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## Hunt Farm: A Wilderness Depot

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## Hunt Farm: A Wilderness Depot

The Hunt Farm is a location along the East Branch of the Penobscot River and is part of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. On August 24, 2016, President Barack Obama used the Antiquities Act to declare 87,563 acres of mountains, forest and rivers as Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument. The monument is located in northern Penobscot County, Maine. This includes a large section of the upper East Branch of the Penobscot River known as a significant piece of the extraordinary natural and cultural landscape. The extraordinary significance of the Penobscot East Branch River system has long been recognized. A 1977 Department of the Interior study determined that the East Branch of the Penobscot River, including the Wassataquoik Stream, qualified for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System based on its “outstanding value as a nationally significant resource.”

The Hunt Farm location was perched on a high bank overlooking Hunt Mountain. While there are no longer any buildings the name remains as a reminder of past efforts in this wilderness setting. The farm/depot area has a long history but we will only look at the non-native settlement of the



*The Hunt farm perched on a high bank overlooking Hunt Mountain in 1894 (Bangor Public Library Merrill Collection)*

farm and its use as a depot for logging. While the lands have had a great deal of history and the area has been known by native people since the last glaciation more than eleven thousand years ago. The native peoples depended on this area for both its waterways for travel and the forest for

sustenance. Yearly, the people would travel from the coast to the interior and return with meat, fish, native plants for medicines and animal furs. The Penobscot people of the Wabanaki Nation consider the Penobscot River and Katahdin as a centerpiece of their culture. While the native people used the land, little is known about their travels outside of cultural stories. While the native people regarded the area as their home, the European immigrants saw it as wilderness to be tamed. The history of East Branch exploration by nonnative Americans begins with a survey commissioned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1793. In 1783, shortly after the War of Independence, the commonwealth reached a turning point, facing huge war debts, and its paper currency was worth only 10 percent of its value. It could no longer tax the people, so it turned to sales of its wildlands and opened a land office to survey the lands and place them on the market.<sup>1</sup> In 1793, William Bingham, a land speculator, began acquiring millions of acres in Maine that was to include the contract for an acquisition of 1-million-acre tract in the northern part of the district.<sup>2</sup> Bingham and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts would be unable to close the deal until the land was surveyed.

The 1793 survey of the area was completed by fifty-one-year-old Park Holland of Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, and forty-one-year-old Jonathan Maynard of Framingham, Massachusetts.<sup>3</sup> A few years earlier, they had made their marks as military officers; they were also close friends, which led to their appointment by the State of Massachusetts's Land Committee to survey the lands called the Great East Branch of the Penobscot River.<sup>4</sup> Their task was to survey a tract of land that was six miles wide on both sides of the river to be reserved for the "Indians." They arrived in Bangor on August 8, 1793, to start their work, finally reaching Nicatou<sup>5</sup> at a place they called in their journal the "Big Crotch," which was where the East Branch and West Branch of the Penobscot River join, on August 30.<sup>6</sup> On September 1, they decided to break the work up, with Park Holland pushing east and then north until he reached the French settlements on the St. John River and then heading back to the southwest, finally rejoining Jonathan Maynard somewhere on the East

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<sup>1</sup> Bennett, *Wilderness from Chamberland Farms*, 48.

<sup>2</sup> The area of the purchase allowed the Penobscot River to reach the Canadian River.

<sup>3</sup> Bennett, *Wilderness from Chamberland Farm*, 48.

<sup>4</sup> Porter, *Bangor Historical Magazine*.

<sup>5</sup> Currently called Medway.

<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Maynard field notes, 1793.

Branch of the Penobscot River. Jonathan Maynard continued up the East Branch, surveying as he went. This survey would be the beginning of the push into the wilderness for timber. In their notes, the surveyors described locations that would later become important to the first explorers and lumbermen. The reason for the survey was that at the end of the Revolutionary War, the Treaty of Paris failed to specify a clear highlands boundary between Maine and New Brunswick. The problem was that both countries interpreted the word *highlands* differently. The United States insisted that the “highlands” was the height of land, meaning those lands north of the St. John River watershed; on the other hand, the British felt that the highlands were the height of lands north of the Penobscot River watershed. The area in between these two rivers was a large area rich in wilderness timber, and the survey would help to make clear the boundary by laying claim to the lands that had been surveyed.

