



July, 1892

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TRANSACTIONS.

Of the

\* Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club \*

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OTTAWA, CANADA:

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## NOTES ON THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE BLUE MOUNTAIN, CO. OF LEEDS, ONTARIO

By Rev. C. J. Young, Lansdowne, Ont.

(*Read February 25th, 1892.*)

Travellers by the Grand Trunk Railway from Montreal to Toronto have possibly noticed the rocky and broken nature of the country they pass through between Brockville and Kingston. This is especially the case in the townships of Escott and Lansdowne and in these townships it is that the subject of the present paper "The Blue Mountain" is situated. The rocky tract referred to is most pronounced in the vicinity of Charleston Lake; it extends thence in a south-westerly direction, and continuing along the River St. Lawrence, helps to form the inimitable scenery of the Thousand Islands. In past years this country was densely timbered with pine and other forest trees, and until the lumberman's axe made its onslaught on these, was, we are told, a veritable wilderness, through which the bear, the wolf and the deer roamed at will. To-day the greater part of the large timber is cut away, and in the more level places the land is cleared and cultivated, yielding some of the finest crops in this part of Ontario. In other parts, where the rocky nature of the soil forbids cultivation, a second growth has sprung up, consisting of pine, hemlock, birch, oak and poplar. Here and there patches of the old woodland remain, where the maple, the elm, the beech, and an occasional oak and hickory flourish in all their pristine vigour. But the pine are mostly gone. Besides the curiously shaped conical hill known as the Blue Mountain some six miles north of the Railway and which according to the Government Survey rises to a height of 360 feet above Charleston Lake, there are several other rocky eminences to the South, towards the river St. Lawrence, reaching an altitude of from two to three hundred feet. The whole of this country is to-day curiously diversified with woods, rocks, swamps and in places excellent farms. But it is the rocky tract known as the Blue Mountain that I am going to speak of. Almost every one now is familiar with the "Thousand Isles;" the portion that remains a wilderness extends for about ten miles on the easterly side of Charleston Lake, and varies from three to four miles in width. To lovers of nature it is a most interesting tract of country. Within these limits there is no cultivation. The larger

timber, as I have stated, has been mostly cut away or destroyed by fires, but its place is taken by the dense second growth of trees above referred to. On approaching from the south, a traveller is at once struck by the extremely broken ground. On this side and on that, huge masses of rock rise up among the trees. Chaos reigns supreme and many a one well acquainted with the country who has gone out in summer to pick berries and has lingered till twilight, has failed to reach home that night. There are deep gullies and chasms between the rocks. The south side of the Blue Mountain proper is very steep, rising in terraces one above another; the outlying ridges contain steep rocky bluffs, in places bare, in others thickly wooded. Between these bluffs are swampy spots, little creeks, or here and there a marsh. In some places the chasms between the rocks are so narrow, though from forty to fifty feet in depth, that a good sized tree that has fallen across, forms a natural bridge. Few except such as are lovers of nature or are fond of romantic scenery, with hunters and berry pickers, visit this spot. The latter are numerous in the summer months, for the ridges, as they are called, abound with blueberries, the gullies with raspberries and blackberries and the small marshes produce very fine cranberries. Near the crest of the highest ridge, running parallel with the large lake below, are two small lakelets, about half a mile long by a quarter wide. The highest of these is a romantic spot, a complete basin among the rocks. On the east side rise abruptly from the water precipitous rocks, to a height of probably a hundred feet, clothed with scrub pine and oak. The water in these lakes is said to be very deep, it is clear and cold, and on a fine day of a lovely blue. The only fish in these lakes is a species of minnow or small chub; speckled trout if introduced, I do not doubt, could thrive well. I should suppose the rugged nature of this district is due to volcanic forces, and those who know the geology of the country better than I do, will say whether it is not altogether probable that these lakelets are the craters of extinct volcanoes. Charleston Lake at the foot of these ridges is now pretty well known. It has been much frequented for some summers past by American tourists, who resort thither for the sake of sport, retirement and the pure air. The salmon trout of this lake are held in much repute, and by those who understand the method of fishing for them, are easily caught in the summer and "fall".

