

A brief history of Long Island, the largest island on Lake Winnepesaukee, will introduce WINDERMERE, the charming, park-like estate upon which stands the well-preserved Victorian mansion, built in 1891-1892 by Dr. Frank Eugene Greene on the southern end of the Island where it commands a view of the Belknap Mountain Range and the broadest portion of the Lake.

Long before becoming an attraction to summer residents, Long Island was building an historical background, the records of which go back to 1799 when it was annexed to the Town of Moultonborough. At this period and on into the nineteenth century, twelve hundred of its acres were found to be productive farm land where potatoes, a major crop, brought prosperity and some fame to the early settlers. According to local history, the seed from these



potatoes was used in the development of the famous Idaho Potato.

Two names stand out in this early farming period: John Boody and John Brown. Boody raised wheat of such superior quality that it was purchased by the Federal Government and shipped to the farmers in the western states who recognized and utilized its excellent seed. More impressive is the fact that so much

wheat of good quality was grown on the farms of Long Island that John Pillsbury built a wind-powered flour mill on the top of nearby Cow Island. This has been recently restored. As time went on and the great wheat farms began developing in the mid-west, he left New Hampshire and started the Pillsbury Flour Mills.

On his Long Island acres, Brown, meanwhile, developed King Philip Corn - used as meal - a strain said to have come from seed given to the Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony by Massasoit, the friendly Indian, son of King Philip. For this flint corn with its eight-rowed grains and its ears ranging in length from ten to thirteen inches, Brown won considerable acclaim. For fifty years, he held the record in New Hampshire for the quantity of corn per acre which he produced.

An indication that dairying was a profitable sideline for these early settlers, stems from the fact that



Brown's wife, Catharine Follet Brown, became known for her excellent cheeses. She produced these in quantities of six and seven hundred pounds annually.

These farmers were joined in 1839 by one Robert Lamprey who brought his family to the Island and built a farmhouse near the site of the present WINDERMERE mansion. Lamprey made a name for himself with his shelled corn of which he raised as

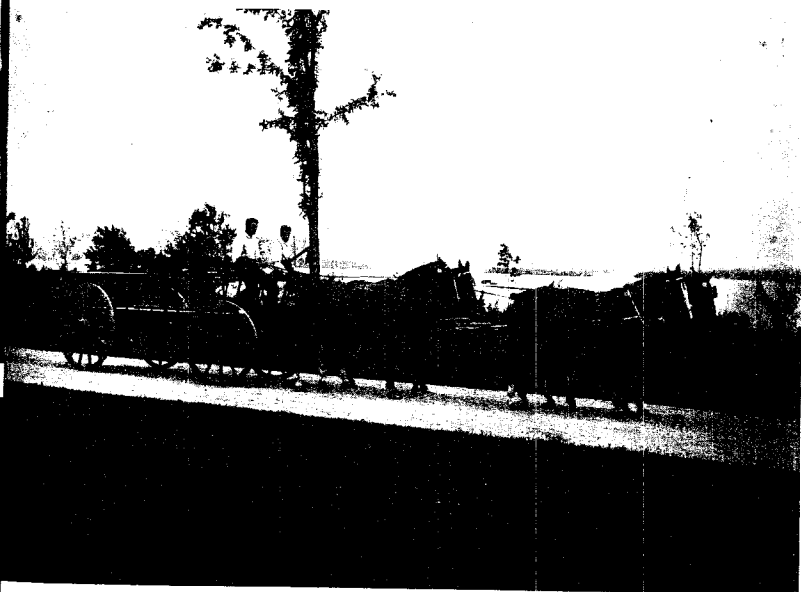
much as one hundred and thirty-one bushels and seven quarts per acre. In 1891, Lamprey moved his house to Geneva Point on Moultonborough Neck and sold his holdings on the southern end of Long Island to Dr. Frank Eugene Greene, thus providing Greene with the land upon which his summer estate was to be developed. Still another name which figures in the history of the Island is Wentworth, early settlers, whose property was situated on the third of the Island nearest Moultonborough. Thus, the names Brown, Lamprey, Wentworth, and Greene; and, later with the passage of time, Blackstone, were to become almost synonymous with Long Island and Lake Winnepesaukee.