Shortly after Maine became a state in 1820 there would be another survey, the "Monument Survey" of the area was completed and Maine started selling off lands that had not perversely been sold by Massachusetts. The land barons from the south purchased as much of the land as they possible were able to buy. The land in township T3R7 was purchased by Edward Smith who in turn sold the land to a group of men from Gorham, which



*Tracy House at the entrance to the Stacyville Tote Road last jumping off spot before heading into the wilderness. (Bangor Public Library Merrill Collection)*

included Elihu Baxter and Charles Hunt, for a sum of \$2781. Then in June of 1831 Charles Hunt sold his shares of the township to his older brother, William H. Hunt<sup>7</sup> for \$1200<sup>8</sup>. Attracted by timber and cheap land in 1833 William H Hunt from Carthage and his friend, Hiram Dacey from Skowhegan left their families and headed north first to Danforth then onto Island Falls finally along

<sup>7</sup> Neff, J. W. 2017. An Intriguing Baxter-Hunt Connection. Private communication.

<sup>8</sup> Some sources indicate he paid one and half cents per acre but twenty cent per acre is would be closer to other purchases in the area

the Aroostook Trail<sup>9</sup> to T4R6<sup>10</sup>. In 1828, the lumber baron, Amos Patten of Bangor had purchased the land for timbering and started logging in the area just the west of T4R6 now known as Patten<sup>11</sup>. From Patten the two men travelled west into the wilderness until they reached the Seboeis River. It was there that William Hunt and Hiram Dacey constructed a raft to be used to float down the Seboeis River to the East Branch of the Penobscot River looking for land and a place to settle. Hiram Dacey decided on a location near where the Lunksoos Camps are now located on the west side of Lookout Mountain while Hunt continued down the East Branch of the Penobscot River



*The original Hunt farm in a Hardy photo from 1873 (Pattens Lumbermen's Museum)*

several miles before finding relatively flat and fertile discussed in the 1793 survey as a location to build his farm<sup>12</sup>. His farm would become known as the Hunt Farm. This farm was considered to be the wilderness gateway to the Wassataquoik Stream, Katahdin and beyond, it was

considered by most to be the limits of civilization and the last great wilderness in the east.<sup>13</sup> The farm was established to support the logging industry, but also served recreationists, scientists, artists and others who wanted to explore the Katahdin region or climb its mountains as a depot that even in the early years the manufacture of birch canoes was a Hunt industry.

After purchasing the land, William Hunt set men to work clearing an area of about 100 acres for planting hay and corn while using the lumber to construct a house and farm buildings. One of the

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<sup>9</sup> The Aroostook Trail had been spotted from Mattawamkeag to T4R6 in 1830 to bring settlers into the area.  
<sup>10</sup> Townships are primarily designated by the numbers 1 through 19 from south to north, while the ranges are counted from the easterly line toward the west, these numbers show the position in the state.  
<sup>11</sup> Coolong, D. 2017. *The History of Patten and Mount Chase*. Oliver Press. Mount Chase, ME.  
<sup>12</sup> Huntington, C. *The Hunt Farm - A History* Carl Sprinchorn Society News, Vol. 3, Summer 1996 pp. 2-7  
<sup>13</sup> Smith, E. W. 1958. *A treasury of the Maine Woods*. Frederick Fell, Inc. New York, NY.

first visitor described the building as a one and a half story farm house with a kitchen, several fireplaces built of hand-hewn square logs covered with boards. There were also several outbuildings



*The Tracy Farm where the stage coach owned by Simon Gates stopped (Pattern Lumbermen's Museum)*

including a large barn with room for storage and animals<sup>14</sup>. The men were able to produce 300 board feet of lumber each day using a whip saw. The boards were fastened to the building using wooden pegs. Once the house was built William Hunt returned to Carthage to bring his wife, Nizolla Gould Hunt and their nine children<sup>15</sup>

including one year old Oliver back to the farm. In 1934 Levi Hunt was to be the first child born at the wilderness Hunt Farm, then in just two years later in June of 1836 Joseph Hunt was born bringing the wilderness family to eleven children<sup>16</sup>. In the early years the Hunt family not only sold boards and lumber but were well known for selling salmon and as a resting spot for lumbermen, explorers and sportsmen. The farm quickly became an important center for exploration and commerce for the region.

In 1839, William H. Hunt was the leader of a group of local citizens who petitioned the Penobscot County Commissioners to make extensive improvements to the rough road that Hunt had constructed from the East Branch to the Aroostook Road in Sherman. This "County Road" proposal was intended to encourage homesteading and commerce along its length. Though it is

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<sup>14</sup> Neff, J. W. 2006. Katahdin: an historic journey. Appalachian Mountain Club Books, Boston, MA

<sup>15</sup> The Hunt clan consisted of William's wife Nizolla and their nine children: Lois (b. 1814), Charles (b. 1816), John 9b. 1818), William M. (b.1819), Sarah (b. 1822), Jane (b.1824), Clarissa (b.1826), Abigail (b.1828), and Oliver (b.1832).

