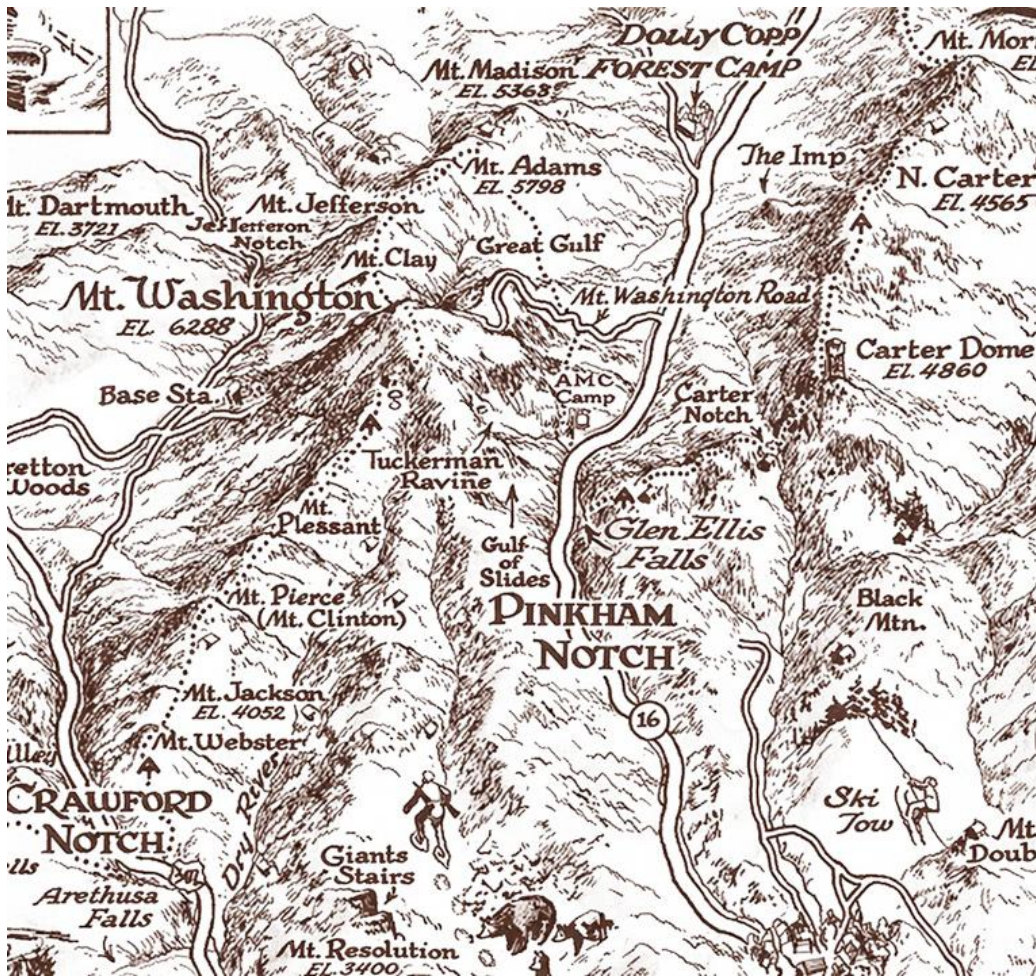


A HISTORY OF PINKHAM NOTCH

WHITE MOUNTAINS, NEW HAMPSHIRE



Excerpt from 1938 U. S. Forest Service Map

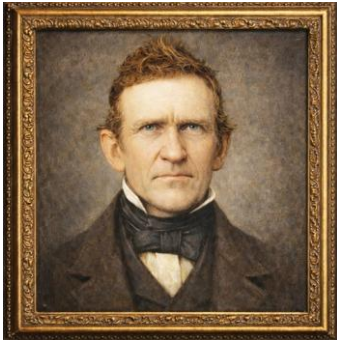
JONATHAN CHEW

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Chat with author at doloresjonathan@hotmail.com

Free download at dollycopp.com

Updated to 9/13/2026



Notch namesake Reverend Daniel Pinkham derived from photos of his son Attorney Daniel C. Pinkham and brother Reverend Rufus Pinkham. Pinkham's biography is a free download at dollycopp.com.



Contents below serves as overview - links operate after download

1. WATER RESOURCES Page 5

Pinkham Notch is a watershed boundary that significantly shaped Northern New Hampshire history, a hydrologic hinge between two major Maine coastal systems. It is the explanation for different settlement, road, and rail patterns north versus south of the Notch, why Gorham/Berlin and North Conway/Bartlett evolved differently despite close proximity.

Long before hotels, logging camps, or modern highways appeared, the Notch's rivers, waterfalls, springs, and wetlands determined where people traveled and where they stopped. Chapter 1 explores the natural setting that made Pinkham Notch such a special place.

2. PINKHAM NOTCH PROPER Page 17

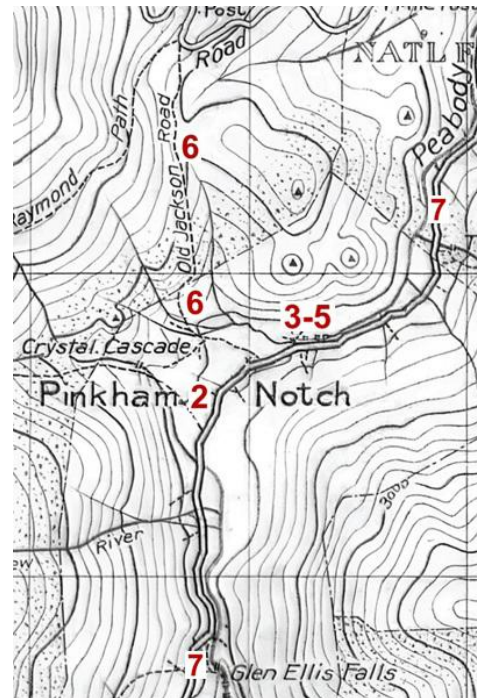
Although the name Pinkham Notch is often applied to the broader Peabody Valley, its historic center occupies only a relatively small area. Today this is the location of the Appalachian Mountain Club's Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, one of the busiest mountain gateways in New England.

This portion of the Notch has consistently served as a principal entrance to the Presidential Range. Stagecoach passengers, carriage road tourists, hikers, skiers, and modern motorists have all shared this crossroads.

Chapter 2 examines the development of Pinkham Notch Proper, tracing how a natural mountain pass gradually evolved into the recreation center visitors enjoy today.

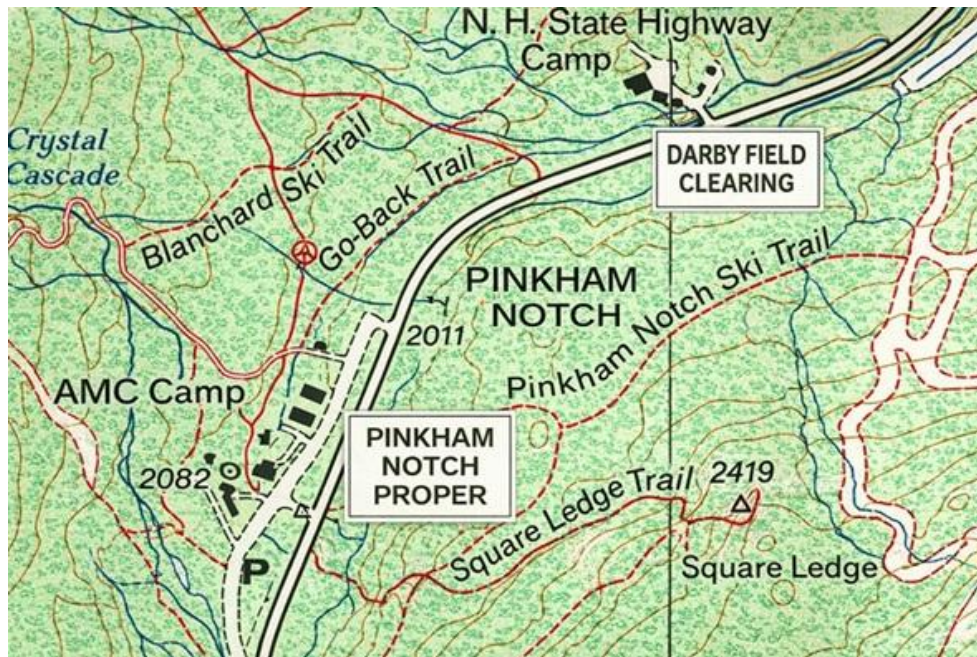
3. DARBY FIELD CLEARING Page 27

Most visitors assume that Pinkham Notch developed around a single center of activity. However the Notch possessed two distinct focal points. While Pinkham Notch Proper served travelers and mountain visitors, Darby Field Clearing just to its north became the Notch's commercial and lodging center, a NH DOT maintenance facility today.



Here entrepreneurs established businesses that supplied lumber, lodging, transportation, and services essential to life in the valley. The late nineteenth century Darby Field bustled

with activity that has disappeared from today's landscape. Chapters 3 thru 5 rescue it from oblivion.



*Excerpt from the 1987 public domain
Mount Washington Range Map by Bradford Washburn,
annotated to identify the two activity centers in Pinkham Notch*

4. SAWMILL AND LOGGING Page 345

Today nothing remains of Samuel W. Thompson's sawmill, yet during the second half of the nineteenth century it became the economic engine of Pinkham Notch. Around this enterprise grew logging operations, tourist and worker housing, and a toll road linking to the Mount Washington Carriage Road.

Thompson's Sawmill was far more than a place where lumber was cut. It shaped the local economy and influenced the use of Notch water resources. The adjacent Darby Field Cottage and shortcut to the Carriage Road can be traced directly to Thompson's ambitious vision. Chapter 4 goes on to illuminate the logging era around the Notch.



*Late nineteenth century Darby Field from east to west: 4) Thompson's
Sawmill east side, 5) Darby Field Cottage center, 6) Summit shortcut to west*

5. DARBY FIELD COTTAGE Page 47

Tourist hotels define much of the early history of the White Mountains, but some of the most interesting were not the grand resorts. Darby Field Cottage was a modest establishment whose fortunes closely reflected changes at the nearby and larger Glen House. Chapter 5 traces the history of Darby Field Cottage from its origins thru sudden decline.

6. SHORTCUT TO CARRIAGE ROAD Page 66

During the nineteenth century thousands of visitors came to the White Mountains to reach the summit of Mount Washington. Every mile saved on the ride from Jackson and North

Conway hotels made for a better experience. In response, local entrepreneurs developed a shortcut from Pinkham Notch that reduced travel time to the Summit.

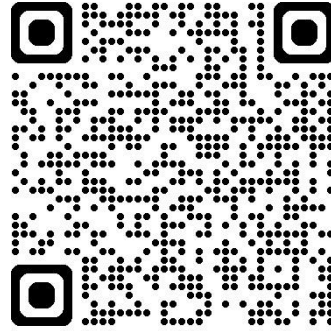
What began as a practical transportation improvement eventually assumed an entirely different role. After the horse-drawn coach era, this shortcut found a new life as the heavily used Old Jackson Road segment of the Appalachian Trail.

[7. SPRUCE HILL AND ROUTE 16](#) Page 75

For generations travelers from the south approaching Pinkham Notch faced one major obstacle. Spruce Hill challenged stagecoaches, wagons, early automobiles, and highway engineers alike. The history of Spruce Hill is part of the history of the Mount Washington Valley's 16.



For the Jackson-Gorham Area, an ebook entitled *Dolly Copp and the Peabody Valley Pioneers* is available. Includes 255 pages and 798 illustrations. As a volunteer project, download free at dollycopp.com.



DOLLY COPP AND THE PEABODY VALLEY PIONEERS

DOLLY COPP CAMPGROUND • LIVES OF DOLLY
AND HAYES • DANIEL PINKHAM • CULHANE
COUSINS • LANDOWNER JOHN BELLOWES • LOST
HOMESTEADS • SAWMILLS • IMP PROFILE •
PEABODY RIVER • LOGGING ERA • RARE MAPS •
HISTORIC PHOTOS

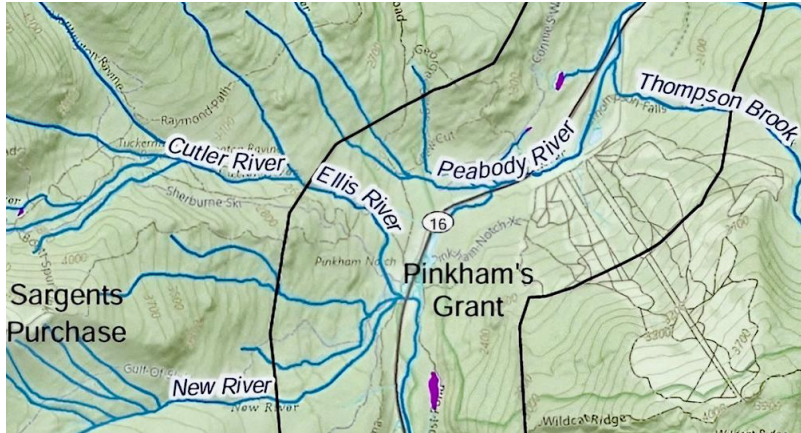
dollycopp.com/dollycopp.pdf

A HISTORY OF PINKHAM NOTCH, WHITE MOUNTAINS, NH

WATERFALLS AND SPRINGS • NOTCH PROPER •
APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB • THOMPSON'S
SAWMILL • DARBY FIELD COTTAGE AND GLEN
HOUSE • SHORTCUT TO CARRIAGE ROAD •
CLIMBING SPRUCE HILL • RARE MAPS •
HISTORIC PHOTOS

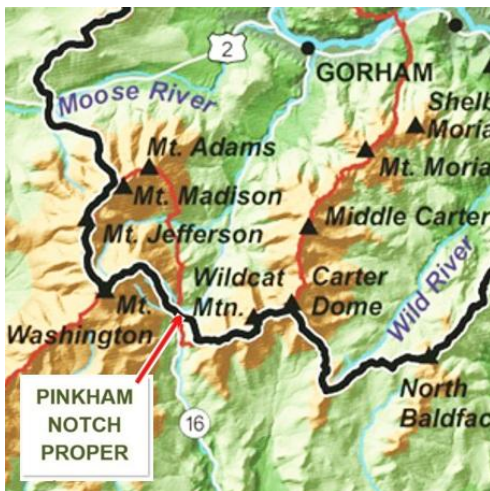
dollycopp.com/pinkhamnotch.pdf

1. WATER RESOURCES



Carter Notch 3,396 ft
 Bunnell Notch 3,038 ft
 Jefferson Notch 3,009 ft
 Carlton Notch 2,805 ft
 Carrigain Notch 2,543 ft
Pinkham Notch 2,032 ft
 Franconia Notch 1,950 ft
 Crawford Notch 1,900 ft
 Kinsman Notch 1,870 ft
 Bear Notch 1,768 ft
 Evans Notch 1,410 ft

*Watercourses from the NH Wildlife Action Plan -
 at right Notch elevations in the White Mountain National Forest*



*Left, a major watershed boundary
 divides Peabody and Ellis Rivers - 2003
 AMC Atlas (Mounts Adams and Madison reversed)*



*Above, east of Huntington Ravine Ellis
 and Peabody headwaters run parallel and
 southeasterly before parting south and north
 at Pinkham Notch - courtesy of topozone.com*

WATERSHEDS

The term notch has long been used in Northern New England for a major mountain pass. One thinks also of Crawford Notch and Franconia Notch. Notch high points serve as watershed boundaries, where runoff flows into opposite drainage systems.

From Pinkham Notch the Peabody River flows north into the Androscoggin River at Gorham then easterly into Maine. The south flowing Ellis River merges into the Saco River in Bartlett and also flows easterly into Maine.

According to *ChatGPT* the Pinkham Notch watershed boundary has significantly shaped Northern New Hampshire history: *"Pinkham Notch is not just a mountain pass, it is a hydrologic hinge between two major Maine coastal systems. This is a natural explanation for different settlement, road, and rail patterns north versus south of the Notch. Also a key reason why Gorham/Berlin and North Conway/Bartlett evolved so differently despite close proximity."*

Typically notches have a visible highpoint separating opposite drainage flows. Not so at Pinkham, its unusual feature. Ages of washed down debris have obscured what geologists tell us is a more typically pronounced profile under its surface.

Appalachia from 1923 confirms: "The summit of Pinkham Notch is broad, flat and swampy; and the divide between the streams flowing north and south is indefinite." Mount Washington explorer Jeremy Belknap was the first to record this feature in 1784:

"To arrive at the foot of this mountain, there is a continual ascent of twelve miles from the plain of Pigwacket {central Jackson}. At this height there is a level of about a mile square, part of which is a meadow, formerly a beaver pond, with a dam at each end." The Route 16 southbound Google photo below reveals the odd level and swampy nature.



As the mid-nineteenth century tourist era opened the 2,032' Notch plain was again recorded as subtle. Passing thru southerly in **1852** from To-day: *A Boston Literary Journal*:

"For about three miles from the Bellows Farm {first name for the Glen House}

the road continues to follow the valley of the Peabody River, which is flowing due north, so that our travelers were going towards its source. Sometimes the stream at their side would be out of sight for a little while, and then again would reappear.

After one of these intervals, they observed that the water in the stream was flowing in the same direction that they were walking. This, of course showed them they had passed the highest point in the valley."

With unharnessed water power available, commercial competition for Notch flows between north and south sawmills started early. Documentation in the *Portland Transcript* of 7/30/1853: "Thompson of the Glen House {hotelier Joseph M. Thompson, not to be confused with later Darby Field hotelier Samuel W. Thompson} has a sawmill on the Peabody, {in Greens Grant} and there is also a mill owned by the other parties upon the Ellis stream {Goodrich Falls Sawmill in Bartlett}.



At left Thompson's Sawmill detail from Jasper Cropsey's **1857** "Mount Jefferson, Pinkham Notch, White Mountains"
- at right Frank Henry Shapleigh's **1877** "Old Mill at Goodrich Falls"

When the waters are low it becomes an object with these rival mill owners to monopolize the stream which, divided, forms the two rivers. Accordingly, parties go up from the Ellis side, and throwing a few stones and brush divert all the water from the Peabody to the Ellis. Then Thompson's men, finding their water running low, send up parties and reverse the position of the stones, and thus obtain command of all the water. And so the game goes on!"

--- This unusual feature is further noted in **1859** by White Mountains author Thomas Starr King in his description of Pinkham Notch: "It is near a small fountain whose waters flow two ways - from one side into a branch of the of the Saco, from the other into a branch of the Androscoggin."

--- From the **1872** *Eastman's White Mountain Guide*: "Here the Peabody River and the Ellis issue in nearly parallel courses from the forest on the right, so near to each other that a slight amount of labor would turn either stream into the other."

--- Among the Clouds Summit newspaper of 7/18/**1903**: "A queer prank is charged against Ellis River. When the Thompson mill at Darby Field was in operation Ellis River was tapped to furnish a supply of water for various purposes. When the mill burned this was dammed up and the water went in in the natural way."

The great freshet washed out this dam and allowed practically all the waters of Ellis to run down the Peabody River channel, leaving the bed of Ellis River practically dry. The break has now been repaired and Ellis River turned back."

--- The AMC's Joe Dodge commented in **1941** in his biography by William Lowell Putnam: "Before the Forest Service put that new trail in, the Cutler River used to change its mind from time to time. Sometimes it would flow north into the river they named for Oliver Peabody; right now it flows south into the Ellis River. While I have lived here in Porky Gulch, the river has gone both ways, often at the same time."

Another atypical Notch feature, Pinkham is the high point for a larger encompassing valley stretching to the north and south, federally designated in the sixties. Comment by Gorham historian D. B. Wight in 1964:

"The valley that lies along the course of the Peabody, Ellis and Saco Rivers, a distance of 35 miles, between Gorham and Conway {photo from North Conway north to Mount Washington at right}, was given the official name of '**Mount Washington Valley**.'

This was by the authority of the Board of Geographic Names of the Department of the Interior and will be marked as such on all Federal maps and publications."



Visit Mt Washington Valley, NH is ...
in North Conway, NH.
Feb 9 · 🌐

Mt Washington looking brilliant and imposing in the afternoon light.



WATERFALLS

According to Grokipedia "early in its course, the Ellis River descends over **Crystal Cascade**, a 100-foot waterfall visible from overlooks along nearby trails. The river then continues through the narrowing gorge to **Glen Ellis Falls**, a 64-foot plunge over a rocky ledge that marks a significant drop near the Notch's southern extent."

These two waterfalls became tourist destinations early on. From *The White Hills* **1859** by Thomas Starr King: "It requires about half an hour {from the Glen House} to reach the Crystal Cascade, with a party of ladies, from the side of the road where the wagon is left."

The **1878** *Switzerland of American* by William Gage: "Glen Ellis Falls and Crystal Cascade are generally visited from the Glen House, which gives more time than a brief stop by the roadside with the stage in waiting."



At left excerpt from the **1858** Boardman Map, with insert of the three tenths of a mile path west to Crystal Cascade; at right excerpt from the **1861** Walling Map



At center Second Glen House (1885 - 1893) advertisement promoting the famed Notch waterfalls - from Ticknor's White Mountain Guide

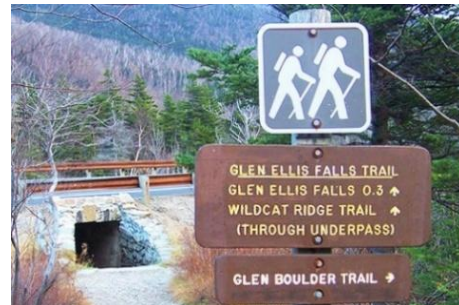
Early praise for Glen Ellis Falls in **1849** by Glen House developer John Bellows: *"The attraction of Spruce Hill Falls {his name for Glen Ellis Falls}, by admiring throngs at no very distant day, will be visited and gazed at, as one of the sublimest and picturesque scenes. One feels like entering the spray at Niagara."*

Background on Glen Ellis naming from the 1889 *History of Carroll County, NH* by Georgia Drew Merrill: *"They were formally known as the Pitcher Falls, in allusion to their shape."* Merrill goes on to say that the Falls received its present name in **1852**. Confirmation as that early name appears in *Today: A Boston Literary Journal* in **1852**.

The 1852 name was applied by Henry Wheelock Ripley of North Conway, later memorialized by Ripley Falls in Crawford Notch. Ripley was a companion of White Mountain author Thomas Starr King and climbed Mount Washington 85 times. Sounds like a prominent early figure with qualifications for acceptance of his naming a prominent natural feature.

But I suspect a local influencer here. The name could have been tied to the marketing plan of the nearby Glen House, opening in 1851 just before the Glen Ellis name was applied. Owners John Bellows, then Joseph Thompson, were vigorous tourism promoters.

Could they have requested their guest Ripley to assist? Consider that they did the naming themselves for Thompson's Falls nearby. At right Glen Ellis Falls entrance from nhtourguide.com.



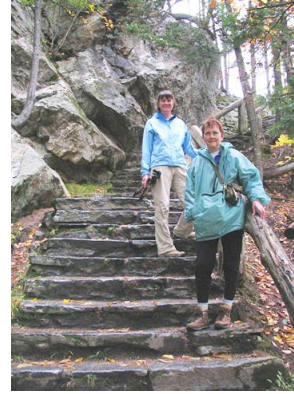
Praise from prominent White Mountains author Starr King in **1859**: *"The Glen Ellis Falls are more grand than those of the {Crystal} cascade just spoken of. In fact, if we wished to take a person into a scene that would seem to be the very heart of mountain wilderness, without wishing to make him climb into any of the ravines, we should invite him to visit this fall of the Ellis River."*

The guest invoice at right dated August 13, **1860** is displayed at today's Glen House. This documents the early relationship between Glen House side trips and Pinkham Notch waterfalls.

The invoice form had basic services printed in advance. The charge for two 'Days Board' was five dollars. This guest had no charges for 'Seats to Falls.'

*2 Days Board,
Seats to Ledger,
" " Falls,
" " Imp,
Horse, Mount Washington*

Gorham historian Denman B. Wight reporting on **1880** informs us that *"stairways have been built so one can reach the foot of the falls with ease."* From the *People and Patriot* newspaper of 6/16/**1881** we learn that Notch Area entrepreneur *"Samuel W. Thompson of North Conway, with several men, passed through this town {Jackson} recently on route for Glen Ellis Falls, where he is making preparations to open up a silver mine."* With Joe Dodge, Samuel becomes one of the two major individuals in Pinkham Notch history).



From *Among the Clouds* of 8/3/**1895**: *"In particular the steps that descend the cliff to the foot of Glen Ellis Falls are a menace to limb, if not to life itself. Perhaps the laggard hotel keepers will bestir themselves to rebuild them. But what is everybody's business is nobody's - until some accident befalls."* At right, well maintained USFS staircase today from be-roberts.com.

From *Among the Clouds* in **1897**: *"The road through Pinkham Notch, which was badly washed, has been thoroughly repaired and the ride by Tally-ho coach to Glen Station is pleasant and interesting. The Mount Washington stages stop long enough at Glen Ellis Falls to give passengers time to see the highest water falls in the White Mountains."*

VISITING ROADSIDE SPRINGS

OVERVIEW: Springs are natural points from which groundwater emerges, often where the water table reaches above the surface. In mountainous terrain cracks in hillside bedrock release groundwater. In the White Mountains, accessible springs attracted tourists.

ChatGPT: *"Stagecoach routes and carriage roads frequently had way-stations where horses were watered and tourists were encouraged to sample 'pure mountain spring water.' Hotels in Franconia Notch and Crawford Notch promoted nearby spring water. Mid-19th-century tourists treated such features as part of an itinerary, tangible markers of a successful excursion."*



Samuel Adams Drake in his 1882 *The Heart of the White Mountains* well characterizes the feature: *"A roadside spring gushing into a trough, a **refreshment stop for dusty travelers and horses.**"* Generic pic at right.

