

Ridgefield Names

*A History of the Town of
Ridgefield, Connecticut,
Through Its More Than
1,200 Place Names*

by Jack Sanders

This history, begun in the 1970s, is periodically updated.
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For this history, I am grateful to many people, not the least of which is my wife Sally, who put up with my many trips to the town hall, libraries, cemeteries, old bookshops, etc., in pursuit of the town's history, and advised me on many historical topics. In addition, countless people provided information — many are listed on page 574 — as well as assistance. To all, I offer my deepest appreciation.

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Introduction

To the scientist, the librarian, or the postman, a name is a means of identification. But a name can be more than simply a label – we might all be calling each other by numbers if that were true. Names are often a source of knowledge, of history, even of drama and romance. This history has been compiled to record not only the fact of, but also the origins and, where possible, the significance of Ridgefield's geographical names.

Moving to an unknown land, the first settlers needed names for the features of the territory to provide some mutually agreed upon system of identification. Even among themselves, the pioneers had to create some new names; there were two Samuel Smiths among the first settlers. So the one who moved here from Milford was usually called “Milford Samuel Smith” – sometimes just Milford Smith” – while the other was called “Norwalk Samuel Smith.”

The pioneers had three chief sources for the names they applied to parts of town: the language of the native Indians; the features, appearances, or uses of the land, including the terrain and wildlife; and the names of the people themselves.

Some of the names used 250 years ago survive today: Whipstick, Flat Rock, West Mountain, Titicus, Silver Spring, Limestone, and Bennett's Farm, for instance. Many, however, had disappeared from use by the 20th or even the 19th Century, and with them unfortunately went part of the town's early heritage, for Ridgefield in the 18th Century had a wealth of colorful names. Brimstone Swamp, Pompion Ridge, Toilsome, Peespunk, Cradle Rock, Dutchman's Swamp, Turn of the River, Turkey Island, Asprumquak, Grassy Island, Nisopack, Asoquatah, and many others have disappeared, except from early land records.

The American Indians

American Indian names, of course, predated the arrival of the settlers. Many were lost more than two centuries ago, having never been recorded by the settlers. Others, like Peespunk, are found only in early deeds and had soon fallen out of use. The precise location to which some of them referred is often difficult to trace today. Still other Indian names remain with us, such words as Mamanasco, Titicus, Mopus, Norrans, and Oreneca.

The meanings of some of the old Indian names have been handed down more by tradition than by record. To translate them is difficult, both because the English colonists were not always accurate in transcribing the sounds of the native tongues, and because the recording of translations of their vocabularies was sketchy at best. Studies have been done of Connecticut's Indian place names and they provide some clues as to word meanings, which do not always coincide with the traditional translations contained in Ridgefield histories. Some place names, like Peespunk and Aokeets, may reveal interesting customs or characteristics of the Indians.

A few words are – or may have been – corruptions of Indian words. Aspen, as in Aspen Ledges, was originally Asproom or, even earlier, Asprumquak.

Titicus was probably something like Mutighticoos. Orange Ridge, behind Fox Hill condominiums, has nothing to do with the fruit or the color, and is a corruption, through many steps, of an 18th Century Indian's name.

And there is at least one name mistakenly considered Indian in origin: Oscaleta. Its source was a man's fancy for a Spanish word.

The Land Itself

Land features or placement led to some obvious descriptive names. High Ridge was so called in 1710. West Mountain and Flat Rock date from very early times. Many other descriptive names, such as Southwest Ridges, Cradle Rock, East River, Brushy Ridge, Great Rocks, Long Pond, Rocky Neck, Flaggy Boggs, Cranberry Meadow, and Yellow Hill are no longer in use and a few are difficult to pinpoint on a modern map – their namesakes, such as yellow or flags (reeds) having long ago disappeared.

The buildings and other man-made structures, or the work-a-day activities of the early settlers, led to a few old names, most of them long gone. But such words can reveal interesting facets of pioneer life. For example, none of Ridgefield's histories mention the fact that the settlers dug pits to trap and kill wolves. Yet, a road description in 1744 mentions the route's passing "ye wolf-pitts," and deeds as early as 1721 speak of the "Wolfpitt Swamp." Few histories, let alone Ridgefield histories, mention deer pits, but several 1720's deeds speak of the "deer" or "dear" pits here.

At least one name has fooled some into thinking it was connected with the colonial life. Fort Hill, which townspeople have for many years associated with some unknown Revolutionary War edifice on Barrack Hill, was in use a half century before the war for independence. It almost certainly referred to an Indian fort and probably had nothing to do with the colonists.

Of course, there were the more ordinary terms, such as the Mill Road (just about any road leading to a mill), Saw Mill Path, the iron works, Mine Hill, and the Stamping Place. There was a Miller's Ridge and a Blacksmith's Ridge.

But one of the most picturesque terms was "Toilsome," an area of town so called as early as 1721. The miles of stone walls here attest to how rocky the land's surface was for the early settlers who were clearing and plowing fields. A name like Toilsome for a particularly rocky, hilly spot is both appropriate and colorful.

The People

The names of only a few of the early families wound up in the records as place names in the 18th Century. And very few of them survive. Copps Hill Road – and thus the plaza, common, and commons – comes from Copps Mountain, now more commonly called Stonecrest Mountain. It was named for John Copp, Ridgefield's first town clerk, physician, and teacher, who helped lay out the community and its boundaries. He was not, however, a true settler since he continued to maintain his home in Norwalk and apparently "commuted" to Ridgefield.

Other people-named places, such as Hauley's Ridge, Ressiguie's Lane, Wood's Gulf, and Sturdevant's Ridge, eventually disappeared. Of the 18th Century family surnames that appear on the first subdivision of Main Street lots, only six – St. John, Keeler, Rockwell, Olmstead, Hauley/Hawley, and Seymour

– are used today for geographical titles. And most of those names came from people living in the 19th or early 20th Century – albeit descendants of the first settlers – and not from geographical references applied in the 18th Century.

A Place of Hills

As its very name suggests, Ridgefield is a place of hills. It is said that the town's center is the highest village between Boston and Washington, with an elevation near the fountain of almost 800 feet above sea level.

The settlers could hardly ignore the ridges and mountains, which consequently were among the first land features to receive names. Many of these names were also among the first to be forgotten by later generations. Long Ridge, Pisgah, Millers Ridge, Broad Hill, New Pound Ridge, Asprumquak Mountain, and Pompion Ridge don't appear on our maps, but do in old land records. Other names are still with us: Copps Hill, Titicus Mountain, High Ridge, West Mountain, and Cedar Mountain.

People today do not often think about the problems presented by hills and ridges. Automobiles make traversing them a simple, easy matter, so effortless that motorists frequently do not even realize when they are going up or down a grade. But ask a bicyclist or runner whether he doesn't notice every little change in elevation. He or she, after all, is using muscle power. Ridgefielders in the first two centuries either walked or rode horses or animal-drawn wagons. Traversing a hill could be a tedious undertaking, especially for horses or oxen pulling a load. Thus, hills were quite noteworthy land features and almost every little rise had a name.

Branches or Runs

Because it is so high and full of ridges, the town gives rise to many waterways that flow in every direction. There are several places in town where rain falling on one side of a ridge can wind up 40 or 50 miles away from the destination of the rain that fell on the other side. Such dividing lines exist on High Ridge and on certain hills in Ridgebury from which runoff could meander for miles to come out of a tap in Bridgeport or in New York City.

Indeed, streams that rise in Ridgefield feed reservoirs serving not only New York and Bridgeport, but Norwalk, Wilton, and Stamford. Ironically, the town's own reservoir was in a hilltop hole with a miniscule, streamless watershed, fed instead by springs. (It stopped being used around 2000.)

Brooks in upper Ridgebury flow northward via the Miry Brook and Still River into the Housatonic, which empties into Long Island Sound at Stratford. The Titicus River watershed, comprising most of west central Ridgefield, winds up in the New York City water supply system while waters that flow through some of the Ridgefield Lakes end up in the Saugatuck Reservoir, serving Bridgeport, Fairfield, Westport, Wilton and, yes, Ridgefield.

The Norwalk River, whose source is the Great Swamp, is Ridgefield's largest waterway. It drains the east and north central parts of the town as well as the Branchville and Florida districts, with the waters eventually reaching the Sound at Norwalk Harbor. In the south of town, streams head southward or southwesterly to reservoirs. The western or "Peaceable" area, east and south of West Mountain, drains into either New York City or Stamford reservoirs.

Doing a Job

Though neither very wide nor very deep, Ridgefield's streams were vital sources of energy to the first settlers. Waterpower was a fairly reliable, inexpensive, and easy-to-harness means of operating mills for grinding meal, grain, plaster, and clover, for sawing wood needed to build houses and barns, and later for manufacturing fabrics. Thus, the prospective settlers carefully surveyed the availability and suitability of waterways before deciding that Ridgefield was a good place for their future homes.

Judging from old deeds in the town clerk's office, there were more than dozen mills operating in town before 1760. They were almost neighborhood businesses, depending of course on whether the neighborhood had a convenient source of running water. Only the southwestern part of the present town lacks a significant stream, but in early times residents of this area probably went to what is now Lewisboro for their milling services. A mill stood on the Stamford Mill River (East Branch) along the present Route 123, an area that was part of Ridgefield before 1732. In addition, the Northrup family operated a sawmill for much of the 19th Century very near the New York State line off today's Route 35.

Disappearing Brooks

Unlike hills and mountains, which are permanent fixtures of the landscape, smaller streams are transient things, subject even to death. Farmers – and that is what most of the settlers were – cleared the land and often drained wetlands to gain pastures. These changes in the surface of the land often altered the course and size of brooks (they were often called “branches” and “runs”). Sometimes watercourses were virtually eliminated.

Oldtimers used to say that “Brooks are disappearing.” Eric Sloane, in *Our Vanishing Landscape*, observed that “the idea might, seem fantastic. Yet a hundred years ago, you could hardly go from here to there without confronting any numbers of fresh brooks. In the back country you will still find every valley fingered with running streams, but wherever the city has encroached and highways have come within earshot, the earth will have been sufficiently drained so that there is no rainwater reserve, and the brooks, you will find, have disappeared.”

Thus, identifying the little branches and runs mentioned in so many deeds in the 1700's is not easy. As often as not, it's impossible without an exhaustive title search. But, as with so many old names, just knowing the words – like Peespunk – is valuable, giving us glimpses of early Ridgefield life and activities.

The first residents had names for many of the waterways in the town, for a stream or a creek was a good marker for delineating property bounds. Many names – the Titicus, Norwalk, Mopus, Spectacle, and Stamford Mill brooks and rivers – have remained in use for two and one-half centuries.

Frequently, however, deeds describing land simply mention “the branch.” In addition, there were no maps to document or stabilize names of streams (and other land features). Often only the people who lived on or near a small brook knew its name. As time passed the original names were forgotten and replaced with other names, usually based on the families that lived along the streams.

When this writer was a child living in Danbury, he went sledding on Horan's Hill and fishing in Horan's Hill Brook. Those names never appeared on any map, but every kid and most adults in the neighborhood knew them. It was Horan's Hill because a couple named Horan lived there. (Mr. Horan was, incidentally, the son of the engineer killed in Ridgefield's only fatal train wreck, which occurred in 1904.) The Horans have been dead for years and perhaps today's generation of young sledders calls it O'Connor's Hill or some such name. (They don't call the brook anything; it has disappeared into pipes under Interstate 84 when the Interstate was built in the early 1960s).

Who, 100 years from now, would know where Horan's Hill was? Yet, two centuries ago, such transient neighborhood names – for streams, hills, glens, and fields – were frequently used to locate property, and many wound up in deeds. Even today, there is no map of Ridgefield that attempts to record the names of all the streams.

Proliferating Ponds

Although there are probably fewer streams today than in 1700, there are unquestionably more ponds. Early land and Town Meeting records mention very few bodies of water – Mamanasco Lake, Bennett's Pond, Round Pond, Little and Great Ponds. But today there are dozens of ponds,

Most of the original ponds were the remains of larger bodies of water that were formed in the troughs scraped out by glaciers and first filled by their melting ice. Over the centuries these ponds became smaller as the ice disappeared and as runoff carried sand, silt, and organic matter down the hills and gradually filled the basins.

As the ponds became shallower, plant life became more abundant, slowly clogging the water. As vegetation died, it added to the bottom material and nutrients, consequently reducing the space for water. Ponds became swamps, then moist meadows and finally dry land. The whole of the Titicus Valley along North Salem Road was once a long lake, the remnants of which are still found in the valley's swamps and in Lake Mamanasco. Though artificially created, the present Ridgefield Lakes probably exist on territory that was ponds many centuries ago.

Lake Mamanasco, which the settlers called "grassy place," was probably a dying pond in 1700 (in fact, it may have been two separate dying ponds, according to one translation of the Indian word *mamanasco*). Although Historian George L. Rockwell maintained that it had been dammed up by beavers, Mamanasco was probably on its way out when the settlers arrived and built a dam at its outlet to raise the water level for a mill (which stood at the end of Pond Road).

Other ponds may indeed have owed their existence solely to beavers, an animal that still shows up from time to time to create ponds in which to try to build a lodge. In early deeds for land near the New Pound Bogs – now called Silver Spring Swamp – we find several references to "ye beaver Damm." Many of these small beaver-built ponds or swamps vanished as the animal was killed off for pelts or scared off from Ridgefield's woods.

Mills and Ice

As the settlers grew in numbers, the need for mills increased. Predictable seasonal changes in rainfall, as well as the vagaries of the weather, such as dry spells and droughts, meant that the wise miller had to store energy when the streams ran low and slow. Several ponds were created for this purpose, including Miller's Pond, New Pond, and John's Pond. Many mill ponds are no longer with us, their dams having burst years ago. One such pond existed just above Stonehenge Inn, along what was then the Danbury-Norwalk Turnpike and is now Stonehenge Road. Another was at the intersection of Whipstick Road and Wilton Road East.

By the beginning of the 20th Century, the need for waterpower had all but disappeared. However, ponds were still handy on farms for watering livestock. And during the 19th and early 20th Centuries, ponds served as sources of ice to cool the precursor of the refrigerator. Ice was cut on many ponds, hauled away by teams of horses to storehouses where the blocks were packed in sawdust and held for the warm months. One such icehouse stood on the site of what is, in 2007, Girolametti Court shopping area on lower Danbury Road. In the late 20th Century, a restaurant called The Ice House operated at the old bowling alley at the rear of this property.

Important sources of ice were New Pond, Hopper's Pond, Round Pond, and a vanished body of water on the south end of East Ridge near the East Ridge Middle School, created by the operators of Hurlbutt's Market to obtain ice.

Throughout much of the 20th Century, Ridgefielders were still building ponds, not for the practical purposes of our forefathers but for the embellishment of subdivisions and house lots. Quite often, these man-made landscaping decorations, dug from swampland, turned sour for lack of enough water moving in and out. Algae, duckweed, and other vegetation can quickly take over and converts such ponds into pea-green puddles, better suited for raising mosquitoes than property values.

Today it's illegal to scoop out ponds in wetlands, which are protected by laws created because dredging destroys wildlife habitats as well as the ability of the swamps to hold water in times of heavy rain and to filter water that drains downward to recharge aquifers.

Landlocked Islands

Being nearly 15 miles from the ocean with no appreciable bodies of water, Ridgefield hardly seems a likely place for many islands. Yet the early land records are peppered with references to "islands." The early settlers considered any piece of dry land that was surrounded or nearly surrounded by swamps to be an island; thus, references appear to Turkey Island, Jug Island, Grassy Island, and plain "ye Island."

Only one vestige of this old terminology survives today and it has confused many a person who has heard it: Island Hill Avenue takes its name from references in the land records that date back to 1710 and describe as an "island" along Danbury Road, approximately between Fox Hill condominiums and Haviland Road.

Roads

Many of the names described in this series will be road names — there are probably more of them than any other kind of geographical name in Ridgefield. The town today has more than 300 roads, some with more than one name, running some 200 miles in length.

Roads were here even before the settlers were. Indian paths existed for as long as the natives did and some of today's highways — such as portions of North Salem and Oreneca Roads — follow old Indian trails.

Even the European settlers had a road through town before Ridgefield was purchased and settled. The “Danbury Cart Path” connected Danbury and Norwalk before 1708 when it was mentioned in the first deed of purchase of Ridgefield land from the Indians. It probably generally followed the Norwalk River valley, perhaps along parts of the present Route 7, and veered off into Redding along Simpaug Turnpike.

Role of Roads

From the earliest days highways were of great importance. Yet their role has changed significantly. Two hundred and fifty years ago, roads were chiefly lines of communication. They connected homestead with homestead, families with town and church, and towns with towns. There were no telephones, no radio, no television, no Internet, and no local newspapers. News traveled mostly by word of mouth, and mouths traveled over roads.

In those days work kept people at home, not away from it. The farm was their occupation and their chief source of food and clothing. Today, work is often far from home and supplies are in town, reachable by highways. News, on the other hand, arrives with the flick of a switch, the opening of a mailbox, the toss of a paper carrier, or the ring of a telephone.

The First Roads

Main Street, usually called the “Town Street” in the 18th Century, was the first road laid out by the settlers. It was a simple straight line along the middle ridge of three ridges, just about in the center of the original purchase of Indian lands. From it roads extended in every direction like the tentacles of an octopus.

Probably the very first roads to be built were intertown routes, especially to Norwalk, to Danbury, and to Bedford. A new town would have a hard time surviving its first few years without communication with and supplies from neighboring established towns. Note that even today, every major intertown state highway in Ridgefield converges on the village: Routes 33, 35, 102, and 116, all of them old roads. Route 7, the only US highway here, was a relative newcomer, having been built in the early 19th Century to better connect Norwalk and Danbury, and to avoid the need to travel through the lofty center of Ridgefield.

At about the same time intertown roads were being developed, highways to fields and pasturelands near the center of town were being laid out. Roads like Peaceable Street, North Street, St. John's Road, Silver Spring Road, and Farmingville Road, were all built to serve farmlands, probably some years before

houses were erected along them. Settlers who lived in the village often put up barns at their outlying farms to store crops and tools.

Some roads were probably built to get to woodlots, whose trees supplied fuel for fireplaces and lumber for construction. West Mountain Road or Barrack Hill Road may have started out as routes to the woods.

The Search for Flat

The curving of New England roads often shocks people who come from flatlands, such as the Midwest or Florida. Floridians or Iowans are accustomed to driving for miles in a straight line. Here, they are lucky to find a straight-away that is 1,000 feet long.

The purpose in laying out Ridgefield's early winding roads, many of which remain today, was two-fold: to get from here to there, and to do it as easily as possible. More often than not, a road went around a hill, rather than over it. This may seem the longer way, but when you consider the distance covered in just going up and then down a hill, it frequently turns out that the "long way around" was almost the same distance. Of more concern to our forefathers, however, was the fact that beasts of burden dragging the load of a wagon found it easier and quicker to travel across a flat surface than up an incline. Even going down a hill was tricky business: the driver of the rig had to make certain that the load didn't roll faster than the animal in front of it.

An example of this desire for flatness is found in Danbury Road. As late as 1908, maps show that Ridgefielders then and before considered Danbury Road to be the present Danbury Road north only to Haviland Road, then across Haviland to Route 7, then north through the Sugar Hollow over the present Route 7 – all of the distance being fairly flat.

The present Danbury Road between Haviland and Route 7 was called "the Hill Road," for obvious reason. It was shorter, but it was also more difficult for load-pulling animals to deal with. What's more, during the spring thaw or after a good rainfall, the Hill Road was probably almost impassable because of mud, a condition that plagued many dirt roads but was doubly difficult to deal with on an incline.

It is probable that the creation of the Second Ecclesiastical Society – the Ridgebury parish – and the near creation of the "town of Ridgebury," were due more to the poor hilly roads from the northern reaches of town to the meeting house in the center than to any other factor. The direct route, as the crow would fly, passes over Asproom Mountain, making travel tedious or impossible at times, and the long way around – via Spring Valley, Ridgebury-North Salem, or Bennett's Farm Roads – could take hours.

Road Maintenance

Because decent roads were necessary to keep the community together in the 18th and 19th Centuries, their maintenance was essential. Washouts, muddy puddles, and poor drainage were common headaches for travelers.

Road maintenance in the earliest years of settlement was probably a voluntary effort. The selectmen or Town Meeting would occasionally appoint committees to study special problems, but people whose property fronted on roads were supposed to take care of their maintenance.

The good-neighbor system apparently didn't work too well. By the mid-1700's, the town began appointing public officials called surveyors of highways whose job was to check roads and bridges periodically for damage or other problems and to see to it that neighbors did the repair work. In 1782, the town was divided up into districts, with a surveyor assigned to each. To guarantee that people would do the repair work, the Town Meeting in the late 18th Century adopted an ordinance giving the surveyors the power to draft workers. Those who failed to obey the surveyors' orders to do road work could be fined (50 cents a day for a man, \$1 a day for a man and a team of horses, according to a state law in effect in 1814).

Work for Taxes

At first the town compensated road workers pressed into service by abating their property taxes. Later, workers had the option of receiving outright payments. The 1793 Annual Town Meeting "voted that each person shall be allowed at the rate of three shillings per day for each day's work, and six shillings per day for a man and team, that they shall work on the highways by direction of a surveyor, and that each person shall have liberty to labour on the highway to the amount of their respective rates (taxes), provided they work on the day or days they are respectively warned to work..." Workers were given four days warning. The pay or abatement for road workers was increased to four shillings per day at the 1795 Annual Town Meeting, which amount was converted to 67 cents a day in 1796 when the United States went on the decimal monetary system. By 1798 the compensation was up to 75 cents and in 1814 it rose to a whopping \$1 a day.

At first most people apparently took advantage of working on roads to reduce their taxes. But eventually the town had to levy a tax to pay for roadwork. The 1799 Annual Town Meeting voted a tax of two cents on the dollar of assessed property value "for the purpose of repairing highways." By 1824, the highway tax had doubled to four cents. Surveyors collected the payments.

Major road projects usually came before the selectmen or Town Meeting for consideration – as they still can today. Often, a committee would be appointed to study a problem and recommend a solution. Take for example, the problem investigated in the spring of 1740 by James Benedict and Thomas Hyatt, "committee," as reported in the town record book:

"Whereas complaint being made to us by Timothy Keeler and others that ye highway across ye brook by Timothy Canfield's house was to be so bad that in ye winter season, there was no possibility of passing or repassing, and having examined ye matter, we found that there was good reason for ye complaint and to mend ye said way. We, by ye advice and consort of ye said Canfield, took off his lott 50 rods (825 feet) of land, on ye south side of said lott, 50 pole (square rods) . . ." in order to move the roadway.

At Least Adequate

Problems like this seemed remarkably uncommon in the 18th Century, at least as far as recorded instances go. It appears that the early Ridgefielders laid out their roads wisely – or, at least, adequately. However, later generations did try to make improvements, somewhat to the displeasure of the tight-fisted

Town Meetings of the 19th Century. Plea after plea for road improvements were rejected.

An interesting case is that of Wilton Road West, often called “ye Country Road.” Today the southern end of the road is smooth and straight as it heads down Flat Rock Hill to the intersection of Silver Hill Road and then up past the old gas station to the Wilton line. But years ago, the road veered off to the east over what was called Pot Ash Hill and met Wilton Road East at a point just north of Silver Hill Road intersection. This route was steep, rather winding, and apparently susceptible to washouts.

Thus, a Town Meeting on Nov. 11, 1831, voted to appoint a committee to view “the present traveled road leading from Ridgefield to Wilton ... over Flat Rock and Pot Ash Hill” to consider a new route. Although the report is not spelled out in the Town Meeting records, the committee apparently recommended a new route. However, the Town Meeting rejected it, perhaps because it would be too expensive. Yet the committee probably had the right idea, and nearly a century later, the state came along and straightened out Wilton Road West, abandoning the old path over Pot Ash Hill (a route that’s still visible and walkable through the woods).

