

MAGUERROWOCK

Bare and grim it faces the west,
To watch the sunset tossing high.
Never before since worlds began,
Was stream so tangled in the grass.
This is summer, but now the sleet,
Drives its sail o'er the frozen plain,
While thun'ring on thro, smoke and snow.
There comes the belated "Princeton train,"
Keeping the course of the river's flow.
And ever old, grim Maguerrowock,
Uplifts its ice crowned head of rock

Mary Blanchard

The vast majority of the people of Calais know little of the larger, part of the city. Calais has not quite thirty-one square miles of territory and probably thirteen square miles is all the ordinary dweller in the city's limits is in any ways acquainted with. The steep and rocky ridge that starts with Maguerrowock and roughly parallels the river, forces the city to keep close to the bank of the St Croix, and as there are few breaks in the ridge, there in so settled "back country" for the city. A spur of the ridge is thrown off for Deshon's hill and probably in some past geological age was connected with Buchanan's hill across the river and the whole lower valley of the St. Croix above tide-water was a vast lake. What was the Salmon Falls was the Last remains of this larger cataract. The slope of the ridge on which the city is built is mostly toward the north and northwest and exposes the city to the benefits of the cold winds that blow from those quarters about nine months in the year, and very little land slopes toward the south as the farmers like for their early crops.

Back of this ridge lies the unknown part of the city. From Maguerrowock bridge in a straight line to where the main road runs into Robbinston is very close to six miles, while following the river, as the road does is twelve miles and by the river may be a mile more.

Lakes And Ponds

How many know that there are fourteen lakes and ponds wholly or partly within the limits of the City of Calais and that one of these is lake four miles long? Here are the names of the lakes: East Maguerrowock, West Maguerrowock, Vose, Beaver, Shattack, Pine and Hope. The following may be classed as ponds: Anthony-Murchie, Red Beach Granite Co's, Little Duck, Maguerrowock, (in meadow) W. L.. Eaton's Farm, Mark's and Louden. These last two are on Carson's heath. Most of these help to make up the Maguerrowock system. Some of them are not more than a mile and a half or two miles from the river at Red Beach yet the waters have to make "a gigantic loop of eighteen or twenty miles to get that two miles. Of course it takes many brooks to feed these lakes so that the water-shed extends far beyond the city lines.

Highlands

Much of the land beyond the ridge is meadow and much is flowed during Spring and Fall freshets, yet between East and West Maguerrowock lakes is a range of hills that is the highest land is the city. Mount Seall is 267 feet high, quite a bit higher than Maguerrowock itself.

The Name

The name seems to be a corruption on an Indian name, and is a relic of bygone days. The Indians called East Magaerrowock Lake Magalwak-agum or Caribou lake, as this would be a good region for those animals in those days. Here are some ways that the name is spelled, most of them are taken from maps and government papers: Mughrrowock, Maguarrawock,

Magurrawoc, Maguerrewock, Maguereowock, Maguerreawoc. Take your pick.

Settlers

No wonder that this valley attracted the attention of the early settlers and some of the earliest built along the stream. Up in Gates pasture now called Wood's pasture, there is one residence at the present time, and the remains of cellars tell where a number of others were built. Ross's lane shows the drift of building at one time. The first school house was a little ways above Furlong brook in what we call Courtneyville and was called the Maguerrowock school, and about opposite the school rose the cattle pound. Baring street had most of the stores and houses. The Upper bridge across the river at Milltown is a hundred and ten years of age this year and is the oldest bridge on the river. Of course it has had a now plank now and then. The bridge at Baring was built in 1829 but it was carried out by the flood in 1923 and had to be rebuilt. While the Milltown one was useable except when the water was rushing over the top and was in use again as soon as the high water was over. The first bridge at Maguerrowock was built in 1827 and was mostly a corduroy way. The question to always asked, "How did they cross before this?" Up to this time there were no roads or travel by wagons as we understand now. Lumber was not hauled to the wharves but in 1805, about the time the mills were built in Milltown, two sluices were built. A log sluice on the Canadian side of the river, the famous sluice of tradition, and a board sluice on the American side extending as far as the Union, hence Middlelanding. Then the lumber was rafted and scowed to the vessels. Most of the heavy hauling was done in the winter. Travel away from the water was on horseback and the streams were crossed at a ford. When Maine became a state in 1820 Calais had only 418 people and the condition before this was such that the grand terry indicted the town for its bad roads in 1819.

But through all the years the valley of Maguerrowock held a great deal of interest for people for it was such a short distance from the river to deep tide water. Early lumbermen thought of turning all the water of the lakes and streams toward Bog Brook and putting the mills there thus having a deep water port, for many vessels had to drop down to the Ledge to receive the last of their cargos which were rafted down to them. A suggestion was made to run a railroad from the mills in Baring down by East Maguerrowock lake, where there was already a mill, and then to Red Beach. The Washington County Rail Road was surveyed that way and some swamping done. In 1897 a law suit was decided against certain people who tried to force the road to be built through Red Beach and Dennysville.