The American visitors are very successful, using a long line and allowing it to sink in the deep water to a depth of upwards of one hundred feet. The rocks to the east and south of the lake are of the Laurentian formation, but contain no economic mineral, at any rate none have been discovered so far. In the lake itself are islands of crystalline limestone, and on the west shore I believe both lead and iron have been found and were formerly worked.

But to return to the Blue Mountain. From its highest part the round conical hill already mentioned, a magnificent view may be obtained on a fine day. Charleston Lake stretches below, at its head is the little village of that name; a little beyond, the spire of the church at Pine Hill rises amid a grove of pine trees; to the north-west the eye ranges over a tract of rock and woodland, to the south and east is the river St. Lawrence, the fertile country intervening, and far beyond, the hills in the United States, where the limit of vision is bounded by the foot hills of the distant Adirondacks. Altogether the view is unique in this part of Ontario. But a ramble among these rocks and ridges is very tiring on a warm day, and few would care to undertake it alone.

Formerly as mentioned this region was a great resort for deer, and the older settlers tell how numerous they used to be. But within the last few years they may be said to have disappeared and now only an occasional straggler is seen. Bear too and wolves were formerly numerous; the last bear that I have heard of was seen four or five years ago by two farmers in the neighborhood, although traces of them have been since seen; and during the past "fall" three are said to have been met with near the Gananoque water some four miles from Charleston Lake. Wolves were thought to have become extinct, but in October 1887 a large one was poisoned close to the Blue Mountain. A number of sheep had been previously missed, one farmer losing as many as twenty-eight, killed, as was thought for a time, by dogs. In the partially eaten carcase of one of these strychnine was placed and thus the wolf was obtained. The person who captured it, told me of its large size, and the layers of fat he found under the skin clearly proving it had fared well on the farmer's sheep. A second one was suspected of being in the neighborhood; but none have since been seen. The lynx or wild cat, as the settlers call it, is still found among the rocks. Of the

other large mammals the raccoon and fox are plentiful. Two years ago I saw four young silver-grey foxes, captured the previous summer, and which had become quite tame. They probably were the offspring of a cross between the red and black varieties, a specimen of the latter being occasionally seen. An otter is trapped from time to time in Charleston Lake; I heard of one last year. The porcupine is a common animal, the locality being exactly suited to his requirements. In the heavier timbered places there are a few black squirrels, an occasional grey one, and other smaller animals are plentiful. With the exception of partridges, (the ruffed grouse) and some ducks, game birds are not plentiful. There are plenty of the former, but they are difficult to follow on account of the rough nature of the ground. This year they have fed eagerly on beech nuts. The spruce partridge I have not heard of. Of ducks the black duck (*Anas obscura*) is very common and affords capital sport to those who are fond of hunting them during September and October. During the day time they are often found resting in the little lakes I have mentioned, where they usually find perfect quiet and seclusion. In the evening they fly down to the bays and marshes around Charleston Lake to feed. Of other ducks the wood duck, (*Aix sponsa*) the "fall ducks and broad bills" as they are plentiful on larger waters in October and November, as also the "golden eye," some of which remain all the winter in the open parts of the river St. Lawrence. Of other birds in this district I will mention some of the rarer kinds, which I have noticed myself or heard of during the last three years. The bald eagle nests every year in the township of Lansdowne, near the river St. Lawrence, also near Marble Rock in Leeds. The osprey is a very rare bird and does not appear to nest. I have seen only one. Of hawks, the red-tail passes to and fro in spring and fall, and if it breeds here rarely does so; the red-shouldered (*Buteo lineatus*) is the commonest of the large hawks and breeds abundantly: I have seen one specimen of the broad winged hawk (*Buteo Pennsylvanicus*) in May last, so it possibly breeds. The other hawks are the sharp-shinned and sparrow, the latter quite common. I should not forget to mention the marsh hawk, which is not uncommon and breeds in the marshes. The eggs of a set I saw in 1890, five in number, were boldly marked and spotted. Of owls we have a