Inter-town Roads

In the early 19th Century, the state seemed to be pressuring Ridgefield – and probably many other towns – to improve its intertown roads. These main roads were, after all, the Interstates and even Internet of their day, arteries carrying information, mail, goods, and people – including militia – around the state.

However, Ridgefield was not excited about whatever the state proposed. A February 1800 Town Meeting voted to oppose a plan to alter or straighten the road “from Danbury Court House through said Ridgefield.” This was at the time when planning was underway for the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike through Sugar Hollow, the present Route 7 path, to replace an old hilly route over Moses Mountain in Danbury, east of Sugar Hollow. (In 2008, we have work well underway on widening this route through the Sugar Hollow, a project that began in July 2005.)

By 1804, the Fairfield County Court had issued a formal “citation” of complaint against the town because of the poor condition of a section of Danbury Road. All through this period, there was considerable development of turnpikes or privately sponsored toll roads in Connecticut. In theory, a better quality road could be built and maintained if users paid a fee for traveling across it.

But apparently, Ridgefielders also didn’t like the idea of paying for something that had always been free, and in 1805 when a turnpike from Danbury to Norwalk was under consideration, the Town Meeting appointed Samuel B. Sherwood “an agent to oppose a petition which was brought before the Honorable General Assembly, praying said assembly for liberty to extend the turnpike Road leading from Danbury to Belden’s Bridge in the town of Wilton, from said bridge to the bridge in Norwalk at the stores or landing.”

It was not until 1829 that the company was finally incorporated to build the turnpike that is now Route 7 (south of Route 35).

In 1805, a Town Meeting appointed a committee to examine layouts for new roads or alterations to present roads “from the meeting house in this town

through the towns of Wilton, New Canaan, and Norwalk.” Again, the state may have received complaints about the quality of our main highways.

The reference to the “meeting house,” however, is worth noting. The meeting house was the town hall (as well as the Congregational Church) and in New England was almost always located in the center of a community. Ridgefield’s was on the village green along Main Street at the head of Branchville Road. All main roads in theory led to and from the meeting houses of each community. Even today, throughout the United States, highway signs that give mileages to the next town are usually reporting the distance to that community’s city or town hall.

Road Construction

Early roads were not fancy, being little more than cleared paths through woods and fields. But they had design.

Old dirt roads were deliberately built with a sort of wash board surface to help direct water off to the sides. Also for drainage, they were slightly higher in the middle than at the edges, a technique still used by modern road builders.

Earth-surfaced roads had remained in use here as late as the 1960’s when the last few major dirt roads – all of them very old highways – were paved. Those included Spring Valley Road, Mopus Bridge Road, and Ledges Road. For a while in the 1970s and 1980s, a “new” dirt road appeared from the vestiges of an old highway, and with the development of houses along it, the northern section of Peaceable Hill Road was the only – and the last – dirt highway in town. It was eventually paved, too.

More important roads in the 19th Century were packed down with rollers and sometimes surfaced with gravel or clay for hardness and durability.

Wood-covered “plank roads,” usually made with oak board, were found in various parts of the Northeast, especially New York, in the last quarter of the 19th Century. No evidence has been found of plank roads here, but one was once planned. In 1851, the “Stamford, New Canaan and Ridgefield Plank Road,” a company that proposed to run a wood-topped highway from Stamford to Ridgefield, was authorized by the State Legislature. Capital stock \$100,000 was authorized. The road was never built.

It might be good to point out here that 18th and 19th Century inhabitants had no need for snow plows. Snow, in fact, was usually a boon to the traveler and worker, and machinery was developed to pack down the snow onto highways to preserve it. Snow reduced friction and a horse or ox pulling a sleigh or sled could haul considerably more weight over snow-coated ground than it could pulling a wagon over dirt. Indeed, farmers would often wait for winter to undertake such tasks as hauling away boulders or big stumps from fields.

Pavement Types

Near the turn of the 20th Century, the town began using a very durable kind of highway called a “Telford road,” named for its British inventor. This system consisted of vertically inserting long flat stones in the roadbed. These deeply imbedded slabs were covered with gravel, producing a road that was resistant to erosion, frost heaves, and potholes. Portions of Danbury Road, North Salem Road, and St. Johns Road are among the highways here with Telford bases.

In the late 19th Century, roads were being built in a similar fashion, but using blocks of wood instead of slabs of stone. A wood base was much kinder to the delicate hooves of horses. It is not known whether Ridgefield ever used this type of road, called Nicolson pavement.

Solid concrete paving came on the scene in the 1910's and 1920's as the automobile, growing in popularity but susceptible to the shortcomings of dirt roads, required better surfaces. The first paving, part of a state experiment, was done on the eastern end of Branchville Road around 1912. Main Street was not paved until 1926.

The town did not adopt regulations with specifications for road construction work until 1959. To draw up such regulations the town had to have a planning commission. Creation of the commission in 1958 was a hotly debated issue that was forced by the many complaints that new roads being built in subdivisions were of poor quality.

Naming Roads

The practice of formally naming roads is fairly modern in Ridgefield. The earliest application of names came from the habit of referring to "the road to Danbury" or "the road to North Salem." Soon those highways came to be known by the simpler and easier terms, "Danbury Road" or "North Salem Road."

By 1735, however, the only road names found on the land records are "Danbury Rhode," "Bedford Rhode," and "ye Country Road."

In a similar manner, family names often became attached to the roads that bounded their homesteads. At first you would go to the lane where the Olmsteads lived. Later you went to the Olmstead Lane. Blackman Road passed by the Blackman farm and Lounsbury Road, by the Lounsbury homestead.

Most of these names were adopted in the early 20th Century when the automobile made traveling easier and the number of travelers increased. To find your way about in strange places, it was handy to have a map and even handier to have names on the map that corresponded to names on the roads.

However, even in the middle to late 19th Century, streets in the village were acquiring names – probably because there were quite a few of them in a small area, and they needed identification to avoid confusion among newcomers or visitors.

Today, every road gets a name, often before it's built. When they submit subdivision plans to town officials, the developers usually suggests the name, and the Planning and Zoning Commission approves or maybe changes it.

Unfortunately, not all of our more than 325 road names are very suitable or distinctive. Some are downright awful.

Survey of Roads

A survey of the 23 Fairfield County towns in the 1970s showed some interesting tendencies in the practice of road-naming. One of the most common – and least creative, even least meaningful – names has been "sunset." Twenty one towns had a Sunset Lane, Road, Avenue, or Circle. Not a town to be out-done, Ridgefield at one time actually had a Sunset Drive as well as a Sunset Lane. One would think that a sunset is obvious and common enough that we would not have to have street names to remind us that they occur.

The sunrise, incidentally, is considerably less popular, probably because most people find it painful to haul themselves out of bed to see one. Only 11 Sunrise roads existed in the county in the 1970s.

Trees were a very popular, if not very creative, source of names here and throughout the county. The most popular road name in the county was maple, with 22 of 23 towns having maple roads of one sort or another (only Sherman ignored it).

Twenty-one towns had road names commemorating the birch (be it white, black, or plain) and 21 also named roads after the oak. There were 19 towns with pine roads, while 19 honored the dogwood, 15 the cherry and the apple, and 17 the dying elm. Twenty towns had roads named for the bayberry bush. Namers in 18 towns, including Ridgefield, apparently once tired of tree names and labeled roads simply “forest.”

Animals are popular, too, but deer far outstripped all others. Twenty-two towns had deer-connected road names – remember, this was in the days before deer overran the countryside, gobbling up gardens as well as wildflowers and many saplings of native trees and shrubs. Nineteen towns used foxes; eight, bears; seven, beavers; six, woodchucks; and five chipmunks. Surprisingly only three towns had rabbit roads. Even the gopher is remembered in Newtown.

Although they are our most visible wild mammals, squirrels are apparently not held in high esteem in this upper-class county; only two squirrel lanes, drives, roads, paths, had made the atlas by 1985. They are apparently on the same level of appreciation as rats and mice, unrecognized anywhere on a road sign.

Wolves, once common in these parts, were treated even worse. The only references to them were in three towns with Wolfpit roads, recalling the method used to trap and kill the creatures. When it was once suggested to a Ridgefield developer that he name his new road “Wolfpit” after the 18th Century wolfpits that existed near his subdivision, he quickly rejected the idea.

“Sounds too much like ‘armpit,’” he said.

One might think that a skunk would get the same rating as some of the vermin-related names. But no: Wilton has a Skunk Lane. Ridgefield used to have one, but it was apparently deemed undesirable, and is now North Street.

Birds, which are perhaps too flighty for the road namers, were less popular than mammals. In 1981, only 12 towns had partridge roads and 12 had pheasant roads; Ridgefield has both. But 11 had roads named after robins (we don’t) and eight, eagles (ditto). Our newest bird name, Cardinal Court, was on the street signs of 10 other towns in 1981.

Though they are probably the most intelligent birds cruising our skies, crows fare poorly, being neither cute or colorful. Danbury has a Crow’s Nest Lane and Westport a Crow Hollow Lane, but nobody has a Crow Court or Circle. Among the dumbest of birds is the turkey (rejected by another developer who was subdividing the town’s last turkey farm), but five towns have turkey names.

As for “people” names, Washington (11 towns) and Lincoln (11, too) can’t be beaten.

Even bugs have their place in the county atlas: There were no fewer than seven Cricket Lanes in the 1980s.

Among other Ridgefield names that were common in the county were Prospect (16 towns), Hillcrest (16), Main (16), Pleasant (14), River (13), Brook (11), Highview (11), Saw Mill (10), and Sleepy Hollow (9 – ugh!).

In recent years Ridgefield has made efforts to select appropriate names, and to avoid the trite or icky-sweet subdivision road names that have sometimes been selected.

Ridgefield has a rich heritage to draw upon for names much better than Highview, Longview, Minute Man, Sprucewood, Tally-Ho, Pilgrim Hill, Memory (Lane, of course), Kingswood, or the king of them all – Sleepy Hollow.

When We Were Bigger

Ridgefield was once wider than it is today, and longer.

Before 1732, the western boundary extended about a mile and three-quarters into present New York State. This land had been acquired from the American Indians in pieces, starting with the very first purchase in 1708, which extended into the southeastern section of present-day Lewisboro, and ending with a piece in modern North Salem in 1729.

The town begrudgingly gave up these lands, called The Oblong, in 1731 when a new colony line was drawn. But because this territory was once part of Ridgefield, this study has included pre-1732 names that were used for these lands and that appear in the Ridgefield land records.

For the same reason, many of the early names used for Ridgefield land now in Danbury have been included. When Ridgefield acquired the New Patent lands after 1731, the town bounds extended through what is now western Danbury north to New Fairfield. This northern neck was part of Ridgefield until 1846.

Some place names, originating in other towns, occasionally extend into Ridgefield. The peak of Spruce Mountain is in Danbury, and most of Starr's Ridge is in Redding, but parts of both are also in Ridgefield. Such names have been included in this history because they appear in early Ridgefield records.

Not only the boundaries, but also the names of the bordering towns have changed over the years. In 1750, Ridgefield would have been described as bounded on the south by Norwalk, on the east by Fairfield, the north by Danbury and New Fairfield, and the west by Salem. Wilton didn't break off from Norwalk until 1802. Redding, once part of Fairfield, was incorporated in 1767. North and South Salem were once one town. Today's Lewisboro was for years called just "Salem."

A

AARON'S COURT

In 1988, Aaron bumped Abbott as being the “first” of the more than 1,200 place names found in Ridgefield. That was the year that the father and son team of Lewis J. and Barry Finch got approval for the subdivision that includes Aaron’s Court, a dead-end road off the east side of Ridgebury Road, between George Washington Highway and Shadow Lake Road.

The road serves nine of the 10 subdivision lots; the other lot is on Shadow Lake Road. Of the development’s 44.75 acres, 21.2 acres were set aside as open space under the town’s Planned Residential Development regulations. Aaron was Aaron Turner, perhaps Ridgebury’s most famous son. Turner created a popular 19th Century circus and hired a young Phineas T. Barnum as a ticket-taker — *see* Turner Road.

ABBOTT AVENUE

Running from High Ridge to Gilbert Street, Abbott Avenue was named for George I. Abbott, a well-known village businessman at the turn of the 20th Century. He operated a Main Street grocery store where 50 Coins Restaurant used to be, and was the first foreman of the Hook and Ladder Company, one of three divisions within the early Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department. He was also a state representative in 1902.

Abbott owned and probably developed the land around Abbott Avenue around the turn of the 20th Century. The roadway is shown on a 1905 sewer map and the name Abbott Avenue was in use by 1911, when it appears on a property map in the town clerk’s records.

ABBOTT’S MILL ROAD

Abbott’s Mill Road may have been the first formal name applied to the present-day Florida Hill Road, which, during the 18th Century, was frequently called at least “the mill road.” In fact, Florida Hill Road may have been built partly to provide access from town to the gristmill that stood at the intersection of Florida Hill Road and Route 7, now the site of a home called “Moongate.”

Peter Burr received permission from the proprietors in 1737 to erect “a good and sufficient grist mill” on the “Norwalk River.” He was also allowed to dam the river “northward of Cedar Mountain” to create a pond for water storage. This is very probably the present-day Miller’s Pond, named not after the occupation of milling, but after the late Nathaniel Miller, a former owner.

This gristmill probably served the milling needs of most of the residents of the southeast part of town and of nearby Redding. Perhaps even villagers went to this mill, rather than the one at Mamasasco, which was the first to be established here.

David Abbott was the fourth owner of the mill, operating it for less than two years. But his ownership was notable enough to have his name applied to the road leading to the mill. In a 1745 grant of 27 acres to David Scott, the proprietors describe the tract as “lying southerly of Abbott’s Mill Road.”

The “proprietors,” a term that appears frequently in this history, were originally the people who bought Ridgefield from the Indians and held title to all of the common — or surplus — land in town. They, their descendants, and their designees generally controlled the government and, through their landowning status, had some power to determine who could move into town and who could not, at least in the early years of settlement.

ACORN PLACE

Acorn Place is the only town road named for a nut, assuming that Chestnut Hill and Walnut Grove Roads were named for the trees that bear the nuts. William R. Hornibrook developed the 1,200-foot-long, dead-end road off lower Silver Spring Road. The subdivision it serves was approved in 1976. The name was selected because of the many oak trees on the property.

ACRE LANE

Acre Lane, off Wilton Road West, was developed around 1964 by the Symone brothers — Frank, John, and Robert — as Parkview Estates. The name comes from the size of the lots, of which there were 23. It became a town road in 1965.

ADAMS ROAD

Part of Washington Park Estates off Branchville Road, Adams Road was named for the second president of the United States, John Adams. Selectman Paul J. Morganti suggested the name in the mid-1950’s as one of several presidents’ names to be used in the subdivision, developed by Bert Ison. The road, which runs between Lincoln Lane and Jefferson Drive, became a town road in 1956.

ADDER MEADOW

Mentioned in deeds of 1830 and 1843, the Adder Meadow was probably somewhere west of Rippowam Road. The name is probably connected with the earlier-known names of Rattle Holes and Rattlesnake Swamp (*q.v.*). The “adders” that were probably once sighted in the meadow were either rattlesnakes, which certainly would have found rocky West Mountain a fine place to live, or copperheads. Adders are common poisonous snakes in England, and since most of the settlers were of English ancestry, the name was probably used generically for any poisonous snake.

ALDRICH PARK

Aldrich Park, sometimes erroneously called Farmingville Park, was named for Larry Aldrich, who donated the 37 acres in several pieces during the 1960’s and early 1970’s. Through additional donations and acquisitions, the park has grown to 65 acres.

The park, near the corner of Farmingville and New Roads, is where the town’s first Little League field was built. It also contains a good number of marked hiking trails through woods and wetland, and is often used by students for nature study. It has been rumored that somewhere in or near the park was an old silver mine (discussed under Lost Mine Place).

Larry Aldrich founded a women’s clothing firm in 1927. His wife, Winifred, an artist, helped spark his interest in contemporary art and he began

collecting in the late 30s, eventually becoming a central figure in the New York City art scene. The Aldriches moved to Nod Road in 1939 and in 1963, Mr. Aldrich acquired three acres and a Main Street house that had once been The Old Hundred, a 19th Century country store. The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum opened there in 1964 and has championed countless new artists by showing their work.

Mr. Aldrich died in 2001 and Winifred, two years later.

AMMAWOGG

In the settlers' fourth purchase of land from the Indians in 1727, the deed begins, "we Taporneck & Moses, Indians belonging to Wepack or long pond so Called, & Richard and Samm Indians, belonging to ammauogg." These four men sold the Ridgefield proprietors territory, most of which was ceded to New York Colony in the 1731 transfer of the Oblong (*q.v.*). Ammauogg or Amawalk is today a hamlet in the town of Somers, N.Y., along Route 35 about dozen miles west of the Ridgefield line. The name means "people gathering up a little hill." (*See also* Wepack.)

ANDERSON MOUNTAIN

Anderson Mountain is another name for Titicus Mountain, according to a mention in *The Ridgefield Press* in 1952 (*see* Anderson Tea House Road).

ANDERSON TEA HOUSE ROAD

Anderson Tea House Road was once applied to modern-day Old Sib Road, much of which was built around 1908 as an access to H. B. Anderson's resort, called the Tea House, on Titicus Mountain. Later, the resort was named the Port of Missing Men. "Anderson Tea House Road" appears on a 1928 property map filed with town clerk. The map says Louis G. Smith owned the road itself.

Henry B. Anderson took over the Ridgefield Water Company in 1902 and acquired Round Pond on West Mountain as its main water source. Around the same Mr. Anderson organized the Ridgefield Electric Company to power water supply pumps and village lighting. He and Ogden Mills, secretary of the treasury under President Hoover, were partners, owning some 3,000 acres in Ridgefield and nearby Westchester County, N.Y., on which they built some of the ponds and many of the West Mountain and Titicus Mountain Roads existing today.

A Yale graduate with a Harvard Law degree he had a noted legal firm in New York City (which once represented the old New York Central Railroad). His first home here, a mansion on West Lane, was later sold to Frederic E. Lewis (*see* Lewis Drive.). His second home was on Titicus Mountain. He died in 1938, at the age of 75. (*See also* Eight Lakes *and* Old Sib Road)

ANDREWS POND

In Beers Atlas (1867), Andrews Pond was the name for the body of water, now called Sanford's Pond, just north of I-84 and just east of the New York line in Danbury — territory that was once part of Ridgefield. Andrews probably once owned the pond, and may have been a miller who used its waters. In the 1700's it was known as Whittings Pond.

AOKEETS

Aokeets (or *Aokeels*, *Aokkeels*) was the American Indian name for the body of water now called Little Pond, on the west side of Route 7 just south of the intersection of Route 35. John C. Huden, in his *Indian Place Names of New England*, says the name may have meant “hornet place” or possibly “adversary’s place” in the Siwanoy language. The Siwanoy, which means “South People,” was a group of Indians who lived in southern Fairfield and Westchester Counties. The suggestion in the name is that some ancient Indian battle or battles may have taken place at or about the pond.

Aokeets is first mentioned as a boundary marker in the first purchase of Ridgefield land from the Indians in 1708. However, it never again appears in the town’s land records. The Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich, third minister of the First Congregational Church, employed the name in an 1800 report on the town, so it may still have been in some use by then. However, Clark’s map of Fairfield County, published in 1856, refers to the pond as “Little Pond,” the name it still holds.

ARMAND PLACE, ROAD

Armand Road, and the dead-end Armand Place off it, are roads at and adjacent to the Eleven Levels or West Mountain Estates subdivision off Old West Mountain Road. The roads were developed in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s.

The names recall Colonel Charles Armand, more formally known as Charles Armand Tuffin, Marquis de la Rouerie, a wealthy French nobleman who fought with the colonists during the Revolution. In the summer of 1779, Armand established a barracks for his Partisan Legion near the intersection of Barrack Hill Road and Old West Mountain Road — on or about the area served by these roads. From here his men went on sorties into Westchester and Putnam Counties, attacking the British and protecting patriots. Some of his cavalrymen also acted as a sort of police force, patrolling the area to apprehend marauders, deserters, rioters, stragglers, and other soldiers found guilty of violating the General Orders.

Historian Silvio Bedini says the barracks operated here for about a year. Armand then headed south, serving with de Kalb in North Carolina and then participating in the surrender at Yorktown. In 1783, Congress appointed Armand a brigadier general, indicating his service to the country was much appreciated.

ARNOLD’S WAY

Not many towns would name a road after America’s most notorious traitor. But then, not many towns would issue two medals in his honor, either.

When Benedict Arnold was in Ridgefield, he was a hero, a leader in the Revolution. During the Battle of Ridgefield, he had his horse shot out from under him on Main Street, a couple hundred feet north of the entrance to this private road built in 2003 to serve several houses on the backland of the former Yanity property.

When Reed Whipple and Larry Leary were preparing to develop the land, they asked this writer for naming ideas. The story about Benedict Arnold’s fighting very near their land was related. The developers, perhaps wisely, eschewed “Benedict Arnold Way,” feeling it was tainted by a name that is syn-

onymous with traitor. However, they felt Arnold's Way lacked the bad connotations and still recalled the historic events of April 27, 1777.

General Benedict Arnold came to Ridgefield that day to fight the British, who had landed two days earlier at Compo Beach at Westport, and had marched north to Danbury, where they burned many homes and community buildings. On their way back to the sea, the troops passed through Ridgefield where they were attacked by General Arnold and General David Wooster, leading local militia. Arnold's horse was shot out from under him on the Main Street, but he continued to fight. Wooster was mortally wounded along the North Salem Road, now Route 116 (*see* Wooster Street).

Near where the battle involving Arnold took place, Mary Olcott erected a plaque in the early 20th century, marking the burial ground of "eight patriots who were laid in these grounds companioned by 16 British soldiers, living their enemies, dying their guests" (*see* Olcott Way). In 1977, for the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Ridgefield, the town struck a medal that depicted both Arnold and Wooster. Arnold is shown atop his wounded horse, with the words, "Arnold leads the Patriots." The medal was reissued in 2002, the 225th battle anniversary.

The Arnold's Way development was the ending of a much longer battle than Arnold's. For nearly 20 years, the town debated what to do with Peter and Beth Yanity's backland. The Yanitys lived there since the 1950s, and were both active in Ridgefield (*see* Yanity Gym). They at first sought several times to have condominium zoning for the property. The Planning and Zoning Commission repeatedly found that as being inappropriately dense. The cluster of single-family houses was finally agreed upon as the answer.

When the houses were under construction, it was found that some were taller than allowed under zoning. Work was halted. Confusing language in the town regulations was cited as the cause and eventually, after much debate, the Planning and Zoning Commission modified a code so that the houses could be completed.

ARROWHEAD PLACE

Arrowhead Place is a short, dead-end road off Ramapoo Road, in a 1998 subdivision of Rolf Almgren and Birgit Almgren Lindeberg, brother and sister. The 8.7-acre Almgren family property was divided into 10 half-acre lots, with 1.8 acres of open space. George Hanlon, who built the houses, said he selected the name to be in keeping with the American Indian theme of Ramapoo (*q.v.*).

ASCOT WAY

Ascot Way, a short, dead-end road off lower Main Street, was named for the subdividing company, Ascot Associates, whose main partners were William Wade and Anthony Ricardo. Why they used the name is unknown. Developed around 1969, Ascot Way became a town road in 1974.

ASHBEE LANE

Running off Route 7, Ashbee Lane was named for the late Charles F. Ashbee, a retired insurance executive who lived on Wilton Road West and on Barry Avenue. When he died in 1962, the front page of the May 31 issue of The Ridgefield Press announced: "*C.F. Ashbee, Santa Claus, Dies at 89.*"

Charley Ashbee, an insurance man, had been a local legend. “Mr. Ashbee spent nearly as much of his long life portraying Santa Claus and delighting the children of this town as he devoted to the insurance business,” The Press said. “Donning a Santa Claus suit became a habit with Uncle Charley soon after he and Mrs. Ashbee settled here.”

