

THE ROCKS IN OUR HEADS

Interlude VI *Pelle Camping*

Woodgate, NY (with Beth, Judy and Tony;
Laura and Paul); Summer, 2009

Flagstaff, AZ •

• Farmington, NM

New Orleans •

Woodgate •

Stockbridge •

Bar Harbor •

Map Legend

- Lodging for a previous trip
- Lodging for this trip

A Word on the Trip Diaries and Their Odd Titles

Loie has always taken notes on our trips; I used to struggle with a lot of gear and took pictures. At some point she got a small camera and took over the photography. Before digital photography and personal computers, Loie and I used to make picture albums for our trips. Now we've gone digital!

As you may have read in the Introduction document and the diary for *Driving Yo*, we've been taking trips we call Driving the Stone Age. That's a long story, but we've both been interested in old stuff for a long time, so we took one trip in 1999, to the Scottish Highlands and out islands, looking for what we thought would be a good introduction to the beginnings of Western Civilization in the Neolithic monuments so prevalent there. We decided we weren't seeing the *beginning*, but that it was fun nonetheless. (See *The Rocks in our Heads, Driving the Stone Age I: Highlands and Islands*.) And we got the Europe bug, so went to Italy and France, sometimes on trips that were mainly Driving the Stone Age, sometimes not.

So as the trip diaries and albums accumulated, and when we created a Life List of prehistoric sites, I started to name the trips. We had *DtSAs*, and *Interludes*: trips with few or no prehistoric sites.

Then, I started to write an essay based on our thoughts garnered driving the Stone Age, and a whole lot of reading. Loie didn't like the working title, so I changed it to *The Rocks in Our Heads*. When the Trip Diaries went digital, I decided to munge the two projects by including a serial version of the essay at the ends of the diaries.

So now we have *The Rocks in Our Heads: DtSAs* and *The Rocks in Our Heads: Interludes*, both of which may end with an essay installment.

Documentation Notes

In the beginning, Loie wrote out her Trip Diaries in longhand in notebooks. For our trip "Driving the Stone Age X, *The Oldest Stones*" she bought a netbook computer and began to write her diaries with it. That made formatting the diaries a lot easier!

But there were a few trips since that one where lugging the netbook was less than congenial, and she went back to hand-written notes.

Her handwriting is beautiful, and I wanted to preserve some aspects of it. In the Trip Diaries it has a few short-hand style shortcuts. So, when you see $\&$ meaning "and," or @ meaning "at," or "w/" meaning "with" you will know that I have transcribed a hand-written diary.

Navigation Tips

These interactive PDFs include...

- a Bookmarks List for Days and their individual events, use the Bookmarks; we hope your device will make that easy;
- a clickable/tappable Table of Contents, and;
- various hyperlinks.

You may also just page through by...

- scrolling, clicking Page Down buttons, or;
- right side tapping/right left swiping;
- depending on your viewing device.

▶ Zoom the pictures to examine details.

Table of Contents

Preparation

Day 1: Wednesday, August 12, 2009—Departure, Bingham's; Cortland

Day 2: Thursday, August 13, 2009—Arrival; at the Camp

Day 3: Friday, August 14, 2009—On the Lake; Into Old Forge; Eighth
Lake and Raquette; Old Forge

Day 4: Saturday, August 15, 2009—At Home on the Water

Day 5: Sunday, August 16, 2009—Return

Afterword

Great Camps

Preparation

Loie's work colleague Beth had been saying for ages that we should come to her parents' "camp" in the southern Adirondacks. Of course it wasn't a camp like in backpacking camping. It's a beautiful home on a lake shore. Some old tradition of the wealthy people calling their immense summer home lodges "camps" has filtered down to we lesser folks.

Our friends Mary and Ed know something about the area, and gave us some good pointers on how to get there and things to do and see.

Laura and Paul were interested in a few days on a lake; Paul is a great boating and paddling enthusiast.

So off we went!

Day 1: Wednesday, August 12, 2009—Departure, Bingham's; Cortland

9⁴⁷ PM August 12.

We decided to stop in Cortland, about 25 miles south of Syracuse.

We left our house at 3:15 + generally made good time—some road work slowdowns, one bit of rush hour around Harrisburg. 1 bathroom break @ 150 m—10 minutes, then we decided to have home cooking @ Bingham's*—about 7–7⁴⁵ish. We bought a blueberry pie + a slice of death by chocolate cake for in the hotel room snack. Food was hot lump—B had chicken + biscuits w/gravy; good + salty + lots of it. I, mashed potatoes + cabbage rolls.

