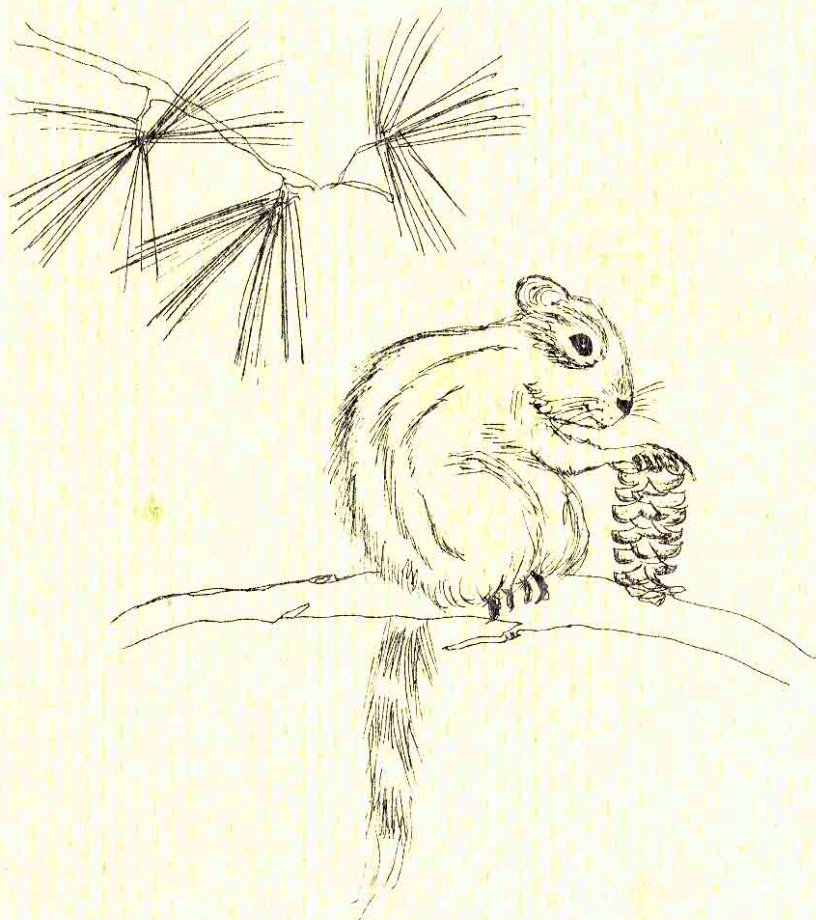


THE STORY OF RUSTIC RIDGE 1901-1976



NORTHFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

COMMEMORATING THE

SEVENTY-FIFTH

ANNIVERSARY

OF

RUSTIC RIDGE

A tap root
fulfilling inherent yearnings
of Spirit, Body and Mind.

Dedicated to the memory of

AMBERT G. MOODY

1863 – 1945

Whose foresight and helpfulness
forged a community blessed with
spiritual sensitivity and an
abiding loyalty to high ideals
and mutual friendship.

An Expression of Appreciation

Many of us enjoyed the review of our Northfield heritage during the Tercentenary Celebration in 1973. Now in 1976, coinciding with our nation's two-hundredth anniversary, we celebrate the seventy-fifth birthday of the Rustic Ridge. The following story provides us the opportunity to learn and appreciate how the Ridge came to be what it is today. I would like to recognize some of the people who made this story possible.

First, all of us are indebted to the Historical Committee for their tireless efforts, working countless hours to prepare this invaluable story. We salute the following:

Francis Jones	Dorothy Noble
Earl Loomis	Dorothy Peck
Esther Loos	Carolyn Poole
Virginia MacLeod	Bessie Schmadeke
Helen Moore	George Townsend
Robert Moore	Marilyn Williams

Their research included contacts with many past and present residents of Northfield and the Ridge. Our salute is directed towards them as well; only fear of inadvertent omission keeps me from attempting to identify each member of the supporting cast who cooperated so effectively with our committee.

The committee's research also benefited by earlier works on Northfield including Dr. Robert Bonner Jack's history of the Ridge completed in 1946, W. R. Moody's biography of his father, Dwight L. Moody, A. P. Fitt's volume "All About Northfield", and booklets commemorating Northfield's centennials.

Bessie Schmadeke's generous financial contribution to help defray publication costs of this book was made in loving memory of her father, Horace K. Brainard, the first president of Rustic Ridge. Our appreciation of this manifestation of devotion honors the memory of both Mrs. Schmadeke and her father.

Two people deserve special recognition: Esther Loos and Earl Loomis. As Chairman of the Historical Committee, Esther's skill, determination and enthusiasm in gathering and organizing the material which was used as a basis for this book perhaps can be fully appreciated only by the members of her committee. Earl possessed long-range vision ten years ago when he perceived the value of a Ridge history. With his administrative ability he organized a committee and during the ensuing ten years he was the guiding spirit in creating and writing the narrative.

Many times we have been asked: "What is Rustic Ridge?". As we read these cherished memories perhaps we can better attempt to answer the unanswerable.

David S. Powell
President
Rustic Ridge Association

Cover illustration by Nancy Hann

FIRST COTTAGE – 1901

Starting at the intersection of Highland Avenue, Moody Street and Winchester Road, North Lane takes its way due east and shortly after crossing Birnam Road, with more than one sharp curve, climbs a foothill of Notch Mountain still following an easterly course. There, amid the woods of the hillside, seven finger roads, at intervals, branch off North Lane in a northerly direction and along these roads are the cottages of Tract One and Tract Two of Rustic Ridge, while north of them are the cottages of the Pine Grove addition, and south of North Lane are the four cottages of the South Extension – a total of seventy-one cottages, whose owners and renters work together in the Rustic Ridge Association of East Northfield, Massachusetts.

The pioneer of Rustic Ridge was the Rev. Arthur N. Thompson.

In 1901, while walking through the woods, he came upon a spot on the south side of North Lane at the sharp curve at the top of the hill where the view charmed him and as he gazed, he found himself exclaiming, "What a wonderful place for a summer home!" Upon inquiry he learned it was possible to secure the land and he looked about for someone to build his home.

This is where the builder – Mr. Howard S. Harris, a Hermon man of the Class of 1902 – comes into the picture.

I quote from his letter to me. "In the summer of 1901 I was working in New York State and one day something seemed to tell me I must return to Northfield, and I did at once, arriving there at twelve o'clock on a Saturday night, having walked all the way from Greenfield. I knew the night watchman at the Seminary, Thomas Rowan, and found him at Marquand Hall and slept in his bed that night. He told me that Mr. Frank Spencer tried to locate me that day and had asked where I could be found. I went to see Mr. Spencer next morning and he told me the Rev. A. N. Thompson wanted to build a slab cottage on the hillside and he would like me to do it. Mr. Spencer had materials there and we started on Monday morning with five helpers, and Rev. Mr. Thompson slept in the cottage the next Saturday night."

The Rev. Mr. Thompson named the cottage "Kenjockey." This was the first cottage on the Ridge.

In the November issue of the 1901 Record of Christian Work there is a letter from Rev. A. N. Thompson to the Editor with a picture of Kenjockey and a plan of the rooms. The Rev. Mr. Thompson wrote that the cottage was built in ten days by four men and the total expense was \$300.45. He also added that while at Conference time the minimum cost of board and lodging on the campus was seven dollars a week, they had lived at Kenjockey at an average expense of \$2.03 per week each person and had lived well.

That summer of 1901, Mr. A. G. Moody had Mr. Morris, a teacher of mathematics at Hermon, survey Tract No. One. John Fleming and Howard Harris helped him. Tract No. Two, east of Pine Road, was surveyed in 1904 and Pine Grove in 1903.

The foregoing is copied from the opening pages of the Rustic Ridge Association History, 1901 - 1945, authored by the Rev. Robert Bonner Jack, Secretary of the Association for twenty-five years.

Peering into the mists of centuries past, can we discern the trail leading to the almost instant gratification of a spontaneous wish suddenly sparked in sighting the beautiful rolling river valley? Our flashback demands retracing to the founding year in the Seventeenth Century, as the Northfield community celebrated its Tercentenary in 1973.

FRONTIER OUTPOST – 1673.

Escaping from a murderous attack in daylight by once friendly Indians, surviving settlers and their families fled under military escort in 1675, ending the first settlement of Northfield that began in the Spring two years earlier. The Indians known as Squakheags had encouraged English settlers from Northampton to buy their land, and a deal reached in 1671 and extended in 1673, brought sixteen families to the meadows and plains of the river valley.

Ten years previously, in 1663, Mohawk Indians from New York raided the local Indians and a revenge expedition by the Squakheags in 1669 was mauled badly. English explorers reached the area in 1669, and apparently the Squakheags hoped that English settlers might add some protection against enemy tribe raids.

For some centuries Indians had camped in the river valley, burning meadows and upper plains each autumn to clear tillable ground for the raising of maize. Clearings where squaws raised crops were prized discoveries by scouts as the English tide of settlement rolled westward from the eastern coastline and advanced northward up the Connecticut River Valley. The river and its tributaries offered traversible highways in exploring the northern wilderness.

The selling of property by the Indians apparently did not mean to them moving their village sites, as they continued living in their scattered wigwam clusters on familiar grounds, spearing salmon (legendary source from which their name derived - Squakheag), catching shad, hunting, and maize raising in open areas which for years had served as the gathering place for Indian councils and competitive games.

Growing hostility began simmering in the Spring of 1675. A garrison of twenty soldiers came to the fort as added protection for the settlement.

Suddenly in September the bad feeling flamed into open attack by the Indians. Several settlers were caught in the open fields and killed, and all survivors headed for the stockade where many settlers lived in small log cabins inside the fort. Fearing this outbreak of hostility, one of the settlers had hurried previously to Hadley for reinforcements and thirty-six soldiers were enroute to the scene on the very day of the attack. They camped overnight about three miles away unaware of the attack. Upon renewing their approach on foot the next morning, Captain Beers and his men walked into a ravine ambuscade where the grass grew tall, and the Captain, the settler-messenger, and over half the force were killed. Escapees from the ambush carried back word of the slaughter and a larger force assembled and hastened to Northfield, passing decapitated heads mounted along the way as they neared the settlement.

Settlers inside the stockade were escorted immediately to safety while the Indians burned completely the stockade and huts, killing the cattle to wipe out all vestiges of the settlement. The following year in the Spring the Northfield Conference that assembled on the site of the destroyed settlement for a Council meeting included surrounding Indian tribes twenty-five hundred strong. But the death of the Indian leader, King Philip, who camped during the Spring of 1676 on the bluff west of the river, signaled the early dispersion of tribes in the area, and by 1684 a few grantees broke ground anew, planting crops and preparing to rebuild.

By 1686, friendliness with the Indians was restored and twenty-nine families had joined the settlement. To gain clear title to the land, the settlers made an additional payment to the Indians and the second attempt at settlement moved ahead with a display of confidence that homes could be built for permanence. Only two years later, a marauding Indian band stirred up by the French to attack English settlements, killed six persons near the brook crossing Main Street in Northfield, and half of the families left. During 1690, the County Court, in consequence of renewed French-English hostilities, ordered removal of all the inhabitants to Springfield, ending the second attempt to establish a settlement.

These initial harrowing episodes made it starkly clear that the wilderness from the Squakheag outpost to the Canadian border cloaked hazards too menacing for the survival of English settlers. Warfare swept deep into the wilderness as aroused Indians attacked English outposts, the Deerfield massacre occurring in 1704. Only after the French and English peace agreement in 1713, could resettlement be attempted again. A measure of the precarious conditions surrounding the settlement during four decades is revealed by actual occupancy approximating nine years in two brave attempts.

In 1714, the Court granted the right to settle this territory anew, naming the town Northfield. But, in 1723 two leading citizens were killed by a band of Indians. Then in 1724 a fort was built a few miles northward

which relieved the town from direct frontier attack. In fact, Northfield ruggedly spearheaded English settlement in the river valley for two-thirds of a century before wilderness dangers abated enough for further advance northward to Charlestown, N.H., settled in 1740.

Renewed warfare between France and England in 1744 provoked further assaults upon the local fort, and sporadic killing of settlers in 1746, 1747 and 1748. After razing forts in the next few years, in 1754 Northfield fortified again to defend against new warfare. Northfield became a recruiting territory for volunteers experienced in Indian attacks to serve as protective forces.

Not until 1766 could the rugged pioneers achieve a sense of peaceful security for a few years. Then came the Battle of Lexington. A volunteer force of minute men, twenty-five in number, hastened to Cambridge to join colonists fighting the British. The exhausting war of rebellion continued the urgent demand for men of valor willing to confront life and death emergencies, and Northfield was quick to respond.

