

THE DEDICATION
of
"GILBERT LOOKOUT"

August 27, 1932

An Illustrated Description
by
Arthur W. Gilbert

Foreword

The present account of the ceremony dedicating Gilbert Lookout has been a rather gradual growth. The first intention was to record the event for the books of the Secretary of the Dorset Society of Natural Science. But before that description was completed it occurred to me that a more detailed account would be interesting to the family in later years. Hence the story was amplified.

Rather unexpectedly, the whole of this extended account soon appeared in the Manchester Journal, and was thus put in permanent form.

The later additions are two: my personal comments, written as footnotes (although they appear in a right-hand column), and intended for rather limited consumption; and photographs kindly supplied by Holley and Dorothy, whose cameras were operating on the day of the dedication.

By keeping to the left-hand columns in the following pages the reader may get an unvarnished account of what actually happened. If he wishes further diversion he may follow the footnotes. I doubt whether he could avoid looking at the pictures, no matter what the instructions were.

It is hoped that these three forms of description, each performing a somewhat separate function, may serve to keep alive and accurate our remembrance of a most stirring event.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1932

THE DEDICATION OF "GILBERT LOOKOUT"

**Rocky Cliff on Owl's Head Nam-
ed After Founder of Science
Club With Appropriate Cere-
monies.**

Under a sky that presented alternately a threatening and a benign aspect, were held on Saturday, August 27th, the exercises that marked the formal naming of the rocky promontory on Owl's Head in honor of Dr. George H. Gilbert, and its dedication as a memorial to the founder of the Dorset Society of Natural Science and of the Dorset Trail. ①

Despite a gathering cloudiness—which was to produce rain just as the climbers returned to their cars from the walk to the lookout—some 75 representative residents and summer visitors in Dorset and vicinity ate their picnic lunches in the impressive setting provided by the Potts orchard, high up in Dorset Hollow. It is estimated that 100 people finally sat down together to enjoy a program arranged by Ernest H. West, the vice-president of the society, and presided over by Dr. James B. Herrick, the Society's president.



1- Description of this trail may be found in "The Dorset Trail" by George H. Gilbert, published by the Society in 1928. There are still copies for sale at the Dorset Library.

At present the Society has a 'trail committee' to look after the condition of the path,—James Gilbert, Robert Rudolph, and Mrs. Houghton. The first hasn't been on the trail, or any of its peaks, for a number of years. Mrs. Houghton still fondly refers to herself as 'the keeper of the trail', although in a attempt during the present summer she was not able to find the trail to Owl's Head (we say, "finders & keepers."); while Robert Rudolph has done a tremendous amount of work, especially on the Green Peak lookouts, and deserves more recognition than his modesty will demand.

Unfortunately, the annual subsidy promised for the upkeep of the trail has not been forthcoming, and volunteer labor, though plentiful, is not so efficient nor as persistent as the trail requires.

2- Cloudiness in the morning threatened to cancel the whole affair, but the noon sun brought people out in larger numbers than had even been hoped for.

While the climbing party was in the woods, and even while they were still scrambling up the rocks, thunder-heads came up over Baddeley's and ominous rumblings began to be heard. It should stand as a tribute to the dedication and memorial service that everyone waited for the program to resume to be started, though a good setting seemed to be sure for each one. As a matter of fact no one became so wet from the rain as he had been on the up-journey from the natural process of perspiring.

3- The Rev. Donald Clarke of Manchester, with his family, was one of the conspicuous guests from Dorset's 'schools', as Dr. Herrick jokingly called them.

An opening in the clouds flooded the gathering with brilliant sunshine, gave warmth to the whole proceeding, brought out the mountain views with clearness and stimulated a larger number of people to essay a mountain climb, than ever before in the history of the Society.

In his introductory remarks, Dr. Herrick emphasized the fitness of naming this particular lookout on Owl's Head for Professor Gilbert. First of all it is a part of the Dorset mountains, held in such deep affection by a scholar, a man of books, who not limited to his bookish interests, found sermons in stones and beauty in all the things of nature.

"To this point," said Dr. Herrick, "Professor Gilbert used frequently to come, bringing with him all kinds of companions, for he loved his fellow-man. Sometimes it would be a summer visitor, sometimes a man of science, sometimes a group of young people, or even a single boy from the city or farm with whom he would enjoy the tramp through the woods and the view of the valley."

1- This is no mere literary expression. The sun generated plenty of heat for the occasion, despite which Dr. Herrick maintained his composure in suit coat and straw hat, - as did Dr. Clarke also. Others on the program were less conventionally, but more comfortably, attired. It was one of the hottest and most sultry days of the whole summer.



The President opens the program.

2- Although no historian of mountain-climbing in Dorset, I believe this statement is true. The naming of Jackson Peak brought a goodly number of people to Kirby Hollow, but a mere handful went to the summit. The books of the Secretary of the Society record an October trip to Owl's Head some years ago, - but by only a dozen or so people. Memory and photographs tell of large camping and picnicking parties on Dorset Mt., but not to the number of 60 at any one time.

If anyone wonders at my stressing of this point of the number present, let him understand that I am simply searching for objective data to prove the frequently-heard contention that this was one of the major events at Dorset this summer.