The name WENTWORTH recalls the fact that there was no bridge from the mainland to Long Island until some time after 1864. In that year, one of the

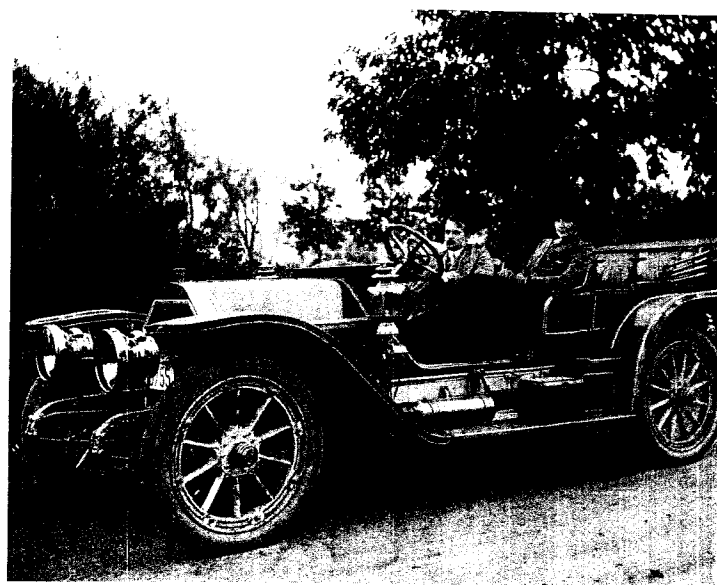
current in the Lake at that point. Sometime before 1900, this primitive piece of construction was replaced by a bridge supported by concrete piers; this, in turn, was supplanted in the twentieth century by the present dependable bridge.

A very comprehensive story of transportation on Lake Winnepesaukee, with emphasis upon the steamboat and the part it has played in the development of the Lake and its islands, was written by the late Edward H. Blackstone - familiarly remembered as Bud. His book was published in 1969 by the STEAMBOAT HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA, 414 Pelton Avenue, Staten Island, New York. Its title: *Farewell Old Mount Washington*.

From early times, the raft, the gundalow, the catamaran, the horseboat, the scow, and the barge all played their significant parts in the lives of those



Dows of Moultonborough married a Wentworth. In order to get his bride to her new house in Moultonborough, Dow used a rowboat for the crossing; then wheeled her possessions from the shore to their home in a wheelbarrow. When a bridge was finally built, it was merely a built-up roadway constructed of rock and gravel, not at all satisfactory since it could be easily washed away, particularly since there was a strong



residing on Long Island. From here on, with the coming of the steamboat, the history of the Lake and all its islands shifts from a small self-contained area with its own schools, bands, boat builders, and farmers into a far less isolated and independent community.

In the last half of the nineteenth century, the use of the steamboat in conjunction with the railroads promoted a tourist boom which led to the building of

inns and hotels; and many homes became boarding houses while others catered to paying guests.

There were two hostelrys on Long Island: The Browns' Long Island Inn was established in 1874. It was successfully run by George K. Brown, son of John and Catharine, and later by his son, Harry, remembered with great respect by the Island's inhabitants as a friend and neighbor. Their house, built in 1830, which was expanded for use as an inn, is still standing, near the entrance gates of WINDERMERE. From this inn, the slope to the shore of the Lake was cleared and an avenue of trees led down to the large wharf. It was, at this time, a great accommodation that mail was delivered by boat five times a day. Such famous steamers as *THE LADY OF THE LAKE* and the first *MOUNT WASHINGTON* stopped regularly at Browns' Wharf on their trips around the Lake, bringing, in addition to mail, provisions, freight, and passengers.



