



CANADA HILL—EARLY ABODE OF WILD ANIMALS

THIS miniature mountain is situated in the southerly part of the town. It is between two and three hundred feet high and nearly a mile long. It is covered with a dense forest of pine, hemlock, and hardwood timber, much of which is now quite valuable. The entire hill is the result of an internal convulsion that took place in some prehistoric period of our planet's history. The rock is mostly granite, with occasional layers of mica and slate; while, in some exposed places, are seen finely developed trap dykes in the form of steps that look like the work of a human artist. There are many picturesque spots scattered on and around the hill, the most noted being the "Porcupine's Den." This is near the crest of the hill and consists of huge masses of granite piled one on the other in a confused mass to a considerable height; this shows that a tremendous power has worked here in that far-off time when the earth was in its infancy.

Some parts of this upheaval present perpendicular precipices, other places are roughly rounded slopes covered with shrubs and trailing vines, in summer redolent with the odor of myriad wild flowers. The labyrinths that everywhere traverse the ledge make a scene of rugged beauty far exceeding any other locality to be found in this vicinity. Not far from the Den is a small pond, about half an acre in extent, that has never been dry in the memory of man. Surrounded on all sides by evergreen trees, and half hidden by flowering shrubs and tall grasses, this tiny lakelet forms a scene of rare sylvan beauty that makes it a favorite trysting place for lovers of nature in her quiet aspects.

The view from the western summit is exceedingly fine, embracing a beautiful panorama of forests, well-cultivated



farms, winding streams, and thriving villages; while, in the far distance, as far as the eye can see, tower the everlasting hills, Mount Washington and the entire Presidential Range. Nearer rest the rounded summits of Peaked Mountain, Saddleback, Chocorua, and Kearsarge.

The hill is said to have taken its name from the following circumstance. About 1770, William Mayberry, called "Cash Bill," cleared a farm on the southern slope of the hill and built a house and barn, the traces of which are still to be seen about ten rods from the road and nearly halfway to the summit. When the barn was raised, they had a pretty lively time. Rum flowed like water; all and sundry became more or less intoxicated and boisterous. While the revel was at its height, a man named William Elkins in a foolhardy spirit climbed the highest tree, an immense pine, growing nearby. When asked how far he could see, he replied with drunken gravity, "All over the world and a part of Canada." A bottle of rum was then smashed against the trunk of the tree, and the hill was named *Canada Hill*. CANADA HILL LET IT REMAIN. LET IT NOT BE CALLED HIGHLAND CLIFF, AS SOME OF A LATER GENERATION WANT TO CALL IT.

The early settlers found here an abundance of wild animals to dispute with them the sovereignty of the magnificent forests that then covered the entire township. Many traditions have come down to us from the older people, some of which were related to Samuel T. Dole, when he was a boy in the 1830's and '40's. Among them are the following:

Ichabod Hanson, first of the name in Windham, built a log house near where his grandson Joshua later lived, the farm being in 1895 owned by "Billy" Waterhouse. One bright morning in spring he was attracted by the sound of a waterfall in a southerly direction from his house. Upon examination, he found that the waters of Dole's Brook near the house had been dammed up during the preceding days by beavers, and a pond covering several acres had been formed,



the water flowing in one unbroken sheet over the top. The beavers were busily employed at their usual vocations. Some were standing guard over the dam; others were bringing food to the colony. Hanson quietly withdrew and kept his discovery a profound secret until the following winter. He then returned, broke down the dam, and killed the entire community, receiving enough money to complete the payments due on his farm.

In 1769 William Mayberry, mentioned earlier in this sketch, was looking for a place to settle and discovered a colony of these sagacious animals in a pond which they had made on a branch of Inkhorn Brook, on the east side of Canada Hill. The following winter he broke out the dam and killed the beavers. These were the last of which we have any record in Windham. The following spring the place where the pond had been came up to grass, and Mayberry built his log house there. He said that he chose this locality on account of the fine grass growing in the bed of the old pond. The dam is still to be seen for several rods, and the spot is still called "the Meadows."

While Mr. Mayberry lived there, he lost six calves one night through "wild cats," which were probably Canadian lynxes. His daughter Betsy told her grandson, Samuel T. Dole, that each calf had been bitten on the back near the shoulders, and that their hearts had been entirely torn out by the ferocious beasts. She also remembered that, in the fall of 1783, a large moose came out of the woods and fed with the cattle, then disappeared slowly into the forest.

Another night her father called them all to the door to listen to the howling of the wolves a few rods away. The next day a neighbor, William Campbell, reported the loss of three sheep.

Bears were the cause of much loss to the crops of the settlers. Once, while grandmother Betsy with her brothers and sisters was gathering ripe strawberries, they suddenly came upon a bear sleeping at the roots of a large pine that had been



blown over by the wind. They hurried home and told their father. The bear had disappeared when they returned, but he set a trap made of logs that afternoon. The following day he had to hurry away early and forgot the trap. In the course of the forenoon the oldest son, John, a lad of twelve, found the trap sprung and empty. On looking around, he saw the bear limping nearby and apparently in great pain. John quietly returned to the house, slyly took his father's flint-lock, and returned to the place. Resting his gun across a log, he fired and killed the "Varmint." He then informed his mother of what he had done, and, in a short time, mother and children were all assembled around the dead animal, the mother scolding John one minute for his rashness, and praising his courage the next. They managed to skin the game and quarter the carcass. Then, having no wheeled vehicle, they dragged it home on a hand sled; and "many a good meal we had off him," said John, when relating his adventure later.

The last bear seen in this part of Windham was shot by Samuel Dole, senior, in 1790.