

The Ranger's
History
of
Bradbury Mt. State Park

POWNAI, MAINE

RANGER

of the



STATE PARK COMMISSION

Benj. H. Britt

(Paste your photos here)



INTRODUCTION

In my contacts as Ranger here at the Park, I find that there is a desire among our visitors to hear or read the history of this area. With this thought in mind, I have tried to gather the facts and set them down in a readable manner. So with a realization of my inability as a historian, I present this book for your approval or criticism. I only ask that you will receive it in the same spirit that I present it, namely for your enjoyment and with the hope that you may gain some bit of information that you will cherish in the years to come.

Since time immortal it has been with a feeling of ecstasy that man has climbed to some hill or mountain top and looked at the scene spread out below him. It seems to me, that at no other point, within easy traveling distance, of the average citizen of Cumberland County can one secure a more varied view, than here at Bradbury Mountain. He who stands here sees at his very feet, a country village. As his eye travels farther away, he sees a miniature desert, a view of Casco Bay, the ocean, other villages, a city skyline and the White Mountains. And over all, farms and homes, forest and fields. Truly this is a view to thrill the heart of every home loving American. For here he may say with pardonable pride, "This is my own, my native land."

In the past, some military man has said, "Hold the heights and you hold all." I some times wonder if the time will not come when Bradbury Mountain will play its part in the defense of our country. I hope that this will never come to pass, but if it should, I somehow feel, that as it has stood through the centuries, it will stand this test too, steadfast and unflinching. This mountain is old, how old none can say with any certainty. I have been told and have every reason to believe, that only this mountain and a few hills that surround it, was the first land to appear on this part of the Atlantic Coast. One may find what appears to be sea sand, less than one mile away.

I have dug around clam or quahog shell from a clay bank, on the Desert of Maine road, leading off Route 1. At least three miles nearer the park than is the present shore line.

That it was crested and craggy, when first it was raised, there is no doubt. It was ground by glacial action and eroded by the weather. If one will take the time to climb along its base, he will find large rocks laying on its sides, where they have been cleft from the cliffs. Some have been carried across the road and lay in the woods beyond. Except for the feldspar mine it bears but few scars from the hand of man.

It is the wish of the Park Authorities, both State and Government that it be changed as little as possible. Only that little, that seems necessary to adapt it to the public use. The woods will be left undisturbed, except for what trails are found from time to time, to have the most desirable use. They do not wish to create an artificial park, but rather one where the true nature lover can study the Animals, Birds, Flowers and Rocks with which Nature has so abundantly blessed this spot.

Here one may gather with family and friends and enjoy a picnic or indulge in such sports, as are in the future provided. Or he may by himself walk through the woods, and revive the scene he remembers as a lad, if he was country raised. If he was city born, he may find some of that love of land and country, that is the foundation of our true American citizenship, that love of his for the sight and smell of piney woods and good, sweet earth that ever haunts and always holds him true to this, his heritage. I do not wish to imply that the city dweller is not as good a citizen as his country cousin, but here, he may understand that deep seated love of that cousin for the woods and countryside. For here he was born and this will ever be his heart's desire.

No amount of wealth he may accumulate, no peak of power he may win, can ever replace, deep down in his heart, those happy moments spent as a youth. This is a hard and fast fact. Some men may have been carried along, on the crest of a wave of prosperity, until this fact may have for the moment been forgotten. But some time, in later years perhaps, that longing for the days spent rambling the fields and woods will return.

In preserving the various spots, occupied by our parks, we feel that we are helping to preserve those things, that hold men true to each other, to their families, and to our great nation.