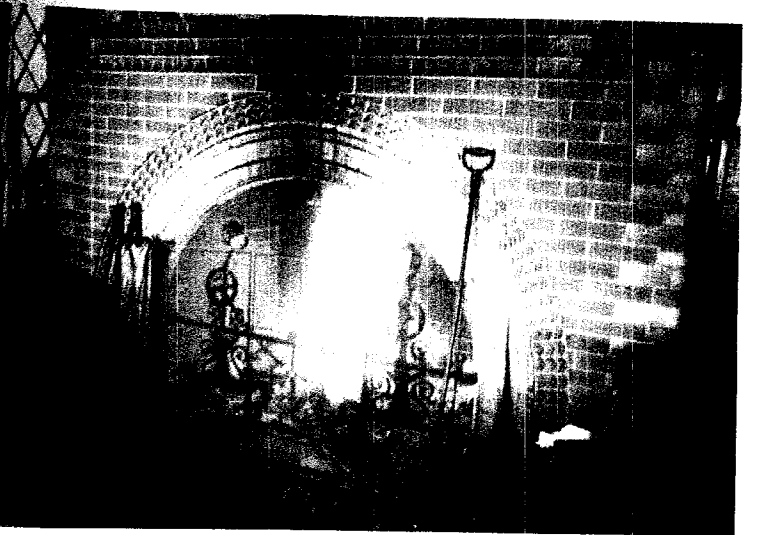
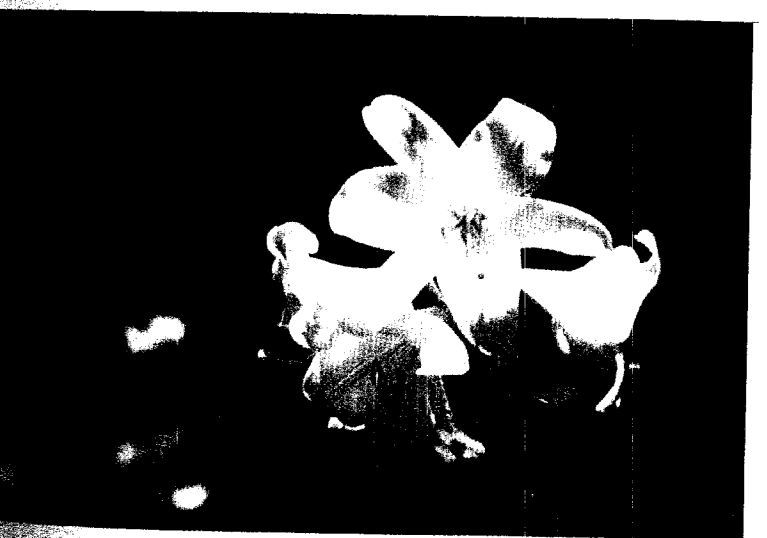
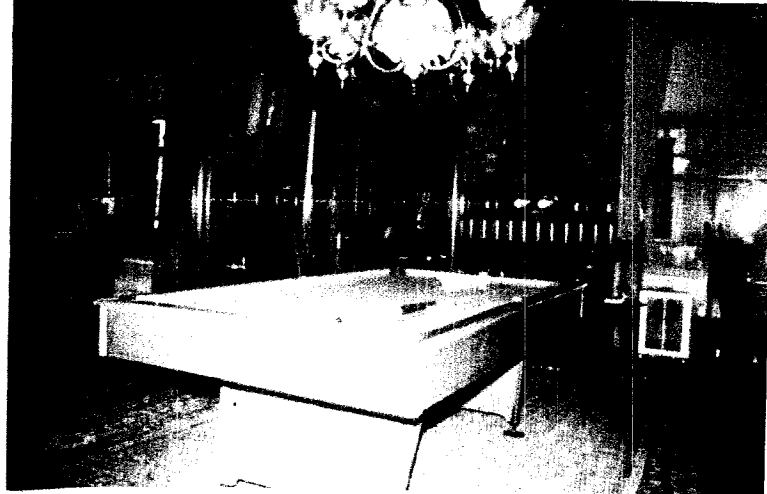
The other hostelry, named Island Home, known locally as Blake's Hotel, was situated half way down Long Island. It was flourishing in 1878 under the management of two cousins, one named Blake; the other, Lamprey. Popular in its day, it stood unused for a number of years, but it remained standing until 1962 when it was destroyed by fire.

