

Sally's Pond and Discovery in 1840 that there was a way through the mountain for a road to Knowlton

Scattered through the Township of Bolton, in the north-eastern part, are several little gems of lakes and ponds but Sally's Pond, in the southern center part, is perhaps the crown jewel of them all. It is like a little sparkling dewdrop nestling among the hills which are nearby on every side. When the sun sinks behind the mountain it becomes a perfect mirror and it is well worthwhile to go there about sunset-time to enjoy the beauty of the effect upon the waters at twilight.

There are two legends as to how this beautiful little mountain pond got its name. One is that it was given the name "Sally" because an Indian woman with that name lived in a hut or cabin near its shore. The late David Cousens of Bolton Glen, who was born in 1846, told the writer that the cellar-hole of her habitation was still in evidence within his memory and that it was a few hundred feet from the pond on the west side of the road at a spot not far north-westerly of the George Pibus barn. Sally, he said, wove baskets and also made herb medicines. The other legend is that the pond was given its name by the surveyors when they surveyed, in 1842, the road from the Old Magog Road, in Bolton Pass, through to Knowlton and on to Gilman's Corner, where it again joined the Magog Road. The late Otis Norton said that Isman Coons used to tell that he helped the surveyors and that they decided they "would give the pond the name of Sally in honor of old Mrs. Hanson." (The wife of Nathan Hanson, whose maiden name was Sally Wadleigh). The surveyors boarded, Mr. Coons said, at Hanson's Hotel. It stood where H. E. Fraser's house stands today. No map has been found that shows the name of the Pond until one of comparatively recent years, but there is documentary evidence that the name dates back to as early as 1842.

Lester Ball who is still remembered by many people of this section of the country, when setting sable traps discovered that there was a natural way for a road through the Bolton Mountain by Sally's Pond from the old Magog Road in Bolton Pass. Fortunately, we have the account of his discovery in his own hand-writing. While his discovery may not rank with those of Cabot, Columbus, Cartier or other great explorers, it was important for Knowlton, because previous to the building of the road past Sally's Pond to Knowlton, (now part of Route 39), that place was hardly on the map. Here is what Mr. Ball

wrote: "In the Fall of 1840, I went to set up a line of sable traps and found a pass through Bolton Mountain by Sally's Pond to the old Magog Road at the foot of Bald Mountain." It is evident that he was walking eastwardly from Knowlton where he then lived. Continuing he wrote: "Went to see Col. P. H. Knowlton. He sent for Lindel Corey land surveyor and in a few years got a grant from the Government and built the road." The road was opened for travel about 1848. We have also the proces-verbal made by Lindel Corey of the survey of this road. It is dated, Brome 22nd July, 1842 and is labelled: "Proces Verbal of the survey of a route for a road from Baretop Mountain in Bolton to P. Gilman's in Brome." In it it is stated that the road commenced at a post on the Magog Road "about ten chains west of the Balled Mountain. . ." and ran north "to the west bank of a Brook which is the Outlet of a small Lake designated by the name of Sally's Pond. . ." The old Magog Road came over the mountain — as it still does — from Brome Corner and down into Bolton Pass but turned eastward and ran close to the south side of the Pass. Near the corner formed by the Magog Road and that new road is the house where William Gardner lived for many years. This house was built by Isman Coons sometime between 1854 and 1856 to replace a log house he previously built. "Uncle Bill" Gardner told the writer that Mr. Coons settled here, "just before the new road was built" and that he worked on the road and cut corduroy for it. A corduroy road was a road built of logs put down crosswise and used especially in wet or marshy places. Such roads gradually got very rough and it has been said that the best way to get money for roads in the early days was to have the Governor driven over the corduroy and it would shake some money out of the governor's coffers. It would also, we are sure, be good for the Governor, as it no doubt "shook the Very Devil out of him." The Pioneer Roads were full of



LESTER BALL
Born 1815. Died 1916. From a very old Tintype.

beauty because they followed the natural way, many of them having developed from a trail or bridal path; and the Pioneer Roadmaker built much differently than does the Highway Builder of today. If there was a hill in the way, instead of laying it low, he, if it were possible, made his road go around it; if there was a valley to be crossed, instead of filling and grading, he made his road descend into it and climb out on the other side; if there was a rock or ledge in the way, which made a sharp turn necessary, instead of removing it, he made the sharp turn and so the roads were full of almost right angled turns, which the old folks aptly called "The Fiddler's Elbow." He built leisurely, tranquil roads, full of surprises and pictures — full of variety. The old road through by Sally's Pond was just such a road — it had many "Fiddler's Elbow" turns, around rocks and obstructions. Shakespeare wrote that there were sermons in stones and if he was correct in saying this, and we reckon he was, then some parts of Bolton are sure full of sermons! The following story would apply to the rock filled woods near where the old Magog Road comes down the mountain. A guide was once taking a party of ladies on a tour and he pointed out to them a great quantity of rocks they passed at one place and mentioned that they had been deposited by glaciers. One of the ladies then asked him, "Where are the glaciers now?" and his answer was, "They have gone back for more rocks." We hope that they don't come back to our County with them just when the Brome County Rural Development Organization gets its survey and plans all made under the ARDA programme!

These lines seem very appropriate at this time in our history. They were written by a man named Chas. B. Thompson and have been found in a book published in the United States in 1905.

