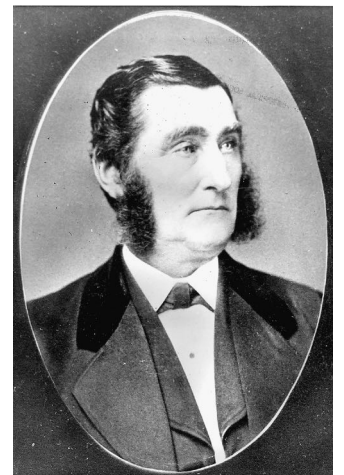


Then & Now – Summit House #2 – 1882-1907 Top of Mount Wachusett



Summit House #2 After Its Expansion in 1900

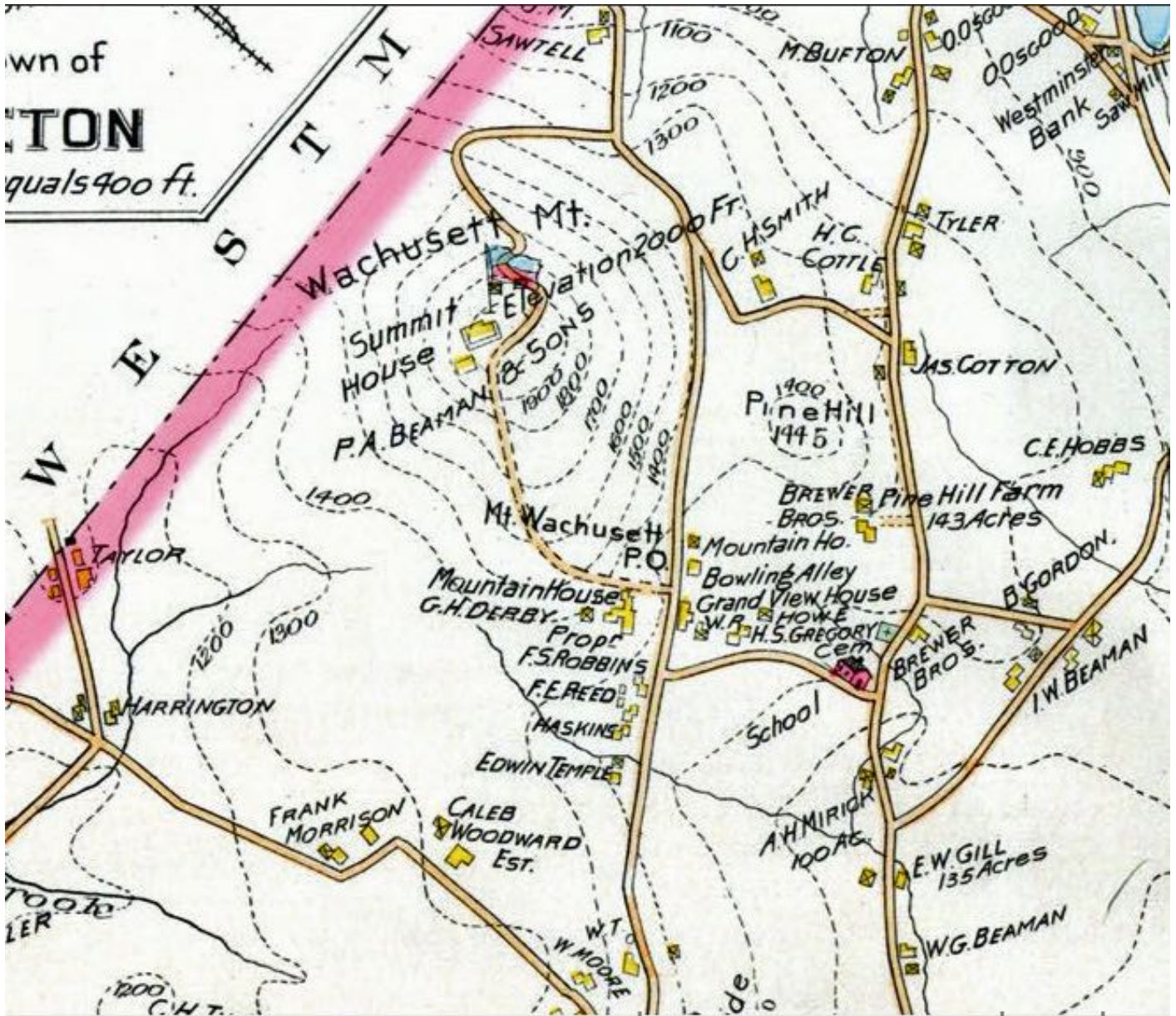
Wachusett Mountain was sold by the Wachusett Company to Phineas A. Beaman & Son in 1882. They erected a three-story bona fide forty foot square hotel in 1884, which was sometimes called the “Tip Top House”. The first manager was G.H. Derby from Fitchburg. This hotel brought yearly as many as 30,000 visitors to the mountaintop (doesn't seem possible for the 1890's), where visitors could take advantage of a new structure offering 30 rooms for as little as 10-15 dollars a week, or at \$2.50 a day. Each room was supplied with gas and connected to the front desk by electric bells, installed by local resident Frank Brooks. By 1900, a bowling alley, horse barns, and icehouse had Also been added. The Beaman's conducted a general hotel business until the State of Massachusetts took the property for a reservation in 1907. Alley L. Harrington leased the hotel for several years, and then William R. Howe for a few more years.



