



Canada Lake

The Snyder Letter and the Lake In 1819

The Town of Caroga is favored with lakes that lure the vacationer, and Canada Lake is not only the town's most beautiful, it is one of the prettiest in the entire Adirondacks.

Canada Lake has been endowed with a range of names, but the road survey of 1810, depicted on one of the earliest maps we have, gives the name as "*Canada or Fish Lakes*." The name Fish Lake persisted for a while and the fanciful Auskerada that later developers favored never became fashionable, so Canada Lake it was and is.

One of the earliest written accounts of the lake was made by Henry R. Snyder. Mr. Snyder was well educated, graduating from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1837. All his life he worked as a surveyor and civil engineer, traveling through seventeen states and working in four of them in his forty-year career. He retired to Johnstown and spent his leisure writing papers of either historical or archaeological interest. Many of his works dealt with Indian history, and he was considered an authority on it.

When he was ninety years old, he wrote a description of a trip to Canada Lake that he had made when he was twelve years old. Since he was born in 1807, our history begins with his vivid account of the lake in 1819.

We are indebted to Roscoe H. Sammons of

Johnstown who preserved a copy of the article and made it available for the town history [Rufus Grider includes the same account in his *Canada Lake Album*, pp. 36-40].

AS I SAW IT SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

I am an old man now, have almost reached fourscore and ten, and yet the circumstances connected with the first visit I made to Canada Lake are as vivid to my recollection as they were the day they occurred seventy-five years ago.

There is probably no one living now who had seen it before that time, and its surroundings then gave evidence of having been visited by but very few white men.

I first saw it when a lad of twelve. Three or four years before that time a certain Mr. Jefferson from Dutchess County had located where Wheelerville now stands, cleared several acres of land, built a nice house and barn and erected a grist-mill with two run of stone and a saw-mill. His clearing was under a good state of cultivation and everything around him had the appearance of prosperity. His little homestead was in the midst of a dense forest still in its primitive state that stretched away a hundred miles to the north, and south to the road leading east from the present site of Oathout's Hotel at Caroga Lake.

I had never been further north than the Klipp hill and when Mr. Jefferson, who had often stopped at our house on his way back and forth from town, extended an invitation to father and me to join a fishing excursion to the lake I hailed the offer with all the

enthusiasm of a boy's love of adventure, for it seemed to me a most perilous undertaking to penetrate the Great Wilderness as it was then called.

The road from Johnstown to Clapper Hill as it was then called was good, from thence to Mr. Jefferson's it was bad, and there were only eleven families living upon it, including Mr. Jefferson's. One-third of the distance between Clapper Hill and the lake was skirted on both sides by the primeval forest, and when we reached its end we had reached the end of all roads in that direction.

We were received by our host most courteously. He directed his man to care for our team and then invited us into the house and entertained us while Mrs. Jefferson retired to superintend the preparation for our supper. Then we gathered around the table and after blessing had been asked, Mrs. Jefferson, mother-like came around and helped me bountifully and although I am an old man, I have not forgotten what it means to have a mother. After the repast was finished the older members of the company spent the evening in general conversation upon Dutchess County and the Hudson River while I listened, for in those days children were taught to be seen and not heard, and after arranging the plans for the next day's fishing, we retired. Having finished breakfast, we removed our outfit to a large Hudson River boat, which was moored on the inlet of the lake, and then started for Pine Bluff where we meant to locate our camp. On our way down the inlet nothing worthy of note transpired except the attentions which the mosquitoes and black flies paid to us making our lives almost, for a time, unendurable. As we entered the Lake a breeze springing up drove them away and allowed me to look about. What an enchanting scene met my view! The lake, the mountains and the woods! They were sublime and every time I have been there since I have been reminded of that visit. Walled in on both sides with mountains, each mountain crowned with a majestic peak raised all its surroundings, and each peak so placed as if designed to watch over the lake.

In making the passage we saw many interesting things. Once was the numerous broods of wild ducks. I was much interested in the efforts each mother made to screen her little flock from our view.

The place has always been delightful to me and arouses all the romance of my nature, and as I recall my first view of the island as we hove in sight of it, lying off shore like a man-of-war with its three tall masts and bow up-stream it seems a fitting companion to the sentinels guarding the banks.

As we looked from this spot in a northerly direction through the opening in the forest made by Green

Lake most magnificent scenery meets our view, and as we turn about and look toward the southwest the entire lower end of the lake stretches away before us.

Many of the beauties which I saw at that time have disappeared before the march of civilization. Then the shores had the appearance of retaining all their primitive conditions, not a mark or sign indicating that any human being had ever been there before and one of our company remarked that if he did not know that such was not the case he could easily believe that we were the first white men to dip an oar into the lake.

The confines of the lake itself are the same now as they were when I saw it first but the surrounding forests have changed much. That portion of the woods, which gives a diversified charm to a landscape view of a primitive forest, the pines, spruces, and hemlocks towering above the hard-wood trees is all gone. At the time of my first visit the west, northwest, and north shore from a point near the outlet as far as London Bridge were covered with large tall pine trees and, in fact, all through the forest sloping to the north shore of the lake from the tops of the mountains, these majestic kings of the primeval glades stood in their dignity and grandeur giving the lake an appearance that it does not present to the visitor of to-day. Yet, shorn as it had been, it is beautiful still with its many smaller tributaries, some of them accessible with boats and steamers, like their mother-lake surrounded with the primitive forest down to their water-edge, with their many delightful little coves that are so pleasant to those that lay quiet and repose.

As we passed down the lake the mountains gradually sunk to moderate elevations toward the outlet and we soon reached our camping ground. Although there were no modern improvements such as docks, wharves, and the like, it was one of the prettiest places imaginable and to me experiencing my first outing in the woods, it had a charm that only those who have had a like experience can appreciate.

We lay to against the bank and made a landing. Father and Mr. Jefferson selected the place for the camp and directed the rest in removing the outfit to its shelter. Ere long we had everything snug. Wood cut for our fire, supper cooked and eaten and when darkness at length settled low over the landscape we were ready to fish. Such a catch as we made that night I have never seen equaled since. Father stood in the bow of the boat and with a spear and being an expert marksman, as the great speckled beauties weighing from one to three pounds a piece come toward us, attracted by the fire in our jack, they fell ready victims to his aim. The breakfast we made the

next morning would have graced the table of a King. After a day of tramping and rowing what can give an appetite like an unbroken night's rest under the swaying, sighing, singing limbs of a great forest where the faintest breath wafts to the sleeper the life-giving scent of the pines and balsams, and what can so well appease such an appetite as fresh trout fried to a crisp brown. Pampered appetites ministered into by French chefs, know nothing of the delights of such a meal.

After breakfast we decided that each might spend the day as he liked and we would fish again that night and the day following. I prevailed upon father to explore with me the peninsula lying between West Lake and Canada Lake upon which we were encamped. We went over the larger portion of it and found it covered with pine trees from seventy to ninety feet high and varying in diameter from eighteen inches to four feet at the base. The land on which they grew was a free from underbrush as a park. The breeze blowing across it from lake to lake kept the flies and mosquitoes away and the velvety carpet of pine needles and the soft atmosphere, heavily loaded with the scent of the pine trees, combined to make it a most delightful retreat. To me, as I recall the scene, it seems as if the sad, whispering zephyrs of the early dawn and fading twilight were the voices of the pine trees lifted in lamentation for the children of the woods who once peopled that glade and thronged the shores of the lake, roaming through the forest in search of the Moose. Deer and other game, returning at night to smoke their pipes at the camp-fire and compare with each other the incidents of the chase. Gone are they now forever.

The next night we went fishing again and although the wind blew a little too much we caught a fine mess, all we could take care of. In the morning it was proposed that we explore the outlet of the lake, and as soon as breakfast was disposed of we started. We found the banks of the outlet low on both sides, way through what is now known to the ladies as Lily Lake, but which at that time was called Old Pole Lake and afterwards Little Lake. Leaving the lake and continuing down the outlet the banks remained the same to a point where Stewart's stone dam was built many years afterwards where we met a fishing party from Stone Arabia and the Mohawk. Here they had pitched their camp and although not knowing who they were, father and Mr. Jefferson went ashore to see them. As they stepped from the boat two old men, Mr. Fry and Mr. Walrod advanced to meet them and to his surprise father found that they were acquaintances of his. They come down to where we were waiting and after being introduced to the rest of our party and a spending a few minutes in conversation,

invited us all to go ashore, which gave the youngsters of both parties the opportunity of enjoying each others society.

During a lull in the conversation, father asked Mr. Fry how they got there and he replied that they come up the Old Indian Trail. Father then asked him if there was an Indian trail from the Mohawk River to the lake and the old gentleman made answer by stating where the trail started and describing its course. He said it began where the East Canada Creek empties into the Mohawk and followed that stream up to its intersection with this outlet. Thence up the west side of the outlet, so as to keep on hard ground to the lake. Following the shore of the Lake to Pine Bluff and the outlet of West Lake which it crossed, it then went up the low ground to Pine Lake intersecting the old Caughnawaga and Johnstown trail.