INVENTORIES: There are two primary sources for locating historic roadside springs along the Glen Road thru the Notch. First, Gorham historian D. B. Wight, writing in 1967 *The Androscoggin River Valley*, presents a summary of springs as of 1913:

"There were many fine springs on the Glen Road at this time, and at the Glen House two amateur sign writers busied themselves one rainy day in making needed signs for them, which were put up.

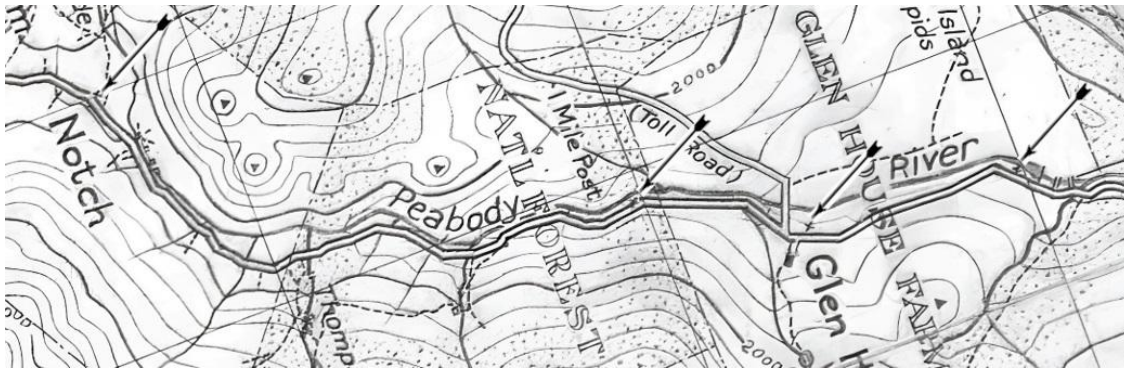
These included Two-Mile Spring {two miles south of Main street in Gorham}, Four Mile Spring, Copp Spring near Copp's Bridge, Lower Billings Spring near Glen Pond, Upper Billings Spring, and Cascade Spring, near Crystal Cascade entrance."

A second source is the 1916 *AMC Cutter Map* which marks spring locations. They are without names, but useful for positioning other spring references. Some 1916 map locations correlate very well with the then recent 1913 Glen House sign list.

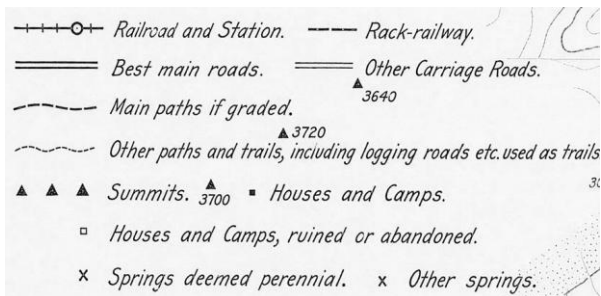
At right 1925 U.S. Forest Service promotional photo

Making use of the 1913 spring list I omit the Two-Mile and Four-Mile Springs in Gorham, as well as the Copp Spring in Martins Location, in order to focus south closer to the Notch.

I am also reversing the 1913 list order slightly to focus first on the more southern Upper Billings Spring, where identification is much firmer than at Lower Billings Spring. Strong evidence for the Upper helps contrast the weak case for the Lower.



Annotated excerpt from 1916 AMC Cutter Map with north at right from left in Pinkhams Grant "X" for spring matches with Cascade Spring and match with Upper Billings Spring; in Greens Grant Spring in front of Glen House and Spring at Thompson's Mill Pond



At left the legend for the 1916 AMC Cutter Map, an outstanding resource for White Mountain historical research

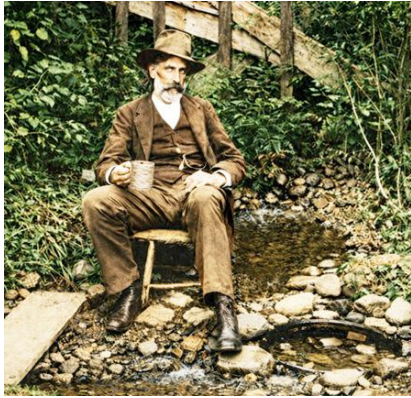
UPPER BILLINGS SPRING: As noted above proceeding south on the 1913 spring list there are two Billings Springs, the Lower followed by the Upper to the south at a higher elevation.

The task is to judge which of the two springs the 1911 Billings news clip below refers to. And alternatively, if there is any historical validity to Lower Billings Spring at all.



Frequenting the Glen House in the 1870s was humorist Henry W. Shaw, (photo left) his pen name Josh Billings. *Among the Clouds* of 8/15/1879 records his humor in seeing drenched arrivals: "The rain steadily increased, and by the time we reached Spruce Hill, where the driver informed us it rained where it was clear everywhere else, a perfect torrent was pouring down upon our rather weak ribbed umbrella."

Josh Billings stood on the piazza when we reined up to the door, and doubtless thought of something extremely funny as he noted our forlorn appearance. But we were nearly too famished to care if he made a whole column of jokes at our expense, only that I think he should credit them to the right source."



Colorful Shaw came from Poughkeepsie, New York and lived from 1818 to 1885. In his day he was a very popular, even a household-name humorist. Today he is still considered important but second-tier. From the Paw Paw, Michigan newspaper *The True Northerner* dated 8/12/1881:

Humorist Josh Billings at his Spring - NH Historical Society

"The afternoon was spent in visiting Glen Ellis Falls. Thanks to Mr. Chapman who, while at the falls, made a cup out of Birch Bark, and from which we all took a cooling draught on our return to the hotel from Josh

Billings Spring by the roadside. This spring takes Josh's euphonious name from the fact that he first dug it out and placed in it an old board to retain the water."

From *Among the Clouds* 8/29/1910: Mr. F. O. Pierce is at the Glen for the summer. "He with Dr. Withhas also improved the appearance of the famous Josh Billings Spring and other places of interest to the guests."

More from the *Gainesville News* of March 15, 1911: "Some years ago, when Josh was staying in the White Mountains, he was charmed by a beautiful spring of clear, icy cold water which bubbled up at the side of the highway.

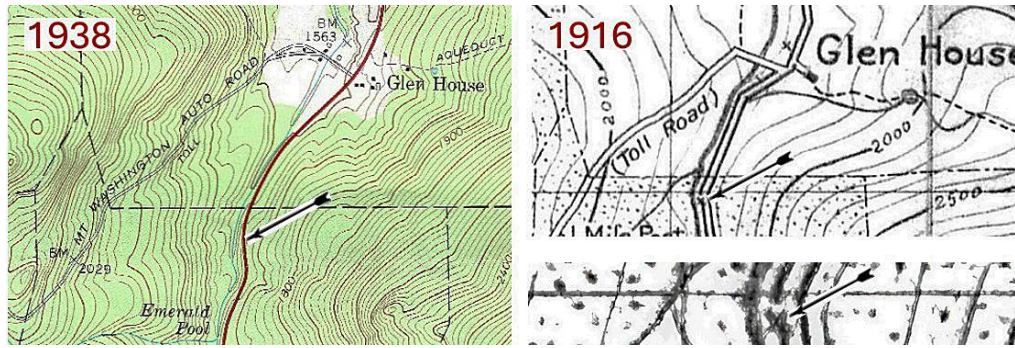
He made the carriage stop and removing his slouch hat, lay down on his face, and drank a deep, refreshing draft. In compliment to him the residents in the neighborhood named the fountain 'Josh Billings Spring,' and it has thus been known ever since."

The *Cambridge Chronicle* of March 15, 1911 tells the story of the cup Josh kept at the spring. He had it inscribed "*whoever steals this fine big cup by a big black bear will be eaten up.*" It got taken as a prank. The story continues to a significant locational clue: "A few days later the humorist, having nursed a consuming thirst, **walked all the way** to the spring to quench the same."

Definitely not the the spring bearing his name on the hotel grounds. More logically, 'all the way' proceeds south from the Glen House about one half mile to the Upper Billings Spring location documented below.

Evidence for Upper Billings includes an authoritative source, the 1938 *Guide to the Granite State*. The *Guide* is structured as a series of historic tours around New Hampshire, a Depression Era federal project keeping writers and researchers employed. Our interest is in the description along Route 16 north from the Town of Bartlett.

The text uses one tenth mile markers. At the 15.1 mile marker is the path to the Peabody River's Emerald Pool. Next landmark, 15.4 mile marker, "*at the top of the hill on the left is the **Josh Billings Spring.***" This agrees with the spring designation on the 1916 *Cutter Map* at right below.



At left Billings Spring location in 1938 Guide plotted on a modern USGS Map; at right location compatible with spring notation on 1916 AMC Cutter Map, both just south of the Greens Grant and Pinkhams Grant civic boundary line

Before the automobile era a walk on the Glen Road was a safe pastime for Glen House guests. From *Through the Wilds* 1889 by Charles Farrar: "Reaching the hotel they obtained rooms, ate their dinner, and then strolled out for a walk, visiting Thompsons Falls and the Emerald Pool before they returned to the house" (Pool is further south from Upper Billings Spring).

It is also documented in the 1858 *Eastman's Guide* that Glen House visitors could walk north to Dolly Copp Farm, the prime viewing location east to the Imp Profile on the Carter Range: "The point from which the face with its quaint expression upon the mountain top is seen is nearly two miles from the Glen House. It would be, also, a pleasant afternoon walk."



The AMC Archive offers a supporting clue. The caption with a 1910 Billings Spring photo (left) describes it as "one mile north of Pinkham Notch." This is additional hard evidence for a location on the Glen Road just south the Pinkhams Grant - Greens Grant Boundary Line.

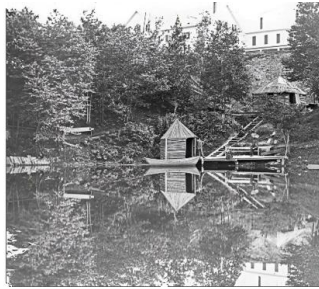


Billings Spring at the 1938 Guide location survived until circa 1960, when a Route 16 widening project removed it and part of the hill then there. The location today is paved over, at left a Google photo view north of the cut back hill.

Howie Wemyss of the Glen House confirms: "I believe that the 'upper spring' was eliminated when Route 16 was 'improved' in the 1960's - but mostly because I recall Doug Philbrook telling me so." Philbrook {photo right} was for many years president of the Mount Washington Auto Road and the leading area historian - the best source of all.



LOWER BILLINGS SPRING: This name was applied by 1913 sign makers near the 'Glen Pond' feature immediately in front of the Glen House. There is confirmation for a spring at that location. We have the 1916 *Cutter Map* designation and references on old photographs to 'Glen Spring.' But there is no evidence that anyone other than the *sign makers or their managers* associated this spring with Josh Billings who had passed away in 1885.



At left, view west with caption "*Glen Spring near Glen House*" Right, view east with Glen House on rise beyond spring and pond. Howie Wemyss comments:

"These are what I've always assumed was from the spring opposite the Glen House itself. At left is the view looking

west - southwest over the spring pond, across the wooden bulkhead and out over the Peabody River."



More rare photos from the Wemyss Collection - left pond, right Glen Spring Bridge, location of foot bridge undetermined

At right major research contributor **Howie Wemyss**, President of the Glen House. Howie shared rare photos from his unique collection, attributed herein and some the top highlights of the Notch History.

He also alerted me that the historic Summit newspaper *Among the Clouds* had recently been made searchable - an invaluable tip that greatly aided the depth of the research.



I have a theory as to the motive for the 1913 dual naming. It was one thing for horse drawn tourist coach drivers at a few miles per hour to call out passing landmarks such as Upper Billings Spring. But, entering the private passenger auto era after 1910, at 25 or more miles per hour, viewing or even finding these little features fell from grace, worthy of neither a stop nor a walk south from the Glen House to view.

I suggest that the 1913 marketers for the Third Glen House may have seen advantage in reviving the name of a faded, but still remembered, piece of Glen House lore. To do this they placed the tourist feature right on the revived hotel grounds. No other source than the 1913 list cites two Billings Springs. And consider, would Josh Billings complicate his humor with the confusion of two springs?

Josh Billings at the White Mountains.

I am now dwelling at the "Glen House,"
at the very feet of the White Mountains.
I probably shall stay heré until i spend
mi last cent, and then ded hed mii remains
tew New York.

Excerpt from the 8/16/1873 Rolla, Missouri Explorer

"Of Josh Billings, George Stevens says a difference of fifty cents on a \$1200 board bill for his family and horses caused a row between Josh and Mr. Milliken which resulted in the gruff old fellow's telling Mr. Milliken that he'd never come to his dam hotel again, and he never did."

- Berlin, NH Brown Company Bulletin of 2/1930

CASCADE SPRING: Continuing south on the ascent to Pinkham Notch, reaching the height, Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) archives include a photo (right and below) of "Cascade Spring, Pinkham Notch Road, eleven miles from Gorham, recorded 1920s."



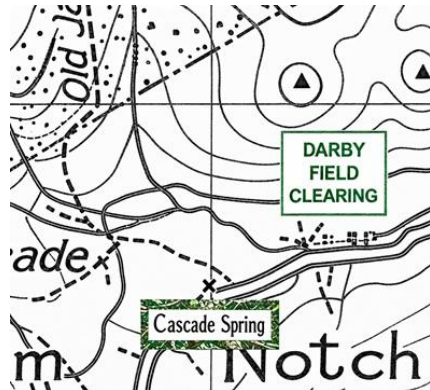
The 1916 *Cutter Map* places a spring, assumedly Cascade Spring, within the one half mile stretch of the Glen Road between the Darby Field Clearing and Pinkham Notch Proper. It was just to the west of the 1885 carriage road short cut, most of which became by 1916 the Old Jackson Road hiking trail.



According to *ChatGPT* direct or indirect references to Cascade Spring are not found in any digital literature. The 1938 Route 16 survey is also silent on it.

Horse transportation was central before the auto era. A spring directly beside the Glen House - Jackson highway at the top of the Pinkham Notch divide would have been useful for these animals.

Perhaps the 1913 sign makers dressed up an old watering hole for tourists - a creative addition as I see 'Lower Billings Spring' above.



MINERAL SPRING FURTHER SOUTH: While the 1913 Glen House spring list southbound ends at the Cascade Spring, a 'Mineral Spring' is included on the 1858 *Boardman Map*, below left, and repeated in the same position on the 1861 *Walling Map*, below right. The location looks to be between the Notch Proper and Glen Ellis Falls. Still running today, it is oddly not found on the authoritative 1916 *Cutter Map*.



We know that many early White Mountain hotels cited a mineral spring nearby to attract guests. Such an arrangement here is described in the 1872 *Eastman's White Mountain Guide*:

"After leaving the entrance to Crystal Cascade {southbound} we cross the Ellis River, and soon pass the Mineral Spring House, an unfinished and uninhabited cottage in the edge of the forest on the right."

This house, the only shelter for seven miles, was located here on account of the supposed medicinal character of the spring nearby; but the project has been abandoned, and the building seems going to ruin."

There is a web reference to a spring in this immediate vicinity, likely the earlier Mineral Spring. *"The location is perfect for those traveling on the Appalachian Trail or hiking the Notch to Mount Washington, for it is so close to the Trail. It is located about a 1/4 mile {slightly off, see below} south of Pinkham Notch on the western side of Route 16."*

Accompanying user comments: *"I have used this spring for many years. The water has very good taste, sweet. The pool under the pipe had a fish in it one summer."* Another: *"I just hiked Mount Wildcat, mainly so I could stop at this spring. The tube was very low and almost dipping into the stream below it. Still the water served my hike both up and down."*

An October 2025 field review by volunteer research associate John Compton has good news: *"I am pretty certain that the Mineral Spring at that location has been found! It is located on the west side of NH 16 at a point that is 0.34 miles north from the entrance to Glen Ellis Falls parking lot, and 0.34 miles south of the entrance to the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center - equidistant between those two entrances."*

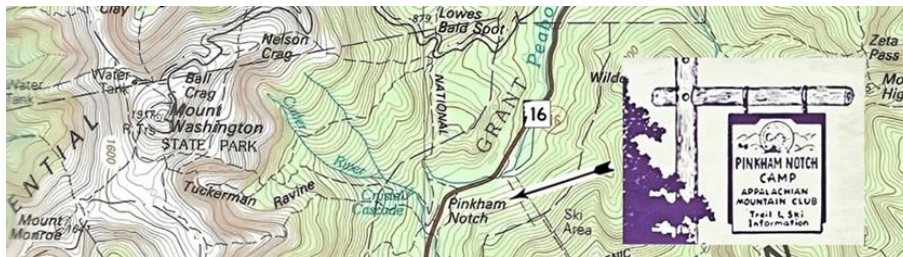


John's photos above show the spring aside the southbound lane of Route 16

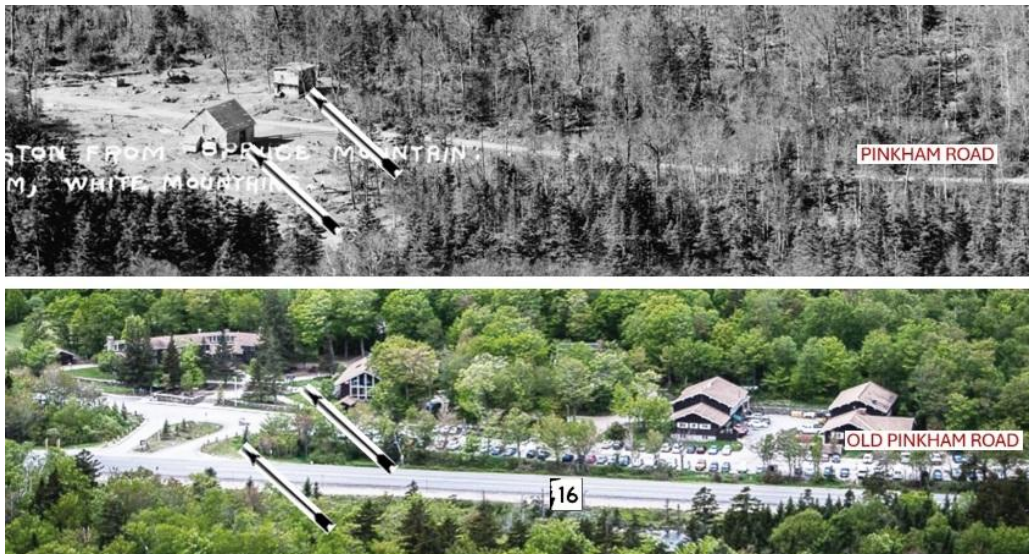
2. PINKHAM NOTCH PROPER



With north to right the 1784 Holland Map shows at left early NH grants combined to form Jackson - arrow to as yet unincorporated Pinkham's Grant - Jackson failed in its attempt to annex the Notch and further north to include Greens Grant and Martins Location



Vicinity Map



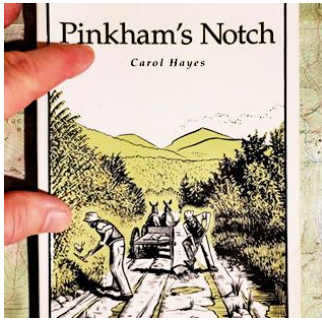
Top, view west from Square Ledge 2,419' -Spruce Mountain reference incorrect - to Pinkham Notch Proper circa 1895 shows east side Weeks Store and west side Osgood's Cabin; bottom, same view today courtesy of hikebikettravel.com

NAMING THE NOTCH

The earliest name for today's Pinkham Notch is found in Jacob Bigelow's **1816** *Account of the White Mountains*: "The ascent was from the **Eastern Pass** following Cutler's River."

Same name appears in the **1817** *Gazetteer of New Hampshire*: "**Peabody River rises in the Eastern Pass of the White Mountains, where also rises Ellis River, a branch of the Saco.**" The corresponding early name Western Pass was in time revised to Crawford Notch.

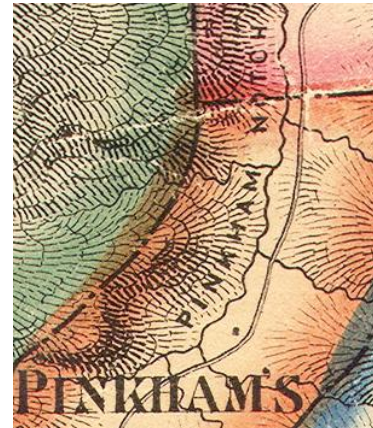
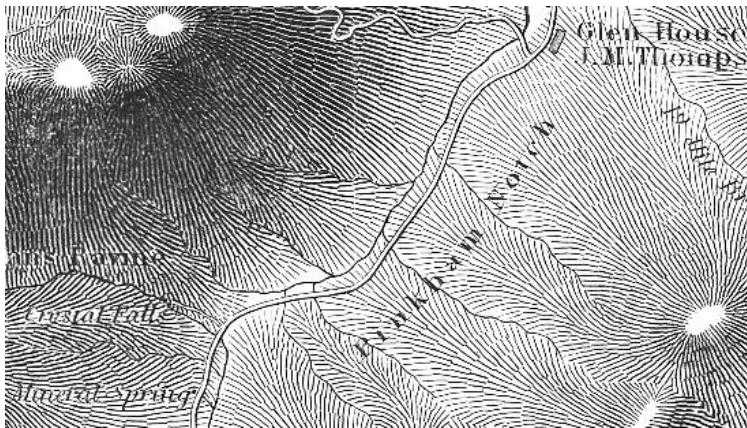
Early naming is reflected in Carol Hayes' 1998 historical novel *Pinkham's Notch*, as Daniel Pinkham speaks to his wife Esther: "**Beyond East Pass there is a splendid valley. The Glen, farther up this valley, has two parts. Our Hansons {their daughter and son-in-law} live in Greens Grant and we will be in Martins Location.**"



Cover of Carol Hayes' 1998 historical novel *Pinkham's Notch*

I suspect that today's name was first applied in 1851 by cooperating Glen House developers John Bellows and Joseph Thompson. Their luxury hotel was sited within blandly named 'Pinkham Woods' and 'Greens Grant', neither name invoking mountain splendor to attract distant Boston tourists.

The Pinkham Woods identifier was in use within the **1844** *Report on the Geology and Mineralogy of New Hampshire*.



At left an excerpt from the **1858** Boardman Map labels the 2.7 miles north from the Notch Proper to the Glen House as the broader "Pinkham Notch" - at right same notation on the **1861** Walling Map

The extension of the name north was to stick. ChatGPT: "*Although the Glen House stood in Green's Grant, approximately three miles north of the narrowest part of Pinkham Notch, nineteenth-century writers often expanded the name of the pass to encompass the entire eastern Mount Washington resort district.*"

Lucy Crawford's 1883 history called it 'The Glen House, in Pinkham Notch,' and the 1888 History of Coös County similarly described 'The Glen House in Pinkham Notch,' even while locating the Notch itself more narrowly at Glen Ellis Falls."

Consider that concern for initial weak place naming was expressed by Glen House developer John Bellows in an **1849** letter to his business partner railroad president Josiah Little: "*I regret that time had not permitted you when here to have gone over to the mountains, and I think you would have been forced to admit that Greens Grant, for so we call it, **for want of a better name**, is one of the wildest romantic spots.*"

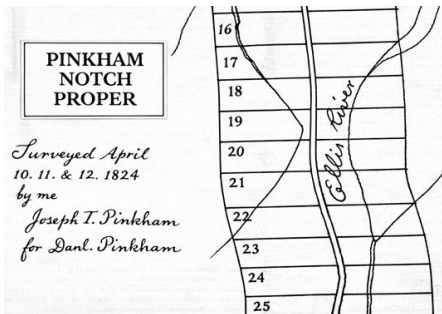


A 1947 *Appalachia Journal* article by John Olsen says the name Pinkham Notch “seems to have come into use about **1851**.” That year was the first full season for the Glen House.

In **1852** *To-day: A Boston Literary Journal* uses the new name in its article *A Day in the Pinkham Notch*, characterizing the Notch as “one of the features of the White Mountains which is not known to all travelers and the existence of which is hardly recognized by the guidebooks.”

Replacement of Eastern Pass with Pinkham Notch is widely accepted after **1852**. An example from an **1853** issue of *Putnam's Monthly Magazine*: “There is the Pinkham Notch, know sadly and sternly to all those who have jolted over its unutterable stones.” Touring Harvard Librarian Dr. Harris in **1853**: “The entire road, from Gorham to Jackson, through the Pinkham Notch, though bad enough for carriages, is extremely interesting.”

Daniel Pinkham well deserved the naming honor. He had opened the Notch with his alternative trade route starting in 1824. As Daniel was elderly and not far away at the time of the naming he was likely aware of it. Daniel passed away in county seat Lancaster in **1855**.



EARLY NOTCH PROPER

In 1824 the entirety of linear Pinkham's Grant, originally extending north to incorporate Greens Grant and Martins Location, was divided by grantee Daniel Pinkham into rectangular 100 acre lots, his new road their centerline.

Just north Hayes and Dolly Copp lived on two of these Pinkham lots, Hayes the son of Pinkham's first cousin. At left, annotated map of his lots at the Notch Proper

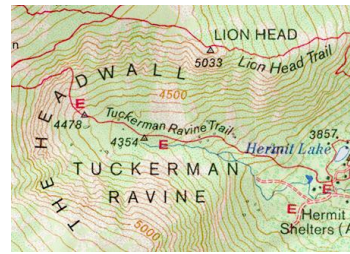
from the *Peabody Essex Museum*.