great variety, but none are common, the snowy owl and the great cinereous owl have both been captured in winter near the Blue Mountain, and I have seen specimens, as well as the Virginian horned owl, which is generally distributed but not common. Of the long eared-owl, I saw a specimen shot within a distance of ten miles, in November 1890. The short-eared owl, two specimens procured in the township of Lansdowne in 1890; the screech owl, (*Megascops asio*) caught at Lansdowne in October 1891, which I now have alive; and the barred owl, and saw-whet; a specimen of the latter was caught alive at the river St. Lawrence in June 1890. All these varieties I have seen. Of other birds the white-rumped shrike is common, the northern shrike (*Lanius borealis*) appears every winter. The towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) is a common bird, hatches in June I found the nest with four eggs, May 19, '91. I noticed a pair of morning doves, (*Zenaidura macroura*) in April 1891, in the township of Lansdowne. The flycatchers are common. I noticed a nest of the wood pewee, (*Contopus virens*) on a horizontal branch of a beech tree in June last, and in the same grove also on a beech tree obtained a nest of the ruby-throated hummingbird. Of warblers the rarest I have seen is the "mourning," of this I watched a nest with four eggs in June 1891. In marshy districts around Charleston Lake the long-billed marsh wren is very common, breeding in all suitable locations; the winter wren occasionally breeds, and in 1890 I found a nest in a rotten stump close to the ground, not ten yards from the tree on which the bald headed eagle nests, a striking reminder of the frequent proximity of majesty and insignificance. Of water fowl, the favourite haunts of these birds are so numerous, that it would be strange if there were not a fair variety. The bittern, the great blue heron the green heron, I think, though not quite sure, the black and wood ducks, the coot, the horned grebe, (*Colymbus auritus*) all breed in the Blue Mountain district, as too the woodcock, a nest of which species with three eggs, I saw in June 1890; the Virginia rail, nest with nine eggs June 17th 1891 and the killdeer plover. A nest of Bartram's sandpiper was found in an upland meadow in 1889 with eggs and it is probable that the solitary sandpiper also breeds, as I have seen the old birds as late as June and as early as August. Of other birds I am assured by a person who has travelled in the North West, that he saw a flock of sand



hill cranes pass over the township of Escott in 1890, and recognized the birds by their cry. In the present month December 1891, I have seen two wax wings, (*Ampelis garrulus*). Space does not permit me to go further into an account of the birds, as I must mention some of the more striking plants. The rarest plant I have met with is the dwarf sumach, (*Rhus copallina*) found by me about a mile inland from the river St. Lawrence in October last in the township of Lansdowne. The bright red foliage of the plant at that time of year formed a noticeable feature. I understand it has only been found once before in Canada on an island in the St. Lawrence river near Brockville. I enclose a leaf. In the same locality I find the pitch pine, *Pinus rigida* to be a common tree growing in suitable places, i.e. rocky ground on the islands in St. Lawrence and north, on and around the Blue Mountain. The red cedar is also a common tree here, growing in this section of country invariably as far as I have observed, on and among Laurentian rocks. Time forbids me to go into any systematic mention of other plants, but I will speak of a few at haphazard, which friends at Ottawa have kindly named for me. The closed gentian, (*Gentiana Andrewsii*) is fairly common from the St. Lawrence northward in moist meadows. On the borders of creeks and near the river, the ground nut, (*Apios tuberosa*) is a common plant. Near the Blue Mountain I met last May with pretty blossoms of the fringed polygala, (*Polygala paucifolia*). On the Islands among rocks as too on the Blue Mountain. I have met with the enclosed fern, a southern variety I think, (*Asplenium ebencum*.) The mandrake, (*Podophyllum peltatum*) is very plentiful in places on the islands, and the little plant 'Pyrola elliptica' (enclosed) grows among the rocks. The ginseng, recently so much sought after, has been frequently found in the vicinity of Charleston Lake. We have several other plants to which I might call attention as met with in this locality, but I must pass them by now, hoping on another occasion to give a more systematic list of some varieties not commonly found. I cannot but add in conclusion that some knowledge of the 'fauna' and 'flora' of the country districts of Ontario and where we happen to live, is to my mind both edifying and instructive. The field is wide and diversified here in Ontario, a comparatively short distance shows great variety of soil and natural features, to a certain extent even of climate. There are few who amid the pressure