3- All of Dr. Herrick's remarks were well-chosen and discriminating. I regret that someone with a more nimble pencil than my memory turns out to be was not present to record them permanently.

Not only was this jutting rock developed by Professor Gilbert as a vantage point from which to view the whole Dorset valley, but the part of Owl's Head which includes this cliff had recently been purchased by the Society, so that it could remain perpetually as a memorial without fear of disfiguring lumber activities. Vigorous applause greeted this announcement, and special recognition was given Mr. West for the part he had played in initiating and carrying through the purchase. ①

The president then called upon a boy who came to Dorset from the city, learned to love its mountains and tramped over many of them in company with Professor Gilbert, to read two poems written by the latter many years previous. Robert Rudolph responded by reading the following *lyric*. ②

To the Dorset Mountains
There ye stand while ages are forgotten,
The same unchanging witnesses of man.
The wintry tempests, hurled against your sides,
Are but as thistle's silk down that drives
Against my cheek. They fall away to murmurs
Round your ancient, rocky pillars, which rise
In calm grandeur, and stay the wildest storms.

Ye have a charm to lay the sombre wave
That dashes, borrow-laden, o'er the soul,
O eternal mountains! The charm to bring
A restful feeling to the weary heart.

Ye speak in truth the very thoughts of God,
That breathe upon us more than words can tell.
A gentle eloquence is ever yours,
Or clad in green, or mantled white in snow,
Caress'd by clouds, or talking with the stars—
Those sweet evening guests who say wondrous things.

1- The Society now owns about 25 acres on the summit of Owl's Head, including the stand of spruce on the northwest slope which surrounds the cliff. It is my opinion that this purchase, and the sense of ownership which will follow it, will awaken a new interest in at least this part of the trail. Any revival of interest will be welcome.

2- Since qualitative adjectives are being confined to these comments "below the line", this is the place to note the willingness and seriousness with which Robert Rudolph accepted his place on the program, and the excellence of his reading. Our impression was very favorable.



Dr. Herrick in reminiscent mood.

Men look upon you twice or thrice,
and then
Are gone. Their children's dust is
soon with theirs,
And the gravestone on the hillside fal-
len
Into ruins says nothing of the dead.

Ye hear the marriage bells, all full of
joy,
And then a knell, that slowly climbs
the air,
As burdened with a multitude of
sighs,
Someone rests from toil in dreamless
slumber.

A shadow flecked with happy sun-
shine fits
Below you in the valley: this is life.

Ye have seen how many shadows
coming,
Coming o'er the meadows but to van-
ish.
In the forest, or on some pleasant
field,
Bathed with incense of a thousand
flowers.

Dorset, 1874.

Mt. Aeolus

As the angel came up from the east,
With the seal of the Lord in his
hand;
So Mt. Aeolus raises its crest
By the loftiest vale in the land.

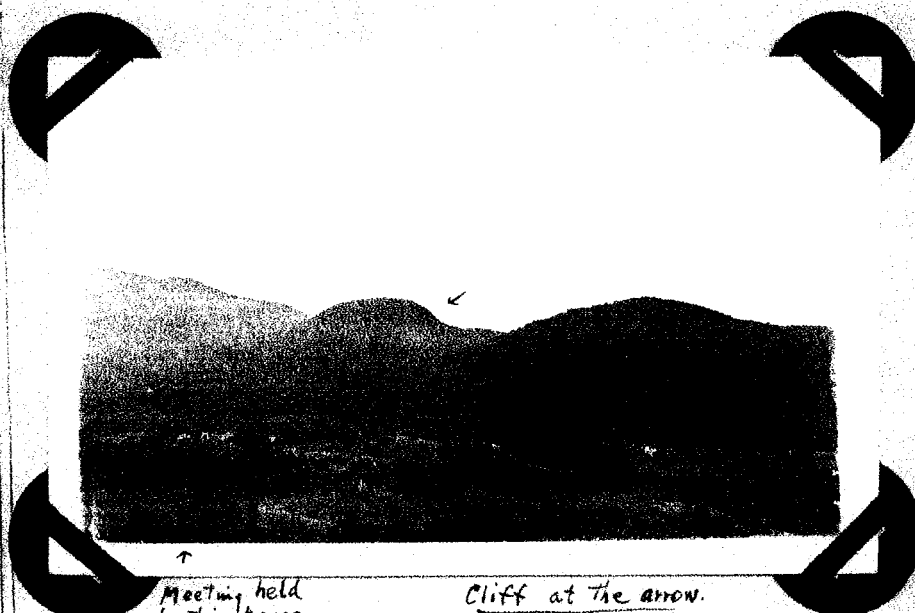
There it says to the east-wind, "blow
not,
In thy strength, on this valley of
mine:
I was set as a shield for this spot
Long ago by a counsel divine."

There it beckons the clouds to come
near,
As they sail the blue seas of the
sky;
They must send on the meadows the
cheer
Which they hold in their fountains
on high.

On the brow of Mt. Aeolus fair
A rich chaplet of green rests for
aye,
As a sign of the garlands they wear
Who may walk the sweet hills far
away.

The last beam of the sun lingers long
On Mt. Aeolus, over the vale,
Ere the day dies away as a song,
And the stars tell their wonderful
tale.