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.geni.com/people/William-H-Hunt>

not clear whether or not the major improvements envisioned by the petitioners ever took place, some enhancements, even if minor, were likely made. The changes certainly hastened the start of logging across the river from the ford at Hunt's in the early 1840s. It is interesting that the present road from Stacyville to the Hunt Farm site follows the 1839 County Commissioner's survey layout.

According to Bert Hunt, William Hunt's grandson for weary travelers William Hunt kept a number of barrels of rum in a taproom for his guests. As the years went by, however, he was either influenced by the many clergymen, notably the Rev. Marcus Keep, who stayed there, or he just worried that having drink on hand resulted in too many unwarranted experiences at the inn. Legend has it that one day when nobody was around, he went down into the cellar and sampled one of the kegs, perhaps a bit too much. The next morning, he awoke with a hangover. So, he was all done selling rum and didn't want anything to do with it. He took the kegs outside, picking up an axe and smashed in the head of each barrel, letting the contents run out on the ground. From then on Hunt Farm was a dry hostel for travelers<sup>17</sup>. Life in the wilderness was difficult for the family of eleven; living from May to October at the farm then the Hunts would retire to their town house for the frigid winter months. Hunt and his wife labored for over two decades to provide services to loggers and recreationists alike, and those years had taken their toll. Their ten-year old son Oliver had been seriously affected by an outbreak of typhoid fever in 1842, a challenge for the whole family. On December 7 of 1842 his wife Nizolla died. Not long after her death he remarried to Deborah Staples, but it was never to be the same for William Hunt so, in 1848 William Hunt sold the farm house to his son William for almost twice what he had paid for it per acre and move into town. In 1847 the farm was described by the Young Botanical Survey as having 100 acres of the 175 acre farm planted with potatoes, oats and hay with 75 tons of hay harvest that year. Then in 1854 William Harmon Hunt, sixty-two at the time, sold the rest of the farm to his son William M. Hunt, then thirty-five. The sale included two lots of land of fifty-nine acres and eighty-eight acres for the sum of \$500. For a few years, both the father and mother often made the trek to the farm each summer to help the son run the inn. It should be noted that Lyman and Irving O. Hunt, William H. Hunt's grandsons (sons of William M. Hunt), constructed a sporting camp on Nesowadnehunk Stream on Katahdin's southwest flank in the early 1890s. In the late 1890s they moved their operation upstream and built the famed Kidney Pond Camps, now a part of Baxter

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<sup>17</sup> Kimball, M.R. Hunt's Farm Down East , April 1975, pp. 12 - 15

State Park. It was Irving O. Hunt who blazed and cut the Hunt Trail up Katahdin's Southwest

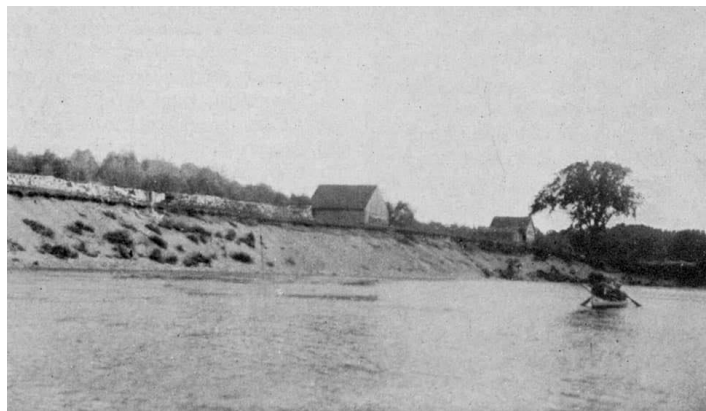


*The Hunt Farm ford looking down-stream from the from in 1894 (Bangor Public Library Merrill Collection)*

Ridge to the summit.