Ashbee had been born in New York City in 1872, and moved to Wilton Road West early in the 20th Century. Every Christmas for several generations, he was a fixture at celebrations on Main Street and with various organizations. For all the joy he gave kids, he was named Rotary Citizen of the Year in 1960. Among his off-season hobbies was autograph collecting; he owned the signatures of every president except George Washington.

Everett Lounsbury Jr. developed and named the road in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s. The name appears in one 1979 deed as “Ash Bee Lane,” prompting one to wonder whether the deed’s author thought ash bees were dry equivalents of sweat bees.

ASOQUATAH

Asoquatah is the native word for West Mountain, appearing in the 1708 deed for the first purchase of land from the Indians. However, the settlers never commonly used the name, and it never appears in any subsequent deeds – “West Mountain” was used instead. It quickly fell out of use, perhaps because it was difficult to pronounce.

The meaning is uncertain, but there are at least four possibilities. One is “pine tree sap place,” assuming that the word is constructed from *azoi*, meaning sap; *kowa*, meaning pointed or thorny, i.e., pine; and *tock*, meaning place. Pine sap may have been used by the Indians here as an adhesive or sealer, and perhaps as a fuel for fires and lights.

Another possibility is that the word had something to do with a place where the ruler lived — the sound *sohk*, meaning ruler. *Aso* could mean “backward” or perhaps “turning place” in an old Indian path, which is said to have traversed the mountain (see Oreneca Road).

However, Nicholas Shoumatoff, who lived in Lewisboro and who studied local Indian names, believed *Asoquatah* translates as “something that is not crooked.” Take your pick.

ASPEN LEDGES ROAD

In Ridgefield, Aspen has nothing to do with the tree. The word is a corruption of the Indian term, *Asproom* (*q.v.*).

The steep incline on the north side of Ledges Road was identified in the land records from as early as 1753 when the proprietors granted Stephen Smith five acres “lying at Asproom Mountain, west of ye Great Ledges.” By 1783, deeds are calling the area “Asproom Ledges.”

The first reference to the modern-day version occurs in an 1841 deed for land “near Aspen Ledges so called.” S.G. Goodrich (“Peter Parley”) used the term “Aspen Ledges” in his *Recollections of A Lifetime*, published in 1855, indicating that the corruption of the word was probably well established by then.

The road, which extends from the end of Old Stagecoach Road to Bob Hill Road, was built around 1959 by Robert Kaufman as part of the Ridgefield Knolls subdivision.

Mr. Kaufman planned to call the road Topstone Drive West to complement Topstone Drive, also at the Knolls. However, both names would have caused confusion with Topstone Road at the eastern edge of town. Thus, Topstone Drive was changed to Knollwood Drive and Topstone Drive West to Aspen Ledges Road. “Topstone” was also used as the name of Kaufman’s water supply company, which served the Knolls as well as some parts of the Ridgefield Lakes. He had lived in the Topstone area of western Redding in the 1950s.

ASPEN MILL ROAD

William Peatt Jr., the developer in the early 1960’s of this lane off Ledges Road, proposed naming it “Asproom Mill Road,” after the accurate representation of the Indian name and the fact that Hezekiah Scott’s grist and cider mill was only a short distance away (*see* Kiah’s Brook). Although his suggestion used a historically accurate name and reference, the old Planning Commission apparently didn’t like the sound of Asproom and changed it to Aspen, thus creating confusion for many people with Aspen Ledges Road – which in turn is sometimes confused with just plain Ledges Road. The planners should have listened to Mr. Peatt.

ASPETUCK MOUNTAIN

An 1893 map of Connecticut shows today’s Barlow Mountain as being named Aspetuck Mountain. This is an error; no reference to the word “aspetuck” ever appears in the land records here. The label was probably applied in confusion with a locality in Redding or Easton.

ASPINE LOAF

Aspine Loaf is a version of the name “Asproom Loaf” or “Loft” that appears in an 1839 deed referring to land near Barlow Mountain.

ASPROOM BRIDGE

In 1792, David Scott sold James Scott 2nd land “near Asproom Bridge.” This may have been the bridge by which Barlow Mountain Road traverses the Kiah’s Brook east of the Scotland School, or it may have carried Ridgebury Road or Sherwood Road over the Titicus River near Ledges Road.

ASPROOM LOAF, LOFT, ALOFT

In 1756 Gershom Bennit sold Jonathan Whitlock nine acres “lying easterly of Asproom *Loaf* so-called.” But in 1786 Abraham Pullen, Abel Barnum, and Jonathan Woods all had land at “a place called Bennett’s Farm near Asproom *Loft* so-called.”

In 1797, when James and Jere Scott sold six acres to Abraham Pulling, they described it as being on “the west side of Asproom *Aloft* so called.” Even later, in 1866, Timothy O. Scott combined both new and old forms when he sold two acres at “Aspen Loaf” to Smith Burt.

Loaf, as in Sugar Loaf Mountain Road, referred to the shape of the peak of a mountain — its being like a loaf of bread or a loaf of sugar (which a couple centuries ago was conical in form). Loft or Aloft just meant it was high. Some landowners may have misunderstood the earliest word, loaf, and converted it to the seemingly more sensible loft or aloft. The references are probably to the lofty peak of Barlow Mountain, just west of Limestone Road and visible from

much of the Ridgefield Lakes area. It is today part of Pierrepont State Park and a fine hiking trail traverses the peak from which, at 950 feet above the sea, one can see for many miles in all directions.

ASPROOM MOUNTAIN

Asproom Mountain, as it was commonly called in the 18th Century, is the ridge or hill that extends from Limestone Road westerly to Spring Valley Road. It is now sometimes called Ridgebury Mountain, and includes Barlow Mountain and Sugar Loaf Mountain. At its easterly end it connects at Asproom Loaf with Stonecrest or Copps Mountain, the ridge along the east side of North Street.

Asproom is a corruption of *Asprumquak*. In April 1716 John Copp, who helped lay out Ridgefield, surveyed the northern boundary line of the town (then quite a bit south of where it is now) and said he crossed the top “of a mountain called Asprumquak.” According to various authorities, this word means “lofty place” in the native language.

“Asproom” first appears on the land records in the third purchase from the Indians in 1721, but there was at least one instance of the original word’s remaining almost entirely intact some years later. When the proprietors in 1748 granted 22 acres to Joseph Crampton’s heirs, they described the land as “lying northeasterly of Asproomqua.”

However, Asproom was by far the most common form of the word and was used to place various nearby localities. For example, there was **Asproom Boggs**, a swamp along the Titicus first mentioned in 1721; **Asproom Plain**, flatlands south of the range or perhaps in the area of Regan Road (1724); **Asproom “Peek,”** possibly the area around Summit Lane with an elevation of 860 feet or perhaps the previously mentioned Asproom Loaf (1722).

The Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich wrote in 1800 that the mountain and the ledges provided such a strong division between Ridgebury and Ridgefield that the two regions were virtually separate communities. In fact, the range of the Asproom Mountain probably did more to lead to the creation of Ridgebury Parish and repeated petitions for a “Town of Ridgebury” than any other factor (*To be discussed under Ridgebury*).

Asprumquak Mountain is the original form of Asproom and Aspen, as described above.

B

BAILEY AVENUE

Bailey Avenue, a doglegged road between Main Street and Prospect Street, was named for Lewis H. Bailey who developed it. The road does not appear on the Beers map of the town in 1867, but does on an 1893 map. The Ridgefield Press said the road was about to open in November 1879.

Bailey, who lived from 1818 to 1899 and was the chief founder and first treasurer of the Ridgefield Savings Bank, is said to have opened the road – and others on East Ridge – to develop businesses and houses. Bailey Avenue served as a shortcut to the small freight yard along its eastern leg, where the Ridgefield branch railroad line ended. An old railroad warehouse along the lower leg has been converted to workshops and offices.

In the early 20th Century, Bailey Avenue was home to many immigrant Italian families, several of whom still lived there in 2008. The late Paul J. Morganti, head of a large international construction firm, was born in an apartment house there.

During Prohibition, bootleg wine and other alcoholic beverages arrived at lower Bailey Avenue by freight car. The state police – whose barracks were on nearby East Ridge – would periodically pull a raid, roll the barrels up to Main Street or Bailey Avenue, and smash them open with axes in the middle of the road for all to see. Many members of the Italian-American community never forgot that, and long disliked the state police and certain of its leaders.

There was also a “speakeasy” that operated from a house that used to exist where the 24 Bailey Avenue offices are today (next to the driveway to the Donnelly shopping center).

In a 1973 interview, Ann Lent Van Wagner, who was born on Bailey Avenue in 1896, said the house served as a center of entertainment during the 1920s. The Mei family had both a speakeasy there and a small dance hall behind the house. “We used to dance every Saturday night,” she said. Despite Prohibition, the Meis somehow obtained barrels of beer via freight car—the tracks from Branchville ended right next to the Mei house. Tony Mei used to serve drinks of all sorts through a small window in the dance hall.

One night, Van Wagner said, there was a drunken brawl at the hall. Angered at the melee, Mei grabbed some boards and nailed them across the window. “No more drink,” he said, keeping the dance hall dry for a while as a lesson to the brawlers.

Bailey Avenue has the distinction of being the first one-way road in town, an arrangement approved by the Police Commission around 1973 to ease traffic congestion in the center.

Bailey Avenue is also the site of the town’s first municipal parking lot. The old Garden School was torn down in 1955 to make way for the lot. At the time, many opposed the lot, saying that no one would walk all the way from there to shops on Main Street. By the 1970’s and 1980’s, the lot became so full of “walkers” that the town began planning more lots, with the help of its new Parking Authority.

Although the road has been in use for more than a century, the town learned in the summer of 1976 that it had never obtained title to the end of the road near Prospect Street. Technically speaking, it was still privately owned. Using its attorneys and the cooperation of neighboring landowners, the town eventually got the ownership.

One of the more exciting days in Bailey Avenue's history occurred *under* the road. On March 29, 1985, gasoline leaking from a service station's subterranean tank was sucked from the ground water table by a sump pump in the cellar of The Ridgefield Press building, which then sent it into the storm sewers. An explosion of gas fumes damaged a workshop down the road, and the fire department closed down The Press and the gas station for several days until all was safe.

BAILEY'S NEW ROAD

Bailey's New Road is the straight stretch of Farmingville Road (*q.v.*) from Lee to Limekiln Roads, built around 1914 as bypass — Farmingville Road originally traversed today's Lee and southern Limekiln Roads; named for E.N. Bailey (*q.v.*), the first selectman who approved the project.

BALLARD PARK

This beautiful five-acre park on Main Street, opposite the library, was the 1964 gift by bequest of Elizabeth B. Ballard. It had been her home and that of her father, Lucius Horatio Biglow, who called the place "Graeloe," a name visible on one of the gateway pillars along the Main Street sidewalk. (Graeloe came from his wife's maiden name, Graham, and his own, with the e's apparently added to give it a Gaelic or Scottish flavor.)

In the 18th Century, the property had been the home of Col. Philip Burr Bradley, commander of the Fifth Continental line during the Revolution and a noted Connecticut personality. Mr. Biglow bought the place in 1889, and moved the house back a bit from the road, renovating and adding to the structure. Biglow was the head of Biglow and Main, music publishers in New York, and was also president of a paper company. He built the Tudor-style store and office building on the west side of the Main Street, owned in 2008 by the Amatuzzi family, who for many years operated Roma Pizzeria in the southeast corner of the building (Planet Pizza in 2008).

Mrs. Ballard reportedly felt that her house would be a white elephant for the town to maintain, and in her will ordered it razed. That happened around 1965.

In her more than 80 years at Graeloe, Mrs. Ballard was active in the community. She was a founder of the Ridgefield Boys Club in 1936, serving as its chairman for many years, and had been a member of the Ridgefield Garden Club since shortly after its founding in 1914, and was twice its president. Her bequest included the Greenhouse, now used by both Ridgefield and Caudatowa Garden Clubs. She was 88 at her death June 14, 1964.

BANKS HILL PLACE

Banks Hill Place is a dead-end road serving the 1983 "Lounsbury Ridge" subdivision (*q.v.*) of 21 acres off Lounsbury Road. The name comes not from the hilly terrain, but from a former owner. The Banks family was farming in

this neighborhood as early as the 1850's and the family was in town at least a half century earlier (*see below*).

BANKS MILL POND

A 1795 deed from Silas Hull to Mary Hull describes land "east and adjoining to David Banks Mill pond."

David Banks, along with Daniel Banks, possibly his son, were owners of the old "woolen factory" that stood on the Norwalk River at the present-day intersection of Route 7 and Topstone Road. The early 19th Century operation was the successor to the fulling mill started around 1770 by Hugh Cain, whose name still lives today in Cain's Hill Road (*q.v.*). The Banks family operated the mill or factory at least until 1839 when a list of some \$750 in debts against the property, said to be worth only \$600, was filed in the land records.

The place is now an official historic site in Connecticut, the result of archaeological studies conducted there in the early 1980's (*see Cain's Hill*). However, little but crumbling stone foundations was left of the mills by then.

BARE MOUNTAIN

Bare Mountain appears in a 1752 deed for a hill in Ridgebury better known as Bear Mountain (*q.v.*). It may be an interesting example of how names change to fit situations or imaginations.

While documents as early as 1739 spoke of "Bear" Mountain, the 1752 deed from Theophilus Taylor to Theophilus Benedict, both Danburians, described eight acres "situate in Ridgefield North Patten, lying westerly from ye Bare Mountain, lying in ye hollow between said Bare Mountain and ye Chestruin so-called." A reference is also made to Bare Mountain Brook.

While the word may be just a misspelling, George R. Stewart, in *Names on the Land*, offers this possibility: "Most... mountains had thick forest all the way to the top. But some were higher or more wind-swept, or more rocky, or had perhaps been cleared by fire. These grassy-topped or rocky-topped mountains stood out sharply among the others and were good landmarks. In all the colonies they were most often named Bald Mountain, sometimes Bare Mountain, occasionally Naked Mountain."

"Later, after the forests had been cleared, these mountains were not so individual, or sometimes the trees grew on a burned summit. Then, because the sounds were the same, men often wrote Bear Mountain. So there is no way of telling which it first was, but there are so many more of these than of mountains named for other animals that most of them were probably Bare Mountain."

BARLOW MOUNTAIN

"Barlow Mountain" came into use in the 19th Century for the eastern end of Asproom or Ridgebury Mountain where it joins with the northern end of Stonecrest or Copps Mountain. Its peak is about 950 feet above sea level, making it one of the highest points in town. This peak in the 18th Century was known as Asproom Loaf or Loft (*q.v.*)

The mountain received its modern name from John Barlow, a blacksmith who had his shop and home near the top of the mountain along an old highway, once the eastern end of Barlow Mountain Road. This road still exists as a path from Limestone Road to the intersection of Barlow Mountain and Knollwood Roads, and cuts through Pierrepont State Park. It was said to have been a stage-

coach route and one of Barlow's tasks may have been some shoeing of passing teams. According to Silvio Bedini, author of *Ridgefield in Review*, Barlow was born in Fairfield in 1744 and came here in 1769. He made all of the usual wrought iron objects, such as shoes, hinges, and nails, but may also have been skilled enough to produce parts for guns.

There has long been a tradition, reported by Mr. Bedini, that Barlow was the inventor of the famed Barlow knife. That, however, is not true. Russell Barlow produced the Barlow knife, known as early as 1779, and he did it in England.

Around 1802, John Barlow joined many other Ridgefielders of the period in heading west, in his case, northwest, to Ballston, N.Y.

Foundations to the old Barlow farm still exist in the woods of Pierrepont Park. Although much of the old iron abandoned around the site was removed during World War II scrap drives, excavations of the stone foundation around the blacksmith's shop as late as the 1970's turned up some fine, though ground-worn, examples of 18th Century smithing, including heart-tipped strap hinges.

Barlow Mountain is erroneously shown as Barrow Mountain on some U.S. Geological Survey maps.

BARLOW MOUNTAIN ROAD

Barlow Mountain Road is so called because it was the road that led to and across Barlow Mountain. It begins at North Salem Road (Route 116), angles past Pierrepont Pond, and heads up through Twixt Hills subdivision, ending at the state park. It once continued through the park to Limestone Road (*see above*).

Most of this roadway was in existence in the 18th Century. However, the upper reaches are new, built in connection with Twixt Hills (*q.v.*). The new road bypasses some of the old route, part of which is now called Old Barlow Mountain Road and part of which is abandoned. The original roadway, including the strip through Pierrepont State Park, was said to be one of the routes used by American revolutionary troops on their way to meet the British in the April 27, 1777 Battle of Ridgefield.

A 1928 property map refers to "Barlow Mountain Hill Road."

BARNUM PLACE

Barnum Place off Turner Road in the northwest corner of town is part of the Turner Hill subdivision (*q.v.*). Like most of the Turner Hill roads, it is named after an early circus personality, reflecting the fact that several farms in northern Ridgebury were in the 19th Century used to house circus animals in the winter.

Barnum, of course, was Phineas T. Barnum (1810-1891), the Bethel native whose name survives in the Ringling Bros., Barnum and Bailey Circus. While P.T. Barnum never lived here, he was connected to Ridgefield through Aaron Turner (*see* Turner Road), who was born here and who in 1836 hired a young P.T. Barnum as a ticket-seller, secretary and treasurer of the Turner circus. Barnum was soon out on his own, buying in 1841 Scudder's American Museum in New York City where he displayed "500,000 natural and artificial curiosities from every corner of the globe." The museum was famous for its sign that read, "This way to the egress," fooling people into thinking there was some odd exhibit of an "egress" and thereby keeping people moving through the museum.

Egress, of course, was nothing but another word for exit. To get back in once they “egressed,” patrons had to pay another quarter.

A year later, he hired the diminutive Charles Stratton, calling him Tom Thumb, and in 1850 brought the European opera star Jenny Lind to America, where “The Swedish Nightingale” did 95 concerts for him. It wasn’t until 1870, when he was 60 years old, that he founded “P.T. Barnum’s Grand Traveling Museum, Menagerie, Caravan, and Circus,” which he was soon calling “The Greatest Show on Earth.” Indeed, it grossed \$400,000 in its first year.

BARRACK HEIGHTS

Barrack Heights is the late Francis D. Martin’s 34-lot subdivision on Barrack Hill Road and North Salem Road. Mapped in 1956, the subdivision was approved in 1966 and is served chiefly by Continental Drive.

BARRACK HILL ROAD

Barrack Hill Road, the easterly half of which is quite old, was named for the cavalry barracks of Col. Charles Armand’s Partisan Legion of French troops, said to have been located near the intersection of Old West Mountain Road toward the end of the Revolution (*discussed under Armand Place*).

H. B. Anderson improved the western end of the road around 1908 for his mountaintop resort (*see Eight Lakes*). The road, from North Salem Road to the New York state line, is shown on the 1856 Clark’s map of Fairfield County.

The eastern end, at least up to Old West Mountain Road, existed from early in the 18th Century and was probably called the Toilsome Path at that time. The first recorded use of its current name, albeit misspelled, occurs in 1857 when Samuel S. Olmstead sold Samuel Scott four acres, “following the line of Barack hill Road.”

BARRACK HILLS

Barrack Hills is a 1965 subdivision of 9.6 acres into six lots along Barrack Hill Road between Blue Ridge Road and Hillcrest Court. Developers included real estate broker John F. Coyle of New Canaan, who was then also a Ridgefield junior high teacher.

BARROW MOUNTAIN

Barrow Mountain appears erroneously for Barlow Mountain on modern US Geological Survey maps.

BARRY AVENUE

Barry Avenue is state Route 102 from High Ridge Road to the intersection of West Mountain and Ramapoo Roads. The point where it turns into West Mountain Road has often confused people, but its extent to Ramapoo Road was defined by the Board of Selectmen on Oct. 23, 1958.

Barry Avenue is an example of a road’s picking up its name from a prominent family that lived along it. The R. C. Barry family had a sizable farm on the north side of the road, almost opposite Fairview Avenue, around the turn of the 20th Century. The name Barry Avenue was in use at least by 1908 when it appears on a map published that year.

According to Beers’ 1867 atlas, Barry Avenue was then called New West Lane. The same name also appears on an 1893 atlas. New West Lane suggests

that the road is a relatively modern one, built as a shortcut from town to West Mountain. (The “old” West Lane, off southern Main Street, was called West Lane as early as 1775.) In fact, an 1854 deed, no doubt referring to Barry Avenue, calls it the “new road,” suggesting the highway was built around 1850.

Though it was “New West Lane,” the road was probably not meant as a new alternative to West Lane, which was a flatter route to New York. Instead, it was a short cut to West Mountain, replacing Ramapoo Road and Gilbert Street – long considered one road, and the main route from the village to the mountain.

And if two names for one road are not enough, there was once a considerable discussion about a third. One of the road’s most prominent residents was Frederic Remington, famed American artist and sculptor of the old West. He died at his new home there in 1909. For some time after his death, townspeople debated whether the highway should be called Remington Road. In fact, a 1927 property map prepared for Edith M. Finny uses the term “Remington Road.” There was a similar movement in the 1950’s and Silvio Bedini’s 1958 history of the town went so far as to locate a house as being on the corner of High Ridge and Remington Road, a modern impossibility since a street at Westmoreland has since acquired the name of Remington Road.

BATES FARM ROAD

An old highway at the Ridgefield Lakes, Bates Farm Road dates from before 1856 and recalls the Bates family. The Bates clan was living in the area by 1835 when John Bates is mentioned as a property owner in connection with the building of Limestone Road. Taylor Bates bought 72 acres thereabouts in 1841.

By 1908, there were at least three families of that name living in the area, but the road took its name from the farm of Fred S. Bates at the intersection of Bennett’s Farm and Bates Farm Roads. He served three terms as a selectman between 1904 and 1907. The Bates house is still standing at 19 Bates Farm Road. When the Richard Clare family took down some crumbling plaster in the house in the mid-1980’s, they found written inside the outside sheathing, “Fred S. Bates, Ridgefield, Conn., June 10, 1885.”

The beginning and end of the road – Limestone to Bennett’s Farm Road – was defined in 1961 by First Selectman Leo F. Carroll in a letter to the town attorney. Previously, it had been considered a portion of Limestone Road. However, when the dirt section of old Limestone Road from Bates Farm north to Bennett’s Farm was finally paved about this time, a new name was needed for the connector between Limestone and Bennett’s Farm. Selectman Paul J. Morganti suggested the name, recalling his childhood memories of the Bates farm he had visited on milk runs with his father.

BAYBERRY HILL ROAD

This name is the result of a 1959 petition by its residents who didn’t like the original name of the road – with good reason.

Bayberry Hill Road runs off lower Branchville Road, serving a subdivision first laid out in 1955 by the Stam-Nor Holding Company. Stam-Nor consisted chiefly of two partners: Raymond Wennik and George Bossert, both of Norwalk. They named the road leading to the circle-shaped development “Lakeview Road” because it overlooked John’s Pond on the other side of Branchville Road. But, in an example of creativity that doesn’t work, they called the circle

“Boswen Drive” after themselves. A road off Boswen Drive was labeled, with equal modesty, Wenbos Lane.

It’s not difficult so see why residents didn’t take kindly to those names. And town officials didn’t much care for Lakeview Road since there was already a Lakeview Drive at the Ridgefield Lakes. The neighborhood suggested “Hickory Hill” but there was already a Hickory Lane off Florida Road. So they offered Indian Hill and Bayberry Hill as alternatives, and the selectmen chose the latter for both the entrance road up the hill and the circle.