The second century of Northfield life from the war of rebellion right after its beginning on through to the war between the states in its closing years tested further the spirit of this pioneer community. The hardy descendants of early settlers burdened with debt frugally conserved every resource. Tenaciously during the Nineteenth Century the foundation was laid for better days. The small business firms in the town and the farmers in the surrounding countryside suffered from competition and from the migration of young men to cities and to the West, depleting the community. The era of renewed growth and increasing community loyalty began coincident with the start of the third century of Northfield life, with the inspiring return of a native son, Dwight L. Moody, to his home town in 1875, after more than two years of intense evangelistic service in England, Scotland, and Ireland that brought him world fame. Promptly he bestowed this fame upon Northfield by making his childhood town both home and headquarters as he responded for the next twenty-four years to evangelistic calls throughout the nation and set in motion activities which brought thousands of distinguished citizens to this fountain of spiritual inspiration.

BIRTH OF A NEW ERA – 1875

Dwight L. Moody, born in 1837, was a farm boy descendant of early settlers in Northfield. He was the sixth child of Edwin and Betsey Holton Moody, and only a small lad when his father died at age forty-one during the thirteenth year of the marriage. The mother faced dire economic straits with seven children to raise and the arrival of twins a few months after the father's death. Creditors took even the kindling in the woodshed.

With sturdy strength, courage, and faith in God she kept her family together. Aid came from her brother and the minister of the Unitarian Church. The older children were enrolled in the Sunday School and the family baptized. When the children were asked to bring in others to the Sunday School, small Dwight's missionary work began securing recruits with his brother. The mother instructed her children in the enduring Faith that seeks after God and His Righteousness.

The stages by which Dwight L. Moody developed into a world famous evangelist include before dawn to after dark farm work at a very early age, limited school opportunities, leaving home at seventeen to work in an uncle's shoe store, rebirth of faith in a Boston church, highly successful selling of shoes in a midwestern territory, intensive lay leadership in a Chicago church, switching from lucrative commercial employment to full-time leadership as a layman fostering the Christian faith, president of the Young Men's Christian Association in Chicago, and finally answering a call in 1873 with his family and Ira D. Sankey, famous gospel singer, to conduct evangelistic services in England. This man of precious little formal classroom education, but remarkable energy, devotion and zeal, landed in Liverpool, England, in mid-June almost wholly unknown, to discover that the inviting sponsors had died and no one was there to assist him in initiating the program of religious meetings. He placed his trust in God and went with his family to a hotel. That evening reaching into his coat pocket he found an unopened letter which had been handed to him just before sailing. Opening it he read a letter from a Y. M. C. A. Secretary inviting him to York, England. Immediately he wired this concerned Christian that he would be there the next day, and in less than a week's time launched into a wholly consuming schedule that accelerated rapidly in attendance and miraculous results for over two years throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland. News reports of these dramatic meetings reaching the United States stirred great interest as the evangelist aroused the British Isles with his sincerity, compelling eloquence, and natural simplicity. Landing in New York in 1875, during August, he was eagerly besieged with press inquiries and invitations to conduct meetings in America, but he informed everyone that he was headed immediately for Northfield to see his mother. The magnitude of this devotion to family and home town within a few years gave birth to new Northfield frontiers.

— The visionary leadership of Dwight L. Moody and his full-hearted love of his native town inspired and profoundly influenced activities which combine together into an unique community limited in size but vast in its potential for fulfillment of the human spirit and Divine nature of mankind. Mr. Moody's spirit vividly imprints the life of the ongoing community in a great many spheres, but now the Northfield Mount Hermon School reflects this influence most conspicuously. Notes selected from the biography written by his son, William, illuminate the qualities

which add distinction to Northfield as it enters the final quarter of the Twentieth Century:

Dwight L. Moody was the principal architect of the Northfield environment. He commanded personal respect by his inspirational leadership, common sense, humility, self-reliant judgment, and his open and unselfish character. He sought to find points of common belief instead of points of difference. When he preached, he first achieved rapport with his congregation before starting his sermon. Christian unity was central to the Northfield Conferences, with the Bible as a whole held sacred.

The historical development of the community, greatly over-compressed into a few items of special interest to summer cottage owners, follows:

A frontier settlement started in 1673, twice destroyed, finally took root after four decades, survived rugged years of danger and austerity, to achieve during its third century distinction in the service of mankind.

Native born son, Dwight L. Moody, 1837 - 1899, won world-wide acclaim as an evangelist, founding—

Northfield Seminary - 1879

Christian Conferences - 1880

Mount Hermon School - 1881

Northfield Hotel - 1888.

First summer cottage built on hillside adjacent to Seminary - 1901.

Dedicated leadership in conferences and education continued during the Twentieth Century.

CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE CENTER — 1880

As calls on Dwight L. Moody to lead evangelistic meetings poured in, promising leaders emerged as participants assisting in these services. Mr. Moody sensed an impelling need for a summer program drawing together outstanding Christian leaders to increase the nation-wide, and also world-wide, impact of the evangelistic programs. When he looked for a leader to launch a pioneer program, he found concurrence in the proposal but great reluctance to accept the main leadership role. Everyone recognized Mr. Moody as the one most qualified to give momentum to the proposal; so finally, with prayers for guidance, nearly five years after beginning his American evangelistic crusade, he invited over three hundred to attend a ten-day session in early September, 1880, in Northfield, just after completing the first dormitory building. The facilities of the Seminary and the Town were sorely taxed as conferees from this and other lands acclaimed with their prayers and enthusiasm the introduction of this powerful new stimulating approach, widening the impact of religious leadership on the Christian world.

This distinguished assembly of prominent churchmen from America and from abroad laid the foundation for Northfield to become a fountain of religious inspiration, continuing for two-thirds of a century. The summer conference programs generated movements like the Student Volunteers, which propelled outstanding college students into foreign mission careers. Summer conferences for student leaders, similar to those started at Northfield before 1895, began operating at other places of beauty and distinction, such as Estes Park, Colorado. Men like John R. Mott, Robert E. Speer, and a host of others, reached out for the torch they helped to light at Northfield and carried it to great heights in the religious experience of America.

The "Convocation for Prayer" as the first conference was called, generated one year later, a conference for one month that brought nearly nine hundred to the town. The third conference was delayed for three years while Mr. Moody was in Great Britain and then resumed annual sessions. Two new annual conferences were organized during his lifetime, one for young men in 1886, and for girls in 1893. Mr. Moody's star-studded roster of speakers attracted large followings, his sense of timing and drama keeping the crowds spellbound. Northfield soon occupied a place of such central importance in American religious life that many leading newspapers from large cities sent reporters to the meetings and Postal Telegraph ran wires to the campus for quick news service.

The General Conference for two weeks in early August climaxed the summer sessions, giving a spiritual quality that brought people of great influence to Northfield. The recollections of a very early Ridge resident, Bessie Brainard, married to John F. Schmadeke in 1921 at the Brainard cottage built in 1903, offer an appealing glimpse at the evening service:

"An early supper was planned for all who wanted to attend the Round Top service at sunset. I doubt if anyone who has sat on that hillside near the graves of Mr. and Mrs. Moody and watched the sun go down beyond the western hills can ever forget some of the messages they heard, perhaps from the converted alcoholic Mel Trotter, whose words you could not hear without a sob in your throat and tears in your eyes. Perhaps the message would be given by one of the great preachers from England or from here in America. They always seemed helpful and inspirational. Then there was the praise service at the Auditorium. Who can forget those hymns of worship and praise? Is it any wonder that those who heard them wished that their children and grandchildren might have the same experience?"

Among the Moody projects, the summer conferences stand out singularly as a magnetic force that generated waves of emotional perceptiveness and witness to the glory of God. They were hailed as a phenomenon by the national press and those who thronged to attend. Not

only did Northfield become a household word in Christian circles, but untold numbers responded to the stimulating spiritual forces of these summer assemblies. The fact that cottage colonies began to cluster beside the conference site to house some of the devoted participants only suggests the influence of the conferences, but even so offers a heartening memory to those who were blessed by this hearthside relationship.

DEDICATION OF LOWELL LODGE – 1899

Prophetic words were spoken by Dwight L. Moody in August, 1899, four months before his death, during the dedication of Lowell Lodge on a site just off the present Highland Avenue. The Lodge was designed to accommodate twenty-five self-supporting young women from the mill town of Lowell, Massachusetts, in attendance at the seventeenth General Conference of Christian Workers.

“I am more than pleased with what has been accomplished here. We give the land very gladly because we believe it is going to open up a new plan which I hope will be a great blessing not only to the town of Northfield, but to the country. If people see that such a house can be put up for \$1,000, some of them will duplicate this one. We will furnish the land for nothing. If people come here from Lowell and get stirred up by God’s spirit so that they go back and carry a blessing to others, we shall be a thousand times repaid for the little paltry land that we give. We don’t want a city in Northfield; we want to spread out. There is no reason why the whole mountain side should not be built up. The greatest trouble we have is to entertain the people who come here. You can imagine that to have twelve hundred extra people in a little town like this, as we have had for the last few days, makes somebody work. Now, if people will undertake to put up houses where they can board themselves it will be a great relief. In that way they can get a room and live on bread and milk and blueberries, for about two dollars a week. We don’t ask them to come here to pamper the body, but to feed the soul.

“I believe the blessing of God is going to rest upon this building and those who come here. I think Northfield is just about as near Paradise as we can get on earth.”

On his death bed in December, 1899, Mr. Moody requested a nephew, Ambert, to assist in the business details: “Will, you will carry on Mount Hermon; Paul will take up the Seminary when he is older. Fitt will look after the Institute in Chicago, and Ambert will help you in the business details.”

COTTAGE BUILDING BOOM – 1902

As the Rev. A. N. Thompson pursued his impelling desire for a cottage, he apparently approached a Seminary and Conference administrator in August, 1901, Ambert G. Moody, inquiring about the availability of the site. This is a portion of an area, later designated as South Addition, conveyed to Northfield Seminary by George F. Moody, Ambert's father, on September 24, 1901. But before that happened the cordial affirmative response to the inquiry materialized by arranging with Frank Spencer to supply materials and men for construction early the ensuing Monday morning. Mr. Spencer took prompt steps to deliver materials as requested and searched for Howard Harris, a mature Mount Hermon senior recognized for his hustling performance on a campus where pitching in was a daily requirement. That Sunday morning in August when Harris learned that Spencer wanted him, he was immediately hired to take charge of construction starting the next morning and asked to rush the cottage to completion. Some time after the Seminary acquired title to the site, a renewable lease was executed with the Rev. Mr. Thompson to run for a period of several years, with the annual rental stipulated as 6% of the land value - computed at one cent per square foot.

— Later that same August, Mr. Moody responded promptly to immediate inquiries for building lots, by raising money from four men; Silliman, Whipple, Tarbox and Walter, to purchase fifteen acres from William D. Alexander, by deed dated September 3, 1901, and had a layout prepared of lots and access roads. This was later known as Tract I, designated as Rustic Ridge, containing 41 lots, practically all sold within a year, by August 1902, operating under Trustees appointed to supervise the development project.

The Rev. A. N. Thompson became an active participant in stirring up interest by speaking from the Conference platform in 1902 about his new cottage in the woods, inviting members to visit it; also, he served as a Trustee for Tract I, signing deeds conveying land to buyers of lots. The selling price of one cent a square foot brought the cost to fifty dollars for a lot of five thousand square feet, but some sites cost more, comprising two lots or larger areas.

The rising demand soon compelled further arrangements with the Seminary to lease plots on additional land, forty-two lots being laid out in an area designated as Pine Grove Addition directly north of Tract I, and ten additional lots in South Addition where the pioneer cottage stood. The tremendous appetite for hillside sites remained unappeased so Tract II, fifteen acres up the hill from Tract I, was purchased from George F. Moody and his sister, Mrs. Elizabeth C. Washburn, offering forty-five more lots for sale by late 1903, raising the total to one hundred thirty-nine lots

in the four contiguous areas that comprise Rustic Ridge. The land in both Tracts was held in trust, Arther N. Thompson for I and Ambert G. Moody for II, in accordance with Declarations of Trust. In Tracts I and II the ownership of lots was conveyed by deed, but in Pine Grove Addition and also in South Addition the land belonged to the School and those building cottages leased the land remitting a modest annual rent and renewing leases at about ten-year periods.

The five-year span dating from the first cottage hummed each summer with sounds of hammer and saw. "Hustling" Harris and his associate for two years, Tom Hood, working for twenty-five cents, sometimes thirty-five cents an hour, directed most of the whirlwind of construction, hiring a number of Hermon men as helpers, while forty-eight cottages were planned and finished by the end of the summer of 1906. Only eight of these cottages were built by other contractors.

Four-fifths of the seventy-three cottages erected on the Ridge nestled into the hillside before the pace slackened after 1908, which was the last year of Harris construction. Other contractors were active by this date, particularly Arthur Bolton, and most of the cottages joined the colony by 1917. World War I, after entry by the United States, almost clamped the lid on cottage construction. The Seminary by that time could offer more ample dormitory facilities.