Back on the road, we decided to stop about 25 south of Syracuse—in a Ramada Inn off 81 in Cortland.

King size bed!

We saw half of a double rainbow—passing by Wilkes-Barre, around 6¹⁵ PM. Lots of clouds + blue sky coming + going all day. North of W-B, B started seeing white bark birch trees—indicating a new temperature zone.

The drive is a no-brainer, mostly 65 mph highway, mostly straight.

Gorgeous sunset.

Too many trucks!

Occasionally 1 lane. Speed changes from 65 to 55 to 65, and once to 45. But, a drool drive for sure.

P.S. This is the trip of massages!

* Mary told us we should make an effort to find it and eat there. She was right!

<https://www.binghamsrestaurant.com/orderze/default.aspx>

Day 2: Thursday, August 13, 2009—Arrival; at the Camp

Written Thursday, 8 A.M.

Gassing up yo leave Cortland:Fog starting to lift. Humid, pleasant, not chilly or warm yet. Mile 51 on I 81 NY.

X 16, drifting, not in gear, Bucky had to BRAKE because he was catching up to the driver in front of us who was motoring!

The Trip of Places—Ithaca, Rome, Russia, Poland, Cincinnati, Apulia, Verona.

Written Friday

B + I arrived around 11 AM yesterday, expecting L + P @ noon. We had trouble with the final directions + had to call Beth for help; she came + retrieved us @ the White Lake Inn parking lot. As we knew L + P had no cell phone + expected to arrive @ noon, we decided to hang around the house. I checked my phone @ 1¹⁵ + lo + behold, a message from Laura!

“It’s noon, we’re in Scranton, we’ll be there.” We all figured that would put them here by 3¹⁵–3³⁰.

Around 2 Beth + I considered taking out a kayak, then decided against it—about 15 minutes later the sky opened + it poured rain.

After the rain I had trouble getting a cell signal even up on the road. Finally got one around 3³⁰—briefly—long enough to hear a new message from Laura, that there was a glitch in the directions + if there were any more call on . . . + gave a 717 #. I didn’t get it all + then couldn’t get another signal. Luckily, she then called the camp #, they were @ Alder Creek + arriving shortly. B updated them. Laura had bought a cell phone the day before!

Nice supper, conversation, deck sitting, BEAUTIFUL clear

starry night, Perseids.







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Day 3: Friday, August 14, 2009—On the Lake; Into Old Forge; Eighth Lake and Raquette; Old Forge

Written Friday morning

Little Long Lake. Cool, dewy, cloudless.

Now, Tony out getting the paper + mailing a letter, Judy around the house, Paul + Beth are out paddling, Laura is up, B sleeping.

1¹⁵ PM. We kayaked to the Nazareth end of the lake with Beth this morning thru the lily pad field. Bucky wanted to see the dam, so we pulled out to walk around that and not be swept over. Beth went barefoot, hiphopping all the way. We chatted with caretaker Mr. Howard. On the paddle back we spotted P + L in the paddle boat.

Decided to skip [Sagamore Great Camp](#)—2½ hour tour to get in—didn't feel we had time. Left P + L asleep on the dock.

Now, in Old Forge at [5 Corners Café](#) for lunch, 2 guys playing electric *Sitting On the Dock of the Bay* music next to our outdoor seating. Busy tourist town.

Written Saturday 1 PM

We went from lunch to the Friday farmer's market—by St. Bartholomew's Church. About 20 vendors, lots of people; produce, cheese, flowers, eggs, meat. We bought 2 goat cheese rounds + a tub of goat cheese feta. Then on to the general store* for a new map + postcards. Next, the Visitor's Ctr, which had nothing useful for this trip.

On to our drive up 28 N. We'd already decided to take a pass on [Sagamore Great Camp](#) + just drive + look for lake

* [Old Forge Hardware](#): The Adirondack's Most General Store. Apparently a famous attraction.

views. We went as far as Eighth Lake and Raquette—all beautiful. We drove back the 4 mile gravel road to Sagamore GC in case we could see something, but no luck. Coming back drove the South Shore Rd. from inlet to old Forge—still not close to the lake, but a quiet whole tree-lined drive.