"The following lines may not be of use to you, but express in simple language a sentiment worth remembering, one which any citizen would do well to think of when patriotic thoughts enter his mind, hoping that 'May it ever be thus':

"No North, no South, no East, no West,
But one great nation Heaven blest."

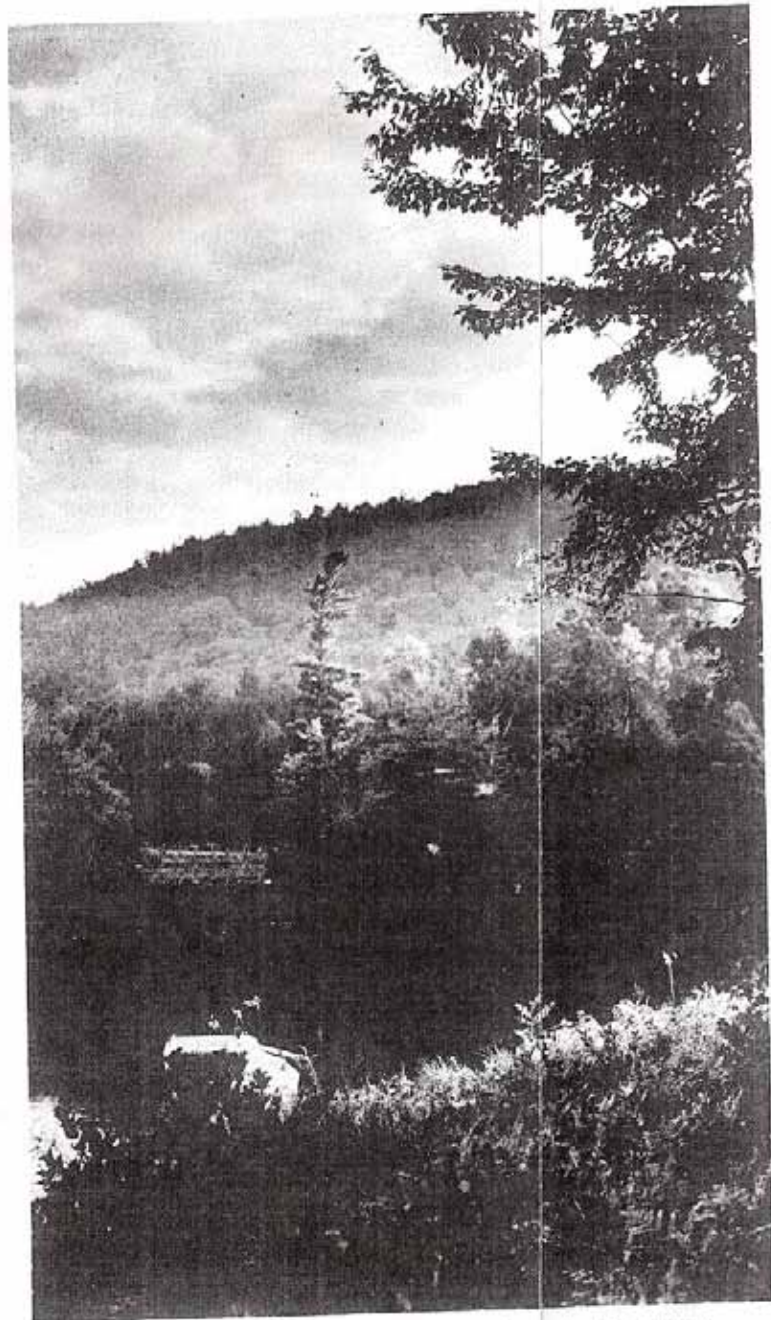
For many years there was a steam sawmill on the north shore of the pond. The late Otis Norton said that the first mill was built about the year 1893 by Malcolm Ross and another man whose name we do not know and was later sold to Wm. Randall, who in turn sold to Owen McLaughlin. There was a slide down the mountain for sliding logs into the Pond. The late Owen McLaughlin gave the following information

some years ago now. He said that he bought Randall's Mill which was a "small" one and he built a new mill in 1897, which burned in June 1898. In that same year (1898) McLaughlin rebuilt. It was a "very strong mill" in which he had a "100 H.P. Engine and Boiler with all modern machinery." He continued to operate that mill until about 1901 when he sold out to Frank Guthrie. Guthrie lost a large quantity of timber by fire (there were fires in this region in 1903 and in 1904). Then he sold his mill to a company and they moved the mill away. About 1906 or 1908, George H. Houldsworth acquired the property and built a new mill and house. These burned, Mr. McLaughlin thought, "about 1912." The accompanying picture of Houldsworth's mill and house was given to us by Mrs. George McClay of Bondville to whom our thanks are extended.

Fortunately, although this fire was a disaster for Mr. Houldsworth, it ended the "Mill Era" at the pond and there has been built up around the shore quite a number of summer cottages. At eventide, with the shadows creeping over the hills and gradually filling the valleys with darkness, with the Veery and other birds singing their evensong, all is so tranquil and beautiful—except for the noise of motor cars speeding along the highway.



The mill which stood at the north shore of Sally's Pond.



Beautiful Sally's Pond — Highway shows in center background.



This beautiful and unusual picture of the road leading to Bolton Pass was taken from the hills near Sally's Pond and is looking eastwardly. In the foreground is the George Pibus barn and the house, to the left of the road, just beyond the bend is the Peter Mock House. Mock settled here about the time the road was built, in the 1840's. The house no longer exists.