Tying the birth of the colony directly to the Conferences, the Rev. Robert Bonner Jack wrote in the first published Ridge history:

"When, in 1910, we were looking about for a summer home, there were a number of places in mind. The deciding factor in the choice of Rustic Ridge was the fact that the Northfield Conferences would be within reach. It can be affirmed if there had been no Conferences there would have been no Rustic Ridge Association."

NEIGHBORING COTTAGE COLONIES

The contagious fever of cottage ownership among Conference delegates swept northward as the tide of new roofs visible from the Seminary campus rolled along the hillside, also surging upwards. In 1903, two adjacent tracts north of the Rustic Ridge area joined the burgeoning cottage community. The widow of Elliot Lyman, Mrs. Richard Woodbury, developed Mountain Park along town roads, laying out lots just east of Winchester Road on the lower portion of the hillside. When the last cottage was built in 1917 the new tract had added twenty-three cottages to the summer grouping. A number of these were or became year-round homes, and since the Town provided road maintenance and other services, no community organization developed.

The second tract parallel to and up the hill from Mountain Park, originally owned by Elliot Lyman, was laid out into building lots, known as the Northfield Highlands, and sold to Spencer and Roper in 1903, the first-named partner being the same Frank Spencer who aided in organizing construction of the first Ridge cottage two years previously. By 1907, eleven cottages were standing in the Highlands, and the total later reached fourteen. A Highlands Association was formed and maintained a water system until 1934, when Seminary water was installed. The Association disbanded in 1955 when the Town took over the roads.

These neighbors were welcome additions, nurturing the same devotion to Northfield ideals that invigorated Ridge cottage owners. In the first two decades of this Century, neighbors holding mutual interests had occupied 110 cottages on the hillside and most of these summer retreats and homes continue in active use as the Century enters its final quarter. Perhaps the only surviving builder who erected, repaired, remodeled, and serviced many cottages is Lee Bolton, who established a reputation for craftsmanship and integrity that continues to be a blessing in the lives of cottage owners today.

RECOGNIZING MUTUAL INTERESTS

The dominating common desire to worship God in this peaceful setting of natural beauty remained unchallenged, but soon some other mutual interests gained prominence among the new neighbors on the Ridge in day-to-day discussions. More formal consultation began receiving attention. Activities fashioned to serve the convenience, comfort, and social graces of the freshly minted community mirrored these interests. The attention and service offered by the management and construction groups engaged in selling lots and building cottages and roads, bridged the early formative years. Supplementing the Trustees empowered to issue deeds, the Seminary appointed Road Trustees to construct and supervise the original dirt roads authorized by deed provisions. Piping water from a spring-fed pool south of the sixth ridge temporarily took precedence in 1902 and 1903. Then the developers sent a "no business enterprises on the Ridge" notice to all land owners and lessees.

In 1905 a few owners stirred by increasing appreciation of other matters that needed pursuing, invited hillside neighbors to the cottage of Rev. R. M. Aylsworth on August 21, 1905, as the General Conference session ended, to start a local organization. The main sentiments voiced as revealed by the minutes of that first meeting, dealt with draining the swampy low lands below the hillside, apparently to eliminate the damp odor of decaying plant life windblown to nearby cottages on the first ridge, and collaterally to lessen the soggy potential for an unwelcome

mosquito hatchery; also to launch a project to plant shade trees along the approaches where residents trudged several times a day to the campus meetings.

An Executive Committee was agreed upon — Mr. Horace Brainard, Chairman, Miss Emma Beach, Rev. Davis W. Lusk, Mr. H. B. Moore, and Rev. A. N. Thompson, Secretary. Money was subscribed, and trees were planted by the Seminary in 1906, creating the beauty of The Willows that glorified for many years the shortest route to the Auditorium. The Committee held two later meetings in 1905, appointing Rev. Mr. Lusk and Rev. Mr. Thompson as a sub-committee to draw up plans for a permanent organization. A year later residents gathered at Mr. Brainard's cottage, electing him Chairman and Rev. Mr. Thompson as Secretary (also designated as Treasurer in 1907). The sub-committee report on permanent organization was adopted, including by-laws, creating "The Rustic Ridge Association of East Northfield."

It seems relevant here to report that the longevity record for summer residence on the Ridge belonged to Mr. Brainard's daughter, Bessie Schmadeke, from 1903 until her death in 1974.

Another long-lived companion of Ridge folks received its initial distribution as a result of the first meeting, the "Communication to Householders" originating from the discussion. A copy of its first revision in 1909, addressed without title to "Owners and Renters of Summer Homes on Rustic Ridge" and bearing the names of the entire Executive Committee, sets forth the following guides which have been considerably abbreviated below:

- Purpose is to further reciprocal interests
- Annual Meeting in 1907 acted to entitle temporary occupants to all Association privileges except voting on real estate taxes or related items
- Charge for garbage disposal service 50 cents a month
- Keeping poultry declared a public nuisance
- Reasonable quiet requested after ten o'clock at night
- Assessment of 1/3 of 1% on Town valuation to provide for expenses
- Agent appointed for care and rental of cottages
- Association protests expensive rents or building a second cottage on lots as originally laid out

Mr. Brainard's leadership continued until 1910, with a later term in 1917-18. At the start of his administration he urged the building of inside bathrooms. The camping-out practice of burying garbage, or burning it, in the early years became distressing to residents, but the only available vehicles to cart it somewhere else were horse drawn and few in number among residents as rail transportation brought most of them to Northfield. The primitive disposal practices offered an open invitation to skunks, raccoons, and rodents for nocturnal foraging visits. Bringing pet animals to

cottages was discouraged, one reason being possible conflicts with wild animals in which no one could be a winner. At the 1906 organization meeting "It was voted that the expense for the removal of garbage and debris be apportioned among residents of the Ridge at the rate of one dollar per household." A committee was formed "on the removal of garbage with power...". This entry speaks volumes and nearly all residents gladly contributed. The committee acted immediately to have garbage picked up twice a week, and signed a contract for 1907 at the rate of \$2. a trip. The Annual Meeting minutes for 1907 carry a resolution stating that "We respectfully insist that no garbage be buried or burned within the territory of this Ridge, but that all make use of the means of removal provided." The twice a week schedule endured until 1974 when cost control steps shifted it to once a week.

Aware that the colony was fast outgrowing its spring-fed water supply, in 1907 the Seminary was asked for water from the School reservoir. Granting this request and laying a network of surface pipes in the next two years throughout the cottage area, again demonstrated the close relationship between Ridge and Seminary. The Seminary had collaborated in a "deed" provision that the land could not be used in any way inimical to the interests of the Seminary, the land being subject to repossession by the Seminary if misuse by the owner is charged and substantiated through impartial arbitration. Apparently this provision was never invoked, but at least it guided Ridge officials in warning a mild offender many years ago. This unmarried lady had just acquired her cottage and invited friends for a Saturday night birthday party that continued past midnight with enthusiastic singing. She was promptly visited on Sunday afternoon by a committee of three who invited attention to the deed provisions and warned that repetition of sleep disturbing celebrations could be sufficient cause for repossession of her property. This contrite and amused lady continued to enjoy her cottage for more than fifty years.

The earliest cottages were scattered along North Lane, East Lane, Rustic Way (now Woodruff Way), West Lane, and Wood Way. The deeds conveying lots provided that expenses for improvements on roads initially constructed by Trustees engaged in the development, should be borne by cottage owners. The right of way for the access roads to cottages was not deeded to land owners, remaining under the control of the Road Trustees designated by the Seminary.

One of the Trustees appointed for this purpose was A. G. Moody. At the Annual Meeting in 1908 he announced completion as required by deed provisions of Ridge roads in use, except for some blasting planned for next year. A committee of three road supervisors for the Ridge Association was then appointed to take immediate charge of future road repairs, the members being Rev. R. M. Aylsworth, J. P. Sjoburg, and A. G. Moody. This service by Mr. Moody continued till 1930, as chairman after 1918.

The road maintenance budget was \$40 out of \$127 total for 1908, as the Ridge accepted full responsibility for road upkeep. Under horse and buggy travel dirt roads sufficed. Horse drawn delivery wagons brought groceries, milk, and vegetables to cottages. Relating an anecdote crystal clear in his mind, Robert M. Moore recalled an exciting moment in those days:

“It was an evening early in August of 1910 and we were returning to our cottage on the 5th Ridge from the General Conference Meeting. Because of the lameness of my mother, Mrs. Edgar B. Moore, we were in a surrey pulled by a horse hired from John Sutherland’s Livery and driven probably by Clarence Steadler. We children took advantage of the lift up to the 5th Ridge. It was a warm, starlit night and we could see the oil lanterns flickering through the trees as the people climbed to their various cottages. In those early days the road went by the Men’s Camp in the Cathedral Pines and then onto what is now North Lane just where the steep hill begins. As our conveyance began the climb up the then dirt road and had reached the first turn something happened to the harness, either the traces broke or became unhooked, so the surrey began to back down the hill. All of us children jumped out leaving mother inside and, following her calm directions (Mother was always at her best in emergencies), we eased the surrey into a large tree by holding on to the spokes while the driver tended the horse. After emergency repairs to the harness we continued on our way up to the 5th Ridge, but needless to say everyone except Mother and the driver walked in back of the vehicle carrying rocks to use as temporary brakes if needed.”

Ministers moved into leading roles in early organized activities, along with church officials from various faiths and communities. Seven of the first two dozen cottages built were occupied by ministers. Consistent with leadership schooled in church administration, through elected officers, formal meetings, duly constituted committees, by-laws, recorded minutes, and annual reports, the common interests of property holders and all residents of Ridge cottages were served by admirably scrupulous and conscientious representatives, who practiced consummate New England thrift in managing finances. By 1909 a separate Treasurer was elected at the Annual Meeting.

One outstanding mutual interest among cottage residents from the beginning of the colony was the activity at Camp Northfield just south of the cottages in a beautiful pine grove at the foot of Notch Mountain. In the Spring of 1895, Dwight L. Moody invited the International Y. M. C. A. to start a camp at Northfield, and by that summer it was in operation. In 1903 the camp hosted 500 men at \$1.00 a day for board and lodging. The morning meetings, ball games, clam bakes, corn roasts, and soaring evening bonfires were features enjoyed by Ridge folks. The men in the camp participated in prayers after breakfast, conference meetings, tennis competition, cycling, hiking, coon hunts at night, and boating, fishing, and

swimming in the nearby river. Religious classes were also scheduled. The average number staying at the camp approximated two hundred.

In those early years frequent references mention the Northfield Ideals. This connoted an already existing unique spirit of friendliness, cooperation, and consideration for each other, consistent with the perpetuation of a congenial and harmonious colony. Just as the conferences contributed to spiritual growth, the Ridge group endeavored to encourage those embracing high ideals of living to purchase Ridge cottages. This reduced to a minimum problems of unruly behavior and made excess use of alcohol non-existent. Ridge residents became accustomed to mannerly and refined associations where each one showed consideration for the welfare of fellow members.

BUILDING ON ROCK – 1911

The colony focus on the conferences, now successfully guided by Dwight L. Moody's elder son, William, intensified as the Association members organized to improve the opportunity offered by living in the new cottages. What a contrast existed between the hillside and crowded campus gymnasium cubicles, tents, and dormitories! The sense of personal belonging and companionship with established friends exhilarated the summer residents. Cottages not occupied by owners could be rented to appreciative conferees.

The Ridge cottages built on an underlying base of rock with rock piers for a foundation, often with supporting posts cut from tree trunks with the bark left on, were indigenous to the stony outcroppings of the hillside, but the real foundation and strength of the colony was based upon spiritual trust in the blessings bestowed through the love and will of God.

The conference programs continued to expand as new groups filled in schedule openings. Two groups started in 1904, one on foreign missions and the other for Sunday School workers. Another, home missionary people, joined in 1908. Then in 1920 Christian Endeavor conferences began. That raised the count to seven groups, but the General Conference during the first two weeks of August continued to establish its dominance by attracting the most distinguished speakers and audiences. A large staff of summer helpers, peaking near three hundred, about a third of them students or prospects of Northfield Seminary and Mount Hermon, serviced the eight-week schedule of meetings. Sons and daughters of Ridge residents looked forward to these spirited summer opportunities.

Some Ridge residents entertained speakers for dinner to give them a change from the crowded meeting and dining halls. Residents also could get meals in the dining rooms, or elect "take-out Sunday dinners" at a window in Gould Hall. During 1926, about 5,700 persons registered on the

conference grounds, and a great many others attended from the Northfield Hotel, guest houses, private homes, cottages, and drive-in visitors from surrounding communities. World War I participation by the United States did not last long enough to have a major effect on Northfield activities, but the cottage building program which had declined after 1910, came to a virtual halt.