Dorset, 1889.



Meeting held
by this house.

Cliff at the arrow.

Trail runs rather
directly between.

A male quartet, composed of Rufus S. Gilbert, George H. Gilbert, Jr., Arthur H. Gilbert and Dr. W. D. MacDonald, sang two selections chosen for the rugged musical qualities essential in an outdoor presentation, as well as for the appropriateness of their words. "There's Music in the Air" was followed by an adaptation of the University of Vermont song especially for this occasion. (p6)

The dedicatory poem, by Wilfred C. Gilbert of Washington, D. C., written upon the request of the vice-president of the society, was read by G. H. Gilbert, Jr., who explained before beginning to read that the poem was intended to present the imagined reflections of his father, seated upon the rocky ledge on Owl's Head, and gazing off over the Dorset valley. (p6)



The male quartet in action.

1- Dr. McDonald owns and occupies a house on the Rupert Mt. road; is a summer member of the Dorset choir; and an old-timer in the University Glee Club (N.Y.). The singing combination thus formed was a pleasant surprise to all of us. In fact, the results were so good that considerable disappointment was felt, and expressed, over the immediate break-up of the quartet, due to ended vacations.

Cousin Maria expressed great concern over the write-up of this story, fearing (as I later discovered) that anyone besides herself would not 'tell the world' how "good the singing was."

Now that there has been comment from the "inside", and from one person on the "outside", it remains only to say that the quartet's public reception was very generous.

2- Again literally true, - not an exaggeration. At the piano Friday morning, the writer and Holley struggled with a typical college song to make the necessary changes in content without spoiling the rhythm or producing mere rot. The outcome was none too good, but comment was favorable. For the sake only of permanent record, the words as sung are appended herewith. (p6)



The poem is read.

Vermont

Old Vermont, with verdant hillside,
 Lake and crag and tree,
 Songs of heartfelt adoration
 We will raise to thee. Cho.

Thou hast been our inspiration,
 And with purpose new
 We will train our sons and daughters
 To be strong and true. Cho.

Hail to thee, our hills and vallies,
 To Vermont all praise;
 Like thy past in all its glory
 Be thy coming days. Cho.

Chorus

Lift the chorus, speed it onward,
 Sing thy praise with glee;
 O Vermont, our pride forever,
 Hail, O hail, to thee!

3- This was easily the high point in the program. The poem speaks for itself;—the reading of it must be spoken of by another. The appropriateness of having the poem read by the namesake of the Society's late President was at once apparent to all. The sureness of presentation, clearness of interpretation, sonority of voice, and depth of feeling were apparent as soon as the reader had proceeded even a few sentences into his subject.

With the reader's suggestion that the poet had caught and expressed Professor Gilbert's real philosophy fresh in the minds of the listeners, several of them (e.g. Mr. Carhart) were seen to smile and nod appreciatively at various points in the exposition.



The Poem's Real Inspiration

Welcome, my friends, (for all who
scale this height
With eager step, however slow—
whose hearts
Trob quicker for the joy ahead—
are friends
In spirit, tho' your form and face
unknown)
Rest by this fragrant fire, that so you
bring
Clear vision, keener zest, to that far
view
Unfolded here to seeing eye and soul.

No endless reaches of untraveled
wilderness—
No ocean vast, or ocean-seeming
plain—
Tires the eye with sheer immensity;
Nor yet a landscape palled with heavy
smoke
From cities sprawling o'er else pleas-
ant fields;
But Nature intimate with Man, is
here disclosed:
Village and forest in friendly com-
radeship.

Look to the north! How fair our
State outspreads
Her timbered hills, in wave on wave
of green,
Toward Camel's Hump and Mans-
field's stately pile.
And toward the sunset, see a mighty
range—
Unnumbered giants standing friendly
watch
O'er these their elder brothers. Ages
since,
Primeval flood filled all the gulf be-
tween—
Teeming with life, and mother of life
to be.
That flood is shrunk, and bolder now
they stand,
Watching with jealous eye the emer-
gent plain—
The advancing life—the development
of man.
There lies Champlain, amid the bat-
tlegrounds
Of Nature and of Nature's children—
age on age.

How gratefully the forests clothe
these rugged hills—
A living mantle. Through those val-
leys steep
A thousand brooks make friends
along the way;
Friends have they been of mine
since life began
And will be, always. Yet to some
our State
Is desolate, infertile, loath to yield
A scanty living from its rocky fields—

Its winters brutal and its summers
fair indeed
But too precarious for money crops—
A goodly place once to have lived,
and left.

Rocky? Ah yes. But what were stat-
liest dome
Without the underlying rocky base
Founding that pile on earths' un-
changing breast?
And what were life, without some
rocks of doubt,
Of hardship, disappointment, danger,
grief,
To test and prove its mettle? Better
so
Than one dead level of abundant ease.
How clear
The atmosphere today! How charged
with life—
As tho' the friendly Pow'r that
wrought this view
Rejoiced to have us share it—sought
to give,
Through clearer vision here, a fresher
mind
And outlook, true perspective. Here
we sit
As on a judgment seat; and little
things
Fade from their false importance, lose
their hold—
While great things, as to comrades,
here display
Their true proportions. Here the
rush and noise
Yield to the white-throat's call, the
swish of winds
Through fragrant spruces. The un-
hurried step of time
Is not disturbed. See there the
mighty shaft
That dominates our southern valley,
straight
Upthrusting to the skies its granite
bulk severe
In simple power—our monumental
pride,
And justly so—a sign perpetual
Of man's indomitable will to live his
life
In freedom from his fellows. Yet
from here
Scarce visible, its pride a pencil
point—
A tiny heap of stones amid the eternal
hills.