Father then said that Thomas Sammons had told him that that trail went through to the St. Lawrence River. Mr. Walrod replied that Thomas Sammons was right, but that the trail he referred to did not start from Caughnawaga on the turnpike, but from a place of the same name down near the Mohawk River where the Indians and the --- Tories scalped old Mr. Fonda in the time of the Revolutionary War. And here I must leave for time the description of this charming and beautiful lake, which I have known so long and which has afforded me so much pleasure and comfort hoping that in the future others may visit this locality that has so many of nature's charms in all of its surroundings. Its present modernized aspects, with its hotels and the many pretty cottages that line its banks, the beautiful little steamers with their whistles that echo from shore to shore and through the surrounding forests, give a pleasant and cheerful sensation when contrasted with the solitude that surrounded this charming lake the first time I saw it seventy-five years ago.

At some future time, I propose to take up the course of those old Indian Trails I have spoken of and follow them to Canada.

Henry R. Snyder

The next description of Canada Lake is a newspaper account preserved by Jephtha R. Simms [*Trappers of New York*, pp. 167-169]. This story of the wild lake predates the hotel by less than twenty-five years.

An anonymous writer in the Geneva Courier over the signature of Harold, has thus pertinently described this sheet of water and its locality, in that paper, bearing date, Oct. 28, 1845. "Two and a half miles from Caroga [Garoga must be the aboriginal word]

is a larger lake, about four miles in length, to which I gave the name of Lake Byrn. It takes exactly the form of the letter S. I think this is the most romantic spot I ever visited. The surface of the ground rising back from the shore, is covered with large irregularly shaped rocks, from five to forty feet in diameter, lying entirely above ground, and often tumbling together in mountain masses, lodged and wedged in like drift-wood. Many of these rocks are riven asunder and the base of each portion thrown outward from the line of separation., the superior parts resting against each other, thus forming apartments with a solid stone roof large enough to shelter a dozen or twenty men. This I think must have been the work of fire. Strange as it may seem, all this is in quite a dense forest, and almost infinite are the shapes taken by the trees in their turnings and twistings to avoid the numerous rocks. In some instances the roots of a single tree have grown astride a huge rock, the base of the trunk resting on its apex, six or eight feet from the ground. The appearance is the same as if the rock were forced up from the ground beneath, elevating the tree with it, but not a particle of earth attaches to either; and these are all living, healthy trees. It is in this neighborhood that tradition says large sums of money were buried by certain Spaniards, in the time of the American Revolution; but 'it's sure never a bate o' it did I find at all, at all!" So said a hard-fisted son of

Erin, relating the story. Near the centre of Lake Byrn, is a small rocky island, covered with evergreens, birch and flowering shrubs," This island, the reader will remember, I have named Stoner's island. The writer above quoted called on Major Stoner, at the time of his visit, and his Chips of Travel contained a brief summary of the old warrior's military life."

Two Nineteenth Century Painters Who Enjoyed the Lakes

Two well known artists of the nineteenth century found views in the Town of Caroga attractive enough to paint.

Rufus Alex Grider was an art teacher whose avocation was the sketching and painting of historical monuments. His sketch books in the New York State Library in Albany contain an accurate record of old homes and monuments in the Mohawk, Schoharie, and Cherry Valleys.

Grider was born in Pennsylvania in 1817 and he spent more than thirty years teaching in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He moved to Canojoharie after 1875 to teach in the public schools there. He became fascinated with local history and began his sketching, which he pursued continuously after he retired from teaching in 1883



Rufus Grider sketch of Nick Stoner Island and fishing hut at Canada Lake.

until his death in 1900. He was not known as a great artist, but as a careful and exacting student of history. His is the most important collection of central New York pictorial history in existence.

In addition to the nine volumes of sketches and watercolors, his series of sketches of antique powder horns is also in the library. He visited and sketched in the vicinity of Lakes George and Champlain, and made several trips into Adirondack Mountain regions. On these trips, he sketched some of the old haunts of Nick Stoner in Hamilton County as well as Stoner Island at Canada Lake. His two sketches of Caroga Lake were made before 1897 and one bears the inscription, *"Lake Caroga from the Public Road on the right, Sherman's Boarding House is seen in the center, on the left the public road is here seen leading up to the Tavern. Several miles to the left of that town another called Canada Lake is situated which pictures will follow. Nick Stoner was digging the cellar for a house for a home he intended building at or near Sherman's on the bank of the lake when he surrendered to Death."* (It seems as if everyone contributed to the lore of Nick Stoner!) Grider's painting do contribute to the

visual history of the town, but because of their poor condition were not available for copying.

George Washington Waters was born in Coventry, Chenango County, in 1832. He studied art in New York City and in Dresden and Munich in Germany. He was the head of the Art Department at Elmira College for 32 years and died there in 1912. While many of his landscapes were of the Chemung County area, he often painted Adirondack scenes.

His works were exhibited at galleries in New York City and he is noted for his portraits, including those of Walt Whitman. His landscapes typify the romantic period of the lake nineteenth century. They resemble those of Hudson River School painters, academic, formal oils, with a sense of exaggerated natural features that almost brings independent life to the rocks and trees. In his painting of the Camel Hump, that mountain, though recognizable, is depicted from an impossible angle that increases its height. This was the way he and his contemporaries saw their surroundings and it is historically fortunate that scenes in the the town have been recorded in their style.



Drawing by George Washington Waters



Renderings by George Washington Waters



The First Summer Residents

The building of the road along the north shore in the 1840's offered new opportunities to reach the lake. In 1853, the first home was built on the lake by Josiah Durey. It was just west of London Bridge, on the north shore, and it stood until the twentieth century.

The next structure was the Claflin financed Hotel, the Canada Lake House, or Lake View House as it was sometimes called, and it was completed in 1868.

It was several years before there were permanent summer homes along the shores, but many temporary structures appeared throughout the seventies. These were mostly located in West Lake and ranged from tent platforms to rude shacks. If it were not for a collection of stereopticon pictures provided by Nellie Tyrell, we would know nothing of these earliest summer people, for almost no written records exist.

Two brothers, Frances Hunt and George Trowbridge Copeland, summered there regularly up to 1885. Francis had a furniture factory in Beecher Hollow, Edinburgh, New York, which made chair rungs, beds, and coffins. He opened a store on North Main Street in Gloversville that was both a furniture store and an undertaking

business. His brother, G.T., was a photographer and recorded their summers at Canada Lake. Nellie Tyrell is George's granddaughter.

The Copeland's owned a wood burning steamer, probably the lake's first, which was called the Water Lily and which conveyed them from the hotel dock to the wilds of West Lake. As the accompanying picture story illustrates, the boat also hauled barges of lumber for their camps as well as baggage and guests.



G.T.Copeland's steamer, the Water Lily.



A rare early picture of Nick Stoner Island shows the steamer Water Lily and the roof of a cabin on the island.

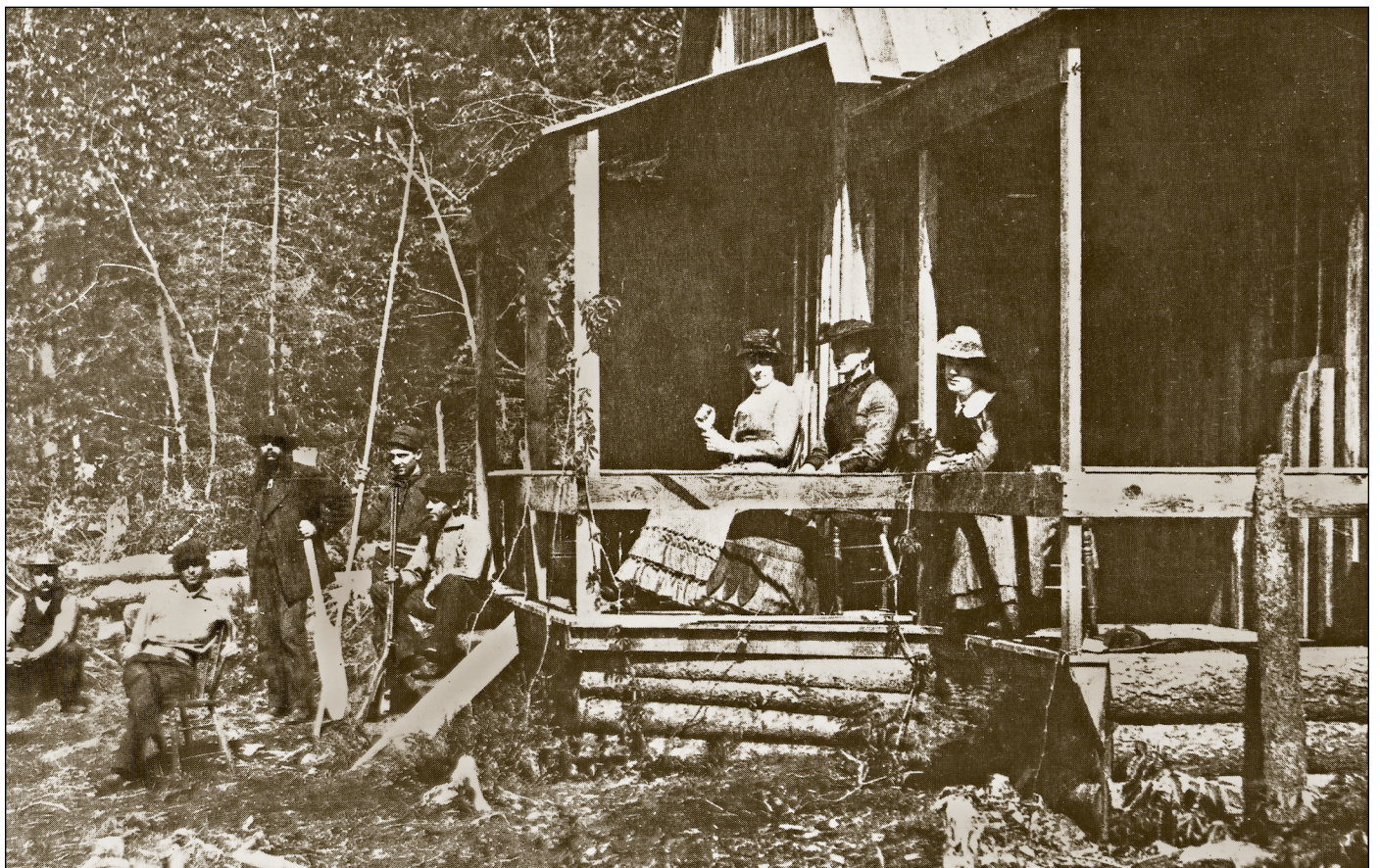
Among the families whose outings he recorded were the Churchills, the Hansons, and the Huckmans. One family group located at Strobeck Rock on West Lake and another called their camp *Saint's Retreat*.