HISTORY

This mountain was well known to the Indians. The Abenaki tribe were early settlers of this section. It has been established by relics found, that there was at one time a campsite on the northeast corner of the mountain. There were campsites at New Gloucester, Brunswick and at Lisbon Falls. The Royal River was much used as a thoroughfare, by the Indians. We know this section was well known to them, the camp was undoubtedly used by them, in their annual trips to and from the seacoast. It is a family tradition with the Cottons, that Mrs. Sarah Cotton has seen them many times standing on the cliff, back of the cabin. No attempt was made to molest this cabin by them. As far as history records there were no people killed by Indians in the town. The Abenakis were a friendly tribe, until enticed into King Phillip's War by the French, who had been fair in their dealings with them. This was something the English had not done. One should remember that the first English had come with the purpose of trading, rather than to make homes. These traders had taken advantage of the Indian's love for worthless but glittering gee-gaws, and had cheated them at every turn. It is a matter of record, that one trader named Purchase, once traded a keg of water to an Indian for 100 pounds of furs. The Indian, who believed the keg to contain rum, remonstrated with the trader but was driven from the trading post. This post was located near Brunswick, and was the first point plundered by the Indians at the outbreak of hostilities. The first actual contact between white and red men, in this section took place about three and a half miles above Brunswick on the Androscoggin River in 1607. Thomas Purchase settled in Brunswick in 1628.

After a series of abuses, running from kidnapping of the Indians by the English, to the drowning of a child of Chief Squando by English sailors at Saco, the Indians attacked and killed Thomas Wakely and eight of his family on September 12th, 1675. The Indian wars were carried on spasmodically from this date until 1760. The Indians had by this time been so thinned

out by disease and war that many of them had fled to Canada, some to the eastern part of Maine, then known as Arcadia. Many of the settlers had been killed and most of the small settlements destroyed. Many settlers had been killed at Yarmouth, some at Freeport. The well known Means Massacre occurred there in 1745. The English had aggravated the trouble by various acts. In 1755 the Council of Massachusetts, under King George II had offered forty pounds for each male Indian scalp and twenty pounds for each female or child's scalp. Declaring all Indians Enemies, Rebels and Traitors, this offer was increased to 300 pounds in June 1756. This resulted in more savage attacks on the small settlements. The Indians realized that this was a move to exterminate them. They struck with all the power possible to them. The French on the other hand had used the Indians fairly, their missionaries had lived and worked with them from Father Biard in 1611, until Father Raile was killed at Norridgewock on August 23, 1724 with thirty Indians, men, women and children. The Indian seemed destined to be a pawn in the game of conquest and hatred played by the monarch of England and France. The country that was theirs by every right of law and justice was claimed and taken from them in the hope of these kings to become rich and powerful. I believe we can understand the Indian's attitude if we give him credit for the natural intelligence he surely possessed. A comparison of his position with that of the people of Europe, will show us with what desperation he fought against overwhelming force with inefficient weapons.

The first white man to see the mountain was some old time sailor, skirting the coast. Some believe this may have been Eric the Red, or some of the other old Norse sailors, who made a brief stay on Cape Cod. This is a reasonable supposition, if one considers the maps made by these men. On them is shown a dent in the coast line that seemingly can refer only to Casco Bay. I will not say that the Norsemen explored the bay, but we have every reason to believe that they knew of its existence. To say that some of these sailors had seen the bay is to assume, that they had also seen the mountain, as the mountain is visible from far at sea. Cartier describes the bay in his account of his voyages, also telling of the mountains to the west. These are no doubt the White Mountains and he must have seen Bradbury as well. Of the first to set foot on it we have no record of any man to precede Samuel Bradbury. He is credited with becoming lost and perishing on it in the early 1700's. This man is described as a young explorer and hunter. From him the mountain is supposed to have taken its name.