William M. Hunt continued to manage the Hunt Farm until 1874 when it was sold to Chauncey R. Patterson who used it in support of loggers because of the shallow water and wagons could ford the river easily. William M. Hunt purchased and moved to the old Cram Farm in Sherman, a farm that also took in guests at times. In 1881 C.R. Patterson purchased the Deacy Clearing up river

and constructed a corduroy road<sup>18</sup> connecting to two wilderness farms. In 1881 Simon Gates<sup>19</sup> of Winn purchased the Hunt Farm from Patterson under the condition that he would not use the buildings at Deacy Clearing for loggers or sports while Gates built a new hotel. In 1885 Patterson moved over the property line, leased land from George Adams of Bangor and build what would be called the Patterson House for sports and loggers. This was followed by a new road from the townline on the Stacyville Tote Road to his location and a cable ferry to cross the river. This shifted exploration, lumbermen and sportsman from the Hunt Farm to the Patterson House.



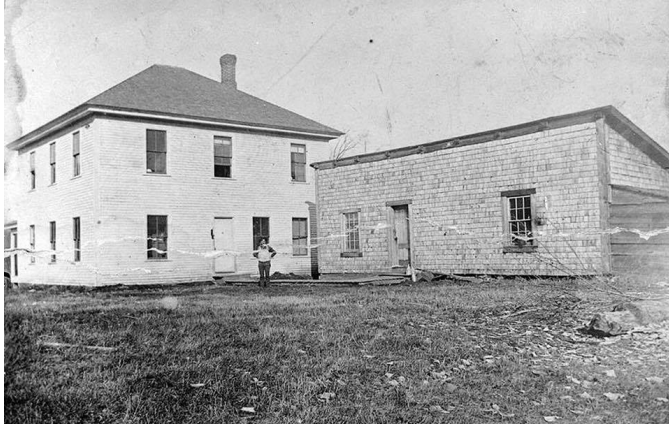
*Hunt Farm and elm tree with timber for building the 1881 corduroy road (Patten Lumbermen's Museum)*

<sup>18</sup> Corduroy Road has timber placed perpendicular to the road to allow easy passage by wagon during wet season.

<sup>19</sup> Simon Gate operated the stagecoach that carried people to these wilderness locations.



Back at the Hunt farm Simon B. Gates had purchased the Hunt Farm because the buildings were falling down. Simon B. Gates. Gates was already the “gentlemanly” proprietor of hotels in Winn and Mattawamkeag and apparently saw a potential opportunity to restore the fortunes of the venerable farm inn on the bank of the East Branch. After years of neglect and abandonment, the older buildings at the site had deteriorated beyond repair and a fire in 1900 destroyed the old house and some of the attached buildings. He would tear the remains down and remove all of the old buildings and use the clearing to build the first large hotel which he called the Matagamon House.



*The Matagamon House as it appeared from the river bank  
(Patten Lumbermen’s Museum)*

The Matagamon House was a grand affair located on a bluff above the river. It was a four-square house that had two full stories with a large roofed porch. In 1893, the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad, affectionately known as the “B & A,” was completed through the Millinocket area and north to a new rail station at Stacyville at Davidson and another at Sherman with one just downstream at Grindstone. It

made the East Branch of the Penobscot far more convenient to reach as well, a boon to those who wished to canoe, hunt, and fish along the East Branch and up its tributaries. In 1903 after the big wildfire the Matagamon House was purchased by Madison Tracy of Stacyville as a stepping off location for his sporting camps on Deer Island down river. The owner, Madison M. Tracy of Stacyville, had been a major player in the history of access to Katahdin for quite a few years. In the late 1880s he co-founded what became the Katahdin Lake Wilderness Camps, cleared a trail in 1916 into the South Basin for the second

**Moose, Deer, Sea Salmon, Trout,**  
are only part of what you find in the rich game preserve about



**MATTAGAMON HOUSE,**  
at HUNT FARM, East Branch of the Penobscot. House is charmingly located, roomy and well furnished; has best of natural advantages, including ice-cold spring water. Seven miles from Stacyville by buckboard; Mount Katahdin close by. Will add new camps in 1902.

**Address**  
**M. M. TRACY, Hunt Farm,**  
**P. O. Stacyville, Me.**  
Open all the year.

*Ad for the Matagamon House by Madison Tracy in the B&A Magazine in 1905.*

Appalachian Mountain Club August Camp to the region, and then helped build the short-lived Sandbank Trail to Katahdin Lake in 1920. The Sandbank Trail was built by Stacyville and

Sherman residents who wanted to be sure their towns would be selected as the starting points if any road were to be constructed into the areas being proposed at that time as a preserve or national park – an interesting portent of a later twenty-first century development. The 1906 ad identified Joe Whittier as the proprietor and stated that as many as twenty-five persons could be