The view on the right is Copeland's landing. G.T. Copeland turned his camp on West Lake into a photographic studio from the 1870's up to about 1883. He took all of the photographs on these pages, showing scenes around the lake and his neighbors on the shores of West Lake. The pictures were made into Stereoptican slides which sold for \$2.00 a dozen, 25 cents apiece.





The Churchill's were neighbors of the Copeland's, and their camp—below—was one of the first on West Lake.





The Huckman's camp was typical of the early West Lake tenters.



On the Mountain—roughing it in the 1870's. This group called their camp, Saints' Retreat.



Strobeck Rock on West Lake—a favorite camping spot in the 1860's.

When William Claflin acquired all of Great Lots 59, 60, 65, and 66 as well as part of Lots 52 and 53 of the Glen, Bleecker, and Lansing Patent, he owned the entire shoreline of Canada Lake. There were few buildings on the lake and his hotel was in a unique position to provide a restful vacation, or as one of the first visitors to the hotel described his visit: *"The fatigue which labor lays upon the shoulders and hangs like a clog upon the feet of the inhabitant of city and village, is exchanged gradually for the exuberance and freshness of nature. The air, laden with the scent of the spruce and the pine, gives renewed health and appetite to the artificial and machine like toilers of streets and villages. To row the wife and children to a romantic island out in the lake where fish are said to be abundant was so pleasant an experience that we predict that when the Canada Lake House is better known, it will have an abundance of guests and it will become a very popular place of resort for health and relaxation."*

Mr. Claflin began to subdivide and sell water-

front properties around the lake. On May 17, 1887, Lee Claflin wrote to the company's lawyer in Johnstown, *"We cannot sell the point to Mr. Decker for less than \$200. He cannot want it bad if he is not willing to pay that for one of the best locations."* Mr. Decker finally agreed to take a lot on the terms named, in the spring of 1890, the Claflins again wrote their lawyers, J.M. and H. Dudley.

Gentlemen:

Yours of May 10 is received.

We had given Mr. Decker the refusal of the lot on each side of him and lot #30 was one of them.

We wrote Mr. Decker on the receipt of your letter, and he has written us in answer that he will take the two lots at our price. #30 and #32.

There are plenty of other good lots and tell Mr. Ferres select another if he will.

Our price for lots on that shore are now \$200, back to the road with the regular reservations in the deed. Those who buy now get the selection.

Yours truly. Please send state papers.

L.C. Claflin



J.H. Decker's Silver Springs Cottage and boat house.

J.H. Decker was one of Johnstown's wealthier gentlemen, having founded one of the principal concerns engaged in the manufacture of gloves, in 1875. He employed over 250 people and there was great demand for his products because of the high quality of his goods.

When he purchased the Canada Lake land from William and Mary B. Claflin, there were several restrictions on the property which were typical of all the Claflin deeds. It specified that a house should be built *"to cost at least \$400 and be covered with a coat of paint."* The building should take place within a certain specified time or the property would revert to the original owners. Under no condition could he deal in alcoholic beverages, wines, liquors, ale, or beer.

In addition to erecting a large summer house, Mr. Decker built a windmill and a barn for horses. His large boat house and pavilion sheltered a steamer.

Mr. Decker owned the summer house until he died, when the property was willed to his daughter, Mrs. Louella D. Mosher. She deeded it to her brother in 1927 and he in turn sold it to Parkin T. Snowden. Finally, the Henry Steubers bought it

in 1955, and own it still.

For years the camp bore the name, *Silver Spring Cottage*, because of the property's spring for which access was supposed to be given to neighbors. Mrs. Snowden was an aunt of Ruth Googins, Elliot Roosevelt's second wife. The Elliot Roosevelts spent several weeks visiting at the cottage sometime after 1932.

Mr. Decker built a second cottage, the present Loveday camp, on the North Shore. That land was purchased from Albert N. Simmons, a lawyer. Simmons, with his partner, J. Fitch Van Ness, bought land from the Claflins along the north shore, immediately west of the hotel, which Van Ness rebuilt in 1892 and 1893. The two men sold many lots on that shore. A few cottages were built there before 1890, but the years between 1890 and 1894 saw the construction of the large wooded camps that still stand so prominently near the water. James Hull built the cottage later owned by Helen Bushby and still later by the O'Dells. Helen Bushby liked to sail and had trouble with the winds around the island, necessitating many rescue operations. With the cumbersome sailing garb of the day, it is no wonder these rescues are remembered.

The Claflins sold several lots along the south shore, one of which was the Northup lot which was purchased in 1892. M.L. Northrup of Johnstown began construction of a summer home that year.

The Presbyterian Church of Johnstown built a summer home for its ministers in 1890 on land on the south shore which also had been purchased from the Claflins.

As the next two letters show, the company maintained an interest in the new resort. Perhaps it was the fact that the lumber companies had built all the roads and continued to contribute to their repair which kept the town's taxes relatively low throughout the nineties.

July 31, 1889
Boston, Massachusetts

To J.M. and H. Dudley from Lee Claflin

We are writing to relinquish our claim for the road to Caroga through the woods, and have written M.L. Northrup to that effect.

We have written him to call and have you make out the necessary papers to relinquish the rights we now have to the Town of Johnstown, provided the town will keep it in order.

signed, Lee Claflin

May 10, 1890

J.M. and H. Dudley from Lee Claflin

We have decided not to sign the documents you sent us. We are willing the plank road through the woods should be made public.

We have a few planks which have been in use on a bridge, some 3000 feet in good condition which we will contribute towards the fixing up the road should Mr. Northrup and friends repair the same.

I told Mr. Bona to let them have the planks [Mr. Bona was a postmaster at Wheelerville.]

It appears as if this obvious reference to the roads along the south shore of Canada Lake means that Fulton Road was once a plank road.

Between thirty and forty lots were sold around the lake in just a year or two. Then, for some unknown reason, the Claflins wrote their lawyer in August of 1892 saying, *"We do not care to sell any more cottage lots for the present, so cannot do anything for Mr. Gage until a future time."* It is possible the Claflins were already trying to sell all the land they owned in the Town to one buyer.

The Fulton House

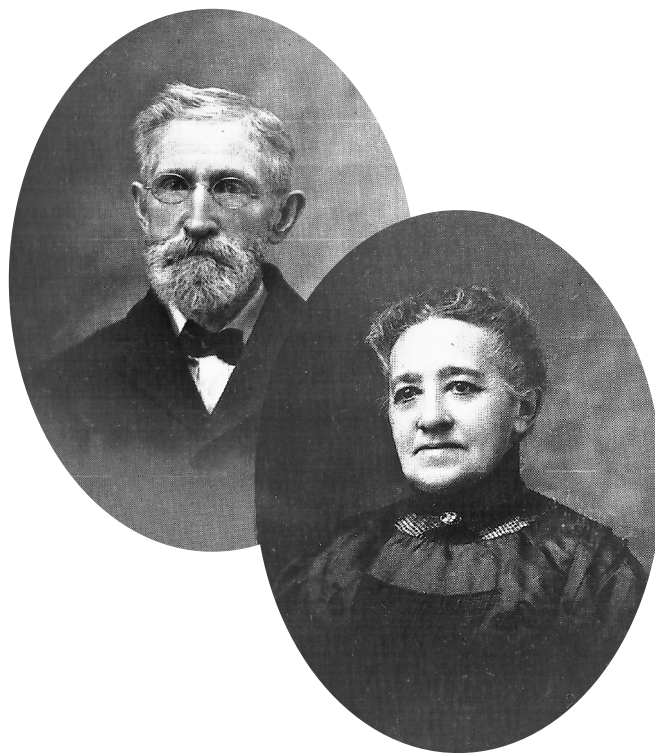
Construction of the second hotel at Canada Lake was begun by James Y. Fulton in 1888. His great-granddaughter, Priscilla Fulton Jung is a summer resident of the lake and she had provided most of this account of the hotel and many of the pictures.

