A HISTORY OF TWIN LAKES

Prepared by

THE TWIN LAKES ASSOCIATION

THE TACONIC RANGE

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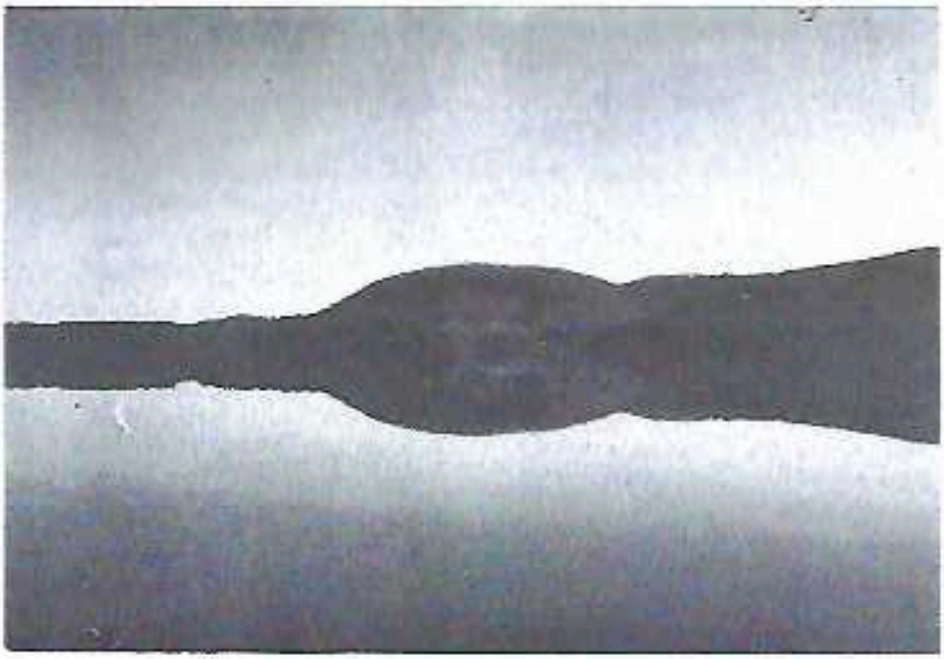

TOM'S HILL

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INTRODUCTION

Our lakes lie in the Housatonic Valley of the Berkshires. To the west are the mountains of the Taconics, dominated by Bear Mountain, which, with an altitude of 2355 feet above sea level, is the highest mountain in Connecticut. Many millions of years ago the Berkshire Mountains were as grand as the Swiss Alps are today. They are among the oldest mountains in the world.

The two "ponds" are described in the old records as lying "very nearly close together." It is probable that the name "Twin Lakes" did not come to be used until the channel was dammed and the water level rose so that the lakes were joined.

The largest lake lies to the East and is 562 acres in area, with a maximum depth of 80 feet and an average depth of 32 feet.

The first known humans in the area were Indians of the Mattapacook Nation made up of small tribes which fled to the Housatonic Valley for refuge. Marauding Indians from the East had carried their ravages west of the Connecticut River, and had burned or destroyed many towns, including an Indian village near Simsbury that was called Weatogue. The survivors fled to the west and finally settled upon the banks of the Housatonic, within the present limits of Salisbury and Canaan. They gave the name of their former settlement to their new place of residence—Weatogue.

The old records show that the Indians first called the lakes Panaheconnok and Hokonamok. This, of course, was long before the railroad causeway was built which divided the west lake into two halves. Later the lakes were named Washining and Washinee—names which are still used today. These names were supposedly the names of the two daughters of an Indian chief who ruled some tribes in the area. Washining meant "Laughing Water" and Washinee was "Smiling Water." Legend has it that, during a tribal war, a young Indian brave was captured and brought to the shore of the big lake to be tortured. The daughters of the chief befriended him and pleaded for his release. However, they were unsuccessful. The evening before his torture the two girls paddled out on the lake and were never seen again. When the moon is full, it is said, an empty canoe still might be seen drifting along the shimmering path of moonlight. Today, we commonly identify the lakes as the First, Second, and Third lake, and The Channel.

Before The White Man Came

Before Salisbury was settled, Connecticut had been a Crown colony for a century. During these hundred years, our area was part of an unknown and unexplored wilderness. In a letter to a friend one lady living to the east describes the outlook from her cabin: "As the sun sets in the west it drops behind an impenetrable forest, dark and gloomy, into which the sun never reaches." This interminable forest in which wolves and bears and savages lurked filled her with an oppressive melancholy. The unnamed forest was not inhabited by white men and was only known as the "Western Lands."

For nearly a hundred years the colonists in Connecticut would hear reports of this formidable mountain region. In the early eighteenth century there were stories from scouts that told of forests that were all but impenetrable. In northern mountain areas these were called "The Greenwoods." Explorers found that there was hardly enough space between the trees for a man to squeeze his shoulders.

Anyone who could struggle west through the Greenwoods forest would eventually descend into a lovely valley with clear blue lakes and in the distance the blue peaks of the Taconics. Much of the land in the valley had been cleared by the Indians and now formed fertile fields for growing corn. From the Indians early scouts learned that this beautiful area to the west of Norfolk and Goshen was called "Ousatonnuc" which translated into "land beyond the mountains." While the Indians called the river in the valley "The Great River," early explorers gave it the name of the land—Ousatonnuc.

For the Indians it must have been a happy place to live. It was not only beautiful, but it was a refuge from their enemies. To the east were the fierce Pequot raiders and the Mohegans. To the west over in New York were the dreaded Mohawks. Fortunately, the dense forests to the east and the Taconics to the west made it difficult for the fierce tribes to reach the valley. The Indians apparently preferred to pitch their wigwams along the Housatonic River and, as far as we know, there were no villages on our lakes, although a village was reported somewhere east of the third lake.

The First Settlers

The earliest history of our area goes back some 300 years. On October 12, 1671, the Connecticut General Assembly granted the Rev. John Woodbridge of Newberry, Mass. 250 acres of land in Killingworth. However, half of this Killingworth grant was being contested when Mr. Woodbridge died. His heirs petitioned the General Assembly to grant Captain John Buell 125 acres to be laid out west of the "Ousatonnuk" in exchange for the contested acreage. As it turned out, the grant was located between the two lakes. When Captain Buell died, it was passed on to Samuel and David Buell. It was later surveyed by E. Lewis and was sold to a T. Hezekiah and Joseph Porter for thirty pounds on January 18, 1731. Another 125 acre grant was laid out along the west shore of Lake Washinee, but the deed has been lost, so we don't know who the owner was. These were the first owners of land on our lakes.

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The first settlers to arrive in the Salisbury area in the early 1720's were Dutch. Several years later the English began arriving. One report indicates that the English soon outnumbered the Dutch, while another states that, up to the summer of 1732, Salisbury was occupied only by Indians and four Dutch families. At this time Salisbury was unsurveyed and unnamed and was a primitive wilderness. In October of 1732 the area was surveyed and a report to the General Assembly showed some scattered land fit for plowing. At this time 3500 acres had already been laid out in land grants. Of course, the original settlers were farmers.