The bayberry is a native plant whose berries, when boiled, produce a kind of wax or tallow that was used in colonial times to make candles of a dirty green color. Bayberry candles do not bend easily and, according to a 1748 description by a Swedish naturalist visiting in America, do not melt in summer as “common candles do; they burn better and slower, nor do they cause any smoke, but yield an agreeable smell when they are extinguished.”

The Northern Bayberry, more common along coasts than in the hills of Ridgefield, provides food for many songbirds. It’s also popular with road namers; though probably few people could identify a bayberry and even fewer find one, at least 20 of the 23 towns in Fairfield County have bayberry roads.

BEAR ISLAND

According to a 1959 subdivision map of the Hemlock Hills development in Ridgebury, Bear Island is a tiny island in a pond west of Old Mill Road. It takes its name from the nearby Bear Mountain Road and Bear Mountain (*see below*).

BEAR MOUNTAIN

Bear Mountain, a ridge reaching an elevation of 794 feet, is south of the eastern end of George Washington Highway, and runs north-south between Old Mill Road on the west and Pine Mountain Road on the east. The name is first mentioned in Ridgefield records in 1739 when the boundary line between Danbury and Ridgefield was perambulated (the state-required practice of periodically walking the town lines to check and restore boundary markers.)

Bears may well have been sighted on the hill; they may also have lived in the rocky, craggy inclines there. Writing in 1800, the Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich said that there had been bears in Ridgefield, but they were “extinct.” However, they may have survived longest in the remote hills of Ridgebury.

Bears are not unknown in Ridgefield in modern times. In July 1991, a black bear wandered through town, and was spotted by many people. A number of times since, usually in the spring, bears have been seen, undoubtedly just passing through. Quite a few sightings, in many parts of town, were reported in 2006.

This hill has also been called Bare Mountain (*q.v.*), leading to speculation that the name came from a lack of trees at its top. A 1752 deed refers to **Bare Mountain Brook**, which may be the stream just west of Pine Mountain Road and which was later called the Wolf Pond Run or Brook.

BEAR MOUNTAIN ROAD

Bear Mountain Road is a short road up the west slope of Bear Mountain. The late Otto H. Lippolt developed it as part of his Hemlock Hills subdivision, designed in 1959. On a 1957 map, Mr. Lippolt called the planned road “Bare”

Mountain Road, suggesting he may have believed in the “bald top theory” (see Bare Mountain).

BEAR SWAMP

An 1800 deed mentions a property line passing by “Bear Swamp” near Round Pond. The swamp was probably west or northwest of the pond – quite possibly the swamp east of and parallel to Oreneca Road near Sturges Park. This has always been one of the wildest sections of town and, in the 18th Century, was probably used chiefly for woodlots. Perhaps the name was applied after some farmer, out cutting fuel for his fireplace, saw a bear in the swamp.

BEAR’S DEN

The earliest reference to this interesting name occurs in 1795 when Phinias and Levi Smith sold William Scott 2nd of Norwalk several tracts and a house. One of the parcels was “near the Bear’s Den.” However, writing in the 1920’s about the Bear’s Den, historian George L. Rockwell said it had been so called for more than 150 years, dating it back to at least the 1770’s.

Mr. Rockwell wrote: “On Stonecrest Farm [part of which is now the development along Stonecrest Road] in Titicus District is located the Bear’s Den, and such it has been called for over a century and a half. It is only a matter of conjecture just when the section of woods and rocks ceased to be a home of the bear. The author was told many years ago by Benjamin Lee of Farmingville that his grandfather, Daniel Lee, killed a large black bear one winter day. Mr. Lee was drawing logs with his oxen to a saw mill on the Norwalk River, and was passing through the woods about a half mile north [of Farmingville School] when a large black bear rose up in his path. Mr. Lee seized one of the stakes from the sled and by a lucky blow, broke the bear’s back.”

Sounds more like Davy Crockett than Daniel Lee.

BEAVER BROOK

The ambitious beaver was recognized in place names long before the name was applied to the road in Ridgebury. In a 1770 sale of a 40-acre farm to Oliver Whitlock of Norwalk, Ebenezer Nash, also of Norwalk, describes the property as “one piece of land lying near Beaver Brook with a dwelling house and barn thereon... bounded north by John Baldwin’s land and the Flatt Rock, east by Ridgefield Road, south by Abraham Nash’s land, and west by highway.” Another piece sold at the same time was bounded on the west by “Beaver Brook.” This appears to be the stream that runs along Wilton Road East, which modern US Geological Survey maps call the East Branch of the Silvermine River.

The name Beaver Brook is quite common in the Northeast. George R. Stewart, in his *Names on the Land*, says it and Mill Brook are the most common stream names in Massachusetts. The reasons are not only that the animal was desired for its fur, but also because its effect on the land – the result of its dam-building and pond-making – was difficult not to notice.

No doubt, the industrious farmers admired the hard-working beaver, even though its dams frequently flooded their land. Even today, beavers periodically cause problems in town, blocking up streams and causing flooding that in one way or another annoys or threatens suburban life. Usually, they are trapped and carried off to more rural parts of the state.

BEAVER BROOK ROAD

Beaver Brook Road, the main roadway through Ridgebury Estates, connects with Briar Ridge Road and Shadow Lake Road. No pre-1900 references have been found to a "Beaver Brook" here and the origin of the name is probably modern.

Ridgebury Estates was first proposed for development as Rolling Meadow Estates in 1957 by Herman J. Leffert and others. The road through it was to be called Old Farm Road. For some reason, the plan was abandoned.

Then, in the early 1960's, David Katz and Sons proposed a subdivision there called Sherman Colonial. A great debate with planning and zoning authorities ensued over the lot sizes, and the case went to court. Meanwhile, the town attorney, who would normally have defended the Planning and Zoning Commission, bowed out to avoid a conflict of interest. The commission asked the town for money to defend the suit, but the town declined. So commissioners on their own hired counsel, fighting and winning the case in the Connecticut Supreme Court. However, the town for years refused to pay the lawyers, and the unpaid "Sherman Colonial fees" became almost a running joke in the town hall. Finally, the Board of Finance gave in and appropriated the money, but not without a stern warning against incurring unbudgeted expenses without finance board approval.

That court fight was over whether lots should be one or two acre. In the 1980's zoning battles continued there, but over whether the subdivision should be surrounded by corporate development zones, which were adopted in the late 1960's. Ridgeburians wanted the area returned to residential status while several developers as well as town officials who wanted to fatten the tax base favored corporate zoning. Eventually, the town gave up on its corporate zoning, and in the 1990s, most of the land south of Ridgebury Estates was developed as Stone Ridge Estates.

Jerry Tuccio developed most of the lots at Ridgebury Estates in the late 1960's and early 1970's. He chose the name of Ridgebury Estates. Beaver Brook Road was accepted as a town road in 1970.

BEAVER DAM

"Ye Beaver Damm" appears periodically in the land records of the early 1700's. Citations usually referred to a dam across the outlet of New Pound Boggs, now called Silver Spring Swamp. It was possible at the point just east of the intersection of Silver Spring and St. John's Roads where there's now a man-made dam, but it may also have been farther north.

Deeds as late as 1780 speak of land "southeast of the Beaver Dam at New Pound Ridge" or "at Beaver Dam near New Pound Ridge." It is interesting that an animal-made feature like a mud and stick dam could gain such recognition that it appears in property deeds as a landmark for more than a half century. However, this was not the only beaver dam so cited. In 1782, the proprietors took land from the heirs of Samuel Smith for a highway "at their meadow under Copps Mountain at a place called Beever Dam." This dam was probably west of Danbury Road around Tanton Hill Road.

BECK LANE

A little dirt road no longer in use, Beck Lane shows up on a 1939 property map in the town clerk's office as being east of and generally parallel to Silver

Spring Road, across from Silver Spring Country Club. The name came from former Silver Spring Road resident Thomas H. Beck, who owned 100 acres thereabouts in the 1930's and 1940's. Mr. Beck was chairman of the board of Crowell Collier Publishing Company at the time of his death in 1952.

BEDFORD ROAD

Bedford Road is a highway of great importance and, perhaps consequently, a highway with several names. It is the modern-day Route 35 from Main Street at the fountain to the New York State line. The term was used as early as 1717 when the proprietors deeded Norwalk Samuel Smith "six acres of pasture land near ye West Mountain, south of Bedford Wrote." "Bedford Rhode as far as ye West Mountain" was formally laid out by the proprietors in 1722. This would have brought it a few hundred yards west of the present state line, land then part of Ridgefield.

Frequent mention of Bedford Road or "ye road leading from Ridgefield to Bedford" appears in deeds throughout the 18th Century and as late as 1817. It surprisingly shows up even on a 1902 survey map of property along the section of the road today called South Salem Road. In the early 18th Century, the entire length of the road from Main Street to the colony or state line was called Bedford Road. The term West Lane, for the portion east of the West Lane Schoolhouse, did not come into common use until the 1770's. South Salem Road, for the western section, probably dates from the 1830's.

Bedford Road was so-called because the next important town west of Ridgefield was Bedford, N.Y. In fact, in 1790 Bedford had the largest population of any town in Westchester County, all of 2,470 people. As early as 1640, Connecticut colonists purchased the land that later became Bedford. According to Richard M. Lederer Jr. in his *Place Names of Westchester*, the General Court of Connecticut favored naming new settlements after places in the homeland, "intending thereby to keep and leave to posterity the memorial of several places of note in our dear native country of England." The name was selected in 1682 and applied to an area of six square miles.

Bedford Road was a main route for stagecoaches and the quickest way to get to New York City from this part of the state. The Keeler Tavern, at the head of Bedford Road, was consequently a popular stopping place for long-haul coaches. It was also where the mail for Ridgefielders was dropped off. So important was this route that a 1777 British Army map called "A Plan of the Operation of the King's Army under the Control of General Sir William Howe KB in New York and Eastern New Jersey," termed this highway the "Upper Road to Connecticut." The name distinguished it from the lower road, also called the Boston Post Road – today's US Route 1 along the coast. A 1793 map of Lewisboro refers to it as "The Hartford Post Road" (see Post Road). It was also one of the first state highways, receiving the route number 3 by the 1930's. Later, it became Route 35.

During the 18th Century, Bedford Road also served as a route from town to several mills, including a grist mill and a saw mill, near the New York line. A town horse pound was also located somewhere near where South Salem and Old South Salem Roads are today. (Old South Salem Road was the original route of Bedford Road as it crossed the line.) The town's sheep common and ram pasture (*q.v.*) were on the eastern end of the road, near Parley Lane.

In the 19th Century, Bedford Road might have been called Shoemaker's Highway. According to Silvio Bedini, no fewer than 20 shoemakers lived along the road in 1820, all working from their homes. At that time there were 40 shoemakers in town – one for every 57 residents. (The writer lives in a house, just off West Lane, that was occupied in the mid-1800's by shoemaker David W. Olmstead.) One vestige of the trade remains in the name Cobbler's Lane (*q.v.*), which runs off lower South Salem Road.

By the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, much of the old Bedford Road had become lined with large homes, many occupied by wealthy New Yorkers and maintained as summer and weekend places. Among the more illustrious people who lived along the road were Robert P. Scripps, partner in the Scripps-Howard newspaper empire, and John Ames Mitchell, founder in 1883 and publisher of the original *Life* magazine. Author Samuel G. Goodrich, known to millions in the 19th Century as Peter Parley, was born along this road (near Golf Lane) in 1793 (*see* Parley Lane). His brother, author of several once-popular histories, was born there in 1790, and sister, Abigail Goodrich Whittelsey, one of the nation's first female magazine editors and publishers, in 1788.

BEECHWOOD

Beechwood is the name of the 1987 subdivision of the north side of Farmingville Road, served by Norrans Ridge Drive (*q.v.*). Charles Szentkuti received the approval for 25 lots on that and on Linden Road. When the Providence Bank took over the property in 1990, it created the "Beachwood" Development Corp. to hold the land. Either the Providence bankers couldn't spell—or thought the land was near the shore; instead, it's surrounded by Great Swamp. (The name of the town of Beachwood, Ohio, also far from a beach, is believed to be a misspelling of Beechwood made by a local clerk.)

BEECHWOOD LANE

Beechwood Lane is a short road that runs from Pelham Lane to a cul de sac, but also connects with Rising Ridge Road. It was laid out in the early 1960's by the Giles Montgomery and his son, Barry, as part of the Twin Ridge development and became a town road in 1968.

Just how modern subdivision roads get their names is often not thought worthy of recording. Most are just "pulled out of a hat," so to speak. But in the case of Beechwood Lane, there's an interesting little tale, provided in the 1980s by one of its residents, the late Max Gunther, author of 26 books and countless magazine articles:

"The name of this little street (barely a quarter-mile long) was plucked out of the air on about two seconds' notice one morning in 1968. It happened during a phone conversation between Barry Montgomery and me. Barry was chief visionary behind the large land development now known as Twin Ridge. When I first met him in February 1968, he had completed the western part of Twin Ridge, but the eastern end was undeveloped. There was nothing here but swampland and wild woods. To raise operating cash, Barry was offering to sell plots in this trackless wilderness for what now (1986) seem like astoundingly low prices.

"My wife Dottie and I tramped through the snowy woods with Barry and decided this was where we wanted our new home to be. We bought acreage on a rise overlooking the swamp, which Barry planned to turn into a seven-acre

lake. He also planned to build a paved road adjoining our property. Until the road was built, the only way we could find our way to our future home site was by looking for forest landmarks. The main landmark was an enormous, 200-year-old beech tree.

“Barry started work on his road in the spring of 1968. In our rambles through the woods, I had suggested that he call this road Tanglewood Lane, which pleased him. We were referring to it by this name before it was even so much as a dirt trail. But one morning, Barry phoned me in a mild panic. He was at the Ridgefield Town Hall. He was in the process of filing maps of the proposed new Twin Ridge section, and it turned out that he would not be allowed to call the new road Tanglewood. The name was already in use elsewhere. He needed another name and needed it fast.

“I immediately thought of that gigantic tree. ‘Beech Lane,’ I said.

“He was dubious. ‘People would misspell it,’ he said. ‘It sounds like – you know, a sandy beach.’

“‘Okay,’ I said. ‘How about Beechwood?’

“‘Ah!’

“And so it came to be. The huge beech tree still stands massively off the southeast corner of our house today.”

The American Beech favors forest soils and can grow to 120 feet tall. The wood, strong and difficult to split, tends to warp. It has been used for inexpensive chairs and furniture, railroad ties, food boxes, and barrels. Its prickly burs contain nuts eaten by a wide variety of wildlife, being extremely high in fat content. The nuts have also been popular as the name and symbol of a food and gum manufacturer.

BEERS PLACE

Beers Place is another road name that made it to paper but not to earth. In 1986, when developer Carl Lecher subdivided 50 acres off Branchville and Nod Hill Roads into the “Nod Hill” subdivision, he sought a name for the road serving many of the lots. He asked this writer, who suggested Beers Place or Lane, recalling the Beers family that was once so much a part of Branchville.

Lecher agreed, and when he appeared before the Planning and Zoning Commission, that name was accepted. However, John Katz, then chairman and a veteran commission wit, had to add his comment about a road named Beers. “It’s better than Cutty Sark Court,” he said.

Alas for the name, the road was never developed. Fortunately for the community, the land was sold to the federal government and is now part of the Weir Farm National Historic Site.

The property was long the home of artist Robert Fawcett, once called “the illustrator’s illustrator,” who died in 1967 (. He was a founder of The Famous Artists School in Westport, and author of the long-popular book, *On the Art of Drawing* (1958).

BEERS STATION

Beers Station was an early name for the corner of town today called Branchville. The term was first used in an 1854 deed for land on a “new road” running from “Beers Station on railroad” to Ridgefield. The new road was Branchville Road.

When the Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road line was built up the Norwalk River Valley in 1852, a station to serve Ridgefield was erected in the southeast corner of town. The area had been chiefly farmland and where many members of the sizable Beers clan lived. It wasn't until after 1870, when the spur or "branch" line to the village was built, that this section became known as Branchville.

The Beers connection with the railroad began in 1850 when Sherman Beers sold land for \$600 to the new railroad company, including "the privilege of extending to the Sugar Hollow Turnpike on the east and to the river on the west." Beers wanted to make certain that the sale would benefit the community, for he added "the condition that the said rail road company establish or locate a station or depot on said lands." He also agreed "that the said company shall have the privilege to lay a lead pipe from my spring east of my house for the purpose of supplying the said station with water for all purposes connected with said road."

By 1851 the railroad decided that "for the accommodation of the business and travel for the town of Ridgefield, Redding..." a facility should be leased rather than built. So Sherman Beers leased to the railroad "the front two rooms in the basement in the dwelling house now occupied by me, together with the room or office between the said front two rooms and now occupied as a bar room... for the uses and privileges of a passenger house and ticket office for said railroad company." One room was to be specially prepared "for the reception and accommodation of females."

The bar room became the ticket office, and Beers had to provide the rooms with "suitable chairs or settees, and a looking glass of a suitable size, and wash stand, pitcher, basin, and napkins for the ladies room with a desk fixed or portable." He also supplied office furniture and "airtight" wood or coal stoves for each room.

For a while, "Beers Station" became a commonly used term, not only for the building but also for the southeast corner of town. Its last recorded use was in 1868 when Sherman Beers, who was obviously biased toward the name, sold an acre "at a place called Beers or Ridgefield Station on the Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road." Ridgefield Station was the more formal name for the area, and appeared on the 1867 map of Ridgefield included in the New York metropolitan atlas published by F. W. Beers (no known relation). On this map, Sherman Beers' station/hotel is shown as his "Halfway House."

After a few years a new station was built on the west side of the main track. It was operated by William Woolsey Beers, Sherman's cousin.

In 1970, this writer met Yardley Beers (1913-2005), a physicist with the National Bureau of Standards and a former New York University professor, who was descended from the Ridgefield Beers clan. "My branch of the Beers family moved from Norwalk to Ridgefield in the 1790's when my great great grandfather, Anthony, bought a house on Nod Hill Road on the Wilton line... Anthony and my great grandfather, Lewis, are buried in a private (Beers) cemetery adjacent to the house. [The cemetery is still there.] The house has since been owned by a number of artists. One of them was a friend of the famous architect Stanford White, who was frequently a guest there. And the house was enlarged under White's supervision. The most recent owner ... is Sperry Andrews, an artist. [This was the home of J. Alden Weir, the artist, now the centerpiece of the Weir Farm National Historic Site.]

“My grandfather, William Woolsey Beers, (was) the first stationmaster in Branchville. My father, Lewis Gilbert Beers, was born in a house no longer standing.... (He) inherited an interest in the Gilbert and Bennett Company of Georgetown through his mother, a Gilbert. He went into the company at an early age and opened their plant in Chicago. Later, he was forced out of the company by Gilbert family politics, and he joined John A. Roeblings Sons Company – also manufacturers of wire – in Trenton, N.J., where I grew up. My father’s sister married Dr. R. W. Lowe and I was a frequent guest at their home on Main Street, diagonally opposite The Elms, until their deaths around 1945 or so. My father’s half sister, Mrs. Ebenezer Hoyt, lived at the other end of Main Street, and I frequently called on her. A son of another half sister, Harvey Valden, was (assistant) postmaster...”

Silvio Bedini, in Ridgefield in Review, seems to confirm Yardley Beers’ statement about his grandfather. Says Bedini: “Another district post office was maintained in Branchville. Its first postmaster was William W. Beers, who also served as the station agent of the Norwalk-Danbury Railroad from its establishment in 1852 until his death in 1879.” Apparently, Sherman didn’t want that job.

BELDEN FIELD’S CORNER

Belden Field’s Corner applied to the sharp curve of Bennett’s Farm Road just before Ridgebury School, where a man named Belden Field owned an 80-acre farm early in the 20th Century. According to Harold Iles of Redding, children from the Limestone School on Danbury Road used to walk to a spring on this property to get drinking water for the schoolhouse – a walk of nearly a mile each way. Mr. Iles’ two brothers attended the school.

BELLTOWN

The neighborhood around southern Main Street was called Belltown in the mid-1800’s when a schoolhouse there was said to be the only one in Ridgefield to possess a bell to summon its pupils. The Bell District School, according to Historian George L. Rockwell, burned in 1865 and about 30 students from the district were absorbed into Flat Rock, West Lane, and Whipstick school districts to avoid having to build a new school. Mr. Rockwell does not mention what happened to the bell, which no doubt survived the fire. Belltown never appears in the land records as a locality name.

BELVEDERE COURT

Belvedere is one of those “pretty names” that have no historical connections, but sound nice. In fact, the name also has a nice meaning; it’s from the Italian, and ultimately Latin, for “beautiful view.” Towns like Belvedere, Calif., and Belvedere, S.C., were named for their good views. Anthony J. Czyr developed Belvedere Court from a 1997 subdivision of nine lots and 3.8 acres of open space from 27.9 acres off Limekiln Road.

Mr. Czyr, who died in 2003 and had built dozens of houses in town over a 40-year career, was one of Ridgefield’s more unusual developers. A quiet man who could quote Shakespeare with the ease of a college professor and was also a jazz guitarist, he donated his services without fanfare to many community groups, and helped build the Ridgefield Historical Society’s headquarters on Sunset Lane.

BENEDICT'S MOUNTAIN

In 1852, Gould Sherwood sold Caleb Pierce nearly 10 acres "at Benedict's Mountain, a place so called." Both buyer and seller were Danburians, so the land was probably just across the line in the Ridgebury section of Ridgefield, probably up by Pine Mountain. One of the adjoining property owners was listed as "the heirs of Asa Benedict," and therein probably lies the source of the name.

BENEDICT'S POND

Benedict's Pond was apparently another name for Bogg's Pond, a body of water now in Danbury but in territory that was part of Ridgefield before 1846. In an 1826 deed, Ezra Pearce Benedict of Danbury quit claimed to Richard J. Boughton, also of Danbury, a saw mill at "the Boggs so called, on the outlet of the Boggs or Benedict's Pond." Thus, the name probably came from the miller. An 1832 deed mentions Benedict's Pond, but ignores the name Boggs. Boggs Pond, sporting a modern dam, still exists under that name in northwestern Danbury. Water from it feeds the city's West Lake reservoir.

The Benedict family has been a part of Ridgefield since the early 1700s; it's a shame no current name remembers the Benedicts.

BENNETT'S FARM

As an area of town, Bennett's Farm has been so known from as early as the 1730's and is one of the town's oldest names. Although there were several other 18th Century "farm" localities, such as Knap's Farm and Fitch's Farm, Bennett's Farm is the only name of that kind to survive.

James Bennett, founder of what was to become a sizable clan here, came to Ridgefield in 1721. He had lived in Fairfield, although his home there may have been in what is modern-day Redding, which was then northern Fairfield. Bennett bought a house on Danbury Road, possibly near Grove Street, from Alexander Resseguie in that year. He soon began amassing large quantities of land a couple of miles to the north where he evidently lived for a while before moving to nearby Danbury, possibly in the Starrs Plain area. The date of his death has not yet been found, but was probably around 1739. For in 1740, his estate was divided among his heirs: Gershom, Ephraim, Samuel, Abraham, and Deborah Bennett, Elizabeth (Mrs. Jonah) Smith, and Hannah (Mrs. Israel) Mead.

Several of the family members, particularly the Meads, continued farming in the area, in some cases acquiring more land from such owners of large tracts as John Sturdevant, while others went off to new frontiers. Both Ephraim and Gershom, for instance, moved to northern New York State, which was being widely promoted for settlement after the Revolution. In 1835, the "Widow Lucy Bennett" was living on Great Hill Road but by 1867, not a single person named Bennett still owned a farm in all of Bennett's Farm District.