James Y. Fulton had been a printer, a drug store clerk, a marble cutter, a monument maker, and justice of the peace before attempting the resort business. He built the hotel in the southeast corner of the lake, and construction appears to have been carried on in several stages. Lumber was inexpensive, and the Claflins had a part in the construction of the hotel as this letter of March 17, 1888 shows.

To J.M. and H. Dudley, from Lee Claflin and Son.

We wrote to Mr. Fulton making him what we think a liberal offer as follows. Lot #51 for \$150 to be paid for when the deed is ready for delivery, and #52 for \$150 to be paid for and the deed delivered on June 1st, 1890. If he will construct a good house of thirty rooms, the same to meet our approval we will contribute 10,000 feet of lumber. We think he cannot find much fault with this.

He doubtless will show you the letter. Your last letter was more favorable and we were induced to make him the above offer.



James Y. and Lucinda Fulton



These two small pictures were taken before the Fulton House was built. The one on the right shows the Fulton Cottage which became a part of the hotel and seen to the right of the Fulton House pictured below.





Fulton's Canada Lake House

There were two large separate buildings with porches across the front of each which were connected. To the west was built a smaller two story building called the "cottage," which was attached by a short enclosure. The first floor front of the easternmost building was almost entirely glass, its doors and floor to ceiling windows affording a good view of the lake. Later a third building, four stories high was added. This had dormer windows on the top floor and a large tower on the far end. The tower held a large tank into which water was pumped to provide a gravity system for laundry, bathing and toilet facilities. Two wells at the rear of the hotel provided water for cooking and drinking. Later, matching dormers were added to the original structures.

Separate buildings in back of the hotel included an ice house and laundry shed containing two hand cranked washing machines used for hotel linens.

Beside the hotel were the boat houses. The old boat slip, where the larger boats were hauled out for winter storage, is still visible. Behind the boat-houses there was a large barn and livery stable where the hotel horses and Fulton's Stage were kept. Some of the summer residents at the lake also

kept their horses and carriages there. Mr. Fulton's stage was drawn by four horses and brought guests from Johnstown. At Clip Hill, women and children could ride, but men had to walk.

Many day guests and summer residents at the lake came for meals, especially for the Saturday night supper of pork chops, baked beans, and brown bread or Sunday dinner with chicken pie which sold for 50 cents.

Mrs. James Y. Fulton (Lucinda Ruport) issued the orders for hotel service and was *"a strict, but lovely woman; a hardworking lady who got up at 4:00 AM to bake pies and other goodies. She did most of the cooking."* According to Walter Osborne who worked at the hotel from 1896 to 1905.

Kerosene lamps provided the night lighting. A telephone switchboard was installed before 1910 and Mrs. Margaret (Carroll) Gifford was sent to the *Fulton House* and to many other Adirondack Resorts to give instruction on the use of the new telephone service.

The feature attraction of the hotel was the variety of boats it offered. Guests could make arrangements with James Y's son, Francis Fulton, the captain of the *Kanaughta*, to hire row boats



Interior of the porches at Fulton's Canada Lake House

which he towed to picnic sites in West Lake or along the steamer route to Stewart's landing. Picnic lunches were packed by the hotel kitchen. In addition to the steamer *Kanaughta*, the hotel had another steamer, the *Clermont*, three sailboats, several canoes, and a fleet of round bottom row boats.

When not boating, guests remember, picking cranberries in the huge bog behind the beach.

There was a large parlor on the main floor and the hotel offices were located nearby. The dining room could seat about a hundred and fifty people at six long rectangular tables, with twelve to fourteen on a side.

Marguerite Dean of Johnstown remembers with fondness the trip to Fulton's Hotel. She said it "played a big part in my life. After a long ride, four hours at least, in our four seater with two horses, we would arrive at Fulton's about lunch time. I remember Mr. Fulton used to insist on men wearing coats in the dining room. So, if a man without a coat started to enter, he'd be stopped and Mr. Fulton would rent him a black (duster like) coat for 10 cents. The meals were plain but excellent. The "Auskerada" was off limits to

us –liquor was sold there, but not at Fulton's." (The deed selling the lots on which the Fulton House stood restricted the sale of all liquor.)



CANADA LAKE HOUSE,

JAMES Y. FULTON, Proprietor.

CANADA LAKE, FULTON COUNTY, N. Y.

In the Adirondacks, Northern part of Fulton Co. A beautiful Summer Resort in the Mountains on the south side of East Canada Lake, into which empties thirteen different lakes.

Entirely Free from Hay Fever.



How to get to this beautiful spot among the Hills, Mountains, Sparkling Streams and Lakes of the Adirondacks: Leave the N. Y. C. R. R. at Fonda, take trolley to Johnstown from which place our wagons start, or go to Gloversville from whence good comfortable carriages or stage can be procured which will bring you to our house by 12:00 M. or 6:00 P. M.

Auto Stages Connect at Electric Station in Johnstown at about 11 A. M. and 4 P. M. except Sundays
Choice Table. Best Accommodation Fishing, Sailing and Canoeing. Daily Stage and Mail



TERMS

Board and lodging per day, \$1.50; Children under 15 years, \$1.00.

Lodging and breakfast, 75 cents.

Supper, lodging and breakfast, \$1.10.

Single meals, 50 cents.

Board and lodging, five days or more, \$1.00 per day.

Children under 12 years, \$4.50 per week.

Special rates to families.

Regular meals to Cottagers 30 cents; their children under 15 years, 25 cents per meal.

Exclusive use of either rooms No. 1, 3, 5, 8, 9 and 11, by one or two persons, \$8.00 to \$9.00 per week, including board and use of boat.

BOAT HIRE

Use of Boat one day 50 cents. Per hour 10 cents.

Use of extra pair of oars 10 cents, to all.

Sailboat "Naomi," with captain, 50 cents per hour.

Sailboat "Lou," 10 cents per hour.

Regular Boarders may have the use of boat with one pair of oars two hours per day, and for extra hours 10 cents per hour. Boats by the day 25 cents.

POOL AND BILLIARDS

Pool per game, 5 cents per cue. Billiards, 35 points, 15 cents.



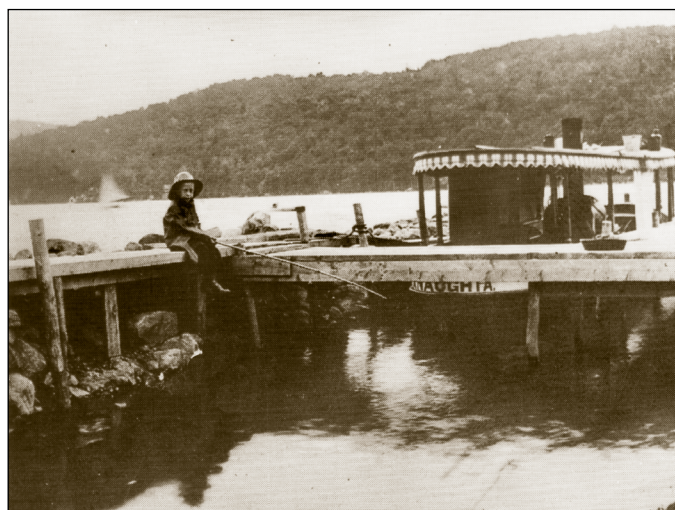
The dock at Fulton's

For twenty-six years, Fulton's *Canada Lake House* entertained many of the residents of the lake and guests from as far as New York City. Stories of events at the hotel will play a large part in the remembrances of happenings at the lake, and will be told as they occurred. Like all the other hotels at the lake, the *Fulton House* burned. As Helen Ireland Hays remembers the night of October 12, 1914.

"Uncle Harry, Harold B. Northrup, and his daughter, Margaret, who is now Mrs. William Van Voast, and my father, James S. Ireland, and I spent a fall weekend at our cottage on Canada Lake. The cottage is now owned by Don Clark.

"In the middle of the night, we all looked out across the lake and were terrified at what we saw. Fulton's Hotel was in flames! As I remember, there wasn't a suggestion of structure or building, only gigantic, leaping flames where the hotel should have been. The roar and crackle of that conflagration came all the way across the lake. In fact, those sounds may have been what wakened us.

"Today, in my memory, I can see those slashing flames, thrusting and piercing the blackness of the night sky, just as clearly as I saw them then."



Everyone was so busy with the hotel fire that no one remembered the steamers on the shore. They, too, were burned. By 1914, the automobile was used for travel to the lake, and several cars were in the hotel garage, but they were rescued. They belonged to Jim Green, Ed Sliter, and Dr. Harry Thomson.

As the newspaper account relates, the Fultons had already left the hotel business, and within seven years the era of hotels at Canada Lake would be over.

Nothing remained but the stone chimneys and fireplaces. The Engels bought part of the property and later built their cottage around the original fireplace which was in the Fulton House clubhouse. Today that is all that remains of the once lovely hotel.



THE MORNING HERALD

October 12, 1914

Large Hostelry at Canada Lake wiped out
by Flames Early this morning
Guests escaped in safety

A telephone message to the Morning Herald at midnight from Canada Lake stated that fire had broken out in the Fulton House and the main part of the building was burning briskly. It was stated that there was but little chance of saving any part of the structure.