When the Dutch first arrived in the area they quickly made friends with the Indians and easily persuaded them to sign the legal colonial deeds giving away their land. It is interesting to note that the Indians never thought about land ownership—land was for all to use.

As the first white men, peacefully clearing and working their land, did not interfere with the hunting in the undisturbed forest and fishing in the river and lakes, the Indians continued to occupy their wigwams side by side with their friendly white neighbors.

View of Twin Lakes from Tom's Hill

The settlement which is now Salisbury was first called Weatogue after the Indian village. Weatogue means "wigwam place." In 1741 the General Assembly granted a town charter and the town was renamed Salisbury, after the town in England. By 1742, many surveyors had traversed the lands surrounding Salisbury, measuring off the former Indian holdings into legal rights of ownership.

On the subscription of land in the town, the properties were divided into twenty-five rights. One right went to the first settled minister, one for the use of the ministry forever, and one for the support of schools. This is the origin of the ministerial and school funds of the town.

Soon, settlers with their many children overran the Indian hunting grounds and trespassed on their corn fields. The unfortunate Indians ended up with no rights of their own because their lands were now the legal property of the King. When the Indians complained, the General Assembly, being meticulously honorable, sent Daniel Edwards in 1742 to investigate their grievances and to solve the problem. Edwards was impressed with the area, and promptly secured for himself a legal deed for two square miles of land in the Northeast corner of Salisbury, which was ground previously exempted. To settle the problem with the Indians, Edwards bribed their chief, Tocconuk, with the generous gift of two blankets.

After this deal there were no more Indian grievances. No provision was made for any reservation of land for the Indians. It is presumed that some of the more enterprising Indian families moved away. The remaining families, unmolested, built their primitive shelters on the unimproved colony lands and, adopting the customs of their white neighbors (in particular, their "fire water"), lived on for some years in a degraded condition, until their families finally became extinct.

The minutes of the town meetings for the years 1742, 1743, and 1744 help form a picture of the area. Wild animals, dangerous to livestock and destructive of crops, were plentiful and bounties were voted each year to help kill them off. The selectmen offered 3 pounds for a grown wolf killed, thirty shillings for each wolf cub, and three pence for a crow's head or a streaked squirrel's head. Rattlesnakes were numerous and a bounty was set at one shilling per rattle.

In 1744 the Rev. Jonathan Lee was sent to Salisbury by the Connecticut General Assembly to establish a congregation. By this time Salisbury had passed its first century as a colony, mostly unsettled. Jonathan Lee was minister of the Congregational Church from 1744 to 1788 and he ruled his flock with an iron hand. The records show that he fined Seth Dean Jr. 5 shillings for swimming in Twin Lakes for diversion on June 11, 1784, because it was Sunday.

Settlers began moving into the land around Twin Lakes. In 1748, Joshua Jewell bought property on the Woodbridge grant and settled to the west of Lake Washinee. In the northeast section of Salisbury, Jabez, Silas and Daniel Bingham came with their families from Windham in 1750 and settled first somewhere on the Undermountain Road. The Binghams acquired the land between the two lakes, which was part of the Woodbridge grant. Daniel settled on what has come to be called the Miles' farm. The Between-the-Lakes Road was first called Bingham Lane.

During the period between the French and Indian war and the Revolution several Bingham families in the vicinity of Twin Lakes produced more daughters than sons. Mainly through the many daughters, the family connections were said to have comprised half of the north end of the town. Daniel and Hannah Bingham lived on a farm purchased from the Van Dusens. The first part of the Miles' farmhouse was built by Daniel's only son, Caleb, about 1800. Caleb was born April 18, 1757, and became a distinguished educator and book dealer in Boston.*

After the Revolution, two brothers, Eliphalet and John Whittlesey, settled west and east of Twin Lakes. Thus, the first settlers who cleared land around the lakes and started farming were Joshua Jewell, the Binghams and the Whittleseys.

*In 1803 Caleb Bingham established a free public library. This collection of books was expressly created for use by young people aged 6 to 16 who lived in the Town of Salisbury, although it was used by adults as well. In 1810, the Town Board voted to allocate tax money to the library, thereby making Salisbury the first community in America to provide tax supported public library services.

In the year 1784, a fever of uncommon mortality raged in the north part of the town and in the vicinity of the lakes. It was called the pond fever, and was believed to have been caused by the unusual accumulation of water in the lakes. Many names "which had been frequent and prominent upon the civil and ecclesiastical records ceased thereafter to be any more seen."

From the Revolution until the advent of the railroad, the area around Twin Lakes was quiet farm land, with grain fields and pastures to graze cattle and sheep. The land was mostly cleared of trees right to the edge of the lakes. There was little recreation on the lakes except for an occasional camper and some fishing. The only change from this bucolic life was in Taconic where some small industries were operated. These actually started before the Revolution and grew in importance until the twentieth century. They are described in more detail in the section titled "Taconic."

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In The 1830's

Margaret Holt is a descendant of one of the first settlers on Twin Lakes—John Whittlesey. One of John Whittlesey's brothers had settled in Ohio, and in 1834 his wife died. It was decided to send his daughter, Mary Vesta Whittlesey, to live with her Uncle John at Twin Lakes. The John Whittlesey farmhouse still stands today, though extensively remodeled. It is located just to the northeast of The Institute of World Affairs on the Cooper Hill Road. Mary Whittlesey recorded memories of her life as a teenager in the 1830's, and some excerpts follow:

> "There was a kitchen on the end of the carriage and woodhouse building in which was a trough and cistern for rain water. All our large work and washing, butchering, drying out lard was done there. It was up some stone steps and a little distance from the house. There were stone walks around it and it was my work to keep them clean. I used to scour the knives and forks besides washing the potatoes, wiping dishes and making the boys' bed. I always slept with the girls in a large, pleasant north chamber. Oh! but it was so cold in winter! It used to

Sheep grazing on the hill south of the first lake.

have frost (like snow) an inch thick on the wall. It was said it never was so until after they got a cook stove below. When the weather was warmer the carpet would be wet with the melting frost over nearly the entire floor. After Maria Carney came there to work she made so much stir about it that Uncle bought a sheet iron stove and put it in the room so Maria kept enough wood and chips there to have the stove red hot on cold nights and it made it pretty nice for me when I returned from singing school. It was my lot to have a great deal of tooth and earache. Many a time was Maria kind to me, going over in the night to the kitchen fire and filling a flannel bag with hot ashes to put on my face. I was very kindly treated by her, yet it makes me tremble when I call to mind her talks. She had no principal to activate her. She had no relations that she knew of, was naturally smart and wanted a home where she could earn money. She gave me many lessons "not to let the folks know." One thing she did was to bake cake, cookies or gingerbread to eat and kept them in her trunk, being very liberal with me if I would not tell. Once, after Uncle and Aunt left for the day she had a large iron dripping pan full of lovely cookies, half baked when, for some reason, they came back. When Aunt went to the bedroom to lay off her things, Maria took the pan out of the oven, ran to the currant bushes back of the carriage house and dumped them all out for the chickens.