In 1826 Daniel Pinkham passed over his newly subdivided Notch lots for placing family farms. Evidently Neither Pinkham Notch Proper nor the adjacent Darby Field Clearing were suitable for farming on the scale Pinkham envisioned. The flat land at the Notch Proper was swampy, and productive acreage at Darby Field was limited, although by 1900 part of it had been put into use for farming.

There were no farm or tourist structures at the Notch Proper early on. The location was best known for its path to Crystal Cascade and then that path continuing into Tuckerman Ravine. From the 1927 *New Hampshire History* by Hobart Pillsbury: “When, about **1850**, the railroad approached Gorham, mountain travel that way increased. At that time the means of access to the Summit from the Gorham side consisted of a path leading up through Tuckerman Ravine.”

From *Trail Development in the White Mountains* by Guy Waterman referencing **1858**: “Path into Tuckerman Ravine from the two-mile point on the Mt. Washington Carriage Road then under construction. A second means of reaching Tuckerman was a direct route from the Pinkham Notch Road, also becoming a **discernible trail** about this time.”

An **1859** Thomas Starr King wrote that the main ascents to Mount Washington did not yet include access via Pinkham Notch: “There are three paths for the ascent of Mount Washington, one from the Crawford House at the {Crawford} Notch, one from the White Mountain House, five miles beyond the Notch, and one from the Glen {in Greens Grant}.” According to ChatGPT “several reputable summaries repeat that AMC's early White Mountains trail activity was in **1879** at Tuckerman Ravine.”



Right photo from hikebiketravel.com, center Jock Davis from the Jackson Historical Society, Headwall on 1987 public domain Washburn Map

According to the 2015 *History of Jackson in 1879* "Jonathan (Jock) G. Davis and his father are credited with cutting a trail from the Pinkham Notch Road to Tuckerman Ravine on Mount Washington. He was later hired by the Appalachian Mountain Club for trail maintenance." Samuel Adams Drake, in his 1882 *The Heart of the White Mountains* described Davis as "as a medium-sized, muscular man, heavily whiskered, with powerful bare arms and "a step like a panther."

From Chisholm's **1887** *White Mountain Guide Book*: "There is a **sort of** path from the Crystal Cascade into Tuckerman Ravine, but the best route is by a newly-cleared bridle path which leaves the Mount Washington carriage road about two miles up."

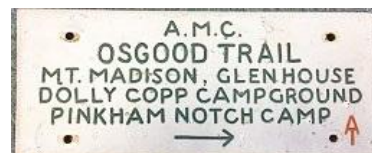
From *Reservations of the AMC* 1913 by Harvey Newton Shepard: "Since **1879** the club had maintained what they called the Crystal Cascade Trail. As far back as **1885** there was mention about plans for a 'public house' in Pinkham Notch which will probably be occupied in the winter." Here are roots for AMC Camp construction of 1920.



Enlarged (enhanced) excerpt from an 1895 Library of Congress photo with Weeks' Store lower left, Osgood's Cabin upper right

The first construction at the Notch Proper was not the AMC Camp. Rather, as documented in the **1889** *Glen House Book*, while traveling northbound on the Pinkham Road, "the driver pulls up by the side of a rough cabin, christened by habitués of the Glen House '**Osgood's Castle**.' His cabin marks the entrance to the Crystal Cascade and to Tuckerman Ravine.

Mr. Osgood, the presiding genius and veteran guide, is one of the best known characters in the mountains. He acted as a guide for the patrons of the Glen House." The Osgood Trail from the Glen House to Mount Madison was cleared by Osgood in 1878.



In a 1901 *Among the Clouds* newspaper Benjamin Osgood recalled "I began to work at the Crawford House on June 1, 1856, but left there on July 22 and went to the Glen House and stayed twenty eight years." That is, until 1884, the year the Glen House burned to the ground. Thus his cabin in the Notch may reflect a period of residency beginning before **1884**.

An *Among the Clouds* account of 8/27/**1884** records "the start was made from the Intervale House {North Conway}, Goodrich Falls 9:15, Jackson 9:41, Glen Ellis Falls at 12:47,

Osgood's Store 1:15 in the afternoon. Here light refreshment was found at a store and then a start was made for the Glen House."

As shown below the **1892 NH Atlas Map** includes 'Weeks Store' at the Notch Proper, likely a later name for the 'Osgood's Store' recorded there in 1884. After the challenge of steep Spruce Hill, reaching level ground it was natural for travelers to pause here, then water their horses at the nearby Cascade Spring.



At left Notch features of the **1892** Town and City Atlas of NH omit the Osgood Cabin, perhaps too insignificant or dilapidated that year to include



At right the **1893** USGS Map includes the east side Weeks Store (arrow) but as in 1892 no west side Osgood Cabin; to the northeast (second arrow) is S. W. Thompson's Darby Field Cottage

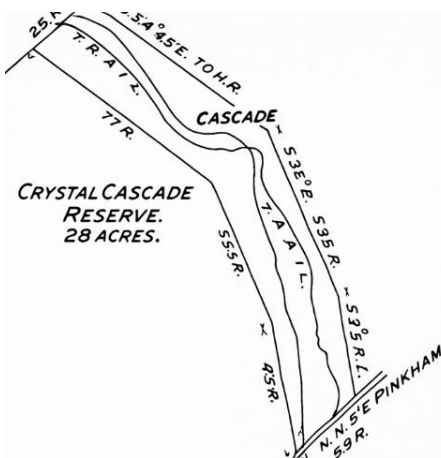


1895. Caption: "Hikers at a lumber camp in Pinkham Notch on 2/24/1906." To the north behind the trees is landmark Lila's Ledge, comparative view of Ledge at right.



Crossing into the twentieth century, the **1906** AMC photo at left documents a lumber camp at the Notch Proper that year. In appearance, it is not a reuse of either the store or home there in

Multiple lumber camps here or nearby are reference in the 1916 *Chronicles of the White Mountains* by Frederick Kilbourne: "The chauffeur carried Keenan {back in **1912**} about two miles and at his request let him out at the deserted lumber camps near the Darby Field."



In **1909** the AMC assumed management of the land that today hosts the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, leasing it from the Umbagog Paper Company, map at left courtesy of AMC. Background from Harvey Shepard writing in 1913 on the AMC's Glen Ellis Falls and Crystal Cascade Reservations:

"These reservations, each containing twenty-eight acres, are held under a lease from the Umbagog Paper Company. At the entrance to the latter reservation, a little to the south of the path into Tuckerman Ravine, the Club has permitted the construction of a refreshment hut, which has proved to be of great convenience to trampers {early term for hikers}.

From AMC's Becky Fullerton: *"Beyond the 1909 lease and its 1912 extension and accompanying map, we don't have a site plan that covers the year 1920 when the cabins were built. But presumably the 1920 permit area matches the formerly leased area. AMC did allow a man by the name of William C. Briggs to set up a concession stand on the property in 1912."*

In the summer of **1920** the AMC constructed two log buildings at Pinkham Notch—initially a simple lodge with a small trading post for supplies and information, overnight capacity 36 guests.

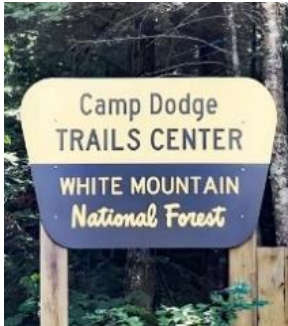


Left Pinkham Notch Camp in 1923 - center west from Square Ledge - right inside courtesy of the Forest History Society

USFS SUPPORTS AMC

The United States Forest Service (USFS) was removing buildings after its **1915** purchase of Martins Location and Pinkham's Grant - restoration of the forest, designated a national forest in **1918**. (Note that most of Greens Grant, the Libby's Glen House property, remained in private ownership as it still is). The *AMC Cutter Map* of **1916** shows no buildings that year at the Notch Proper, a few 'ruined or abandoned buildings' on Darby Field adjacent to the north.

No history of Pinkham Notch would be complete without a tribute to Joe Dodge, photo below right, manager of the AMC Pinkham Notch Camp starting in 1928. From AMC Archivist Becky Fullerton:



"Joe Dodge (1898-1973 - photo with fan at left), legendary White Mountain figure and 'father of the AMC hut system', played a key role in the expansion of the Appalachian Mountain Club's system of back country huts on the White Mountain National Forest.

He acted as Huts Manager for AMC between 1928 and 1959. Dodge acquired a love for the White Mountains during

family visits as a youth in 1909 and 1916."

Enter after name of person furnishing information.		CODE	blank	Sex	Color of	Age at
7	8	A	9	10	11	
Dodge, Joseph B.	Head	0	M	W	41	
— Cherstine	Wife	1	F	W	42	
— Anne Coles	Daughter	2	F	W	11	
— Joseph Brooke Jr.	Son	2	M	W	10	

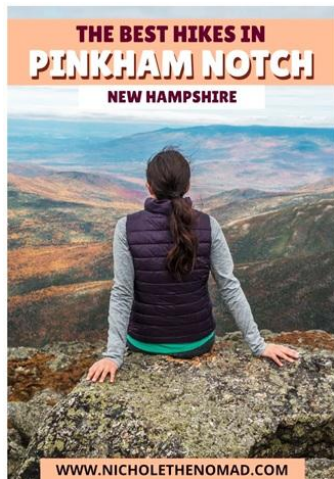


At left Census of 1940 shows Joseph Dodge Family living at the AMC Camp - at right daughter Anne continued the tradition of White Mountains leadership

The 1938 *Guide to the Granite State* organized historic tours around New Hampshire using one tenth mile markers. On the tour along Route 16 north from Bartlett, at 12.9 miles is the 1920 Pinkham Notch Camp, "a group of log houses admirably adapted to their surroundings, the leading trail center in the White Mountains."



Caption on 1937 post card at left: "Scene shows sportsmen at Dolly Copp Forest Camp. From this site, skiers travel only a few miles to enjoy June skiing in Tuckerman Ravine." At right Notch Camp skiers in 1950s, source AMC



This 1960 summation by Mount Washington historian Frank Allen Burt remains relevant: "Of all places in New England where skiers get together, there is none where the snow lingers longer, or where everybody from novice to hardened expert may have more fun and thrills, than in Tuckerman Ravine on the eastern flank of Mount Washington."



At left Jeff Fongemie, Director of the USFS Mount Washington Avalanche Center, provides training with model at Pinkham Notch Visitor Center

Historic timeline for the AMC Visitor Center:

1920s - 1950s: Backcountry/hut integration and visitor services. As the AMC developed the White Mountains hut system (Lakes of the Clouds, Madison Spring, etc.) and guided programs, Pinkham Notch became a coordination node.

This is for advice, maps, weather, and a place to buy passes and small gear before heading into **Tuckerman Ravine** and Huntington Ravine. At right enhancement of 1938 AMC sign.

1960s - 1990s: Program expansion and infrastructure. The center added more formal interpretive programming, expanded lodge accommodations and services (meals, group programs), and increased coordination with the WMNF and volunteer trail crews.

The AMC also positioned the Pinkham site as a regional office and hub for White Mountains hut and trail coordination.

Paul Doherty of Gorham, who lived 1919-2000 was for decades a conservation officer with the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department. In time he became Chief of its Northern District. Pinkham Notch Camp functioned as the primary operational hub for Doherty's work when incidents and rescues occurred on the Presidential and Carter Ranges.



*For Dolores
Have fun at Dolly Copp
Paul T. Doherty
11/10/92*

At left Paul T. Doherty; at right his 1992 book *Smoke from a Thousand Campfires* is a collector's item today, here autographed for my wife Dolores

2000s - Present: Modernization, education, and transit role. The Visitor Center now provides up-to-date weather/conditions, trailhead parking, USFS info, hut reservations and desk services (Joe Dodge Lodge), education programs (talks, skills clinics), and serving as a main stop for the AMC Hiker Shuttle. The center sits at one of the busiest access nodes on the WMNF's eastern Presidential side.

EARLY CAMPING AT NOTCH

After **1900** there was a sudden national proliferation of motor cars. Directly connected to that surge motor camping became a national craze. Faster automobile transport dramatically stimulated White Mountain tourism and appeared early on in Pinkham Notch, as noted in the 1989 *Forest and Crag* by Laura and Guy Waterman:

"In August 1903 a party from Philbrook Farm Inn {north in Shelburne, NH} went by horse and carriage to a picnic at Crystal Cascade in Pinkham Notch. While in the Notch, they were surprised by the arrival of not one but three automobiles. Mr. Philbrook took the opportunity to lead his horses up and around these strange machines to accustom them to the novel sight."

The large populations in nearby Massachusetts were now particularly well positioned to recreate to the north. Many early AMC members were from Greater Boston. Both the US Forest Service and the AMC made timely responses to manage the new auto camper visitors.

AT DOLLY COPP: The **1918 Biennial Report of the New Hampshire Forestry Commission** recorded six USFS WMNF Campgrounds operating by that year, including Dolly Copp, 5.3 miles to the north of the Notch Proper (5.3 to the pre-1951 bridge entering the Campground).

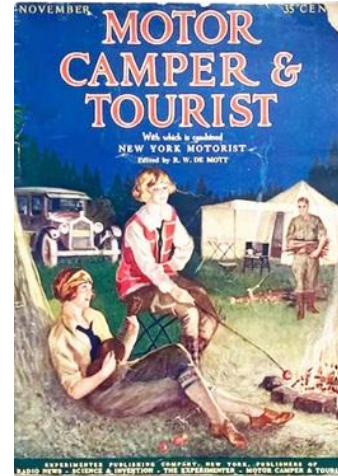
AT DARBY FIELD CLEARING: From that **1918 Forestry Commission** report, early development of a campground "at Darby Field on the Glen Road is planned." But when the

Darby Field Cottage there was taken down near 1915 the site became a federal gravel pit. It was briefly a tent camp for the Civilian Conservation Corps in the early thirties. Darby Field Campground never materialized.

RIGHT AT AMC CAMP: The AMC provided auto camping sites at its new Pinkham Notch Camp. According to AMC archivist Becky Fullerton by 1920 *"cars were getting bigger, and people realized you could use them to travel for vacation, and the rise of car camping almost immediately followed. The problem was that back then you could pull over and camp wherever you wanted."*

The solution was to build campgrounds next to popular trails and provide secure parking for these vehicles. It was a way for AMC to capitalize on the car phenomenon and help the USFS control the car camping crowds." The new AMC camping sites were open to the general public, it was not necessary to be an AMC member.

From the **1922 AMC Guide**: *"Two log buildings serve respectively as eating-house and living-room and sleeping accommodations are provided in **small tents with wooden floors**. Automobiles may be left under the supervision of the keepers. During the winter the buildings are closed and all equipment removed."*



Northern New Hampshire perspective on the early twenties camping boom from the Bethlehem, NH *White Mountain Echo* newspaper:

Echo of 8/21/1920: "One cannot ride any distance along any of our highways without coming across a camping party. Never in the history of the White Mountain region has there been so many of these parties in evidence."

Echo of 9/5/1925: "Camping parties, lured by the promise of free camps in the principal White Mountain towns and in the great National Forest Reserve have also increased and assumed a volume hardly conceivable."

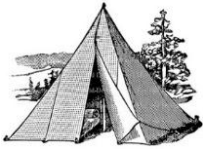
But a finer class of tourists camping than ever before is seen here and about fifty percent of the campers are traveling in limousines or sedans with their outfit on trailers, combining luxury and comfort with utility and economy."

AT PINKHAM NOTCH MEADOW: To manage the growing federal camping adjacent to AMC is documented in a **1925 Appalachia**: *"Much annoyance was experienced in the busy month of August by noise from camping parties **in the meadow opposite the Pinkham Notch Huts**, and therefore we applied to the Forest Service for some control over this meadow."*

The {USFS} supervisor is of the opinion that the number of tourists is so great it is not fair to extend our permit; but he expects the Service hereafter will give a closer supervision during the height of the camping season."

The relatively level 'Notch Meadow' had been the tent camping site of early explorer Reverend Jeremy Belknap, a noted historian and namesake for New Hampshire's Belknap County. From Belknap's 1784 journal:

*"Proceeded along the old Shelburne Road, full of wind falls and mires, and overgrown with bushes. Three fourths of a mile further brought us to our proposed **encamping ground**, which is near a meadow, in which Ellis River and a branch of the Androscoggin have their heads."*



While in Pinkham Notch, Belknap experienced what many tent campers know well:

"The rain increased and continued all night. Our tent leaked, and our fire decayed; but, by frequent attention, we kept it alive, and so continued to lay that we avoided being wet."



ABOVE GLEN ELLIS FALLS: It seems fair to conclude that the course of action chosen under 'closer supervision' of informal Notch Meadow campers was for the USFS to prohibit camping there. This diverts camper traffic to Dolly Copp to the north or to a new Glen Ellis Public Campground to the south.

Glen Ellis Public Camp Ground on 1920 AMC Map



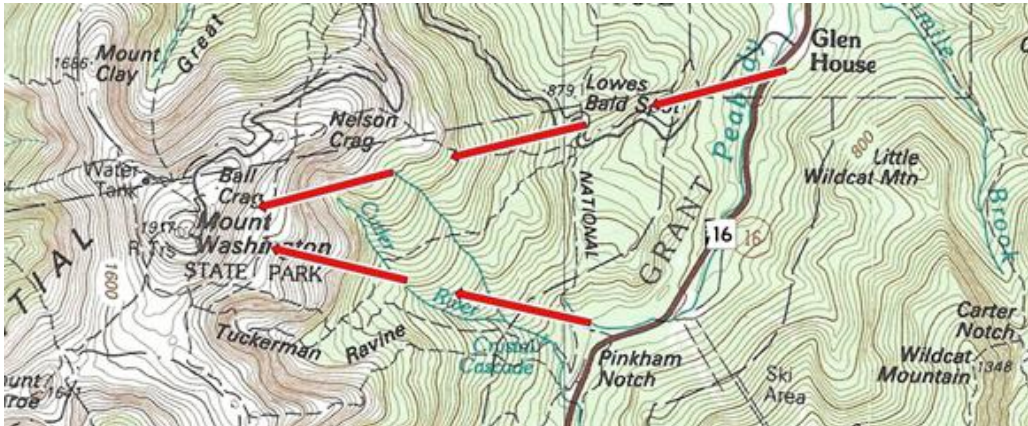
The Glen Ellis Camp Ground was short lived. Its small size must have made for inefficient management of water supply, waste disposal and overnight staffing. And soon redundant, for Dolly Copp Campground to the north was chosen by the USFS for major expansion to meet Notch Area public camping needs.

SUMMARY: Short lived camping areas or proposals, from south to north, were at Glen Ellis, Notch Meadow, the AMC Hut, Darby Field, then abandoned Dolly Copp Farm to the north. That last is the the only facility remaining a century later. In photo at right Dolly Copp Campground is identified with Pinkham Notch.

The federal view by **1927** is in a National Forest Commission report dated that year: *"Of all the campgrounds, the Dolly Copp in the White Mountains is the most popular. Fortunately, there is ample area for the physical expansion of the facilities."*



3. DARBY FIELD CLEARING



SUMMIT FROM GLEN HOUSE

Glen House developer John Bellows in **1849**:

"Greens Grant is one of the wildest, romantic spots, presenting at one glance incomparable mountain scenery."

Among the Clouds 1893: "The location of the Glen House is unsurpassed. It stands in the very center of a magnificent panorama of mountain peaks."

SUMMIT FROM DARBY FIELD CLEARING

New England Magazine 1899: "Here we are directly under the shoulder of Mount Washington and the surroundings are striking in the extreme."

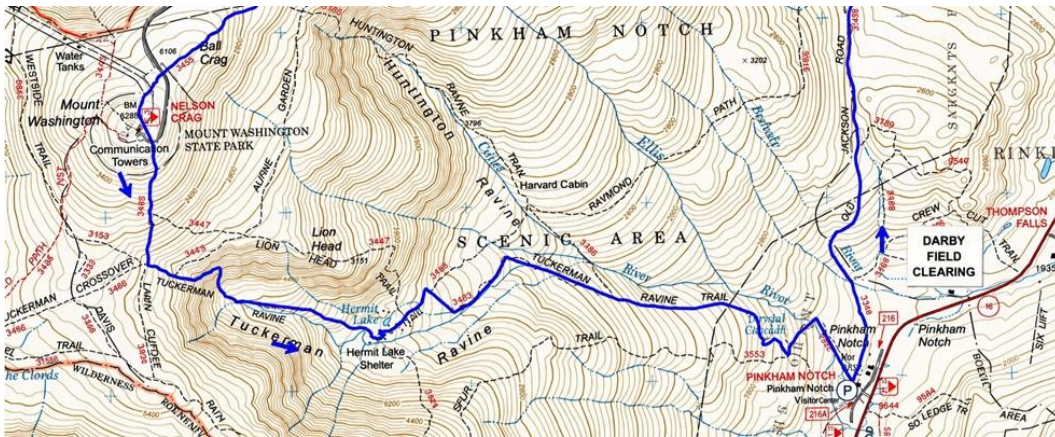
The 1938 Guide to NH: "At Darby Field there is a fine view of Tuckerman Ravine."

SHARED SCENERY TO WEST

With Pen and Camera thro' the White Mountains 1896:

"The route introduces its patrons to the great ravines that cut deep into the mass of Mount Washington and to a selection of scenes which are barred to the visitor who sees the mountains only from the railroad car {west side}."

Among the Clouds 7/17/1902: "A few steps brought us to the top of the cliff facing Crystal Cascade. Once more in the tally-ho, we retrace our steps to the Glen. Probably there is no bit of forest road in the mountains more delightful than this."



In 1965 much of view from Darby Field Clearing was federally designated as the Pinkham Notch Scenic Area

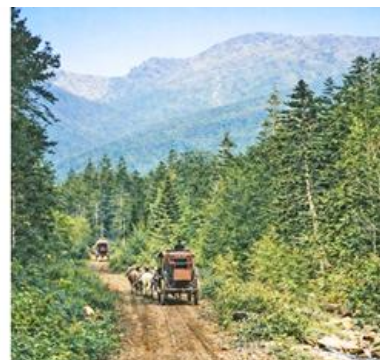
EARLY YEARS

The remoteness of the the East Side of the Presidentials was suddenly overcome when passenger rail service linked to Boston arrived in nearby Gorham in 1851. Glen House developer John Bellows cooperated closely with the railroad. Together they built the road south from Gorham to the new Glen House. Bellows from Lancaster had followed the progress of the Boston - Portland - Montreal railroad planning for years.

In contrast, the more southerly higher elevation view at Darby Field did not have good access to Boston tourists until twenty five years later, when Glen Railroad Station opened in Bartlett to the south in 1876. Darby Field Cottage construction became viable soon thereafter.



At left, view south from the Glen House includes just the tip of 5,033' Lion Head, a shoulder of Mt. Washington - at right, 2.2 miles south at Thompson's Mills on Darby Field, Lion Head and Tuckerman Ravine are fully revealed



Along Pinkham Road southbound approaching Darby Field Clearing Tuckerman Ravine comes into view



In between those years Glen tourists could enjoy both mountain views by taking a carriage from the Glen south to Darby Field Clearing. Confirmation in *The White Hills* 1859 by the eminent Thomas Starr King (photo left):

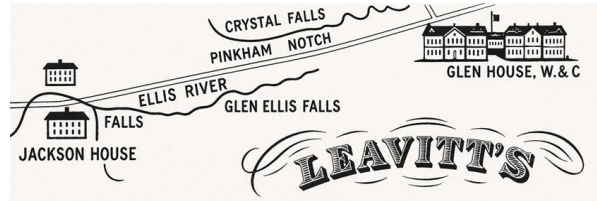
*"In the Autumn of 1858, a **clearing** was made about three miles from the Glen, which opens the nearest view of the whole summit and shoulders of Mount Washington, which can ever probably be obtained from the base. It is near a small fountain whose water flows two ways."*

The following inexpensive inns are within easy marches of each other: N. Conway, the Washington House, N. Conway House ; Jackson (9 M.), Trickey's Jackson Falls House ; Copp's farm-house (14 M.), 3 M. beyond the Glen House ; Gorham, Eagle House ; Mt.-Adams House (11 M. from Gorham, 10 M. from Copp's); Jefferson Hill (6 M.), Jefferson Hill

*Excerpt from Osgood's 1876 White Mountains Handbook
on hiking north thru the Peabody Valley - no 'inexpensive inns'*

*Tourists hotels on 1878 Leavitt
Map - as yet none in Pinkham Notch*

The 1858 clearing is cited again in the 1889 *Glen House Book*, a promotional publication, in its description of Notch features: "Away we go down the road {northbound}, which now falls perceptibly before us. Soon we enter a **clearing** where there is a **sawmill**. Far up to the left the stark walls of Tuckerman's peer over the forest."



Details on Peabody River bridges at the Clearing, narrated southbound in the 1872 *Eastman's White Mountain Guide*: "About two or three miles from the Glen House the **road crosses the river twice in quick succession**, and reaches the highest point of the Notch."

Entering the Notch southbound, Pinkham Road ran along the Peabody's *east bank*. The combination of two crossing in quick succession gave access to usable property on the *west bank*: **Darby Field**. Annotated 1896 Peabody Essex Museum map at right shows these crossings.



THREE USES OF FIELD'S NAME

Pinkham Notch history includes three uses of Darby Field's name. First, he was the earliest European to climb Mount Washington, in 1642. Field's climb is honored by an historical marker dating from 1963 on Route 16 (photos below).

Honoring Field with a marker was intended to designate what was thought for year to be his most likely point of ascent. Comment from historians Laura and Guy Waterman: "*Until 1984 most of the experts placed the route as going up from Pinkham Notch.*" But there is no agreement among historians today as to the base point for Field's 1642 climb. The competing routes are fully discussed in the Waterman's 1989 book *Forest and Crag*.