The size and extent of James Bennett's farm is difficult to determine, but it apparently included most of the present Ridgefield Lakes area, as well as Fox Hill and the ponds to the north. Bennett family members also had land to the west, near Lake Windwing, possibly part of the same farm. At any rate the farm was large and notable enough to become a place name by 1739, when the proprietors gave Ebenezer Lobdell three acres "lying between Danbury Rhode and

ye Rhode to Bennitts,” and allowed Abraham “Bennit” four acres “lying westerly of ye road that leads to Bennits Farm” – the first recorded use of the name.

The road mentioned in both deeds is probably today’s Great Hill Road. A 1743 deed calls it “Bennits Path.” In 1740, the proprietors sold John Whitlock 100 acres “northerly from Bennitts Farm and southerly from Joseph Keeler’s New Pattent (Ridgebury) Division” and 10 acres at Whitlock’s “new dwelling house near Bennitts Farm.” The spelling of Bennett varies considerably. The second “e” begins to appear in the 1770’s (such as in “Bennets Long Pond” in 1779).

Bennett’s Farm began to gain more distinction as an entity as it gained in population. The Annual Town Meeting on Dec. 14, 1756 “voted that there shall be a school kept ... amongst ye people at Limestone and Bennits Farm.” This schoolhouse may have been erected on Danbury Road near the intersection of Limestone and Haviland Roads. (Near the gasoline station just to the north is the site of a later Limestone Schoolhouse which is now a home.)

An old schoolhouse used for Bennett’s Farm district was still standing but crumbling at the corner of Bates’ Farm and Bennett’s Farm Roads in the early 1970’s. Its date of erection is unknown, but George Rockwell, who frequently tried to have the building preserved, maintained that it was the second oldest wooden one-room schoolhouse in Connecticut. The building was eventually torn down.

The Annual Town Meeting of Dec. 8, 1789, voted that “a lawful pound may be erected in some part of the town that is called Bennits Farm.” However, a Town Meeting several months later decided that the pound should instead be erected at Limestone near Ebenezer Lobdell’s house and that Lobdell should be “keeper of the pound.” There’s no record of why, but it was probably argued that Limestone was more densely populated and more in need of a pound than Bennett’s Farm. (Pounds were used to hold livestock that had escaped.)

By 1867, the Bennett’s Farm School District (number two) was defined as bounded on the east by Danbury, on the south by a line that went by the intersection of Routes 7 and 35 southwesterly to where the Norwalk River (Ridgefield Brook) crosses Great Hill Road and Limestone Road, thence to Stonecrest or Barlow Mountain, then north to near the intersection of Bogus and Ned’s Mountain Road, then easterly to the Danbury line. That encompassed almost all of Limestone and Bennett’s Farm Roads, the whole of the Ridgefield Lakes, and most of Great Hill Road, an area now densely populated, but then mostly farmland.

Bennett’s Farm is one of those names that has more than one common form. In fact, at least four variations occur in modern times: Bennett’s Farm, Bennetts’ Farm, Bennett’s Farms, and Bennetts’ Farms. The Bennett’s Farms version is preferred by those who maintain that one man named Bennett (presumably James) had more than one farm. Bennetts’ Farms indicates at least two Bennetts had farms. Both versions are based on situations that may have been the case at one time or another. However, as a name, neither is historically accurate, according to town records. Not once in many dozens of 18th Century deed references to the district does the plural “farms” appear. It is always “farm.” (By the 1850’s and 1860’s, a few references to “Bennetts Farms” begin appearing.)

Then were the references to one farm owned by one Bennett or by several Bennetts? Because early town clerks infrequently used apostrophes to denote

the possessive, it's never clear. However, Town Clerk Benjamin Smith, recording a deed in 1799, writes "Bennit's Farm" and when Samuel Stebbins became clerk a year later (and until 1836), he frequently wrote "Bennitt's Farm." (In 1834, he also recorded a "Bennitt's Farms.") So, probably the earliest references are to one large farm founded by James Bennett and the name should be spelled "Bennett's Farm." Just in case you ever wondered or cared.

BENNETT'S FARM ROAD

As it runs east-west from Route 7 through the Ridgefield Lakes to Ridgebury, Bennett's Farm Road is an old highway, appearing on the earliest map of town (1856). Probably most sections of it were in use at least a century before that. However, the 18th Century Ridgefielder probably considered Limestone Road from Danbury Road to Great Hill, and Great Hill Road to Bennett's Farm Road to be the "road to Bennett's Farm" since it was the most direct route from town to the farm (see *Bennett's Farm*). Thus, Great Hill Road was probably the original Bennett's Farm Road or Bennett's Path as it was first called.

The name "Bennett's Farm Road" was once applied to a route that extends all the way to Ridgebury Road. However, a 1961 petition to the selectmen resulted in the section from the Ridgebury firehouse to Ridgebury Road being changed to Old Stagecoach Road (*q.v.*). Just the opposite happened to the east end of the road, between Great Hill Road and Route 7 in Danbury. Petitioners in 1973 got the selectmen to label this section as Bennett's Farm Road after it had been called Maplewood Road for years. The petitioners incorrectly contended that Bennett's Farm Road was historically the correct name for this segment. It had been properly called Maplewood Road because it traversed Sturges Selleck's Maplewood Farm in the 1800's.

BENNETT'S LONG POND

Bennett's Long Pond was another name for Bennett's Pond (*below*) and Long Pond (*q.v.*).

BENNETT'S POND(S)

In early land records, Bennett's Pond is always singular, although the word pond is invariably plural on modern maps because there are now two distinct ponds connected by a stream. The singular form in the 18th Century indicates only one large pond existed then. And a 1779 deed refers to "Bennets Long Pond," suggesting its oneness as well as its shape.

By 1856, they are clearly shown as two ponds on Clark's 1856 map of Fairfield County.

From the high ledges to the north, overlooking the ponds from 200 feet above their surface, one can get a spectacular picture of the water and a clear view of the swamp that surrounds it. Overlooking the ponds, it is easy to imagine them and the extensive swamp as a lake as big as Mamanasco, now the town's largest body of water. Undoubtedly, the Bennett's Ponds are a "dying" body of water, the remnants of a small lake formed after the last glacier some 15,000 years ago.

Some of the water for these ponds, now owned by the state, arrives from the hills to the north, some from the Fox Hill Lake and other Ridgefield Lakes, interconnected by streams. Because of this, the Bennett's Ponds are dramatic examples of the effects of 20th Century development on our waterways.

The outlet streams of Fox Hill Lake and Rainbow Lake flow into the lower of the Bennett's Ponds. Fox Hill and Rainbow Lakes are surrounded by densely developed houses, and their waters receive runoff from fertilizers and from septic systems. Consequently, the water at the lower Bennett's Pond can become murky and full of algae, duckweed, and other vegetation that feed on the incoming nutrients. The plant life is clogging its waters and gradually helping to turn the pond into a swamp. The upper Bennett's Pond, on the other hand, is much clearer – most of its incoming water is from the undeveloped, unpolluted hills. Not a house is within its watershed.

The outlet of the Bennett's Ponds sends water southeastward into Danbury, crossing Route 7 and filling the pond across the highway from the end of Bennett's Farm Road. From there the water wanders northward to the west branch of the Saugatuck River, which flows through Redding into the Saugatuck Reservoir in Redding and Easton. The reservoir is owned by Aquarion, the company that provides water for many cities and towns in lower Fairfield County, including Ridgefield (it was long known as Bridgeport Hydraulic Company or BHC). Thus, the Bennett's Ponds – as well as the Ridgefield Lakes behind them – are part of the Aquarion's vast watershed, and the firm periodically checks them for potentially harmful levels of pollution.

For nearly three centuries, most Ridgefielders never saw the ponds since they were surrounded by private property and they were not accessible by any major road – both the Bennett's and Great Ponds are the only sizable, natural ponds that can't be seen from a car (and maybe from a house). Two centuries ago, at least one highway led to the wood lots in the mountains to the north, passing very near the pond. Today, of course, it is parkland and many Ridgefielders use their feet or bicycles to visit the shores of the pond via the trails installed by the Friends of Bennett's Pond.

The first use of the term "Bennetts Pond" was found in a 1745 Town Meeting record, and the singular "pond" continued to be used into the 1860's. The name, of course, refers to the Bennett family of Bennett's Farm, who owned much or all of the land around the pond in the mid-18th Century. Land records indicate that Bennetts still had land at the pond or ponds in 1815.

By the mid-1700's, a sawmill operated on the outlet near the present Route 7, resulting in its sometimes being called Bennett's Saw Mill Pond. An iron works (*q.v.*), using water power, was built in the same neighborhood by the Peck brothers in 1792.

An 1818 Town Meeting banned fishing on the pond with "any sein or seins, use or employ of any hook, pot or other implement by which fish are or may be caught or taken." It is not explained why, but the record book did note later the same year that one David Blackman was fined \$10 for fishing at Bennett's Pond. Round Pond was under the same restriction. The rule may have been prompted by overfishing the waters of the pond.

As part of Col. Louis D. Conley's Outpost Farm (*see* Outpost Pond) early in this century, the Bennett's Ponds were used for swimming and fishing. At the end of Devil's Run Road, a rough dirt path that leads from Bennett's Farm Road to the lower pond, there are cut granite steps leading into the water, a reminder of the days when this was a playground on one of Ridgefield's largest and wealthiest estates.

BENNETT'S POND STATE PARK

In the 1990s, IBM gave up on putting a corporate facility on its land north of Bennett's Farm Road – the old Fox Hill Inn site (*see* Fox Hill). It offered the land to the town, but for reasons never clearly explained, the town leadership did not pursue purchase. IBM then sold to Eureka V LLC, an arm of a major Northeastern developer, which submitted plans for a huge housing development on the 458 acres north of the road.

An organization was formed to convince the town to buy the land. The Ridgefield Open Space Association (ROSA) launched petition drive in October 2000, and in September 2001, voters agreed to acquire the old IBM land by eminent domain. On Dec. 20, 2001, the town took title to land north of Bennett's Farm Road, and in 2004, it turned title over to the state. The result is Bennett's Pond State Park, which has become one of the community's most popular pieces of open space for hiking and trail biking.

The park is linked to the town-owned Pine Mountain and Hemlock Hills Refuges, and via a trail system, to parkland in Danbury and Bethel.

BENNETT'S SAW MILL POND

An 1877 deed for a small parcel "in Ridgebury Parish" describes the land as being "at the west part and in a pond known as Bennett's Saw Mill Pond." Whether this is the same pond mentioned above or one in Ridgebury proper has not been determined.

BENSON ROAD

A short, dog-leg, dead-end road in Ridgebury, Benson Road was developed by William Mannion in the 1960's and accepted by the town in 1968.

Frank Benson came to Ridgefield from North Salem in 1908, buying the house on the southeast corner of the intersection of George Washington Highway with Ridgebury Road. He farmed land across the road where Benson Road is. His daughter, Ruth Benson Heller, lived in the house from the age of three until her death in January 1976 at the age of 70.

BERTHIER PLACE

Dead end road running south off Chestnut Hill Road serves about nine houses on 3-acre lots; approved 1987 as part of 61 acre subdivision by Dillon Associates. The name recalls Alexandre Berthier, French military officer under Comte Rochambeau, who led French troops who encamped in this vicinity in 1781 (*see* Rochambeau Avenue).

BEST DIVISION OR MEADOW

The Best Division was a very early subdivision of meadowland and, as the name suggests, was prime property, deeded out to lucky proprietors. Most of it was along Danbury Road, from the vicinity of Fox Hill condominiums northward.

On April 22, 1709, the proprietors laid out 21 lots on both sides of the "branch or run of water that vents itself northeastward out of ye Great Swamp on ye east side of Copps Mountain." This area, or part of it, was also called the Great Island because it was virtually surrounded by either swamps or streams. Because it was the first subdivision of meadowland outside the village on the ridge, it was also called the "First Division."

A 1712 proprietors' deed assigns "a certain lottment of meadow called ye Best Division lying in ye township ... on both sides of the branch that runs out of ye Great Swamp." In the same year, a proprietor received 2.5 acres "on ye Great Island, being some part of ye Great Swamp, lay'd out on yet account of ye grant of ye Best Meadow Division."

A couple of Best Meadow division lots were also laid out at Titicus and on Chestnut Ridge, but the term came to be used chiefly for the Danbury Road meadows. It was not long-lived, however, and the term does not appear on the land records after 1760.

BETTY GRANT

In 1739, an Indian named Betty sold Ridgefield settlers land that extended from modern-day Ridgebury north to the New Fairfield line. Much of this land became annexed to Danbury in 1846, and Danburians apparently called it "the Betty Grant," according to *Connecticut Place Names*. The deed of sale was also signed by Jacob Turkey and Mokquaroose. Jacob Turkey had been involved in an earlier sale of Ridgebury land.

BETTY'S CORNER

Daniel M. McKeon of Ridgebury maintained that Betty's Corner is an old name for the intersection of Ridgebury and Old Ridgebury Roads in the very northern part of the town.

Pamela Colgate, who once did some study of Ridgebury history, reported that she was told by a member of the old Benson family of the Danbury section of Ridgebury that Betty's Corner is up in Danbury, a little south of Interstate 84. In any event the name is supposed to come from Betty, the Indian who sold to the settlers the northern tier of old Ridgebury (*see above*).

Though Betty's Corner was mentioned in George L. Rockwell's *History of Ridgefield*, it never appeared in any 18th Century deed, so its origin may be more 19th Century tradition than 18th Century fact.

BIDDLE HILL

Biddle Hill, the rise along the "top" of Branchville Road near the western intersection of Old Branchville Road, was named for the Edward R. Biddle family who lived in a large house atop the hill in the early 20th Century.

The Biddle farm, formerly owned by Ebenezer W. Keeler, extended southward into much of the modern Twin Ridge development.

The Biddle sisters – daughters Harriett, Christine, and Edna – were all active in St. Stephen's Church and Edna did much work for the Ridgefield Library. Their brother went by the rather colorful name of H. Wilmerding Biddle and became a Long Island real estate businessman.

BIDDLE LANE

In the original subdivision plans, dated 1950, Biddle Lane was the proposed name for what is now Nutmeg Ridge on the northern slope of Biddle Hill.

Although Biddle Lane may not sound as fine and fancy as Nutmeg Ridge (often mixed up with Nutmeg Court, more than a mile away), it seems more suitable and less confusing. When someone from Nutmeg Ridge someday calls in an emergency and finds that the police car, fire truck or ambulance arrives

late because it went to Nutmeg Court by mistake, then maybe the neighborhood will petition for a return to Biddle Lane – or, if they want to go further back into town history, Pompion Ridge or Pumpkin Ridge, both of which were used for this area in the 18th Century.

BIG SHOP LANE

An old road, only the ends of which are readily distinguishable today, Big Shop Lane extends from Main Street between the Finch building and the Gap at 440 Main Street eastward to lower Bailey Avenue. While it does not appear on 1856, 1867, 1893, or 1900 maps of the village, an engraving called “View from East Ridge,” drawn by someone named Kelsey in 1853, seems to show a path extending from Main Street to East Ridge in this vicinity.

In 1948, a developer asked town officials about putting up commercial buildings along Big Shop Lane. He maintained that it was town-owned road and as such would have to be improved and maintained by the town if he went ahead with development plans. What the town told him is not clear, but his plans never materialized. Responding to several inquiries over the years, First Selectman Joseph J. McLinden commissioned a 1972 investigation into whether the town owned any of Big Shop Lane. The study concluded that the town held no title whatsoever and that several parties privately own the lane.

Today largely obscured by parking lots, the path received its name because it passes by the front of the Big Shop, the large 2½ story building at the north end of the Bailey Avenue municipal parking lot. This structure, built around 1830 on the site of the present First Congregational Church, housed a carriage factory and other small industries in the 19th Century. The Big Shop was also a community meeting place, and Hannibal Hamlin, vice-president under Lincoln, once spoke there. The shop was moved around 1888 to make way for the church. It continued to house businesses until fairly modern times when it was converted into apartments. The building was condemned as a dwelling around 1971 and remained vacant and deteriorating until 1977 when Bartholomew T. Salerno purchased it from the G.M. Zandri family. Much to the relief of historical preservationists, Mr. Salerno renovated and restored the building as a location for restaurants, shops and offices (for a while the upstairs was to be the studios of WREF, the Ridgefield radio station Mr. Salerno founded).

Mr. Salerno, who died in 1988, had been among those who claim the town owns Big Shop Lane, but officials continue to treat it as private property.

BIG SWAMP

Two deeds in 1869 mention “the Big Swamp so-called,” on the Titicus River. This was probably the sizable wetland north and northwest of Ridgefield High School, an area that had earlier been called New Purchase Swamp (*q.v.*).

BIRCH COURT

Birch Court, a short lane off Walnut Hill Road, is one of five roads in town named after the birch. All are a source of great confusion.

Birch Court, for example, is more than two miles from Birch Lane, by Haviland Road. White Birch Road is more than two miles from White *Birches* Road. One has to be careful when using any of those names in addresses. A little less confusing is Silver Birch Lane, off New Street.

Such names are popular not only here, but throughout the area. By 1981, 21 of the 23 towns in Fairfield County had roads named after either the White Birch or Black Birch – usually the former because of its distinctive and attractive bark. Both were once more common in our woods, but White Birch especially is suffering from climate warming. The Black Birch, used in making furniture, is also a source for the flavoring using in birch beer. Some Indian tribes used white birch bark for making canoe skins and shelter coverings.

Birch Court, which was accepted by the town in 1964, part of the Eight Lakes development (*q.v.*).

BIRCH LANE

This dead-end road off Poplar Road was developed and named by Armando Salvestrini in the early 1960's. The area was once part of the huge Outpost Nurseries and the birch trees in this area may have been planted as nursery stock (*see* Outpost Pond).

BIRCH POND

Birch Pond has no connection with the tree, but instead is a mispronunciation of Burt's Pond (*q.v.*), an old name for Lake Mamanasco. The Burt family once owned the mill at the lake outlet and long held much land in the neighborhood – although some was confiscated during the Revolution when some Burts took sides with the British. Birch Pond appears occasionally in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. A legal notice in an 1896 issue of *The Press* speaks of "Mamanasco Pond or Birch Pond."

BIRCH ROAD

As if our birch-name problem were not confusing enough, consider Birch Road. According to the 1958 Directory Map of the Town of Ridgefield (as revised in 1960), today's Birch Lane was called Birch Road.

BLACK FRANK'S CORNER

Black Frank's Corner was a late 19th and early 20th Century name for the intersection of North Salem and Ridgebury Roads. According to Beverly Crofut, Black Frank was a Micmac Indian who had a shack in the triangle of the intersection of those two roads in the 19th Century. Mr. Crofut learned the name from his grandparents, Sturges and Jessie Keeler Selleck. The shack stood there for "years and years," Mr. Crofut said.

The 1870 census says Frank Stedman, 60, a laborer, lived there with his son, Leander, 14. The "shack" shows up on Beers' 1867 atlas under the name, F. Stedman.

Triangles at road intersections were publicly owned land – schoolhouses were often built in triangles so towns wouldn't have to spend money buying land. With no interest in putting a school there, apparently the town fathers did not mind Black Frank's squatting on this tiny island of land. (*See also* Black Man's Corner.)

BLACK MAN'S CORNER

Catherine Wettingfeld reported that her mother, Edith Douglas Wettingfeld, who was born here in 1900, recalled a Black Man's Corner somewhere off

North Salem Road. This is probably the Black Frank's Corner discussed above. The late Harold Iles also recalled a Black Man's Corner in this vicinity.

BLACKMAN ROAD

An old highway traversing what was once called Hawley's Ridge, Blackman Road extends from Farmingville Road south to the intersection with Ivy Hill Road where the Blackman family had a sizable farm or farms.

In 1805, John Blackman of Fairfield paid Ebenezer Burr \$1,700 for a 54-acre farm in the Hawley's Ridge area. Life in Ridgefield was apparently not good for the new settler, for he died only a year later. However, his family stayed on, and by the mid-1800's, several Blackman family houses existed near the intersection of Blackman, Ivy Hill, and Lounsbury Roads. At least two are still standing. One, on the west side of upper Ivy Hill Road, is said to date from before 1783, possibly having been built by a member of the Hawley family, descendants of the town's first minister. The other house is on the east side of lower Blackman Road.

By 1922, the family members had moved elsewhere and the town filed tax liens against the many pieces of Blackman-owned land, then confiscated them for auction (*see also* Hunter Heights).

BLACKSMITH'S RIDGE

Blacksmith's Ridge is a very old name that had long ago disappeared from use, but was recently resurrected for a subdivision road.

The first of many 18th Century references occurs in a 1717 deed in which the proprietors granted David Scott 13 acres "lying on both sides of ye highway (perhaps Peaceable Street or Ramapoo Road) leading to ye Blacksmiths Ridge."

The deed mentions one of the adjoining landowners as Benjamin Burt, the town's first blacksmith and probably the source of the name. A transaction involving land in this vicinity, recorded in the town's first record book in 1716, mentions land "laid out to ye blacksmith right." Thus, it is probable that Burt was given a sizable tract on the ridge as part of an inducement to move to Ridgefield, which was in need of his craft (*see* Burt's Lane).

Blacksmith's Ridge was used throughout the 18th Century into the 19th Century (an 1853 deed calls it "Black Smith Ridge"). Early deeds did not make its location clear, though one in 1760 mentioned four acres at "ye west end of ye Blacksmiths Ridge, under ye West Mountain so-called." Deeds in the 1850's and 1860's mentioning Blacksmith's Ridge seem to pinpoint the location to the vicinity of today's Westmoreland development, particularly the Barry Avenue end.

Blacksmith Ridge Bridge, a name that appears occasionally in mid-1700's deeds, may have referred to Peaceable Street as it crosses the swamp near Golf Lane.

BLACKSMITH RIDGE ROAD

Blacksmith Ridge Road serves a 1981 subdivision, created by Lewis J. Finch, his son Barry Finch, and Dr. Robert Mead. The development on 59 acres consists of 18 lots off the east side of Peaceable Ridge Road and the north side of Peaceable Hill Road, overlooking the old Blacksmith's Ridge or possibly

being part of the area originally included in what was known as Blacksmith's Ridge. The developers chose the name on the recommendation of this writer.

BLOOMER ROAD

Extending from Old Branchville Road to Branchville Road, Bloomer Road was named for Thomas S. Bloomer, who in 1890 acquired a 35-acre farm there. Bloomer was born in 1858 in nearby North Salem, N.Y., headquarters of a large family of Bloomers who migrated there from Long Island, which they had helped settle in the mid-1600's.

Although he was a farmer, Thomas Bloomer also worked for the town highway department and because of this and his living along the road, the selectmen chose his name for the road. He died in 1916.

His son, Frank J. Bloomer, lived at the homestead until his death in 1966, and built the stone base for part of the road by hauling rocks by horse from nearby fields. It is said to be one of the best-built minor roads in town.

BLUE RIDGE ROAD

One of those roads with pretty but meaningless names, Blue Ridge Road runs from Old Sib Road to Barrack Hill Road. It was built for the Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*) and was accepted as a town highway in 1957.

BOB CREST DRIVE

Shown only on paper (town clerk's map 2428), this road at the Ridgefield Knolls was never built, or the name was later changed to something else.

BOB HILL ROAD

Accepted by the town in 1961, Bob Hill Road extends from Knollwood Drive to Rockcrest Drive at the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*) atop Ridgebury Mountain. It was named for Robert Kaufman of Redding, developer of the Knolls, who for many years continued to operate the Topstone Hydraulic Company, the water firm that served the 250 or so houses at the Knolls.

BOB'S LAKE

Bob's Lake was a neighborhood name for Lake Windwing (*q.v.*) off Bennett's Farm Road. According to Jon M. Elkow, "When we moved to town back in 1964, Lake Windwing was locally known as 'Bob's Lake,' the Bob being Bob Kaufman, developer of the Ridgefield Knolls development. Bob and/or his corporation owned much of the land now owned by the town. The lake is an apparent source of the water for the knolls as the wells owned by the Topstone Hydraulic Company are located a short distance from the lake.