We had good enough living, I guess, but *wheat* bread only at tea time and one kind of very plain cake. The "men" only ate with the family at breakfast and dinner. Sometimes only "your aunt" had the white bread, the rest ate rye. Uncle John was very kind to her. The friends sometimes said that she had been indulged from her earliest days and he *had* to keep it up.

At school I passed pretty well in my studies. Beat much older ones in reading and spelling. After reading over history or other lessons I could recite pretty well, but thinking little over them soon forgot them. My cousin used to say she didn't see when I ever studied. I guess there was little going on I didn't see or have a hand in and I am very sorry, now, that my books did not have more of my attention.

In winter we used to slide, play fox and geese in the snow, snowball and roll snow into a fort! In summer we played "cricket" a good deal, and catch ball. There was an old mill over a small stream where the water was once dammed up. The building was torn down soon after I left Conn. In that brook we paddled, washed our slates, etc. One warm summer day some of the girls—I wasn't in it—made the little ones strip, hid their clothes and then told them a team was coming, scaring them all under the bridge in a hurry. There came up some trouble about using the young children so, but I escaped that time because I always went home for my dinner and often helped about the work so my playtimes were usually short.

Lucy and I often took rides together and once a month went to the town library to draw books. One time Uncle and Aunt went to Danbury, but a horse was left for me to ride. Some other girl—who was not accustomed to riding—wanted to go and she had a colt to ride. I offered to let her take my horse and I would ride her colt. There were five or six girls in all. We rode downtown and had a fine time, but on our return, when almost to Chapinville, my horse started suddenly and jumped right out from under me! It was startled by a white calf that had been lying quietly, but started up just as I was alongside. My horse ran on, not very fast, and was caught just before overtaking the carriage in which Uncle and Aunt were, on their way home from their journey. I was not hurt, only a little bruised so I got on and rode to where the horse belonged and then took my own again. Uncle heard about it afterward, but only said "you better keep your own horse next time."

One winter there was a singing school held in the schoolhouse in Chapinville and quite a company of us attended. I may have been 14 years old when Mr. Suydam, with a two-horse wagon, called for all in our neighborhood who wanted to go. His sister, Phebe, and others went along. After the sing was over—the horse felt pretty good—as we passed the blast furnace on the way home the bright light rather blinded us all so the team ran upon some sawmill logs in the driveway and over we turned, wagon, boys, girls, wraps and all. Phebe had on a cloak so she couldn't use her arms at all and she fell into the flume which took the water from the lake to the mill. This ran under the road and part of it was uncovered. It was full and quite deep. I was thrown against the cross pieces and might have gone in only I was quickly jerked back by someone. The wagon was broken so I went home with cousin Walter Whittlesey and his wife Emmeline—they lived on another road—and stayed overnight. It was a very cold night and they used coals in a warming pan, sprinkling brown sugar on them, to warm my bed and to take the soreness from my bruises. Word was sent by the boys to tell Uncle that I would not be home that night. Phebe stayed at the miller's in the stone house. She had been quite protected by her cloak though her hair and clothes were wet and filled with sawdust. She had held tight to her singing book under her arm and her candlestick in her hand (i.e., when she went into the water). I was taken home the next morning, but was lame for days.

There was usually a great deal of snow, winters, and it drifted badly. In some places the road would be bare. On Park's hill I remember quite a distance where snow was piled up as a high wall on either side, only room enough for our team to go through. It took great labor to make even this pathway. All hands would turn out after a bad storm to open roads with teams, shovels, and heavy log sleds. Sometimes the snow packed so hard it would freeze and, becoming glazed, people would drive anywhere to escape it, even over stone walls or fences. A large part of the division of farms was made by stone walls or fences. There was no lack of stone and men went around in gangs and hired out for that kind of work. I well remember what hearty eaters they were for the washing of the potatoes fell to my lot.

There was a queer man who lived a good deal at Uncle Lief's. His name was Jack Harris. He was very good to us children and often drove a double sleighload of us when we went off on a sleigh ride. He always wore a quilted hood in winter. One night we were invited to Mr. Hollister's—about halfway to town—and Jack thought the sleighing would be better to go across the pond (when the snow was blown off the

road or was drifted it was not unusual to go across). It was so warm that there was a dense fog or mist and around the edge of the lake it had thawed, but the horses jumped upon the firm ice and then we were sure of good sleighing. Much of the way there was water on top of the ice and there was a crackling all about us. When we had crossed the pond we had one or two fields to cross, then we came directly to the place where we wanted to go. We arrived safely and had a joyful good time. We played "Robin's alive and alive he shall be, if he dies in my hand you may saddle bag me," played blindfold and other games. All this time Jack was dreading the journey home. We trusted entirely to him and as the snow was nearly off the traveled road, it was decided that we go back the way we came. The fog was thicker than when we went and no one could tell whether we were going in the right direction or not, there was more water on the ice and we could see no lights or shore, besides, there were air holes we might get into. When we were safely across another difficulty arose. Where were we to land? The distance from the ice to the bank, the thin edge, the steep ascent up the bank among the brush, all had to be taken into account for we could not find where we had entered the lake earlier. Jack finally found a place where he thought it was safe, told us to "hold on tight" and then gave those horses a cut with a whip and urged them to it, so they brought the sledload all safely to land. He often said nothing would get him into such a scrape again. I think our people never knew the danger we escaped.

The lake we crossed was one of the "twin lakes," the Washining, the Washinee was not so wide a lake and was more crooked. There was a natural road between the lakes and in one place an outlet from the one to other just where an ordinary bridge was built. In former years there was much written about the "moving rocks" in this lake. I have been upon one or two and seen others. The trough they left behind as they ploughed toward shore was plainly visible. It was only when a large part of the rock was out of the water that they were so moved. I believe it has been conceded that they were moved by the breaking up of the ice in the spring. Uncle Eliphalet owned the island in this lake. He cut the grass upon it and often took sheep over in boats. The lake was a resort for fishing and boating. Another interesting point near Uncle's was Mt. Tom. Babe's hill was not so high as Tom, it was barren and rocky, but very slightly. There was one lone white birch upon the southern side and it grew between two large rocks or one rock which had been split open. On Fourth of July I have known of the rocks being drilled into, powder put in and fired off. The hill is very steep on nearly all sides and one of sports was to *run*, full force, down the whole length of it. It was hard to stop when once started. On the northeast side we used to roll stones down. We used to take friends to the top of Babe's hill to view the scenery. The landscape was fine and the twin lakes were in sight as well as many pleasant homes.