From the Indians this section had taken the name Wescus togo; a translation of which is "a banked and gullied stream" referring to the Royal River which drains it. This land was included in that territory granted to John Mason and Sir Ferdinando Georges, by Charles I of England in 1639. The boundaries of which were never definitely established, but were roughly from the Merrimac River to the Penobscot and running back forty miles from the coast. There were other charters or grants for parts of this same territory, by other monarchs, notably the Lagonia District. The eastern part of land was also claimed by France as part of her land of Arcadia. Georges spent most of his life and fortune, trying to get the matter straightened out, only to meet with failure. This section was included in York County, and so remained until 1760 when it was set aside as Cumberland County. The town's first name was New Boston. A copy of a deed for a piece of land in the town, taken from the records of York County reads as follows: "Laying in New Boston, beyond North Yarmouth." This name was later settled on the town of Gray. This town was later considered as part of North Yarmouth. I have used this as an example of the unsettled boundaries of that time. The dividing line between the Province of Maine, named for Main in France and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, was a large white rock on the Foreside shore. This line followed roughly the town lines of Cumberland and Falmouth. This section has also borne the names, East North Yarmouth and North Freeport. This town was included in North Yarmouth until 1789 when it separated from the mother town as part of Freeport. It so remained, until 1808, when by a disagreement over a preacher and over a section of road leading from Pownal Center toward New Gloucester, it petitioned the Legislature and was granted a separate charter. It was named for a former Governor of Massachusetts, Thomas Pownal who had been friendly to this section. We have thus established this Park as having been in one province, one state, two counties and four towns.

Perhaps a note of explanation at this point will help the reader. Most of the early settlements of this section were made along the coast or on the larger rivers. The few settlers who ventured into the wilderness were quickly alarmed at the outbreak of the Indian Wars. There seems to have been a difference of opinion among local historians, as to who was the first

permanent settler of this town, one writer giving that honor to Mr. George Warren in 1775, another to Mr. Jonathan True in the same year. Both agree that John True, his son, was the first male child to claim this town as his birthplace. He was born August 7, 1785.

As other settlers came, Mr. Thomas Haskell built a saw and grist mill on the east branch of the Royal River. Two years later in 1798 a school house was built near this mill. Here was held the first town meeting. This settlement consisting of the mill, school house and five or six cabins was called Little Yarmouth. From this school house went forth the petition that was later to be the foundation for the town charter. A road was built into the town in 1756 by Jacob Parsons. This came by way of Walnut Hill and was no doubt part of what is now Route 9. A store was established at Pownal Center in 1832. One has existed there almost continually since. This store was established by Hosea Newell. A later well known and respected proprietor was Mr. True Warren who is still remembered in this town and its vicinity.

The town was first surveyed and mapped in 1773. At that time it was a wilderness, untracked and unsettled. Not for almost fifty years was it destined to start to become, as it is today, a substantial New England town, and site of the Park, which is, as I believe, to play a prominent part in its future development.

The first man to settle on land actually comprising the Park was no doubt William Cotton, who built a log cabin just below the Cotton Peak. The date of this settlement was between 1785 and 1788. Here in 1791 was born Jacob Cotton, who married Sarah Bailey. An interesting fact about this marriage is here noted. This young couple traveled to Harpswell, through the wilderness twenty-five miles each way, to have this ceremony performed by Rev. Elisha Eaton. There was evidently no minister of their faith at a nearer point.

The log cabin was torn down and replaced by a frame house about 1800. This place was the home of five generations of the Cottons until destroyed by fire in 1929. These men by diligent work established what was probably the first vineyard in this part of Maine. Here, in terraces built on the side of the mountain, was grown grapes that were the wonder of the surrounding settlers who came for miles to secure them. It is related by some of the older residents of the town that the door yard of the Cotton

farm would be crowded with all sorts of vehicles from ox carts to horse drawn chaise, as well as saddle horses during the harvest season. The sides of the mountain warmed by the sun during the day helped keep off the frost and thus assured a longer ripening season. These people were also noted for the quality of the apples grown by them. Some of the terraces as well as the irons that held the arbors may still be seen on the side of the mountain.