of daily life, when following their avocations, but can spare a day or part of a day now and again to watch the workings of God in nature, and acquaint themselves with his works. In a comparatively new country, there may be for a time but few who thus care to spend any spare hours they may happen to have ; but these few will increase. I seldom meet with a kindred spirit though no doubt such are on the increase; but I feel sure that such an institution as the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club seems to be, is best calculated to produce a sentiment of love for nature, and a yearning for knowledge of those things which are placed within the reach of most of us.

—————:o:—————

#### EXCURSION No. 1.—TO THE CASCADES OF THE GATINEAU.

The first excursion of the season was held on Saturday, June 4th, and was one of the most successful that has ever taken place under the auspices of the Club. Amongst those who availed themselves of this opportunity to visit the beautiful Gatineau Valley were several members of the Club who live at a distance, but who were in Ottawa either attending the meeting of the Royal Society of Canada or the session of Parliament.

A large and happy party of excursionists left the Union Station at 9.45 a.m. by the new Gatineau Valley Railway, and ascended that wild and important tributary of the Ottawa, which rising away in the far north beyond the head waters of the Ottawa itself, flows almost due south from its source and joins the Grand River at right angles to its course a mile below the city. Everything conspired to make the trip pleasant, the weather was simply perfect. Old Sol shed his genial warmth over the fresh spring landscape, the air was clear but there was no rain, a grateful coolness pervaded the broad and beautiful valley up which the railway winds its way. The run from Ottawa to the Cascades was delightful and refreshing. The cars were new and clean, there was no dust, and above all, there were no mosquitoes, and the railway officials were most attentive and courteous. From the time Hull and the Can-

adian Pacific Railway track were left behind and the party entered the valley of the Gatineau, a varied and constantly changing panorama of great beauty was unrolled before the eyes of the appreciative excursionists. The numerous curves necessary in carrying a road through a mountainous country showed to great advantage the rounded hills covered with their copious mantle of tender green. The delicate tints of the Aspen, the Sugar Maple and the Beech contrasted well with the dark foliage of the evergreens, Pines, Firs and Spruces; which again was varied by the differing shades of other trees and plants, and with the foaming torrent rushing below made a landscape of marvellous magnificence and beauty. Leaving Hull and passing through the rich farm lands which lie amongst the hills, the road runs past Ironsides and then on to Chelsea, rising at first gradually and then quickly from terrace to terrace until at the latter place the old Laurentian Hills are entered with their characteristic scenery. The railway skirts the edge of the river and gives many a glimpse of rushing rapids, weather-stained rocks, hill-side and crag scenery. Kirk's Ferry and its foaming waters were passed. This was the original objective point of the party, but as the sky appeared to be rather overcast and as the railway company had put a special train at the disposal of the Club, it was deemed wiser to run on as far as the Cascades, and at the end of the day everyone was much pleased that this change had been made. The Cascades, about fifteen miles from Ottawa, was reached at half-past ten, when Mr. Frank T. Shutt, M.A., F.I.C., F.C.S., Acting President of the Club in the absence of Dr. George Dawson, C.M.G., F.R.S., &c., (who is now in England as arbitrator and adviser with the Imperial authorities on the Behring Sea matter) having formally welcomed all present in the name of the Club, announced the programme. The following gentlemen acted as leaders for the day in the various branches of study:

Geology—Dr. H. M. Ami, Dr. R. W. Eells, Prof. Bailey (Fredericton, N.B.).

Botany—Mr. R. B. Whyte, Prof. Macoun, Mr. W. Scott.

Entomology—Rev. Dr. Bethune (Port Hope, Ont.).

The party then broke up into small bands and went off with the leaders to seek for treasures in this new field of work. Everyone found something of interest, and many of the visitors who had only come on

the excursion for the day's outing, saw for the first time some of the charms in the study of the glorious creation around us, which make naturalists, as a class, the happiest and most contented of mortals.