In Old Forge we stopped at the 2 mountain man stores + at the 2nd one I found a pair of brown leather Teva sandals—reminiscent of the Hush Puppies I loved, but much more styley, so I bought—on sale 20% off (\$80 → \$66). And we bought 3 bottles of wine.**

Finally, home for pork, tomato salad, mashed potatoes, pole beans (all fresh vegs from Mary + Ed, Laura + local NY state). Finished blueberry pie + chocolate from Germany (Tony ate most of the chocolate).

More wine, talk, stars + music on the deck.

** Somewhere in here there was something about our telling Paul about the stores having sales on boats and his investigating that. Or about going for paddling lessons?































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SEVENTH LAKE



RAQUETTE LAKE



























KIDS NEED
NOT DRUG



KIDS NEED BUCKS
NOT DRUGS

Two dark glass bottles, likely wine or beer, are placed on the table.

Two small glass shakers, one for salt and one for pepper, are on the table.

A bag of crackers is visible on the table.

A large white plastic bag, possibly containing food or supplies, is on the table.



Day 4: Saturday, August 15, 2009—At Home on the Water

1 PM. Light breeze, pleasant, some clouds, a little humidity.

Now, Saturday—not up till 9 AM. Beth + Tony Bolan to Utica for chores + errands. Judy frying up a zucchini—yummy! Preparing to make lasagna, so a big pot of sauce on the stove. Paul + Laura in the double kayak, Bucky + me in the canoe, out for a paddle to the northeast end of LLL. It began clear + gradually clouded a bit, though pleasant. We got all the way to the end, including a little exploration towards Otter Creek, but beavers had blocked it. We saw several beaver lodges, some nearly submerged by high water. Loads of white lilies + quite a few pitcher plants. In

The paddle back had us going against a bit of wind that had come up, enough to make little waves, but not making it too difficult.

It didn't take long for B + P to mess around with a rowboat + then they went out again. Paul in canoe, B in a rowboat—Hiawatha + Minnehaha. Laura's asleep on a chair cushion on the deck + P + B are returning to camp. I think they'll be ready for lunch. Tony is mowing the lawn.

All the cats are home.

Written Sunday

Back to Sat—Judy fried up squash + zucchini, shredded to nosh on all day. She made 2 lasagnas + her own noodles—4 eggs, 1 cup flour, 1 c water = 1 batch, cooked on the griddle like pancakes.

We plowed through more wine, B made a salad using the goat feta + tomatoes. As soon as supper was over—about 9³⁰—I

went to bed. Oh yes—bought an apple crumb pie + Beth + I made gluten-free brownies (with chocolate ice cream) for dessert.

































Day 5: Sunday, August 16, 2009—Return

10⁵⁴ AM. Warm, humid, hazy, clear.

Left camp @ 10 AM, 517 m on the odometer. Route 365 to thruway.

Dunkin Donut rest stop Chippenham (?) East of Syracuse.

11⁴⁷ on 481 → 81 @ Syracuse. NY/PA line at 1:04 PM then lunch @ Bingham's (21 miles).

1⁵⁰ seated @ Bingham's, gassed up (\$2.69/g) + peach crumb pie for Mary and Ed on the table so we don't forget to get it on the way out.

Lunch = Greek salad, burger for B, 1 soda = 18.95.

Road delay @ mile 214 or 50→2 lanes → 1.

Took 476 PA Turnpike → 80 → 81. Home at 6⁴⁵ PM about 937 total miles for trip.

Nothing of import except many road delays for work/road obstructions. Still only 7 hours 45 min. including lunch @ Bingham's + 2 rest stops.

















Great Camps

The camp certainly was great. We all had a very relaxing and refreshing vacation.

Loie and I didn't bother to investigate before the trip, but in formatting this diary I looked at the history of the "camps" a bit more.

Apparently, they began as real camps, so calling them camps is not quite as reverse pretentious as it seemed.

From <http://thepointsaranac.com/great-camp>, the web site of William Avery Rockefeller's "The Point."

The Adirondack Great Camps are grand and fanciful log mansions, built by Gilded Age magnates along the rugged lakeshores of upstate New York. It was a time when cities were expanding and the natural world seemed too far away. The foremost families of the era—Vanderbilts and Astors, Guggenheims and Rockefellers —needed an escape, and suddenly found they had a yearning for wooded retreats of great but rustic comfort.