The hotel is one of the oldest and best known in the lower Adirondacks. It was under the management of James Y. Fulton of Johnstown for twenty-six years. Mr. Fulton retired from the management in September, when the property was sold to a syndicate of Johnstown and Gloversville people. Attorney

David Demarest of Gloversville has been in charge of the place since Mr. Fulton's retirement. Wilbur Thorne, a well-known hotel man, is interested in the place and, according to previous announcements, was to be in charge next season.

The main structure of the building was of wood, three stories in height and there were several outbuildings. The office, dining room, and dance hall was on the first floor, the other section being used for sleeping rooms. The entire building has been refurnished since the change of management.

Later communication with the Auskerada hotel, on the opposite shore of the lake, gave information that the building was still burning with little or no chance to save any part of it, and that the fire had communicated to the barns and outbuildings and that all the buildings would be burned to the ground.

A wind blowing toward the lake had saved the fire from spreading into the trees and toward the cottages along that shore. Should the wind shift during the night considerable alarm was felt for the safety of a large area of that side of the lake.

There were several guests at the hotel, some of whom had retired for the night, but so far as could be learned this morning all were able to get out in time and were

taken to the Vrooman hotel at Caroga Lake.

A later message verified the report that all guests were out of the hotel and safe at Vrooman's in Caroga Lake.



The Auskerada

For eight years after the first *Canada Lake House* burned in 1884 there was no hotel on the north shore of Canada Lake. A rare picture and a newspaper account of May 11, 1892, best describe J. Fitch Van Ness' constructions of the new hotel.

On March 9, 1893, the *Fulton County Republican* announced the name of the new hotel; and on June 8, 1893 the new hotel was "now open for the reception of visitors."

THE AUSKERADA NEW HOTEL TO BE BUILT

This is the Name by Which the New Hotel
at Canada Lake will be Known

The old site of the Canada Lake House which was destroyed by fire several years ago will be used for a new structure, a large hotel and barn. The hotel will be four stories in height above the basement and 150 ft. long. There will be 100 rooms, neatly furnished and supplied with all modern improvements. A large barn adjacent to the hotel will be built 200 ft. in length. Ice houses, a boathouse, shooting gallery, billiard room, and all accessories will be provided.

Ground was broken today and the owners expect to have it completed and furnished for the season of 1893. The old bowling alley which was saved from the fire will be used as a restaurant during the coming season.

Some time ago the *REPUBLICAN* announced that the projectors of the elegant new hotel at Canada lake had decided upon a name for the hotel, which

would be known as the "Inlet house," but a careful research into past history and legendary lore surrounding the locality has resulted in the displacing of the modern sounding title, and the permanent adoption of "The Auskerada" as the name by which the hotel will be known to the seeker after rest and recreation in the mountain wilderness. This title is one of graceful sound and pleasing utterance, and is derived from the name of the lake itself, which in days of yore was called Auskerada lake by the Indians, the term signifying "Many Fishes." The change is certainly a very happy one and seems to fit in much more gracefully than the one first proposed.

The hotel has now reached that point of progress where plastering of the upper stories, the painting and the plumbing will make it complete, and the new landlord and landlady, Mr. and Mrs. Finch, will be duly installed in their new positions April 1st. The furniture for the hotel has already been ordered and is now on the way.

LIGHTED BY ELECTRICITY

Among the plans not generally discussed, the management of the new hotel are seriously considering the feasibility of lighting the structure by electricity. Negotiations are now in progress with the Gloversville electric company, involving the purchase of a boiler and engine, and the plan is believed to be thoroughly practicable. In case it matures favorably, as is now believed, the building will be heated with steam throughout and the power from the boiler and engine will be utilized for the manufacture of electricity for lighting purposes right on the premises.

The projectors of "The Auskerada" are confident that there is a highly successful future in store for it.

The hotel was an elegant structure with the verandas on two floors. These surrounded three sides of the hotel and provided a gracious place to sit and rock and enjoy the lake air. Almost the entire first floor was filled with the large dining room.

There was a huge parlor on the second floor and a dance hall was also located on that floor. One bathroom on each of the top three floors held the guest accommodations.

A very long wooded bar was located on the lower level and the bar rail was supported by brackets in the shape of griffin.

A stage ran between the *Auskerada* and the *Palmer House* in Gloversville, with the stage driver, Mr. Busquet, driving down from the lake each morning and back again the the afternoon. For many years he lived in the hollow a quarter of a mile east of the five corners.

A post office was located on the second floor, and the official address was Auskerada, New York. J. Fitch Van Ness became the postmaster in 1896, followed in 1902 by Felix Kiernan, and in 1904 by Francis R. Fulton.



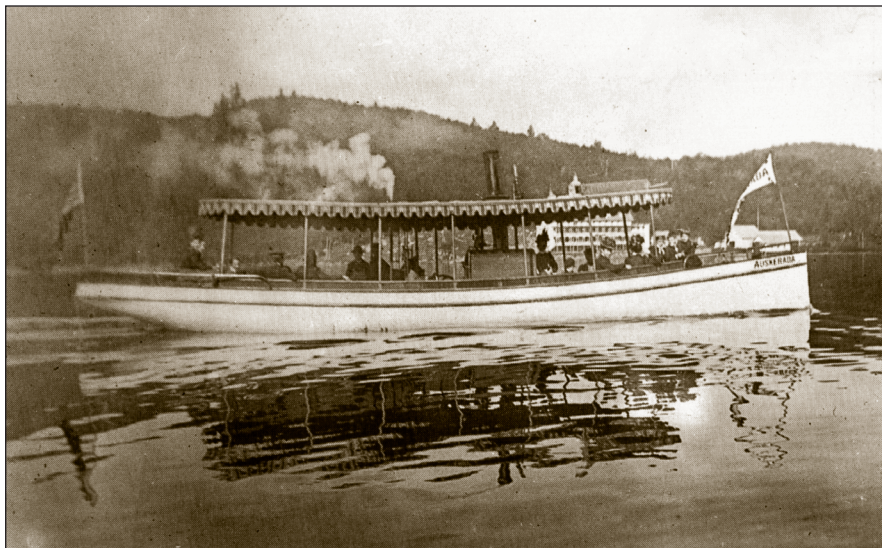
A Griffin from the bar rail at the Auskerada.



Postcard of the Auskerada Hotel, ca. 1910.

In April of 1895, J. Fitch Van Ness still owned the hotel, and, according to a mortgage filed by the Town Clerk, Nelson H. Anibal had lent Van Ness \$1,200 toward that purchase. A later map shows that Anibal had become the owner by 1905. After that there was confusing series of owners; the hotel business was as risky as ever.

An advertising brochure of 1909 and 1910, when David Smith was manager, certainly makes staying at the *Auskerada* sound romantic enough. Its pages are reproduced.



The Auskerada Hotel, Canada Lake, N. Y.



AUSKERADA HOTEL

Stands at the head of the Lake –an ideal location with magnificent outlook, broad piazzas and everything necessary to make this resort homelike and cheery. Here you have all the advantages of the mountains, lakes and forests –and yet only eight hours from New York City, and twelve miles from the cities of Gloversville and Johnstown. The ideal combination of isolation and accessibility. A place where you can paddle, sail, swim, motor, ride, hunt, fish, or just be lazy as the mood strikes you.

Patrons are assured of an excellent table and good service.

Rates: \$10.50 to \$14.00 Per Week.

THE INLET

A honeymoon trip to the mountains is ideal. The inlet is a quiet retreat and inexpressibly sublime.

Here we have a high altitude, undoubted climatic advantages. Just the place if you are looking for the chain of conditions for health are unsurpassed. You can leave the hotel after lunch, busy yourself in the primeval forest, alone with nature, and walk or row back in time for dinner. The Auskerada possesses the natural advantage of facing the south, rooms are well lighted and airy, always commanding a breeze from the lake, and a magnificent view.





LONDON BRIDGE

The lake is sixteen hundred and fifty feet above tide water in the most southerly spur of the Adirondacks. The largest of clusters of fifteen lakes within a radius of six miles, all of which are nestled among mountains of virgin wilderness, the haunt of fish and deer, and all accessible by carriage road, boat, or trail. There is no prettier sheet of water in the whole Adirondack region than Canada Lake.

Each succeeding year city people find the most potential tonic for wrecked nerves among the lakes and mountains, and a month or two spent here each summer carries with it a longer lease on life.

THE OUTLET

Few things are more delightful than floating here in row boat or canoe away from the heat of a summer day, gathering pond lilies or listening to the call of the birds. Here is the retreat of the hermit thrush. The launch or steamer carry passengers through this channel to Stewart's Dam, a distance of nine miles, where conveyances can be procured for Dolgeville, making a trip to Little Falls, most picturesque and beautiful from start to finish. As the channel curves from side to side the effect of the reflected shadows is beyond the power of pencil to describe.



SUNSET ON THE LAKE

"The sunsets and sun risings
Wholesomely vie
In decking with splendor
The over-arched sky;
The twilight, amazed,
Is now blinking in glee
At her own mirrored self
In the clouds we can see,
While the Lake tranquil lies
'Neath the overhung hues
In tilled admiration
Unwitting the ruse."