At 13 o'clock (1 p.m. old fogy time) there was a general rally at the rendezvous when the inner man was refreshed. After luncheon the botanists and geologists united their forces and a visit was paid to the mica mine. The way was rough and hard but the reward was declared to be ample by all who took the trouble to climb to the pits. There were several of these, and mica was seen strewn around in large quantities, besides many other minerals of interest. Apatite, pyrites, pyrrhotite, pink calcite, pyroxene in crystals, as well as gneisses and other rocks.

At 17.30 Mr. Shutt summoned the party to the railway station and announced that the leaders would deliver short addresses upon the results of their day's work. He congratulated those present on the success of the excursion, and in a few well chosen and happy words introduced each speaker. Dr. Henry M. Ami was first called upon. He spoke in his usual pleasant and earnest manner on the minerals and geological specimens he had collected, which he exhibited, and also on the points of interest in the past history of the locality. He drew attention to the origin, nature, composition and use of the minerals met with and gave a sketch of the geological formations between Ottawa and the Cascades.

Dr. Briley, Professor of Geology in New Brunswick University, Fredericton, N. B., followed Dr. Ami, and in a pleasant manner expressed his gratification at being present. He had been a member of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club for many years, and was proud of belonging to it, as he was satisfied it was the most active and live society of the kind on this continent. He then gave some graphic notes on the theories regarding the rocks which were seen during the day.

On behalf of the entomological branch, the Acting President invited the Rev. Dr. Bethune, the well-known and talented editor of the "Canadian Entomologist," to speak. He also expressed his great pleasure at being present and meeting his fellow-members of a club which he had joined some years ago because he knew that it had good workers in its ranks, and was therefore doing good useful work in all branches

of natural history. The present day, although very pleasant, had not been bright and sunny enough to tempt a large number of insects from their hiding places. Dr. Bethune spoke in a charming manner of such insects as he had captured, and all present were interested in his explanations of their life-histories.

Mr. Robert B. Whyte was then called upon to speak on the plants collected. As one of the oldest members of the club, as well as one of our best and most enthusiastic botanists, Mr. Whyte is always eagerly listened to, and all were much disappointed when his interesting account of the many treasures he had gathered, was summarily cut short by the appearance of the train and the conductor's word of command "All aboard." The success of the day was attested by the frequently expressed wish that the day had been longer, and the Excursion Committee has been requested to arrange another excursion by the Gatineau Valley Railroad as soon as practicable.

The city was reached at 10.30, the advertised time, and the party was met at the station by a string of electric cars, which in a few minutes took all to their respective parts of the city.

All present expressed themselves as delighted with the day's outing, and a vote of thanks was passed to the railway authorities, and especially to Mr. J. T. Prince for the facilities and attention given to the members of the Club.

## SUB-EXCURSIONS.

## SUB-EXCURSION NO. 1.—TO ROCKCLIFFE.

The club began its field work this season on May 14, when a party of about forty members and their friends took the electric cars to New Edinburgh and examined the woods lying round Hemlock Lake. Leading the Geological branch were Dr. H. M. Ami and the Hon. Pascal Poirier. Mr. R. B. Whyte lead the Botanists, and Mr. Kingston the Ornithologists.

The weather was exquisite and the woods, although the buds of the trees had not yet expanded, were ablaze with lovely spring flowers. The wistful *Hepaticas* peeped out from behind rocky points on Rockcliffe, and the modest Spring Beauty brightened the deeper shades of the groves. The Adder's-tongue Lily and Trilliums, red and white, held their heads erect in the welcome sun-light. Violets coy and the too-retiring Wood Daffodil or Bell-flower, together with the Wood Mignonette (*Tiarella*) and stalwart Blue Cohosh, as well as many other woodland beauties, all opened wide their blossoms to welcome their admirers. The soft downy twin leaves of the Wild Ginger with their single handsome purplish flower, were found by those who sought vigilantly for this attractive plant, and *Daphne Mezereum*, which has become established in the woods, probably from seeds dropped by birds, added a peculiar charm to the shrubbery with its bright pink blossoms. The beauties of all these were pointed out by Mr. Whyte, and their structure and classification explained.