These were hard working, industrious people. By their efforts there was constructed from native stone taken from the side of the mountain, a cattle pound. This was probably built previous to 1800. A peculiar thing about the early homesteads was the fact that as fast as land was cleared a fence or stone wall was built around it to keep the cattle out. The very reverse of the present day custom of fencing land to keep the cattle inclosed. Each settler was given a pattern of slots or notches with which to mark his cattles' ears instead of brands as used in the west. These patterns were all recorded, the pound keeper having a copy. If cattle were found damaging crops they were caught and impounded until such time as the owner came to claim them. The owner was to pay the cattles' "keep," also for whatever damage they had done to crops. As the land became more generally fenced, the pound fell into disuse for this purpose although a pound keeper was appointed in this town as late as 1891. This pound was also used to confine cattle being driven to market from upriver to Brighton, Massachusetts, or points along the way. It was customary for buyers or drovers as they were sometimes called, to hire boys in one town to drive herds of these cattle on to the next town where they were confined in these pounds. Rested and fed, they were moved on to the next town by a fresh relay of boys. These pounds were constructed mostly of logs and have long since disappeared. I know of no other in this part of the state. This one is in a remarkable state of preservation for a structure that has been exposed to the elements for a century and a half.

The old tavern or Jones Inn as it has been called was built about 1795, undoubtedly by Henry Jones. His son Caleb has been credited with the construction of the inn. He was as we know the keeper of this inn for many years but I believe that Caleb, who was not born until 1791 was too young to have had a part in its construction which must have occurred soon after the establishment of the stage line in 1793 by Mr. Graffam of Portland.

This stage ran from Portland to Hallowell with mail and passengers. The tavern is described as a two and one-half story building, square in structure with many paned windows. It was destroyed by fire in 1891.

The tavern served as a relay station for the stage, where fresh horses were provided and passengers fed. It is related that the boys would sit on the stone wall across the road from the tavern and watch for the arrival and departure of the stage with its team of four coal black horses. One can imagine the part the tavern played in the social life of the town. Here came the traveler with news of the outside world and here also was left the newspapers and letters that reached this scattered settlement until such time as a post office was established. Many famous men of the day were said to have stopped to rest and partake of mine host Jones's dinners. Among them was supposed to have been George Washington. This was the most direct route between Augusta and Portland. An Act of Congress, March 3, 1825, established this stage line as a Post Road. The mail continued to be carried over this road by stage until about 1900. Many interesting stories of the Inn and of the town are told which we hope may be some day gathered and printed.

The feldspar mine was opened in 1928; from it was removed many tons of spar during the five years of its operation. Most of this was ground in mills in New Jersey and went into such useful articles as bath tubs and dishes. Thus we again see Bradbury Mountain entering the picture to provide us with pleasure as well as necessary things of our daily life. This seems to have been its role through the years. Many "specimens" are collected on its dumps and are gladly given to the finder upon application to the Ranger.

The area now owned by the Government and leased to the State, consists of one hundred seventy-three and six-tenths acres. Bisected by Route 9 it lays on the southeasterly side of the mountain. On the westerly side of Route 9 is an area containing roughly one hundred twelve acres including both peaks of the mountain. Here in a lovely old fashioned stand of buildings is located headquarters for the Park. The house is the living quarters for the Ranger and his family. Directly back of the house is the main peak, four hundred eighty-five feet above sea level. This peak is two hundred eighty-five feet above the house level; at one point a sheer wall of stone about seventy feet raises above the trees with which the mountain is cloaked. This cliff is discernible for many miles. Ships entering Casco Bay will first raise this point as a guide. Fishermen setting their trawls or lobster traps

still use it as a "mark" to help locate them again. On the comparatively level area above this ledge, three hundred and fifty feet above Pownal Center, has been installed an excellent Binocular Viewing Machine.

From this point on a fair day may be seen the view described at the opening of this article. One can hardly picture in his mind the variety of color in this eye picture. In autumn this is especially true. It seems Nature tries to outdo even the imagination as here one sees almost every shade of red, green, yellow and brown, while in the distance is the blue of Casco Bay with its three hundred sixty-five islands, one for every day in the year, as the sailors say. In the background is the Atlantic Ocean with its streaks of white breakers on a field of blue green.

This Park land was acquired by the Government under the Soil Conservation Land Utilization Program. Purchased from the owners in 1936 to 1938, it was developed by WPA labor in 1939. It is leased to the Maine State Park Commission and administrated by them under U. S. Forestry supervision.