Thus, the improved bridge and the accessibility provided by the steamboat not only attracted tourists to Long Island but it drew summer residents who built beautiful houses and brought to the area an elegant way of life, heretofore unknown. Prominent among those who had the means and the foresight to choose Long Island as a site for summer residences were two brothers: Dr. Frank Eugene Greene and Dr. Jared Alonzo Greene, both of whom were known for their patented blood and nerve medicines, the best known and most popular of which was *Greene's NERVURA*. In connection with their thriving business, they pioneered with their national advertising and promotions. They came from the Boston area and had factories there as well as in New York and Chicago.

As previously mentioned, the Lampreys sold their land at the tip of Long Island to Dr. Frank Eugene Greene. On this property, during 1891-92, he built the spacious three-storied mansion which still stands,



carefully preserved, and owned and still used for summer vacationing by his descendants, adding up to five generations in 1976. The house, representing the Victorian style of architecture frequently found in summer homes of that era, stands upon spacious grounds with well-kept lawns, and with fields, meadows, and woodland beyond. As it stands today, a



macadam road leads to its entrance which is impressively marked by a pair of large granite gate posts hung with wrought iron gates. A black-top driveway continues on into the property, passes the gatehouse and winds its way to the mansion. Although geographically in Moultonborough, the estate is approximately ten miles from the Village, Center Harbor.

WINDERMERE has the usual related buildings found on an estate of its era. Aside from the caretaker's house, also referred to as the gatehouse (now used as a year-round home), there is a stable, an ice house, a pump house, and a poultry house. The buildings are in good shape since the Greene family lives in the mansion each summer and takes pride in its appearance.

The story of the buildings of WINDERMERE begins in 1891 when Dr. Frank Eugene Greene purchased the Lamprey acreage. Dr. Greene then consulted with the well-known Boston architect, J.H. Besarick. The blueprints, prepared by Besarick are among the Greene family's records. At this same time, Dr. Greene sought out two contractors, requesting bids; one was from Boston; the other, from Laconia, New Hampshire. Busiel, the Laconia contractor, was the low bidder and he was given the contract. As construction proceeded, the Boston firm requested permission to see the finished product. A representative who visited the estate declared that he could not have done as good a job.

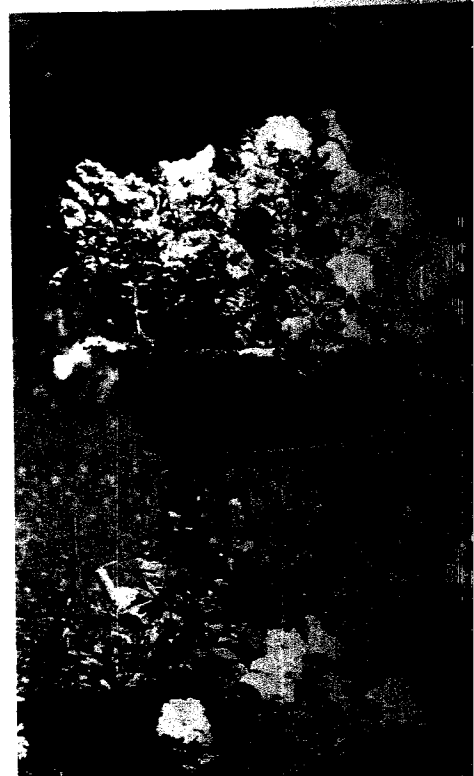
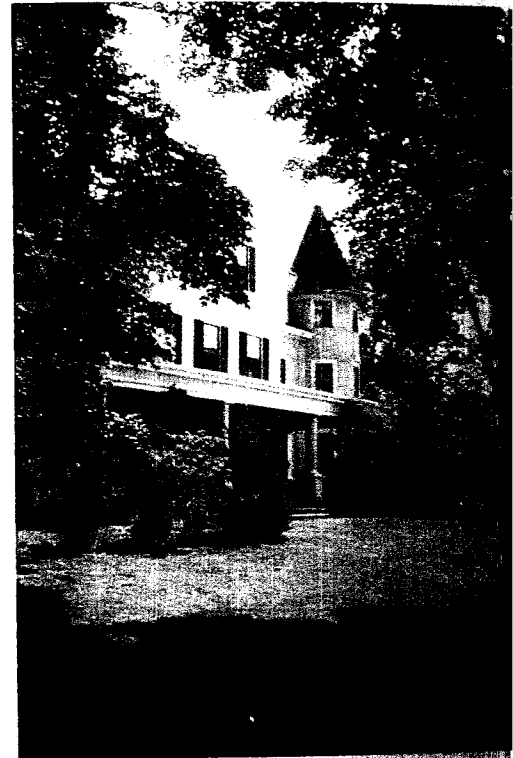
The construction of WINDERMERE and its related buildings was spread over two years. All the materials used came by boat, by barge, by horseboat, and by steamboat from Lakeport, New Hampshire. Approximately one hundred workmen camped in tents on the property while the mansion was under construction. This was customary in the days before the automobile made possible the daily "portal to portal" approach. Dr. Greene, while the building went on, frequently stayed at the Long Island Inn as he watched and guided the progress. Although the materials were transported by boat, and although one hundred men were involved in the building which