Early on a summer morning about 1911, a cottage owned by Mr. E. B. Derr of Boston on the seventh ridge, burst into flames from an unknown cause though unoccupied for two years, burning to the ground as it attracted hastily garbed neighbors. A volunteer bucket brigade dipping water from the spring fed pool on the sixth ridge (just south), kept the fire from spreading by dousing the red hot ashes and shriveling nearby bushes and trees. This stirred the Ridge organization to examine its need for warning devices, fire prevention precautions, adequate water lines, and fire extinguishers, to cope with fire emergencies. This cottage was not rebuilt, which accounts for the Ridge total of 72 as building ended. A few years later in the Mountain Park section, right beside the Ridge area, another cottage burned to the ground when a kerosene lamp was knocked over while being used to heat a curling iron.

The Annual Meeting in 1911 concurred in a proposal to set up stand pipes, later painted red, for additional fire fighting capability, paying two-thirds of the cost for 1400 feet of pipe. The Seminary, through Mr. A. G. Moody, agreed to haul the pipe from the railway station, lay it, and pay one-third of the cost for materials, which included valves and fittings. In the next few years two fire warning stations were erected and the purchase of fire extinguishers was encouraged to enable residents to join in quick emergency measures to extinguish fires; also the procurement of personal fire insurance for cottages was urged. From that time the need for caution and constant readiness was frequently impressed on owners, so that the only serious subsequent blaze came when lightning struck the pioneer cottage, the owners, the Rev. and Mrs. John Moore not being in residence at the time. Serious damage occurred to the interior before discovery by nearby neighbors, the Robert Hubers, who immediately called the Fire Department when they detected a column of rising smoke. After repairs by enlarging and paneling the living room a vastly improved layout in attractiveness and comfort was achieved. Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Parker became the owners of the pioneer cottage in 1975.

Occasional early models of automobiles began appearing on the dirt roads of the Ridge by 1912, raising dust and questions about the road surfaces. A tax of \$1.00 per cottage for road repairs was voted by the Association. The Seminary was asked to put North Lane in good condition and widen the bend alongside the pioneer cottage. Through the generosity of Miss A. M. Spring, who spent summers on the Ridge for twenty years, North Lane was widened in 1913.

As a guest at the Northfield Hotel in the early 1900's, Miss Spring learned about the Ridge colony, bought a tract of considerable size and had seven cottages built on the Ridge in 1906. She lived in the small guest house of one of these cottages (now the White property on the fifth Ridge), the other cottages being made available rent-free to conferees. Her numerous philanthropies included giving away her cottages to persons working for her or other close friends, while living sparsely herself. The Ridge has been enjoyed by many unusual and distinguished visitors and residents, but none more colorful or generous than she, who probably during her lifetime of helpfulness gave away her inherited fortune, at one time owning most of the land not owned by Indians in Palm Springs, California. She died in 1938 a relatively poor woman in worldly goods, who had lived with a deep sense of stewardship.

An often discussed idea among Ridge owners surfaced in 1921 as a beginning effort to have the Town take over Rustic Way and Rockside, also North Lane, as their responsibility. That the Town cooperated in repairs is attested by formal thanks extended to officials by the Ridge in the early twenties. Apparently the Town recognized the increasing amount of tax income from the Ridge area, collections totaling \$1,000 a year for an assessed valuation of \$36,000. By this time gravel was beginning to compete with garbage for Ridge dollars, the graveling of roads in 1927 costing \$120, and road repairs costing an additional \$73 the same year. Considerable relief from dust through spraying oil on road surfaces was welcomed as travel by car became more frequent. The Road Commissioners of the Town about this time began supervising maintenance work on North Lane and spent \$300 in 1929 blasting rock to widen this road opposite Kenjockey. In thanking the Town in 1930, the Ridge requested steps to lay the dust and put up lights on North Lane. It became customary to ask the Town Selectmen each year to repair, oil, place signs or render similar services on North Lane.

The initial funds for Ridge needs had been raised by equal assessments per cottage and voluntary gifts, but in 1909 a tax rate of 1/3 of 1% of the valuation by the Town assessor was voted. This rose to 1/2 of 1% in 1914, and 3/4 of 1% in 1918, despite strict approval practices accompanied by annual audits of the books. The Treasurer managed except during two years of World War I, to end the year with a favorable balance, reaching \$334 in 1924. The firm temper of financial administration was established in 1923 when the garbage removal service became an instrument for tax collection leverage, the Association voting that those who have not paid the Ridge tax be informed by the Garbage Committee that waste collections will cease unless the tax is paid.

The flickering light of kerosene lamps, lanterns, and wax candles, on which residents relied for over a quarter century, gave way to much less romantic but welcome shining electric bulbs between 1927 and 1929,

when the Electric Company approved the Association's request to bring the main line to the Ridge. It was required that the Ridge put up four branch lines and each cottage owner pay \$10 for connections. Fifteen subscribers were necessary to launch the project. After paying out \$525 for this purpose in 1929, the year end balance dipped from \$494 to \$188, but it was deemed a bargain that heartened everyone.

Most of the four-legged nocturnal prowlers couldn't have cared less, however, and contrivances by householders to outwit them, often in vain, by securely fastening tops on garbage pails or hanging them with ropes from convenient trees, seemed to offer more of a challenge than a safeguard against littering. Fearless representatives of the skunk and raccoon native clans familiarized themselves with the garbage collection schedule, conveniently tacked on the back door of each cottage, and made their forays in advance of pick-up day. Heavy stones on the lid of a can could be displaced by a sturdy raccoon upsetting the can and bouncing it over rough terrain. On one occasion an occupant with a flashlight responded to a late hour clatter and spotted mama raccoon in the beam with her offspring on an orientation tour to sample Ridge cooking. The Seminary watchman became a consultant on trapping skunks but Ridge minutes fail to mention the results.

The official designation of the Association head switched from Chairman to President in 1911, and a Vice President was added in 1916. As trees and autos neared a collision course, a Tree Trimming Committee appointed in 1919 began policing errant branches scraping the high body vehicles that swayed over the rutted dirt roads.

A Ridge Praise Service on special Sunday afternoons proved very popular in 1921 and 1922, so that a Sunday Service Committee was appointed in 1923. Hymn singing on Sunday afternoons attracted many residents to informal outdoor gatherings on East Lane particularly. Music played an important part in cottage life, a number having pianos or organs. The children joined a special choir for conference programs, and many residents sang in adult choirs that contributed so much to the sacred music featuring all conference sessions. The bells of the Chapel ringing out with goodnight hymns filled the hillside air with lovely music, closing the day with "taps."

Short cut paths that kept pedestrians off dusty roads became something of a hobby for spare moments, as everyone walked to and from the Campus, at night carrying lanterns that looked like fireflies flashing along the narrow trails. On the sites of at least three cottages, tennis courts were built to share with neighbors, and several put up stakes for quoits and horseshoes.

Adjacent Camp Northfield, alias Men's Camp, alias Cathedral Pines, and later Virginia Camp, offered an inviting picnic place convenient for cottage residents from many different states who came mainly by train for many

years. The camaraderie created conditions favoring whole-hearted participation among all age groups, etching unforgettable memories of unabated enjoyment at picnics, on hikes, playing group games, swimming in outdoor pools, and many sing-ins as well as sing-outs. The Social Committee was first organized in 1906. The 1922 notice of a Camp Northfield outing, labeled "First Annual Picnic" for all summer cottage occupants, cheerily invites all summer folks to bring a basket lunch for sharing in a group supper, the hours running from four to nine P.M. bristling with games, stunts, singing — with never an uninteresting moment. The same notice concluded with an invitation to join a song and praise service at four o'clock the following Sunday afternoon beside Kenjockey, the pioneer cottage. Swimming in Wanamaker Lake, at the junction of present routes 10 and 63 is a happy memory of the early years when it was wooded and sparkling unless the activity stirred up its mud bottom. Hikes to Garnet Rock, the old reservoir, Hogback, the Big Birch, camping out and stag swimming in the river before the era of pollution, were features of the summer including for the young ladies visits to nearby camps to entertain service men during mobilization times. A simple listing of other committees organized during the twenties reveals the shaping of Ridge community life to serve developing needs:

Milk Committee — 1920

Mosquito Committee — 1925

Hospitality Committee — 1924

Nominating Committee — 1926

Condolence Committee — 1925

Road Signs Committee — 1929

This witness of brotherhood and fellowship with enduring faith is the bed rock on which the cottage colony was built during its early decades.

TESTED BY ADVERSITY — 1930

For almost half a century Northfield conferences increased in numbers and power, then a shadow of uncertainty crept into sight. The failing health of Will Moody, who had won highly deserved praise in carrying on the magnificent program of his father in Northfield, coupled with deflated economic conditions crippling institutional and family life throughout the devastating depression of the thirties, seriously affected conference activities although the roots remained healthy and vital. The combined loss in energetic leadership and financial vigor, further complicated by the effect of rapid shifts from train to auto travel, gradually weakened the vitality of the conferences from their peak in the mid-twenties. By 1930 the number of delegates registered were about 1,100 below 1925 for the same conferences, and the rate of loss continued with 1935 falling 2,000 below 1925, over a forty percent decline in ten years. Concerned but not disheartened the conferences continued to be well attended at a lower rate of expectation due to depression consequences. Ridge residents were as

faithful as ever in participating but fully aware of the creeping shadow haunting the conference leaders.

The pinch on Ridge finances that began in the early thirties grew into constant concern as red ink replaced the comfortable balances scrupulously protected up to that time except for a brief period in World War I. Red ink year-end cash balances of \$110 in 1933, \$131 in 1934, continuing two additional years, corresponded with increasing arrearages among Ridge taxpayers. The higher tax rate voted in 1934, from 3/4 of 1% to 1% of assessed valuation, overcame the imbalance after two years so that receipts and expenditures for the ten years 1930 to 1940 matched with perfection. The temporary detour in keeping finances on the track did give rise to extended discussion about depriving delinquent taxpayers of electric connections similar to prior thoughts of stopping garbage collections for delinquents. No record of the application of such penalties has been discovered. During many years expenses exceeded income for a fiscal period, but discreet use of cash balances to bridge times of heavy expenditures usually kept everyone happy.

Efforts to curtail depression expenditures brought a one dollar reduction in 1936 of the \$6 per garbage collection trip set in 1930, and centered on reducing road repair expenses through urging Town officials to take over North Lane entirely and if possible all Ridge roads. In 1936 the Ridge voted additional efforts in this respect, and that year the Town surfaced and oiled North Lane and indicated it planned to take over the road. President Woodruff reported in August, 1938 on his special trip during February to harmonize with Town officials the feelings of townspeople and summer residents. He stressed widening and improving North Lane and a through Town road from North Lane to the Highlands. That very year the Town took North Lane under its full responsibility, improving it to the point that Ridge dwellers became openly dissatisfied with the gravel topping on other Ridge roads, which washed away on the steep hillside. This prompted a letter to the Association approved by many members urging the hard-topping of all roads, resulting in 1941 in permanent road building along Rustic Way to the steep downhill connection with West Lane. The Seminary did the work, the Ridge paying direct costs. Impressed by the new surface the 1941 Annual Meeting voted for continuance of permanent road improvements, asking the Town again to take over maintenance of Rustic Way, extending it to the Highlands.

A startling adversity suddenly struck the Town, Schools, and Ridge. It becomes vivid through the experience of Miss Lucy Jackson living in a cottage on Ledge Way across from the end of East Lane, one of the few in residence at the end of the summer when a great hurricane roared over New England. In the late afternoon of September 21, 1938, as the storm grew in intensity, Miss Jackson became frightened and decided to go over to Rustic Way where Dr. McIntire and her sister, Miss Livingston, were

living. After bundling up as well as she could against the wind and rain, she opened the front door and started to descend the steps. As she did there was a terrible cracking noise and a large tree fell across her pathway. She hurried back indoors feeling she was safer there. Trees and branches were falling all about and her cottage shook with the fury of the wind. Where could she go? Where would she be safest? What part of the cottage would offer her the most protection? She decided that the safest place was a closet under the stairs. She gathered some pillows and covered her head with them, feeling that she would at least be recognized if the roof crashed in, and there she stayed until the wind began to die down. Darkness fell and she managed to get through the night without heat or light. The night passed slowly and daylight came showing her the wreckage that lay about her cottage. She knew she must go out and find out about her neighbors. As she climbed over fallen branches she saw them coming to meet her, Dr. McIntire, Miss Livingston, and Mr. Doremus. They returned to Dr. McIntire's cottage where they offered up prayers of thanksgiving for their safety.

Another eye-witness, the Rev. Robert Bonner Jack, wrote the following account of the after effects, including it in the first Ridge history:

"New England was visited by a hurricane which with great fury came out of the great deep. Mrs. Jack and I made a tour of the region on the following day. The Main Street of Northfield was blocked with fallen trees. The total effect was that of a huge game of Jack Straws. Men were busy cutting down fallen trees, removing broken branches, hauling away rubbish in an effort to clear the roads.

We walked down to Schell Bridge and saw the swollen Connecticut River covered with debris. I remember sea gulls, blown inland by the tempest, were perched on floating boxes or branches, on the way back to their ocean home.