Secondly, the name Darby Field gets attached to the clearing on the east side of the Pinkham Road, where the ascent would have started, across from the Route 16 sign. Historian Nicolas Howe's 2000 *Not Without Peril* comments: "Denizens of the notch must have chuckled at the tidy little play on words that let them call this mountain pasture 'The Darby Field.'"

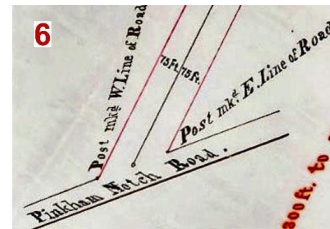
And from the NH AMC's 2021 newsletter *Mountain Passages*: "It is not clear if the name of the field was a mistake or a joke but it has caused confusion for over a century."

And third, the name Darby Field Cottage is first documented in the excerpt at right from the 7/14/1885 *Among the Clouds*.

S. W. Thompson, the former proprietor of the Kearsarge House, has fitted up a small house in Pinkham Notch, near Crystal Cascade, for the entertainment of travelers, and calls it *Darby Field Cottage*, after the first white man set foot on top of Mount Washington. In this con—

SAWMILL, TOURIST COTTAGE, SUMMIT SHORTCUT

These three features combine to present a lively turn of the century scene on Darby Field. At the heart of this Pinkham Notch history, they are presented separately as chapters **four**, **five** and **six**.



Late nineteenth century Darby Field from east to west: 4) Thompson's Sawmill east side, 5) Darby Field Cottage center, 6) Summit shortcut to west

After 1915 vacant Darby Field was used as a USFS gravel pit. It was also considered for use as a USFS campground, which did not materialize. Activity picks up in the early thirties with brief occupancy by the federal Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

The CCC was a national program to relieve unemployment during the Franklin Roosevelt presidency. In the vicinity of Pinkham Notch the CCC built a substantial camp to the north in Greens Grant and a sub-camp very close by on Darby Field.

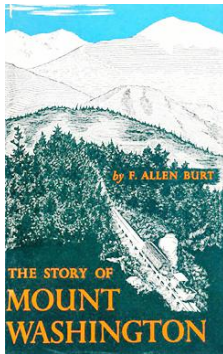
According to livingnewdeal.com "there were 17 permanent CCC camps on the White Mountain National Forest. After establishing their campsites, the men constructed ski and hiking trails, high country shelters, roads, campgrounds and parking areas."



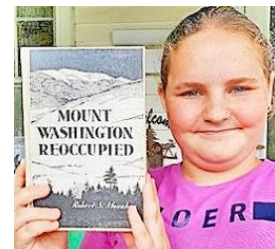
At left CCC Camp Peabody in Greens Grant on 1937
US Geological Survey Map; center thirties CCC Camp in operation; at
right volunteers at AMC Camp Joe Dodge Trails Center occupying CCC site since 1980s

In 1960 Mount Washington historian F. Allen Burt provided an overview of the 1933 Darby Field Civilian Conservation Corps Camp: "Robert Monahan was recalled to active duty with the U.S. Forest Service when camps of the Civilian Conservation Corps were established throughout the White Mountain National Forest in May and June of 1933.

At first he was in charge of the thirty-five man side camp at **Darby Field** in Pinkham Notch and superintendent the following winter of the two hundred man camp at Wild River." Use of the place name fades after Burt's 1960 reference.



Darby Field CCC Camp in 1933; right above Monahan
in 1933 Camp photo, right below Monahan reference photo



At left from the Howie Wemyss Collection excerpt from the 1933
Camp photo with caption "156th Company CCC, Pinkham Notch Sub-Camp"

At right my granddaughter Laura Myshrall holding
Monahan's classic 1933 "Mount Washington Reoccupied"

Another source on Darby Field CCC is the alumni association for those who worked in the AMC huts at ohcroos.com: "Monahan moved a crew of 35 men from Wild River {Maine} to the Darby Field subcamp, located at the site of today's DOT garage. The 35 men of the camp worked on five separate projects within a three mile radius.

The place then was nothing more than a gravel pit that the crews graded for their 24-man tents. It had earlier been the site of the Darby Field Cottage, a 19th-century boarding house that took its name from the first European to climb Mount Washington, who was then thought to have started his climb from that site."

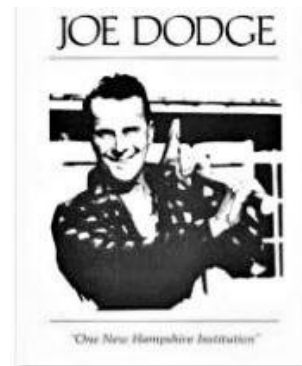
A Dartmouth Alumni Magazine includes a letter Monahan wrote from the "Darby Field, C.C.C. Camp at Gorham, N.H." on 8/16/1933, where he lists the camp's principal jobs:

"Relocation and major improvement of the Tuckerman Ravine Trail; construction of a network of special ski trails on Wildcat Ridge; rearing {photo at right of rock pile cairn as guide on foggy trail from withtheslowskis.com}; policing Dolly Copp Camp Ground; improvements at Glen Ellis Falls, Thompson Falls, and Emerald Pool."



According to the AMC "the CCC built eight trails in Pinkham Notch and Tuckerman Ravine, including the Sherburne Ski Trail, Tuckerman Ravine Trail, and also the Hermit Lakes Shelters. CCC members also did jobs outside the bounds of typical conservation and construction work" such as first aid for the growing number of skiers.

Joe Dodge (on cover of his biography at right) at the AMC Camp was aware that the CCC had been stationed just to his north, evidenced by a 1941 remark in his biography by W. L. Putnam: "Now you better get along up there with your buddies our you'll be thrashing around in the dark up by the old CCC camp where you cut through the woods to your place."



HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE GARAGE

After the CCC Camp left Darby Field a state highway maintenance facility became the next occupant, still the use there today. Notch travelers and the North Country economy are highly dependent upon this facility.



Today Darby Field hosts a NH DOT highway maintenance garage, "Pinkham Patrol Shed, 469 Route 16, Pinkham's Grant, NH 03581"

From the *Time for Tuckerman Community Forum* we learn that in 1927 winter plowing was limited: "Route 16 would be plowed occasionally from Gorham only to the Glen House, three miles from the Notch, and from Jackson northward not at all."

According to the USFS Mount Washington Avalanche Center "few skiers came to Tuckerman Ravine before the Pinkham Notch Road was plowed in the winter in the later twenties, but by the mid-thirties hundreds, thousands could be found there on sunny spring weekends."

A 2019 NH DOT report entitled *Maintenance Facilities Historic Context* offers history: "In 1927 the Governor and Council approved State Highway Commissioner Everett's recommendation to keep Franconia Notch open to winter traffic. In 1929-1930 the other two notches, Crawford and **Pinkham**, were opened as well.

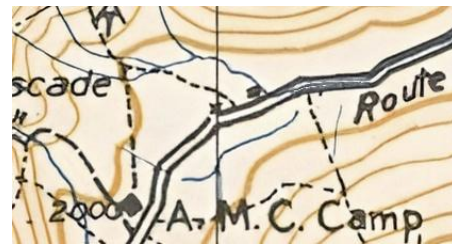


Left and center excerpts from the NH DOT's 2019 report 'Maintenance Facilities Historic Context'; right 'Road Camp' notation at Darby Field on 1933 AMC Pinkham Notch Map

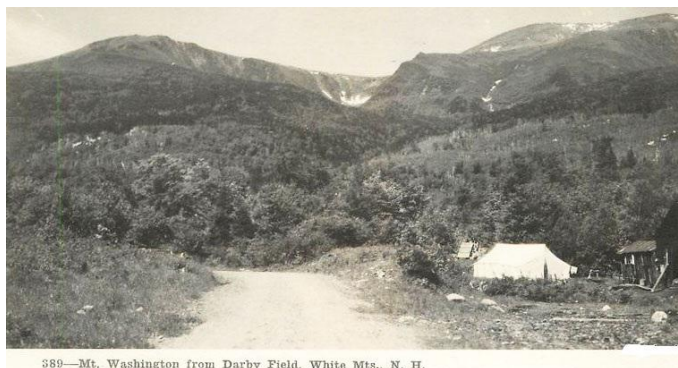
The ability to keep the White Mountain highways open to winter traffic was key to growing the state's winter sports industry. In the late 1930s the State Highway Department established **year-round camps** in Franconia, Crawford and **Pinkham Notches** to facilitate winter snow removal. Typically, the dwellings were occupied by a husband and a wife. During the winter, a second man stayed in a separate cabin to assist in spreading salt and sand."

The 1940 Census of Population for Pinkham's Grant includes a 'Road Camp'. Dwellers include Newell Johnson age 40 and his wife Beatrice 35, children Newell Jr. 17 and daughter Fay 13. Do we snicker and say good luck growing up way out here? More likely location a kid's dream land and a rich base for a successful adult life.

AMC's 1952 Map at right. Continuing from the 2019 NH DOT report: "As late as 1970, there were still two camps and a patrol headquarters at Pinkham Notch, standing on land that the State leased from the U.S. Forest Service."



In the AMC Archive, several Guy Shorey post card views along Route 16 are specifically cited as from 'Darby Field.' They are dated in the **1920s**, **1934** and **1953**. As noted earlier with a NH DOT maintenance facility thereafter occupying the site, association with the 1885 Darby place name naturally faded.

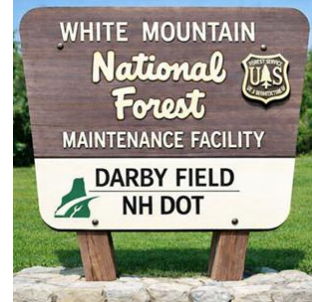


Guy Shorey post card from 1940s - 'Mt. Washington from Darby Field'

The last reference found is from Historian Frank Allen Burt, grandson of Henry Martyn Burt, publisher and editor of the Summit newspaper *Among the Clouds*. Authoring his classic

Story of Mount Washington in **1960**, Burt was cognizant of the Darby name in describing Robert Monahan and the CCC in 1933: *"At first he was in charge of the thirty-five man side camp at **Darby Field** in Pinkham Notch."*

After Burt's 1960 reference the Darby Field place name fades completely. The NH DOT Maintenance Facility becomes the single intuitive identification for travelers and writers needing a landmark.



At left NH DOT Maintenance Facility today; at right hypothetical restoration of historic place name 'Darby Field' to USFS signage

4. SAWMILL AND LOGGING



PHOTOTYPE CO.

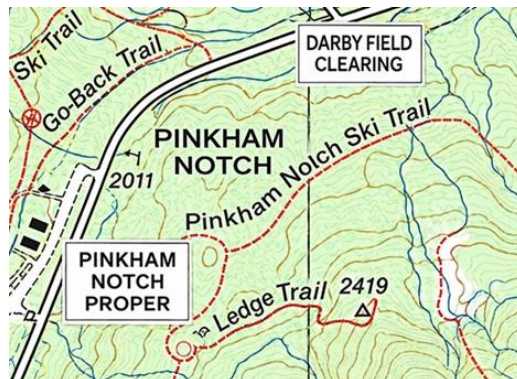
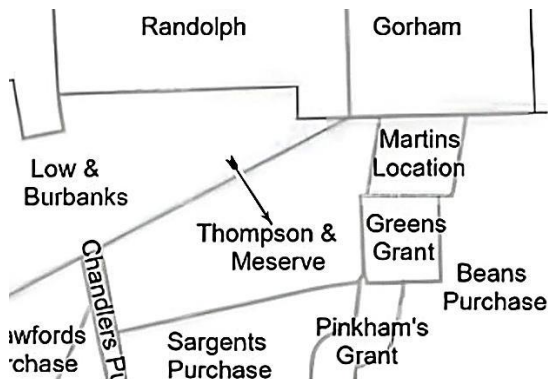
BALDWIN COOLIDGE, I.

MT. WASHINGTON AND TUCKERMAN'S RAVINE FROM THOMPSON'S MILLS,
PEABODY RIVER AND GLEN ROAD IN FOREGROUND.

*Late 1880s sawmill photo and caption by Baldwin
Coolidge, prominent photographer of that era*

BUSINESSMAN SAMUEL THOMPSON

This is the first of the three chapters detailing Darby Field development. Samuel Thompson was a prime mover in all three. Born in 1808, Thompson was a contemporary of Peabody Valley pioneers Dolly Copp and Glen House developer John Bellows, key members of the earliest generation in the Peabody Valley.



As a young man in the 1830s Samuel Willey Thompson undertook some of the first Presidential Range land surveying for his maternal uncle, New Hampshire Land Commissioner James Willey. In 1835 Commissioner Willey sold Thompson and Meserve's Purchase to Samuel Thompson of Conway and George Meserve of Jackson for \$500. The

tract contained about 11,840 acres. Today a large portion of the Mount Washington Auto Road passes through the civic unit.

Three decades later in 1866 Thompson was summoned for court testimony, to review the details of his 1835 surveying. The court was interested in specifics of his survey routes as his notations controlled the original setting of civic unit boundaries. By 1866, the Summit of Mount Washington had become valuable for tourism and worthy of major legal expense to sort out conflicting claims based on the now outdated surveying standards of 1835.

Details from the resulting NH court decision, *Henry Bellows Wells {nephew of and partner with John Bellows} versus Jackson Iron Manufacturing Company*, are a gold mine for historians studying the East Side of Mount Washington, the Pinkham Notch and Peabody Valley side.

Thompson's 1866 testimony includes a valuable sawmill clue: *"Went on once with the intention of **building a mill** on the north branch of Peabody River."* Sounds early to be thinking of a sawmill on the Peabody. But by the 1840 Census there were already sawmills nearby in Martins Location and Greens Grant.



Greens Grant Sawmill excerpted from Jasper Cropsey's 1857 "Mount Jefferson, Pinkham Notch, White Mountains" - Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Perspective on the era's mills from Gorham historian Casey Hodgson: *"There were little sawmills everywhere as there was no way to deliver lumber any great distance, so sawmills were built on the location. They were located on every brook or stream that would provide water power."*

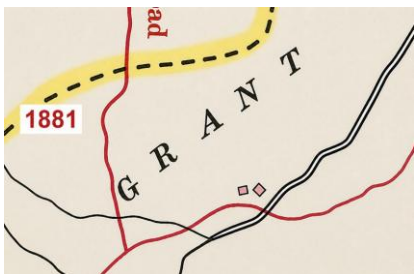
Thompson's intended mill was to be on the North Branch. Today there is a federally designated West Branch of the Peabody River draining the Great Gulf, but no designated North Branch. Chat GPT cleans up the discrepancy: *"It is quite plausible that the 1850s phrase 'North Branch' referred to the main north-flowing Peabody stem. Classic 19th-century regional histories often describe rivers in directional terms rather than always giving a stable, formal name."*

Thompson's testimony also recounts passing through Pinkham Notch, referencing Crystal Cascade there as a landmark: *"Came out through Tuckerman Ravine - on the south line we came due east by compass to Pinkham Road, Peabody River after sunset."*



Followed the Crystal Cascade stream some - came out on the Pinkham Road east of the Cascade, three fourths of a mile down the stream from the Cascade." He was at what would soon be known as Darby Field.

While the 1866 look back to 1835 does not precisely tie Thompson to what became his Darby Field sawmill site, it does document that he knew of the mill site early on.



At left above the 1861 *Walling Map* records a building on Darby Field that early. While we might like to assume this was Thompson's mill, no definitive identification for the 1861 structure has been found.

At left an 1881 map from the Peabody Essex Museum includes two buildings on Darby Field. One is definitely the mill, as we have a firm record of it operating there by 1881.

Settling to the south, Samuel becomes a major entrepreneur. In 1837 he expands his North Conway home into a tavern, then grew that business into the elegant Kearsarge House grand hotel. From here his post - 1885 Darby Field Cottage, subject of the next chapter, may have been managed (or by Mount Washington's West Side Barron, Merrill & Barron hotel management company).



Perspective from *Among the Clouds* on 8/30/1894: "The rise of North Conway from its original insignificant state to be a central point of summer travel is due largely to the efforts of Samuel W. Thompson." ChatGPT's perspective:

--- "Thompson assembled a family-linked, debt-financed land and timber enterprise involving himself, his wife Eliza, son William F. Thompson and the Rickers. Thompson's career was based on creating and controlling movement—mail, passengers, tourists, artists and eventually forest products—through the eastern White Mountain corridor.

--- There is firm secondary-source support that Thompson himself extended coach service to Pinkham Notch. White Mountain art scholarship states that Thompson established coach service first from Conway to North Conway and "subsequently, to Pinkham Notch. This is important because it puts him commercially in the Notch well before the 1880s sawmill evidence.

--- The eastern White Mountain corridor was part of his business network decades before his documented Darby Field sawmill operations. Thompson used the same vertically connected business philosophy in Pinkham Notch that he had used in tourism, where he combined lodging, horses, stages and destination promotion. In Pinkham's Grant he combined land control, timber access, milling and associated lodging."

As Mrs. Abraham Lincoln toured New Hampshire in 1863, traveling from the Kearsarge House north to the Glen House, luxurious accommodations appropriate to her station, Thompson owned the connecting stage line and personally drove her coach.

According to the 1899 *Thompson versus Currier* legal record Thompson purchased 1,200 acres in Pinkham's Grant in 1885, a little more than half of the civic unit. His daughter Eliza, as an adult Mrs. Levi J. Ricker, owned the remainder.

The same 1899 record cites an 1893 effort to restrain Thompson from further timber cutting in Pinkham's Grant - evidence of his role there as an active lumberman. Other evidence of his broad business interest, he developed a silver mine in Pinkham's Grant at Glen Ellis Falls in 1881.

SAWMILL TIMELINE

--- According to *Among the Clouds* of 8/27/1884 "about half a mile beyond the {Tuckerman} Ravine was a large house, not a hotel, but called the **Peabody House**. The place is called **Thompson's Mill**, but the mill was burned three years ago {1881}."

Rest assured I searched far and wide for more background on the Peabody House. But as ChatGPT advises, if other references exist they may be in newspapers, etc. that are not yet made internet searchable.

--- Confirmation of the mill fire from the *New Hampshire Patriot* of 11/13/1884: "Samuel W. Thompson of North Conway is **rebuilding the Glen mill**, burned down two years ago {1882}."

--- From an 1885 *Appalachia*, on a journey north from Jackson in the snow: "An occasional 'tote team', carrying supplies to the **mill** one half mile beyond the Tuckerman Ravine Path, and other five foot sledges had kept the road open. Here I left the sleigh, which Ravelleon took **half a mile further to the mill**, while I awaited him at the Crystal Cascade."

--- From the *Among the Clouds* newspaper of **7/15/1885**: "S. W. Thompson, the former proprietor of the Kearsarge House, has fitted up a small house in Pinkham Notch, near Crystal Cascade, for the entertainment of travelers, and calls it the **Darby Field Cottage**."

This announcement, coupled with his 1885 land purchase, appears to be a fast business reaction to the very recent burning of the nearby Glen House. But the Glen, perhaps surprising Thompson, quickly reopens. News entries citing new *Cottage lodging* are delayed for a few years while entries for *sawmill lodging* continue.

--- The *New Hampshire Patriot* of **8/12/1886** reports that in Jackson "the boarding houses are all full, there being about 550 in the place. The Glen House is reported as being full."

Samuel W. Thompson of North Conway has opened a **boarding house at Thompson's mill** in Glen woods." The generic term 'boarding house' appears to be referring to construction of the adjacent Darby Cottage Cottage pictured at right.



--- An 1899 entry in *New England Magazine Volume One* referring back to this period: "Within three miles of the Glen we find a **sawmill, with its boarding house and barns**, where we get hot coffee for ourselves and oats for our horses."

--- *Among the Clouds* **8/3/1888**: "Mrs. A. P. Thompson, of Union, NH, in company with her husband, made the ascent of Mount Washington from **Thompson's Mill** on Thursday on foot by way of the carriage road." So by 1888 the "Darby Field Cottage" name announced in 1885 is still not Thompson's lodging label. Yet the first, only, and very obscure advertising for the adjacent Cottage dates from this year.

--- *Cloud* of **8/3/1888**: "Two young lads entered the woods by Crystal Cascade to climb Mount Washington. It rained heavily and they were drenched to the skin. About three o'clock on the morning they descended to **Thompson's Mill**, but were unable to get in and dry themselves. They walked back five miles to the Cook Place, where they dried their clothes."

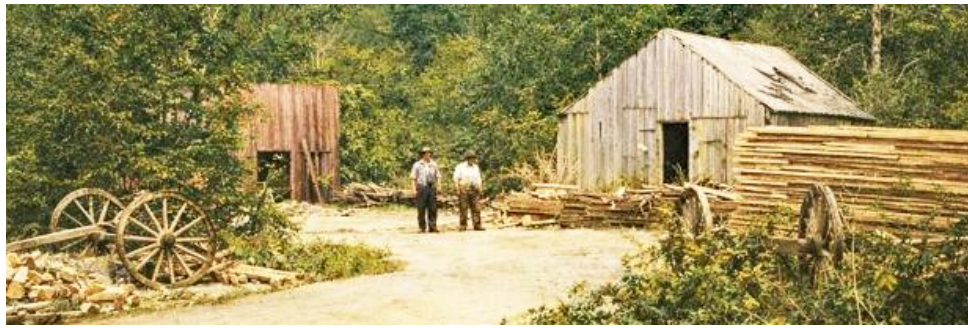
Cloud of **8/23/1889**: "A party of 28 young men from Camp Chocorua, Squam Lake, {first boys summer camp in USA 1881} reached the Summit about noon yesterday.

After partaking of one of the famous dinners at the Summit House, descended through the mist to their rendezvous, an **old barn at Thompson's Mill**. They arrived at Thompson's Mill on Tuesday. They got their barn in ship-shape for temporary occupancy."

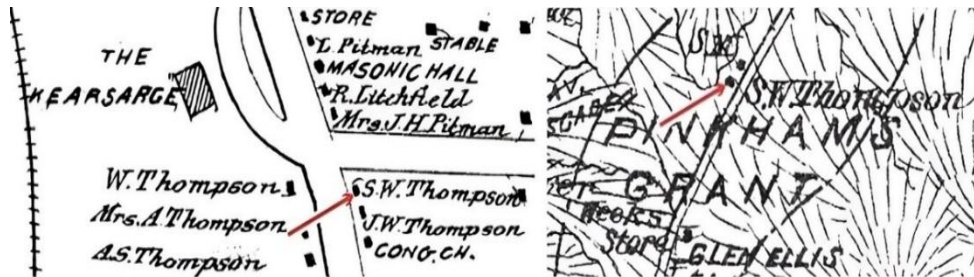


At right is an excerpt from the Baldwin Coolidge sawmill photo above. Buildings in the background could be barns, the more distant showing a substantial profile.

--- From the **1889 Glen House Book** travelling southbound: "Just beyond **the mill** at the third mile, our driver has again pulled up by the side of Osgood's Castle, home of Glen House guide Osgood where the path to Crystal Cascade and Tuckerman Ravine enters the woods."



Above sawmill image from the **1892** book *"Through the Wilds"* by Charles Farrar stating "near the path to Crystal Cascade on the road to the Glen House"



Annotated excerpts from the **1892** Town and City Atlas of NH
- left S. W. Thompson's North Conway home near his Kearsarge House
Hotel, right his ownership of Darby Field Cottage, S.M. short for adjacent sawmill

--- Darby Field's sawmill burns again, a second time considering the circa 1881 fire. This is documented by the **1896** map of logging estimated at right from the Peabody Essex Museum. Note the shortcut to the two mile mark on the Carriage Road operating just to the west, the subject of Chapter 6 "Shortcut to Carriage Road."



--- The *Among the Clouds* Summit newspaper of **7/18/1903** confirms that Thompson's Mill burned before that year: "When the Thompson mill at Darby Field was in operation Ellis River was tapped to furnish a supply of water for various purposes. When the **mill burned** this was dammed up and the water went in the natural way."

Around 1900 there are several photos from Darby Field over the sawmill site westerly into Tuckerman Ravine. The larger mill documented by the two circa 1890 photos above is gone. There is now a smaller structure here, perhaps a surviving outbuilding, with no hard proof it is actually a functioning sawmill.

The building seems incidental to photographers, of interest to Pinkham Notch history, but not the object of the photos, just a structure that happens to be 'in the way.' As always a popular view, from the *New England Magazine* 1899: "Here we are directly under the shoulder of Mount Washington and the surroundings are striking in the extreme."



"Mount Washington from Pinkham Notch" from the 1896 "With Pen and Camera thro' the White Mountains"



From the 1900 "Scenic Gems in the White Mountains" - caption "from the Darby Field Cottage"

From With Pen and Camera: "The Pinkham Notch road, between Jackson and the Glen, crosses the bridge in the foreground."



As noted evidence is lacking that the circa 1900 photos show a functioning sawmill. Yet hinting at some logging function, the undated photo at left from the Howie Wemyss Collection shows logs stacked nearby and ready for mill processing.

Prepping logs in this manner is the job of the lumber camp crew, not the receiving mill workers. Perhaps the logs are ready to be rolled into the Peabody River during high water, to float north to the large Libby Mill in Gorham. Wight on 1911: *"The Fernald Lumber Company cut 14,000 cords of pulpwood for the American Realty Company in the Peabody River Valley. In May it was floated down the river in great quantities."*

The New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands presents the Peabody as a 'boulder - cobble river channel,' defined as *the high-gradient riverbeds of streams and small to medium-sized rivers common in mountainous and hilly areas. They occur on flashy rivers, flooding rapidly and intensely with snowmelt runoff in the spring and during peak rain events."*



Peabody flood at old Auto Road bridge a few years ago

Or raw logs were hauled north on the road. Historian D. B. Wight comments on Peabody Valley logging as of 1888: *"Cut timber was hauled to the mill {north to Gorham} where it was sawed into lumber and loaded on rail cars to Portland."*

The sufficiently maintained thru road had a gentle grade, described in *The Echo* newspaper of 8/17/1878: *"The Glen is reached from Gorham, NH following the Peabody River the whole distance with hardly a perceivable rise."* That advantage, combined with forceful spring river currents, were adequate for moving raw timber to waiting sawmills.