What handiwork they are, these age-
less hills—
These silent guardians of our valley
fair.
Like trusted friends, whose changing
moods reflect
No change of heart, we view them,
from afar,

From near at hand, from North and
South—and feel
In myriad forms one everlasting
strength;
In ever-shifting characters, one
changeless Friend.
And this, whereon we stand. I count
a joy
Above the most, tho' not the loftiest.

No view like this in all the world—to
me:
Far-reaching to the bounds of human
sight—
Suggesting more than human mind
can grasp—
Then, nearer, gathering in one glor-
ious sweep
The landmarks learned in many a
happy year
Of roaming thru these wooded hills;
and there,
Below us, in the shelter of these
mountains—Home.
I envy no man wealth or high com-
mand;
For money cannot buy a home, nor
power
Create a setting to compare with this.

Distance alone is naught. Who cares
how far
His vision carries if the end be void?
It needs no mountain-top to view the
stars.
Orion shows, in his appointed place,
To those whose eager eyes make him
their goal;
But worlds unnumbered fill the starry
skies
Unseen, unsearchable. So, standing
here,

We strain beyond the vague horizon—
strain
Beyond the reach of eye to penetrate
Then, firing of the outer ranges, turn
In gratitude to known, familiar
scenes.

No icy pinnacle is this—with dizzy
crags
Defying man's ascent. And yet,
thank God,
No railway violates the peace; no
carriage road
Offers the idly-curious an unearned
view.
But still some strength of limb, some
firm resolve
Are passports hither; and this look-
out, rightly won,
Itself is passport to the lordly uni-
verse.

W. C. G., August 15, 1932

Dr. L. Mason Clarke was then presented to the group as a fellow-scholar of the late Professor Gilbert,—one who had penetrated the latter's shyness and reserve, although his contact with him had been entirely "on the level"—no mountain excursions being part of their mutual experiences. ①

After commenting upon the brevity of human memory, and the impossibility of prolonging beyond a short generation the personal remembrance or incidents of a man's life, Dr. Clarke referred to the search for truth and fidelity to it when found as among the chief characteristics of Professor Gilbert. In a time when religion is hesitant, unprofitable, the scientific spirit continues on its triumphant way. ②

"This passion for the truth," said Dr. Clarke, "led him to stand by his beliefs in the face of criticism, obloquy, and even persecution."

It was this spirit, combined with a genuine interest in creating a center of cultural study and improvement in Dorset, that led to his establishment of the Society of Natural Science in 1915, and to his leadership of the Society through its first 15 years of existence. ③

Immediately at the close of the exercises at the "Potts Place," given over completely to the visitors with generous hospitality, a large party started up the trail to the lookout, high on the northwest side of Owl's Head. On foot, on horseback, scampering along the path with the agility

1- Dr. Clark explained that he took his mountains "on the level" because of an affected heart. Later Dr. Ferrick remarked, jokingly, that as a physician he had noticed Dr. Clark get up from the ground to move stones, and that in his opinion he was a case of "joints" and not of "heart". This brought loud laughter. Dr. Ferrick followed this with the statement that he himself had actually climbed several mountains in his earlier days in Dorset.

2- This sentence is quoted in the Journal Record. Either the typist slipped, or the original form seemed a bit seditions to the editor. Unless my memory is very poor, that sentence might with accuracy be enclosed in direct quotation marks. It should read: "In a time when religion is hesitant, government ineffectual, and philosophy unprofitable, the scientific spirit continues on its triumphant way."

3- One can not help contrasting the two societies of Dorset which make some claim to benefit the community in a cultural way. This comparison is wholly personal, but hardly escapable. The Science Club (as originally established, anyway) is wholly disinterested, intellectual, catholic, and unpretentious. The Dorset Players (Inc) can be specifically characterized, in my opinion, as just the opposite, in all the respects mentioned.

4- The Potts Place and the Potts family had to many of us been just names until this event. Ernest West was as astonished as the rest of us to find the Miss Potts with whom we dealt exceedingly gracious and refined. Every effort was made to entertain the guests pleasantly on Aug. 27. Several girls and boys from the family carried drinking water very effectively.

A visit several days later to the orchard where the picnic was held convinced me that the picnickers had cleaned up after themselves very creditably. Only one lunch box was left, and that had apparently been abandoned in the flight from the sudden rain.

of 3½ years plodding along steadily with the help of canes after as many as 72 years of active life, up went the 70 people through clearing and wood-lot, over about a mile of easy ascent and a final eighth of a mile of precipitous and rocky trail zig-zagging among the spruces and underneath the overhanging ledge, to a spot apparently on top of the world from which a clear sweep of the whole valley was had. Some of the climbers had fallen by the wayside proving the truth of the line,

"Some strength of limb, some firm resolve

Are passports hither."