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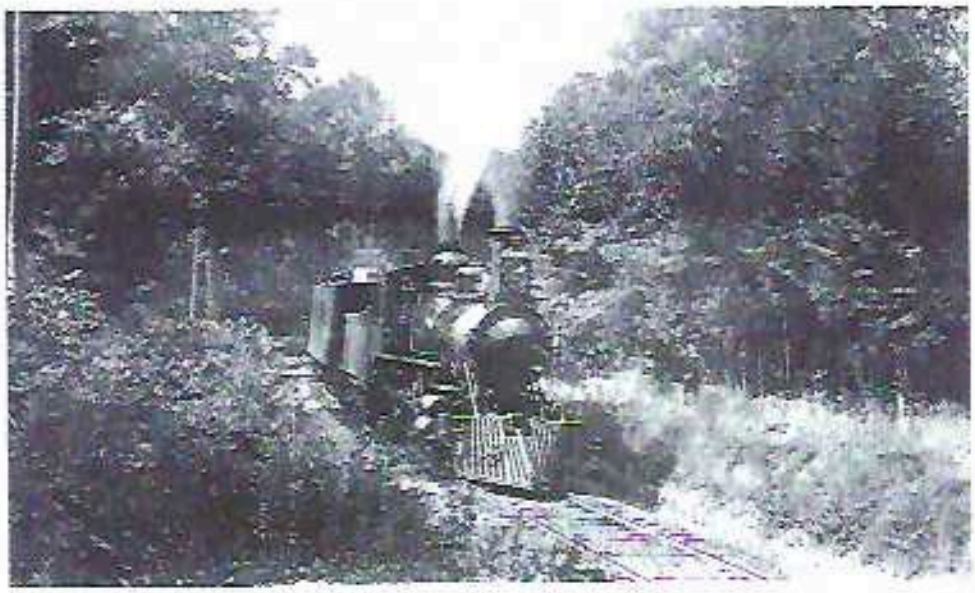
The Railroad

For nearly a hundred years there was a railroad which ran along the south shore of the first lake and cut across the second lake. This railroad provided access to Twin Lakes and its advent marked the beginning of a change from farming to recreation. The history of the railroad starts just after the Civil War.

In 1865, Egbert T. Butler of Norfolk started studying the feasibility of building a railroad connecting the Hudson and Connecticut rivers. The existing railroads ran north and south because of the difficulties of crossing the hills in an east-west direction.

In 1867-68, two groups of surveyors were put in the field, one at Lakeville and the other at Winsted. The Lakeville surveyors worked from the New York State border to Winsted, while the Winsted engineers worked easterly to Collinsville and eventually to Springfield, Mass. After two months of surveying, a suitable route was found which required a maximum grade of 69 feet per mile to the east and 84 feet per mile to the west.

Ground was broken to start construction of the railroad on October 29, 1869, in Winsted, and the line was completed on December 7, 1871, at Canton. The first train, made up of baggage and passenger cars with twenty



A train approaching Picnic Grove from Taconic in 1895

passengers, left Hartford at 8:40 a.m. on December 21 and reached Millerton at 3:30 p.m. The train passed Twin Lakes in the early afternoon.

From its incorporation in 1867 to its total abandonment in 1967, it operated under five names. These were: The Connecticut Western; The Hartford and Connecticut Western; The Central New England and Western; The Philadelphia, Reading, and New England; and The Central New England. It was finally merged into the New Haven System.

The Taconic railroad station was located nearly a mile south of the post office, standing just to the east of Taconic Road. Leaving Taconic station for Salisbury, the railroad went under Taconic Road. This required a bridge which was quite narrow and had steep ramps leading to it.

As originally built, the railroad tracks from just east of Taconic to the east end of the lily pond were on a wooden trestle. In 1915 the trestle was filled, making a causeway. Two bridges were built, one between the first and second lakes, and the other between the second and third lakes. When the trestle was filled, a pond between the first and second lakes was created. This pond became a haven for turtles. Track men using hand cars would stop at the pond and catch turtles which were taken to the Twin Lakes railroad station. One can only assume that a lot of turtle soup was made. The pond was called Turtle Pond until Miss Helen Miles planted water lilies, and thereafter it became known as the Lily Pond.

After the railroad was built, a spur line was added, running from Taconic station to the channel where the blast furnace was operated. Ore and limestone were shipped to the furnace site and large ingots of pig iron were shipped out. These ingots were weighed on a track scale at Taconic station for invoice purposes.

In the latter two decades of the 19th century, camping and picnicking at the lakes was popular. The South Shore camping ground was a religious meeting place. Trains provided transportation both east and west, stopping at Picnic Grove, which was located at the sandy beach half way along the south shore of the first lake. From 1870 to 1900 the people who camped during the summer were local, mostly from Canaan.

Picnic Grove had a pavilion large enough to accommodate several hundred people, and a store and snack bar. This establishment was operated by Captain C.L. Smith, who lived well into his 90's. Every year on his birthday, he, his son and his grandson would go for a swim. The

End of summer—returning to Philadelphia

grandson was in his late 50's when the Captain died. Captain Smith was a boat builder and the owner of a scull that he rowed around the lake. He also rented boats at Picnic Grove.

The station at Taconic was an important shipping point for milk from the nearby dairy farms. To keep the milk fresh, ice was used for cooling. Each winter ice was cut and stored in an ice house which was located at the east end of the Lily Pond. The ice-cutting tools are now on display at the Holley Williams house in Lakeville.

The advent of the railroad brought some hoboes to the lakes. However, they caused no trouble, only occasionally coming to a cottage to beg for a meal. Doors were never locked.

At the intersection of the railroad and Twin Lakes Road there was a shanty with a stop signal. If someone wished to board a train, the conductor would stop the train for the raised flag of the signal. The name on this shanty was "Washining." This stop was also used by farmers to ship out milk.

In 1900, the Twin Lakes station, which was located to the west of the first lake bridge, burned to the ground. A new station was built and, in 1911, an addition was constructed. This became a post office, which was active until it closed during the second World War. Prior to this the post office was in the store that later became the club house. Miss Kelsey was the postmistress, and each day she walked the track from Taconic, where she lived. "Special Delivery" letters were sometimes delivered by children who had come to pick up their own mail. They detoured home via the recipient of the S.D. letter. Otherwise it went in the letter box to wait for pick up by addressee, probably the next day.

In later years, the trains regularly stopped at crossings and the conductor would stand on the road watching for automobiles before the train started across the road (quite the reverse of the normal procedure!).

Early in the 20th century, before automobiles, residents along the south shore would arrange with Canaan merchants to fill orders for meat and groceries. The merchants would give packages to the railroad engineer, and, as the train passed cottages, the engineer would throttle back and then toss packages into the arms of various customers waiting along the track.

Early non-local residents came from Westchester County and from Philadelphia. The New York people tended to take the New Haven to Canaan and transfer, while the Philadelphians came through Grand Central Station in New York and took the New York Central to Millerton, and thence to Twin Lakes. Mothers and children would move up to their Twin Lakes cottages for the entire summer. On Friday evenings, working fathers would join their families for the week-end. Getting off the train at Twin Lakes station, the men would find launches on hand to meet them and take them to their homes. There was a special dock near the station with individual slips to tie up the launches.

From the first train in 1871, steam locomotives were used. In the 1940's the first diesel engines were employed. The last steam train was run in 1948.

When the railroad was abandoned in 1967, the bankrupt New Haven Railroad sold its right of way to abutting property owners. This resulted in the rerouting of part of the South Shore Washining Road. Today, little vestige remains of this once important road bed.

