

acre tillable for potatoes. With the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad running along its front, and with its own storehouses located on sidings on that line, with splendid buildings and with ample equipment to meet every requirement, this so-called Hoyt & Wheeler farm was for years and is today the biggest business proposition in farming within the limits of the County.

At the present time it is owned by Phillips Company, a big potato concern with headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia, an active figure in which business is Mr. D. W. Corey, long located in the potato buying and shipping business in Presque Isle, and one of the most active and capable men who have been associated with the potato growing and shipping interests of Aroostook. The active management of the big farm is in the capable hands of Mr. Wheeler, who was formerly associated with Mr. Hoyt in the ownership of the farm. Since coming into the hands of Phillips Company the farm has been increased in size by the purchase of an adjoining farm, and now comprises in the neighborhood of 500 acres. Located on the same road as the State Sanatorium, the institution and the farm are features of special interest on that road, the farm especially being one of the show places of the northern part of the County.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Scenic Attractions Of Aroostook, Its Forests And Fish And Game, Its Roads And Its Automobiles.

In a series of sketches of this sort the claims of Aroostook on the score of scenic beauty should not be overlooked. Aroostook is attractive in many ways, but not the least so in the summer season, by reason of its almost unrivalled summer climate, and its scenery. Its summer season is brief, beginning about the first of June, and ending, somewhat too abruptly, in the latter part of September, which is often a very beautiful month in Northern Maine. But while it lasts Aroostook basks in such soft sunshine and balmy air, it has such a wealth of wonderful cloud and sunset effects, such coloring in the masses of verdure in the fields and forests, there is such a tonic in breathing the clear and invigorating air, and such joy in living as are found nowhere else.

In its hills and valleys, and its smooth, wide roads, which everywhere, winding through charming rural neighborhoods, appeal to the eye through their beauty, and what equally cheers and satisfies, their many evidences of human thrift and

prosperity, Aroostook, in the four months of summer sunshine it enjoys, is unrivalled.

It has the varied summer charms enjoyed by other sections of Maine and New England, and it also adds to what they have some special charms which they lack. For instance, in seasons when the winters are favorable, and the clover does not winter-kill, fields sometimes scores of acres in extent, burst into a riot of bloom and fragrance such as can be found nowhere outside Aroostook, and the traveller may ride for days through their fragrant verdure. Alongside the clover fields are the potato fields, more luxuriant in foliage than even the clover meadows, and when in full bloom not surpassed in beauty by any crop that is grown.



A TYPICAL FEATURE OF WOODS LIFE
IN AROOSTOOK

Besides its broad and wonderful farms, which visitors to the County so much admire, Aroostook is fortunate in the general configuration of its landscape. In North Aroostook it is traversed by the Aroostook River, a tributary of the St. John. The latter has its source in the remote western wilderness of the State, and after flowing for hundreds of miles through a magnificent valley, empties its waters into the Bay of Fundy. In no part of its long journey to the sea is it surpassed in beauty of scenery by any other river on the continent. Its tributary, the Aroostook River, is as beautiful, both in itself and in the beauty of the valley

through which it takes its course, as the parent river. In some respects, indeed, the Aroostook River Valley surpasses the St. John Valley in that it is far more extensive in area, receding gently from the banks of the river in a broad map of the most fertile and beautiful farming country to be found in all the eastern part of the country.

In addition to the scenic attractions of the settled portion of Aroostook, there is its vast forest, an unbroken wilderness stretching for a hundred miles between the last settlement and the Canadian border. What this mighty forest domain is one can feebly imagine, if he climbs to the tower of one of the lookout stations, which are perched on the top of every commanding elevation in the great wilderness country.



LAKE SCENE IN NORTHERN MAINE

From each of these lookout towers one looks down upon that part of the sea of treetops which intervenes between the tower he is in and the next on the crest of some hill on the distant horizon, and from the top of that one in every direction the same view is repeated. Each tower has a watchman, whose eye, during the dry months of summer is constantly scanning the great expanse of forest committed to his care for signs of fire, and if a wreath of smoke curls up above the tree tops anywhere within the precincts of his watch and ward, he gives the alarm by telephone to the fire warden of his district, with its location, as in-

dedicated on his map. The warden in turn calls up the patrolman within his district, and if this does not suffice, and the fire assumes threatening proportions, he calls upon the authorities of the nearest settlements to summon a posse of fire fighters to grapple with the emergency. For, though he may not be aware of the fact, every able-bodied man is amenable to the authority of the forest fire warden, and his summons to join a force that is ordered out to fight the spread of a forest fire that one of the lookout station watchmen has discovered and reported, is quite as imperative as a court summons to attend as a witness or for the purpose of jury duty.

These lookout stations have to do primarily with the protection of the almost boundless money value of the forested portion of the State, and the organization of the system has an economic and commercial object. But in preserving the millions of dollars of wealth which these hundreds of timbered townships represent, they also protect their scenic wealth from ruin and devastation by fire, and nowhere else in the whole country perhaps, is there a region of such scenic charm and fascination as is possessed by the vast wilderness of Northern Maine, a large part of which region is in western section of Aroostook.

THE FISH AND GAME ATTRACTIONS OF AROOSTOOK

Closely allied with the great forest of the County, and made possible by the extent and physical character of the wilderness region, is the fish and game attractions it holds out to those fond of hunting and fishing and of woods life in general. The great woods is full of lakes, ponds and streams, many of which teem with trout, salmon and togue, and by the side of the lakes and streams in the midst of the delights of forest freedom and solitude, there are countless places to pitch a tent or build a camp. For those who love such a life, and in most persons nature has implanted the sane and natural instinct which responds to the lure and fascination of a great wilderness, such as stretches over Northern Maine, this sort of life has an irresistible charm.