"Each spring Bob would bring down a load or two of sand and put out a float that created a nice little bathing area for those of us in his houses. Nothing official, but much less crowded than the alternatives. We swam and fished in the lake up until the early 70's, even though the beach had begun to deteriorate without Bob's annual fixing up. I can remember bringing our new canoe down in the summer of '73 to practice the 'what do we do if it tips over' drill. That same summer was the end of my swimming in the lake when I caught – snagged, really – a snapping turtle that was bigger than any dinner plate in our house."

BOBBY'S COURT

Bobby's Court is a dead-end road off Riverside Drive at Stonehenge Estates, named for Robert Tuccio, son of the subdivision's developer, Jerry Tuccio. The town accepted it in 1964.

Robert Tuccio, a boy when the road was built, became a Ridgefield builder himself in the 1980s, and developed many of the lots that his father subdivided in the 1960's, particularly at Eleven Levels (*q.v.*). He was also a Realtor in town for many years and, in 2007, lived in Southbury.

BOG MEADOW

An 1840 deed from Ira Stevens to James Stevens, both Danburians, mentions land at "Bog Meadow... a place so called in the town of Ridgefield." The locality was probably in today's western Danbury, once part of Ridgefield.

BOGGS, THE

In 1833, Ezra Pearce Benedict of Danbury sold his 42-acre farm to Abraham Moffet, describing it as being "at the Boggs so-called." This locality" mentioned in some late 18th and early 19th Century deeds, was in what is now upper Danbury (*see Boggs Pond below*).

It is probably the last mention in Ridgefield records of this locality, although in the first half of the 19th Century there are also references to "the Boggs" for an area in northwestern Ridgefield around Turner Street. One occurs in an 1832 deed, another in 1833.

BOGGS MOUNTAIN

An 1835 deed mentions Boggs Mountain, which is probably the hill just south of Boggs Pond (*see below*). With an elevation of 1,067 feet it is one of the highest places in Danbury. The term could also have been applied to what is now called Round Mountain (*q.v.*), just north of Boggs Pond.

BOGGS POND

Boggs Pond in northwestern Danbury on the New York State line was once within Ridgefield when our town boundaries extended north to New Fairfield through western Danbury. "The Boggs" as a term crops up in the Ridgefield land records in the late 18th Century when that section of upper Ridgebury was being settled. What may have been mostly a swamp was turned into Boggs Pond, probably in the early 19th Century; for an 1826 deed in which Ezra Pearce Benedict and Edmund Price, both of Danbury, give up their interest in a saw mill, the mill is placed at "the Boggs so called on the outlet of the Boggs or Benedict's Pond." Thus, the pond served to store water to power the mill.

An 1822 deed speaks of land at the "outlett of the Middle River Boggs Pond." The Middle River, still called that, flows from the pond into the center of Danbury where it joins the Still River and heads northeastward to the Housatonic River.

A large school district in Danbury, just east of the old Ridgefield line, was called Boggs in the middle 1800's; Ridgefield deeds in 1843 mention "Boggs School District" and "Boggs District." There was also a Middle River School District.

BOGUS

Bogus is a genuinely peculiar name whose application here predates by nearly a half century its first officially recognized appearance in print. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the most comprehensive of English dictionaries, Bogus is a distinctly American word which first appears in print in 1827. The dictionary cutely says: “Bogus (is) a cant word of US about the origin of which many guesses have been made and ‘bogus’ derivations circumstantially given.”

It cites 1827 editions of the *Painesville (Ohio) Telegraph*, which used the term for apparatus for coining counterfeit money.

The dictionary said one expert considered “bogus” to have been short for “tantrabogus,” which in his Vermont childhood was used to refer to a bad-looking object. That word may have come from “tantarabobs,” an old Devonshire word for the devil.

The dictionary said bogus seems to be related to “bogy,” which can be traced back in print only to the early 1800’s and means an evil one; it is apparently derived from the Slavonic, “bog,” meaning god.

Although bogus started out to mean a counterfeiting device, it became more commonly used to describe what was counterfeited – such as a “bogus bill.”

Bogus as a place name turns up in Ridgefield land records 45 years before the incident in Painesville. The first reference appears in a 1782 deed from the proprietors to John Rockwell’s heirs, in which two acres are described as “on the northwest part of Daniel Rockwell’s land at Bogus so called.”

Where did the word come from and precisely what did it mean to those who used it? The answers may never be more than conjecture. Inspection of 18th Century land and tax records in Ridgefield and Danbury uncovered no family by the name of Bogus, which seems to eliminate that possibility as a source. But it is worth noting that the US Geological Survey maps record a “Bogus Mountain” in Bethel near the Danbury line and another in New Fairfield, showing that the word had been in common use hereabouts.

George R. Stewart, who wrote two books on American place names, cites two Bogus localities – Bogus Creek, Calif., and Bogus Hollow, Iowa – as places where counterfeiters operated. However, he observes that Bogus is “a name applied to features, especially in the California mining districts, to indicate some deception or humbug.”

My guess is that the word is somehow connected with Dr. Willard’s “tantrabogus,” which was used in Vermont, a state which many Connecticut people helped to settle (and which was once called New Connecticut).

It is interesting to note that in 1783, Nehemiah Keeler sold Eliphalet Brush “eight acres in my farm called Bogus.” Later, the same deed refers to “such Bogus Farm.” The references sound personal, almost as if it were Mr. Keeler who first applied the name as descriptive of his farmland. That terminology seemed to have stuck; in 1807 Obil Rockwell sold Benjamin Lynes land at a corner “of the Bogus Farm so called.” An 1826 deed also refers to “the Bogus Farm.” By 1855 deeds were referring to land “in Bogus.”

Research done by Edwin D. Liljgren, who lived on George Washington Highway, determined “Bogus” to be the area we now call Ned’s Mountain. Anyone who has trekked through this region knows that it is rocky, steep, rough terrain and would be extremely difficult to use as farmland. When Keeler

refers to “my farm called Bogus,” he may be applying an almost sarcastic title for property that he may have accepted earlier in the 1700’s without knowing its rough nature. It would have, in effect, been “counterfeit” or “worthless” land, suitable perhaps only for woodlots – and even then woodlots of questionable quality since most of the trees in the area may have been evergreens, a poor fireplace fuel.

BOGUS ROAD

Bogus Road is one of the town’s oldest road names still in use. The term first appears in an 1806 deed which describes land at “Ridgefield Short Woods” as being bounded on the west “by Bogus Road, a highway so called.”

Today, the name applies chiefly to the road running between a point near the end of Sophia Drive south to the intersection of Ned’s Mountain Road. However, according to Historian George L. Rockwell, Bogus Road at the time of the Revolution was a well-defined highway, extending from George Washington Highway, south across Ned’s Mountain Road, through the modern-day Hemlock Hills refuge, and coming out on Bennett’s Farm Road near the Ridgebury School. This path is said to have been used by some of the British soldiers on their way from Danbury to Ridgefield on April 27, 1777 when the battle with colonial troops occurred.

Later, this old road seemed to fall out of use, and virtually disappeared. Neither Clark’s 1856 map nor Beers’ 1867 atlas shows the road. In fact, it does not appear on any early 20th Century maps of the town. It may, however, have remained a driftway for moving livestock or an access to woodlots throughout the 19th Century. An 1864 deed refers to it as “the old Bogus Highway.”

The section of Bogus Road north of Ned’s Mountain up to George Washington Highway appears as a road on the town’s 1946 zoning map. The present-day Bogus Road also appears in name on a map for Otto H. Lippolt’s subdivision, Hemlock Hills, drawn in 1959. Mr. Lippolt, a well driller and land collector, had planned to develop small house lots along the whole length of Bogus Road down to Lake Windwing. He went so far as to improve the old path of Bogus Road, where he installed drains and culverts that still exist in the Hemlock Hills refuge. Mr. Lippolt managed to develop only part of the upper half of the road, and land around the southern end was forever preserved when the town in 1967 purchased 570 acres from his widow (*see* Hemlock Hills).

In 1957, as he was preparing his development, Mr. Lippolt engaged in some debate with town fathers over whether Bogus Road was a town road. Apparently it was eventually agreed that the roadway was public land. At any rate, most of it – from the paved portion at the north to the dirt section through the park – now belongs to the town. It is not clear who owns the unused northern connector between Sophia Drive and George Washington Highway, though a case could probably be made for its being an old town road.

Bogus Lane was apparently another name for Bogus Road. The term shows up first in an 1841 deed and was rarely used. **Bogus Woods** appears in an 1863 deed.

BOSWEN DRIVE

Boswen Drive is the original name for the circle now called Bayberry Hill Road (*q.v.*), and was a creation of the developers, George Bossert and Raymond Wennik, making use of the first syllables of their last names. A little lane

of the circle was called Wenbos. The names didn't go over well with residents who successfully petitioned the selectmen to change them.

BOULDER HILL LANE, ROAD

Boulder Hill Lane and Road, which run off Rockwell Road and Perry Lane, were named for the estate of the turn-of-the-century artist, Frederick Dielman (1847-1935). His house there was called "The Boulders," taking the name from the rocky terrain. When Jerry Tuccio developed the property in the 1950's, he made use of the estate name – as he also later did with Mimosa, Westmoreland, and Twixt Hills. The roads became town highways in 1957.

Local legend says that the British engaged in a small skirmish with the colonists atop this hill during the Battle of Ridgefield in April 1777.

A president of the National Academy of Design, Frederick Dielman was a celebrated artist of his era, especially known for his murals, both painted and mosaic. The mosaic panels in the Library of Congress, entitled *Law* and *History*, are often cited as his best-known works.

Dielman was born in Hanover, Germany, on Dec. 25, 1847, and as a child came to Baltimore where he graduated from Calvert College in 1864. In 1872, he went to the Royal Academy of Munich, Germany, for formal art training. "He may have had a natural artistic talent as it is recorded that he published his first drawing, 'A Confederate Raid in Maryland,' at age 16," said a Library of Congress biography. He maintained a studio in New York City for many years.

He was elected to the National Academy of Design in 1881, serving as president from 1899 to 1909. He was a founder of the Society of American Artists in 1877. Off and on between 1878 until 1903, he taught at the Arts Students League of New York, and was director of the Art Schools of the Cooper Union in New York from 1905 to 1931. There, he taught both day and evening classes until he was 84 years old. "It is believed that he taught more American art students than any other art professor," the Library of Congress said. A former student once recalled, "When Professor Dielman lectured to us he was already well over 60. But he had a buoyancy of spirit and a twinkle in his eye which belied his years... The lectures were absorbingly interesting and sank deeply into our consciousness."

In 1883, Dielman married Lilla Marion Benham, daughter of Major General Henry Washington Benham, a West Point graduate. (His portrait of his father-in-law is in the West Point Museum.) The Dielmans had three children, one of whom became a painter and sculptor, Ernest Benham Dielman. The couple moved to Ridgefield around 1900. When Dielman died at age 87 on Aug. 15, 1935, at Boulder Hill, he was the oldest member of the National Academy of Design.

BRADLEY'S MILL POND

Bradley's Mill Pond is one of many names used over the years for what is today Miller's Pond on the west side of Route 7, just above Florida Hill Road. It first appears on the land records in 1818 when Ebenezer Hawley 2nd sold John Couch of Redding one acre bounded on the west by "Bradley's Mill Pond." That same year Sturges Bradley had purchased Sarah Couch's "grist or corn mill" and her adjacent saw mill there. She had owned the mill since 1782 while her husband, Thomas, had operated it until his death around 1817.

Bradley owned the mill only four years, selling both mills to Stephen Jackson in 1822.

Peter Burr had established the gristmill and pond in 1737, and they went through 12 owners before Bradley bought it. The gristmill was probably an important one, serving the needs of southeastern Ridgefielders and those in the northwestern part of Fairfield (later Redding).

BRANCH, THE

Branch means a stream of water that feeds into a river, analogous to a tree branch connected to a trunk. Many early deeds refer to “the Branch” almost as if it were the stream’s only name. For example, land northwest of the Ridgebury Congregational Church was bounded, according to a 1790 deed, “east by the Branch, so called, as the same now runs.” The phrase “so called” appears frequently in early deeds, indicating the name is an accepted title, established at least in the neighborhood. Deeds repeated said “West Mountain, so called,” “at Limestone, so called,” etc.

BRANCHVILLE

First applied in 1870 to the southeast corner of town, Branchville was named for the “branch” rail line from the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad to Ridgefield village. The first recorded use of the term appears in an 1870 deed for four acres “lying in the town of Ridgefield at Branchville.” It was the very same year that the branch line was built, suggesting that the railroad rather than neighborhood residents had invented the name to distinguish the station from the new one at Ridgefield center. Previously, the station at Branchville had been known as Ridgefield Station (*q.v.*)

Passenger service on the branch line ended in 1925; freight service lasted until 1964. Most of the track bed, complete with gravel but missing its rails, is today the path of the Northeast Utilities high-voltage line and the town’s “Rail-Trail,” developed in the 1990s for walkers (no bicycles, alas, allowed). Some of the other sections along southern Florida Road have been sold to adjoining landowners.

To the Indians, the southeast corner of town was known as Wheer Cock (*q.v.*). Later it was called Copps Corner (*q.v.*). When the railroad line from Norwalk to Danbury was completed in 1852, the neighborhood was at first called Beers Station (*q.v.*) or Ridgefield Station.

While this area had been mostly farmland and a mill or two, the coming of the railroad sparked the development of a booming, albeit small-scale, industrial community. It included mills, stores, a hotel, a machinery factory, a noted mineral quarry, a post office, and a school (still standing on Old Branchville Road.)

Branchville had its own school district at least since the middle 19th Century – it was known as the “Ridgefield Station District” before it was called Branchville. Its schoolhouse was used until 1939 when children started being “bused” to Garden School and the East Ridge School in the village. A new Branchville School opened in 1969 on lower Florida Road, remaining in use until in 1983 when it was closed due to declining enrollments and used as Board of Education offices. In 1994, faced with increasing enrollments, voters agreed to reopen the school.

An 1893 atlas labels this territory as “Plattsville,” which is undoubtedly a mapmaker’s error.

BRANCHVILLE HILL

The US Geological Survey map uses “Branchville Hill” for the ridge along Old Branchville Road at Bruschi Lane.

BRANCHVILLE HILL ROAD

A map prepared for the town assessors in 1934 labels as Branchville Hill Road what we today call Nod Hill Road. This suggests that the ridge traversed by this road was at some time called Branchville Hill, a more likely possibility than the Branchville Hill situation cited above.

BRANCHVILLE ROAD

Branchville Road, the main route between the village and the southeast corner of town, changed several times in name, path, and purpose over its many years.

It is probable that the village end of the road – different from today’s east end – was laid out before 1725 as a route to the fields to the east of the main settlement. However, the eastern half of the road was not formally established until 1744 when the selectmen defined the path as “beginning at Fairfield line at ye south end of Cedar Mountain, at ye northeast corner of Abraham Bennits land, and so running westward between ye said land and Matthew Seamores till it comes to ye west side of ye land at ye Wolfpitts, and from there westward eight rodds wide till it comes to ye Pompion Ridge to Smiths Lott and Osburns, and thence onward as ye way is now to town...”

Most of the above-described route is the present Old Branchville Road. The wide breadth of the right of way – 132 feet – evidently allowed the road makers flexibility in determining the exact path through some pretty rocky and terrain. If a rock outcropping or a swamp made one route unusable, the path might be moved 70 or 80 feet over to flatter or drier ground without requiring land transfers.

The eastern half of the road in the 18th and early 19th Centuries served primarily as access to the handful of families living in the southeastern region of town and to a saw mill on Cooper Road. It may have been used as a route to Fairfield, the county seat, though the main highway south was today’s Route 33 to Wilton and Norwalk. The main road east to Redding (originally upper Fairfield) was probably over either Florida Hill Road or Haviland Road.

When the Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road began Feb. 22, 1852, the track ran through less than 4,000 feet of Ridgefield’s southeastern corner. Only one road from the village served this neighborhood, and the station was placed almost exactly at its junction with the tracks. However, the road was a poor one. Almost immediately after the tracks were laid, there were cries for a better highway for the carts hauling freight and the stages carrying passengers to and from trains. Soon after 1852, the “new road,” as it was sometimes called in the mid-19th Century, was built from Pompion Ridge to just west of the station. Its hills were less steep and it avoided the wet lowlands traversed by the old highway – today called Old Branchville Road.

The town acquired land for the new road in 1851, buying strips three rods or just under 50 feet wide from 13 different property owners. Most sold the

segments through their property for only \$1 – ranging from Bradley Beers’ 100 feet to Russel B. Keeler’s 948 feet. However, others either held out for more money or had better land of more value. For instance, Stephen Jones was paid \$100 for his 330 by 50 feet, and Benjamin and Lydia Godfrey received \$45 for a 922-foot strip.

The western end of Branchville Road, as we know it today, was probably not built until sometime before 1831 when the section from Main street eastward to the East Ridge Middle School was being described as “New Lane” in several deeds. Until that time, the main route from Main Street to the Branchville area was via Rockwell Road, a very old roadway.

At its western end, the “new” Branchville Road ran into the Village Green of the 18th and 19th Centuries. For a while it was called Railroad Avenue, especially in the village, because it was the way to get from town to the Branchville Station. The road became known as Hawley Street after the spur rail line to the village was built. The Hawley family had owned the house on the northeast corner of Main Street since Thomas Hauley, the town’s first minister, arrived around 1713.

Today, many people know Branchville Road only by its state-applied number – Route 102. As a state highway, it was one of the first in the area to be paved – the western end, at least. The pavement was experimental, and was done before 1920 – even before Main Street lost its dirt top.

BREWSTER’S POND

Brewster’s Pond off the southeast side of Lounsbury Road is named for the Brewster family, which has owned it since 1936 when Carroll H. and Dr. Blandina Worcester Brewster bought the former Lounsbury farm, known as The Hickories, as a weekend and vacation retreat. Mr. Brewster was a New York City attorney who died in 1952. Dr. Brewster, a pediatrician, died in 1984.

Their son, Carroll W. Brewster, also a lawyer, returned to the home in the 1990s. He had been president of Hobart and William Smith Colleges in New York, president of Hollins College in Virginia, and a former dean of Dartmouth College. Another son, the Rev. Gurdon Brewster, was a missionary to India in the 1960’s and has been the Episcopal chaplain at Cornell University.

BRIAR RIDGE ROAD

Briar Ridge Road is an old highway that today runs from the intersection of George Washington Highway and Miry Brook Road in Danbury almost straight north to the extreme northeast corner of Ridgefield in Ridgebury. There, it turns into a dirt path that is closed to the public, and continues northward a short distinct in Danbury where it becomes paved again, part of a residential subdivision.

Most of the southern section of the road straddles the Ridgefield-Danbury line; property on the west side of the road is in Ridgefield, and on the east side, Danbury.

In 1985 Ridgefield tried to get Danbury to improve the dirt section of this road. Ridgefield officials felt this road could handle traffic between I-84 and the Danbury Fairgrounds mall as well as people using Ridgefield’s back roads to get to the Danbury industrial area that included the big Union Carbide headquarters. Traffic would then avoid the more rural roads of central Ridgebury, like George Washington Highway and Ridgebury Road.

Danbury just laughed.

The southern paved portion of Briar Ridge Road that straddles the Ridgefield-Danbury line is a small segment of a very old route that extended from Starrs Plain to Mill Plain. Part of this route, described in an 1866 deed as “a mountain road leading from Miry Brook to Starrs Plain,” began at its south end along modern-day Route 7 in Danbury, a short distance north of Bennett’s Farm Road and about opposite West Starrs Plain Road. From there, it ran northwesterly across lower Wooster Mountain into what are now the uninhabited wilds of northeastern Ridgefield. The road eventually came to Pine Mountain Road, which brought travelers north to Miry Brook, then to Briar Ridge Road, and up to Mill Plain village (which until 1846 was part of Ridgefield).

The name, Briar Ridge, was in use by 1936 when it appears on a map. The name is probably descriptive of fields allowed to grow wild; briars would be among the first wild vegetation to establish itself in unmown fields.

In the late 18th Century, the Briar Ridge area was known as the Fox Hills or Fox Hill, according to 1802 and 1803 deeds. This was long before today’s Fox Hill, along eastern Bennett’s Farm Road, was so called.

BRIDLE TRAIL

A dead-end road off Hawthorne Hill Road in Ridgebury, Bridle Trail was designed by the Connecticut Land Company, headed by Richard Conley (son of Col. Louis D. Conley, owner of Outpost Farm, Inn, and Nurseries – *see* Outpost Pond). According to Richard Owen Carey, who took over the Connecticut Land Company, the road was originally planned to connect to Spring Valley Road. Probably because of the rough terrain, this plan was abandoned.

Bridle Trail – so-called because the area has many bridle paths – was developed in the late 1950’s and accepted as a town road in 1961. It’s sometimes misspelled Bridal, as if it were a honeymooners’ spot, and even Bridge – an easy-to-make typing mistake for Bridle. In fact, the 1986 Kaiser Handi-Book map of town listed it as “Bridge Trail,” though the index had the correct spelling.

BRIGGS MOUNTAIN

A single 1841 deed mentions four acres in Ridgebury “on Briggs Mountain.” Judging from names of adjoining property owners – Abbott, Pierce, Stone, and Weed – the mountain was in western Danbury north of Mill Plain, possibly near Aunt Hack Ridge Road, an area once part of Ridgefield.

BRIMSTONE SWAMP

Brimstone Swamp, a colorful name reminiscent of the “fire and brimstone” religions of the 17th and 18th Centuries, was applied to wetlands at the south end of town as early as 1717 when the proprietors deeded “four acres in ye Brimstone Swamp, so called” to Ebenezer Smith, a newcomer from Milford. Subsequent deeds in the early 1700’s identify the swamp as the lower end of Miller’s Ridge. For example, the proprietors note in 1729 that a highway was laid out “beginning at ye east end of Matthew Benedicts lot at ye Millers Ridge and ... running southeast four rods wide till it come on to a small brook that runneth out of Mr. Ressequies land, then southerly to John Osburns Brimstone Swamp.”

The location is probably one of two swamps at the lower end of Nod Road – either along Nod West Drive that's part of the Woodcock Nature Center, or to the east of Nod Road and north of Pelham Lane, off Comstock Court.

The name may have described the color or the odor of the swamp. Perhaps it was descriptive of the bubbling so often seen in swamps and similar in the imagination to burning, bubbling brimstone or sulfur. It could also have referred to the swamp's tendency to generate methane gas which, under some circumstances, will self-ignite to form what are variously called will-o'-the-wisps, jack-o-lanterns, or *ignes fatuus*.

The term last appears in a 1777 in deed which James Ressigue sells Mathew Keeler 30 acres "at a place called Brimstone." The land was bounded on the south by the Norwalk (later Wilton) town line.

BROAD HILL

This very early name typifies the many simple, straight-forward descriptive terms applied by the early English settlers to geographical locations. Like the town's name itself (a field on a ridge), it described the main attributes of the locality – a hill that was broad.

Broad Hill was in use before 1725 and apparently referred to either the ridge traversed by Peaceable Ridge Road, or the hill just to the south where Yankee Hill Road, Minute Man Road, and Revere Drive are. The term was in use as late as 1794.

BROOK LANE

Brook Lane, a short dead-end road that does little but serve an entrance to the Branchville Cemetery and one house, was for over two centuries a portion of Branchville Road. In 1955, a flood washed out the Branchville Road bridge over the Cooper Brook. After that the state installed a new bridge just to the south and, in the process, straightened and widened the eastern end of Branchville Road, abandoning the old road, which is now Brook Lane. If it still crossed the brook, Brook Lane would be exactly opposite Old Branchville Road – of which it was a part in the 18th and 19th Centuries.