On this summit was preached in 1798 the first sermon by a regular ordained minister, Mr. Alfred Johnson of Freeport. Services were held here at various times until the present church was built at Pownal Center in 1811.

Spring water of the purest quality is abundantly furnished at headquarters for the area. An excellent trail leads from the picnic area to the summit. This trail is provided with seats at convenient points and contains sixty-five stone steps. It makes accessible to most of our visitors an easy and pleasant way to enjoy the view which has been described.

It is hoped that we may in the future provide more facilities such as playgrounds for the children and sports of various kinds for adults. We have in mind softball, croquet, horseshoes, tennis and baseball as well as swings, slides, teeters and a sand pile for the little tots. Ample room will still be available for an extension of the picnic grounds which is sure to be demanded. On the easterly side of Route 9 there are sixty acres on which we hope to have a one mile Snow Shoe Trail with a proposed Skating Area and a twelve hundred foot Ski Trail on which some work has already been done. This will enable us to furnish a year round program for all to enjoy.

These improvements, of course, depend not only on the generosity of our State Legislature but on the enthusiasm of the various sports' clubs in

the surrounding territory. It would seem that situated as we are within an area that includes in a fifty mile circle, one half of the population of the state, that it is not unreasonable to expect that this cooperation will be manifested.

As to your Ranger, I wish to bid you welcome to the full enjoyment of the facilities now available. I assure you that I shall receive pleasure in your enjoyment of them. I only ask that you will help me by observing the rules suggested by the Park Commission. These rules are not intended to interfere with your enjoyment of your visit here with us. They are established so that all may have an equal part in the pleasure to be found here and to keep them intact for others to enjoy. I will try to be of what service I can to make your visit an enjoyable occasion. I ask your cooperation in return.

Please remember—this is *your* park, if you use it as a proud owner should, you will not only be doing yourself a favor, you will be doing your bit to preserve it for future generations to enjoy. A kindly word spoken to some friend of your visit will be appreciated by your Ranger and by the Park Commission.



A RAMBLING RHYME

By A PARK RANGER

INTRODUCTION

A story I'd tell you in this "Rambling Rhyme",
Of things that happened in olden time,
Part of it history, perhaps part fancy too,
Also I'd tell of a sight that's fair to view,
Tell you of pleasures that the future does hold,
For you and your friends if you'd be so bold,
As to come to the place where Mt. Bradbury holds sway,
And ramble around o'er its summit some day.
I know you will enjoy it and have a good time,
As I am doing, rambling along in this Rambling Rhyme.

I

There is a mountain in Pownal town,
It has a story of no small renown,
How old it is I dare not say,
It's kissed by the sun and the wind each day.
And from its top, the Indian as he danced,
Watched the White Man's slow advance,
The Sailors of old, as they came each day,
Looked at its top as they entered the bay.
And the Settlers so few, with a righteous hope,
Worshipped their God at the top of its slope.
Young Bradbury, so the story is told,
Lost his life on its summit bold.
Over its side a fair maiden did fling
Her faithless lover's diamond ring.
And on the trail that by it wound,
The Cotton family built a cattle pound.
Close by this pound you still can see,
Where the stage coach tavern used to be.

II

People who went to Hallowell town stopped here,
For a good dinner or a cup of cheer.
Jones's Tavern was its name,
But it did not always bear too fair a fame,
For this they tell—that a peddler entered its door one night,
And never saw another day's light.
Here a house was built, I won't say by who,
But it was built about eighteen hundred and two.
That house still stands today,
As you can see if you pass that way.
A mine was opened a few years ago,
To quarry feldspar, quartz and mica too.
This is the story as 'tis told,
Of Bradbury Mountain, gray and old.
This is the story as it was told to me
I write it down so all may see.