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Taconic

Early history makes no mention of Taconic, or Camp's Forge as it was first known. An old cemetery in Taconic was deeded to the town of Salisbury by John Weldon in 1789. Gravestones in this cemetery bear the names of Phineas Chapin, born 1757, Abiel Chapin, born 1758, and Samuel C. Scoville, born 1804. Both of these families played an important part in the history of Taconic.

In 1738 the Town of Salisbury was sold. Charles Lamb was one of the proprietors and he managed to secure choice acreage. This included control of the streams and water available for power in the Town, except for the falls on Succonups Brook, at the outlet of the channel from Twin Lakes. However, Lamb was successful in getting a vote to prohibit any assignment of land near the falls through a lottery drawing. It was to his advantage to see that this source of power was fully protected.

In 1748 Jacob Bacon and Daniel Parke built a grist mill and a forge at the outlet of the channel. At the falls, a wooden flume picked up water and fed it to a huge water wheel. This was the source of power to turn the grinding stone of the grist mill and to lift the heavy hammer of the forge. Also a saw mill was built, which was still operating in the early 1800's.

In 1759, Deacon Hezekiah Camp became the proprietor of the forge, and the settlement became known as Camp's Forge. The forge later passed to Phineas Chapin, and for many years this district bore the name Chapinville. The name of the village was changed to Taconic by mandate of the U.S. postal authorities about 1920, because of confusion among so many names ending in "ville." The 1895 Rand McNally Atlas shows the village listed as Forge Pond.

In 1825 a furnace was built to smelt iron ore into pig iron. This furnace stood near the water gates which now control the flow of water from the Twin Lakes channel-outlet into Succonups Brook on its way to the Housatonic River. Fuel for the smelter was charcoal. This was produced by burning wood in pits on the mountains (where trees were plentiful). The charcoal was hauled down the Taconic Mountains in huge wagons to the furnace. Because charcoal is free of sulphur and because the native iron ore near Lakeville and Salisbury was of excellent quality, a very high-quality pig iron was produced, and this was noted for its use in the manufacture of cannon and of cart wheels, which were subjected to frequent hard impacts.

As Taconic thrived the need for a place of worship became apparent. In 1832 Bird French donated a parcel of land and a small church was erected. By the mid 1950's this church was no longer used, and it was torn down in 1959. Today, the triangular piece of land lying near the post office is maintained as a mini-park by the Town of Salisbury. A memorial in the park bears the following inscription:

> "On this land deeded by
> Bird French in 1832 the
> Taconic Union Chapel stood
> for 127 years as a public
> meeting house for religious
> worship."

On occasion, the operators of the manufacturing facilities at Taconic would block the outflow of water to the water wheel, in order to make repairs to their mills. This resulted in flooding of the property on the lake frontage, which made the property owners unhappy, and dried up the brook which served the farms below. Eventually the matter was taken to court, and a settlement was reached whereby the water level was to be maintained between the two iron bolts located on the easterly side of the outlet. The legal document setting up this agreement was written by Justice of the Peace Lemon Church, dated August 1, 1837.

From 1840 to 1890, the smelter was owned and operated by Horace Landon, succeeded by his sons, John and George Landon. Seven years later it was operated by someone whose last name was Moorehouse, but it retained the name of the Landon Iron Co.

As surrounding land was cleared of trees to make charcoal, the cost of the charcoal increased. Finally, the advent of processes to make steel using a lower quality of ore resulted in the smelter ceasing operation. In 1897, Nathaniel C. Scoville and Jonathan Scoville bought all the surrounding land and the smelter buildings were torn down to make way for a private hydro-generating station. This station had direct current generators which charged wet cell batteries that supplied power to the Scoville estate. The power station building, now a private residence, still stands across the road from the dam.

In 1896, Robert and Herbert Scoville converted the Nathaniel C. Scoville homestead, then occupied by themselves, four sisters and their mother, into a private estate. The farm buildings were removed to the former Andrew J. Spurr place, which they had purchased for a dairy farm. An imposing English mansion was erected on a new site, and the farmhouse was dismantled and moved to Ashley Falls. Extensive lawns were laid out; greenhouses replaced barns; and a coach barn, which could house several spans of horses, was built. The dairy herd of purebred Guernseys was the special project of Robert Scoville, and was reputed to be one of the leading dairies in the United States. It is now know as Grasslands Farms.

In January 1917, the Scoville mansion, Stone House, burned to the ground. Because of the conservation in effect due to World War I, the mansion remained in ruins and was not rebuilt until 1930, several years after Robert Scoville was married.

Prior to this, Herbert Scoville had built a brick colonial home, Hill House, on a hillside nearby. This building burned in 1925 and was replaced by a replica of a rambling Normandy French farmhouse with a slate roof and tall chimney pots. In 1942, Mrs. Herbert Scoville opened Hill House as a haven for British sailors of World War II who had been torpedoed and were in need of rest. They found this peaceful, quiet place ideal for recuperation.

At the peak of the industrial activities in the mid 1800's, Taconic—or Chapinville, as it was then called—boasted a general store and post office, a blacksmith shop, boarding house, butcher shop, schoolhouse and chapel. These are all gone today, and all that remains of that early era is an old stone house, the origin of which is a mystery. It is noteworthy that the stone used to construct this house is not native stone, and no one knows where it came from. It is reported that the walls vary in thickness from three up to six feet. This house is mentioned in the girlhood memories of Mary Whittlesey in the early 1800's as being the miller's house. Thus it probably dates back to about 1750 when the grist mill was built. The house stands today several hundred feet north of the dam, across the road.

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The Island

The history of the island in the East Twin Lake starts with the first owner, Eliphalet Whittlesey, who settled at Twin Lakes directly after the Revolutionary War. This property was eventually conveyed to Derrick Franklin and Norman Spurr, with Norman Spurr later gaining full ownership. After some years, he conveyed the island to Charles McElroy. On November 27, 1867, for the sum of $500, McElroy sold the island to Edward Rogers of Philadelphia.

Sometime during the line of ownership, the island was cleared of trees. Part of the land was

used to grow grain and the other part was a pasture for grazing sheep. It is said that, if the shepherd wanted to get his flock to and from the island and the sheep balked, he would pick up a lamb and wade across at the shallow part where the causeway is now. The rest of the sheep would follow. It would appear that farming of the land stopped during the ownership of Edward Rogers because many of the trees now on the island seem to be about a century old. We know that Arthur Woodford camped on the island in the period 1870-1875, and he reported that, at that time, the land was bare of trees.

After Edward Rogers died, his estate conveyed the property on June 8, 1891, for $2000 to the Twin Lakes Land and Improvement Association, a voluntary group, located in Bridgeport, Ct. A year later, on July 5, 1892, the island, then known as Bishop Island, was sold for $2500 to the Camp Riga Club, also of Bridgeport, and numbering some forty members. The purchase was made on a Tontine plan whereby the members agreed that, when only two of the original buyers survived, they would become the owners. By 1906, there were only two members left, John T. Alvord and David Reed. John Alvord bought out David Reed, and, on August 29, 1906, became the sole owner. John Alvord died in March 1924, and the ownership passed to George Alvord, who in turn conveyed it to Muriel Alvord in 1925.