One cannot forget the sad results of a fallen chimney on the Seminary campus. We went out Winchester Road and called on the Coburns at Myrtle Street, then worked our way under and over fallen trees through the length of the Ridge. Mr. Roger Woodruff and Mr. W. F. Townsend gave fine service in the matter of clearing the roads.

President C. C. Woodruff and Vice President Rev. W. H. Des Jardins visited the Ridge and made a careful inventory of the condition of the cottages and where there was need of immediate attention, they notified the owners. To a very remarkable degree the cottages came through without damage and it is a matter of profound thanksgiving that on the Ridge no lives were lost. As an example of the havoc caused by the hurricane, on the two lots of Ramona Cottage, seven large trees came down. The Cathedral Pines of Virginia Camp seemed to be a focal point of the hurricane; there was a complete wiping out of the one-time grandeur of the tall

... Following the hurricane the Government sent CCC men to the Ridge to clear away the fallen trees and straighten out the situation.”

The fallen electric wires were restored by the Ridge at a cost of \$125. What might have been a calamity beyond recovery was surmounted by untiring efforts to restore the Ridge to safe conditions, the tall trees actually sheltering the cottages as a wind break, defending them from devastation. The pruning was severe but left no permanent scars in the Ridge area that would hamper the future enjoyment of residents deeply attached to their beloved green hillside.

Another casualty of the hurricane, hopelessly inundated by debris and silt, Wanamaker Lake reached its end as an old-time friendly swimming pool. Previous to that, however, its existence became precarious when the State of New Hampshire, whose boundary is only a short distance beyond the Lake, decided to put through a highway providing a short cut between routes 5 and 10 to improve the route to the state capitol at Concord. Through the influence of A. G. Moody the Lake had been kept in use as a swimming place for many years, and he proposed plans that would have protected it as a traditional spot of beauty and enjoyment. Much to his disappointment the plans were not approved. Later, Schell Pool on Hotel grounds was put in good condition for a happy meeting ground by Ridge swimmers.

Renewed disaster in the shocking attack on Pearl Harbor in December, 1941, resulting travel and rationing restrictions, and cancellation of conferences for a time, tested again Ridge resilience to emotional stress and years of difficult adjustment. This trip along the trail trod by our forebears begins now to merge with the efforts exerted by our own associates in assuring the future of the Ridge.

REBOUND – 1942

Nominating the first full year of American active participation in World War II as the beginning of a rebound from adverse influences, calls for an explanation. The towering tide of adversity visible in 1942 with war rationing curtailing activities grew more menacing as conference schedules had to be canceled in some war years. Grievously, just after the War's end Ambert G. Moody died suddenly.

Actually, the adverse conditions during the nineteen-thirties had strengthened rather than weakened the sense of reliance steadily gaining momentum under the leadership of the Ridge Association. A glowing tribute to the helpfulness of Seminary and Town officials is found in the expressions of appreciation often recorded in Ridge minutes, and particularly to Ambert G. Moody who assisted in every conceivable way in

his personal contacts and as a member of Ridge committees to resolve all kinds of questions in constructive ways that brought the summer folks, Seminary Staff, and Town Officers into amicable accord.

The particular event signaling a step forward came when the Northfield Town Meeting in early 1942 voted that Rustic Way and Rockside Extension north to Myrtle Street should become a Town road. This relieved the Ridge of future annual maintenance costs on a frequently traveled road and successfully concluded an effort tracing as far back as 1911 when the Ridge first sought Town assistance in road repairs. The Rev. A. L. Berger, Association President, came from Syracuse, N.Y., to attend the Town meeting. Legal requirements made it necessary for the Town to secure the permission of the State Department of Public Works and present an easement from every owner of property abutting the right-of-way. Hence, Mr. Thomas J. Duncan, Chairman of the Road Committee, wrote to each property owner for this purpose on March 30, 1942. All consented with the right-of-way ninety feet wide. In view of former President Woodruff's death, who served during difficult years from 1929 to 1940, recognition was extended for his admirable leadership during a time of testing, by voting to name the new Town road "Woodruff Memorial Road", later modified to "Woodruff Way."

Though oil could not be procured in 1942 due to war restrictions, the Seminary repaired Pine Grove roads that year at their own expense, thereby adding to the upward bound feeling sensed within the cottage colony.

Beginning with World War II years and inspired by the smooth surfacing of Rustic Way in 1941, the project nominated whole-heartedly for immediate action was fund raising for hard surfacing as many roads as possible. This proceeded during the War years and some years beyond with a great sense of unanimity. The fact that permanent road building must wait for the end of the War acted only as a stimulus to make widespread future improvements. Fund raising through various activities — food and White Elephant sales, social events, dramatic readings by charming Betty Bollman (Mrs. W. H.), and special donations, added to the growing fund during the time that only emergency repairing continued.

The fund raising efforts absorbing the attention of the entire Ridge, included earnest support by a mother and daughter, Mrs. Herbert P. Bruce and Dorothy, long-time residents of Rest-A-While at the upper end of Ledge Way, who had devoted their lives to teaching in New York schools. Unfortunately both fell ill, and entered the Brattleboro Hospital, the mother dying first and within a short time also the daughter who bequeathed the cottage and furnishings inherited from her mother to the Rustic Ridge Association. One of the heart-warming memories of that time is the faithful pastoral service rendered to these dedicated women by the Rev. Arthur L. Berger, President of the Association.

The Association could only qualify as a legal entity to accept the inheritance by incorporating under the laws of the Commonwealth. Prompt steps were taken by the Legal Committee appointed to arrange incorporation, with Dr. Berger elected President, Rev. William H. Bollman, Vice President, Rev. Wesley H. Des Jardins, Treasurer, Mr. William F. Hoehn, Clerk, Miss Gertrude Lauber, Assistant Clerk — and as Directors, Mr. George W. Carr and Mr. Thomas J. Duncan. By-Laws were adopted. At the August 4, 1945 Annual Meeting it was voted to dissolve the Rustic Ridge Association and turn over all assets to the Rustic Ridge Association, Inc. A meeting of the new corporation followed immediately and the officers elected at time of incorporation were elected as officials of the new corporation. Arrangements were completed to sell the Bruce cottage and add the funds received to the road fund. Two recorded items at this meeting throw light on the outlook of Ridge residents; first, it was reported that more cottages had been sold or rented in 1945 than in the past four years; secondly, the Association heartily recommended that the General Conference be held during the summer of 1946.

Instead of the sorrowful events of World War II years triggering despair, — the interruption of Conference schedules and the passing of a beloved counselor, Mr. Ambert G. Moody, it became evident that the Association had developed the capability of guiding the best interests of residents through times of deep concern and bereavement, fortified always by abiding Faith.

The General Conference reconvened in 1946, and was hailed by cottage residents whose interest continued high. But where in 1910, attendance was almost 1,100, still high at 890 in 1925, by 1940 the figure had slumped to 404, and in 1950, the final session of Northfield's own famous convocation, only 290 registered, smaller than the pioneer conference in 1880.

So many factors changed the times in seventy years. At the start most delegates came by train and stayed the full conference period. With auto use increasing guests stopped off during vacation trips for shorter visits. Other "Northfields" began to spring up and denominations organized their own conferences. The decisive blow came from World War II. The momentum lost by wartime cancellation of sessions could not be regained. Despite these formidable factors, the Rev. William Bollman, President of the Association, was authorized in 1951 to see Dr. W. E. Park, President of the Schools, to learn the prospect for renewing the General Conference in 1952. With great personal effort the Rev. Mr. Bollman helped in arranging continuation of a similar type conference in 1952 under the auspices of the National Council of Churches. Ridge people tried hard but unsuccessfully by attendance and financial help to bring back the exhilaration of earlier days. Ridge resolutions backing continuation were passed each year from 1950 to 1953, but the Conference cornerstone was gone and

sincerely mourned. This expressed in personal terms represented the greatly regretted departure of a truly trusted lifetime friend, one full of inspiration and joy in living, to enter the Kingdom beyond our earth bound circle, leaving behind an illustrious and unforgettable memory of soul stirring accomplishments.

The immediate years following were sobering ones, the blow softened by the continuing life for several years of related summer conferences on the Campus. Gradually these dropped from the summer schedule so that today there is no visible connection between Rustic Ridge and groups that meet on the Campus. But the Ridge is a going concern, most of the cottages are occupied for at least some part of the summer, and the fellowship is warm, as if the mother (Conference) having let go, the child (Ridge) is faring well entirely on its own, blessed by ancestral schooling and affection of inestimable value.

Topping the list of post-war activities, hard surfacing roads with oil and gravel to eliminate dust and ruts became a consuming interest. Expenditures on roads in 1951 and 1952 reached \$1,847, about equal to the entire tax yield in those years at the highest rate, 2% of assessed valuation, ever levied by the half-century-old colony. The rate then dropped to 1-1/2% and soon to 1%. By 1960 the hard surfacing program neared completion except for Oak Lane, similarly improved in 1964. Maintenance costs on roads still claim close to half of Ridge income for renewal of surfaces by oiling and graveling to resist cracking and frost damage.

Accompanying the launching of the hard surfacing project in post-war years, the ownership of roads came under review. Vested originally in three Trustees designated by the Seminary to build and supervise access roads to cottages, the Ridge paying for repairs since 1908, the prospect of heavy expense for hard surfacing propelled to the forefront of current topics the desirability of a Quit Claim Deed placing ownership of roads in the newly incorporated Association. This related mainly to Tracts I and II, as Pine Grove cottages and road rights-of-way therein occupied land owned by the Schools. Since the nineteen-fifties Pine Grove roads have been maintained by the Association, and included in the permanent road program.

An early ownership inquiry dates back to 1921, when an attorney was consulted about the provisions for maintaining roads not actually owned. Years elapsed before this issue was clarified to some degree. A direct move to acquire title from the Schools developed at an Executive Committee meeting in 1945, requesting fee simple ownership of private roads south of Pine Grove. Annual meeting minutes in 1950 disclose unanimous support of a motion recognizing and acknowledging the receipt of a Quit Claim Deed giving title to roads, the motion directing that the Clerk place same on file for future reference. This apparently applied only to Tracts I and II. Preceding the 1950 meeting, road work was delayed over a period of

two years presumably pending resolution of ownership in view of the eagerness to advance the permanent road program. So, in 1951 and 1952 road expenditures were very heavy.

Now a mystery develops. No deed can be located in Association files and the Register of Deeds for Franklin County has no record of the deed being filed in his office. A report to the 1951 Annual Meeting by the Clerk, Mr. W. F. Hoehn, states that the Quit Claim Deed is in the hands of Mr. McEwan of the Northfield Schools, who is investigating the ownership of roads providing access to Tracts I and II. Then, a year later, Mr. Hoehn reported to the Annual Meeting that all roads are now owned by the Rustic Ridge Association, Inc., and that the Quit Claim Deed which the Association holds has been recognized by the Northfield School for Girls and the trusteeship of roads has been relinquished. The actual existence of a deed is clouded both by its missing status and 1956 minutes of an Executive Board meeting on August 18, stating that Mr. Hoehn reported there is no need to obtain a deed from Dr. Zenger of the Northfield Schools as the roads automatically reverted to the Association after the death in the early fifties of the last Trustee. For practical purposes the Association functions as the owner of private ways in Tracts I and II, and is responsible for adequate road maintenance except on Town roads in the entire Ridge Association area.

After several years of approaches to School officials by John Hann, III, owner of a cottage on a leased lot in Pine Grove Addition, an agreement was concluded in the forepart of 1975 that the School would sell the entire Pine Grove area at a price of \$500 an acre, provided that Mr. Hann, III and his father, John Hann, Jr., accept the responsibility of organizing the sale through direct contacts with leaseholders and guarantee purchase of the total parcel of land. There are 8.9 acres and sixteen cottages in Pine Grove Addition. Town zoning requires 11,000 sq. ft. for each parcel on which a cottage stands, with minimum frontage of 125 feet and minimum depth 100 feet. When the transaction is completed, the Pine Grove Addition roads will be deeded to the Rustic Ridge Association, Inc., by the School, with a twenty-five foot width for each right-of-way. This project will clarify the issue of ownership of land which concerned occupants of cottages on leased land in Pine Grove as well as the ownership of roads maintained by the Association.

The Annual Meeting is the governing body in conducting Ridge business, adopting in early August the annual budget and tax rate applicable for the fiscal year beginning August 1. The tax rate set in 1959 was 1 and 3/4% of valuation, with collections close to \$1,000. This continued until 1967 when two financial changes voted at the Annual Meeting postponed a recommended increase in the tax rate intended to insure bank balances sufficient to pay bills in the new fiscal year before collections could be deposited. First, the collection period was advanced

from the latter part to the forepart of the fiscal year, amending By-Laws accordingly, to take effect August 1, 1968. Then secondly, the assessment of Ridge taxes on a "per cottage" basis replaced the percentage of Town valuation as the basis for figuring the tax. The equal assessment per cottage reverts back to the practice when Ridge residents first organized, which had been suggested in 1942 as preferable but was set aside then in view of differing opinions.