There has been much historical documentation of the logging railroads in the White Mountains. The Wild River Valley east of the Carter-Moriah Range is the nearest example. But accessing Pinkham Notch timber did not necessitate such specialized transport.

From the *Gorham Mountaineer* newspaper of February 5, 1886: *"The Glen Road is in better condition for sleighing than any other of the roads in the vicinity, owing to the number of teams engaged in logging on that road... Elkins has moved into the woods to begin logging operations."*

Historian Denman Wight wrote on 1901: *"E. Libby & Sons lumber business was growing each year. In February Arthur Hill set a record for big loads by hauling 5,900 feet down the Glen to the mill."*



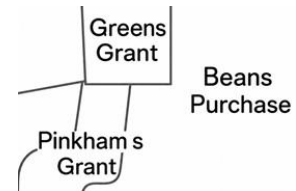
At left is the circa 1900 Thompson Sawmill remnant (?) from a 2023 Facebook post by Mike Dickerman. This scene is of the building, not the background Tuckerman Ravine and Mountain view.

A description of the logging process by Erik Eisele in *New Hampshire Magazine* applies: *In "winter camps they would spend the frozen season cutting and limbing trees."*

The rock-hard ground and a canvas of snow facilitated easy transport. Horses were part of the team, paired with drivers who used them to drag the logs to the nearest riverbank. There they would be piled up until spring arrived."

Gorham historian D. B. Wight records that in 1900 *"E. Libby & Sons purchased land extending twelve miles along the Glen Road, also 5,000 acres in Jackson, totaling over 18,000 acres."* Given their extensive holdings at this time the Libby's may have owned the Thompson Sawmill site.

Wight also informs us that by 1890 the owners of the adjacent **Beans Purchase** civic unit to the east had sold to E. Libby & Sons *"all that part of Beans Purchase that pitches toward the Peabody River {westerly from the Carter – Moriah ridgeline} on the Gorham side of said tract... All hard wood or timber suitable to be manufactured into boards or lumber."*



LOGGING ERA

Forest resources were valued early on. Gorham historian Denman Wight: *"From the time Gorham was incorporated in 1836 the lumber which stood so thick in the forest began to be logged in earnest."* On post-1870 logging from the 1924 *NH Forestry Commission Report*: *"Clear cutting methods came into use in place of the earlier method of culling the larger trees."* It took decades to recognize the negative impacts of clear cutting: the science of environmental impact was still in its infancy.

*"The State should not only own, but also scientifically handle her resources. If individuals and corporations would do it, all would be well. But their claim of doing so is not supported by facts. A single visit to **Pinkham Notch** would satisfy the credulous that danger menaces the forests."*

--- Boston Transcript circa 1903

Local logging camps were necessary for the cutting process. Perspective from *ChatGPT*: *"White Mountains logging camps were intentionally temporary and built for one to three seasons, then abandoned or burned. Many never acquired formal names."*



Left photo with comment from Mildred Libby Kilgore: "This is one of several logging camps which E. Libby & Sons owned and operated off the Glen Road"; right photo of logging transport in Jackson courtesy of the Jackson Historical Society

In 1902 Darby Field Cottage converts into a boarding house for loggers. Repeating a camp reference from the 1916 *Chronicles of the White Mountains* by Frederick Kilbourne: "*The chauffeur carried Keenan {back in 1912} about two miles and at his request let him out at the deserted lumber camps near the Darby Field.*"



At left undated photo of Libby lumbermen at a boarding house in Martins Location (Howie Wemyss Collection); at right AMC members on 1906 visit to logging camp in Notch Proper

From the *Cloud* of 8/26/1903: "*The famous Spruce Hill had recently been covered with about six inches of loam which had been softened by a heavy rain that afternoon, making the road almost impassable. The car was delayed here for over two hours, finally being pulled out of the mire by a **heavy team procured from a logging camp a mile or two above.***"

An overview of East Side of the Presidentials logging appeared within the 1896 *Annual Report of the Forest Commissioner of the State of Maine*. Although the report was for Maine, where the vast bulk of the Androscoggin Watershed lies, contributing sub-watersheds from New Hampshire were included in the assessment:

*"At the outlet of the valley, at Gorham, are the mills of E. Libby & Sons, and their supply of logs comes from this locality. Beginning at the lower end of the valley and on the lower slopes of its sides they have gradually worked back and up until they had nearly cleared the valley of spruce back as far as the Glen House and up to a height of 2,000 feet above the stream. Further up the valley {southward towards Pinkham Notch} however, **the timber had not been touched.** It was a magnificent stand."*

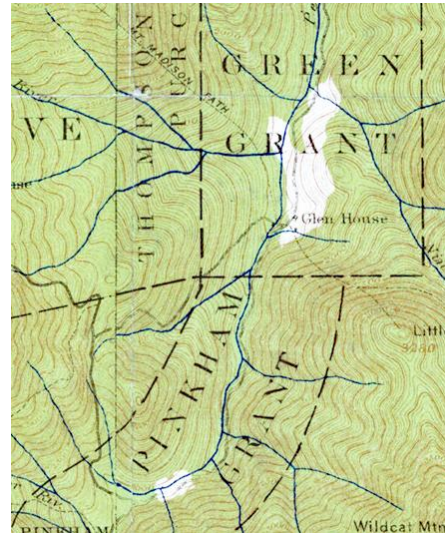
This supports other evidence that logging advanced from Martins Location south into Pinkham Notch. Whatever woods were denuded to support the Thompson Sawmill, they were inconsequential compared to the clear cutting approaching after the 1896 assessment.

1896 USGS Map shows areas denuded by logging or farming; shortcut to Carriage Road operating lower left

The Report of the New Hampshire Forestry Commission of 1902 supplements the 1896 map cut area: Travelling north "there is no havoc visible on the western side of the road until emerging upon the Glen House site. From there to Gorham the ragged appearance of the hillside and along the stream {Peabody} is depressing."

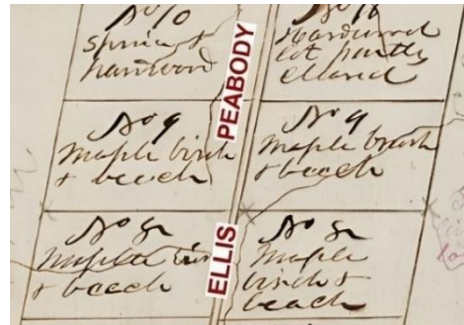
LOGGING TIMELINE

--- At right below is a map of Pinkham Notch Proper in **1895** with Daniel Pinkham's 1820's 100 acre rectangular lots annotated with the types of timber available to be cut.



I interpret this as a benchmark of what has not been logged by this year. Examples, ten west 'spruce and hardwood,' nine west and east 'maple, birch and beech.' Source is the Peabody Essex Museum.

--- From *The Weekly Union* of **1/18/1899**: "W. C. Putnam has sent his logging teams to Pinkham's Grant to work for Lockhart & Soule. The haul is from Spruce Hill to Glen Station" (south).

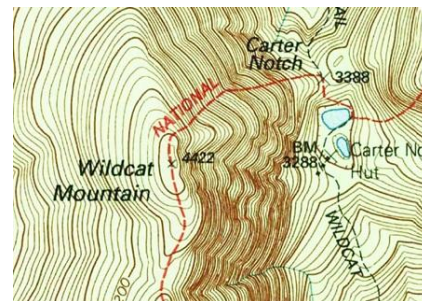


--- Cloud of **7/17/1902**: "A little further on we pass the Darby Field Cottage, now a lumberman's boarding house." ChatGPT confirms that in the hierarchy of accommodations in the White Mountains in this period we have grand hotels, more modest hotels, cottages and then boarding houses, the last category the least in cost and social prestige.

--- A calamitous flood along the Peabody River reported in the *Gorham Mountaineer* newspaper of **6/6/1903** documents extensive logging south of Greens Grant:

"The Peabody rose rapidly and the big **jam of pulpwood** at the Copp bridge {in Martins Location} started and pieces, few at first then the whole mass, began to come down the stream toward the Androscoggin. E. Libby & Sons received word from the Glen that the toll bridge {in Greens Grant} had gone and that Copp bridge had also."

--- A USFS Bulletin dated **1904** describes logging south of Pinkham Notch: "The slopes draining into the Ellis River, from the Village of Jackson to **Wildcat Mountain** have been stripped of all coniferous growth. The present stand is now an inferior growth of hardwoods {source of map sectionhiker.com}."



The whole south spur of **Wildcat Mountain** is covered, however, with a virgin spruce forest. The slopes here are very steep, and the difficulty in lumbering has so far kept the lumberman away."

Gorham historian D. B. Wight on **1905**: "The pulpwood contracts called for cutting of 9,000 cords in Beans Purchase and 2,000 cords in Pinkham's Grant. O. W. Fumald had the contract for getting pulpwood in Pinkham's Grant." Again on **1905**: "Leblanc was operating near **Darby Field**."

--- From the **1907 Appalachia**: "Operations from the lumber camps near the Ox Bow on the Ellis {in central Jackson} have overrun the picturesque **Glen Boulder Path** in Pinkham Notch."



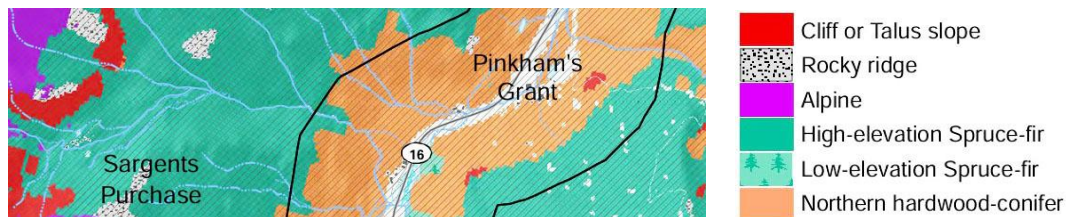
*View from Glen Boulder over Pinkham Notch
towards Carter Range - slopes of Peabody running
north and Ellis running south visible - www.trailfinder.com*

--- In **1907** New Hampshire statewide had its top year of timber cutting at 755 million feet. Perhaps that maximum reflected the heightened cutting in Pinkham Notch.

--- A detail of a **1907** ski trip in *Skiing in the White Mountains* by C.O. Stickney: "An interesting feature of their passage through Pinkham Notch was at Roderick's lumber camp where through the courtesy of the management, they were permitted and inspected the cutting operations on **Spruce Hill** and to enjoy the exciting novelty of riding down the mountain on a load of logs."

--- *Appalachia* **1908**: "The {AMC} Councillor, following the policy of his predecessor, has kept in touch with the paper company which owns the timber in the vicinity of **Pinkham Notch**, in an endeavor, thus far successful, to keep the axman out of coveted areas." In 1908 the AMC successfully secured legal exemption from logging at Crystal Cascade and Glen Ellis Falls.

--- *AMC* **1908**: "On the Northern Peaks, as if it were the final gasp of the expiring demon, standing timber so remote and inaccessible as to be considered potentially safe is being cut with ruthless hand, while paths whose integrity the loggers had practically guaranteed are being cut over in a most crude and wasteful manner. The same is true in **Pinkham Notch**, where for the second time within a year the Tuckerman Ravine Path is threatened."



Forest type from 2010 NH State Wildlife Plan

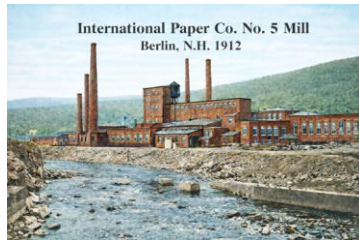
From a **1909** USFS report entitled *The Timber Supply of the United States*: "A portion of the water in this river {Androscoggin} comes thru the Peabody River directly from the highest of the White Mountains, including the Presidential and Carter Moriah Ranges. In this vicinity the **commercial spruce forest** has been largely removed by the clean cutting method."

By **1912** the logging camps on Darby Field are deserted. This indicates that logging in the area had ended.

Many logging roads became natural templates for trail development in the subsequent recreational era. This relationship is well stated in in the **1912 *White Mountain Trails*** by Winthrop Packard, approaching Carter Notch from the south:

"The chance traveler may thank the lumberman, whose road it follows, and the Appalachian Mountain Club. The lumberman opened it and the Appalachians have kept it up since the tote road was abandoned."

Little old style on the spot sawmills like Thompson's by 1881 were now 'ancient history.' The area's wood processing industry had consolidated to the north. Context from *northern woodlands.org*: "By **1917**, the Berlin Mills Company, with three paper mills and 4,250,000 acres of timberland, was the **largest pulp and paper manufacturer in the world.**"



Left old post card; right view south at Berlin, NH pulp and paper making with Presidential Range to the south - Source: Beyond Brown Paper Archive



1920s Guy Shorey winter view south to Tuckerman Ravine as snow cover reveals aftermath of cutting

*"The lumberman may have devastated the woods, but we have the **National Forest** now and trees will grow again" - 1927 Granite Monthly Magazine*



Excerpts from the 1938 USFS Map of the White Mountain National Forest, drawing of Pinkham Notch Camp serving as icon for the whole Forest

5. DARBY FIELD COTTAGE



*Cottage photo circa 1910 enhanced with AI -
- original from the Howie Wemyss Glen House Collection
- central peak is the Boott Spur shoulder of Mount Washington at 5,492'*

OVERVIEW

Since 1920 the Appalachian Mountain Club has provided lodging and a hiking center in Pinkham Notch. Thirty - five years earlier Darby Field Cottage was the forerunner of its nearby AMC descendent.

The Cottage is first cited in an *Among the Clouds* newspaper of 7/15/1885: "S. W. Thompson, the former proprietor of the Kearsarge House, has **fitted up a small house** in Pinkham Notch, near Crystal Cascade, for the entertainment of travelers, and calls it the **Darby Field Cottage**." In those days construction lumber was not hauled in from a distance - Thompson's adjacent sawmill would have been the supplier.



At left annotated 1896 USGS Map shows Short Cut to Carriage Road, Notch Road and Cottage

Adjacent to the west, Thompson was one of three substantial hoteliers from the south investing in a shortcut to the Carriage Road, serving tourists travelling north from their hotels in Conway and Jackson, also climbers. *Among the Clouds* of 7/15/1885:

*"The new carriage road up Mount Washington comes into the Pinkham Notch Road near the **hotel site owned by Mr. Thompson**, which is said to be the finest on the East Side of Mount Washington. It commands a view of Tuckerman Ravine and the Summit. There are some prospects that a hotel accommodating several hundred people will be built on this by another season."* Overly optimistic it will turn out.

For tourism in New England by the late 1800s the term "cottage" denotes a small tourist inn. These were less expensive alternatives attracting the more modest segment of the hiker

and tourist markets. Dolly Copp just to the north offered beds in her farm house as '**Imp Cottage**' due to its famous view east to the Imp Profile on the Carter Range.



At left Dolly Copp in later years - at center Imp Profile and at right Old Man compared - Franconia Old Man the NH state emblem since 1945

For the complete story of Dolly visit www.dollycopp.com/dollycopp.pdf

From an 1853 Portland Transcript: "The good dame of the farm house is sociable, and never tires of talking of the old man, away up there on the mountain top. As he is her nearest and most steadfast neighbor, she has a great esteem for him."

She will be delighted to see you, and will furnish you a cup of excellent milk, telling you as she puts the bit of silver which you offer her into her pocket, that she 'never taxes anything for a cup of milk.'

She is a contented, genial, old lady, living there with her family, shut out from the great world, and we know you will be delighted to make her acquaintance."

Thompson's Darby Field Cottage plan appears just after the nearby larger and more upscale Glen House burned late in 1884. That year was a shock for the hotel industry, as Bryant Tolles confirms this in his 1998 *Grand Resort Hotels of the White Mountains*: *"It was a severe blow to the traveling public and economy of the district east of Mount Washington. A twenty mile gap was left between the hostleries of Jackson and Gorham."*

Thompson's Cottage attempts to fill the new East Side Mount Washington market gap: the Glen fire on 10/18/1884 followed quickly by his purchase on 2/10/1885 of Pinkham's Grant property. Yet for a time Thompson's sawmill complex continues to provide tourist rooms, not yet the new Cottage.



With a perhaps unexpected quick rebound, to Thompson anyway, the First Glen House is replaced in 1886 by the Second (enhancement at left), reopened fully in 1887.

Yet business success was mixed. Again from hotel historian Tolles: *"In large part this was because of the hotel's distance from the railroad as well as mounting competition from expanding hotels to the west of the Presidential Range."*

East-west competition appears repeatedly in late 19th-century guidebooks, summit newspapers, and hotel advertising. The Glen House marketed itself around direct ascent of Mount Washington by carriage road while the West Side countered with direct rail access from Boston and then the Cog Railway.

- Crawford House in Notch, Highlander Center today.
- Fabyan House, with its strategic location as a rail hub.
- Profile House, a major luxury rival in Franconia Notch.
- Twin Mountain House, tied to Crawford and Fabyan.

Facing West Side competition coupled with a fast Glen House rebound Darby Field Cottage business sputters. But then as the Second Glen burns again in 1893 and is not immediately replaced, Cottage patronage climbs into its peak years. Now the sole East Side tourist junction, the Cottage merits its own phone line to the Summit.

After the 1901 opening of a smaller Third Glen House, Cottage business quickly goes into permanent decline. In 1901 the stagecoach company headquartered at the Cottage relocates to the revived Glen. In 1902 Darby Cottage is downgraded to a boarding house for loggers.

COTTAGE TIMELINE

The history of Darby Field Cottage is preserved in many period news clips and other references. To improve the efficiency of the timeline the most repetitive entries have been pruned out, valid, but represented only by their dates listed below.

These are all short, similar reports of Cottage visitors arriving from the south, often staying in Jackson, meeting at Darby Field Cottage or lodging there, ascending to the Summit thru Tuckerman Ravine or by the 1885 short cut to the Carriage Road. Dates of these deleted entries:

8/15/1891, 8/10/1894, 8/13/1894, 7/22/1895, 7/27/1895, 8/3/1895, 8/6/1895, 8/9/1895, 8/22/1895, 8/27/1895, 7/23/1896, 8/3/1896, 8/13/1896, 9/4/1896, 7/27/1897, 8/9/1897, 8/20/1897, 8/16/1898, 8/20/1898, 8/26/1898,



8/28/1898, 8/29/1898, 7/15/1899, 7/18/1899, 7/22/1899, 7/31/1899, 8/17/1899, 8/21/1899, 8/30/1899, 9/5/1899, 7/14/1900, 7/21/1900, 7/26/1900, 8/2/1900, 8/10/1900, 8/16/1900, 8/20/1900, 8/22/1900, 8/23/1900, 8/25/1900, 8/31/1900, 9/3/1900, 9/11/1900, 7/13/1901, 7/29/1901, 8/2/1901, 8/28/1901, 8/29/1901, 9/5/1901, 7/14/1902

EARLY YEARS

--- Interesting that of the numerous tourist guides listing lodging in the vicinity of Pinkham Notch, *none* include Darby Field Cottage. Only the **1888 American Hotel Guide**, excerpt at right.

Peterboro	2,207	Tucker's.....	2.00
Pittsburg		Hilliard's.....	
Pittsfield.	1,974	Washington	2.00
Pinkham's Grant.		Darby Field Cottage...	
Plymouth.....	1,719	Blair's.....	
		Little's	2.00

The *Hotel Guide's* listing was automatically included at the back of all new hotel registers produced by a printing company. Every business that bought its blank registers was included, nicely confirming 1888 Cottage operations or upcoming intent to start such. This is an extremely obscure reference, not well suited as White Mountains based advertising.

--- Cloud of **9/4/1899**: *An interesting coincidence of which Mr. Hurley became aware on glancing at the **Darby Field** register is that nine years ago when visiting the mountains he registered at the Cottage on the identical date.*" That gives our timeline its first visit, **9/4/1890**.

--- Cloud of **7/11/1891**: *"They are on a trip through the mountains on bicycles. They left Amesbury, Mass. on Saturday, and rode to Rochester, Wakefield, North Conway, Jackson and **Darby Field Cottage**. They then came to the Summit leaving their wheels behind. They returned and resumed their trip through Pinkham Notch, Randolph and Jefferson."*

--- Cloud of **7/11/1891**: *"Charles E. Riley of North Conway ran from the Summit of Mount Washington down the carriage road to **Darby Field Cottage** in Pinkham Notch, a distance of eight miles, in fifty nine and one half minutes."*

Note that most Darby Cottage references to the Carriage Road are to the 1885 adjacent new shortcut to the two mile mark, not north and roundabout to the 1861 entrance across from the Glen House.

--- At left below is an **1892** photo of Dr. Ralph C. Larrabee in front of the porch of Darby Field Cottage. To Larrabee's right is Henry N. Berry. According to photo source the NH Historical Society, they are *"standing in front of the **Darby Field Cottage** before starting up the Osgood Path to Mount Madison."*

Larabee will become AMC President for 1912-1913, then editor of the popular AMC *White Mountain Guide* from 1918 until 1935, his early Guides avidly collected today (photo below right). Perspective from AMC Archivist Becky Fullerton: *"I have not run across AMC groups staying at Darby Field Cottage, which is likely how it would show up in our records."*

*From the 1880s up through the first decades of the 20th century they were likely to stay in Jackson at places like the Eagle Mountain and **Iron Mountain Houses** {below center}. Perhaps Darby wasn't large enough for their typical group sizes."*

Larabee staying in Jackson is confirmed in the *NH Weekly Union* of 9/30/1896: *"Ralph C. Larabee of the Harvard Medical School is registered at the Iron Mountain House for his second visit this season. He is a member of the Appalachian Mountain Club and one of the most persistent of the mountain climbers who frequent this place."*



--- According to the *Cloud* of **8/13/1892**, Cottage staff had a popular guide dog. *"The party had for guide from **Darby Field Cottage** the famous **dog Dude**, who neglected his business to the extent of attacking and killing a porcupine which he found on the Borders of Hermit Lake while forging ahead of his party as usual."*

--- *Cloud* of **9/5/1892**: Cottage caretakers *"H. E. Reed and Mrs. Reed of **Darby Field Cottage** came to the Summit yesterday."*

--- There was an impact from the 7/19/1893 Second Glen House fire. That loss affected the nearby Cottage, four miles to its south. Cottage business picks up, serving tourist demand on the East Side of the Presidentials. Historian Frank Allen Burt on competitive pressure after the 1893 fire:

"There was definitely a rising tide of big hotel activity in the broad valley to the west of Mount Washington." Gorham historian D. B. Wight: *"The depression that was in progress in the country may have had some bearing on Mr. Milliken's decision not to rebuild at that time."*



Top First Glen House and its expansion. Bottom Second Glen House dated 1892 from the Curtis Roger Collection (colorized): Curtis: "A beautiful example of late nineteenth century Shingle Style architecture mixed with Mock Tudor."

--- *Cloud* of **7/20/1893**: *"The Brookline Rovers Cycle Club left the **Darby Field Cottage** near the **Glen House** site at seven o'clock yesterday morning pushed their machines up the carriage road and arrived here at two o'clock."*

--- *Cloud* of **7/20/1894**: *"Noon Arrivals: Geneva Stickney, **Darby Field Cottage**, NH, Lalia Stickney, **Darby Field Cottage**, two young misses about thirteen years of age, walked from the **Darby Field Cottage** to the Summit and return yesterday."* (These were the children of Cottage caretaker Alice Reed by her first husband Marshall Stickney, Geneva born 1882

and Lalia 1884. Her first husband had died in 1885, Alice remarrying to Horace Reed in 1889 in Bartlett.

--- Cloud of **8/7/1894**: "They left Gray's Inn Jackson Sunday afternoon and walked as far as Crystal Cascade, where the night was passed at **Darby Field Cottage**. They returned via the Mount Washington Carriage Road and thence back to Jackson."

--- Cloud of **8/11/1894**: "They drove into the **Darby Field Cottage**, where a mountain wagon awaited them after their mountain tramp."

--- The *White Mountain Echo* tourist newspaper looking back from 9/20/1902: "Chagrined at my failure at my first try at Tuckerman I returned to the attack on **2/27/1895**. Leaving '**Darby Field Cottage**' at 6:40 AM, the floor of the ravine reached at 10:30."

--- Cloud of **7/26/1895**: They "walked to the Summit from **Darby Field Cottage** yesterday forenoon arriving at 11 o'clock. After a short rest they proceeded down the mountain via the Crawford bridle path on their way to Sugar Hill where they are passing the summer."

--- Cloud of **8/16/1895**: Cottage staff again at the Summit House among ninety-three noon arrivals, signing in as "Miss Jennie Stickney, **Darby Field Cottage**, NH. and H. E. Reed, **Darby Field Cottage**, NH."

It was common for Darby Field Cottage day hikers to lunch at the **Summit House** (photo right). Grand hotel historian Bryant Tolles: "The dining room was able to seat 150 persons, many of whom were day trippers on the stage road or the railroad and were present only for lunch."



--- Cloud of **8/23/1895**: "Mr. William F. Trowbridge of New York City, who is traveling through the White Mountains on his way to the Adirondacks, arrived at the Summit House from **Darby Field Cottage**."