*The Auskerada was open in the winter.
The page from the guest book shows that Jas. S. Ireland and horse were registered in 1906.*

AUSKERADA HOTEL			
J. F. VAN NESS, Manager, Auskerada, N. Y.			
Money, Jewelry and Valuables must be placed in the Safe in the Office, otherwise the Proprietor will not be responsible.			
Friday, August 17, 1906.		TIME	ROOM
Charles W. Northrup	Johnstown, N. Y.	S	
Alfred F. Case		S	
Saturday, August 18, 1906.		ROOMS	REMARKS
James Keagle		D	✓
Mrs. James Keagle		D	✓
Miss Grace Wells Keagle	Johnstown, N.Y.	A	✓
Miss Florence Keagle		D	✓
Mr. & Mrs. C. F. Fisher	Groversville, N.Y.	P	✓
daughter		D	✓
Miss Josie Pomeroy	Mt Vernon, N.Y.	D	✓
Mrs. and Mrs. C. M. Brewster	Troy, N.Y.	D	✓
Roscoe C. Veck	Red Bank	S	✓
Geo. E. Cummings	Johnstown	S	✓
A. E. Smith	My City	S	✓
Mr. & Mrs. Kealey	Elkburg, N.Y.	S	✓
James S. Ireland (horse)		S	✓
Alfred F. Case	Pine Tree Lodge	S	✓
Mocha Driving Co.		S	✓

May 24, 1906 NAME IS CHANGED

Postoffice at Canada Lake no longer
"Auskerada"

Postmaster Frances Fulton, of Canada Lake, has received official notice from the postal department at Washington that the name of the postoffice at that resort has been changed from "Auskerada" to "Canada Lake." For a long time an effort has been made to have the name of the postoffice changed in order to save many complications which have heretofore arisen in getting mail. Through the efforts of Congressman Littauer that change has been accomplished and he has not only won the thanks of the residents of that vicinity but many of this city and Gloversville. The postoffice is located at Fulton's Canada Lake House, and Postmaster Frances Fulton is in charge.

So, in 1906, Francis Fulton became postmaster of the Canada Lake post office. He was succeeded in 1908 by William Kochgrabe and in 1912 by James H. Chase. In 1913, the post office name was changed again, this time to Green Lake.



The bus belonged to the Gloversville Auto Stage Company and made scheduled trips to the Auskerada. The postcard photo below was taken shortly before the hotel burned.

The cuisine is under the supervision of a competent city chef who is in daily communication with markets of Gloversville, one of the best supply cities of the State. Here you have all the advantages of the mountains, lakes and forest—and yet only eight hours from New York City and twelve miles from the thriving and prosperous cities of Gloversville and Johnstown.

RATES: From \$2.00 to \$3.00 per day, and from \$9.00 to \$14.00 per week.

How to Get Here



OUR nearest railway station is Gloversville. Every train on the New York Central, which stops at Fonda, is met by a train of the Fonda, Johnstown & Gloversville Railroad—either steam or electric, or both. The cities of Gloversville and Schenectady are connected by the finest equipped trolley line in the United States, cars leaving either city every thirty minutes. At Gloversville, stages run every day, and livery conveniences can be obtained at very reasonable rates. Distance from Gloversville, twelve miles—a ride of two hours through a beautiful country picturesque with nature's adornment.

For further information address

FRANK MORRIS, MGR.,
Auskerada, Fulton Co., N. Y.

OR
N. H. ANIBAL,
Gloversville, N. Y.



ALLEN INN AT CANADA LAKE, N. Y.

James M. Strong and Fred A. Cook bought the hotel in 1916. The last owner was Frank Kathan, whose wife was Ruth Allen. Kathan changed the name of the hotel to the *Allen Inn* and he was the owner when it burned.

Allen Inn at Canada Lake destroyed by Fire

April 23, 1921

A fire of unknown origin which broke out Saturday night about 11 o'clock totally destroyed the Allen Inn

with a loss of about \$25,000. Frank Kathan, husband of Ruth Allen, the owner was at loss to say how the fire originated. For the past several weeks workmen had been busy about the place in preparation for opening the hotel next week. On Saturday they had been removing flooring in the former bar room of the hotel and what wood was not available for further use was thrown into the fire which had been started in the fireplace in that room and it is said that the flames might have started from some sparks from this fireplace.

The Dam at Stewart's Landing

Stewart's Landing lies in the Town of Stratford but its story really belongs with the history of the Town of Caroga. From the earliest days, travelers from the west could reach Canada Lake by following its outlet upstream. When a dam was built at Stewart's Landing, nearly four extra miles of Sprite Creek became navigable, substantially cutting the length of the trip to the lake.

The dam at Stewart's Landing not only changed the water level at Canada Lake, it changed the way of life on the lake. Steamers had appeared on the lake in the 1880's, but when the dam was built in the late 1890's, the long steamer excursion became one of the southern Adirondacks most exciting adventures.

It is almost three miles from the hotels at the eastern end of Canada Lake to the outlet at Lily Lake. A cruise around the lake into West Canada Lake is nearly nine miles long, but the trip to Stewart's Landing offers an excursion of nearly fourteen miles round trip.

A small dam preceded the dam built by Alfred Dolge in 1897. From the time of the earliest sales

of camp sites by William Claflin, the deeds relinquished to the sellers the right "to raise the water in the lake known as East Canada, not to exceed six feet, perpendicular, above the present high water mark."



Above, the mill at Stewart's Landing. Below, the 1897 dam at Stewart's Landing and the saw mills.



The construction of the first large dam did not solve all the residents' problems, for so much water was drawn for power that it caused the lakes "to become unnaturally low in the summer season to the injury and annoyance of" James Y. Fulton and many summer people. The solution



*Above, the outlet of Green Lake into Canada Lake when the 1912 dam was under construction.
Below, rowing up the outlet from Stewart's Landing in the 1880's.*

was a new dam, erected by the power company at the urging of Cyrus Durey and the Durey Land and Lumber Company, in 1912 and 1913.

Niagara Mohawk Power Company maintained the dam for many years, using the water power from Canada Lake to produce electricity. However, like many other small dams throughout the state, the dam at Stewart's Landing was no longer needed as a power source. Its threatened abandonment, its importance for maintaining water levels for summer residents, and unpaid county taxes on the dam resulted in such a problem that the only solution seemed for the state to take control of the dam. Through the efforts of the Canada Lakes Protective Association three bills were put before the state legislature. Assemblyman Harris introduced the bills which called for the dam to be turned over to and maintained by the State Department of Environmental Conservation, and a water level control district was organized. With the passage of these bills and their signature by Governor Rockefeller, the water level of the lake continues high enough for boaters.





The Decades of Steamers at Canada Lake

No more romantic adventures occurred on Canada Lake than those associated with the many steamers, big and small, that plied the lake in the 1890's and the first decades of the twentieth century. Some were real steamships, wood fired, belching smoke as they headed down the outlet. Some were run by naphtha. A few were designed only for passenger excursions, but others were working ships for the lumber mills and of these a few were even used for power to saw lumber. The ships delivered milk and mail, took people to their camps before the roads were built, and carried them to dances on Saturday and church on Sunday.

One ship was almost fifty feet long, others were quite small, but their most amazing attribute was the number of such ships on the lake. Unravelling the mystery of their origin and demise has been the most difficult part of the research for this history. Their romantic names, *Whip-poor-will*, *Wanderer*, *Water Lily*, *Kanaughta*, *Clermont*, *Auskerada* and *Bedbug*, made the search an entertaining one.

The Copelands' *Water Lily* was apparently the first ship on the lake, sailing during the

1870's and 1880's. The next record of a steamer is a newspaper note from June 16, 1888 which reports that "*The trim little steamer, 'Wanderer,' was launched on Canada Lake Saturday. Mr. Charles Melius has charge of it.*"

Among the earliest records of excursion ships is the story of a cruise around the lake starting at Fulton's Hotel, in the summer of 1892. The ship was the *Whip-poor-will* and it was piloted by a Mr. Klein.

Mortgage records tell us of two ships that were on the lake in 1893. Lewis Ballou bought from William H. Faville, who held the mortgage of \$204.58. The ship was described as being "*thirty-seven feet in length and have a screw propeller with steering gear at the side and built in the year 1880.*" It is not known if the ship was brought to the lake before 1893. Mr. Ballou acquired a second boat a month later, in November of 1893. Frank A. Hill held the mortgage of \$543 which covered not only a "*steamboat with boiler engine and fixture that goes with the same,*" but the sale included "*machinist tools, carpenter tools, and a blacksmith shop, with its stock and tools.*"

Captain Ballou's ability as a steamboat navigator certainly earned him a glamorous reputation, as this clipping from August 20, 1896 indicates.

**CAPTAIN BALLOU
THE GALLANT CANADA LAKE
NAVIGATOR MARRIED IN
GLOVERSVILLE TO-DAY**

At 4 o'clock this afternoon, at the home of Mrs. H.A. Lansing, No. 14 Yale Street, occurred the happy ceremony which united in marriage Captain Louis Ballou of Canada Lake and Miss. Bertha Dow Bowhall of Canton, St. Lawrence county, a sister of Mrs. Lansing. Rev. W.E. Park officiated. The ceremony was witnessed by the immediate friends of the bride and groom, and at its conclusion a dainty wedding supper was served under the supervision of a caterer. They were the recipients of a number of beautiful presents. Mr. and Mrs. Ballou will leave for Canada Lake to-night and will make their home during the summer months at the Auskerada hotel, and during the winter will reside in this city. The bride has resided in this city only a short time, but has made many friends. She has been interested in temperance work and has been prominently identified with Rescue lodge, of which she is a member. The groom is well known in this city and county and for a long time, he has run a steamer on Canada Lake, being the pioneer steam navigator of those waters. He is very popular among the visitors at the lake, and his many friends will wish him and his bride much joy in the future.