**The  
Mattagamon  
House**

Is Right in the Heart of the  
East Branch Game Country  
—Seven miles over Good  
Roads from Stacyville on the  
B. & A. Twelve Miles by  
Canoe from Grindstone

**It's a Great Region for Fishing and for Big Game Hunting**

<p>Wissataquoik Stream, Famous for Trout, within half a mile. Other Fishing Waters nearby are Big Sebols, Little Sebols and Sandbank Brook. Good Trout Ponds in this Section.</p>	<p>Big Game, Moose and Deer are very Plentiful in this Locality. Outlying Camps for Convenience of Sportsmen. <b>THE BEST ROUTE UP KATAHDIN FROM HERE.</b></p>
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Our Camps are Comfortable and Clean, and our Table can't be Beaten. Rates: \$1.50 per day. Best of references from People we have Pleasid.

**Irving E. Palmer, Proprietor      Stacyville, Me.**

accommodated each night for a dollar per person.

By 1912 the proprietor had become Irving E. Palmer according to an ad in the 1912 edition of the Bangor & Aroostook's "In the Maine Woods" where they told of uncommonly large salmon and trout caught by fishermen. Irving E. "Pud" Palmer of Stacyville raised the cost by had fifty percent from \$1.00 to an immensely more expensive \$1.50 per day. That ad glowingly described where great

*Matagamon House ad from the B&A in 1912.*

fishing was available and boasted the presence of "Big Game Moose and Deer for the taking. Our table can't be Beaten....Best of referenes from People we have Pleasid." Irving Palmer built a second building for he and his wife with Gates still as the landlord. Palmer later tore down the first Mattagamon House and built a second one at or near the same site. The Palmers later built a new log cabin next to the new inn where they lived while running the hostelry. After a major flood in 1919 the Matagamon House started to see increased use for a very short period of time but by 1944 it set on the bluff above the river abandoned and falling into disrepair.



*In the early years (1850) the elm tree was a marker used by travelers (Patten Lumbermen's Museum)*

The site itself, however, took on a semblance of new life for a short period beginning in 1944 when artist Carl Sprinchorn (a Boston artist), along with his one-man support team, Nat Turner, from Yarmouth Nova Scotia who had moved to Happy Corner Patten in 1914, occupied the old log cabin. Sprinchorn had earlier struck up a strong friendship with Caleb Scribner, at that time not only the local Maine Fish and Game warden for the area but a rather good amateur artist in his own right. During Sprinchorn's prior art forays over a twenty-year period to Shin Pond and its nearby lumber camps, he and Scribner had often visited the old Hunt Farm site. One day his friend suggested to the artist that the site might be an ideal place for him to find inspiration for his artistic talents. He accepted Scribner's invitation to spend the fall and winter of 1944 at the Hunt site. The local carpenter, trapper, and woodsman, Nat Turner, was engaged to fix up the old log cabin and to stay with Sprinchorn to take care of the necessary chores and cooking. This freed the artist to spend his days exploring the landscape and painting – both outdoors and indoors. On September 2, 1944, Carl and Nat journeyed with their supplies on foot and wagon from Patten by way of the Happy Corner Road, and after canoeing their supplies down the river from Lunksoos, finally arrived at the log cabin. In the weeks and months to follow, Sprinchorn roamed along the East Branch and up the Wassataquoik Valley, completing quite a number of paintings, some on site and others completed indoors. Nat continued to occupy the log cabin off and on for a number of years, but eventually the structure joined others on the site and fell into disrepair. A major spring freshet in 1949 seriously eroded the riverbank again and brought down a giant elm tree that had stood beside the buildings. The tree had been a prominent landmark for canoeists as long as anyone could remember.

Nate Hudson who had taken up residence in the Palmer home finally tore down what remained of the Matagamon House in 1951. The wood was used to build a fence for his garden<sup>20</sup>. The remains of the small cabin used by Nat Hudson was finally claimed in