--- Cloud of **7/27/1897**: Among the 27 evening arrivals at the Summit House are staff "Clara Geneva Stickney, (**Darby Field Cottage**), Spruce Hill, and Hodd Reed, (**Darby Field Cottage**), Spruce Hill." This time, checking in at the Summit, staff deemphasized their Cottage address by using parentheses in favor of identification with the nearby landmark Spruce Hill.

--- Cloud of **8/3/1897**: "Barron, Merrill & Barron are constructing a **telephone line** down the carriage from the Summit to the **Darby Field Cottage** where the **stage teams are kept**. The line is to be put on the poles of the Western Union telegraph company down to the **new carriage road** {adjacent short cut}, where it is to follow that to the foot of the mountain."



In this era the Barron Company is an important player in White Mountains West Side tourism, contracted by hotel owners to provide day to day management. A period ad by Barron, Merrill & Barron reads "through parlor and sleeping cars from Boston arrive and depart from station on hotel grounds," specifically citing the Crawford, Twin Mountain, Fabyan and Summit Houses.

Their phone line to Darby Field indicates the fleeting prominence of the Cottage on Mount Washington's East Side. 'Stage teams are kept' is also indicative of Cottage prominence. As the Cottage had no advertising in traditional periodicals, could Barron Company literature and clerks have been performing this task? Their West Side through hikers clientele needed a place to land on the East Side (no Glen House operating).

-- *Cloud* of **8/6/1897**: Head of staff Mr. Reed of the **Darby Field Cottage** drives a party to the Summit.

--- *Cloud* of **8/7/1897**: They arrived yesterday afternoon, "*having walked up the carriage road from **Darby Field Cottage**.*" No distinction here between the adjacent shortcut to the Carriage Road two mile mark and the more roundabout access from the Glen. The pattern is for the *Cloud* to insert 'Glen' when distinguishing between the two Carriage Road entrances.

An advantage for Jackson and North Conway hotels, from the Cottage it required 1.6 miles to reach the two mile post on the Carriage Road. That compares to 4.7 miles if using the main entrance further north at the Glen House. It also saves four hundred feet of climb, a significant reduction in the horse drawn era.

--- *Cloud* of **8/17/1897**: "*The **telephone line** from the Summit to **Darby Field Cottage**, in Pinkham Notch, has been completed. A line has also been put in to the Halfway House on the carriage road, and hereafter those desiring to know the state of the atmosphere at the Summit can now ascertain the fact before making the ascent.*"

--- The *Cloud* of **8/20/1897** reports on a hike from the **Cottage** to the Summit using Tuckerman Ravine, but one of the minority of visits originating from the north, in this case from the Shelburne Spring House east of Gorham.



*Photo of Cottage in 1897
courtesy of Howie Wemyss*

--- *Cloud* of **8/23/1897**: They "*arrived at the Summit on Sunday, having ridden up the carriage road on horseback from **Darby Field Cottage**.*"

A second *Cloud* entry this date: "*Leaving the Ravine House {West Side in Randolph NH} they walked up*

*the Air Line Trail to Mount Adams and thus on to Washington. After a rest they proceeded to **Darby Field Cottage** by way of Tuckerman Ravine.*"



--- *Cloud* of **8/26/1897**: "*One of the most remarkable dogs in the White Mountain region is a little fellow called '**Dude**' belonging Mr. Horace Reed of the **Darby Field Cottage**.*"

He is a cross between a bull terrier and pug, and weighs about twenty five pounds. He acts as guide to parties going on excursions from his home."
At left an image of this mixed breed generated by ChatGPT.

--- *Echo* of **9/4/1897**: "*Leaving the Summit on Saturday morning they walked down the carriage road and across the **cutoff to Darby Field Cottage**, where they took dinner, and afterwards engaged a team to take them to Randolph Station.*"



That is, north to Martins Location, across the Peabody, past **Dolly Copp Farm** (photo at right as abandoned near 1910) then northwesterly around the base of Mount Madison.

Continuing from the Echo of 9/4/1897 "*they were accompanied in their drive to Randolph by a very knowing dog, whose summer work is to guide tourists from **Darby Field Cottage** into Tuckerman Ravine.*"

--- More on the Reed's dog from the *Cloud* of **9/6/1897**: A party of four "*walked through Tuckerman Ravine to the Summit yesterday afternoon. They were piloted by '**Dude**' the dog guide, and returned by carriage to **Darby Field Cottage.**"*

--- *Echo* of **9/18/1897**: "*As an alternative it was decided to descend the mountain on the Eastern Side and proceed by the carriage road to **Darby Field Cottage**. At Darby Field Cottage a team was procured to convey the trampers {hikers} to Glen Station.*" More evidence of the Cottage as a transportation hub.

--- From an **1897** *White Mountain Life*: "*At **Darby Field Cottage**, where the **horses and wagons are kept**, a brief halt is made for water and you have time to look up at the massive peaks.*" More evidence of a stage hub. "*Stops were made at **Darby Field Cottage**, Glen Ellis Falls, Jackson and Glen Station was reached just before six.*" That is, to the nearest passenger railroad station twelve miles to the south, Glen Station past Jackson in Bartlett.

--- From the **1/1898** *Maine Central Railroad Guide*, a description of the trip down the carriage road "*to the site of the old Glen House at the base. Tally-ho coaches are taken then by **Darbyville Cottage**, thru the Pinkham Notch, stopping on route at the Crystal and Flume {Glen Ellis} Cascades and on to Jackson.*" The nickname 'Darbyville' conveys a little hamlet with some hustle and bustle.

--- *Echo* of **7/30/1898**: "*The trip is made up the mountain by rail {West Side Cog Railway}. At one o'clock prompt the stages leave for the return trip to **Darby Field Cottage**, where a change is made to the Tally-hos" passing prominent hotels in Jackson.*" More evidence of a transportation hub.

--- *Cloud* of **8/16/1898**: "*They took the Portland boat from Boston on Saturday night, they took the Sunday special over the Maine Central to Glen Station. After dinner they took a carriage for the **Darby Field Cottage**. They ascended to the Summit through Tuckerman Ravine. This is one of the best tramps that is offered to get the most out of a few days' outing so far as the mere matter of travel is concerned. Their return was over the Crawford bridle path.*"

The pattern for such hikes was by now well established, documented in *Eastman's 1858 White Mountain Guide*: "*It is frequently the case that persons pass up from the Glen to the Summit, and either walk or ride down on the other side to the {Crawford} Notch; and vice versa. In this way a day's time, and a stage ride of over thirty miles is saved.*"

--- *Cloud* of **9/5/1898**: "*Noon Arrivals: Mr. H. E. Reed **Darby Field Cottage**, Mrs. H. E. Reed **Darby Field Cottage** {caretakers and as farmers, year round residents}.*"

--- *Cloud* of **7/21/1899**: Horace Reed is at the Summit House signing in as from Pinkham's Grant, that civic unit encompassing Darby Field.

--- *Cloud* of **7/21/1899**: "*A party of six from Perkins Cottage, Jackson, drove to **Darby Field Cottage** yesterday morning and were driven thence to the Summit by Mr. Reed {Cottage staff}.*"

--- *Cloud* of **8/3/1899**: "*Professor Dandelin and Professor Cummings of Harvard are **camping near Darby Field Cottage.***" Could that be at the adjacent Wildcat Cabin? "*They climbed Mount Washington and the hardy pair returned to their camp by way of the carriage road.*"

--- Cloud of **8/15/1899**: "The party came to **Darby Field Cottage** from the Perkins Cottages, Jackson, with Mr. C. B. Perkins yesterday and were driven to the Summit by Mr. Perkins and Mr. H. E. Reed of the Cottage."

--- Cloud of **8/28/1899**: "We left the Iron Mountain House at Jackson directly after breakfast and drove up to **Darby Field Cottage** at the beginning of the '**New Jackson Road**' up Mount Washington." A proper noun now naming the adjacent shortcut. Picked up in local usage thereafter and evolved to 'old'.



Left, Tally-hos were large carriages unique to the White Mountain tourist trade; center, train leaving Crawford Notch eastbound for Glen Station; right, Stanleys in 1899 driving up Main Carriage Road

--- On **8/30/1899** Freelan Stanley and his wife Flora drove one of his newly invented Stanley Steamer autos to the top of Mount Washington. Historian F. Allen Burt: "On that quiet summer day that strange new vehicle glided into the Glen and paused for the night at the **Darby Field Cottage**." Burt's decades later look back could be interpreted as snide: "The only lodging available."

--- Echo of **9/2/1899**: "At the **Darby Field Cottage** the party took a four horse team to Glen Station and returned through the Crawford Notch {by rail 21 miles westerly}, enjoying to the fullest extent the advantages for appreciating the scenery offered by the new observation cars."

--- Cloud of **9/4/1899**: They "left **Daby Field Cottage** journeying up through Tuckerman Ravine and stopping on the way to enjoy the charms of Crystal Cascade. Their course was ably directed by Mr. Reed's **faithful dog Dude**, and they heartily recommend him to tourists."

--- Cloud of **9/6/1899**: "Guests from Fernald Cottage in Jackson climbed Mount Washington thru Tuckerman Ravine. They drove to **Darby Field Cottage**. Their return in the afternoon was by the carriage road."

--- From a **1900 Appalachia** journeying north from Jackson: "An experimental road walk from North Conway brought me early one afternoon to our meeting place, the **well-known hostelry** in Pinkham Notch, honored by the name of **Darby Field Cottage**. The first picture which I ask you to imagine is a solitary traveler enjoying at leisure the close range view of Mount Washington with the buttresses of Tuckerman and Huntington Ravine."

The above quote was contributed by AMC Archivist Becky Fullerton, researching links to the Cottage. Her comment: "I also found a mention of Harry W. Tyler, who writes of meeting up with Parker B. Field, appropriately a Darby Field descendant, at the **Cottage** for a Carter and Twin Range trek in June **1900**."

--- From the *Sierra Club Bulletin* in **1900**: "A short distance below we found that the road had been broken out by loggers, and the walking was good. It was nine o'clock when we got to the **Darby Field Cottage** at the base of the mountain. Here we got a good breakfast."

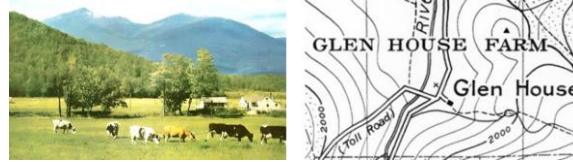
--- From *Plant World* in **1900**, A Botanist's Day on Mt. Washington: "Standing near **Darby Field Cottage**, the evening before, we could see the Summit House, three miles away and one of the miles a vertical one, in the clear light that illuminated the peak after our world was

*in deepening shadow. After a long and weary descent we reached **Darby Field** about 8:00 PM."*

The **1900** Census documents one residence in Pinkham's Grant that year, housing the Reed Family and their boarder: Horace Emery Reed 44, his wife Alice A. Reed 41, mother-in-law Emily Cowing 69, and boarder George Eastman 43.

The 1900 Census indicates that Horace Reed had owned his farm 'free of a mortgage' for seven years. That takes their occupancy back to the Glen House fire year of 1893, just as Cottage patronage soars.

Pasturing dairy cows across from the Third Glen House on 1910 post card; right farm designation on 1916 AMC Map



Horace lists his 1900 occupation as a farmer and boarder George as a farm laborer, not in some aspect of hospitality work. Taking a broad look at the many visits to their home herein, with one exception the earliest is July 11 and the latest is September 18, a typical summer tourist season. It appears that by farming the Reeds and the boarder sustained themselves for the remainder of the year.



Seventy- four years earlier Daniel Pinkham (portrait at left) had passed the Notch over for family settlement as the only level potential tillable land was swampy. The Reed Farm was on adjacent less level pasture land, likely for grazing animals and gardening. The Reeds filled out 'Farm Schedule 58', listing their agricultural produce, but that data has not been preserved.

Mixing farming with the hosting of summer tourists was widespread. Rural New England's scenic areas had been doing this for some time. Shrewd residents like Dolly Copp on the Peabody just to the north welcomed the economic opportunity.

From Howard Russell's 1975 *Three Centuries of Farming in New England*: "*The increasing influx of visitors brought many an up-country farm family a lucrative market for milk, cream especially, eggs and vegetables. And a welcome income also from surplus rooms in the farm dwelling.*"

-- Cloud of **7/12/1900**: "*Nathan Larrabee drove one of the four horse Barron Mountain coaches from **Darby Field Cottage**. Severe weather is encountered. During his experience as a driver, covering several years, he asserted it was his toughest ride up the mountain.*"

--- Cloud of **7/12/1900**: "*A dozen North Conway visitors and residents reached the Summit after a five hour tramp up the carriage road. They drove to **Darby Field Cottage** camping there for the night.*"

--- The Cloud of **7/26/1900** reports on a walk from Boston to the Summit. "*It took them eight days to complete their journey to **Darby Field Cottage**.*" But how did they know it was there - not clear what organization managed Cottage marketing.

--- Cloud of **7/27/1900**: Staff in news: "*Mr. Reed drove them to the Summit in two hours and thirty minutes and made the return trip in one hour and thirty minutes - remarkably quick time.*"

--- From the *Cloud* of **8/22/1900**: "A party of eleven left **Wildcat Cabin** where they are passing a few days on the main road **near Darby Field Cottage** and walked up Tuckerman Ravine."



At left, enhanced view westerly thru the front porch of Darby Field Cottage reveals a small structure, possibly 'Wildcat Cabin'

--- As it likely relates to the above so positioned out of date sequence, a *Cloud* entry of **7/24/1900**. "Mr. Joseph Emile Daudelin is occupying Professor Cummings **near Darby Field Cottage**. The **camp** is a tasteful log structure with a fine open fireplace and everything needed for comfort in camp life, and is charmingly situated in a secluded nook in the edge of the woods."

--- Again as it likely relates to the above, a news clip moved out of date sequence, *Cloud* entry of **8/29/1900**: "A party from **Wildcat Cabin**, near the **Darby Field Cottage**, came to the Summit yesterday in charge of Mr. Reed {Cottage staff}. **Wildcat Cabin** is doing a most **thriving business**. Its capacity being tested to the utmost. Several parties have already visited the Summit from that hostelry."

Out of date sequence as related from the *Cloud* of **8/24/1900**: A party of two from Lynn, Massachusetts "**left Camp Wildcat, a three minute walk from Darby Field Cottage**", and walked through Tuckerman Ravine.

--- *Cloud* of **8/9/1900**: The weather "**looked so threatening that they gave up and took the road again and intended to stay the night at Darby Field Cottage and resume their trip towards Jackson.**"



--- *Cloud* of **8/15/1900**: "**They left Darby Field Cottage Sunday morning, rode to the Ravine House, and climbed from there to Madison Hut.**" The Madison Spring Hut was opened by the AMC in 1888 at elevation 4,795.



--- *Cloud* of **8/22/1900**: "**Ascending Carter Notch, they stopped at the lakes and then came and stayed at the Darby Field Cottage overnight.**"

--- *Cloud* of **9/3/1900**: "**The party left North Conway yesterday morning, took the train to Glen Station and from there walked to the foot of the trail, climbing as far as Hermit Lake Cabin. Fearing they could not accomplish the trip before night they returned to the main road, spending the night at Darby Field Cottage, having walked during the day over twenty miles.**"

--- *Cloud* of **9/4/1900**: He "**rode his bicycle from Ferncliff, Jackson, to Darby Field Cottage and thence up the carriage road to the Summit. He returned the same way.**"

--- *Cloud* of **9/5/1900**: Another bicycle trip, "**about 10:30 a.m. Mr. Stearns telephoned up to report his safe arrival at Darby Field Cottage, after having made the eight miles of descent and two miles on the Pinkham Notch Road.**"

-- Echo of **9/8/1900**: "Mr. John W. Eaton of Newton, who has been spending several days at the Jackson Falls House on Sunday left that house at five o'clock, arriving at the **Darby Field Cottage** at seven, from which he made the ascent of Mount Washington through Tuckerman Ravine, reaching the Summit at ten o'clock. At quarter after three he was back at the Jackson Falls House, making a record seldom equaled."

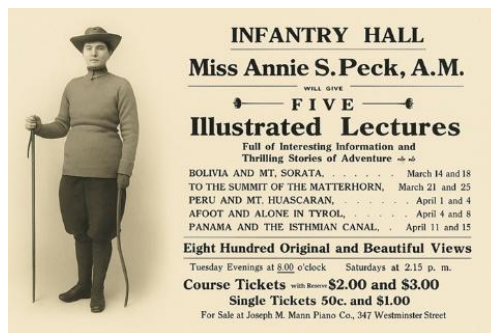
--- Cloud of **9/8/1900**: "Leaving **Darby Field Cottage** they walked up the carriage road on snow shoes to the Half Way House." They ascended the Summit and left the way they had come, "arriving at Reed's {staff at Cottage} about 12:30 p.m. Others in the party went to Reed's in the morning and drove from there to Jackson."

--- Cloud of **9/12/1900**: Letter to the Editor: "We had a very pleasant time on our trip from the Carter Notch House Jackson to **Darby Field Cottage**, and from Darby Field Cottage to the Summit. We went over the Presidential Range to Mount Madison by way of the Gulfside Trail."

--- Cloud of **9/15/1900**: They "gave up upon the severity of the weather upon reaching **Darby Field Cottage**. They tried again Friday walking up and down the carriage road. In the **new carriage road** they found many trees uprooted by the gale, one tree thirty inches in diameter lying in the road." Clear distinction here with the more distant older carriage road entrance.

--- Cloud of **7/13/1901**: "**The Mount Washington Stage Line** has its headquarters at the Glen this year, instead of the **Darby Field Cottage**, and is again in charge of Mr. W. W. Jewell of Gorham." A clear sign that Darby Field Cottage is losing its prominence as the rival third Glen House comes on line.

--- Cloud of **7/13/1901**: "They passed Wednesday night in Madison Hut, and came over the Northern Peaks by the Gulfside Path, proceeding down Tuckerman Ravine to **Darby Field Cottage** to be met by carriage."



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--- Cloud of **7/15/1901**: "**Miss Annie S. Peck**, {1850 - 1935} who has achieved great fame as a mountain climber, paid her first visit in four years.

They took the bridle path for Boott Spur, intending to descend into Tuckerman Ravine and go out by **Darby Field Cottage**, where they arranged to take a carriage back to Randolph." Looking up Annie, she was also a leading woman's rights activist of her time.

--- Cloud of **7/27/1901**: Proprietor of a hotel to the south "George E. Gale drove the party to **Darby Field Cottage**, where the young gentlemen took to so called '**new road**' to the summit, Miss Moore coming by carriage with Mr. Gale." Another distinct reference to the adjacent 1885 shortcut, subject of the next chapter.

--- Cloud of **8/3/1901**: "On Thursday morning they drove over Hurricane Mountain, through Kearsarge Village, Intervale and Jackson, through the Glen to **Darby Field Cottage**, and walked to Hermit Lake in Tuckerman Ravine, where they encamped for the night."

--- Cloud of **8/5/1901**: "Mr. Joseph Emile Daudelin, well known in Boston music circles {a master of the violin} again in **camp near Darby Field Cottage**. On Friday, in company with George Huntley, **son of the manager of the Darby Field**, walked to Randolph and ascended to the Madison Hut." Again could be nearby Wildcat Cabin.

--- Cloud of **8/17/1901**: Parties "who are stopping at the Twin Mountain House, Jackson, rode to **Darby Field Cottage** Thursday, where they were caught in the storm and remained overnight. Friday morning they walked up Tuckerman Ravine."

--- Cloud of **8/29/1901**: "They arrived at the Summit, Saturday, on their way over the Range. They started from Shelburne Thursday, and went as far as **Imp Camp** {opened by the AMC circa 1885} on the Carter Range, where they remained on Thursday night. On Friday they went through the Carter Notch down to **Darby Field Cottage**."

--- Cloud of **8/29/1901**: Another party "rode from the Mount Crescent House, Randolph, to **Darby Field Cottage** yesterday {proceeding northwesterly hugging the base of Mount Madison}, and came up through Tuckerman Ravine to the Summit."



They remained overnight at the Summit House, and **walked over the southern peaks to Crawfords** and from thence returned to Randolph." Historic continuity, in 2003 the AMC's Highland Center was built on the site of

the Crawford House.

--- Cloud of **8/29/1901**: "A party left Grays Inn Tuesday, arriving late in the evening at **Darby Field Cottage**, where they were **hospitably entertained**. This morning they came to the Summit via Tuckerman Ravine. They proceeded over the northern peaks to the Madison Hut."

--- Cloud of **8/29/1901**: "They passed Saturday night at Madison Hut and started at 6:30 a.m., making their walk to the Summit a leisurely one. After a short stay here they walked down through Tuckerman Ravine, reaching **Darby Field Cottage** at dusk."

--- Cloud of **8/31/1901**: "Immediately after breakfast a party of four gentlemen left Moat View Cottage in North Conway for a climb up Mount Washington. They rode their bicycles most of the way to **Darby Field Cottage**, where after a good meal they rested for the night."

After reaching the Summit via Tuckerman Ravine "one of the party started via the carriage road for **Darby Field Cottage** which he reached at 8 PM." Others in the party "descended to Appalachia via the valley path, going down the railroad track back to Randolph and around the base of Mount Madison to **Darby Field Cottage**. Resting for the night, they rode their bicycles to North Conway."

--- From the Cloud of **09/06/1901**: "Carriages for parties of one to 30 can be had to go up or down Mount Washington, or to any of the resorts on the East or West Side. Persons walking over the ranges can have carriages to meet them at the foot of Tuckerman Ravine, or Crystal Cascade, by telephoning from the Summit."

THIRD GLEN REPLACES DARBY

Development of Darby Cottage was announced in 1885 just after the news of the late 1884 first Glen House fire. The second Glen House opened quickly. Cottage patronage was slow to take off until the burning of that Second Glen in 1893. Patronage was good through 1901.



The Second Glen House servant's quarters converts into the Third Glen House (Glen Cottage), building far left

But suddenly in 1902, tourist stays at Darby fall dramatically. I don't see that as a coincidence with the Glen reopening. Darby Cottage lowers its prestige into a boarding house for loggers. It may have been a Libby property at this time, more useful for their logging business than for its extra rooms.

The Glen restoration is described in the *Cloud* of **9/6/1901**: "*Libby and Sons have nearly finished the rebuilding of the Glen House stable and carriage house, which were badly wrecked by a gale in the spring of 1899. There is the same accommodation for teams as when the Glen House was in its prime. The cottage is now in order and accommodates 15 or 20 guests, so that for the **first time in eight years** visitors are finding a resting place at the Glen.*"

The tradition of luxury service continued, as cited in *Among the Clouds* on **7/17/1902**: "*At the Glen, where the small house has lately been improved and put in order for guests, we are cordially welcomed by Mr. & Mrs. Eugene W. Libby, are soon partaking of a delicious dinner.*"



At right a son of Elihu Libby, Eugene W. Libby age 28 from an 1896 Granite Monthly Magazine - State Representative for Gorham 1904

"*The daintily set table and the napkins arranged in the shape of a slipper with a rose or a pink in the top of each, all lend a flavor to the meal. The cozy and cheerful house with its pleasant piazza and hard wood floors, and its parlors furnished and decorated with all the refinement of a private residence, makes a homelike impression.*"

54.0 6.7 **GORHAM, N. H., Mt. Madison House on left. garage connected.**

For diverging routes, see **Index map, White Mountains Section, page 620.**

For through connections, see **Trunk-line Index map, page 1a.**

Note (a)—For **Glen Cottage** and summit of **Mt. Washington**—Turn square right just after passing **Mt. Madison House**, and follow direct road to **Glen Cottage**, (8.0 m), where toll road connects with summit of Mt. Washington, open to autos on Mondays and Saturdays. Toll, \$5 for autos, 20 H. P. or more; \$4 less than 20 H. P. P. Motor cycles \$1, each passenger 80c.



For its initial years rooms in the rehabilitated servants quarters are marketed as **Glen Cottage** - smaller scale than the Second Glen House. Use of 'Cottage' in the title at the Glen is short lived, continued by the *Cloud* only until 1907 when it reverts back to Glen House. It continued a little longer is the excerpt above from the 1910 *Automobile Blue Book*. (At left Libby Memorial on Route 16 in Gorham.

Timeline entries for Darby Field Cottage now trail off. A key *Cloud* entry of **7/17/1902**: "*A little farther on we pass the **Darby Field Cottage**, now a **lumberman's boarding house** and occupied by a **motley crew**, with little appreciation, probably of the grand sights around them.*" An elitist comment.

Logging was primarily seasonal, winter, and off-season work for farmers. So some rooms could have remained for summer tourists, explaining the trickle of guests continuing below.

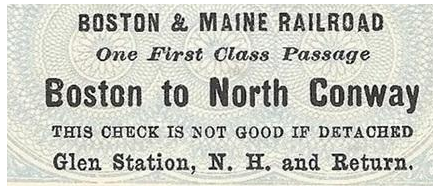
--- *Cloud* of **7/18/1903** after a record rain storm: "*A gang of thirty workmen who are living in **six log cabins** of their own manufacture, near **Darby Field Cottage**, are working hard and expect to make the road passable throughout in about two weeks.*"

--- *Cloud* of **8/3/1903**: "*On Wednesday they came though Jackson thence to **Darby Field Cottage** where they stayed till Friday, **sleeping in the barn.***" Perhaps the traditional guest rooms were all taken by loggers at this point and not available to tourists.