But the 60 who were successful, and pleased, perhaps, with their own achievement, exclaimed in praise of the lookout. It was, indeed, a worthy memorial!



Two of the horses at the start.

1- One little girl, Dorothy Lou Ogden (about 5), made the climb very nicely, much to the distress of her mother who stopped at the foot of the cliff and pictured her daughter as in all kinds of trouble.

2- Mrs. Pearson, wife of a retired missionary, herself a climber for some years in Switzerland. Slow, steady going was her solution - plus continuous help here and art from Holley and yours truly. James Holley Gilbert, when asked later where Arthur was at a certain juncture in the proceedings, caused his grandfather by replying that Arthur was carrying one-half of Mrs. Pearson down the mountain. Holley carried the other half. Said Mrs. Pearson was in carbon the next morning, however, despite her unusual exertion.

3- The trail is in excellent shape, due to several previous trips over it with axes and paint brushes. One lady (knowing that the new minister had made a trip on the path with the Boy Scouts) noticed a large fallen tree that had been dropped to clear the path, and exclaimed, "What fine work the parson has been doing!" May I say that no chooped tree of any size on that trail bore the mark of any workers except Gilbert's and their invited friends?

4- No better lookout now on the whole Trail, except the second climb on Green Peak - much more of a climb than this.

5- A panorama of the view from this cliff was attempted by the writer, and



Holley on the Trail up under the ledge.

Ernest West took charge of the brief ceremony at the lodge, calling on Dorothy Gilbert to read another of her father's early poems.

The Mountains of Dorset
A valley musical with brooks
That burst from fountains sweet
and high;
About it, whereso'er one looks,
The earth springs up to meet the
sky.

Not Alpine heights, calm, stern and
grand,
Clad in their changeless robes of
snow;
These mountains near and friendly
stand,
As young in heart as the vale below.

A warm, rich life throbs in their
veins,
As strong as though the world were
new;
Each spring and summer still it
reigns
In countless wealth of form and
hue.

A symbol of that life serene,
Whose touch our mortal spirits
own,
Whose infinite, unwasting sheen
Across their landscapes fair is
thrown.

These mountains stand for God alone,
His sign is on them fresh and clear;
Strong as the pillars of His throne,
They wear His glory year by year.

On them are writ in sacred speech
Of life and beauty, words that move

The heart to hope, and words that
teach

The accents of a gracious love.

In time they flame across the vale
As were they walls of Paradise;
In time each crest, a snowy sail,
Is set for oceans in the skies.

They call and beckon to the soul,
They woo it with a patient love,
To heights where larger scenes unroll,
And life is kindled from above.

1889

turned out rather successfully. It is, however, too large to be included here, and must be requested separately.

6- Two horses came out, - and perhaps 10 people. Some quit early: others went to within 3 minutes of the top and then stopped. Some climbed much better than they thought they could (e.g. Arthur Corwin, who finally removed his leather-soled shoes and finished in his stocking-feet), while others found they had over-estimated their strength. One woman in particular (Miss Durham) had previously stated publicly her determination to take this walk, "even if it's the last thing I ever do," as she jokingly remarked. She was revived from a collapse, and carried down the last part of the way, to be taken home and put to bed. Reports the next day were that she would suffer no permanent ill-effects.



Ernest West christens
the Lookout.

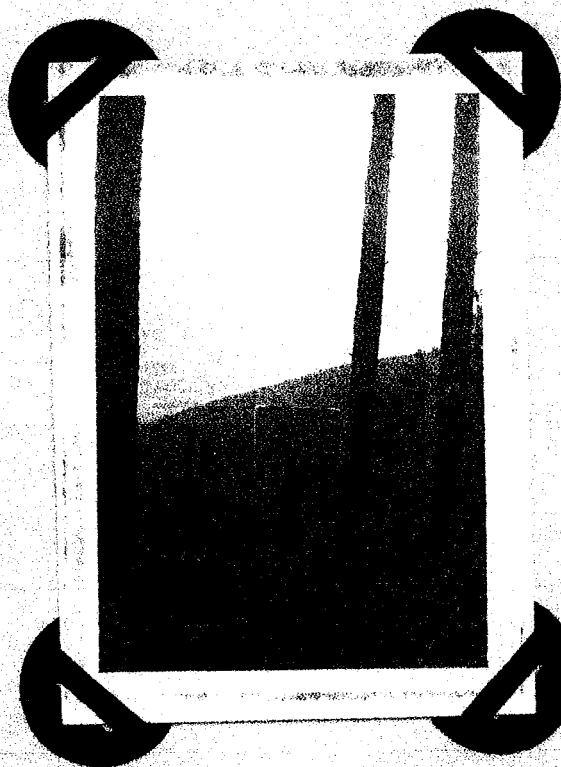
After a repetition of one of the songs by the quartet, Mr. West, for the Society, declared the ledge officially named "Gilbert Lookout." And at his signal the youngest of Professor Gilbert's grandchildren, Arthur, Jr., (aged 3½ years), removed the draped flag from a wooden table affixed to a tree, revealing the inscription:

GILBERT LOOKOUT
named by
DORSET SOCIETY OF NATURAL
SCIENCE
for
GEORGE H. GILBERT
Founder of the Society
And of the Dorset Trail

1- In this song Dorothy substituted for Rufus, and carried the tenor part successfully without a rehearsal. The hawks soaring over that cliff had never heard robust human song like that before - nor will they again, probably.