At the time of the change, Ridge taxes ranged from \$8.66 to \$26.96, averaging \$15.30, to cover the expenses of essentially identical services. Technical inequities were also involved relating to the infrequent publication of assessed valuations, comparative valuations, and the inclusion of personal property taxes in the Ridge computations although not levied uniformly on all cottages. The new tax rate approved at \$16 per cottage continued a few years and gradually rose to the current level of \$23.

A key area of long time concern witnessed notable improvement in the sixties. The customary fire extinguisher in cottages had for some years contained carbon tetrachloride under pressure, a type recommended as not vulnerable to freezing. This became unlawful for interior use when it was recognized that the vapors emitted in use could cause fatalities within enclosed spaces. A new dry chemical under pressure, also invulnerable to freezing, was recommended by the Ridge to replace old extinguishers, and a large number of cottage owners cooperated by buying the new type. Oddly enough, some of the earliest cottages once had dry powder extinguishers for smothering a small blaze by forcibly throwing the powder on the flames. Today many cottages have installed telephones enabling a fire to be reported promptly to the Town Fire Department, and most cottages keep hoses attached to outside faucets during the summer to hasten dousing leaves, brush or other combustibles. The principal advance in fire protection though, is a new fire hydrant on North Lane near the first Ridge, fed by an eight-inch main brought over in recent years from Birnam Road, to upgrade Town fire protection. This offers a potential saving of several minutes in directing a drenching stream on a sudden conflagration.

At the first organization meeting of the newly appointed Historical Committee in 1966, a survey to collect a variety of information about Ridge cottages and residents seemed the best way to get started and include as many as possible in the undertaking. The results of the 1967 occupational inquiry show about one-third (32), of 90 residents reporting, have business positions; one-fourth (22) in school administration or teaching; one-sixth (16) in church related work; and the nearly one-fourth (20) remaining in scattered occupations such as librarians, social workers, nurses, engineers, musicians, government administrators, and other professions. No comparison with other years is available, though we do know that the ten ministers are below the proportion among early cottage

owners, when seven ministers were among the first twenty-four owners. In 1975, nearly a dozen cottages had ministers or their family members as owners, among the Ridge Association membership of 67 cottages (1 burned, 3 razed, 2 non-members, account for the original 73 built).

Earlier it was mentioned that the longest tenure belonged to Bessie Brainard Schmadeke, until her passing in 1974. Now it belongs to her niece, Dorothy Brainard Noble, residing in the same cottage as her aunt on the first Ridge (West Lane), where she usually has spent summers from early childhood. Several other cottages since construction have continued to be owned and occupied by survivors of the same family as the original owner, particularly the Aylsworth cottage since 1902, Harris since 1904, and others listed later in the *Glowing Embers* section that concludes this history. The nostalgia of this is best expressed through the following anecdote:

An automobile stopped many years ago at the Aylsworth cottage, where a small boy was playing in the yard. Leaning from his car the driver said "This is a beautiful view from here. By any chance is that cottage for sale?"

The boy got to his feet and standing erect replied, "No Sir, my grandfather owns this cottage and he'll never sell it, and when he dies my father will own it and he'll never sell it, and when he dies, I'll own it and I'll never sell it."

The small boy is now a man well along in years living in Arizona, and his sister now owns the cottage. With that spirit of steadfast devotion it is no surprise that six family groups can proudly display in the seventies great-great grandchildren representing the fifth generation in the family line to enjoy summer visits to the Ridge. There are fifteen other family groups whose summer trips have included four generations. Thus traditions are born and roots established for the future. As an example, the descendants of Dwight L. Moody's family are represented by two great-grandsons, Edward M. Powell, Jr., who has acted as Ridge Agent for over ten years, and David S. Powell, the owner of two Ridge cottages with his wife, Lucia, and two sons; also a grandniece, Esther Moody Loos, a cottage owner for the past twenty-five years, with her husband, George (Dud), both spending summers on the Ridge,—they were missionaries for a few years in China. Another striking example of Ridge loyalty is the family of Dr. and Mrs. Walter C. Chapin, a fourth generation family line that is responsible for the introduction of twelve families to Ridge ownership.

The compact cottage colony experienced a somewhat revolutionary effect on social life when the horse and buggy vanished under the invasion of automobiles that offered so much freedom of choice in going to places once considered distant. The carefully built and frequently used foot paths offering short cuts for pedestrians slowly fell into disuse as cars became general at a time that telephones in cottages were relatively scarce. The urgent demand for better roads was a direct product of the invasion, but

also a scarcely recognized threat to the all-inclusive cohesive feeling prevailing until after World War II. Group activities tended to diminish for a time as the "go for a ride" habit lured residents to sample Vermont and New Hampshire scenery and eating places many miles away. But several group picnics and smaller gatherings survived though less frequently. Noteworthy social events in the late forties and early fifties displayed the old spirit at Miss Erb's, the Cregars, Mrs. Schmadeke's, Miss Simar's parties for children, ping pong tournaments at the Chapins, and Ridge picnics.

The appeal of auto trips gradually subsided as traffic thickened and the hillside groups became sensitive again to their own unique resources for enjoyment. In the sixties all residents were invited to Mrs. Anderson's eightieth birthday party, and in 1970 to a square dance with the caller Frank Williams, who had filled the same role fifteen years earlier for a teenage crowd hosted by the Andersons and Bollmans.

Cars did help in reaching swimming places a short distance away, such as the swimming pool at the Inn, and a Ridge committee of Robert Moore and Arthur Parker set about restoring Schell Pool for local use. This worked out admirably and the Town took it over in the mid-sixties as a community recreational service though recently discontinuing it. Also, cars made it easy to reach Laurel Lake, twenty minutes distant, with a carload of children eager to swim. The Loos garage converted to ping pong use, has lured all ages, and a hillside tournament was held in 1972. The School tennis courts are kept busy by a lively assortment of Ridge players from eight to eighty. Golfers head for the Northfield Inn links, and hikers in somewhat smaller numbers than in earlier years retrace the time-worn trails up the mountain. Picnickers have several choices. The Mt. Grace grove on Warwick Road southeast of Winchester, N.H., where the annual picnic group assembles, is a beautiful, well-equipped, favorite spot. There a lobster cookout on Labor Day weekend in 1971, repeated enthusiastically in some later years, satisfied the epicurean appetites of a large crowd invited at the initiative of the younger married group now assuming leadership in Ridge activities. On summer afternoons patio refreshments long have been popular for friendly chats. These are relaxed drop-in-to-say-hello events so that everyone on the Ridge may regard his fellow cottage dwellers as mutual friends with congenial interests.

A new voluntary activity by Marilyn Williams, the issuance of a folksy news sheet including door to door delivery, gave all cottage occupants a pleasant and welcome surprise in August, 1975, when two editions were circulated. Called the "Ridge Runner", the second issue offered information about hiking trails in our area that is expected to stimulate enjoyment of this invigorating exercise.

Occasionally a cottage resident is asked to characterize the Ridge. Surely at the twenty-fifth anniversary the response would have been "A place of exhilarating inspiration and friendship." Possibly at the golden

anniversary as "A place combining inspiration, realism and congeniality." Now at the diamond jubilee changing times within an often abrasive world may prompt the response "Truly a place of reconciliation—a retreat for refreshment, relaxation, compatibility and harmony with life as God wills it."

History is something that people live, not a conscientious reporting of events and circumstances. It is growing up, schooling, worship, romance, weddings, honeymoons, births, baptisms, fulfilled lifetimes, in which the Ridge has often shared. As a young child, Dorothy Miller, daughter of a minister, first came to Northfield about 1903 with her sister, mother and grandmother, to attend the conferences. She slept in a gymnasium cubicle one summer, some summers with her parents and sister in tents on the campus or in rented Ridge cottages, and three other summers in a tent pitched on a leased Ridge lot, and helped her family occupy a new cottage built in 1917. A few years later, meeting there and falling in love, she married in Sage Chapel the Rev. Horace Dudley Peck, and together they served as missionaries to Indians in Guatemala. Now the grandparents of fourteen, it seems a fitting conclusion to this historical narrative to quote the closing tribute of Mrs. Peck in writing her memories:

"Do you wonder that over fifty years after our wedding
Northfield is the dearest spot in the U. S. A. to us?"

Earl Loomis

GLOWING EMBERS

When the story ends, so much remains untold. Even an occasional glimpse back beyond the narrative's horizon promises appealing anecdotes, episodes, or occurrences little known by most readers. So the vignettes added in this supplement offer insights into yesterdays that may persuade you to linger longer at our hearthside. The contributor of each "Ember" is named following the item.

FROM A BOY'S HEART

The following poem was written by Winston Parker at age twelve. He came to the Ridge at age six as a missionary child from British Guiana. His parents bought the Oak Terrace cottage in Pine Grove Addition so his sisters in particular could have a place to call home when they were left at Northfield School for Girls.

Winston was Northfield's first Vietnam casualty (1968). The Town joined to give him a military funeral from Trinitarian Church. He is buried in West Gill Cemetery on Hoe Shop Road. He and his mother had chosen the spot for his father's burial nine months earlier because his father, too, always said, "I get closer to God in those New England hills than anywhere."

Our Cottage Small

*I like to be at our cottage small
Where everything is green
And all the trees are very tall
And many birds are seen.*

*The name of the cottage is Cricket
Because it is small and brown,
And cheerful and homey. I pick it,
Because it's the best cottage 'round.*

*There's a gray stone wall
Which I jump every day;
Although it's not tall,
There it will stay.*

*The woodchuck builds its leafy nest,
The pileated pecker drills,
The place I really love the best
Is those New England hills.*

Evalyn Parker Page

BIRTH OF THE BARK EXTERIOR

Howard Harris, builder of many of the Ridge cottages, generally identified by bark slab outer walls, told me fascinating stories about building the cottages. My cottage on East Lane is next door to the Harris cottage, now occupied by his son, Nelson and wife Dorothy, who recently purchased my cottage also.

It seems that Ambert G. Moody engaged him, a Hermonite, to build a number of cottages as inexpensive summer homes for ministers and furloughed missionaries to use while on vacation attending the then huge summer conferences on campus. The builder's headquarters and tool shed were on the site of the present Harris cottage, built in 1904, often occupied for brief periods by Mr. and Mrs. Harris, his two sons or one of his two sisters, Lillian Fitzpatrick.

Mr. Harris told me that the bark slab construction was dreamed up by Mr. A. G. Moody and himself. They thought it might last fifteen years at the most. My slabs are still good, with some exceptions, nearly three quarters of a century later. Not only economy in building costs but even more economy in outside maintenance by avoiding painting costs, as well as harmonizing with the wooded hillside environment, contributed to the decision that established a pleasingly simple style consistent with rapid construction and readily available materials.

Mr. Harris' older son, Howard, Jr., in replying to an inquiry in 1966 by Carlton L'Hommedieu, who owned Ramona cottage nearby for many years, set forth his father's experience in this way—

“Father completed four years training as a carpenter's apprentice in Middletown, N.Y., and was a qualified journeyman carpenter when he entered Mt. Hermon at age 24. He graduated from Mt. Hermon in 1902 and entered Columbia University that fall to study architecture. He switched from architecture to industrial arts while at Columbia and graduated with a Master's Degree. This background will serve to answer the questions regarding ability to prepare plans for and construct buildings. Most cottages were custom built with plans prepared to meet the needs of the individual owners.”

Mr. Harris and his wife were very quiet, self-effacing people whom very few Ridgeites knew. I mention this because people on the Ridge seldom know of their indebtedness to Howard Harris “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Like many Ridge residents, Mr. Harris found his life's fulfillment in teaching, beginning in public schools in September, 1907 and continuing for thirty-six years until June, 1943.

To complete this tribute, the genius of the father has been revealed again in recent years through the handiwork of Nelson with Dottie's assistance, transforming the remodeled tool shed without a fireplace into a year-round week-end retreat with a beautiful stone fireplace, attractive

living room and a large screened porch—a lovely and comfortable modernized cabin that is a worthy memorial honoring inherited aptitudes and love of rewarding accomplishments.

Dorothy Doremus

SISTERS THREE

As he knelt on Round Top in the days of John R. Mott dedicating himself to the ministry, a student delegate from a Canadian college planted the roots which hold our family so strongly to Northfield. Recalled by that memory, Charles W. Wright, his mother, Mrs. F. H. Wright, his sister, Hazel, and her husband (the Rev. and Mrs. D. O. Cowles), began attending the Northfield Conferences—sometimes boarding in town, sometimes tenting on the campus.

In 1920, the Cowles purchased the Ridge cottage owned by Fleming H. Revell, brother-in-law of Dwight L. Moody. Marjorie and Helen — later joined by Kathleen — began the pattern of happy days which has made Northfield almost synonymous with heaven. When, in 1924, the Wrights bought Sunnysadow (still occupied each summer by Mrs. Charles Wright and her sister Mabel Sayre), it seemed as if we had a colony in heaven. Of course there were other special Northfield people whom we loved, and heading all the rest were Dr. and Mrs. William Sinclair Voorhies, who were experts on birds, flowers, mushrooms, fairy tales and local history.