--- *Cloud* of **7/30/1904**: Making a bicycle trip through the White Mountains, they came "*by the way of North Conway, Jackson and the Pinkham Notch to **Darby Field**. They ascended Tuckerman Ravine on Saturday.*"

--- *Cloud* of **8/6/1904**: "*At the Glen House, a transfer from a mountain wagon to a six-horse Tally-ho is made. It is a fifteen mile drive through the Pinkham Notch to **Glen Station**,*

passing by **Darby Field Cottage**, the Glen Ellis cascades, and following the Ellis River to Jackson."



According to the 2015 History of Jackson *"although railroads had reached Gorham and Littleton as early as 1851, it was another twenty years before the first trains came to North Conway, reaching Glen Station in Bartlett in 1873. **Glen Station** was named for its stage connection to the Glen House."*

--- Cloud of **8/12/1904**: Five tourist from Conway **"camped Wednesday night at **Darby Field**, making the ascent of Mount Washington by the carriage road."**

--- Cloud of **8/25/1904**: *"From Mount Washington these men descended by carriage road, whence, after spending **the night at Darby Field**, they returned to Twin Mountain by way of Gorham."*

--- Perhaps the lack of tourists at the Cottage in this period may not have been due solely to revived lodging at the Glen House, but also to the closing of the adjacent shortcut to the Carriage Road.

--- Cloud of **8/17/1905**: *"T. C. Howe and D. W. Howe of Indianapolis, who occupy a **camp near Darby Field** in the Pinkham Notch, walked to the Summit via Tuckerman Ravine yesterday."*

--- **Undated**: From the 1933 *Imitation and Other Essays* by Harvard professor Charles Hall Grandgent (1862-1939): *"We had lodged in a **dilapidated house** at the foot, called **Darby Field Cottage**, to be ready for an early start up thru Tuckerman Ravine."*



Use of 'dilapidated' assumed to be in the post - 1901 period of decline. Charles' wife Ethel Cushing Grandgent was the aunt of my Grandfather Cushing. Photos at left Charles Grandgent and photo at right yours truly!



--- **Undated**: Assumed to be from the post-1901 period of decline, from the 1949 *Here and There in the Family Tree* by Albert Boyden: *"The night before our ascent of the mountain **we slept in a barn appurtenant (I think) to the 'Darby Field Cottage.'** In the morning we went into the cottage for breakfast, but even our omnivorous youngsters were pretty nearly stopped by the **wretched quality of the food.**"*

--- **Undated**: White Mountain author Nicholas Howe commenting on the **Darby Field Cottage** and manager Reed in his book *Not Without Peril*: *"It was a large but **ramshackle hostelry** serving hunters, fishermen and other travelers and run by 'Hod' Reed, a man well known for his close association with **Demon Rum.**"*

--- The decline of the Cottage is confirmed by the **1910** Census, where we see the Reed Family has moved on and Pinkhams Grant has no permanent inhabitants.

--- The Darby Field place name continues for a time. It is used in the 1916 *Chronicles of the White Mountains* by Frederick Kilbourne referring to a **1912** incident: *"The searchers carefully covered the ground between the Glen House and **Darby Field**, but without avail. The chauffeur carried Keenan about two miles, and at his request let him out at the deserted lumber camps near the **Darby Field.**"*

--- The end comes for the Cottage building near **1915** as it is demolished by its new owner the United States Forest Service. The federal mission was to return the decimated White Mountain forests closer to their natural state. The same federal demolition policy was applied to the Copp and Pinkham farm houses to the north in Martins Location.



Cutter Map of **1916** "ruined or abandoned house and camps" - arrow to Darby Field

--- The demolition near 1915 is reflected in the **1923** writings of the *Boston Society of Natural History*: "In Pinkham Grant, **site of Darby Field Cottage.**"

SEARCH FOR COTTAGE SITE

There is evidence for the Cottage having been located at what is today the NH DOT maintenance facility. As with other sections of this research, leading White Mountains photographer, trail maintainer and hiking blogger John Compton volunteered to examine the site and its periphery to check for Cottage remnants:

"During my investigation on 04/12/2026 a thorough search was made of the New Hampshire DOT property. The day of my investigation was a Sunday. There were no employees at the DOT facility and so I had complete freedom to roam the facility's grounds.

I also searched the adjacent woodlands immediately surrounding the facility, as well as a wide perimeter search of the land surrounding the DOT property. Nothing resembling a building foundation was found."

Another factor, some years ago Howie Wemyss of the Glen House and Joe Gill of the USFS visited a nearby ruin Joe thought was a foundational remnant of the Cottage. This is generally remembered as in the forest east of the DOT facility. John agreed to also field inspect this area, starting well east along Route 16 and proceeding westerly through the woods:

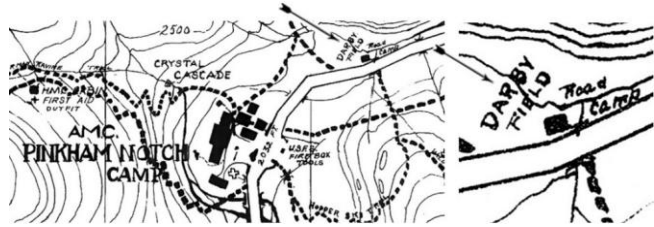
"Also investigated was an area that showed up on ground penetrating radar at about 500 feet east of the DOT facility, see label A01 and arrow on the ground radar excerpt. Here an old cellar hole was found. A slice of the Peabody River is seen in the upper left corner of the photo. Also, regarding the metallic object seen at bottom/center, I have no idea as to what it might be.



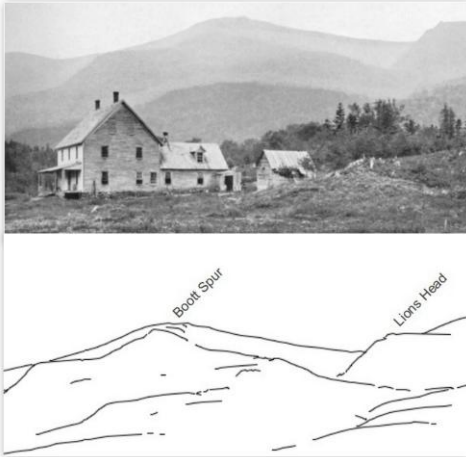
*However in my opinion, it's doubtful that this cellar hole has anything to do with the Darby Field Cottage. For one thing, even if all the trees were removed, there would **be no view** of the Presidential mountains as shown in photos of the Cottage."*

Reliable historic descriptions praise the view from the Cottage, such as in *Among the Clouds* of 7/11/1885: "The Pinkham Notch Road near the hotel site owned by Mr. Thompson, which is said to be the finest on the East Side of Mount Washington. It commands a view of Tuckerman Ravine and the Summit." So, the lack of Tuckerman view from the cellar hole eliminates it from consideration.

Arrows annotated on the **1936 AMC Map** confirm the 'Darby Field' place name still in use that year



Further valuable siting perspective from the **1940 AMC White Mountain Guide**: "Wildcat Summit 'E' Ski Trail – this trail starts from Pinkham Notch Road opposite **the site of Darby Field Cottage.**" ChatGPT research on the origin point of 'E' Ski Trail places it on Route 16 "0.5 mile north of AMC Pinkham Notch Visitor Center," confirmation of the 1940 description. (CCC era 'E' Ski Trail since abandoned as too steep).



The siting search concludes with this contribution from John Compton: "Using mapping software, I got a waypoint for the current location of the DOT facility along NH 16 near Pinkham Notch.

Then I accessed the website named PeakFinder.org and entered the waypoint for the DOT facility. That web site generates a schematic showing an outline drawing and the named peaks visible from the waypoint's location.

Next was a comparison of the photo of the Cottage, left above, and the view generated by PeakFinder, left below.

The comparison is strongly suggestive that the Darby Field Cottage was located at the site of the current day DOT facility." Thanks John for the happy ending!!



Darby Field DOT facility with future dream signage!

6. SHORTCUT TO CARRIAGE ROAD



At left shortcut on 1896 U.S. Geological Survey Map; at right today as part of the Appalachian Trail



A new Carriage Road up Mount Washington, starting near the entrance to Crystal Cascade, and joining the present Glen carriage road about a mile below the Halfway House, will be opened early this season. By this road North Conway will be nearly five miles nearer the summit of Mount Washington.

A Fast Stage Line will run daily coaches to the summit, so that our guests will be able to make the round trip in one day. For terms and particulars address

THOMPSON & SCHOFF, Managers.

Ad by North Conway's Kearsarge House praising the new shortcut and placed in Ticknor's 1887 White Mountain Guide

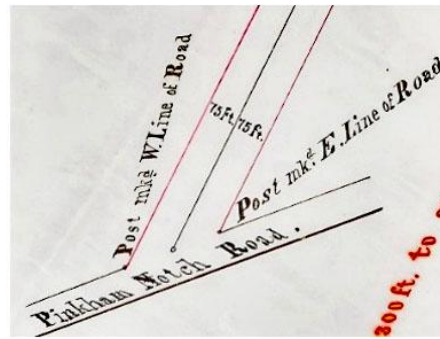
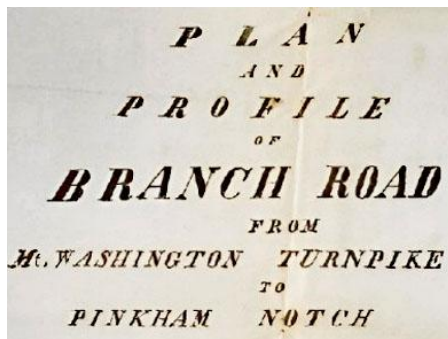
OVERVIEW

This is the last of three chapters on Darby Field features, east to west the sawmill, the Cottage and now the shortcut. Businessman Samuel Thompson of North Conway was an investor in all three.

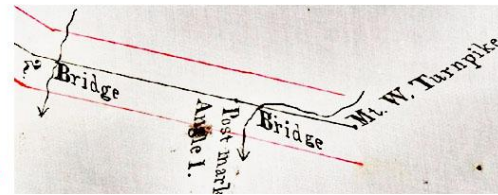
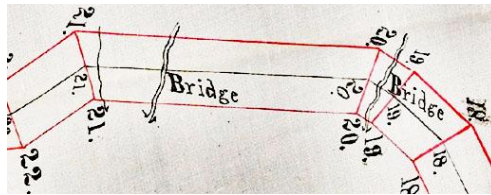
This feature has slightly earlier origins than the adjacent 1885 Cottage, as an 1881 map from the Peabody Essex Museum labels the alignment as 'proposed' that year. It is to run north from Darby Field to the two mile point on the main Carriage Road, 1.6 miles of fairly steep roadway. The 1.6 compares to the 4.7 miles via the the entrance north at the Glen House to the same point up the Carriage Road.

As noted in the Cottage Chapter pedestrians will also to make use of it. From *The Echo* newspaper in 1897: "They walked down the carriage road and **across the cutoff** to Darby Field Cottage."

As noted in the 1887 advertisement the motive for developing this second access was the reduction of travel time from hotels to the south. Assuming horse drawn carriages could move only a few miles per hour it was a real time saver. And the Pinkham Notch origin was at a higher elevation than the Glen entrance, eliminating four hundred feet of climb.



At left title block from 1883 Branch Road Plan, at right starting point at Pinkham Notch Road - source is Mount Washington Summit Road Company Records at the Peabody Essex Museum



The 1883 Branch Road Plan included four bridges - two at left (north at right) are a little more than half way from the Pinkham Notch Road north to the boundary of Pinkham's Grant with Sargent's Purchase; two at right near upper terminus

After initial layout in 1883, a White Mountain Turnpike Company was organized in Jackson on August 27, 1884. As turnpikes were regulated by the state, in 1885 the NH Legislature authorized the junction of the existing Mount Washington Summit Road Company with the new White Mountain Turnpike Company:

"That the Mount Washington Summit Road Company and the White Mountain Turnpike Company be authorized to make a junction of their roads to accommodate the travel to the top of Mount Washington.

And the tolls shall be the same over the road of the latter company, and thence to the top of Mount Washington, that they are over the whole road of the first named company.

The tolls collected for travel passing from one road to the other shall be divided between the two corporations, in accordance with an agreement made by agents of the corporations, dated May 26, 1885."

As noted Samuel Thompson, hotel magnate and owner of the adjacent Darby Field Cottage and Thompson's Mills, was an investor in Branch Road development. From the *New Hampshire Patriot* of 1/25/1883:

*--- "At the meeting of those interested in the boarding house business, January 13, **Samuel W. Thompson** {Kearsarge House}, Stephen Mudgett of North Conway {Intervale House}, and N. T. Stillings of Jackson {Glen Ellis House} were chosen directors. They are to see after the building of the **Branch Carriage Road** on to Mount Washington. A stock company was formed and sixty shares were taken up."*

*--- From the Cloud of 06/26/1884 bannered Jackson: "Road commissioners met 6/24 to lay out a **Branch Carriage Road** on Mount Washington."*

--- Cloud of 8/27/1884: "It was 3:30 o'clock when dinner was over and it was then too late to make it safe to attempt to face the Ravine path. Mr. Webster said there was a blazed track in the woods which ran from Osgood's {home of Glen House guide} to the two mile post on

the carriage road. The track was made last fall by engineers who were prospecting for a **proposed new road.**"

--- From the *New Hampshire Patriot* of 11/13/1884: "Men are at work **on the branch** of the Mount Washington Carriage Road cutting away the trees, so that work may be commenced early in the spring."

--- Maine's *Kennebec Journal* on 5/20/1885: "The Glen House will not be rebuilt this year {was partially opened} but two smaller houses will be added to the accommodations in Jackson. A **Branch Carriage Road** to Mount Washington is begun, leading from the Glen Road at Crystal Cascade Brook to the present carriage road to the Summit."



--- From *Among the Clouds* 05/20/1885: "The increased travel from Jackson and North Conway, in consequence of **building the cut-off**, will make good all the loss which might result from the burning of the Glen House {late 1884}."

I have no evidence for a toll at the base for the shortcut. The Halfway House just short of the Four Mile Post is one candidate, as the carriage traffic from both entrances was by then combined. At right view from the 1883 *W. H. Beardley Guide Book*.



Consider this ten year later report after the Second Glen House fire from the *Cloud* of 8/3/1895: "Fortunately the carriage road from the Glen to the Summit of Mount Washington is in control of a corporation that still keeps it open and carefully mended. You may walk on a clear day and encounter only the solitary **man who takes toll** at the Halfway House {photo above} and his three comrades."

ChatGPT alternative: "There is the possibility that passengers purchased a bundled hotel-stage-road excursion rather than paying a distinct visible toll at Darby Field."

An *Among the Clouds* news item of 7/11/1885 documents the new access: "The correspondent of the *Boston Herald* says the **new carriage road** up Mount Washington comes into the Pinkham Notch Road near the hotel site owned by Mr. Thompson."

Jackson tourist market for using shortcut

JACKSON, N.H.

146 miles from Boston; stage from Glen Station, on

From *Among the Clouds* of 07/17/1885: "There is considerable travel from Jackson to Mount Washington over the carriage road. **The "cutoff" saves distance and makes the trip less fatiguing than before. Parties are coming up nearly every pleasant day.**"

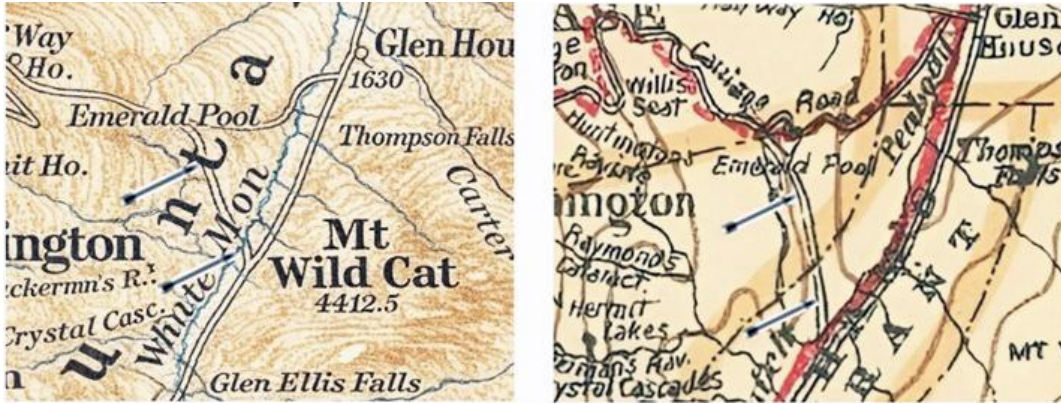
Arden House	M. C. Wentworth	200
Wentworth Hill		
Thorn Mt. House	S. N. Thompson	125
Glen Ellis House	Trickey Bros.	75
Jackson Falls House	C. E. Gale	70
Eagle Mountain	J. L. Wilson	12
Wilson Cottage	Meserve Bros.	12
Iron Mt. House	C. W. Gray	75
Gray's Inn	C. W. Gray	75
Carter Notch House	J. Perkins	15

A Glen House photo title prior to 1885 indicates that the main Pinkham Road known alternatively as the Glen Road and Pinkham Road also had the occasional name 'Jackson Road.' This identification is used in the authoritative *Glen House Book* of 1889:

"All the points of chief interest that can be reached in a carriage, save the Summit itself, are embraced within a distance of four miles from the hotel, and most of them are on the **Jackson Road.**"

The earliest confirmed use of the title "New Jackson Road" appears in an 1899 *Granite Monthly Magazine*: "Last February two young men left the Iron Mountain House in Jackson and drove up to Darby Field Cottage at the beginning of the '**New Jackson Road**' up Mount

Washington." That name evolved to Old Jackson Road by the time of the 1916 AMC Cutter Map.

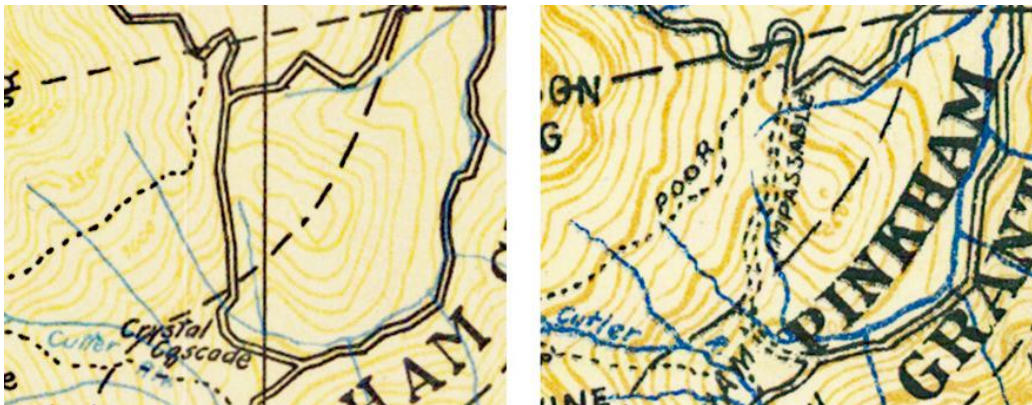


At left Branch Carriage Road on the 1893 Baedeker Map - at right on the 1893 Walker Lithograph Map, both annotated with arrows

Gorham's historian Wight on 1900: "E. Libby & Sons purchased land extending twelve miles along the Glen Road, also 5,000 acres in Jackson." My assumption is that large purchase included the three Darby Field features under study herein. That it included all three Darby Field features remains an inference, work that I will leave to the next generation of researchers.

And Wight on 1901: "The Glen House that had lain idle since the burning of the hotel in 1893, was a place of great activity... They had repaired the stables and horses were taken there so as to be ready to take passengers up the mountain."

Would the Libbys have encouraged continuation of a separate, second Carriage Road access that favored competing hotels from the south? Whatever the reasons, in 1901 as the Third Glen House opens, the 1885 shortcut suddenly falters. Adjacent Darby Field Cottage falters as well. Thompson's Sawmill had burned by 1896.



At left 1900 U. S. Map includes Branch Road; at right 1902 Scarborough Map label "impassable" - source of both dartmouth.edu

Maps frequently copied information from earlier surveys.

The 1900 appearance may not prove that the road was still operational that year; likewise, the 1902 map may be the first map to record an already-existing condition.

Possibly there are other factors in the roadway decline. Forestry historian Christine Goodale recorded a fire in George's Gorge in 1903, that valley paralleling the cutoff on its east side.

Detrimental impact by forest fire on the road are recorded in the AMC 1917 *Guide to Paths in the White Mountains*:

*"It is now in very poor condition, being obstructed by bushes and fallen trees and in places **injured by fire and logging.**"* Suggestion by ChatGPT: *"Treat the four bridges and their disappearance as the decisive physical event ending carriage use."*

The post-1900 automobile revolution replacing horses may have been a factor. With the greater speed and stamina of gasoline engines compared to horse teams, the Pinkham Notch based shortcut lost much of its time saving rationale. ChatGPT chimes in: *The road appears already to have failed for carriage use before automobiles became common on Mount Washington. Automobiles may have eliminated any commercial incentive to rebuild it, but they probably did not cause its initial collapse."*



An *Among the Clouds* news article of 07/13/1904 captures the transition to autos: *"A new epoch of mountain travel begins from the present day. That epoch has been moving on steadily but yesterday brought the fullest realization that anyone has had of it."*

Early auto meets horse team on Carriage Road

*One hundred guests had gathered at the Glen Cottage {temporary name for the Third Glen House} to witness the starting out of the 'Climb for the Clouds.' Instead of the one hundred horses that made the Milliken regime an important era in the history of the carriage road, the stables were crowded with **motor carriages** of every description."*

Mount Washington historian F. Allen Burt adds: *"In 1906 the Libby Company purchased the Pingree stock in the Carriage Road, firmly consolidating its entrepreneurial interests on the East Side of Mount Washington."*

The shortcut to and from the south is soon documented as defunct. Confirmation on the 1902 *Scarborough Map* above and in the 1909 *Baedeker Guide*: *"A steep road of 1.5 miles {actually 1.6}, now **impassible for carriages**, joins the carriage road two miles above the Glen House."*

According to trail historian Guy Waterman New Jackson Road had disintegrated into a poorly marked hiking trail by about 1910. As shown on the 1916 *AMC Cutter Map* below a hiking trail was operating on the road alignment by that date.

Key comment from a 1922 *Appalachia*: *"The construction of the Pinkham Notch camps made advisable the opening as a trail of the 'Old Jackson Road' as a short cut to the carriage road. The work was done by the camp employees."* ChatGPT comments:

"The 1922 quotation probably does not mean that the route had been completely unused before the camps were established. It means it was reopened or regularized as an AMC trail. Walkers followed the decaying roadway despite fallen bridges, brush, fire damage, and logging."



At left USFS map of 1914 still includes Branch Road, but by the next year deleted from USFS maps - annotations added; right 1916 Cutter Map

A summary from the AMC's 1917 *Guide to Paths in the White Mountains*: "In 1885 a road was constructed leading to the Pinkham Notch Road, two and one half miles south of the Glen House, to the second milepost on the Mount Washington Carriage Road. It is now in very poor condition. All the bridges are down.



As a carriage road it is a thing of the past, but it will save about three miles for pedestrians. In ascending, its lower end may be recognized as a grass grown roadway leaving the west side of the Pinkham Notch road about one third mile north of the entrance to Crystal Cascade." The Cascade Spring was just to the west of the entrance.

State legislatures approve scores of localized enabling acts in a single year. As the decades pass obviously outdated authorizations are pruned out. The State of New Hampshire's January 1925 Session included an "Act to Repeal Charters of Certain Inactive and Delinquent Corporations," including the "White Mountain Turnpike Company, Jackson, 1884."

Fortunately for the preservation of its usefulness, the historic cut off held a strategic location within the evolving Appalachian Trail system. When, due to its extreme grade, the early Appalachian Trail was relocated away from Tuckerman Ravine, the revised route included the Old Jackson Road.

According to AMC Archivist Becky Fullerton "it looks like Old Jackson Road became part of the Appalachian Trail sometime between the publication of the 1931 AMC White Mountain Guide and the 1934 edition.

In the 1931 Guide the trail leaves the summit of Mt. Madison via the Osgood Trail and descends via that and the Great Gulf Trail to the Glen House before heading up the Nineteen Mile Brook Trail to Carter. In the 1934 edition, the Appalachian Trail uses Osgood Trail and Madison Gulf Trail to reach the Old Jackson Road to Pinkham Notch." Becky is a great resource person, always helpful!



At left AMC Archivist Becky Fullerton and at right hiking blogger John Compton

ChatGPT sums up: "The 1885 cutoff was not simply an alternate mountain road. It was an attempt by hotel proprietors south of the Glen House to reorganize the geography of Mount Washington tourism. By connecting their stage network directly with the Carriage Road at its two-mile point, they reduced distance, climbing, and dependence on the Glen House gateway.

Its failure around 1900 reflected the disappearance of the Darby Field enterprises, deteriorating bridges, fire and logging damage, changing corporate control, and finally the arrival of motor travel. Its engineered grade nevertheless remained useful enough to be reclaimed by walkers and ultimately absorbed into the Appalachian Trail.

The present Old Jackson Road Trail, which also carries the Appalachian Trail designation, follows the historic carriage-road alignment over most of its length. Forest trails inevitably wander a few feet or a few yards over 140 years because of erosion control, washouts, bridge replacements, and maintenance.

Near its upper end, however, the trail departs from the original road, turning westward to reach the Mount Washington Auto Road opposite the Madison Gulf Trail, while the 1885 carriage road continued more directly to a lower junction with the Auto Road."

As with other section of this work, leading White Mountains photographer, trail maintainer and hiking blogger John Compton (photo above) graciously provided a field review. ChatGPT thinks highly of John (as do I): "John Compton's modern observations on brooks, wet ground, roadway-width segments, exposed stones, and the ski alignment are not merely illustrative. They constitute a preliminary archaeological field reconnaissance."