2- Some criticism of the term 'Lookout' developed before the dedication. It ~~was~~ was not a sufficiently dignified and imposing word, some said. Better a term like 'Cliff' or 'Rock'. But on further thought we were convinced that 'Lookout' was just the proper word and that it should stick.

3- This tablet is itself a memorial to the lettering-skill and diligence of George H. Gilbert Jr. Made of hardwood, painted with several coats of white, and neatly lettered in red, it is nailed and wired to a tree in such a fashion as to be visible from the valley below and, we hope, to weather the blasts of winter.



Owl's Head Lookout Hike

From Kelly Road (just north of swimming quarry on Rte. 30) go 0.6 mi. on "Black Rock Farm" gravel road. Trail starts (elevation approx. 1125') as old logging road to right (SE) of gravel road, opposite tan house in woods, with gentle grade to a sizable clearing and log loading area (**0.39 mi.**). There are several trails and roads leading from this clearing. Take the left-most trail into the woods (on a bearing of N 10° E), avoiding the newer, bulldozed logging roads. About 100 yds into the woods, roads lead both left and right: stay directly ahead on old quarry road which becomes steadily steeper.

(0.75 mi.) Gettysburg Quarry opening (elev. 1720'). This marble quarry was opened in 1866. There is a good view of the Dorset valley from the marble dump, reached by a rough path opposite the quarry opening. Take trail to right, which climbs steeply along right (south) side of quarry opening, for about 150 feet. Turn abruptly right onto gently ascending forest path.

(0.84 mi.) Viewpoint to west over upper Battenkill valley to Mother Myrick (summit elev. 3361).

(1.40 mi.) At 12-foot high boulder on right, trail turns left, starting up cliffs (and is marked by red painted rocks).

(1.60 mi.) Gilbert Lookout on Owl's Head (elev. approx. 2300'). Good views of Dorset Hollow, Mettawee valley, and the Adirondacks.

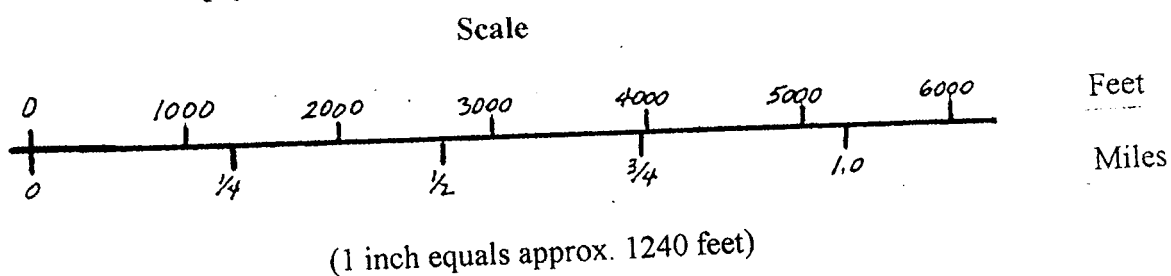
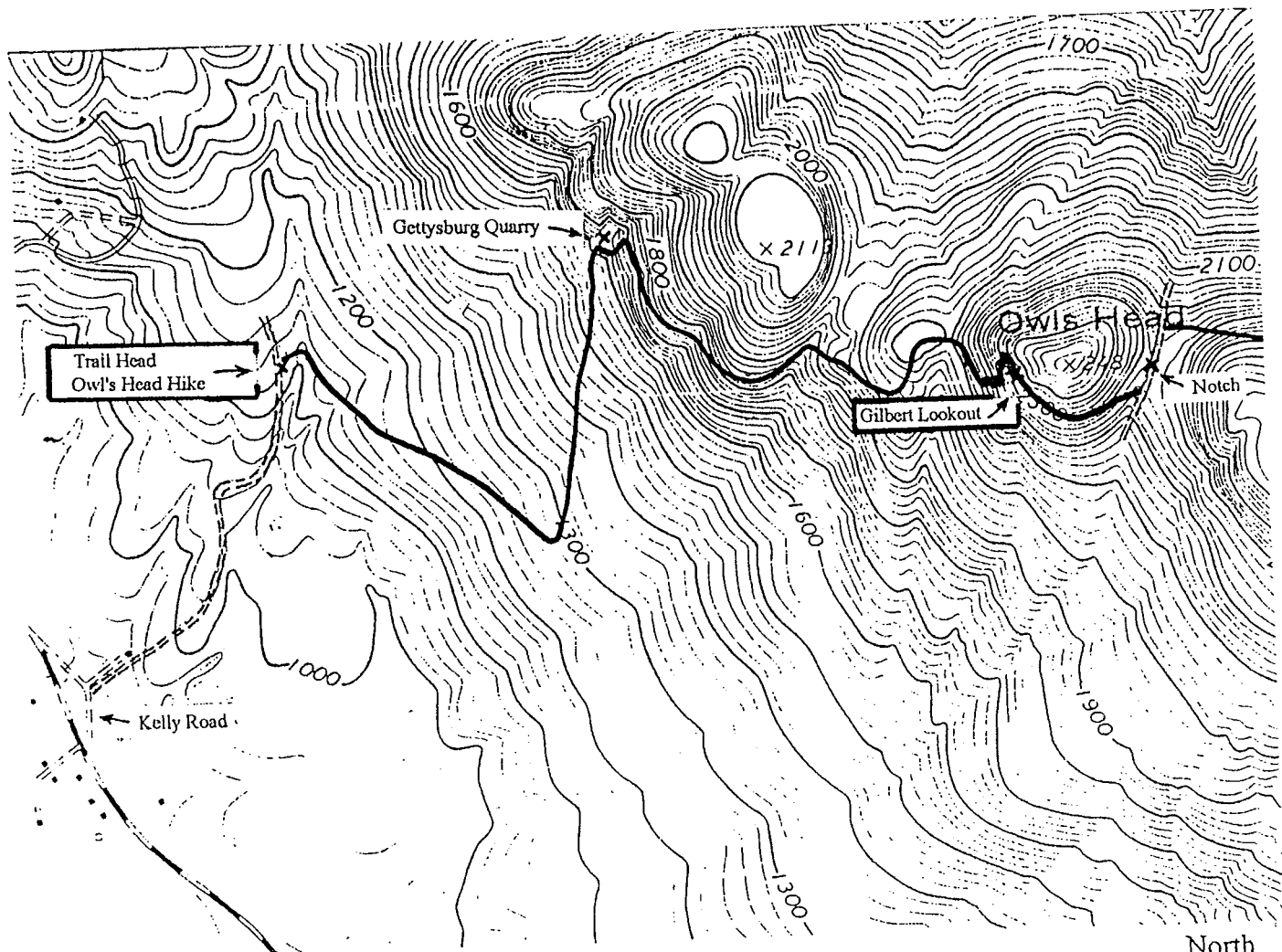
Hike Summary:

One-way distance: 1.60 miles

Total elevation gain: 1250 feet

Round trip hiking time: 3 hours

Hike rating: Moderate



Continuation of Owl's Head hike, to Mt. Aeolus

(Parts of this hike are over unmarked or poorly marked trails).

From Gilbert Lookout, continue on narrow trail which roughly contours around Owl's Head peak through dense spruce forest.

(1.67 mi.) Cliff view toward south, of Manchester, Vermont Valley, Mt. Equinox (summit elev. 3825') and Stratton Mtn. (summit elev. 3936').

(1.85 mi.) Notch between Owl's Head and Mt. Aeolus. Take logging road to left, over notch, and start down slope into Dorset Hollow.

(1.95 mi.) Trail off notch road, to right, is marked by several yellow streamers. Follow remnant of old logging road which curves to right, uphill, marked by yellow streamers.

(2.17 mi.) Road end. Trail goes steeply uphill. Follow yellow flagging tape markers for 100 feet, then bear left on logging road. After 200 - 300 feet, trail switches back to right, and shortly after is essentially unmarked. The remaining route is due east, staying on ridge, first through boggy ground, then over or to left (north) of two rock cliffs, where an increasingly clear path can be followed to summits.

(3.10 mi.) Rocky viewpoint (to south) on westerly summit.

(3.43 mi.) Summit of Mt. Aeolus (elev. 3230'). Formerly called Green Peak. Twenty to 30 yards south of the summit is a rocky lookout with views of the Manchester region and mountains to the south.