Using native timber, Adirondack granite hauled by dray horse from the fields, stripped twigs, and round stones pulled from the rushing rivers, they created pastoral estates of astounding beauty and charm, places where nature could be encountered in its ideal form. These Great Camps embodied the romantic, 19th Century notion of "roughing it" in the highest of luxury—a dream that continues to this day to call the wealthy and adventurous to the Adirondacks. Some Great Camps were lavish, some simple — but none expressed better the collage of mountain charm than William Avery Rockefeller's creation — "The Point."

Places like these are hardly what I would call camps, just as the enormous mansions of Newport are hardly "cottages." But the impulse to create them began with something much more like camping.

From Wikipedia:

*The Adirondack region was one of the last areas of the northeastern United States to be explored; the headwaters of the Hudson River near Lake Tear of the Clouds on the slopes of Mount Marcy were not discovered until more than fifty years after the discovery of the headwaters of the Columbia River in the Canadian Rockies. Although a few sportsmen had shown some interest earlier, the publication of William H. H. Murray's *Adventures in the Wilderness; Or Camp-Life in the Adirondacks* in 1869 started a flood of tourists to the area, leading to a rash of hotel building and the development of stage coach lines. Thomas Clark Durant, who had helped to build the Union Pacific railroad, acquired a large tract of central Adirondack land and built a railroad from fashionable Saratoga Springs to North Creek. By 1875 there were more than two hundred hotels in the Adirondacks, some of them with several hundred rooms; the most famous was Paul Smith's Hotel.*

The early Great Camps started life as simple tent camps, often on land initially leased from hotel owners, as hotel guests sought a more authentic wilderness experience. The tent camps evolved into tent platforms or lean-tos and then into compounds of rustic cabins. Even in the early stages, some of these camps became quite elaborate. In 1883 one of the first families on Upper St. Regis Lake, the Anson Phelps Stokes, would arrive in a "special parlour horse car direct from 42nd street to Ausable for \$100." The party consisted of ten family members and an equal number of servants, "...three horses, two dogs, one carriage, five large boxes of tents, three cases of wine, two packages of stovepipe, two stoves, one bale of china, one iron pot, four washstands, one barrel of hardware, four bundles of poles, seventeen cots and seventeen mattresses, four canvas packages, one buckboard, [...],

*twenty-five trunks, thirteen small boxes, one boat, one hamper,” all of which was then transferred to wagons for the 36 mile ride to Paul Smiths, and thence by boat to their island campsite.**

As the region’s hotels became more civilized and elaborate (Paul Smith’s started without indoor plumbing), so too did the camps. But the use of rustic, native materials and craftsmen remained, as did a tendency to use separate buildings for separate functions, from dining to sleeping cabins, bowling alleys to dance pavilions, all connected by covered walkways as features of a distinctive Adirondack Architecture.

The largest and most luxurious camps were generally built on large landholdings; Adirondack land was cheap and the buyers were extraordinarily wealthy. Many of them were Jewish families excluded from the traditional Adirondack resorts. For example, the rules of the Lake Placid Club specifically excluded anyone “against whom there is any reasonable physical, moral, social or race objection...This invariable rule is rigidly enforced: it is found impracticable to make exceptions to Jews or others excluded...” Wealthy Jews such as Otto Kahn, Alfred Lewisohn, Daniel Guggenheim, and Evelyn Lehman Ehrich and Harriet Lehman (daughters of one of the founders of brokerage firm Lehman Brothers) purchased land and constructed Great Camps when they found it impossible to join the established Adirondack clubs.

The Great Camp tradition has analogs in the western United States, especially in the Rocky Mountains. Closely tied to the dude ranch tradition, elaborate private lodges and cabins owned by groups of wealthy Easterners were constructed in the wilderness. Often families originated from New York or Chicago, and traveled by train to spend long periods in summer in the high country. Some lodges in the West

* Hooker, Mildred Phelps Stokes, *Camp Chronicles*, Blue Mountain Lake, NY: Adirondack Museum, 1964. *That’s my idea of camping.*

were built by railroad interests, who were able to pick the best land while surveying potential railroad routes.

I suppose, not being dedicated campers ourselves, and having spent most of our vacations at the beach, not in the woods, Loie and I just weren’t that interested in Great Camps or their history. It seems a missed opportunity, but you can’t do everything every time. We’ll just have to go back to the Adirondacks and investigate some local history!