The Camp Riga Club had some wild weekend parties on the island. One story tells of a member who had been imbibing and had fallen into the Lake. In an attempt to rescue him, another man staggered down to the dock. As he did, he carefully removed a $5 necktie and, only after he had leaped into the water, did he remember that he had a $500 watch in his pocket.

To get between the island and the mainland, the Club had a steamboat named Jessie.

In addition to the Club House, there were three cottages on the island owned by members. The one built by David Reed later became the home of Mrs. George Alvord. At the north end of the island were the Skidmore and Ostram cottages. The Ostram cottage later was moved across the ice to the O'Hara property and is still in use today. Another club member, named Miller, built a cottage and a barn on the mainland. The barn eventually became a roadhouse and dance hall named Sans Souci (Carefree) and had an all-girl orchestra. This proved to be such a nuisance that, when the Alvords purchased the entire property, they tore down both the house and the barn.

Shortly after John Alvord became owner of the island, he built the stone tower, now commonly known as the Bat Tower. It was probably inspired by similar towers in Europe, and provided a marvelous view of the west to watch sunsets. The tower was constructed by a contractor from East Canaan, and it is said that the base took a whole carload of cement.

When John Alvord built the large house, he needed to have a well drilled. This job was contracted with a Mr. Beale of Taconic who loaded heavy drilling equipment on a large boat to move it to the island. Halfway to the island, however, the boat capsized and all the equipment was lost.

The house was heated with coal and John Alvord would order a railroad carload of coal from Ives and Pierce in Canaan. A truck driver named Pozzeta would deliver 1 1/2 tons by boat each day to the island until the order was complete.

After Muriel Alvord became the owner, she built the boathouse on the east shore, and a second floating boathouse, which was anchored in the cove by the Tower. The boathouses were used to berth her Chris-Craft, which was named after the island—Isola Bella (Beautiful Island).

Miss Alvord built the second house as a refuge where she could paint. She was a very accomplished artist. It is said that she fell in love with the architect of her house, but they never married.

In the middle 1930's, when it became known that there was a plan to build a causeway to the island, there was much opposition. Those protesting were told that the Alvords had secured an opinion from the Attorney General of Connecticut that, since the Alvords owned the island and land on the lake shore opposite, they were the owners of that part of the lake. At first, they planned a drawbridge, but gave that up

when they found that it would freeze in the winter. Construction of the solid causeway started in the early spring of 1935. When the summer residents returned to open their cottages, they were dismayed to see the causeway already completed.

Muriel Alvord Ward's will provided that her husband should have life use of the island, but that upon his death it would go to one of three charitable organizations. These were the Audubon Society, Tanglewood, and the American School for the Deaf in Hartford. Audubon and Tanglewood declined to be beneficiaries, and the American School for the Deaf now operates a summer camp on the property.

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The Caves

New England's largest and most extensive underground caverns are located partway up the hill to the south of the second lake. It is rumored that the caves were discovered in the 1860's by a man trying to find a dog that had disappeared. The hound had chased an animal into a hole and did not come out. The owner, in hunting for the lost dog, stumbled on the largest of several caverns, all close together.

The Twin Lakes caves soon became sufficiently attractive that the owner of the property is said to have set up a toll booth and charged admission to them.

For many years, the Twin Lakes caves were thought to run down toward the second lake, and then under the lake. For early explorers, it was an eerie experience to feel water dripping from the roof and wonder if the ceiling would give way, allowing the lake water to rush in. However, barometric measurement has established that none of the negotiable passages are below lake level, although it is possible that some of the small tunnels at the deep end of the longest cavern may actually continue down to and under the lake.

The largest of the caves is a double-barreled limestone tunnel with a main traveled way six hundred and twelve feet long. This is the longest in New England, and its formations are among the most marvelous and grotesque in the East. This long cavern is called the Cave of the Bashful Lady because of the shape of a stalactite-stalagmite (the largest to be found anywhere in New England) which resembles a woman, draped in flowing robes, with her face hidden against the wall.

More than a dozen smaller passages lead off from the large cave, and anyone entering these should unwind a ball of string in order to trace the way back safely. The cave has been mapped, but the map may not be accurate as the interior is a bewildering maze.

Recent explorations in the caves resulted in some exciting discoveries by a party led by the veteran spelunker, Ned K. Anderson. He had become intrigued by the view through the "Keyhole," a narrow slit that opens into a room which no had entered. One of Ned's young explorers, who was quite thin, finally wormed through the slit and found himself amid beautiful formations of the stone curtain and flowstone type, with some stalactites hanging down. One formation was called "the cherub" by its discoverers.

The "Secret Room" or "Bluebeard's Room" may never be seen at close range by other than young, slender persons, for the "Keyhole" is so soldily fortified with crystalline limestone that it will not chip and cannot be enlarged without wrecking some of the cavern. "Bluebeard's Room" is low and tapering, with good head room but, since it does not lie in the stream course, there are probably no other large extensions beyond.

Leroy Foote, a most active member of the National Spelecological Society, is the latest explorer to discover something new. In 1945 he and a party entered the maze and found a sizeable stream which he thinks may be the outlet of a long, underground river that starts in Vermont and flows beneath the surface all the way into Connecticut. Mr. Foote maintains that the water in the Twin Lakes Cavern "tasted like Vermont water."

Near the Cave of the Bashful Lady is the "Jack-in-the-Pulpit" Cave. This is very difficult to enter, as its perpendicular portal is so small that a man must wedge himself in, with his feet and legs dangling, until he has wriggled down ten or twelve feet. Inside the cave is a marvelous marble hall with a roof some fifty feet

high. In one lofty corner is an inverted stone rockflow formation resembling a giant Jack-in-the Pulpit flower.

Several novices have been lost and have spent anxious, dripping hours inside the caverns. The number of ropes and strings that run into this cavern at one entrance speak of many expeditions of careful crawlers. The six hundred and twelve foot cave may be entered at one end and left by the other—if the way through can be found.

The foregoing information is in a book entitled "New England's Buried Treasure" by Clay Perry.

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The Last One Hundred Years

Thus far two families have been researched, each becoming prominent at the turn of the century. These are the Scovilles (who actually go back to the early history of the Town) and the Alvords. While they were both major land-owners with magnificent estates and mansions, they had little influence on the recreation of others at Twin Lakes.

Late in the 19th century, however, other families entered the scene and became large property owners on the east lake.

In 1849 Alberto T. Roraback purchased 600 acres of land on the east shore of the first lake for $600. The deal allowed the seller to cut timber on the land. Of course, over the years, the trees have grown back.

The families of John O'Hara and William Miles also were responsible in a major way for the increased use of the lake by other people.

After serving in the British Army, John O'Hara emigrated to Massachusetts. In 1888, he purchased land along the northern part of the east shore of Lake Washining. This land extended northward, encompassing fields and pastures which were ideal for farming. Part of this area is now the Institute of World Affairs, and the farmhouse on the Institute land was the home of John O'Hara.