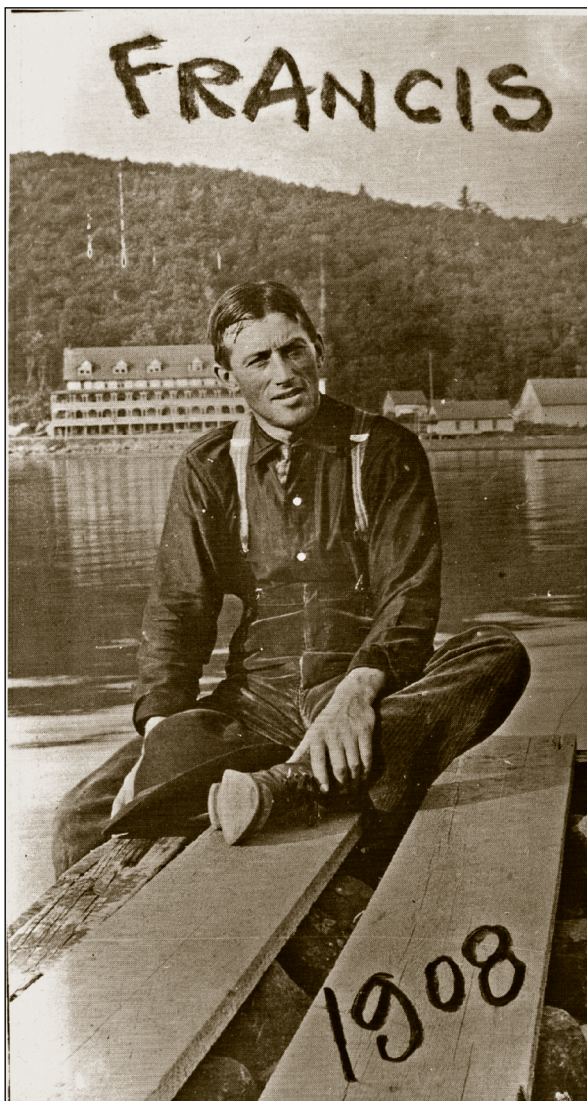
Milton Ballou's uncle, Sherman Dow, purchased the *Kanaughta* in 1912. He ran excursions from

the Fulton Hotel docks for two seasons. The night of the fire at Fulton's Hotel, everyone was so busy putting out the fire in the hotel and rescuing the guests, that no one thought to cut the boats loose from their skids. Both the *Kanaughta* and the *Clermont* burned and Milton Ballou remembers seeing the boiler and engine of the *Kanaughta* near the dock after the fire.



*Above, the the family of Capt. Ballou.
Below, the steamer Kanaughta, August 14,
1895, with Capt. Lewis Ballou.*





Now the first of many unsolved problems concerning the steamer occur. Descriptions of the ships acquired by Captain Ballou almost fit the pictures we have of the Fulton boats, and stories of the origin of the Fulton boats seem to indicate they were built at Canada Lake. It is possible that at one time Captain Ballou owned the Fulton boats.

Walter Osborne who worked at the Fulton Hotel between 1896 and 1905 reports that the *Kanaughta* was at the hotel in 1896. He describes the boat as a wood-burning steamship that could hold up to 50 passengers. There was a canopy roof and roll up side curtains. He said the ship was conceived by James Y. Fulton and built at the Fulton Hotel in the early 1890's.

The ship made one or sometimes two trips daily to Stewart's Landing. The trip took about three hours and cost 50 cents round trip. The boat was usually piloted by Francis Fulton and a boat excursion was the most attractive feature of a stay at the Fulton House. However, Francis Fulton was such a handsome young man that more than a few women have reported that as young girls they were more attracted to a steamer ride by the captain than by the trip itself.

If the boat became too full, row boats were filled up and put in a chain to be towed down the outlet. Rachel Briggs Wells remembers that Francis would come by and blow the ship's whistle and they would all go out in row boats to be towed down to West Lake for a picnic.



The steam launch Kanaughta towing vacationers off for a picnic.



The Kanaughta and the Clermont at dock with their canvas curtains pulled to protect the interiors.

The Fulton Hotel had a second boat, the naptha powered launch, *Clermont*, which was about 20 feet long and could hold 12 to 14 passengers. This appears to have been the work boat of the hotel, delivering summer residents to their cottages, delivering milk and food, and baggage. Cyril Waterman, who worked at the Auskerada remembers that the *Clermont* also delivered mail.

The pleasures of riding on Fulton's boat were occasionally curtailed by the weather, as this newspaper clipping relates.

CANADA LAKE NOTES

Those sojourning at the lake over Sunday had the opportunity of seeing the resort graced in its two phases, in the beauty of fair weather and in the majesty of storm. Not until late in the afternoon did any omen of the coming rough weather present itself, and then great banks of dark, ominous clouds rose from behind the western mountains, causing every craft to seek the shelter of some friendly dock.

But two vessels were unable to gain shelter, the "Kanaughta," loaded with twenty passengers, on its way to Stewart's Landing, and the naptha launch of Delos Brower, containing himself, his wife, and John Brower. The launch had reached the center of the lake, en route to Fulton's Lake House, where they are in the habit of dining. On these the storm burst in its full and unrestrained fury. To those at the hotels, watching through the occasional rifts of spray, the progress of the Brower launch, it seemed that the little boat must be swamped, and row boats were launched, ready to go to the aid of its occupants.

Suddenly, between the rifts of spray the canopy covering of the boat was seen to shoot into the air and the boat rolled over on its side. The driving sheets of rain and spray then shut them from view. When the

next rift opened, the watchers had expected to see the craft capsized and floating upon the lake, and the passengers struggling in the water, but with the next view the boat had righted; but the canopy was gone.

Mr. Brower's presence of mind probably saved him from a disagreeable, if not disastrous, experience. Realizing that the canopy was acting as a sail and was endangering the boat, he cut the fastening and allowed it to blow overboard. As it was, the boat was fortunate to make the landing with results no more serious than the loss of the canopy and a thorough drenching of the occupants.

The experience of those on the "Kanaughta" was, perhaps, the most thrilling of the day, and it is a wonder to those familiar with the lake that the vessel was not wrecked. On the way to the dam, it had reached a point in lower West Canada Lake where it would receive the fullest fury of the storm. A rain was expected and all of the side curtains were down and securely fastened. The storm swept down upon them with a heavy wind. The side curtains served, as had the canopy on the naptha launch, as a sail and so violent was the wind that the heavy steamer was tossed and rolled as though it had been a canoe. The wind increased in fury and there was but one way to save the vessel—to loosen the curtains.

It was impossible for Francis Fulton, who had charge of the boat, to leave the wheel, and he shouted to the men on board to cut the curtains away. With knives and fists, the desperate men slashed and tore them away from the fastenings, and the boat then rode easier. At the climax of the storm, several women among the passengers fainted and for three quarters of an hour the occupants were subjected to the rain and wind. Finally the boat was brought to the hotel dock and a rather spoiled but thankful party disembarked.

The storm was one of the most severe ever experienced in this section, and the manner in which Fulton conducted himself and handled the boat reflects much credit upon himself and speaks highly of his seamanship.

The Fulton boats were not always used for pleasure. In the late 1890's Canada Lake had a double drowning, near Point Breeze. While Mr. Vanderpool was digging a well, his young daughter, who was playing near shore, stepped off the edge of the dropoff. He went to rescue her, and because he was dressed in work clothes and boots, he, too went down. Both drowned and the *Kanaughta* and Francis Fulton were called for the emergency.

In 1903 a second double drowning occurred near Negro Lake Bay. Again the steamer *Kanaughta* was called to help find the bodies. Two young people were rowing and their boat was found, completely dry, drifting on the lake. The local papers virtually contrived a romantic novel around the event, as excerpts from the story show

DROWNED LOST OR ELOPED WHERE ARE GEORGE H. EVANS AND FLORENCE BROWN?

The First Mentioned Theory in the Case of the Couple Who Disappeared From Canada Lake Now Has the Most Supporters- A Fruitless Search

Johnstown, Aug. 14 -The shades of another August night will soon be falling on the silent Adirondack forest and the silvery moon will shed its light upon the waters of Canada Lake, where tireless, hope bereft searchers have not yet abandoned the hunt for missing George H. Evans, of Johnstown, and Florence Brown, of New York. More than 100 hours have elapsed since they left Fulton's Hotel at Canada Lake together and thousands of square yards of woods have been tramped over in the effort to find them, but without avail. Dragnets and dynamite have been employed in the hunt through many acres of watery surface, but the effort there has been as fruitless as on shore. There seems no reasonable escape from the conclusion that the young folks are drowned. If lost in the woods they must be in a distressing condition. There is but one other possible avenue into which they could have wandered -desertion of their loved ones here; but no one is ready to believe that they could be heartless enough to keep the latter under this terrible suspense, even had they deceived them by running away and getting married. Anxiety is growing into despair and those most interested in them think with trepidation of what the morrow may bring forth.