There are people who do not understand the charm of going back always to the same place, but putting in roots makes it possible for every sight and sound and smell, every experience, to have an aura of times past which enriches them. We climb Garnet Rock and remember the time Kathleen rode down it on a bicycle, ending scratched but alive. We look at a tree stump and see Dad driving right onto it in his excitement at arriving, completely unaware as he waved to us that the car was off the ground with wheels spinning. In a thunder storm, we light a kerosene lamp and remember when those were the lamps we always used for light. (How angry we were when unromantic souls like our Dad brought electricity to the Ridge.) When, with a slip of the tongue, someone says “Kellogg’s store,” we remember Robbins and Evans, and the peddlers delivering groceries, fish and ice by horse and wagon. We go to a concert in the Auditorium and see a parade of figures across the platform: Will Moody, Ambert Moody, and many giants of the pulpit who made the Conferences so memorable. Even looking at an empty space we can see the Tea Tent, the Chateau, or the sunset elm.

As the years brought changes, new pictures were added to our kaleidoscope. It was at the cottage that all three Cowles girls announced their engagements, in one way or another, after the boys had passed a pre-engagement test for proper Northfield enthusiasm: Helen to Bill Thompson, Marjorie to Charlie Crain, and Kathleen to Ted Denise. Later

there were three family weddings at Northfield: Shirley Wright to Sterling Bolles, Lynne Thompson to Bill Jacoby, and Constance Crain to Robert Brown. There, too, Susan Crain announced her engagement to Ed Sonosky.

With all these additions to the family, the old homestead was not enough. Cowles Cottage on Woodruff Way is now Thompson's and the Denises and Crains have cottages on Glen Road. Patricia (Denise) and Nick White, who have become the first of the fourth generation to purchase property, also own a cottage along Glen Road. Each generation continues to be grateful for the decision which brought us all to Northfield, the place where "our minds are nourished and invisibly repaired."

Grandmother Wright, who said the last time she turned down the road into Northfield "Every time I come to this spot I feel as if I am about to enter heaven," would have smiled with understanding if she had heard her great-great grandson, Erik Jacoby, looking at the same road fervently exclaim, "I like it here!". They meant the same thing.

Marjorie Crain

KIOWA LODGE

My parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. Cregar, purchased Kiowa in 1920, named at the time it was built in 1909 by the Halsteads, who had a daughter serving as a missionary to the Kiowa Indians. The cottage had a fireplace and two built-in seats as there was little room for chairs. The view focused on the Connecticut River and a berry patch in front of the cottage, but what impressed us most was the carpeted stairway leading to the bedrooms. The dining room was a screened-in portion of the porch. Previously we had rented a cottage from the Hascells, missionaries to Burma, on Ledge Way across from the end of East Lane, and just before owning we rented on North Lane adjacent to Kiowa.

My mother was one of five Hamilton sisters and my most vivid memory is having our last Christmas together in August when two of the sisters were leaving soon for Ohio, which seemed far away. We had brought all Christmas tree ornaments with us and cut a tree on a lot that Maud Hamilton owned, and all of the sisters, husbands, and children gathered at the cottage and *it was a real Christmas*. I remember getting a bright red coat with a black velvet collar, which later that summer induced a bull to chase me across a pasture through a barbed wire fence when I was exploring at the top of the hill.

My later memories are of my sister being married in "The Glen" at Kiowa, when we rented the Spring cottage across North Lane for all the overflow of guests. The groom-to-be had the small guest house and pranks being the order of the night before the wedding, we rigged a bucket of water which tripped as he opened the door. It almost wrecked the wedding.

Years later my husband and I were married at Kiowa (on the front porch – it rained), and since we took our honeymoon by horseback, the horses were tied to the trees, waiting for the ceremony, and our guests tied “Just Married” signs to the horses’ tails, throwing streamers all over them, and away we went to stay our first night at the Fitzwilliam Inn, where they gave us the “bridal suite”, bedding down our horses as they would have done a century ago.

I could fill ten pages with memories about the conferences, but to me when Grandpa Hamilton was called on to sing a solo “Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory,” it was an unforgettable thrill for his young granddaughter.

Doris Gutman

THE ROCK

With a heartrending wrench nearly three decades ago we learned that workmen repairing a sharp rise on North Lane had rolled a sentinel near the road into a crevasse to provide extra support on the south side of the steep grade for the safety of passing cars. That sentinel standing guard at the first bend in the road had become a true friend for those who walked to the Post Office or lived nearby. Family pictures were best when taken on “The Rock” and it stood witness to many events – cars slipping on the gravel into the fence while nosy little faces on the other side eagerly watched the wheels slip and slide; or a family crowded around the sentinel watching an eclipse of the sun; or lovers holding hands in moonlight; and sometimes a child enjoying a picnic lunch alone with his staunch friend “The Rock”; or a group of children playing “Royalty” draping its hospitable surface to make a perfect throne.

We thought the story of “The Rock” was over, but the excavation for the new water main in recent years once more brought our friend back to life. Early one morning it was unearthed by the work crew, when a nearby resident in the nick of time interceded to save “The Rock.” Its story was told to the workmen, and with gentle care they used their power equipment to place it on the lower end of the first lot at the foot of the hill, where one family will cherish its company and think of it as a lasting memorial to a dear mother and grandmother who died early that year after spending over fifty summers in the cottage close by. It was her love for that rock, communicated so endearingly to the rest of us, that instigated its resurrection as a fitting monument for Mrs. Anderson whose ashes are scattered nearby.

Marilyn Williams

BIRD SANCTUARY

An engrossing sight right on our own hillside in Pine Grove is Beatrice Cheek's yard on Mountain Road with thirty to forty bird feeders! Many are made from plastic containers and all have a touch of the unusual. Hung from wires covered with empty thread spools to baffle the squirrels they dance in the wind or flutter with many varieties of birds. As many as half a dozen chickadees sit on a branch waiting turns at an ingenious suet feeder fashioned from an old soap holder, almost oblivious to spectators a few feet away. These birds converse daily with their benefactor, answering her "chic-a-dee-dee" with their own! Sighting purple finches, blue jays, towhees, juncos, English sparrows, downy and hairy woodpeckers, chickadees and a goldfinch in a twenty-minute visit, we learn that both white and red breasted nuthatches, evening and rose breasted grosbeaks, humming birds, flickers, pileated woodpeckers, and an occasional ground-feeding cardinal have been seen during one summer; also Baltimore orioles return every May for string with which to build their nests and stop for a drink of honey and water.

Many feeders have small entrances for just small birds. Blue jays have their own feeding area set apart, as do the humming birds. Squirrel baffles bar the furry invaders from making fast work of a tray of sunflower seeds.

While seed is the primary attraction, the lovely garden surrounding the cottage is planned to appeal to the birds. A red and white array of trillium, impatiens and bee balm near the feeders catches the eyes of feathered friends. Other gardens host self-perpetuating wild flowers such as lady slippers, jack-in-the-pulpits, wild orchids, dolls eyes (they really look like those china eyes), coleus and trumpet begonias. Transplants from the town dump include daisies and portulacas.

Though transplanting from the woods is generally frowned upon by conservationists, Miss Cheek has a touch with wild things which preserves them as she transfers varieties to the ordered woods surrounding her summer home, where she lives from early May to mid-October. An active compost heap returns garden waste to the soil in nutrients. The warmth of the bacterial action can be detected all winter long.

Such a natural spot draws other wild creatures who feel at home there. One can watch a garter snake hunting a frog for lunch or another snake sunning itself on top of a bird cage. This is an exciting natural world — a condensation of the woody cosmos, laid out for all to enjoy.

Marilyn Williams

YANKEE INGENUITY

The inventive spirit senses an opportunity to expand in a rustic setting, children employing the artifacts of Nature's bounty to create imaginative community clusters, and adults trying their hands at creating footpaths, patios, game courts, and more bizarre expedients to increase their

enjoyment and comfort. Four examples will have to suffice in symbolizing all the adaptations of creative Ridge minds.

The Dumb Waiter – When we moved a bureau after occupying our cottage in the early sixties, a trap door appeared and lifting it we found it merely looked down upon the basement studio. We wondered why the floor had been cut in such a fashion. Some months later this mystery was solved. Miss Violet Murray, who at one time lived with the first owner, Miss Therese Simar, was staying at the Northfield Inn and was interested in seeing the cottage again. We invited her to visit with us. She asked if we had discovered the small trap door. We assured her we had, and then she told us how Miss Simar loved to entertain on the patio. Miss Murray did all the cooking and catering and found the rocky steps difficult when she carried refreshments on a tray. She conceived the idea of cutting a hole in the floor and sending the “goodies” down dumb-waiter-style in a basket.

Muriel Devin
Jane Swanson

The Sooty Pot – At the time we took over Uncle Phil Phelps’ cottage, Macatawa, in 1948, cooking was done on a three burner oil stove. On one of the burners was a blackened water container with rubber hose attached to the spigot. The hose ran through a small opening in the kitchen floor ending in a small tin bathtub which was in the basement directly beneath the kitchen. Whenever Uncle Phil desired a bath he would light the oil stove to heat the container filled with water, turn on the spigot and hot water flowed into the tub. He was a small man in stature, therefore the size of the tub was a convenience. After the heating of bath water in this way was discontinued, we found after several days of cleaning and polishing that the blackened water container was a lovely copper pot.

Bernice Rubyor

The Nest – My father, Dr. Anderson, had a flair for the unusual and a genius to construct anything he set out to make. One of these projects was called “the Nest.” It was a twelve foot square platform in the trees back of Sunny Corners Cabin, hung by heavy steel cables from the branches of big pine trees, attached fifteen feet above the ground close to the

main trunks. A swaying wooden staircase connected the platform to the cottage porch. The engineering was superb and it lasted through many a wind storm until finally succumbing to the 1938 hurricane only because a supporting tree went down. "The Nest" was used as an extra bedroom, as a playhouse, as a party room, a movie theater, a circus ring, and a retreat from the world. From it one could climb another thirty feet into the tree tops to sit and read a book of adventure above all that dwelt below. We've all flown from the "Nest" but its cozy protection lives in our hearts and a few pictures remind us of past adventures.

Marilyn Williams

Banquet in a Barrel — There was an evening at the Auditorium I well remember. I was seated under the balcony south of the clock. Near the close of the sermon I realized that a number of people back of me were leaving. It was not unusual for an occasional individual or small group to leave to catch a train or pursue some obligation, but this evening so many left that not only the men on the platform looked my way but also many in the congregation under the galleries. When during the closing prayer others were leaving I turned my head and saw that the section back of me was empty save for a little black skunk under one of the chairs three rows back of where I sat. At that moment the benediction was pronounced and in a split second action started under the direct supervision of Mr. A. G. Moody. Ushers went down each aisle leading to the east end and refused to let anyone out that way. Quickly and quietly ushers led out those still under the back gallery and soon the Auditorium was emptied save for hardy souls at a safe distance anxious to see what happened. Mr. Moody told me that after I left a large barrel was brought in containing a piece of raw meat. It was placed not far from the animal. A brave young usher noiselessly approached the skunk and lifted the chair under which it had crept. The animal sniffed and walked right into the barrel. The head was placed quickly on the barrel and the barrel carried off I know not where, but I imagine that the curious invader accepted peace terms, relishing the banquet in a barrel while being conveyed to a remote area. Mr. Moody added "It was an anxious time for me. I realized that there was a good chance the Auditorium might have to be closed for the rest of the summer."

Bessie Schmadeke

CHIPS OFF THE OLD BLOCK

An old fashioned expression applies aptly in portraying cottage ownership today. A "chip off the old block" conveys a tribute that pays homage both to the offspring and the ancestor. Ten families occupy cottages with continuous related ownership since construction early this century. That is fourteen percent of the cottages, including a cottage on an adjoining Mountain Park lot which is a direct extension of a lot leased long ago in the Pine Grove area of the Ridge.

Later we shall list the names of families who anchored the Ridge community firmly on the steep hillside, but now let us add eleven additional cottages that have belonged continuously to members of the same family for more than fifty years.

To the above twenty-one cottages we can proudly add twenty-nine more owned by other chips off the old block or their parents, raising the total to sixty-nine percent of all cottages in the Ridge Association's community. Only twenty-two additional cottages are on the Ridge portion of the hillside. If the proof of the pudding is in the eating thereof, then the founders of the Ridge instilled a spirit that continues to appeal to succeeding generations. In fact, six family groups now include fifth generation members (great-great grandchildren) among vacation guests. With this insight it seems only natural that in 1973 cottages were bought by a granddaughter, Merrilee Sprague and her husband Walter, another granddaughter Mary Snyder and her husband Warren, and a great-granddaughter Patricia White and her husband Nicholas — capturing the distinction of becoming the first fourth generation cottage owner.

