

VOX POPULI

REAL VACATION SPOT

Editor, Observer-Budget

Rensselaer county, once stamping ground of the Mohicans, is being invaded again by an eager army of vacationists who seek the lakes of Grafton, Petersburg and Berlin or the picturesque Taconic valley where the Little Hoosick winds its way meekly around the feet of great peaks. Before the coming of the automobiles, the eastern section of Rensselaer county was an unread book. There are those who remember the days when it required from 12 to 15 hours to go there from Troy and Albany and return by horse and wagon. What was once a narrow dirt road over the Taconic mountain from Petersburg to Williamstown, Mass., has long since become known as the Taconic Trail where thousands of automobiles pass over daily. Before man and machinery made this possible, it was known as the missing link, connecting Boston and Chicago, the shortest and most direct route between these two cities. Today the time of transportation from Troy to Petersburg has dwindled to a scant 30 minutes.

Persons residing in New York city make the trip to their summer camps and vacation spots in Grafton in five hours. As each season brings forth the cry for the open from those living in the large cities, Rensselaer county becomes more popular. Once it visited by some vacationist, new faces are seen within a short time afterwards. The recent hot spell has brought many from the cities to the shores of Babcock Lake in the Grafton mountains as well as many other favorite vacation spots in the eastern part of Rensselaer county. Every reader of the Leather Stocking tales who can recall the still, secluded beauty portrayed by J. Fenimore Cooper, in his celebrated word picture of the Glimmer glass, will not need lengthy description of the charms of Babcock Lake, which has become one of the most popular resorts in the Grafton mountains. When the Mohawk Indians forced the Mohicans from their village (the site of the present city of Troy), a remnant of the tribe worked its way over the mountain into the state of Connecticut. The white settlers then living near Lake Taconic aided the fleeing red men. They encamped for several days on the shores of this lake, and it is asserted by tradition the chieftain of the party was the celebrated Uncas, last of the

Mohicans. An old Indian dugout, reputed to have floated upon the waters of Lake Taconic for more than a century, is still in a fair state of preservation. The lake itself, the eastern most of the Grafton chain of several, rests in cuplike depression of the mountain, an elevation of 1,850 feet above level. The slopes of the mountain at the adjacent ridges are covered with pine and spruce. Many of the forest glades are banked breast high with brakes and ferns and all kind of berries are usually found in abundance.

The mountain view from Lake Taconic is beautiful. The horizon includes the Green Mountains of Vermont, the Berkshires of Massachusetts, and the Catskills of New York. The Adirondack forest is visible to the north. The view to the east and north is extensive and enchanting. Four miles east of Lake Taconic is the Taconic Mountain range with its outlying spurs which marks the boundary line of New York and Massachusetts, and a part of the boundary line of Vermont and New York. The corner of the state of Vermont where it intersects the eastern boundary of New York, has historical interest. The corner was established only after seven years of bitter controversy between the authorities of New York and New Hampshire. Each claimed what is now the state of Vermont, the eastern part of the town of Petersburg, Hoosick and a small portion of Washington county. Among those who were prominent in resisting the claims of New York were Ethan Allen and Seth Warner, who soon after gained undying fame by their patriotic services in the war of the Revolution. The principal peaks and heights of the Taconics are: Bear, 2,407; Little Bald, 2,632; White Rock, 2,628; Belcher, 2,347; Macomber, 2,804. Beyond the Taconics is seen the Greylock, 6,535 feet above sea level the highest mountain in Massachusetts. Mt. Equinox, in Shaftsbury, Vt., rises loftily at the northeast. The natural beauty and possibilities of Lake Taconic were first fully recognized about 60 years ago. At that time an association was formed by four members, all Petersburg residents. As years rolled by Lake Taconic began to build up and today there are some 200 cottages around its shores. Babcock Lake came into being as a possible vacation center about 1922 when a New York realty company purchased a large tract of land comprising several farms that bordered on the lake. Since that date many cottages have been erected including a large dining hall where guests enjoy a hearty repast daily during their stay at the lake.

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