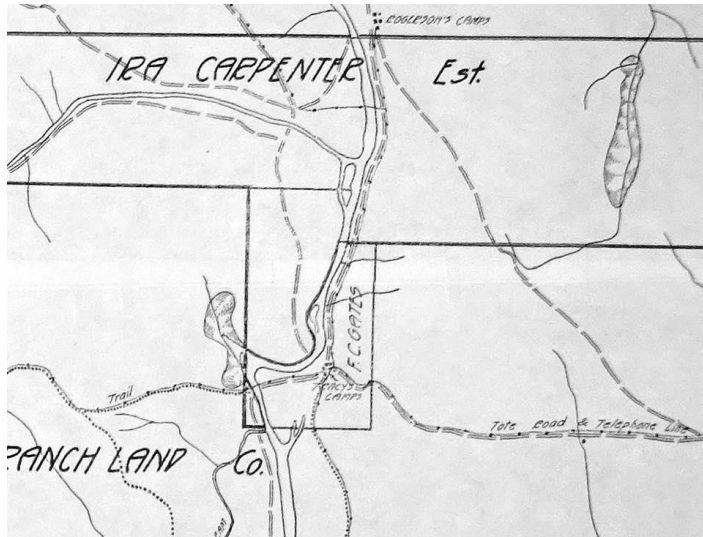


*The Hunt farm after the 1949 flood with the remains of the building on the left side (Patten Lumbermen's Museum)*

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<sup>20</sup> Huntington, C. The Hunt Farm - A History Carl Sprinchorn Society News, Vol. 3, Summer 1996 pp. 2-7

the late 1950's by the river when the Matagamon dam, owned by Bangor Hydro, had to release a large amount of water in to the river which when added to the spring flood washed away the sandy



1931 Tax map showing what remained of the Gates property  
(Sewall Company Map)

bluff with the remains of the buildings where the once famous elm tree stood on the river bank.

Sometime in the late 1950s the land was sold by the Gates Family to the East Branch Land Company for the purpose of logging. It was later purchased by Herbert Haynes and his Lakeshore, Inc. There were two in-holdings one to the Robinson Timberlands, Inc in 1999 where they constructed a camp that remained for several years before a

controversy over river alterations caused the lands to be returned to Lakeshore, Inc. while the other was a quick claim deed dated January 6, 1994 to small lots owned by Donald Piktialis and company, a group of sportsmen from Boston. The group still owns the inholding including a one room cabin. In a 2019 discussion with the owners, they felt that the cabin had only ten to fifteen years before it would be claimed by the river as was the Hunt Farm building.


Besides the small cabin inholding, today all that remains of this once important hub of wilderness activity are two wells, barrel hoops, cans, wire fencing and other small artifacts. With even such a short stay along the river William Hunt's legacy still lives on today from the name "Hunt Farm" with a number of local family names such as Gould, Boynton, Rice, Rush and Morse as well as the name Hunt still residing in the area. Even the Fourth of July Road Race, in Bangor held every year is named after one of the descendants of William Hunt. The Walter Hunt Memorial Race is named for Walter Hunt was born in Stacyville and graduated from Shermen High School.

## Early Visitors to the Hunt Farm

For years the Hunt farm was the gateway to the Wassataquoik Stream Valley. The importance of the Wassataquoik Stream valley plays a role for several reasons. It was a combination of many things, the weather and natural forces, the rough difficult terrain caused by the ice sheet, economic hard times, and the tension along the border with our neighbors to the north. The Hunt Farms was considered to be one of the last outpost of civilization for travelers/scientists and the jumping off point for loggers going into the wilderness. But in 1837 disaster struck with the great depression lasting until 1843<sup>21</sup> which coupled with the 1838 Aroostook border war, logging in the valley would begin. The border dispute started over timber, for years timber in the north country had floated down the St John River and they wanted money for the use of the river and the lands that they claimed. Roads were pushed north to protect the countries northern border. The Military Road from Bangor to Houlton, passing through Macwahoc, was completed in 1832 then by 1840 Aroostook Road<sup>22</sup> had been completed north from Macwahoc to Fort Kent running through Patten, now known as Route 11. With conflict to the north, cheap land and improved access to timber it all began in 1841 with the fords crossing the river at the farms and with the building of the road up the Wassataquoik Valley for timber cutting. But the search for timber was to bring others who wanted to explore to the area. With Hunt Farm established coupled with better roads from Bangor the first non-native American explorers and scientist started coming to the area.

**The Nearest Large Camp  
to Mt. Katahdin**

IS THE



## Lunksoos House ::


at the Ferry, Penobscot  
East Branch, 8 miles  
from Patten.

Close by the famous Wassataquoik river, and surrounded by splendid trout ponds. Here deer are abundant and moose plenty, and there is ideal canoeing on river, streams and lakes. **The Lunksoos House** offers first-class accommodations in every respect; is an especially desirable resort for families; has private lodges and also string of camps on the Wassataquoik trail which are the only camps at the north spur of Katahdin. Daily mails. Trains met. Guides, teams and saddle horses furnished.