Under the three following categories, cottage owners with exceptionally long tenure are listed—

- A. Ownership within the same family group since construction of the cottage
- B. Five generations with Ridge ties
- C. Four generations sharing the same cottage for over fifty years

To identify lot numbers, Pine Grove Addition cottages are shown as PG, South Addition cottages SA, and Mountain Park MP to include three adjacent cottages owned by long-term associate members of the Rustic Ridge Association. Only the lot numbers are shown for the cottages owned in Tracts I and II.

	Lot No.	Year Occupied
A—SINCE CONSTRUCTION		
*Rev. and Mrs. Robert M. Aylsworth	20	1902
**Mr. and Mrs. Horace K. Brainard	3	1903
Mrs. Irene V. Whalen	45	1903
daughter - Sarah W. MacLeod - husband Fraser d - Virginia MacLeod	46	1908

*Mr. and Mrs. Howard S. Harris, Sr.	25		1904
*Mr. and Mrs. William F. Townsend	32	Renter	1906
	35		1906
**Mr. and Mrs. George Andrews	16	PG	1910
Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Jones	28	PG	1911
son - Francis L. Jones			
Niece - Lucille D. Johnson			
*Rev. and Mrs. William H. Miller	2	Renter	1912
	1	PG	1917
*Miss Edythe Babbitt	19	PG	1917
**Dr. and Mrs. William J. Peck		MP	1917
**Succeeding generations listed under Section B			
*Succeeding owners listed under Section C			

B – FIVE GENERATIONS

Non-owners included to indicate succeeding generations			
Mr. and Mrs. Horace K. Brainard	3		1903
d - Bessie B. Schmadeke - h John			
n - Dorothy B. Noble - h Willis			
d - Marjorie B. Fuller - h Willard			
d - Barbara F. Miller - h Roy			
s - Randall G. Miller - w Eleanor			
s - Jonathan			
Dr. and Mrs. William J. Peck		Renter	1906
		MP	1917
s - H. Dudley Peck - w Dorothy Miller (C below)			
d - Helen P. Moore - h Robert (next item)			
Mr. and Mrs. Edgar B. Moore	50	Renter	1906
d - Mary Moore		MP	
s - Robert M. Moore - w Helen Peck		MP	
d - Barbara Moore			
d - Mary Helen M. Neuendorffer - h Richard		MP	
d - Carol N. Ziegenhagen - h Robert			
d - Susan			
d - Lynne			
d - Esther N. Collet - h Pierre			
s - Christophe			
Mr. and Mrs. George A. Andrews	16	PG	1910
d - Catherine A. Marston - h Wallace			
s - George A. Marston - w Grace			
s - Robert A Marston - w Linda			
d - Sarah			
s - Jeffrey			
s - Richard			

Rev. and Mrs. William S. Voorhies	41	PG	1910
gd - Janet V. Abel - h Alan			
gs - John D. Voorhies - w Julia			
gd - Alice V. Rutherford - h Jerome			
d - Francena R. Dwyer - h Paul			
d - Jessie Louise			
gs - Robert W. Voorhies - w Shirley			
s - Raymond A Voorhies - w Sharon (Sherry)			
s - Randy			
s - Tammy			
s - Shawn			
Mrs. Frederick H. Wright	4	PG	1924
s - Charles W. Wright - w Florence			
d - Hazel W. Cowles - h David	6	PG	1920
d - Marjorie C. Crain - h Charles	50		1971
d - Helen C. Thompson - h William	6	PG	1971
d - Lynne T. Jacoby - h Bernard (Bill)			
s - Erik			
s - Christopher			
d - Kathleen C. Denise - h Theodore	53		1962
d - Patricia D. White - h Nicholas	55		1975
d - Jennifer			
d - Olivia			

C – FOUR GENERATIONS

For over fifty years sharing the same cottage, including visits of nieces and nephews

Rev. and Mrs. Robert M. Aylsworth	20		1902
s - *Robert P. Aylsworth - w Frances			
s - Robert D. Aylsworth - w Jeanne			
d - Millicent A. Whitney - h William			
*After death of Frances, married to Edith (Bebe) Ewing, who after death of Robert P. Aylsworth married Dr. Warren Mason			
Mr. and Mrs. Howard S. Harris, Sr.	25		1904
s - Nelson Harris - w Dorothy			
Mr. and Mrs. William F. Townsend	32	Renter	1906
	35		1906
s - Edward L. Townsend			
s - A. George Townsend			
d - Jeannette Townsend			
Cottage sold late in 1975 to			
Mr. and Mrs. Eugene V. Baudouin			
Great Neck, L. I., N. Y.			

Mrs. Jenny A. Johnson		Renter	1911
d - Ruth A. Johnson	80		1921
d - *Helen J. Stearns - h Elber			
s - Elber W. Stearns, Jr. - w Anne			
*After death of Helen, Elber married her sister Ruth			
Rev. and Mrs. William H. Miller	2	Renter	1912
	1	PG	1917
d - Christine M. Fritsch - h John			
d - Dorothy M. Peck - h H. Dudley			
d - Elinor P. Severinghaus - h John			
Mr. and Mrs. Harry W. Doremus	49	Renter	1916
	24		1921
d - Dorothy Doremus			
Miss Edythe Babbitt	19	PG	1917
n - Margaret Stephens - h Harmon			
cousin - Frances Stanhope - h Norman			
Dr. and Mrs. Woodford D. Anderson	1		1917
d - Marilyn A. Williams - h Frank			
Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. Cregar		Renter	1916
	A	SA	1919
d - Doris S. Gutman - h Robert			
Mr. and Mrs. Fred W. H. Cheek		Renter	
Mrs. Ellen Willard - h Daniel	21	PG	1920
s - Gordon C. Willard - w Dorothy Cheek			
sister Beatrice M. Cheek			
Mrs. Mabel Grogan	78	Renter	1918
			1920
d - Marion G. Cooper - h Charles			
d - Ellen C. Hudak - h Michael			
d - Ruth Mary C. Lamb - h George			
Dr. and Mrs. J. L. Peacock	84		1920
d - Carolyn P. Poole - h Gordon			
Rev. and Mrs. J. Wallace Chesbro	79		1921
gs - David C. Chesbro			
gs - Paul L. Chesbro			

Two fourth generation families with over fifty years of residence not listed above, occupied rentals in 1925 and bought in 1927; Rev. Chester J. Hoyt and his wife Estelle, and Rev. Arthur L. Berger and his wife Mary.

The first romantic Ridge trip by a young New York orthodontist to visit the daughter of the Hoyts, Helen, came in 1926, and in 1927 they honeymooned on the Ridge. Now Dr. Walter C. Chapin and his wife Helen, and their son R. Hoyt Chapin and his wife Marybelle, are cottage owners and with their children enthusiastic participants.

The Berger family is now represented by their son David and his wife Roberta, and also by their granddaughter Mary B. Snyder and her husband Warren, who own and occupy with their two children a cottage purchased in 1973.

Another family with fifty years of residence started with a one-year rental in 1926 by Thomas and Edna Duncan, and then the purchase in 1927 of a Pine Grove cottage. Their daughter Carol and her husband John Santos are currently the owners of this cottage. Mr. Duncan for many years headed the Road Committee, directing the hard-topping of Woodruff Way, then Rustic Way, before the Town took over. Regretfully, space limitations confine this listing of families to those named above although "chips" occupy many additional cottages. These include fourth and third generation families, many with two or three decades on the Ridge and still counting.

Possibly you are wondering whether "chip" loyalty prompts sons as well as daughters to acquire cottages? The answer is "yes" with the score two to one favoring daughters.

Esther Loos

WANDERERS ON THE EARTH

Northfield and Rustic Ridge, for us as a displaced family, is a home and a homeland; as those without relatives a place of friendship; and as wanderers on the earth a place of rest and peace.

Back in 1923, sitting in a classroom of the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church of Hungary, at Kolozsvar, taking notes in Church History on the life and work of Dwight L. Moody, had someone told me that one day I would enjoy direct benefit from Moody's work, I would have called that person crazy.

God's ways are mysterious - helping me to become a minister in Hungary working principally with young people; taking post graduate studies in Switzerland and Scotland; and landing in Manchuria, China, as the first missionary of my church. During an early furlough in 1937, I married Maria Lorinez, the first lady-minister of our church, and returned with her to Manchuria, unaware that we would never be able to return to our homeland or see again our parents and relatives.

God had different plans for us. The second World War caught us in China. After the war all doors closed for us to Europe and Hungary, but doors opened to the U. S. A., an unknown land. The first place we came to was Princeton, N. J., with our three China born children. What a great joy it was to discover Mr. and Mrs. Loos and other missionaries from China who could speak Chinese. That helped us feel at home.

We became American citizens. As our children grew older we began to

realize with alarm that in the U. S. A. there is no religious education in public schools. We wanted our children to be educated in the knowledge of the Bible and in Christianity just as we had in Hungary in the Calvinistic tradition. One of our friends, a missionary from Peking, recommended the Northfield Schools for our children. So one day we went for an interview at Mount Hermon School. At first sight we fell in love with Northfield. Knowing our financial difficulties, leaving China with three children and five suitcases, my eldest son was accepted with a generous scholarship. A great burden was lifted from our hearts. How we love the Northfield Schools that gave our three children a solid Christian education!

But more blessings came to us when, by chance, we became owners of a cottage on Rustic Ridge, The Friendship Lodge, and it was thrilling to know that its first owner and builder was a missionary in Burma, the Rev. William Hascell. Since 1955 we have spent our vacations on Rustic Ridge. Our children were especially happy that in the cottage "we have something which is ours." While the children were in school at Northfield they worked on the campus at summer conferences, and my wife also helped at the conferences for eight years. Our cottage was frequently filled with young people and the woods rang with happy singing and laughter. We enjoyed tremendously the fellowship on the Ridge, a unique characteristic of this summer colony. Needless to say, our happiness increased when we found Mr. and Mrs. Loos on Rustic Ridge and again they made us feel at home. For what we needed was solid ground under our feet; need for a homeland, need for friends, need for help, need for love and understanding, and all these things we received from God through Northfield and Rustic Ridge.

I was not surprised when moving from Fairfield, Conn., to Pittsburgh, Pa., that our children begged us: "Please, do not sell the cottage." I promised: "It will not be for sale as long as we live!". Though our children now are scattered over the U. S. A. they come to Northfield as a child comes back home. Also, year by year we can hardly wait for our vacation. Our eldest son, Sandor, after a terrible year in Vietnam came with his family to Northfield in 1973. Sitting outside our cottage he said "Father, it is so relaxing to be here on the Ridge." We concurred with that and are thankful to God for our blessings from the Northfield Schools and the Ridge.

The Ridge has two Sacraments: The Sacrament of Quietness and the Sacrament of Peace. Both of them help us to see the beauty in Nature and feel the nearness of God.

The Rev. Maria Babos

The Rev. Alexander Babos

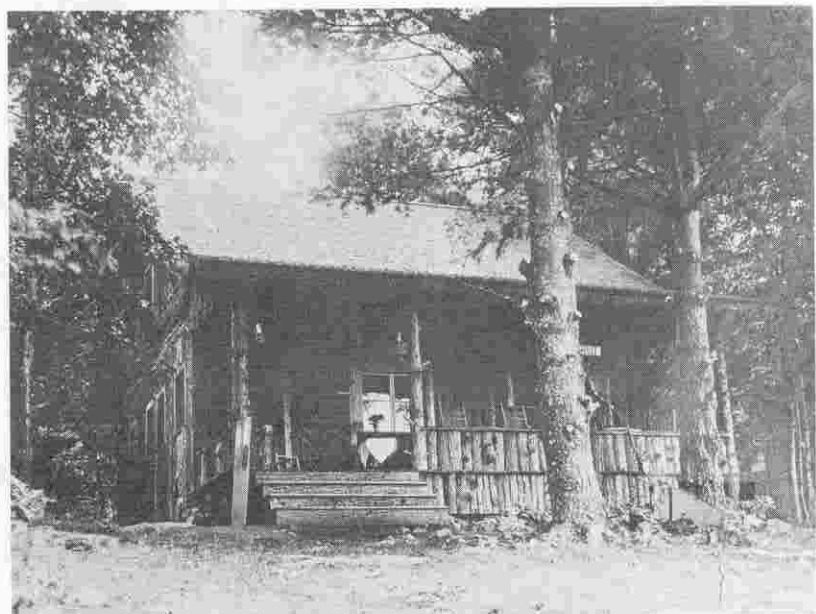
Grace Community United Church of Christ

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

(Retired recently to reside in a home purchased in Northfield.)



Ridge Panorama - 1905



Slab Cottage – 1902
Cottage Living Room – Early





Children's Choir, General Conference – 1906

Porch Decor – Early Century

Young Family Children – Early 1970's





The Willows – 1920's
Hurricane Havoc – 1938