took two years, the cost of the three main buildings: the mansion, the gatehouse, and the barn, added up to \$16,000.

And whence came the dignified name: WINDERMERE? Dr. Greene and his wife were frequent travelers abroad where they collected art objects of all kinds, many of which are among the furnishings of WINDERMERE: paintings, sculpture, artifacts, and other treasures. Following a visit to the Lake Country in England, they chose the name for their summer estate, impressed as they must have been with Lake Windermere which has been so often described poetically for its beauty and peaceful charm. No doubt, they saw a similarity between this beautiful British lake and New Hampshire's Lake Winnepesaukee.

The mansion at WINDERMERE and its related buildings were given red roofs and, to this day, all the buildings are painted Colonial yellow with white trim. Black blinds give the finishing touch. The exterior walls are faced with hand-cut shingles and clapboards; and spacious, covered, columned porches nearly surround the house, providing outdoor living space where views of great natural beauty meet the eye in all directions.

Dr. Greene planted several unusual trees and





shrubs, and nearly 50 varieties are flourishing around WINDERMERE today.

The first floor consists of a large living hall with an enormous fireplace of fancy water-struck brick; the walls and ceiling are of quartered oak panels. This oak paneling continues as the wall up the wide, circular staircase to the second floor. An ornate wrought-iron chandelier graces the living hall, hanging from the center of the room. Off to the right of this living hall, a music room is elaborately furnished with paintings, objects d'art, fine furniture, and a Chickering concert grand piano. Over all, in this room, hangs a crystal chandelier. The billiard room, also off the living hall, has an ornate fireplace and is wainscotted in cherry with hand-painted, embossed wallpaper, imported from Germany. The dining room, like all rooms on the ground floor, is completely furnished with unusual furniture and accessories. The walls are adorned with original oil paintings in gilded frames. The dining

room has whitewood wainscoting, mahogany stained, up to chair-rail height, above which is the original red-flocked wallpaper which covers the upper walls. An ornate fireplace completes the decor of the dining room.

From the dining room, a butler's pantry of copious size, leads to the kitchen. The butler's pantry has a dishwashing sink and adequate shelves for china, bespeaking the tremendous meals and generous hospitality which stemmed from it.

The kitchen, a large room with two pantries, is the only modernized room in the mansion. It has been equipped with a new stainless steel sink and an electric range. The kitchen continues to be equipped for serving bountiful meals to large groups of guests. The atmosphere of the kitchen is homey with its low table around which a group may sit comfortably on an old settle or a rocking chair and chat. Old kitchen equipment is displayed here and there. Beyond the kitchen,

the original walk-in ice chest remains unchanged as does the turn-of-the-century laundry room. A washer and dryer have, however, been incorporated for modern convenience. Despite the installation of these few modern contrivances, the original wood stove remains, giving the hospitable Victorian kitchen a tone all its own.