In March of 1888, after he had purchased the property, O'Hara traveled from New York to inspect his land. However, on March 11, the famous blizzard hit the Northeast, and it was a long time before John O'Hara could finally set foot on his holdings. The snow was so deep that there were still drifts on the hillsides as late as June of that year.

Soon after John O'Hara had established his farm, he set about building a complex of villas and lodges on his lake property. Visitors could get food and lodging and enjoy the recreation of the lake area. In the early 1900's, the only

One of the O'Hara lodges.

boarding house at Twin Lakes was operated by the O'Haras. The clientele included the families of congressmen, noted surgeons, and the head chef of the old Waldorf in New York. Mostly, they vacationed for an entire month, and they came year after year. To accommodate his guests and the general public, John O'Hara opened a beach so that people could swim. He rented boats, as well as horses for those who preferred to explore the primitive roads and trails.

One day, John O'Hara was sawing lumber using a horse on a treadmill to turn the big circular saw. Something got caught and he yelled at the man tending the horse to pull the brake, but the man didn't hear. John O'Hara leaned forward toward the saw, but it didn't stop and his hand was cut off.

Another tragedy befell the O'Hara family in 1936. James O'Hara, educated at Hotchkiss School and graduated from Yale with an engineering degree, returned to the family farm to help his sisters. One day he ventured into a pasture where a bull was kept. The bull suddenly charged, struck, and killed him.

As we have seen earlier, the advent of the railroad started to open the lakes for recreation. It was inevitable that some people would not be satisfied with picnicking for a day, or camping for a few days. Something more substantial, more lasting, was desired. Thus, in the last part of the 19th century, a few cottages and rustic summer homes started to appear.

In 1900, William Miles began acquiring property along the south shore and part of the east and west shores of Lake Washining, and a major part of the shore on Lake Washinee. His land acquisition continued until 1909. During this period families would approach Mr. Miles seeking to purchase shorefront property on which to build a cottage. However, William Miles stubbornly refused to part with his land, although he was willing to grant leases to land on which cottages could be built. The reason for this was that Mr. Miles wanted to maintain the natural beauty of the lakes, with the shorefront uncut of trees or brush. With this protection, cottages along the shore could not be seen from the lake. When Mr. Miles' daughter, Helen Miles,, became owner of the property, she carried on his tradition of discouraging the cutting of tree or clearing the brush.

In the 1890's a cottage was built on land which is presently owned by the Atmores. This was leased land and, knowing that this cottage might have to be moved, it was built resting on heavy timbers that in an emergency could be used as runners. Thus the cottage could be slid out onto the lake when it was frozen over and moved to another site.

Another attempt to move a cottage backfired. In 1934, Miss Helen Miles wanted to move the Ives cottage, which was near the Fuller property, to a new location where the Firths now live. The house was slid out onto the ice on a Friday and then left for the week end. How

The next day the cottage had sunk into the lake.

ever, it was sitting over a spring and the weather warmed enough so that the ice weakened and the cottage and all its contents, including a piano, plunged into the lake. The cottage eventually was taken apart and rebuilt on the site that had been prepared for it. Until it was torn down in 1968 one could still see muddy footprints going up the ceiling.

It was not until 1910 that William Miles finally agreed to sell some land to the Pechins and the Milfords. Before he sold any land, however, the buyer had to promise not to cut any trees or brush.

By 1911 there were some sixty cottages and camps on or near the lakes. There were twenty along the east shore of the first lake, eighteen on the south, and nineteen on the west. Also there were six dwellings on the second lake, including the impressive Miles farmhouse.

Prior to about 1920 there was no road along the south shore; access to the camps was by launch or other boat. During the summer when families were in residence, milk from Grasslands Farm was delivered by a power launch called the Washining Cow. Residents would leave a milk can at the end of the dock with a note telling how much milk was needed. If the rich Guernsey milk was allowed to stand for a day, the cream that rose to the top was so rich it could be whipped.

There was no electricity around the lakes until lines were installed in the mid-1920's. Until then light had been furnished by kerosene lamps.

Although the lake water was probably safe for drinking, at the turn of the century, many residents preferred well or spring water. There was a well with a hand pump on the Loder (Noble) property that served some of the south shore camps. There was an unwritten rule that the pump could not be used before 9 a.m. because of the noise. This pump is still in place.

There was a spring near the Woodford camp on the south shore of the first lake, and another on the shore of the second lake on what is now Salisbury School property. Some residents would paddle a canoe from the first lake to the second lake spring to fill jugs. After automobiles entered the scene, it was common to fill bottles at the fountain feeding the watering trough in Salisbury. In the 1920's and 1930's, one gallon glass jugs were used, and there was many a casualty as could be seen from the broken glass in and around the trough.

By 1920 the first primitive cars were traveling the narrow dirt roads in the area of Twin Lakes. At about this time a road was cut along the south shore of East Twin Lake, paralleling the railroad. Access was up the Miles' farmhouse driveway to the barn, then going toward the lake and across the railroad tracks. There were four gates on the farm property that had to be opened and closed to gain access to the south shore road. Parts of the road were swampy, so slabs of wood from a saw mill were used as a base. Some of the slabs are still in evidence today at the easterly part of the road. The main road to Twin Lakes from Canaan came over Roraback property into the O'Hara area.

During the 1920's, William Miles sold more shorefront lots on the first lake. However, he retained a right of way from the farm property to the shore line of the first lake. On this right of way was a well and a windmill which pumped water to the farm buildings. The right of way was used to herd cows down to the lake where they could wade out into the water to cool off in the heat of summer and to quench their thirst. This right of way was located on what is now the May property, next to the Hamber property line.

In the early 1920's George Mather became an institution. He was associated with the Parsons Grocery store in Canaan, and each Thursday he would go house to house taking orders for groceries and kerosene for cook stoves and lighting. These orders were delivered on Friday along with any laundry and mail. This went on for a number of years. Later Parsons' store became Mather and O'Neil.

About 1925, a corn roast was held at the Roraback's tennis courts. The ladies of the east and south shores entertained the people from the west shore. This event was so successful that it was decided to form a club. A house near the Twin Lakes station was converted to a club house, after it was agreed to meet Mr. Miles' condition that there would be no intoxicating liquor on the premises. Nearly everyone on the

A typical camp in the early 1900's.

lakes belonged. There were two tennis courts and tournaments were arranged. During the summer season, every Saturday night a supper was held with dancing afterward, sometimes with live music. On Sunday mornings there would be a softball game. The club was a gathering place for the teenagers who could buy ice cream or soft drinks and listen to records of the big bands of the era. Each year there was a hay ride for the younger people.

During the second World War, the ladies met at the club house for Red Cross work. Finally, with so many young men in the service, the club was disbanded and the club house became the Roberts Grocery Store. It is now the Satre property. After the war a group of residents banded together and formed a new club, which was established as the Twin Lakes Beach Club. They purchased land and a boarding house next to the O'Hara marina and converted this to a club house. The water front was improved with a beach for swimming, and later tennis courts were built.

