

Winnepesaukee

ing and Development Com-
in New Hampshire. The
ork place the size of Win-
approximately seventy-two
at any given point on the
drive completely around
t, they would have covered

indicate that it is so many
e. Here again we have a
contend that Lee's Mills
mities of the lake. Others
Bay as these points. I've
I've tried measurements
an answer which suits my
Winnepesaukee is from the
to the Downing Landing
Moultonboro and Melvin
Broads" passing the south-
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tain just where to measure.
ngth, and feeling that a fair
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can one get a mental picture
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Hill, or from an airplane, can
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popularly said that Winnipe-
t in the year: and, indeed, if
rock or ledge appears above
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o hundred and seventy-four
ers which support vegetation
it building. These range in
ne thousand acres, to the re-

nowned Becky's Garden with its few shrubs and bushes. Two islands have over five hundred and less than one thousand acres; seven have an area of over one hundred and less than five hundred; six contain between fifty and one hundred acres; twenty-five are between twenty-five and fifty, while two hundred and twenty-seven are less than ten acres in size.

Many of the islands are worthy of note in themselves, being rich in history or legend. As I want to confine myself at this point to geographical features, I shall cite only a few items in passing.

Rattlesnake Island is probably the most interesting in Winnepesaukee, as its ledges pile themselves into a hill which, at the highest point, rises approximately three hundred and ninety-one feet above the lake. The lake is 504.071 feet above sea level, as determined by the United States Geodetic Survey on August 4, 1906, while the summit of Rattlesnake measures 895 feet. Mention of the altitude of the lake brings to mind the fact that the New Hampshire Public Service Commission has attached a water gange to the east side of the Weirs channel bridge, which shows the height of the lake above sea level at any time.

The most sightly island homes on Winnepesaukee could be built on Rattlesnake Island, except that fear of the reptiles for which the island is named and which did and may still inhabit its ledges, have scared away the would-be property owner. I may as well consider here the question of the island and its rattlesnakes. Some believe it to have been so named owing to its shape and appearance. (It has always looked more like an immense crocodile to me.) I can honestly say, however, that the name came from the fact that there were "rattlers" on the island. I can recall a Weirs Reunion Week exhibition of "rattlers" caught on the island by experts. A few years ago it was possible to follow down the east shore of the island in a small boat on a bright, clear day, and see one or more snakes on the ledges in the sun. During lumbering operations on the island workmen have been bitten by them. On at least one occasion the island was burned over in an effort to exterminate them, once and for all. But the ledges that are their natural habitat were their natural protection against the fire, and, crawling deep into the rock clefts, they escaped the flames. I have

not heard or seen any definite proof of the presence of snakes on the island in recent years. Many people go on Rattlesnake each year to pick raspberries. I have known some who went for the express purpose of finding a rattlesnake, and without success. It may be that conditions are no longer right to support reptile life on the island. In some ways I hope so, for then the beauties of this island could be enjoyed by many. In other ways I will have some regrets if the day ever comes when a reproduced medieval castle frowns down from the summit of Rattlesnake Island.

Atop Stonedam Island, about 216 feet above the lake, is a small pond known for its beauty only to those who have explored the island. There are other small marshy spots in the lowland of other islands, but the Stonedam pond is especially noteworthy for its altitude. The name of the island is derived from the stone causeway which once connected the island and the mainland over that section of the lake known as Sally's Gut.

A few years ago a good yarn made the rounds of Winnepesaukee telling of a disappearing island near Center Harbor. I haven't the slightest idea where the story started, for who can tell what fertile imagination starts a "tall tale" on its way. At that time I was covering lake news for *The Laconia Evening Citizen*, and the disappearing island made good "copy" for us for several days. From all that we could determine the island had no foundation. Certainly no foundation that attached it to the lake bottom.

Another island that deserves particular mention is Cow Island, or Guernsey, as it is now called. This spot was settled in 1812 by Paul Pillsbury, who erected a farm house and grist mill on the island. As it was the only grist mill in the lake region in those days, customers were attracted from all directions. The mill was operated by wind power, and people sometimes had to wait days or even weeks to get sufficient wind to grind their corn. Also, the first herd of Guernsey cattle imported to America grazed on this island. Today only the foundations of the house and barns remain, but in 1935 the windmill was restored and dedicated as an historical shrine by Governor H. Styles Bridges. The original windmill survived all the other structures for several years, and it was such a landmark that its