The second floor hall, hung with pictures of Greene ancestors in gold-leaf frames, leads to five master bedrooms and one single room. There is also a trunk room on this floor. Two of the bedrooms have fireplaces and two are equipped with stoves. A full bath and a half bath complete the second floor. All these bedrooms are furnished in Victorian style. The third floor consists of three large guest rooms and three servants' rooms, all appropriately furnished.

A high-posted cellar, with large granite blocks serving as a foundation, supports the entire mansion. An interesting gas system, with a large crib of stones, provided the lighting. This contraption, in order to function, had to be cranked up each day to provide pressure for the gas lighting fixtures which were installed originally in the house and barn. This gas device shows the ingenuity used in contriving comforts in those days. By putting gas under pressure in the basement, gas lighting made available for the mansion and the barn. Today WINDERMERE is entirely serviced by electricity.

The barn at WINDERMERE was as carefully planned and built as the mansion. It is L-shaped and consists of a stable area with stalls for ten horses. There are two carriage rooms and two large hay lofts as well as second-floor quarters for stable help: coachman, groom, and others. The cow barn has stalls for ten cows, two bull pens, two hay lofts, and other rooms. The barn has a full cellar and rests upon a large granite block foundation.

The barn houses a wooden, two thousand gallon water tank, installed in the highest peak of the barn. This was used to provide gravity-fed water to the mansion. Originally, the water was pumped underground from the Lake one quarter of a mile away by a rare type "hot-air" piston pump. The mansion is now fed by an artesian well.

Another building, not previously mentioned as part of the WINDERMERE ESTATE is the large boat-house. In connection with this, a note, historically interesting, is that all the Greenes had steam yachts which plied Lake Winnepesaukee, used largely for fishing parties, easy transportation about the lake, and lavish social events. Dr. Frank Eugene Greene's first yacht, the *Mohawk*, burned in 1906. This, he replaced with a larger one, the *Windermere*, named for his estate.

Although this is the story of WINDERMERE, the summer estate of Dr. Frank Eugene Greene and his family, others of the Greene family have left memories which have found a place in the history of Long Island on Lake Winnepesaukee. Dr. Jared Alonzo Greene, Frank's brother and partner in the patent medicine business, also purchased property on Long Island. On this, in 1895, Alonzo chose to build his mansion on the highest point of land toward the east. He named his estate ROXMONT. The mansion resembled a castle or fortress and soon was referred to as "Greene's Castle".

Today, all that is left of ROXMONT is the stone gateway; for the costly and unusual structure burned to the ground thirty-five years after it was built. Still, the memory of this exotic mansion lives and it has become more or less of a legend.

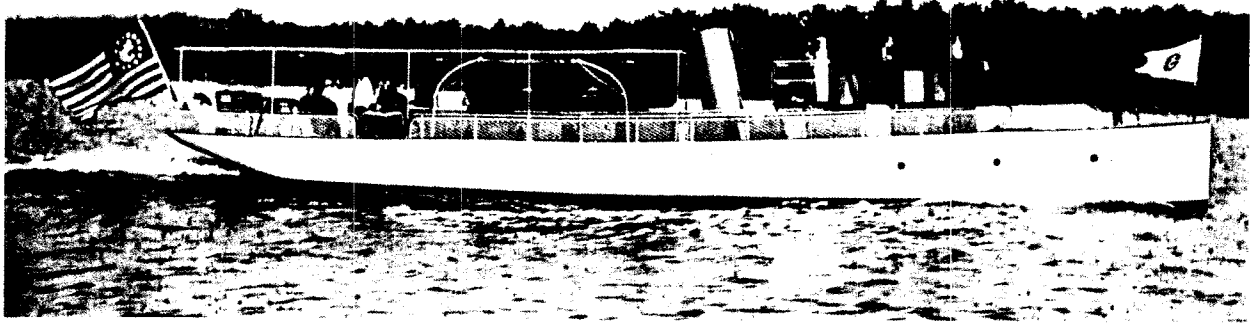
To round out the Greene story in these colorful years, the name of the sister of these two doctors should be mentioned and added to the record. Flora Greene, who married George Washington Armstrong of Boston became a summer resident of nearby Center Harbor. There, she and her husband built a summer home which they named GILNOCKI.