III

No more does the dusky Indian's whoop
Ring out from the side of the mountain's slope,
Nor the settler lie awake at night,
Fearing the Redskins' deadly might.
But a feeling of peace over its side does lay
As people come to enjoy each day.
The Government here a park has wrought,
On this beautiful and historic spot.
And folks from city and town around
Gather here on its spacious ground,
And enjoy a picnic or a hike o'er its trail,
For a lovely view over hill and vale.
The forest's green and the ocean's blue
Will stir the hearts of Americans true.
Here in the sun's golden light
A village in miniature appears in sight,
With a church, a hall and schoolhouse two,
All like doll #houses are in view.

IV

Shiloh with its gates of praise,
Toward the sky twin towers raise.
Desert of Maine with its shifting sands,
At another point Westbrook's chimney stands,
The Shipyard's water tank a sentry rears
Its head, below Portland's wharves and piers.
Blackstrap's crest can be seen
Over the forests glistening sheen.
And the winds that over Mt. Washington blow,
Kiss the top of Bradbury too.
And at night Halfway Rock and Elizabeth's Light
Shine forth with all their glory and might.
And airplane beacons wink and glow
As their ships of the sky pass to and fro.
Eagle Island down in Casco Bay,
Where the "Snow Baby" in summer did play.
And scattered over the countryside,
Homes, farms and villages seem to hide,
And peep at your woods and rugged gray side.
Around your cliffs on a rainy day,
Clouds of vapor swing and sway
And make a curtain that hides from the eyes
The cave where the fox and porcupine thrive.
This is the picture that's painted for you,
If you climb to the top as others oft do.
And if the Indian warrior and his bride
Has gone from its top to the sky to hide,
There are other lovers who up its trail do wind,
And on its top true love do find.

V

Here is a view that is fair to all,
It changed its dress as the seasons fall.
White for winter, trimmed with gray,
Changing again on spring's fair day.
In summer dressed in green o'er all,
Most lovely of dresses in the fall.
When nature opens her magic hand
And paints in colors not equaled by man,
Painting in gorgeous shades of red and yellow
The ash, beach, birch, elm, maple, oak and willow,
While scattered over this wonderful scene
Are pine, fir, spruce and hemlock in shades of green.
As you look at the peaceful scene below,
And over the ocean wide and blue,
You too must say, "God's good to Americans true."
For far from this good land of hope and delight,
The Mad Man of Europe rules with Godless might.
So each in his small way may serve
This land of our birthright to preserve.
And here in cool green shady wood,
Let's rest and play as all of us should,
For rest and play will give the heart
To all of us to do our part.

VI

And you will find that pleasure abounds
Here with your friends on the picnic grounds.
A cup of coffee and sandwiches too,
Hamburger or hot dog or what have you.
Well, just cook them over a fire-place,
Gee, Whiz! Ain't that just a lovely taste?
There's a shelter too for a rainy day,
A little rain needn't drive you away.
Wake up! Get hep! Don't you know you are born,
You never had such fun at eve or morn.
Come with your tents or trailers, there's a place for you,
And room to park your auto too.
Eat your fill my friend please do,
Then a hike up the trail is the thing for you.
All this you enjoy for a nickel, dime or quarter,
There's lots of good clear, cold spring water.
With wood for the fire-place only a dime,
Bet your life you'll have a peach of a time.
And when the question arises what to do,
Bradbury Mountain is the place for you.
As you start home to your own cozy nook,
Back over your shoulder take a look,
Old Bradbury will seem to nod its head and say,
You were welcome my friend, come again some day.

The following party visited **Bradbury Mountain State Park** on 19....

Name

Address

Remarks:

Conserve your gas and tires. Visit your State Parks. You will find at least one located within your driving range. Take your family for a day's outing . . . you will find facilities to enjoy that grandest of all occasions . . . a family picnic. Here also are clean camp and trailer sites. You will be greeted by the Park Rangers, who will gladly assist you to enjoy your visit. You may here enjoy a day of clean, healthy, outdoor recreation at a very nominal charge, "*When the question arises what to do . . . your State Park is the place for you.*"