For hundreds of years Twin Lakes provided an abundance of fish, first to the Indians, and later to the settlers. During the last hundred years, fishing grew to be a major sport, both in the summer and through the ice in the winter. The native species included largemouth bass, pickerel, perch, catfish, sunfish, and rock bass. The pickerel was not originally native, but was brought in from Bantam Pond in Litchfield about 1812. A report by one fisherman in 1890 told of having three lines out and being kept busy pulling in bass and pickerel weighing five or six pounds. Fifty years ago, the number of people fishing the lakes was increasing and the schools of fish began to decline.

In the 1960's, the state found that the water and depth of the first lake were ideal for trout. Accordingly, trout were stocked, and the season was opened to kill off the bass. In the past ten years, the first lake has become saturated with fishing boats trolling for trout, which are now stocked each year. The crowding sometimes causes competition between fishermen and other users of the lake. Land-locked salmon have also been stocked and are caught in considerable numbers. They have been seen in the fall to go up the channel between the lakes, turn red and die, but is is doubted that they have spawned here.

In the late fall each year the Fish and Game Department of Connecticut send a team to set

Bottle-filling contest on a Twin Lakes Day.

out nets between O'Hara's Marina and the Island. The red salmon that are caught are milked of eggs and sperm for the state's fish hatchery.

By the 1920's the style of living for many of the summer residents and vacationers had changed from camping in tents or living in primitive cottages to having more comfortable summer homes. Quite a few families who arrived for the summer season brought along a maid to help with the cooking and cleaning. The Barnum family, which stayed in the substantial white house on the west hill, came from New Haven with Walter, the chauffeur; Alice, the cook; and Marie, the French maid. They also had a pony named Sweetheart, five Cocker Spaniels, and three Marmon cars.

At the end of the season, many of the servants employed by families around the lakes were given a week of vacation, and the families themselves promptly moved to the O'Hara Boarding House.

1907 marked the first Twin Lakes Day. It was originally held on the west shore near the Miles farmhouse now owned by the Petersons. The activities were organized by Albert Roraback, and J. Clinton Roraback was the official starter. He was still a student at Yale, and wore a white sweater with a large blue "Y" which he had won at football, being an All-American center for Yale. A Mr. Riecks provided the prizes which were very handsome bronze loving cups. These prizes proved to be too elaborate, and it was decided to omit celebration of Twin Lakes Day for the two following years. In 1910, the event was resumed, this time being held at the sandy beach then owned by the Pechins, and presently owned by the Atmores. Twin Lakes Day has been an annual event ever since, except for 1955 when a hurricane caused major flooding and the lakes were closed and 1979 following a tornadic storm. During the second World War, with so many younger men away, Twin Lakes Day nearly floundered. However, the Rev. Albert Roraback stepped in, took control, and ran the whole event almost single handedly.

Some of the early Twin Lakes Day celebrations included a boat illumination contest in the

Father-Daughter canoe race—Twin Lakes Day.

evening with winners receiving handsome prizes. One year, one of the south shore residents hired a professional decorator to illuminate his boat. To his great chagrin, his entry didn't even place in the winning of one of the coveted prizes. In 1976, the "75th Anniversary" of Twin Lakes Day included a parade of decorated boats and also a frog-jumping contest.

For many years vesper services were held on Sunday evenings. These were scheduled for the porch of a cottage or camp that had a piano. The Rev. Roraback presided at these services which were sponsored by the Twin Lakes Association. During these years, no motor boats were allowed on the lakes after 4 p.m. on Sundays.

The Twin Lakes Association was established shortly after the turn of the century. It was originally a very informal group of the men around the lakes area, concerned mainly with organizing events for the benefit of the property owners. For some years, a major topic at the annual meeting, besides Twin Lakes Day planning, was the height of the water in the lakes. Some would think it was too high, thus eroding the shoreline; others would deem it too low, thus spoiling the swimming. These two opinions would exist at the very same time! More recently, the Association has begun to take an active role in protecting the purity of the lake water, working with Town officials in regulating fishing and boating, developing zoning regulations, and improving the general area. Along with Twin Lakes Day, the Association sponsors sailboat races during the summer. As the need for a more active and effective membership developed to work on an increasing number of community problems, the Twin Lakes Association of Salisbury became incorporated in 1977. The membership now represents 150 families.

The Institute of World Affairs, which is located to the northeast of the first lake, was established

by Alexander and Maude Hadden in 1924. Its purpose was to educate foreign students in the ways of our democracy in the U.S. Originally the Institute was affiliated with the League of Nations in Geneva. As the danger of the second world war increased, the Institute was moved to Taconic. Mrs. Hadden was successful in getting donations from wealthy New Yorkers, including the Schulte family of cigar fame. The Institute was given considerable property, but after Mrs. Hadden died, part of the property had to be sold off in order to meet expenses. At this writing, it is not known if the Institute will be able to continue its operation much longer.

While the residents of our area associate Twin Lakes with fun and good times, there have also been some tragedies. There have been deaths by drowning and there have been fires which have damaged or destroyed several homes. We have seen hurricanes, tornadoes, and many severe lightning storms. Not much is known of the early years, but more recently a terrible accident occurred in June 1946. A family in two canoes paddled out onto Lake Washining. They were caught on the water by a sudden, vicious storm. Before they could make shore, the canoes capsized. Five people drowned and only three bodies were recovered.

In August 1955, a powerful hurricane swept over New England, dumping an incredible amount of rain everywhere, including Twin Lakes. On the east shore, on Twin Lakes Road, the rain softened the ground on a steep hillside above the road. A sudden mudslide developed in the early hours of the morning, swept across the road, and slammed into a cottage below, on the lake shore. The cottage disintegrated and the wreckage ended up in the lake. A young lady who had been sleeping in the cottage suffered a broken back. Today, all that remains is the fireplace and chimney. As a result of the disastrous flooding, the water level in the lakes rose nearly four feet; the two lakes became as one, effectively making the Between-the-Lakes Road impassable. The water was clouded with mud and silt, and as the water was contaminated, the lakes were closed for swimming for the remainder of the season.

Conclusion

As you have read, our history goes back nearly four centuries, when Indians and wild animals were the only creatures around. The first white settlers arrived in the Salisbury area about 250 years ago and gradually established farms. Eventually, the Indians were displaced and soon either left the area or faded away. Industries were started in Taconic prior to the Revolutionary War, becoming important in the 1800's and declining to abandonment by 1900. The advent of the railroad in 1870 started a change in the Twin Lakes area from farming to recreation. Camping and picnicking gave way to the building of summer cottages, although some farming still continues on a small scale. More cottages were built between 1910 and 1930, and recently some substantial houses have been built for year-round living. Canoeing always was popular; sailing started here about fifty years ago. With the advent of high-powered motor boats following the second World War, water skiing soon became the popular sport on the lakes. But, however difficult it has become to protect the character of the lakes, Twin Lakes still retains the surrounding beauty of the forest and hills and the lakes remain a source of pleasure to young and old alike.