**Ride to Katahdin**

The only saddle trail in to Katahdin basin starts from the Lunksoos House, following the Wassataquoik valley, passing Katahdin lake and south end of Turner Mt., crossing Sandy stream, rounding the head of Sandy pond, and then climbing up roaring brook to the South basin, where a comfortable camp is located. The easiest, most picturesque way to visit Maine's greatest mountain.

Prompt attention given all requests for circulars or special information. Address



**L. B. ROGERS & SON, Patten, Maine.**

<sup>21</sup> Rezneck, S. 1935. The Social History of an American Depression, 1837-1843. The American Historical Review Vol., No. 4 July 1935 pp. 662-667.

<sup>22</sup> Howe, J. Aroostook County Historical Timeline. Unpublished paper

In the spring of 1832, the distinguished ornithologist John James Audubon sketching the flora and fauna for his 1838 publication “Birds of America<sup>23</sup>” traveled down the military road from Houlton to Bangor and remarked about the beauty of the valley below Katahdin. The first visitor to the Hunt Farm was in September 1837 when Charles T. Jackson, recent Harvard College graduate and the first state geologist traveled the river carrying out a geological survey for the state. He had never seen the area but his brother-in-law Ralph Waldo Emerson had brought back stories of the area from a Bangor visit<sup>24</sup>. In 1838 Ezekiel Holmes went up the river looking for a water route to Aroostook County and made comments about mistakes he found in Greenleaf’s 1829 map of Maine<sup>25</sup>.

The first recorded ascent of what was probably Katahdin’s Hamlin Peak approaching from Hunt’s was made by Bostonians Edward Everett Hale (grandson of Nathan Hale of Revolutionary War fame) and William Francis Channing in 1845. Channing was the author of *The Man without a Country*. Channing was a scientist and the son of the famous Unitarian theologian William Ellery Channing. From Hunt’s they were taken by boat to the north bank of the Wassataquoik where they approached the mountain via the Wassataquoik tote road, recently established to support logging operations, finishing their climb from the north. The mountain guide Rev. Marcus Keep started traveling the area in 1846 and guiding parties to the Katahdin area out of the Hunt Farm. They were artist that came to visit the area for its natural beauty, in the 1852 Frederick Church and the Hudson River School of American Landscape painters made the first of five trips to the area painting the natural landscapes. There were scientists that visited the area in 1861 geologist Charles H. Hitchcock and agriculturalist Ezekiel Holmes traveled the area conducting their scientific research while surveying the natural resources of Katahdin and the Wassataquoik Valley. In 1900 the botanist Merritt L. Fernald traveled the area, as his father Merritt C. Fernald, President of the University of Maine had in 1874. Harvard professor Charles E. Hamlin visited in 1879, 1880, and 1881. During the latter trip he persuaded Marcus Keep, then 65 years old, to accompany him one last time to the Great Basin on Katahdin.

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<sup>23</sup> Little, D., Neff, J. and Whitcomb. *Penobscot East Branch Lands: A Journey Through Time*. Elliotsville Plantation, Inc. Portland, ME.

<sup>24</sup> Neff, J. W. 2006. *Katahdin: an historic journey*. Appalachian Mountain Club Books, Boston, MA

<sup>25</sup> Avery, M. 1929. The story of the Wassataquoik, a Maine epic. *The Maine Naturalist* Sept. 1929:83-96.

Henry David Thoreau made trips to Maine in 1846, 1853 and 1857, each of which followed ancient Wabanaki canoe routes through vast, primitive wilderness. He climbed high on “Ktaadn” in 1846, visited Chesuncook Lake with Penobscot guide Joe Attean in 1853, and reached distant Eagle Lake in the Allagash with Penobscot guide Joe Polis in 1857 before returning to Indian Island via the East Branch of the Penobscot River. Henry David Thoreau floated past the Hunt Farm with his companions Edward S. Hoar and Penobscot guide, Joseph Polis in 1857, commenting that they “stopped to get some sugar, but found that the family had moved away, and the house was unoccupied, except temporarily by some men who were getting the hay”. During this trip he also camped near the Oxbow to the north and the mouth of the Wassataquoik Stream. He travelled using a map produced by George W. Coffin that is dated August 1, 1835. Imagine traveling through the wilds of Maine using a map that rough today. There is a great deal of variation between the map and how the river exists today<sup>26</sup>.