George Evans' father was the late Robert J. Evans, of Johnstown, one of the prominent Fulton county glove manufacturers and a man of considerable wealth. The young man has lived with his mother and sister and had no control over the large sum of money left him



The Kanaughta to the rescue.

when his father died. His uncle, Richard Evans, as his guardian had charge of it, but within a few days he would be of age and the money would pass into his hands. The fortune coming to him amounts to over \$100,000. This has given an added interest to the case and opened up a new field for speculation. Could there have been foul play? If so, for what purpose? There was nothing to indicate foul play and this theory was speedily dismissed by the few to whose minds it came.

Evans was an athlete at Harvard where he belonged to the class of '06. He was a conspicuous figure at the summer resort, as he was at Johnstown. He was a handsome youth with pleasant features, and his habits were always good. The young man had of late paid considerable attention to Miss Werth, an attractive young lady, whose home is in Pittsburg, and who arrived at Canada Lake Monday night.

It was for this reason that the young man's mother remonstrated with him when she noticed his apparent infatuation for Miss Florence Brown, of New York, who was a guest at the resort with her sister, Mrs. Biering, of the same city. For 10 days the two young people had been almost constantly in each other's company. Miss Brown is an amiable young woman of 20 and Mrs. Evans had no objection to the young couple being together, except that she feared for her son's happiness if his affection became divided between two. Hence her protest, the last time that she spoke to George about the matter being Monday morning. When they departed Evans was

IN AN ANGRY MOOD

Shortly thereafter he and Miss Brown left the hotel where they were stopping and set out in a rowboat ostensibly to explore Negro Lake Bay. That was the last seen of them. Late in the afternoon their boat was found adrift in the lake. A search of the woods was begun. The Kanaughta went in the lake with a searching party Monday night, but they returned without

having made a discovery. For more than 50 hours the search was practically ceaseless, for somewhere or other somebody was endeavoring to find a trace of the missing youth and girl. The dreaded possibility of drowning was not dismissed and while the forest was being traversed the water was not forgotten. Out on the lake were men dragging –anxious to find the bodies if they were in the water, yet hopeful that their search was in the wrong direction. Nor was the fear of drowning wholly removed when several days' dragging failed to reveal the presence of bodies. The bottom of the lake is soft, stick mud there was reason to think that the bodies might be lodged therein.

DYNAMITE THE LAKE

Hence the suggestion to dynamite the lake. This was carried out and at several points on Canada Lake Thursday there were terrific explosions which sent the water high in the air and even brought up mud from the bottom, but no trace of the bodies was discovered. This lead some hope that they might yet turn up alive, but as the hours pass and no word comes from them, when if they are in civilized parts they must know that their absence has caused a sensation and that Mrs.

Evans and Mrs. Biering are prostrated with grief and anxiety, the belief that they may be eventually found alive is fast dying away.



Arriving for the summer by steamer.



The biggest steamer ever on Canada Lake was the *Auskerada*, which was launched in 1898. The boat belonged to the Steele brothers, Harry and William, who owned the camp which was purchased by Daniel McMartin, grandfather of the author, in 1917. The Steele's bought the property in 1896 from Cornelia A. Davis for \$400.00, and the house predates that sale by at least a decade.

Alvarado Arnst was seven in 1896 and remembers well the Steele's, their camp, and their boat. One thing he remembers best was the cart that was stored across the road in a shed. Alvarado was given rides in that cart as a youngster. It may have been the lake's first piece of fire fighting equipment, and Alvarado remembers it had two large wheels, and a bar with which to push it. It carried a reel of hose, but Alvarado does not think that it was ever used to fight fires.

Alvarado also remembers that the Fulton boat *"had it all over the Auskerada. The Auskerada did take passengers from the Van Ness Hotel (the Auskerada) up and around the lake, but it was too big a boat with too deep a draft to go down the outlet. It cost too much money to run, too. The Fulton's had the priority, because they*

could go down the outlet."

The boat was docked at the Steele's camp beside a huge pier which extended out into deep water, thirty feet beyond the present dock. Stones and sunken logs still outline the dimensions of the pier.

The boat had at least two different types of superstructures, but there are no records to tell whether the high wooden engine housing predates the fringed top.

Alvarado Arnst was ten or twelve years old when the *Auskerada* stopped running. He said it *"was really built for the big lakes anyway,"* and that is just where it went.

Alvarado described the day in about 1901 that the boat left the lake. *"Roy Porter, a 'Building Mover,' came up with a big wagon. The axles on the wheels were a foot thick, and the spokes on the wheels were 2 x 4's. All the wood was hardwood. They ran the boat over to Fulton's place. They were afraid to run the wagon over London Bridge because of the rotten planks. The wagon weighed as much as the boat, and each weighed a couple thousand pounds. There was a runway at Fultons, a skid way down into the water. They ran the wagon down the skid until the*



The Auskerada tied up at the Steele-McMartin camp in 1898, with the Hull-O'Dell camp bell tower in the background.



The Auskerada is shown in front of the Steele-McMartin camp with its superstructure removed.



boat could float up on the end. They fastened it with a long cable, and four horses pulled it up. It took half the day to pull it out. Then, they anchored the boat to the wagon, bound it with chain, and went off down the road with one extra horse for emergencies."

When the wagon passed the Arnst home, where there is a little hill, the men were worried about the wagon rolling ahead. While they were watching the wagon, the extra horse wandered off and started feeding in the wet meadow below the house. "Then, the extra horse got stuck in the mud and the men had to go in and pull it out. When it finally got loose of the mud, they tied the horse to the boat. It was the funniest thing to watch the

wagon, and the boat pulling the horse, as it disappeared out of sight down the road."

The boat was taken to Fonda, where it was put on the Mohawk River and sent up to Lake Champlain. The boat had been on Canada Lake for only three or four seasons.

The Durey Land and Lumber Company had a work boat with the name, *Bedbug*. According to Alvarado Arnst, "They used it to 'boom up the logs' and tow them to the mill. The boat was all steel plate and may have been built at the mill." The boat was occasionally used for excursions, as illustrated by a story told by Catherine Bryant Rowles.

"The Gage boys were to tend store and take care of things one day when uncle Cy Durey was going to Albany. It was the son of Senator Flack who decided it would be much more fun to get the old Steamer which was tied between the Saw mill and Uncle Cy's camp and go down to Stewart's Landing. The rest were persuaded and they collected three or four young people and started on the joy ride.

They had trouble getting the Steamer started but that was no warning to them. Finally it went chugging along. The little Peters girl whose family lived at Irving Pond, thought to herself, 'Suppose it konks out and we can't get it going again Suppose it goes to the bottom of the lake....' But they pulled up

safely at the landing and walked around and fooled a bit and started back. They said, 'We'll tell uncle Cy you teased us for a ride.'

When they returned uncle Cy was back and sitting on his porch wondering what had happened to his steamer. He never scolded them. He liked young people and often let them have barbecues and parties at his place."



The steamer above was one of the lake's work boats, and it is shown with power from the steam engine being used to saw wood. It is possibly the Whip-poor-will. The overloaded launch below sailed from the Auskerada Hotel.



The *Bedbug* met an undignified fate. Several people remember its rotting hull lying for years in the sand. One of those who saw it was Mrs. Orville Slade. Her father was Lewis Ballou, the steamboat captain.

Rumors that a ship was towed out into the lake and sunk in the deepest part near the island are probably true. Alvarado Arnst remembers watching the day that one ship was filled with holes sunk the other side of the island in the deep hole. Mrs. Harriet Crispin, whose father was Coby Moore, believes that it was the *Whip-poor-will* which was kept at that time in the boathouse beside the old mill at Canada Lake. Her father and Cy Durey were the ones who towed it out and sank it.

Mr. Decker had a steam launch which almost everyone on the lake seems to have enjoyed. The Presbyterian Church Cottage in Punky Cove had a smaller boat, appropriately called *The Coffin*.

One of the last boats to give rides on the lake belonged to the Auskerada Hotel. It was skippered at times by Frank Curtin and could hold about fifteen people. It, too, was a shallow draft boat and could maneuver the trip to the outlet. Cyril Waterman recalls that Mr. Curtin was a bit unhappy when the state finally caught up with him in 1915 and he had to obtain a license for the boat.

Dr. Palmer tells of a trip he made to Canada Lake with his grandfather. They took a boat from the Auskerada, and his grandfather was very worried by the captain's repeated stops to pick up passengers. The boat kept sinking deeper and deeper into the water, until the boat was less than six inches out of the water. But, there was no mishap that day, or any other, for everyone remembers the steamers as the most exciting part of a trip to Canada Lake.

Motor boats gradually replaced the steamers, but a ride on one of the commercial lines was still a thrill. As last as July of 1917, an ad in the local papers tells of daily passenger service on Canada Lake "to all points of interest on the river and lakes, by motor boat. Special prices to parties. Capt. W.S. Congdon."

Before long, almost every cottage had at least a small motor boat in which to cruise the lake; but, could it possibly be as much fun as the parties on the steamers? 🐻