Mr. Kingston spoke of the birds seen or heard, and announced to his audience the arrival of the latest summer visitors.

Dr. Ami spoke on the rocks and fossils collected, pointing out their age and also the nature and origin of Hemlock Lake and the surrounding district.

## SUB-EXCURSION NO. 2.—TO THE BEAVER MEADOW, HULL.

A small party of about a dozen members visited the Beaver Meadow, Hull, under the leadership of Dr. Ami and Mr. T. J. MacLaughlin, on 21st May. Amongst the plants collected *Orchis spectabilis* and *Campptosorus rhizophyllus*, the Walking Fern, were the most interesting. Although the day was propitious, not many insects of rarity were secured.

## OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB

## TREASURER'S BALANCE SHEET, 1891-92

## RECEIPTS

1891.			
March 18	--To balance from previous Club year		\$ 15 12
1892.			
March 18	--To Subscriptions :		
	Arrears of previous years	\$ 36 00	
	Current year 1891-92	163 00	
	Paid in advance for 1892-93	6 00	
			205 00
	" Advertisements		41 00
	" " Naturalists " sold		9 35
	" Received for Authors' " Extras "		27 65
	" Net proceeds Excursion to Kingsmere 30 May '91		11 55

309 67

## EXPENDITURE

1892.			
March 15	--By Ottawa Naturalist, Vol V.,	\$225 97	
	" Postage on same	10 75	
			236 72
	" General postage		7 38
	" " printing and stationery		4 60
	" Cost of Authors' " Extras "		25 05
	" Gratuity to Janitor Normal School		5 00
	" Expenses of Soirees		2 20
	" Balance on hand		28 72

309 67

Audited and found correct

Ottawa East. April 4th, 1892.

A. G. KINGSTON,

Treasurer.

I. BALLANTYNE,  
WM. A. D. LEES,

Auditors.

## EXCURSION NOTICE.

An excursion will take place on Saturday afternoon, July 9th, to Casselman by the Canada Atlantic Railway. This is a most interesting locality, and very satisfactory rates have been received from the railway company. The excursion will leave the Elgin St. station by the 2.15 train, and the party will reach Ottawa again at 8.30 p.m. Tickets may be obtained from any member of the Council before leaving, or upon the train, at the following rates:

Members of the Club	40 cents.
Children under 12	20 "
Non-members	50 "
Children under 12	25 "



## SUMMARY

— OR —

# Canadian Mining Regulations.

## NOTICE.

THE following is a summary of the Regulations with respect to the manner of recording claims for *Mineral Lands*, other than Coal Lands, and the conditions governing the purchase of the same.

Any person may explore vacant Dominion Lands not appropriated or reserved by Government for other purposes, and may search therein, either by surface or subterranean prospecting, for mineral deposits, with a view to obtaining a mining location for the same, but no mining location shall be granted until actual discovery has been made of the vein, lode or deposit of mineral or metal within the limits of the location of claim.

A location for mining, except for *Iron* or *Petroleum*, shall not be more than 1500 feet in length, nor more than 600 feet in breadth. A location for mining *Iron* or *Petroleum* shall not exceed 160 acres in area.

On discovering a mineral deposit any person may obtain a mining location, upon marking out his location on the ground, in accordance with the regulations in that behalf, and filing with the Agent of Dominion Lands for the district, within sixty days from discovery, an affidavit in form prescribed by Mining Regulations, and paying at the same time an office fee of five dollars, which will entitle the person so recording his claim to enter into possession of the location applied for.

At any time before the expiration of five years from the date of recording his claim, the claimant may, upon filing proof with the Local Agent that he has expended \$500.00 in actual mining operations on the claim, by paying to the Local Agent therefor \$5 per acre cash and a further sum of \$50 to cover the cost of survey, obtain a patent for said claim as provided in the said Mining Regulations.

*Copies of the Regulations may be obtained upon application to the Department of the Interior.*

**A. M. BURGESS,**

Deputy of the Minister of the Interior.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, }  
Ottawa, Canada, December 19th, 1887. }



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