Phineas A. Beaman

The summit pond furnished water for washing at the house and barn, and was pumped by a windmill to a second floor holding tank in the hotel. Drinking water was carried up from a

spring near the Ox Bow, about a mile down from the top. The hotel season ran from May 20 to October 15 and patrons were brought by railroad to either Fitchburg or Princeton railroad depots and then various stagecoach lines completed their journey to the summit.



1898 Wachusett Mt. - Dotted Path is Mountain House Walking Trail Up The Mountain

This second summit house boasted fresh fruit and vegetables on their dinner table picked daily. S. C. & M. H. Bullard owned a farm at 115 Ball Hill Rd, which furnished produce and dairy products for their own hotel, the Mountain House, as well as the Summit House, and other hotels/boarding houses in town. Their farm boasted having 500 peach tree and 150 plum tree orchards, cattle, and chickens.

The Gardner News, in 1883, listed an example of what it would cost for a husband and wife to visit the Summit on any given day.

- Train ride to Princeton and back to Gardner - \$1.00

- Stage coach to Mountain House and back - \$2.00
- The couple would walk up the rebuilt access road 2.25 miles – the current down road
- Partake in two dinners at the Summit House Restaurant - \$1.50
- Visit the Observatory - \$.20
- Walk down the .75 mile Mountain House Trail
- **A Total cost \$4.70.**

The only access to the Summit and the Second Summit House in 1884, was via:

- The Mountain House walking trail – at the junction of Gregory and Mountain Roads
- The rebuilt carriage road running north from the Mountain House, then up current down road. Mile Hill Rd wasn't finished being built until 1903.



Ralph Beaman & J. West Sailing 1900

Commissioner Report Highlights

- In 1899 the State commissioned a survey of Wachusett Mountain to be done by A.G.

Bullock, Harold Parker and Theo L. Harlow and they named Guy H. Chase a civil

engineer, as the first superintendent who had as his assistant, Mr. Everett Needham. It was their task to make the mountain a “desirable resort for lovers of nature and beauty and a place for decorous recreation.”

- Their work was completed in 1900, and Mr. Chase, with Mr. Needham as his second in command, started their work as created Wachusett Mountain as a resort for nature lovers.

- In 1901:



Everett Needham, Unknown Surveyors, Guy Chase

- The old bowling alley was torn down due to lack of use and disrepair. Two picnic areas were established with picnic tables to keep trash better controlled.
- Mr. Everett Needham became Superintendent.

- 1902:

- A new telescope and field glasses were purchased for the observation tower, as well as an observatory map created.
- A steel windmill was erected to replace the old one destroyed in a winter gale.
- Blasting was done at the summit to find a good water source.



Summit House #2 After Its Expansion – PHS Colorized Postcard

- New horse sheds were completed
- Echo Lake and Bolton property & pond were purchased
- Drawings were started to enclose 300 acres along Echo Lake Rd. as a deer and elk park
- First arrest on the mountain was of Karl Gout of Orange MA; The Steam Car manufacturer drove his Stanhope Spindle back up the mountain with passenger John Faxon of Fitchburg in record time in 1902. They were arrested for their feat and cases filed.
- In 1902-3 two separate companies were formed to build a railway from Wachusett Lake/Park to the summit, cars were ordered, but work was never started.
- 1903
 - Cellar hole was dug for a new Headquarters Office and residence for the Wachusett Mountain Superintendent, near the junction of Mountain and Echo Lake Roads (213 Mountain Rd.). (Today it is the Mountainside Café & Bakery).
 - 2 deer were purchased and one doe captured and placed in the 300 acre fenced park.
 - Mr. Alley Harrington leased and managed the hotel
- 1905 William Howe leased and managed the hotel



Algernon T. Beaman 1899 Manager

TOLL CHECK.

SUMMIT HOUSE,
Wachusett Mountain.

..... 189

TOLL, - - - - -

GRAIN, - - - - -

No. of TEAM, TOTAL,

PLEASE LEAVE THIS CHECK AT THE STABLE.

Toll Check

SUMMIT HOUSE
WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN
Princeton • Mass •

SEASON OF '87
OPEN MAY 20 TO OCT 15

Ch Derby Prop
P.O. ADDRESS.
FITCHBURG, MASS.

PINEBAU, PRINTERS, 213 CONGRESS ST., BOSTON.

1887 Ad Booklet

Early 1890's Ad Booklet

"THIS IDEAL SUMMLR RESORT is now open to the public under the same management as heretofore, and with increased facilities is even better prepared for the comfort and entertainment of its patrons.