John's 2025 report: "Yesterday, I took a stroll along the Old Jackson Road from the Pinkham Notch Visitors Center up to the point where the Old Jackson Road and the hiking trail diverge (two photos below).

At this point, the original Old Jackson Road made a bee line and headed directly to the Auto Road. This segment is now used exclusively for XC skiing. Whereas the current-day hiking trail now heads to the Auto Road via a more circuitous route.



Unlike a hiking trail, the original Old Jackson Road was probably built more substantially since it was designed for travel by passenger carriage. And so, your 'armchair thinking' speculates that some remnants of the original roadway might still be apparent. So, I'll let you be the judge as whether the photos shown below offer any evidence of the original Old Jackson Road." Sure looks like it to me!



"One very short segment above left is atypical for the vast majority of the current-day Old Jackson Road. However, it does more closely resemble a roadway than other parts of the current day corridor. This segment is located along a flat area just a few tenths of a mile south of the Auto Road.

The treadway shown in the photo above right is more typical of the appearance of the majority of the current-day Old Jackson Road. In my humble opinion, it pretty much looks like many other hiking trails in the White Mountains.



The photo above left was taken along another segment of the current-day Old Jackson Road. The treadway has many boulders which most likely were not as apparent when the Old Jackson Road was constructed. They have probably become more exposed and pronounced over time due to erosion. Above right along its route the Old Jackson Road passes over several brooks." (The original 1883 road plan included four small bridges).

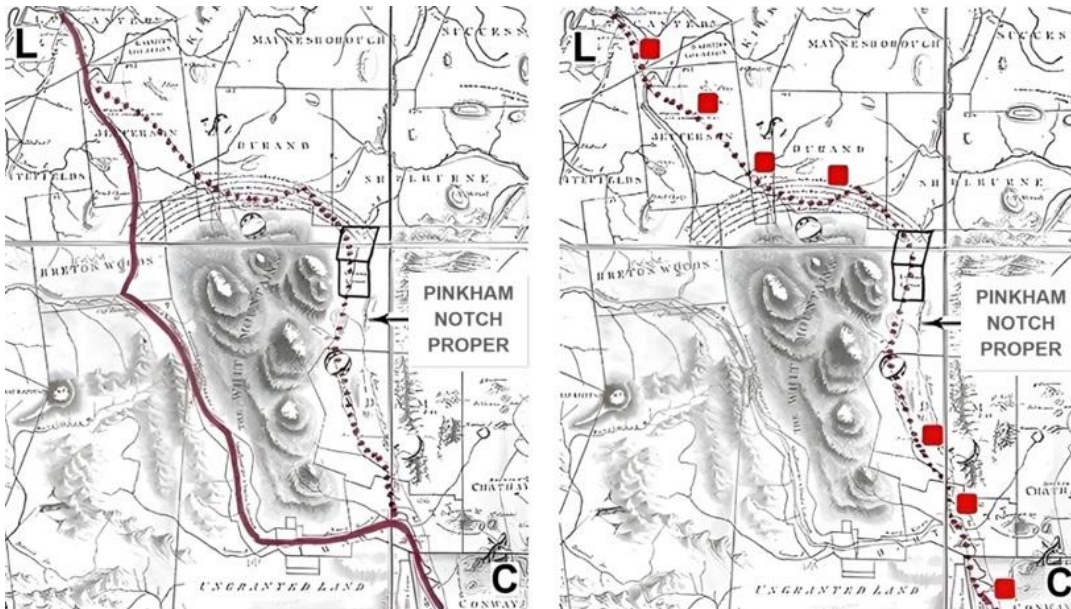
"The photo at right shows a segment of the current-day Old Jackson Road corridor that consists of a wooden walkway (puncheon) built to cross a wet/boggy area.

It would be interesting to know what was used to traverse this same segment if it was also consistently wet when original corridor was operational. All the best to you and yours, John." Very illuminating. Thank you John!



A topographic map of the Spruce Hill area. The map features contour lines indicating elevation, with a 3000-foot contour line visible. Major roads are shown, including Route 16 (labeled in red), Raymond Road, Old Jackson Road, and New River. Key locations marked include Pinkham Notch, Crystal Cascade, and Glen Ellis Falls. The map also shows several peaks, some labeled with numbers like 6, 7, and 3-5. The area is surrounded by dense forest, indicated by stippled shading.

- On annotated 1916 Cutter Map, climb up Spruce Hill was west of Glen Ellis Falls; Route 16 continued north*



*At left the then main route from Lancaster (L) to
Conway (C) – at right dotted line shows Pinkham's
alternative - bold highlights Martins Location and Greens Grant*

Squares show locations of Pinkham Road investors in Lancaster, Jefferson, Kilkenny, Durand, Adams, Bartlett and Conway - selected for marketing the plan to the Legislature – also envision a square in Martins Location as Pinkham's home base

PINKHAM'S ROAD OPENS NOTCH

Pinkham's ambitious road plan is outlined a petition to the New Hampshire Legislature dated 5/18/1824: *"It would be of great public utility to have a road on the Easterly Side of the White Mountains... It will shorten the distance by about ten miles' haul.*

And would save the traveler one pass of the height of land which he is now completed to travel over in passing the Cherry Mountain." Selling the idea is not the place to bring up its problems. However the new route turned out to have a serious challenge, the difficult northbound trip from Jackson over Spruce Hill.

An overview of the Pinkham project in progress from the *Northern Traveler* in 1826: *"It is probable that a road will soon be made around the north end of the White Mountains, through the town of Adams {renamed Jackson after 1829}, to avoid the {Crawford} Notch. The land is level in that direction, along the course of the Androscoggin, and the distance to Lancaster nearly the same."*



At left original road crossing Spruce Hill's 2000' contour

ASCENT FROM SOUTH

Prior to the automobile era, northbound travelers from Jackson at elevation 770 feet did not reach Pinkham Notch at elevation 2032 feet without significant effort. The hardest obstacle came about a mile south of the Notch, where the road necessarily climbed a high shoulder above Glen Ellis Falls known as Spruce Hill.

The old Pinkham Road rose as steeply as twenty percent, narrowed in places to approximately eight feet, and required Glen House stages approaching from Jackson to employ six horses rather than four.

Spruce Hill remains, but motorists ceased to experience it as generations of stage passengers, teamsters, bicyclists, and early automobilists had. Successive highway improvement projects gradually erased the steep obstacle from common memory:

1824–1909 *original road, with very narrow width and maximum grade near 20 percent, exceptionally steep for loaded stagecoaches and primitive motor vehicles.*

1910 *improved road, still tops Spruce Hill but widened and cut to a maximum 12-percent grade.*

1928 *road shifted eastward off peak of Spruce Hill, lowered on to a newly cut rock shelf nearer the Ellis River. 1960 major reconstruction, widened and improved geometry of the 1928 alignment.*

The name Spruce Hill was in use by the dawn of the mid-nineteenth century tourism boom. To note again a **1849** comment by Glen House developer John Bellows: We will see *"the attraction of Spruce Hill Falls {Hill's adjacent Glen Ellis Falls} by admiring throngs at no very distant date."*

On the challenging climb north from Jackson the height of Spruce Hill is somewhat above the upcoming floor of Pinkham Notch itself. An *Appalachia Journal* from November of 1920 explains: *"At the beginning of the glacial period the Summit of the Notch was about a mile farther south than at the present time.*

The Ellis River has a much steeper gradient than the Peabody River; its erosive power is much greater, and therefore the valley of the Ellis River was worn back into the divide, which was lowered and migrated northward.

*At the top of **Spruce Hill**, near the Glen Ellis Falls, is a broad flat shoulder some sixty feet above the top of the Fall. This probably represents the Summit of the Notch during the glacial period."*

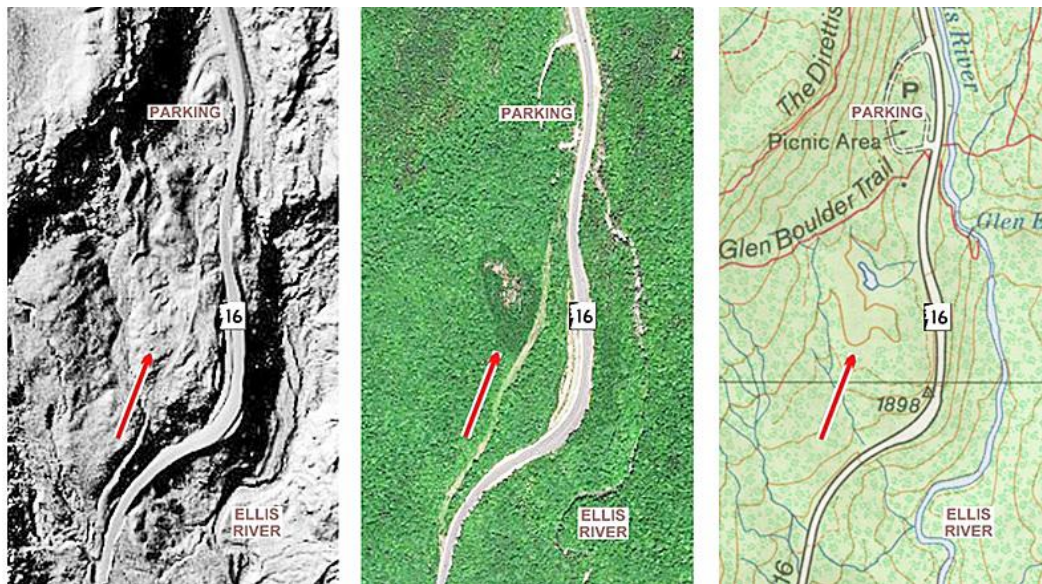
TIMELINE

--- From the *Cambridge Chronicle* of 10/21/**1865**: "While leading the horses up the hill in the **roughest and narrowest** part of Pinkham Notch the rolling of stages was suddenly heard, and close and open carriages, drawn by spirited horses, soon drive past us. I was trying to get my team as far as possible out of the road, so that the wheels of our wagon might not be torn off by the ponderous coaches."

--- Sweetser's Guide of **1876**: "After ascending the long **Spruce Hill** the road begins to drop down into the Peabody Glen."

--- *Among the Clouds* of 8/15/**1879**: "The rain steadily increased, and by the time we reached **Spruce Hill**, where the driver informed us it rained where it was clear everywhere else."

--- From the **1880** *Appalachia*: "It is by this smaller ravine that the best approach to the boulder {Glen Boulder} is afforded. To enter it, one should take the first brook south of the highest point of the stage road in Pinkham Notch, or **Spruce Hill** as it is called by the drivers."



*At left landscape remnant of 1824
road climbing Spruce Hill on UNH penetrating radar,
center same remnant today on Google photo, at right arrow
added to 1987 Washburn Map points to Spruce Hill's 2,000 foot contour*

--- Samuel Adams Drake in his **1882** *The Heart of the White Mountains*: "The summit of **Spruce Hill**, the scene of the highway robbery in 1881, is the top of the long rise beyond the bridge over Ellis River."

A *Granite Monthly Magazine* of **1887** gives details: "As the stage from the Glen House to Glen Station in Bartlett was passing the Glen Ellis Falls, two men armed with pistols emerged from the woods, seized the horses by their heads, and demanded the money and jewelry of the passengers."

Appalachia Journal in **1923** looks back to stage drivers pointing out 'Robber Rock in Pinkham Notch.' The 1923 recollection may demonstrate that the rock remained a landmark for decades.

--- The *Glen House Book* of **1889**: "After stopping to water our horses, we cross the Ellis for the last time in order to begin the long climb up **Spruce Hill** and into the shaggy Pinkham Notch. At last the long ascent is overcome, the ground grows more level, and the crack of the driver's whip sends off the horses in a brisk trot again."

--- *Boston and Maine Railroad Tour Guide* **1889**: After a long climb to the top of **Spruce Hill**, twelve hundred feet higher than Jackson, the road leaves the Ellis, and begins a descent of four miles, past the entrance to Tuckerman's Ravine, and down the course of the Peabody River, to the Glen House.

--- From *Through the Wilds* **1889** by Charles Farrar: "They passed down **Spruce Hill**, which the boys thought almost interminable, and soon after reached the lower end of the Notch, the valley widening as they approached Jackson."

--- A road improvement appropriation for 'Pinkham Woods' is recorded in the **1893 Journal of the NH House**: "Three hundred dollars annually for 1893 and 1894, to repair the Pinkham Notch Road, a highway between the Glen House and Jackson. The three miles through Pinkham woods need to be greatly widened to secure safe travel by the six-horse coaches necessarily employed to meet the demands of the extensive travel in that region."

--- From the **1900 Appalachia**: "Across the road {from Darby Field Cottage} and stream are a joyous trio with bottles no longer full. The social barometer rises with the exodus of the hilarious three. May their horse have the intelligence to descend **Spruce Hill**."

--- Aftermath of the flood of 6/12/1903 from *Among the Clouds* of **7/18/1903**: "From the Glen House to about Daby Field Cottage - about two miles - the road is in its usual good condition, save in to places where the repairers have mended it suitable to make it passable. From the Darby Field Cottage to Glen Ellis Falls the roadbed has been completely washed out.

*The Ellis River, changing its course, swept all the loose earth from the road bed leaving it a path of large boulders, scattered about as in a river bed. The long hill, known to local drivers as **Spruce Hill**, just beyond the falls, is badly washed in a number of places, but a skillful driver can pass them without an accident."*

--- *Cloud* of **8/1/1903**: "Mount Washington Circuit Trip, Running of the Barron, Merrill and Barron Stages to be resumed on Monday Next. Since the terrible flood of June 12, which practically washed away two miles of the Pinkham Notch Road, efforts have been unceasing with a large force of workmen to put the thoroughfare in proper shape for travel. There is probably no road in the White Mountains whose obliteration or discontinuance would cause more general regret and inconvenience."

--- *Among the Clouds* on **8/1/1903**: The Jackson end of the road was repaired at the expense of the Town of Jackson and was made passable soon after the flood. The section **between Darby Field Cottage and Glen Ellis Falls** is where the flood wrought its greatest destruction, making the road a river bed for many rods, and necessitating the cutting of a new road parallel to the old one as the most effective solution to the problem left by the storm."

--- *Cloud* of **8/26/1903** on a trip in a fifteen horsepower Phelps Touring Car: "The **famous Spruce Hill** had recently been covered with about six inches of loam which had been softened by a heavy rain that afternoon, making the road almost impassable.

*The car was delayed here for over two hours, finally being pulled out of the mire by a heavy team procured from a **logging camp a mile or two above**. With the exception of the **Spruce***

Hill incident the trip from Stoneham {Massachusetts} to the Glen House was without a hitch of any kind."

--- From Frank Hunt Burt's **1904** *Mount Washington A Handbook for Travellers*: "We were soon on the famous Pinkham Notch Road going over **Spruce Mountain** in a three-mile rise and running through the beautiful Glen Ellis valley by the East Side of Mount Washington."

--- A NH state statute in **1905** added to roads already designated as state highways "as much of the Pinkham Notch Road as lies in Pinkhams Grant, Greens Grant and Martins Location."

--- From (date unclear) *Chisholm's Guide Book*: "Glen Station is soon reached, with its platform bordered by Jackson stages, whose horses still retain vivid memories of **Spruce Hill**, and the long slopes of Pinkham Notch."

--- Early AMC guidebooks cited the Hill. Regarding the then new **Glen Boulder Trail** in the **1907** Guide, "the path leaves the Pinkham Notch Road north of **Spruce Hill**, about midway between the top of the hill and Glen Ellis Falls." View south at Glen Boulder, elevation 3,773 feet, courtesy of John Compton.



--- Comment by AMC's Joe Dodge: "When I first came thru here with my father, back in **1909**, Pinkham's old road was still being used; of course, it had been fixed up a little but not very much."

--- In **1909** the AMC signed an agreement with the Umbagog Paper Company to preserve twenty - eight acres surrounding Glen Ellis Falls from logging. The property description references the top of adjacent **Spruce Hill**.

--- I love this one, from a **1910** *Motorcycle Illustrated Magazine*: "The road to the Glen House is quite hilly, in fact **Spruce Hill**, at home it would be a mountain, would test the powers of the best machine there is. I found that the easiest way to get up was to get off while the engine was running and run along beside it."

--- We see significant state action in the **1910** *Report of the NH State Engineer*: "On the Pinkham Notch Road the grade of **Spruce Hill** was reduced to a maximum of twelve percent and the road was widened so that at no place was it less than eighteen feet.

Previous to these changes the grade was twenty percent and the width only eight feet." The 1910 upgrade was good enough for the 1912 book *White Mountain Trails* to report "a good motor road leads from Jackson to Gorham."

--- *Among the Clouds* of 7/20/**1910**: "Automobilists who have gone over the road through Pinkham Notch are enthusiastic over the job done on **Spruce Hill** under the supervision of the state engineer. The road is now said to be a perfect boulevard."

--- Charles E. Beals **1916** *Passaconaway in the White Mountains* mentions **Spruce Hill** as "one of the hardest hills in the state for autoists, a long uphill pull of a mile or more."

--- A statewide map by the NH Department of Public Works and Highways for **1917** identifies New Hampshire's main 'East Side Highway' as running thru Pinkham Notch.

--- The nearby Berlin NH Brown Company's *Brown Bulletin* looking back from **1920**: "From the Glen House the line to Gorham {north} used six horses on a coach, sometimes only four when business was poor. The line to Glen {south} always used six horses, on account of **Spruce Hill**."

--- From the AMC in **1920** "Pinkham Notch Camp is at the summit of the Notch. But the highest point on the Glen - Gorham road is at the top of **Spruce Hill**, a mile south of the

camp, where the road follows the mountainside more than a hundred feet above the Ellis River.

*To avoid the cliffs above Glen Ellis Falls, the road has been located across a shoulder high above the river, and the steep southward descent from this shoulder is **Spruce Hill**, long the terror of autoists."*



--- New Hampshire's 1917 East Side Highway designation was revised in 1922 to become part of New England Interstate Route 16. In **1926**, the New England interstate route system was superseded, and New Hampshire retained the number as NH Route 16.

--- AMC's Joe Dodge (photo right) recalling **1926**: "Then we started back up to Pinkham and just had to get rid of the bear. When we came to that big embankment on **Spruce Hill**, we just rolled the carcass out the door and down into the woods."



--- From the AMC Guide of **1926** on Pinkham Notch Camp: "This camp, built in 1920, is located on the Pinkham Notch Road practically at the height-of-land in the Notch, though not the highest point in the road."

--- Route 16 improvements were again made by the NH DOT in the **late twenties**. Major this time as the alignment was moved east, to a lower elevation closer to the Ellis River, and the grade further reduced from the 1910 first grade reduction.



*At left view north at 1928 Route 16 relocation east off of Spruce Hill
- right same view north upon completion - Courtesy of AMC Archive*



*1928 view west at lowered alignment
under construction - AMC Archive*



*Views south in 1928 as Route 16 is
relocated off of Spruce Hill - AMC Archive photos*

--- Joe Dodge quoting touring bicyclists after **1938**: *"After passing the Dana Place the hill never seemed to let up. But then we crested the grade and it seemed like downhill, even though the river was still flowing towards us."*

--- On the drive north in the late **1950s**, my friend Bob Brown well remembers the peak of **Spruce Hill**: *"The crest was so sharp that momentarily there was no sight line to on-coming traffic."*

--- A third reduction of the steep grade was accomplished by circa **1959** Route 16 reconstruction. Modern construction methods accomplished what Daniel Pinkham could not.



*Photos in 2019 just south of Notch by my friend Shelburne, NH
photographer Heidi Wight, stating "In Pinkham Notch chasing rainbows"*

-- After the **1959** rebuild, references to Spruce Hill faded from literature. Just one more reference found, as a NH DOT project title from 1965: *"Reconstruction on NH 16 between the Dana Place and the **Spruce Hill** truck lane."* As with motorized vehicles the steep grade of earlier years was no longer so challenging, Spruce Hill faded from Notch history.



a leak in its cylinder head gasket!

--- Not from my personal memory though. Driving up the new Spruce Hill grade, however improved, in my four cylinder compact car on a hot summer day in 1982, loaded with my wife Dolores and children Becca, Joe and Betsy, the roof piled high with camping gear, my overtaxed engine sprung

FIELD REVIEW AND FUTURE USE

Leading White Mountains photographer, trail maintainer and hiking blogger John Compton has reported on many White Mountain trail features. He was a significant contributor to my earlier work *Dolly Copp and the Peabody Valley Pioneers*. We are indebted to John for his October 2025 field review of the old, bypassed 1910 Spruce Hill route.

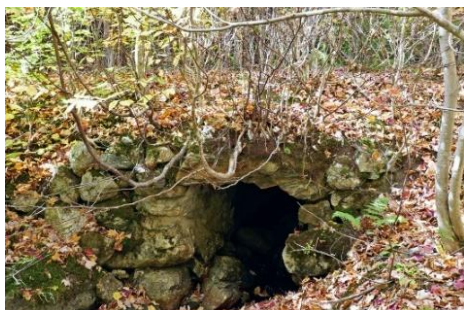
The beginning of John's site visit was just south of the Glen Ellis Falls parking area. John's inspection found *"no signs of any foot traffic, human or animal. I walked this 0.4 mile segment from north to south, and then reversed course and walked it south to north."*



At left above: *"This was taken from the crest of Spruce Hill looking south bound. As you can see this old corridor is filled with weeds, brush and saplings."* At right above: *"This was taken from just below the crest of Spruce Hill looking north bound. And once again, it's obvious that this old corridor is filled with weeds, brush and saplings."*



At left above: *"Some segments of the old corridor were filled with tightly-packed saplings which were challenging to navigate through."* At right above: *"This image shows the type of lovely forest on either side of the old corridor. I must admit that it was very tempting at times to head off the old corridor and into the surrounding woods."*



At left above: *"I found this culvert that runs under the old corridor. There might be more culverts similar to this."* Perhaps this is a remnant from the major improvement of 1910, possibly earlier.

At right above: *"This is a mystery. At about 0.1 mile from my starting point at the north end of the old corridor, I came across two parallel rows of large boulders. This photo was taken from behind the second row of boulders looking toward the old corridor. It appears that maybe this could have been some sort of pull-off for a picnic area, or something of that nature."*



In its 2015 study to improve Glen Ellis Falls parking, excerpt at right, the USFS proposed eventual reuse of some of the adjacent old Spruce Hill alignment: *"An accessible trail approximately 0.3 miles long would be constructed to a scenic vista near the top of the roadcut along Route 16. This trail would utilize the old Route 16 path behind the existing toilet building."*

At the top of the trail would be a vista area with safety fencing to discourage visitors from getting too close to the ledge. A small amount of clearing of brush and vegetation would be necessary to improve the view from the vista down the Ellis River valley to the south." How fortunate that the old Spruce Hill route may be revived for a modern purpose!



NORTH THRU NOTCH

Circa 1960, Route 16 through Pinkham Notch was completely rebuilt, the 1928 Spruce Hill improvement as well, radii of curves greatly expanded and the cross-section substantially widened. A dramatic impact was from relocation east by the AMC Camp. From a 1998 USFS memo on the history of AMC Camp parking: *"The lot parallels Route 16 and is the original roadbed for old Route 16. The central area is gravel with a paved strip of old roadbed running down the middle."* See photo lower right.



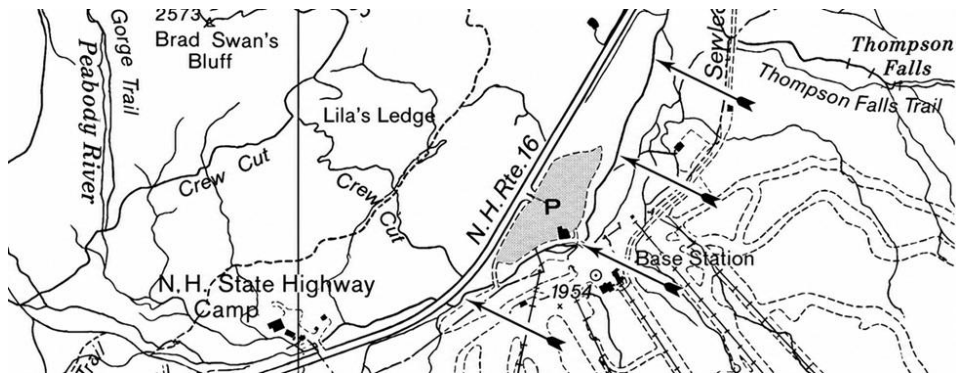
Above left Pinkham Notch Road in 1912 courtesy of Plymouth State University; below left 1937 AMC Notch parking on RT 16 courtesy of Forest History Society; at right RT 16 relocated easterly circa 1959, with Camp parking today along old RT 16

The Notch floor in front of the AMC Camp was relatively flat. Travelling north it had to descend at some point. From the 1872 *Eastman's White Mountain Guide*: Leaving the Notch *"the Peabody turns abruptly down the ravine."*



Quite a contrast, at left 1922 post card view of Pinkham Notch Road; at right view today aside ski area parking

From the 1889 *Glen House Book* moving north from Darby Field: "Away we go down the road, which now **falls precipitously** before us." So where is this abrupt decline today? The circa 1960 road work extended the relative flatness considerably north, pulling with it the necessary decline.



Before circa 1960 Route 16 followed the **east bank** of the Peabody marked by arrows; alignment today is on the **west bank** beyond ski area parking (P) (Base map public domain Mount Washington Range Map by Bradford Washburn)

Looking for remnants of the original descent along the east bank of the Peabody, John Compton conducted a field review on **10/zz/2026**. His findings:



At left along **east bank** of Peabody, 1916 Cutter Map shows original road passing Darby Field buildings; right search area for pre-1960 road remnants, State Highway Camp now on Darby Field

INSERT JOHN'S REPORT HERE

