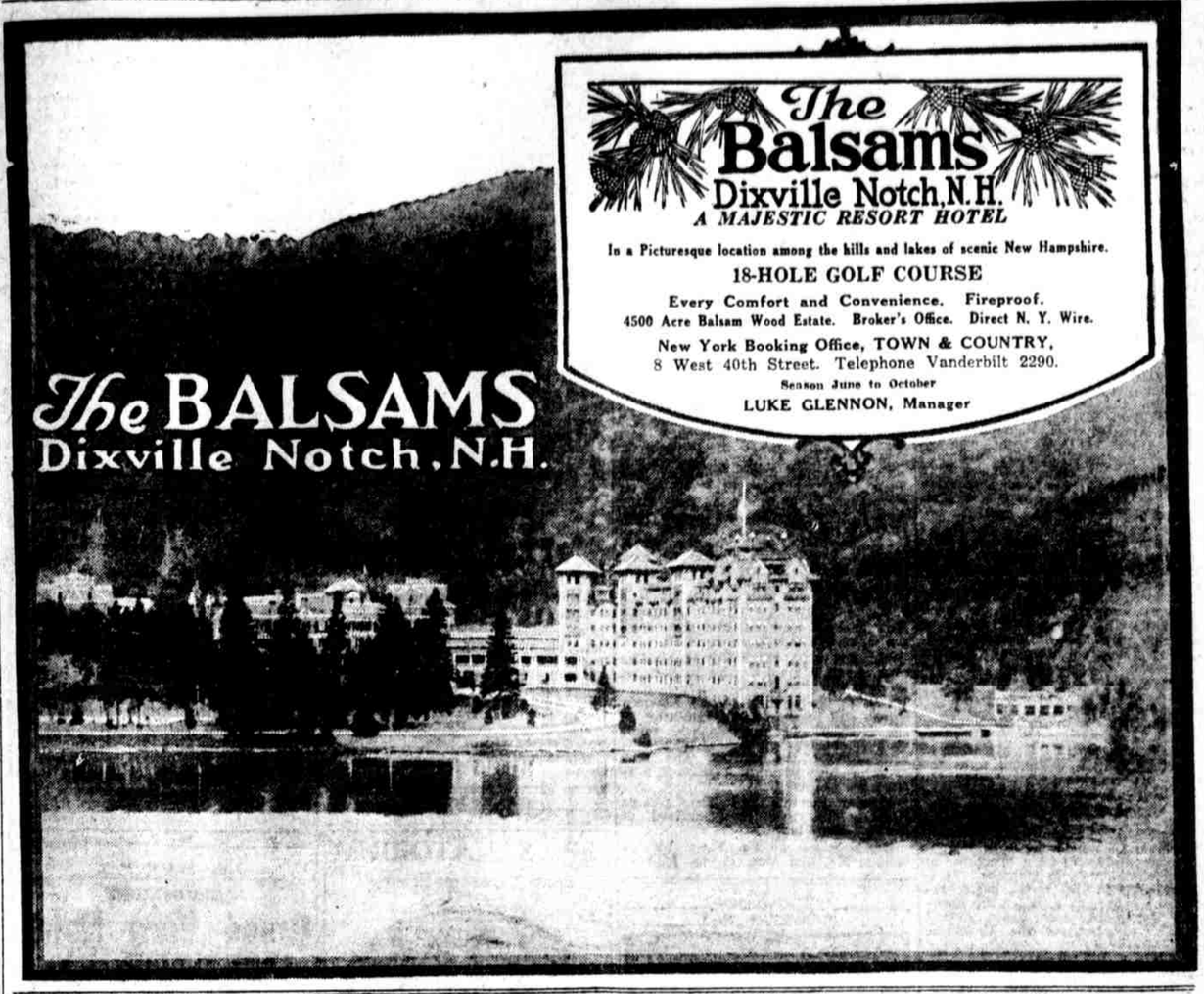

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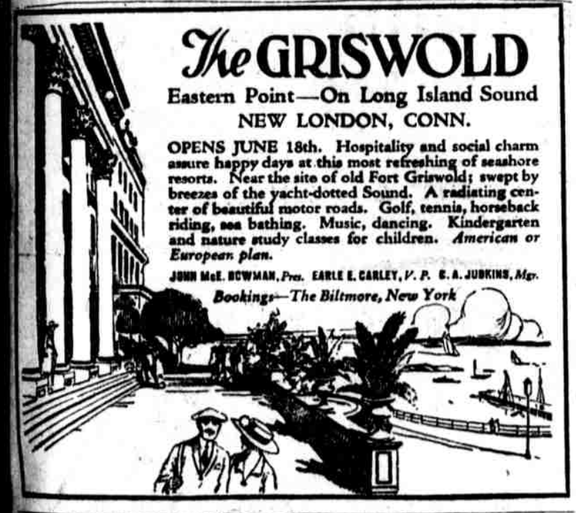

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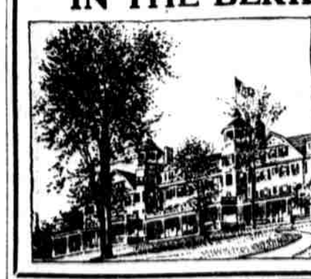

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