There are now 18 sleeping rooms with annex available for an overflow, an equipment of modern sanitary bathrooms and lavatories, with hot and cold water, a spacious reception room and office, a large dining hall, and over all an observatory from which on a clear day Boston Harbor and Mt. Washington are clearly discernable. In the reception and dining rooms are broad fireplaces, which dispel the cool mountain air of late evenings, and early mornings. A ten-foot veranda extends on three sides of the hotel from which one gets the most diversified and beautiful of mountain views. The house has a Modern Electric Lighting Plant, and a Garage and Barn care for all Automobiles and Teams.

ACCESSIBILITY: The "Summit House" is 18 miles by new State road from Worcester via Holden and Quinapoxet, 12 miles from Leominster and 10 miles from Fitchburg. Good roads, many of them State Highways lead to the Mountain, and the State maintains a good road to the summit as a part of its reservation work. It is fortunate that such a place is within reach by Auto, with Team, or by Railroad, as by any of these methods it is easily accessible. If notified of the time of your arrival, the Hotel Auto will meet you at Princeton Depot. It is however a delightful experience to those who are equal to mountain climbing, and who wish to enjoy a leisurely tramp in the bracing Mountain Air to make the trip to the top, on foot, by one of the old Indian Trails.

ADVANTAGES: Rooms: Large and pleasant, cool and clean, affording fine outlook from every window. **Observatory** is supplied with a telescope of high power, good field glasses, and a map showing cities Villages, ponds, streams and hills for fifty miles around. **Reception Room, Spacious Veranda, Billiard Room and Tennis Court. Dining Hall:** Large, attractive and always cool, w here visitors are sure of good service and an excellent cuisine. **Rustic Pavilion** with tables for those who bring their own lunches. **Abundant Water Supply** for the Hotel. Clear cold water from a spring flowing a gallon a minute all the year round. **Mails Daily. Long Distance Telephone. Stable and Garage.**

POINTS OF INTEREST: Easily reached by Auto and Carriage, or on foot by the Mountain Trails. The **Double Boulder**, a curiosity of nature, located in a pasture on the northerly slope of the Mountain, on the line of the old Indian Trail. It consists of two immense boulders laying one upon the other, the upper one so firmly placed in position as to be immovable: they are each about six feet in diameter and together weigh in the vicinity of thirty tons. **Redemption Rock**, a big gray boulder in a clump of trees and underbrush, on a farm a little east of Lake Wachusett. Here was paid by Mr. John Hoar of Concord the ransom, which released Mrs. Rowlandson from captivity. It is one of the most interesting relics of early Indian History, and well repays a visit. It is easily y reached by Auto or Team.

Site of the Home of Lucy Keyes: Another reminder of the hardships and dangers of the early settlement. Here in 1775 upon the eastern slope of Wachusett at the junction of the roads where the present carriage road to the Summit House commences, in a log cabin lived the little four year old girl who wandered off into the dense forest, was carried off' by the Indians and never returned. It is supposed she soon forgot her native language and became one of the aborigines, which was made all the more probable by the story of two men who went many years after the occurrence from Groton on a trading expedition among the Indians in Canada. They related on their return that they found living among the Indians a white woman who conversed in the Indian language, but knew nothing further of her birth or parentage than that once she lived near "Chusett Hill."

SCENERY: *Few resorts have the wealth of Scenery that are enjoyed from the Summit House Veranda. On every side as far as the eye can reach the landscape is spread out like a map from the seashore on the east to the New Hampshire Hills and Mountains on the north. Including little Wachusett and Pine Hill, it constitutes a range, which viewed from the south, and east presents a picture of rare beauty and loveliness. Anyone seeking for a retreat amid wild and picturesque scenes far removed from the heat and turmoil of modern life may find it all here in the quiet grandeur of old Wachusett. As a place to spend the weekend there is nothing surpassing it in Central or Northern Massachusetts and many stop over night to witness the beauties of the sunset or the glories of the sunrise features of mountain life which leave a lasting impression. Not only does this apply to the summer months, but from May until October each day has its peculiar coloring of landscape, from the delicate tints of the trees in early spring to the gorgeous coloring of the fall maples when the early frosts have transformed the mountain slopes into pictures of fire and gold. Autumn at the Mountain, indeed s growing more and more popular with the public and the house has been kept open longer than formerly to accommodate those who appreciate the season of autumn foliage and open fires.”*

The above was created using the below resources during the summer of 2022 by William “Bud” Brooks:

- “Wachusett Mountain and Princeton” article in the Baystate Monthly a New Hampshire Magazine written by Atherton Mason October - 1884
- “Mount Wachusett” article written by Mason H. Arnold - 1920
- “Searchlight on Mount Wachusett” article written by Helen E. Greenwood - 1948
- Blake, Francis Everett. History of the Town of Princeton 1759-1915: Vol. 1
- Images from the PHS collection.

Please visit www.princetonmahistory.org to learn more about Princeton’s rich history.

We would love to hear from you at, princetonmahistory@gmail.com