The Wild Man of Maguerrowock

The early settlers of the region were not the type to create legends. When they were not trying to "save the Country" from the other political party, their talk was mostly about how many logs were cut, how many boards the old muley sawed or how many laths they would have had cut, "if that-belt hadn't broke." But there is one story that should be retold, because it seems incredible that a man could exist under each conditions.

In the early days of the War there came to Bog Brook a young man by the name of Whittridge. His home seems to have been somewhere along the Kennebec river. He obtained work in the settlement but in June was stricken with typhoid fever and was very sick with the disease. One day, as the patient seemed resting quietly, the nurse left the room for a moment. He had just left when the sound of a window being opened was heard. Rushing back into the room the bed was found empty and not a trace of the patient. The alarm was spread and a thorough search made but without results. The supposition was that the sick man in his delirium had either died in the woods or had been drowned. Three months passed and the fate of Whittridge had almost ceased to be a topic of conversation when one day a man on the Canadian side of the river saw a naked man on the American shore whom he recognized as Whittridge. Crossing as quickly as he could get a boat he spread the news and a wider search was started. The whole section was aroused and parties spread out so that each man was in view of the others on each side and the whole

county was thoroughly combed but the results were the same as before. Many people were frightened and women and children kept within doors as much as possible. Gardens were found raided and the only clue would be the print of a naked foot. It was thought that the crazed man must have surely perished during the winter yet in the spring a girl who had come out from Ireland, and was working in the field, saw a naked man coming out of the woods. She screamed with fright and the man ran up to her and struck her across the face with a switch and disappeared into the woods again. Later William Gephard was walking through the country between East and West Maguerrowock lakes when his dog brought him a bone which he had done some butchering, he knew did not belong to an animal. The dog led him to a clump of bushes where he found most of a skeleton which must have been that of Whittridge as a neckband of a nightshirt was found around the neck. The remains were given a Christian burial but the mystery of where he had been hidden was not discovered for some time, it was customary to cut all the hay on the meadows and make great stacks of it and leave them until wanted. On removing one of the stacks there was found, inside, the nest where Whittridge had stayed the winter, but how he lived will always be a mystery.

The Battle of Maguerrowock

First Injun, "Twenty-four musquash killed mine father one Sunday morning before breakfast."

Second Injun, "Then your father him dead."

First Injun, "Oh no, Musquash him dead."

The lower reaches of Maguerrowock meadows have been favorite hunting grounds for muskrats and on quiet spring evenings the bang of guns could be heard almost continually. Some of the boys going on to the railroad bridge and some up to the road bridge. One afternoon a party went up the track. The list was about as follows with their guns: Morton (Babe) Kelley had a 38-56 Winchester; Silas (Cy) Kelsey a 38-40 Marlin; Dr. William (Brogle) Hanson a 45-90; James (Jim) McCluskey had a 12 gauge shot gun that used to come apart when it was fired; Stephen (Cotton Top) Knowles a 44 Winchester; Wallace (Pickey) Purrington a 45-70; Edward (Brooksie) Brooks a 45-70 Winchester; George (Bulger) Scott had a rifle but the caliber is not known. The ones on the road bridge were Seth Scott, Walter (Beetler) McKay, Frank Irving, Finley Frost, Ralph Tracy, Lemuel Groves, John Averill and Stephen Pineo. These were all armed but the sizes of their guns are not known.

History has not recorded who started it, but one of the boys took a shot to see how near he could come to the crowd on the other bridge without hitting any one. The fire was returned and then there was a scramble to get behind the rocks on the road bridge and the bank on the railroad. Shot followed shot. There was a ring as a bullet struck a rail or the dull thud as one hit a rock, or the zip as they passed overhead toward Mount Seeall, or left the country for a trip to Canada. Every bullet had to pass over Maguerrowock stream at least six times before it reached the other bridge. But the spirit that watches over such things kept good guard until all the ammunition was used up and the muskrats while they might not have rested in peace that night, all answered to the roll call the next morning.

While the road to Maguerrowock is not littered with cows driven by bare footed boys morning and evening, for ten cents a week, yet the fishing is the same and the cave is still an attraction since there are so few in this part of the country. The scramble up there will repay any one, especially the view from the flat top. The big Baring bend of the St. Croix, the sinuous winding of the stream, the long reaches of the meadows, the flat country stretching towards Charlotte and Baring, and the lines of the high ways will give you a better knowledge of the topography of the region. Toward your left lies a great game country, for fish, birds, bear, deer or other animals. A use may be made of this section yet, so keep your eye on Maguerrowock.

H. E. Lamb