The Board of Selectmen chose the name on Nov. 20, 1958, and ownership of the road was transferred from the state to the town on June 25, 1959.

BROOK'S BRIDGE

This bridge, identified in the land records as early as 1752, crossed the Titicus River at either Sherwood Road or Ridgebury Road. Since there are indications that the lower portion of Ridgebury Road near the Ridgefield High School is a post-Revolutionary highway, it is probable that Sherwood Road was the original route to Ridgebury (via Ledges Road) and that it crossed Brook's Bridge. The last deed reference to it was in 1793.

BROOKSIDE PINES

Brookside Pines, a 1969 subdivision off the east side of North Salem Road, opposite Barrack Hill Road, borders the Titicus River. William and Lina Oexle created the four lots from nine acres of their homestead – the house being on one of the lots. Armando Morales developed the lots in 1973. Mr. Morales, who later moved to Florida, was a Cuban who left his homeland when Fidel Castro took over.

BROOKSIDE ROAD

Sometime after 1955, the Brookside Development Corporation developed Brookside Road off southern Great Hill Road. The road is so called because it parallels the Norwalk River – sometimes called the Ridgefield Brook in this area. It became a town road in 1961.

BROOKVIEW ESTATES

Brookview Estates, a 1958 subdivision, includes Aspen Mill Road. The brook that's viewed is the Titicus River.

BRUSCHI LANE

Bruschi Lane is a 1,300-foot, dead-end road off Old Branchville Road, named for Luigi Bruschi who developed it. The town accepted the road in 1967.

A native of Ancona, Italy, Mr. Bruschi (pronounced *Broo-ski*) was a building contractor who was also the superintendent of an Old Branchville Road estate in this vicinity, owned at various times by the Greims, Gerli, or Petri families. Over the years, particularly in the 1930's, Mr. Bruschi acquired and sold a great deal of land in the Branchville and Florida districts. He died in 1974 at the age of 83.

BRUSHY RIDGE

Another of those simple, descriptive names used by early settlers, Brushy Ridge was applied to at least three places in town in the 18th Century:

- On the southwest corner of town, near Silver Spring Road. In 1717 the proprietors gave Richard Osborn 31 acres "lying on ye Brushy Ridge" bounded southerly by "Norwalk (now Wilton) line." This ridge was described in a 1774 deed, transferring land at "the lower end of Brushy Ridge so called," bounded south by Norwalk line and west by "Colony line." This area was subdivided in 1985 as Southridge Court.
- Near, perhaps west of, Lake Mamanasco. The proprietors in 1741 deeded Gideon Smith six acres "on ye Ridge called ye Brushie Ridge, west of ye road yt leads up back of ye mill pond." The mill pond was probably Mamanasco.
- Near Long Swamp, whose location is uncertain. This Brushy Ridge is described in 1744, 1753, and 1763 deeds as east of Long Swamp, which may have been the swamp east of Long Pond, just over the Ridgefield line in modern-day Lewisboro. That would place this Brushy Ridge in the vicinity of Rippowam Road on West Mountain near the New York State line. However, based on landowners named in the deeds, it may also have been along North Street.

BRYON AVENUE, PARK

Bryon Avenue, running from High Ridge to Fairview Avenue, is part of an early 20th Century subdivision on the corner of High Ridge and Barry Avenue. Dr. B. A. Bryon, a physician who dabbled in real estate, owned the property. The land had been informally called Bryon Park because, before its development, it was used as a playground, even though it was privately owned. The town's first football team played there around 1905-06. The road was built between 1908, when it doesn't show on a map, and 1912, when it does.

Benn Adelmarr Bryon, a general practitioner, came to Ridgefield around 1892. He spelled his name then as O'Bryon; by 1910, he was using Bryon. While caring for the town's medical needs, he also sandwiched in a sideline of real estate development and investment, subdividing not only Bryon Park, but also Lake Kitchawan in Lewisboro, N.Y. His large house on Main Street stood where the CVS parking lot is today. In the mid-1930's, he moved to Norwalk where he died just before Christmas in 1949 after more than 50 years as a physician.

BUCK HILL ROAD

Buck Hill Road was designed and named by Richard Conley, head of the Connecticut Land Company. Mr. Conley's firm was formed chiefly to disburse or develop portions of the huge estate of his father, Col. Louis D. Conley, operator of Outpost Nurseries (*see* Outpost Pond). Land along this road was part of those holdings.

Paul Morganti, the contractor who built the road for Mr. Conley, said the name came about at Mr. Morganti's suggestion. He and Mr. Conley were ruminating over what to call the road when Mr. Morganti offered "Buck Hill" because Mr. Conley had frequently hunted deer in that area.

The road runs between Danbury Road (Route 35) and Great Hill Road. Route 35 in the vicinity of this intersection is the scene of many auto accidents, a half dozen involving fatalities – including that of a popular Ridgefield police sergeant, George Kargle, in 1980. Many accidents have been blamed on high speed, which, mixed with the unusual hill-and-curve combination of Danbury Road, helps cause motorists to lose control of their car. Because so many accidents occur there, the police identify that strip of Danbury Road to one another as simply "Buck Hill."

Perry Scott built many or most of the houses in the neighborhood in the early 1950's. The road was accepted as a town road in 1954.

Probably Buck Hill Road's most famous resident was comedian and actor Godfrey Cambridge, who shortly after moving into his house there in the early 1970's, nearly fell through the living room floor, which he charged had been rotten. He subsequently filed legal complaints against the real estate agents involved in the sale. Many national news stories portrayed the real estate case as a rich white town against a black newcomer. Cambridge never charged that the complaint involved racial motives. In fact, he told *The New York Times* there were no racial overtones. "Money is where it's at," he said. "Black and white? Forget that. It's green and white."

However, he later reported receiving some racist threats and erected a high, chain-link fence along Buck Hill Road, saying it was to protect his family. However, town officials said he built the fence on town highway property and made him move it, prompting charges of harassment.

In 1976, after disputes between Mr. Cambridge and the town had settled down, the actor died of a heart attack while on the set of a movie about the Israeli raid on Entebbe. He was playing Idi Amin, the dictator of Uganda.

The house was later sold under foreclosure.

BUCKS POND

Bucks Pond is another name for Roberts Pond (*q.v.*). A 1976 deed from the Edelman family to Bruno and Joy Bulfo for five acres includes rights to use the

waters of “Roberts Pond – or Bucks Pond as it was formerly called.” Joseph Roberts built the pond off the west side of New Street and not visible from a road. “Bucks Pond” probably reflected frequent visits by deer that live in the woods bordering the pond.

BUCKSPEN LANE

Buckspen Lane is an 850-foot road off the west side of Limestone Road, serving a 1977 subdivision by Albert Gaeta. A small portion of the road was earlier known as Corbin Drive (*q.v.*). In his capacity as a road name consultant, this writer suggested Buckspen to recall an old Ridgefield name that had fallen out of use (*see* Buckspen Swamp).

BUCKSPEN ROAD

Buckspen Road is an old name mentioned only once in the land records. In 1855, Stephen and Ezekiel Burr of Redding sold Richard Osborn of Danbury three acres bounded on the west “by the Buckspen Road so called.” This may be an old path on what is now the Bennett’s Pond State Park, perhaps the trail that goes north from Bennett’s Farm Road past the old site of the Fox Hill Inn and up to Bennett’s Ponds – possibly passing Buckspen Swamp (*below*).

BUCKSPEN SWAMP

Buckspen Swamp is a fascinating name that appears to be unique to Ridgefield. We have found no other locale in the nation using “buckspen” or even “buckpen.” The word is quite rare.

Buckspen Swamp first occurs in 1741 when John Sturdevant sold Ephraim Bennit three acres, then eight acres, “lying in Bennits Farm at Buckspen Swamp.” Israel Mead, whom one 1741 deed mentions as a neighboring property owner, had land in the area of the Bennett’s Ponds. When Mead’s estate was broken up in 1830, Robert and Sally Lamoreaux (his son-in-law and daughter) sold Hanford Sellick six acres “situated in the Buckspen, bounded on the east by highway.” Another piece in the same transfer was near Bennett’s Ponds.

For some time, the precise location of the Buckspen remained a mystery to us until we came across a map, drawn in 1914, of Col. Louis D. Conley’s property north of Bennett’s Farm Road. The map describes “Bucks Pen Meadow,” a 15-acre tract west of Bennett’s Ponds, east of today’s Shady Lane at Ridgefield Lakes, and north of Fox Hill Lake. The swamp lies wedge-shaped within three hills, and is probably the Bucks Pen referred to so many years ago.

But what was a “buckspen”? There are at least two possibilities. The late Harold Iles, who used to live near this neighborhood, noted that in severe winters, deer “barn up” – that is, gather in groups in a sheltered part of the woods, stamping down the snow and using their collective body heat to stay warm. It is possible that this protected area was a frequent gathering place for deer and was tagged the “bucks pen” for that reason.

However, Daniel M. McKeon reported that an oldtimer once told him of the existence – in woods off Great Hill Road – of a form of corral into which the local American Indians used to drive deer to trap and kill them for food and hides. Indians – or settlers, for that matter – could have driven deer toward a swamp thereabouts in order to get them mired and make the animals easier to kill.

BUELL STREET

Today a virtually unknown right-of-way, Buell Street was laid out, from North Street, opposite Mapleshade Road, to Rochambeau Avenue, with the aim of serving the Peatt Park development. The road was never built, possibly to limit traffic in Peatt Park.

The name was selected by developer William Peatt Sr. to honor his wife. Alice J. Buell, born in 1897, was a schoolteacher in 1920 when she married Mr. Peatt, then a carpenter. Always interested in education, Mrs. Peatt was a president of the Titicus School PTA and served on the Board of Education from 1929 to 1942. She died in 1968, 23 years after having moved to Florida with her husband.

BUFFALO CREEK

Two Ridgefield historians report that Buffalo Creek is another name for the Titicus River, known in the 17th and early 18th Centuries as the Mutighticoos River or variations thereof. The stream flows from Saw Mill Hill Road near the village north along Route 116, North Salem Road, into New York State where it helps fill the Titicus Reservoir, part of the New York City water supply. George L. Rockwell writes in 1927: "Tradition tells us that Mutighticoos River was at one time called Buffalo Creek. [Adriaen] Van der Donck, a historian of Yonkers, writing in 1656, says: 'Buffaloes are also tolerably plenty; these animals mostly keep towards the southwest.'" Silvio Bedini says that Mutighticoos "may have meant 'Buffalo Creek.'"

However, according to John C. Huden, a professor and expert on Indian languages and place names, Mutighticoos or Titicus probably meant nothing so colorful. He translates it as Mahican for "place without trees." Moreover, the term "Buffalo Creek" – or any term mentioning buffalos – never appears in any Ridgefield land records before 1890.

Nor does it appear on today's maps, except perhaps in the name of James B. Franks' subdivision, Buffalo Creek Acres, the development served by Hessian Drive. "Buffalo Creek Acres" was originally dreamed up by Munson and Lizzie Wade, who built their house on a 20-acre spread there in the 1920's. According to historian Richard E. Venus, a subsequent owner of the property was Jan H. Huton, who operated a sportswear store in New York City. On Oct. 28, 1942, nearly a year after the United States entered World War II, his house caught fire and firemen fighting the blaze discovered huge quantities of foods, such as sugar and canned juices, stored in the house, a pile of tires out back, and several tanks of gasoline and fuel oil – one holding 3,000 gallons! Mr. Huton denied he was hoarding during rationing, and instead maintained that the items were stock for a cruise ship.

BUNG TOWN

Silvio Bedini, in *Ridgefield in Review*, tells two stories that may explain the origin of this curious name, once applied to the region along North Salem Road, east of Lake Mamanasco. One tradition is that a child, on his first visit to Isaac Keeler's grist mill near the corner of North Salem and Sherwood Roads, was frightened by the noise created by the machinery, which the youngster described as "Bung! Bung! Bung!"

The other legend relates that when Keeler's mill was burned by the British on their retreat from Danbury in April 1777, the barrels of flour stored in the

mill heated up and caused the bungs (stoppers) to shoot out with a noise like gunfire. However, it's not clear why a flour barrel, unlike a barrel holding liquids, would employ a bung. Most flour barrels had lids.

Still another explanation, less colorful but probably more likely, is that one or several people in the neighborhood were noted as part-time bungmakers. Cutting bungs from wood or cork was probably a winter activity, set aside for a time when the work schedule – for the men, at least – was less hectic and burdensome. However, no record of a cooper or barrel maker in this vicinity has been uncovered.

The first appearance of Bung Town on the land records is in a 1798 deed for property near the Mamanasco grist mill. The name appears infrequently in subsequent years, usually as two words, and is last noted in 1853, appearing as one word, “Bungtown.”

BURT ROAD

Burt Road is an old name for Old West Mountain Road, according to a 1941 deed. The name stems from the fact that some members of the Burt family (*below*) lived along it in the 19th Century.

BURT'S LANE

Burt's Lane is the earliest name for what we today call Catoonah Street. Laid out in 1721, the road's eastern end was situated between the homes of James Scott (the block where Addressi's, Ridgefield Office Supply, Cheers package store, and Neumann realty is) and Benjamin Burt (now the Carnall building).

Benjamin Burt came to Ridgefield from Norwalk in 1712 to serve as the community blacksmith, a trade so needed that the proprietors had reserved a home lot and one-28th of the outlying land for a smith. He agreed to serve in that position for at least four years to gain full title to the land. Burt soon amassed a considerable quantity of property throughout the town, including tracts at Blacksmith's Ridge, which was named for him.

He was more than a blacksmith, and was probably more noted later as a miller. According to one deed, he operated a saw mill on the west side of Danbury Road by the 1730's. He sold it in 1746 to David Osburn.

Meanwhile, in 1742, Burt purchased the gristmill at Lake Mamanasco. The mill, probably the major wheat- and corn-grinding mill in town, had been built around 1716 by Daniel Sherwood, the town's first miller. (Like Burt, Sherwood had entered into a contract with the proprietors over his acquiring free land to live and work here.) Sherwood sold the mill in 1721 to Samuel Saintjohn, who later sold it to Nathan Whitney, who sold to Joseph Keeler, who sold to Burt. Benjamin Burt died 1759 and is buried in Titicus Cemetery.

The name, Burt's Lane, is mentioned only once in the land records. In 1746, James Scott of Bethlehem, N.J., sold his house on the south corner, describing the property as “two acres of land ... lying on ye south side of ye lane commonly called and known by ye name of Burt's Lane.” It was one of the earliest recorded road names taken from a person's name.

BURT'S MILL POND

Burt's Mill Pond is the less common of two versions of names for Lake Mamanasco in the 18th Century (*see below*). “Burts Mill Pond” first appears in

a 1771 deed and was also cited in 1798. No 19th Century references to it are found; by then people were using the shorter “Burt’s Pond.”

BURT’S POND

With a cumbersome name like Mamasasco (some natives still call it “Manamasco”), it’s not hard to understand why this lake was often called by a simpler name, Burt’s Pond.

Benjamin Burt acquired the Mamasasco mill in 1742. With it came the right, owned by the proprietors, to the water in the pond as a source of power. The pond had been sequestered in 1716 by the proprietors for mill power, and they held that sequester until 1797. In 1759, after Benjamin’s death, his children – Daniel Burt, Sarah Burt Caldwell, and Daniel and Thankful Burt Whitney – sold their inheritance in the mill to Benjamin’s eldest son, Seaborn.

Seaborn Burt operated the mill until his death shortly before the Revolution. His death and the politics of the period prompted an unusual controversy among the proprietors, the “land barons” who had originally commissioned the building of the mill. At a gathering April 2, 1778, “the question was put to said meeting whether the proprietors of said town had best commence a suit in order to know whether the property of the grist mill and ye appurtenances thereof, claimed by the heirs of Seaborn Burt, decd., belongs to said heirs or to said proprietors? Resolved in the affirmative.”

The issue might sound like a simple question of title, but many members of the Burt family were Tories. Thus, it was not surprising to find that on Oct. 5, 1779, the proprietors sold their interest in the mill, apparently after they had seized the property – or most of it – from the Burts. Then, “for the consideration of a mill covenant,” the proprietors on Dec. 27 sold the mill to Benjamin Chapman of Salem (Lewisboro), N.Y., for 3,130 pounds – a whopping sum, though one probably inflated by war. In the covenant, Chapman agreed to maintain the mill and grind the proprietors’ meal, and rates were specified (see under Mamasasco Lake).

When he came to town, Benjamin Burt was given land at Mamasasco. He may have eventually moved his home there. Seaborn Burt probably lived near the lakeshore. Christopher, another son of Benjamin, bought 23 acres near the mill at the same time his father purchased the mill. Some of the Burts were living at the lake when the Revolution began – and most of them were Tories who departed for Loyalist territories like Long Island and Canada when hostilities broke out.

One of the dissenters was Theophilus, son of Seaborn Burt. In the 1770’s, the state confiscated all his property. An acre of it was sold by the state in 1781 to Joseph Stebbins in a deed that explained that “whereas Theophilus Burt, late of Ridgefield ... hath absconded and taken side with the British troops against the United States of America” and his real estate had been “adjudged forfeited to the ... state by the county court,” the General Assembly ordered the probate court to dispose of enough land to discharge the debts against the property. Theophilus’s brothers, David and Benjamin Burt, also fled to the cloak of the King.

But like a few other Loyalists, Theophilus decided to return after the war and petitioned the General Assembly for title to his old land. The assembly in 1792 restored title to what was left of his property, and probably in the process, Theophilus got a share in the Mamasasco mill that his father and grandfather

had owned. And the proprietors, deciding to give up any connection with the mill, granted for the modest sum of \$50 the remainder of its title in the building and pond to Burt and his partner, Thomas Hyatt, in 1797.

Susanna Burt, widow of Seaborn, remained in Ridgefield throughout the war in a home near the mill. Whether she was loyal to the cause or the crown is not known; the fact that four of her sons were Tories seems to suggest the latter, and that she was too old to leave. She died in 1803 at the age of 94. Theophilus, who had been born in 1756, died in 1822.

The first use of "Burt's Pond," a shortened form of the earlier Burt's Mill Pond, occurs in a 1793 deed in which Joseph DeForest sells Elias Reed and Isaac Munson 37 acres "near Burts pond (so called)." An 1802 deed confirms the identity of the term, citing "Mamanasco or Burt's Pond." Although the name Mamanasco was used almost exclusively in the first 50 years of the town's settlement and is the name in use today, Burt's Pond – or its variant "Birch Pond" – was a much more common term in the 19th and early 20th Century. Members of the Burt family continued to live in the neighborhood until the early 1900's. And Burts continued to have interests in the mill – Joshua Burt was one of several owners in 1817, and Epenetus Burt had grist and saw mills at the lake in 1865.

BURYING YARD

Like place names, even cemeteries can disappear, or at least their grave-stones. Ridgefield's oldest cemetery, on Wilton Road East just south of the Main Street intersection, is marked with a monument reading: "Ye burying yard lay'd out ye Nov. 25, 1708 by the first settlers of the town of Ridgefield." The monument lists 40 pioneers supposedly buried there as well as "an unknown British soldier killed at the Battle of Ridgefield." The Village Improvement Committee of the Ridgefield Garden Club erected the stone list in 1931 after vandals, thieves and the elements had destroyed most of the old gravestones.

When he was writing his History of Ridgefield in the 1920s, George L. Rockwell found only two tombstones still standing there. By 1973, nothing remained except a small portion of a slate stone belonging to the grave of Capt. Matthew Benedict, "who departed this life July 7, 1757." By 2001, that stone was not visible.

The cemetery originally extended across Wilton Road East and included what are now several lots holding houses on Main Street and Wilton Road East. Rockwell said the current burying ground "is only a portion of the original cemetery, as a road was cut through a section ... about 1850, and the tombstones and remains of the early settlers were carted off. The town in town meeting sanctioned this deed."

Glenna Welsh, author of *The Proprietors of Ridgefield*, later observed: "Mr. Rockwell's curt closing remark infers that this action should never have been taken, as indeed, it should not."

It is not clear where the stones and bones were "carted off" to, but the earliest visible gravestones at the next oldest cemetery, Titicus, are dated in the 1730s.

Over the years, the burying ground had not been well kept, a fact that would have made the old Village Improvement Committee shudder. In 1973, several trees had fallen across the rarely mowed grass, and left to rot. In 1988, local garden clubs cleaned up the property, but by 2001, the cemetery was

overgrown, with trash dumped along its perimeter. In recent years, however, garden club members and the town's Cemetery Committee have kept an eye on the place, preventing it from being overrun. A park bench was even installed so visitors can rest while contemplating the town's founders.

How did the Village Improvement Committee know who was buried there? Perhaps from looking at the town hall's death records, which, though they do not specify where burials took place, do tell the death dates. Anyone who died before Titicus was established in 1735 was probably buried at Ye Burying Yard, although some—like Capt. Benedict —were buried after Titicus had opened.

BUTTONWOOD SWAMP

Buttonwood Swamp is a place that has probably changed a great deal over the centuries, and may not be much of a swamp at all today. Yet its name has survived longer than most antique Ridgefield place names.

In 1763, Nathan Sellick of Danbury sold James Betty and David Sturges Jr. of Danbury seven acres “lying on ye Pond Mountain,” bounded southerly by his own land “running a long ye brook running out of ye Buttonwood Swamp, westerly by ye (Bennett's) pond, east by ye line between Danbury and Ridgefield.”

The 1778 perambulation (boundary survey) of the Ridgefield-Danbury line mentions the swamp. An 1866 deed describes nine acres “westerly of Buttonwood Swamp” and bounded on the east “by a mountain road leading from Miry Brook to Starrs Plain.” A 1940 deed uses the exact same words to describe the same nine-acre parcel.

Because of changes in the size of the Bennett's Pond or Ponds, Buttonwood Swamp today may be part of the eastern end of the pond, west of Route 7, a little north of the Bennett's Farm Road intersection. Nature, in the forms of eutrophication and beaver dams, plus man's own damming, have probably changed the configuration of the pond so that what was once swamp at the eastern end is now mostly the waters of the pond — albeit very shallow in many places.

Buttonwood is another, more correct name for what many people call the sycamore. The tree is called buttonwood because the fruit looks like an old-fashioned button.

BYPASS ROAD I

Bypass Road, an old highway no longer in use, connected Barry Avenue with Peaceable Hill Road. It served the same purpose as Peaceable Ridge Road, which it parallels to the east. It may have been built to be a less steep route between the two roads, easier to traverse in horse or ox-drawn carts. Hence, the name. Bypass Road met Barry Avenue in the vicinity of Woodcock Lane, and connected to Peaceable Hill a short distance east of Peaceable Ridge. A 1970's survey, unusual in that it is of a long-abandoned road, is on file in the selectmen's office. The road may have fallen out of use because it traversed some land that tended to be wet and other land that was pretty steep. Unless the road were frozen or very dry, it was probably muddy and rutty. It may also simply have been a farm road that came into common neighborhood use, especially in the winter. A portion of the road was a part of the Rem Ridge subdivision of

1984 or 1985. It remained undeveloped and was deeded to the town in July 1985.

BYPASS ROAD II

The modern Bypass Road is the highway built east of and parallel to Danbury Road between South Street and Farmingville Road. The Planning and Zoning Commission proposed the road in the 1970s, but it was not built until the 1990s, using leftover fill collected over many years from many projects.

However, the town got in trouble for doing so. The state Department of Environmental Protection found the town had illegally filled wetlands. To compensate for lost wetland, the town had to build a new swamp, which is situated behind the ROAR dog shelter and includes a viewing stand.

Over the years, various efforts to find a better name for the road failed until April 2011 when the Board of Selectmen decided to name it Ligi's Way (*q.v.*), after former Police Chief Richard Ligi.