In 1879, a sickly twenty-one year old Theodore Roosevelt make a trip into the wilderness with his guide from Island Falls, William Sewell. William “Bill” Sewall from Island Falls the guided and young Theodore “Teddy” Roosevelt would become lifelong friends during this trip to Katahdin by way of the Hunt Farm and Katahdin Lake. While crossing the Wassataquoik Stream he lost one of his boots but would not give up making the trip in moccasins. Theodore Roosevelt would remember the trip with great satisfaction in later years. Roosevelt scholars feel that it was this trip that started his realization of the importance of wilderness and its protection.



This 1879 photo of Sewall (left) Dow (center) and Roosevelt (right) before heading into the wilderness. *Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University.*

<sup>26</sup> Little, D., Neff, J. and Whitcomb. Penobscot East Branch Lands: A Journey Through Time. Elliotsville Plantation, Inc. Portland, ME.

## Hunt Farm Tract

Roxanne Quimby purchased the 3,071 acre Hunt Farm parcel from Lakeville Shores, LLC on July 31, 2007. In 2011, she finally began to articulate her very clear vision of what she wanted to do with her land by creating a national park and her reasons why she supported the concept. She also made it clear that some leases would be canceled; on others, the prices of the leases would go to fair market value, which caused some leases to go from \$25 per year to \$1,500 in the first year. She also indicated that hunting, trapping and the use of motorized vehicles would be prohibited on her lands, with gates starting to appear. In January 2011, she sold a conservation easement for the Hunt parcel in T3 R8 for \$514,198 with assistance from the Land for Maine's Future Program and then uSFS, allowing the state to control the ITS 85 snowmobile trail. On May 9, 2011, in a meeting in Millinocket, Roxanne Quimby finally shared with the public her intent to make her lands a gift to the federal government in 2016, the 100th birthday of the National Park System. The Hunt parcel would become one of thirteen parcel to make up her gift. The gift would become Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument with a mandated to protect and preserve all resources, not only for today but also for tomorrow and for the children of the future generations. As such, you are not allowed to remove any natural or cultural objects, including fossils, rocks, historical artifacts, animals or plants. The context that fossils and artifact are found in is extremely important, so they should never be moved. To truly understand the reason why Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument has come to exist and what makes it so unique, you should take the time to read the proclamation that created the monument on August 24, 2016, by order of President Barack Obama. This is a special place of wilderness forest and rivers that most people across the country would never have a chance to experience if it were not for the monument. This monument will give families a chance to see what happens as an industrial forest is slowly turned back into a wilderness forest. The martin, spruce grouse, moose, black bear and lynx have their own preferred habitats and can be seen throughout the monument by visitors, a testament to its return to a more natural state. The Hunt Farm and its visitors were specifically pointed out for their importance in the Proclamation.

*"In the 1800s, the infrastructure that developed to support the logging industry also drew hunters, anglers, and hikers to the area. In the 1830s, within 2 miles of one another on the eastern side of the Penobscot East Branch, William Hunt and Hiram Dacey established farms to serve loggers, which soon also served recreationists, scientists, and others who wanted to explore the Katahdin region or climb its mountains. Just across the East Branch from the Hunt and Dacey Farms (the latter now the site of Lunksoos Camps) lies*



*the entrance to the Wassataquoik Stream. In 1848, the Reverend Marcus Keep established what is still called Keep Path, running along the Wassataquoik. to Katahdin Lake and on to Mount Katahdin. From that time until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the favored entryway to the Katahdin region started on the east side of Mount Katahdin with a visit to Hunt or Dacey Farm, then crossed the East Branch and ascended the valley of the Wassataquoik Stream.*

*Henry David Thoreau—who made the “Maine Woods” famous through his publications—approached from the headwaters of the East Branch to the north. With his Penobscot guide Joe Polis and companion Edward Hoar in 1857, on his last and longest trip to the area, he paddled*

*Dacey Farm with just a brief stop at Hunt Farm. He wrote about his two nights in the Katahdin Woods and Waters area—the first at what he named the “Checkerberry-tea camp,” near the oxbow just upriver from Stair Falls, and the second on the river between Dacey and Hunt Farms where he drank hemlock tea.*

*During his 1879 Maine trip on which he summited Mount Katahdin, Theodore Roosevelt followed the route across the East Branch and up the Wassataquoik. As Roosevelt later recalled, he lost one of his hiking boots crossing the Wassataquoik but, undaunted, completed the challenging trek in moccasins. Many including Roosevelt himself have observed that his several trips to the Katahdin region in the late 1870s had a significant impact on his life, as he overcame longstanding health problems, gained strength and stamina, experienced the wonder of nature and the desire to conserve it, and made friends for life from the Maine Woods.”*