In order to maintain the hunting and fishing attractions of Northern Maine a system of laws for the protection of game has been enacted, and these laws are as vigorously enforced as the legislative appropriations for that purpose permit. In the lakes and streams hundreds of thousands of trout and salmon, propagated at the different hatcheries, are planted annually, the result being that the supply is not only maintained unimpaired, but in most of the waters of Northern Maine is on the increase. Dur-

ing the present season (1922) nearly a million young trout and salmon, hatched at the Caribou Hatchery, have been deposited in the different lakes and streams of the County, and it is proposed not only to keep up this system of annual replenishment of the game fish in the region, but to increase it from year to year.



THE DELIGHTS OF CAMP LIFE

The wilderness section of Northern Maine also abounds in big game, such as moose and deer. Many years ago caribou were as plentiful as deer are at present, but owing probably to the exhaustion of their food supply, they suddenly migrated, their objective apparently being Newfoundland, where they are at present found in large numbers.

THE ROADS IN AROOSTOOK

However charming a section of country may be in point of scenery, it avails little in these days of automobile travel, unless it has roads that invite the tourist, and that make trips for those who have cars, easy and enjoyable to take. For a considerable period after the automobile made its advent, Aroostook remained isolated and inaccessible, because of the usually bad, and often, after rains, practically impassable condition of the stretch of wilderness road located in part in the southern part of Aroostook, and in part in the adjoining County of Penobscot. The traveller never knew what he might expect to find in making a journey by motor car through this section, and this fact for a long time placed an embargo on tourist travel into and out of Aroostook.

This road is now undergoing improvement, and will soon be converted into a smooth and fine trunk line highway, which instead of being dreaded by automobilists, will be one of the most inviting routes for tourist travel in New England, no other affording the same novel and delightful scenery. At all times in the season of automobile travel this wilderness route will be a continual feast to the eye of the traveller, and will make a trip unrivalled for scenic beauty in the month of September, when the gorgeous tints of autumn are spread upon the vast woods through which this road runs.

Road improvement is also making good headway generally throughout Aroostook. From Houlton one is able now to travel to Van Buren, a distance of about seventy-five miles, on an excellent highway, a very large percentage of it either trunk line road or State Aid road. From the shire town of Aroostook one can also travel to Fort Kent by way of Presque Isle, Ashland, Portage and Eagle Lakes, a distance of about a hundred miles over an equally fine road, and through some of the most delightful farming, river and lake scenery to be found anywhere in the eastern part of the country. What is called a Three-Town-Way road is now in process of construction, which will link together by a trunk line highway the splendid towns of Presque Isle, Fort Fairfield and Limestone. This road will afford opportunity, also, to swing around a thirty-six miles circle, on a fine road, which will include the three famous farming towns of Presque Isle, Fort Fairfield and Caribou. In order to appreciate the progress that Aroostook is making in improved highways, one has only to cross over into New Brunswick. New Brunswick is older in point of settlement, its people are thrifty and prosperous, but at the present time its roads are very poor indeed in comparison with those of Aroostook and although our provincial neighbor is waking up to the importance of improved roads, the long lead Aroostook has, and the characteristic hustle and energy of Aroostook people in pushing forward improvements, will be likely to keep our County well in the lead.

THE AUTOMOBILE AS A FACTOR IN AROOSTOOK LIFE

Probably nowhere else in the United States is there a section of equal population where automobiles so abound as in Aroostook. And in the multitude of cars the great majority are not moderate priced cars, but high-class and pretentious ones. As a natural consequence of the gait it has struck in number and price of cars, garages and gasoline stations are more numerous

in Aroostook than saloons used to be in the thirstiest cities before Prohibition wiped them from the map, and they are not only more numerous, but are more costly and elaborate, and have a larger patronage than ever the saloons had.

Assume that Aroostook were wide open alcoholically speaking, on no holiday of the year would so many gallons of grog be poured down the necks of merrymaking crowds as are poured into the tanks of motor cars on any pleasant Sabbath day in summer, when Sunday joy riding is at high tide.

The sights on any fine Saturday night in any one of the bustling villages of Aroostook, cannot anywhere else be duplicated in New England as regards the automobile turnout. It is not uncommon in Presque Isle, the home village of the writer, on a Saturday evening, to have as many as five hundred cars packed like sardines into the business and the adjacent side streets. And what is true of Presque Isle, is true of Houlton, Fort Fairfield, Caribou, and in proportion to size, true of every village in the County.

In the same way that the wide-awake Aroostookans throng all the villages of the County on summer evenings, so they overrun any place that has a show or holiday with their generous patronage, and it is this spirit, and the fact that thousands of automobiles make it possible to exercise it, that has boosted such institutions as the Northern Maine Fair. If one doubts this let him attend the big day of the Fair, or take a glimpse at the cut of a big day scene at the Fair which is inserted in connection with these sketches.

It is not much use to moralize on the exceeding prevalence of the automobile in Aroostook, or to speculate on the bearing in various ways it has on the economic condition of the County. In fact, one hardly knows whether to deplore or to admire and enthuse over the kaleidoscopic picture of color and gaiety which the automobile gives to Aroostook all through the summer season. One thing is sure, that it vastly increases the scope and extent of social and business intercourse in the County, makes life much richer and more worth living, and has compensations that may very largely counterbalance the unquestionable extravagance and dissipation in a money point of view that now and then wreck individuals and that have to be reckoned with in a collective sense.