*A few facts, used in this introduction to WINDERMERE, have been drawn from the book by Edward H. Blackstone. Another publication, compiled by Helen Sturtevant Matthews and published by the Moultonboro Historical Society in 1963, was useful in piecing together the early history of Long Island.*

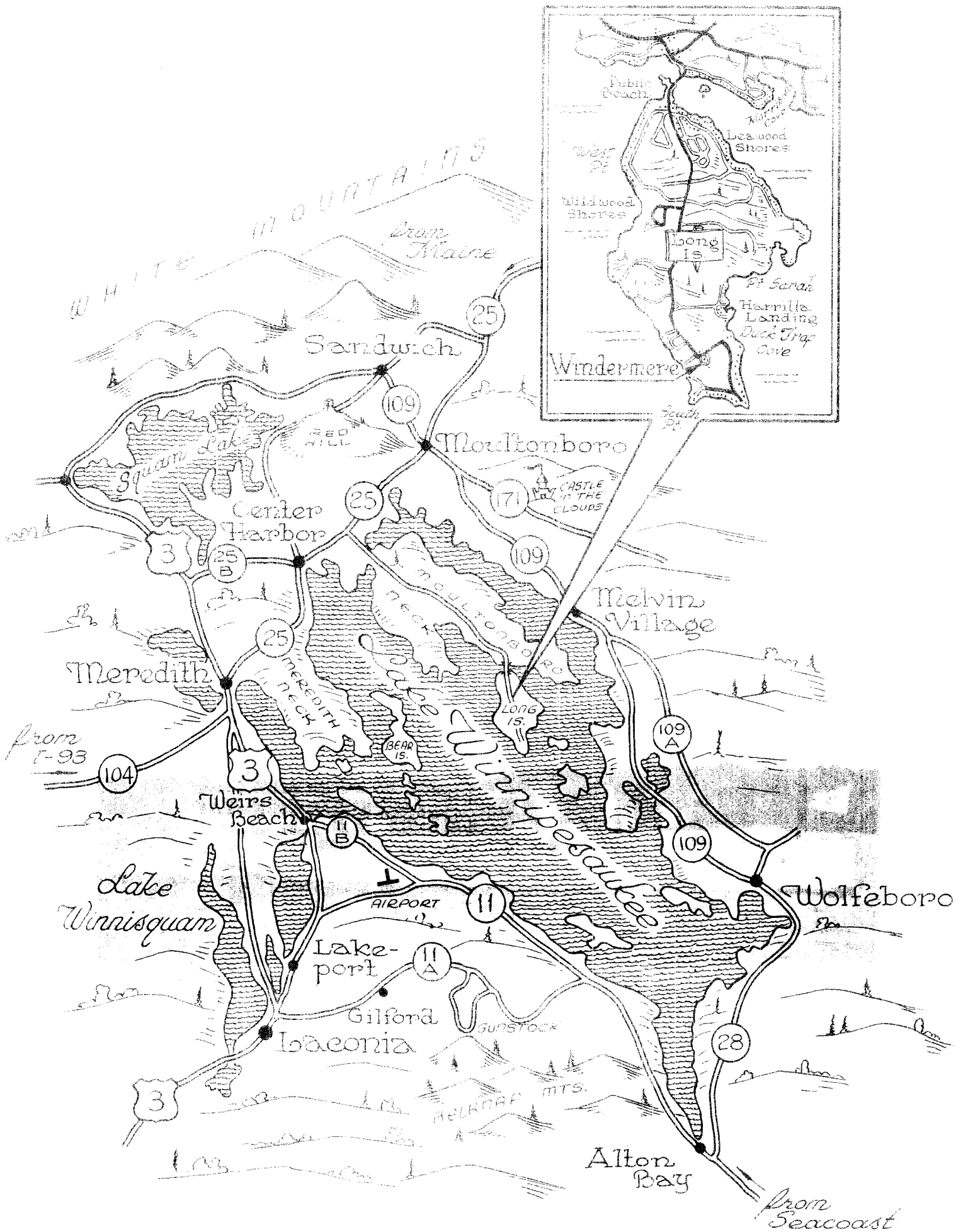


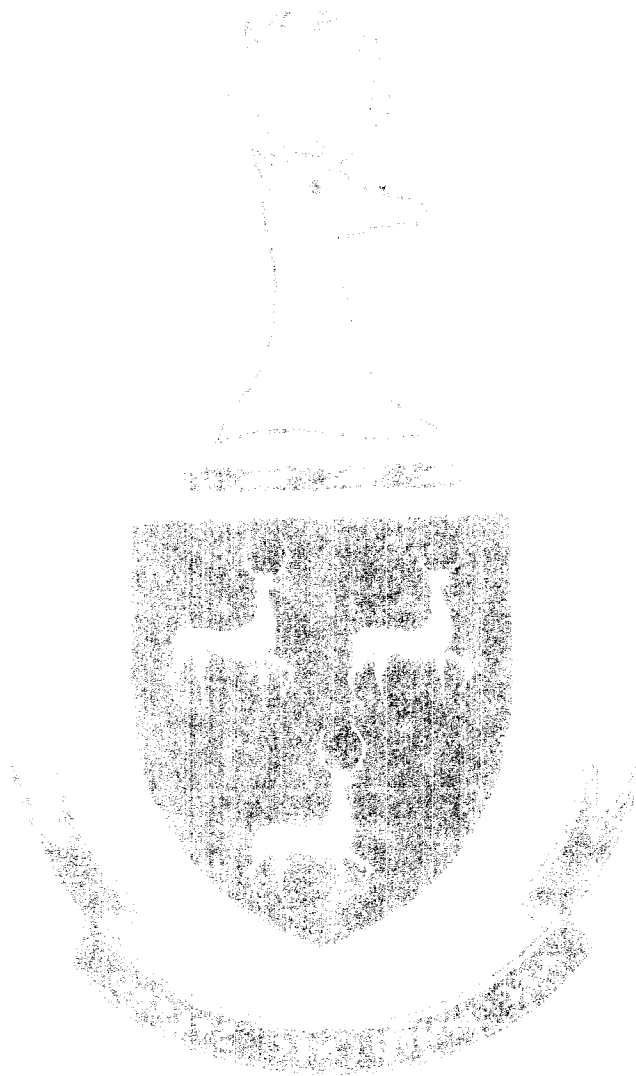
*Dr. Frank Eugene Greene*

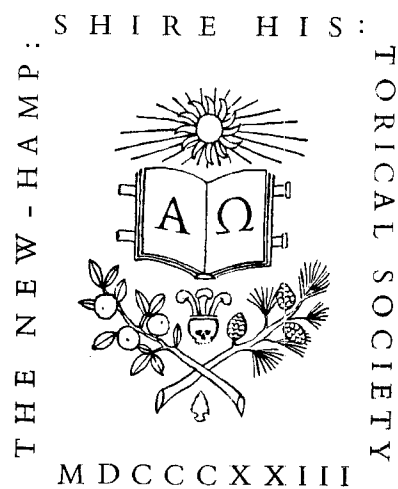




*Dr. F. E. Greene's Yacht Windermere*







*Gift of*  
Mrs. Gardiner G. Greene

*This brochure has been written with the purpose of recording the story of Windermere and to introduce the reader to the history of Long Island on Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire. The writer hopes that this publication will revive the memory of an era when many beautiful Victorian summer estates were part of the American scene. Since many of these mansions have now vanished, and the luxurious way of life which they represented also has disappeared, this recollection of Windermere may serve as a contribution to our cultural past.*

*Gardner G. Greene*