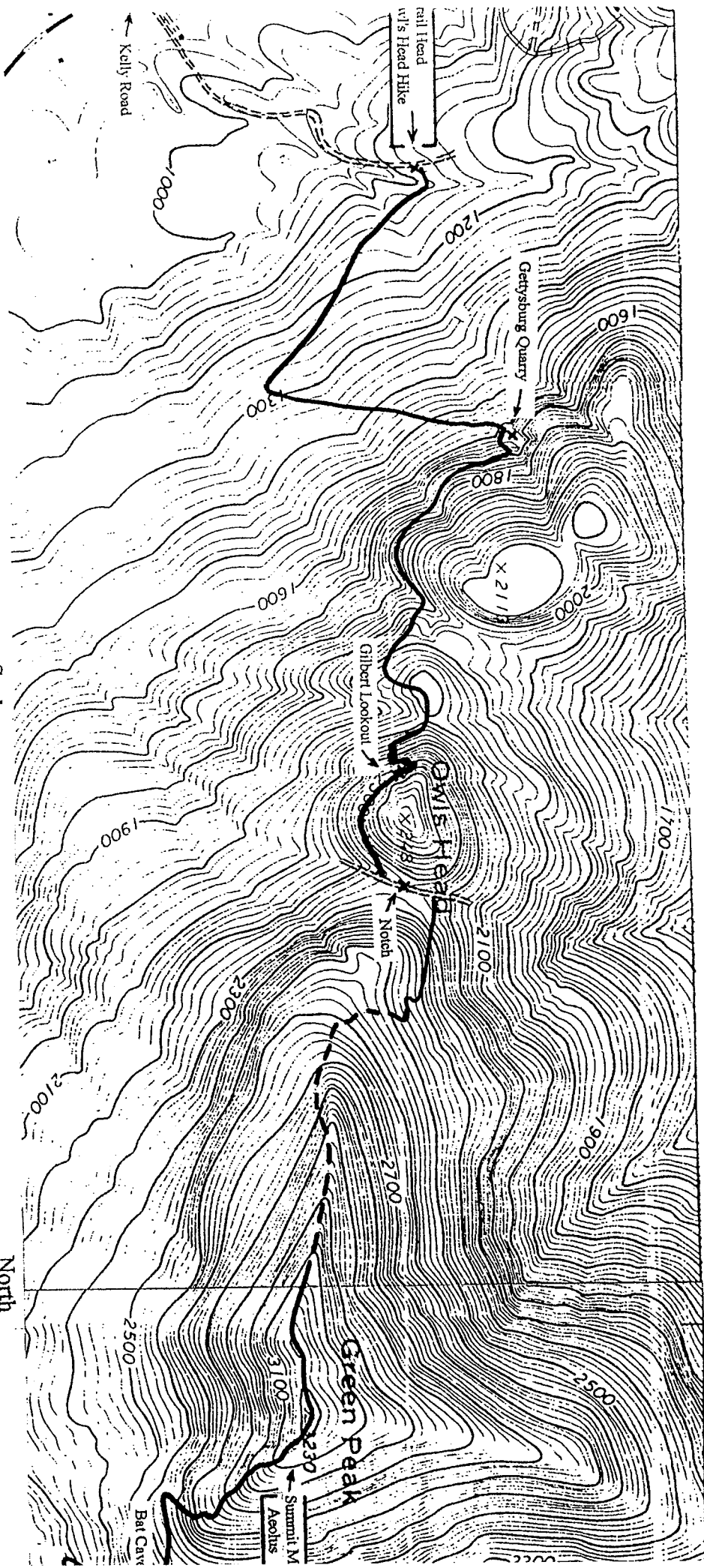
Hike Summary (calculated assuming start at Owl's Head Lookout hike):

One-way distance: 3.43 miles

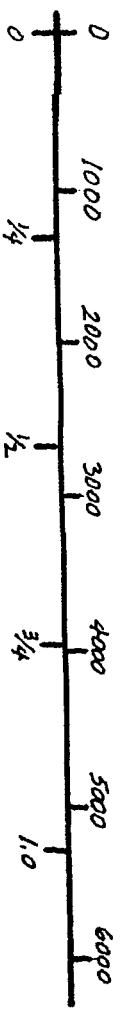
Total elevation gain: 2220 feet

Round trip hiking time: 6 - 7 hours

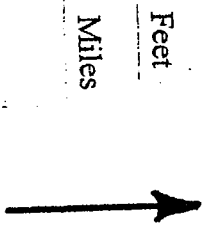
Hike rating: Very strenuous



Scale



(1 inch equals approx. 1240 feet)



TRAILS AND HISTORIC SITES ACCESS
PROPOSAL TO ACT ON DORSET TOWN PLAN GOALS

In the current Town Plan, adopted by the Selectboard on November 16, 2004, there are more than two dozen references to Recreation, Trails, and Historic Site Preservation (excerpted and appended hereto). The clearly stated aim of those references is that Dorset, with a wealth of both beautiful mountains and historical sites, should make a concerted effort to keep as much of those attributes open to recreational and educational use as possible.

Because the increased pace of private development that has taken place during the recent past is likely to continue, it would appear to be incumbent upon the Town to take what action it can immediately to realize the Plan's aims. To that end, it is hereby proposed that a working group be established as follows:

Two members of the Conservation Commission and two members of the Dorset Historical Society be appointed to form a task force to accomplish the following:

1. Create a map showing the existing hiking trails or paths and the "Town Trails" in the township and the location of important historic sites, as enumerated in Table 5 (p. 31-32) of the Town Plan. Mapping of the town trails is specifically referred to in paragraph 8.8.1 (2) of the Town Plan, on p. 51.
2. Recommend which trails need protection, what new trailheads might be provided in order to ensure continued accessibility, and develop a prioritized list of protection actions. (A prime need is to secure access to the historically important Gettysburg Quarry, on the Owls Head trail, which has been a hiker's favorite outing for many years).

It is highly recommended that the task force be given a mandate to use the offices of the town's attorney, if necessary, in assessing the feasibility of legal processes by which various easement rights might be acquired.

The task force would be expected to report to the Planning Commission (with advisory copies to the Selectboard) on the following schedule:

- a) a preliminary set of maps, plans and recommendations within six months, and,
- b) a final report detailing the actions and proposals within one year after establishment of the task force.

TRAILS AND HISTORIC SITES ACCESS
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Working with the Planning Commission and Selectboard, appropriate legal action (easements, land agreements) could be effected prior to the task force's final reporting.

It is wise for the Town to take the recommended steps now, inasmuch as the recently adopted Town Plan includes the following statements:

1. "In most cases, old trails lie on private land. Legal easements to these trails should be secured wherever possible, since active land development could make them inaccessible almost overnight." (Paragraph 8.8, p. 50).
2. Vermont Goal 8: (B) "Public access to noncommercial outdoor recreational opportunities, such as lakes and hiking trails, should be identified, provided, and protected wherever appropriate"

And, Key Element Supporting Goal 8: "develop a trails system". (p. A-5).