C

CAIN'S HILL AND ROAD

Cain's Hill is the ridge across which winds the steep and narrow Cain's Hill Road, a throwback to roads of old. Once part of a major route from Ridgefield to Redding, it became less used in the mid-19th Century when New Road (*q.v.*) – much less steep – was built as a bypass. Cain's Hill Road was not paved until the 1960's and is one of the few roads in town over which through truck traffic has been banned (few would wish to dare to take a sizable truck over it!). In 2006, the road was widened and improved in spots.

Originally known as Sturdevant's Ridge or Sturdevant's Clapboard Tree Ridge, Cain's Hill did not pick up its current title until the mid-19th Century. "Cain's Hill" made its first appearance in a deed in 1855, long after its source had died. The deed mentions land "on Cain's Hill so called. (An 1899 deed spelled it "Kain's Hill.")

Hugh Cain of Redding decided to build a fulling (spinning and weaving) mill in Ridgefield at what is now the northeast corner of Route 7 and Topstone Road, directly opposite Cain's Hill Road. He did it in a somewhat unusual fashion. In 1770, he and Thomas Hays of New Milford purchased an acre "including the river" from Silas Hull for 35 shillings. A year later, Hays quit-claimed his interest in the property for 70 pounds in a deed that noted the existence of a "shop and a fulling mill" on the property. Hays was apparently hired to build the mill and held half of the title to the land and improvements only to guarantee that he would be paid the 70-pound cost of construction when the job was done.

The land, incidentally, was described as bounded on the south by a highway (Topstone Road), but westerly by land of Silas Hull, suggesting that the path of modern Route 7 had not been established by then. This conclusion seems to be borne out by 1792 map of major roads in town which shows no north-south highway in this vicinity, but does show Topstone and Cain's Hill Roads. The main north-south route between Danbury and Norwalk followed Simpaug Turnpike at this point.

Cain continued to operate the mill for many years, at least until 1794 when the following advertisement appeared in *The Farmer's Chronicle* in Danbury:

Hugh Cain, of Ridgefield, announces that he can full in the driest season, has now begun, and can continue to full, provided there should be no rain for six weeks to come. He makes all colors made in America (scarlet excepted).

His boast of being able to work in the "driest season" is probably the result of his having located his mill on the largest stream in town, fed by the springs of the Great Swamp and the drainage from a watershed covering sizable section of northeastern Ridgefield. The Norwalk River virtually never runs dry, and has several upstream ponds for storage. However, the curious part of Cain's newspaper ad is the fact that he was not the owner of record of the mill at the time it was placed. In 1789, he had sold the mill, house, and other property to David Banks for 250 pounds. Banks probably had some tie to the family, for on Jan.

11 of the same year, Cain's daughter, Ann, married Thaddeus Banks Jr., whose relation to David has not been ascertained.

Cain took time out from his fulling duties during the Revolution to serve the patriot cause. He was an ensign in the First Battalion under General David Wooster from 1776 to 1777, and was a sergeant in Capt. Isaac Hine's company. He fought the British in Fairfield in July 1777 and probably was at the Battle of Ridgefield in April of that year, when his general was mortally wounded in a skirmish on North Salem Road.

Over the years Hugh Cain took out quite a few mortgages. Some students have speculated that he was having business difficulties, but that is unlikely. He had the only fulling mill in the town at the time, and was probably busy. As George Rockwell observed in his *History of Ridgefield*: "Nearly every housewife had her spinning wheel and was independent of the mills and the outside world for clothing. The mill relieved these women of much labor, as people would shear their sheep, take the wool to the mill to be spun into yarn, and then it was ready for the knitting of socks, gloves, or tippets, which was done at home."

Thus, it seems more likely that Cain was taking out loans to add to and improve his property and his business. He started with only an acre in 1770. In a 1775 mortgage, he listed property as a house and mill "with my sheers, copper for dying, and all and singular of the remainder of my clothiers tools and utensils." And by the early 1780's, his mortgage deeds listed the house, mill, several shops, barn, pig shed, and more than 20 acres.

Hugh Cain died in 1808. David Banks died in 1847 at the age of 82. The mill was subsequently operated by Elias N. and John S. Glover for some years (at least through 1867), and later by Henry F. Lawton, an Englishman (which would perhaps have surprised the patriot soldier Cain).

By modern times, the mill had disappeared. Cain's house burned down in the early 1960's, killing an elderly occupant. Portions of the stone foundation of the mill still exist and were declared a town landmark in the late 1960's. However, many of the stones have been stolen by people who have used them for walls, fireplaces, and garden displays. In the early 1980's, state archaeologists did a study of the site, searching for artifacts of the old mill and writing an extensive, technical report of their finds.

CAMERON'S LINE

At 6:07 on the morning of Oct. 19, 1985, Ridgefielders who were awake—and those who were awakened—felt something unusual. Their homes were shaking: dishes rattled a bit; pictures tilted a tad; old plaster may even have cracked. They were experiencing the effects of the first significant earthquake in the New York metropolitan area in a century.

Centered near Ardsley, N.Y., in neighboring Westchester County, the quake registered 4.0 on the Richter scale. The previous major earthquake, in 1884, measured 5.0. There was no significant damage in Ridgefield and little elsewhere, though a New York town reported some cracked pavement.

However, the quake brought to light a geological phenomenon that had been little known outside scientific circles, and that affects the very foundation, literally, of Ridgefield. The quake was strongly felt along "Cameron's Line," a fault that runs from Manhattan northeasterly through Westchester and into Ridgefield. Here, the line enters near the southwest corner of town and almost

exactly follows West Lane and High Ridge into the village. It continues across Prospect Ridge, through Great Swamp and Farmingville, then into Redding, on up to Danbury and northerly into Litchfield County.

But Cameron's Line is no run-of-the-mill fault. As veteran science reporter Walter Sullivan explained it in *The New York Times* the day after the quake, the line "marks an abrupt change in the earth's crust that resulted from a collision between North America and a European-African land mass 400 million years ago." Later, the European-African continent pulled away, leaving behind a piece of its edge.

Geologists with the Hudson Institute of Mineralogy describe the result this way: "The rocks south of the Cameron's Line are mostly Ordovician unnamed felsic orthogneiss with some of the Harrison Gneiss metadiorite in the Branchville area. North of Cameron's Line, higher elevations with rugged topography along the eastern, northern and western part of town (such as under Pine, Ned, and West Mountains), are underlain by Grenville age Laurentian gneiss bedrock."

More simply put, if you live in the southern third of town, the earth beneath you closely matches the geology of today's western Africa while folks in the northern two-thirds of the town live atop North American rock.

Mild quakes, the kind most people would not even feel, occur fairly often along Cameron's Line and many other faults in the region. The 1985 quake in Ardsley was actually centered two miles west of the line, but it was felt along the fault on up into western Massachusetts. Connecticut as a state has several earthquakes a year, but they are below 2.5 on the Richter scale, and generally not felt. The area around Moodus, in eastern Connecticut, is famed for its "rumblings" and has experienced series of up to 400 quakes over six weeks, mostly too small to feel. (Native Indians called East Haddam, the next town south, *morehemoodus*, "place of noises.")

In October 1989, the Loma Prieta earthquake in California registered 6.9, killed 63 people, injured 3,700, and damaged 12,000 homes and 2,600 businesses. Forty buildings collapsed in Santa Cruz. A week later, scientists told *The Ridgefield Press* that the town could experience an earthquake "with the level of violence and...havoc" of the California quake. Here, however, the damage would be even worse than an equivalent shock in California, both because most buildings haven't been designed with quakes in mind, and because the crust of the earth is more solid and able to transmit and maintain the magnitude of earthquake waves than the softer ground of the West Coast.

That same year, the state passed building codes incorporating the need for seismic designs, but many older buildings—such as most of our schools and the Town Hall—are brittle brick and/or cement block structures that don't do well in quakes (wooden houses are the safest).

There are many faults that crisscross the metropolitan New York region, and scientists seem uncertain about the level of danger they may present. The faults are certainly not as active as California's. Back in 1985, Columbia University seismologists said the Oct. 19 quake might have been a warning of a more severe quake to come within months. "They stressed, however, that this was a possibility, rather than a probability, and other specialists expressed doubts regarding the prognosis," said *The Times*.

In 2011, the 5.8 quake in Virginia that damaged the Washington Monument was felt in Ridgefield (and across 12 states and southern Canada). But as of this

writing, no local quakes like Ardsley's has occurred since 1985. And for most of us, that's just fine.

CAMP LAND

An 1850 deed mentions the "Camp land at Short Woods." The term was referring not to campsites, but to land owned by the Rev. Samuel Camp, minister of the Ridgebury Congregational Church from 1769 to 1804. Mr. Camp was a man of fairly considerable wealth, owning a large amount of land in Ridgebury and having enough cash on hand to issue mortgages to people who weren't even in his parish.

Mr. Camp is buried in the Ridgebury Cemetery, a few doors north of the church. Alongside his tombstone are the identically designed headstones of the three wives he survived: Hannah, who died in 1777, aged 34; Lucretia, died 1782, aged 35; and Mary, 1800, aged 55. The minister resigned his office in 1804 because of failing health. Although he did not die until 1813, he did not remarry, perhaps fortunately for the women of Ridgebury. His own gravestone is of the same design as his wives', but about 50% larger in size.

CANADA LAND

Canada Land is an intriguing name that appears for the first time in 1825 when Reuben and Susan Trobridge of Danbury sell Israel and Caleb Pearce 66 acres "known and called by the name of the Canada Land." Another deed of the same year transfers 30 acres "called the Canada Land." This property was near Boggs Pond in the northwestern part of modern-day Danbury, then part of Ridgefield.

Based on an admittedly sketchy investigation into ownership records, this territory appears to be the 120-acre grant to Benjamin Benedict in 1741. The town had just received title to the huge wedge of territory from Ridgebury north to New Fairfield in exchange for having given up land to New York Colony (*see* Oblong). It was subdivided into large tracts among 29 Ridgefield proprietors, most of whom eventually sold off their shares. However, some Benedicts owned land in or adjacent to the Canada Land in the 1820's.

Why was it called Canada Land? There are a half-dozen theories, none thoroughly researched. The term had long ago disappeared from use, and was discovered in the 1970's during research for this work. Ridgefield and Danbury historians make no mention of it. Here are some possibilities:

- The land could have belonged to a Tory who absconded to Canada, as quite a few did, during the Revolution. As a result the land may be been abandoned, or may have been confiscated by the state. "Canada Land" then could have been a nickname referring to the whereabouts of its last owner.
- The land could have been owned at one time by an immigrant from Canada.
- The property could have belonged to a member of the Kennedy family (though because there is no land record evidence, more likely it would have been leased, rented, or squatted upon by a Kennedy). According to Imogene Heireth of the Danbury Scott-Fanton Museum, the name Kennedy was sometimes spelled Canaday or Canada in early Fairfield County records. A John Canada was living in Stamford in the late

1600's, and since many 18th Century families came to northern Fairfield County from Stamford.

- It could have been called Canada because it was in the northern end of Ridgefield, just as Canada is in the northern portion of North America. This may be stretching possibilities a bit, but then again, Ridgefield's Florida District is in the extreme southeastern part of town.
- Canada in the Mohawk tongue meant "group of houses" or "village." There may have been an old Indian village thereabouts.
- Someone could have received land here as a grant for service in the French and Indian War, which involved fighting in Canada. Such grants in lieu of cash or in reward for exceptional service were common in the 18th Century – one such grant existed around Ridgebury and Old Stage-coach Roads long before the town was founded (*see Zack's Ridge*).

CANDEE'S POND

Candee's Pond is the fairly sizable body of water on the north side of lower Branchville Road, west of Florida Road and near the Branchville Cemetery. The likes of Elizabeth Taylor and Dwight Eisenhower have gazed upon its waters.

The pond takes its name from Mr. and Mrs. Howard S. Candee, who bought the property, including a house, from Mr. and Mrs. John P. Auer in 1928. The deed says the pond existed then. Elizabeth M. Candee sold the place in 1938 to C. R. Dashiell of Miami Beach, Fla. Mr. Candee, who had worked in real estate in New York City, had been a frequent participant in town meetings here during the 1930's. He moved to Vermont for about 10 years, and returned to Ridgefield in the late 1940's, living on New Street. Mrs. Candee died in 1953; he in 1956 in Princeton, Mass.

A subsequent owner of his Branchville Road estate was S. Howard Young (1878-1972), one of the world's wealthiest art dealers. A savvy businessman, he started out in the field of lithography and by the age of 18, had amassed a fortune valued at \$400,000. He spent most of his career as an art dealer. For many years his partner was his nephew, Francis Taylor, the father of actress Elizabeth Taylor, and Miss Taylor visited the Branchville estate on occasion.

One of Mr. Young's closest friends was Dwight D. Eisenhower, who visited here often. It has been reliably reported that General Eisenhower, then president of Columbia University, made his decision to run for the presidency while staying at the Young place in 1952. According to one writer, Mr. Young was at least instrumental in Eisenhower's deciding to enter the presidential race. He arranged a reception for the Eisenhowers with Scripps-Howard newspaper executives at which the general obtained their support. Without this backing, Mr. Eisenhower probably never would have entered politics, wrote Joyce Laabs, a historian of Lakeland, Wisc., in 1978.

Mr. Young enjoyed vacationing in the north woods of Wisconsin, near Lakeland. He had been a patient of a local doctor and once promised the doctor to donate to the Lakeland Memorial Hospital. After Mr. Young's death in 1972 at the age of 94, it was discovered that he had more than kept his promise: He left the bulk of his \$20-million estate (more than \$90 million in 2005 dollars) in a trust to build a new hospital. In 1977, the Howard Young Medical Center opened its doors in Woodruff, Wisc. It is today considered one of the top orthopedic hospitals in the nation.

It has not been ascertained whether Candee's Pond was built for decoration or to serve a mill. However, the former purpose is more likely since the pond is not shown on an 1867 map of Ridgefield, and few new water-power mill sites were established after that time.

CANDLE WOOD

In his will, written in 1749, Daniel Sherwood, who had been the town's first miller, gave his daughter, Hannah, "about 300 rails lying east of the Candle wood, so called." This may have been a woodland from which candlewood (*below*) was obtained, and the name was shortened from "Candlewood Wood." The location was probably near Candlewood Hill in Farmingville.

CANDLEWOOD HILL

Candlewood Hill, a term found only in the 18th Century, first appears in the land records in 1749 when Daniel Sherwood gives son-in-law John Lobdell 12 acres at "Reedy Swamp," bounded "east by ye Candlewood Hill." Other deeds have described Reedy or Reed Swamp as "over ye Great Swamp, southerly of ye Limestone Hill." The references seem to place Candlewood Hill near what is today called Pine Hill, northwest of the intersection of Farmingville and New Roads and near Aldrich Park.

These two terms – pine and candlewood – for the same place make sense since to the settlers, candlewood was what we call pine. "The first and most natural way of lighting houses of the American colonists, both in the North and South, was by pineknots of the fat pitch pine, which, of course, were found everywhere in the greatest plenty in the forests," wrote Alice Morse Earle in *Home Life in Colonial Days*. "Governor John Winthrop the younger, in his communication to the English Royal Society in 1662, said this candlewood was much used for domestic illumination in Virginia, New York and New England. It was doubtless gathered everywhere in new settlements, as it has been in pioneer homes till our own day (she was writing in the 1890's). In Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, it was used till this century." Mrs. Earle quotes a 1642 author: "Out of these pines is gotten the candlewood that is much spoke of, which may serve as a shift among poore folks, but I cannot commend it for singular good, because it droppeth a pitchy kind of substance (tar) where it stands."

Another author, writing in 1633, said: "They are such candles as the Indians commonly use, having no other, and they are nothing else but the wood of the pine tree, cloven in two little slices, something thin, which are so full of the moysture of turpentine and pitch that they burne as cleere as a torch."

Candlewood was usually burned near a corner of the fireplace so the fumes and smoke would go up the chimney and the droppings would fall on stone. "Every family laid in a good supply of this light wood for winter use, and it was said that a prudent New England farmer would as soon start the winter without hay in his barn as without candlewood in the woodshed," Mrs. Earle said.

CANDLEWOOD LEDGES

In 1796, Abner Gilbert sold Thomas Wilson 13 acres "at Bennetts Farm, on a point of a ledge of rocks commonly called the Candlewood Ledges." This is

the only reference found in the land records through 1890, and the precise location is unknown, although it was possibly north of Bennett's Ponds.

CANDOTO

According to the Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich, writing in 1800, Candoto was the Indian name for High Ridge. The word may be a variation of Caudatowa (*q.v.*), which also appears sometimes as "Candatowa," and which meant "high mountain." One Indian language authority says the word may be related to *kodtuhkoe*, which meant "at the top of a hill" or "highest place" in the language of some Massachusetts tribes. The name never appears in the land records, so the word may have been passed on to Goodrich by word-of-mouth tradition, and may be badly corrupted from the original.

CANFIELD'S MILL RIVER

A very old and short-lived term, Canfield's Mill River was applied to today's Stamford Mill River, or just plain Mill River, which rises in the swamps of western Ridgefield in the West Lane-Peaceable area, flows into New York State, and winds up in a Stamford reservoir. In 1728, the Ridgefield proprietors granted William Truesdale and Solomon Tuttle land in modern-day Lewisboro, then part of Ridgefield, described as "beginning at ye place where ye 20 mile line goes down ye West Mountain between ye Cross Pond and Stanford or Canfields Mill River." (The 20 Mile Line was the eastern boundary of New York Colony, incorrectly supposed to be 20 miles from a point on the Hudson River.) Two years earlier, Timothy Canfield had bought Moses Northrup's saw mill, "standing on Stanford Branch, so called, near ye Southwest Ridges," whence the name.

This mill was situated near where Route 123 in Lewisboro crosses the river in the valley about a half-mile south of Route 35. It was probably one of the first sawmills serving Ridgefield, and consequently was an important one in the early history of the community. There is no telling how many early Ridgefield homes were framed and finished with lumber from this mill.

CANOE BROOK, GUTTER

When Jacob and Elijah Keeler sold 10 acres to John Chapman near Lake Mamanasco in 1789, they described the land as northeasterly "from the place where Canoe Brook crosseth the road," and near the Titicus River. Thirty-five years earlier, in 1754, a deed called this the "Canoe Gutter." Both deeds – and others – refer to the outlet stream of Lake Mamanasco, which flows into the Titicus River. Gutter is an old word for a small brook or stream.

It appears from the name that the Indians had used this stream as a route to the Titicus from the lake, possibly on fishing or hunting expeditions. The native Indians maintained a seasonal village or campsite at the south end of the lake.

CANTERBURY LANE

Canterbury Lane is a recent and locally meaningless name for an old road – at least a portion of an old road. The lane begins at Ridgebury Road opposite George Washington Highway, extending westward. Originally, the road was called West Lane and went all the way west to the New York State line, probably beyond.

The name “West Lane” was first mentioned in a 1799 deed. By the 20th Century, people were terming it “Old West Lane.” In 1969, when Mutual Land Management and Development Inc. subdivided its eastern end, the Planning and Zoning Commission decided that Old West Lane was either too plain or too likely to be confused with West Lane (lower Route 35), eight miles away. The commission renamed the road Canterbury Lane, perhaps because it sounds pretty elegant; certainly there is no historical or geographical significance to the name, unless someone might liken the nearby Ridgebury Congregational Church, the town’s smallest church, to a British cathedral.

CARDINAL COURT

Cardinal Court is a tertiary road off the south side of Peaceable Ridge Road, serving John Maggio’s 1979 subdivision, Peaceable Ridge Manor. The 12.7-acre parcel was cut into five lots of from 1.3 to 3 acres. Mr. Maggio named the road for the bird, popular here as well as in at least 10 of the 22 other Fairfield County towns with similarly named roads.

CARPENTER CLOSE

Carpenter Close, one of the lanes at Casagmo condominiums off Main and Grove Streets, was named for the Carpenter family, ancestors of the Olcotts who built the estate named Casagmo (*q.v.*). The Carpenter family was among the first in New England and Rhode Island. William Carpenter, a friend of Roger Williams, helped found Rhode Island and was a large landowner and an official in the colony government.

CARROLL’S FOLLY

Carroll’s Folly was a slang term used to describe the old intersection of Routes 7 and 35. According to former first selectman Leo F. Carroll (1900-1985), “some damn Democrat started it to hurt me politically.”

Years ago Routes 7 and 35 intersected with a 90-degree junction at which many accidents occurred. Around 1940, Mr. Carroll, a state police lieutenant commanding Troop A in Ridgefield, asked the state highway department to improve the intersection, resulting in a semi-rotary arrangement. That lasted until around 1984 when the state returned the T, but this time with traffic lights. Mr. Carroll claimed that the old rotary was “the safest intersection in New England. There hasn’t been a single (serious) accident out there.”

However, the seeming complexity of the arrangement gave rise to some complaints, most of them half teasing. One day soon after the intersection was completed, the Rev. Hugh Shields, pastor of the First Congregational Church, called Lt. Carroll at the barracks and said: “Lieutenant, I’m up here at 35 and 7, and I don’t know which way to go to get to Danbury.”

Knowing the minister never touched a drop of liquor, Mr. Carroll nonetheless replied: “Listen, you sober up and you’ll find your way,” and hung up.

CARVEL CURVE

“Carvel Curve” is an example of police slang coming into outside – though somewhat limited – use. The term refers to the curve in Route 7 about a quarter mile north of the Route 35 intersection. The police coined it as a quick way to describe a location where auto accidents rather frequently occurred.

The name came from the fact that Carvel operated the nearby ice cream stand until 1977 when Ridgefield Ice Cream took over. Despite the business name change, police officers were still using “Carvel Curve” in 2008, more than 30 years after Carvel left! Some may still use it.

In 1976, the Police Commission began a campaign to have the state straighten or at least improve the curve. In 1987-88, 11 years later, the state reduced the severity of the curve in conjunction with widening the road to four lanes at that point. Accidents, however, still occur there.

CASAGMO

The 320-unit condominium complex, construction of which began in 1968, was named for the 30-acre estate of George Mann Olcott, a wealthy drug company owner and bank executive, who built an elaborate mansion there in 1892. The estate’s name came from the combination of *casa*, the Italian word for “house” (the architecture was Italianate), and Mr. Olcott’s initials, GMO. In other words, it was the “house of George M. Olcott.”

An old saltbox house, torn down by Olcott to make way for his new place, had served as a hospital for soldiers wounded in the Battle of Ridgefield, the main skirmish having taken place just to the west of the house along Main Street (see Arnold’s Way and Olcott Way).

Mary Olcott’s heirs sold the property in the early 1960’s to Jerry Tuccio, the homebuilder, who received the rezoning for the town’s first large-scale apartment development. However, he sold the land to David L. Paul, a New York attorney and apartment builder, who razed the mansion in 1968 after years of neglect and vandalism had taken their toll. Paul later also built Fox Hill Village on Danbury Road. There, under the strong recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission, he included a section of condominiums. When these turned out to be quite popular, he began converting all of Fox Hill, and then Casagmo, to condominium ownership, a process completed in the early 1980’s.

CASA-TORCH LANE

Casa-Torch Lane is a dead-end road off upper Branchville Road, named for John Casavecchia and for Donald and Gina Torcellini, who bought and subdivided the property into five lots around 1953. “Torch” or “Torchy” are nicknames that have been applied to some members of the Torcellini family.

CASEY LANE

Casey Lane, which runs off Ramapoo Road, was named for the William E. Casey family, which lived in the fine little saltbox at the corner of the two roads.

In 1860, Thomas W. Casey of North Salem, N.Y., a shoemaker, bought property on what is now Rippowam Road. Eleven years later, his son, William, also began buying land here, but it was not until 1878 that he acquired the little house on Ramapoo Road. He was said to have been a farmer, and the road probably led to his fields.

William Casey died in 1908, aged 68, but the homestead remained in the family for some years thereafter. The house is one of the few genuine saltboxes – with long-sloping rear roof – left in town.

CATOONAH STREET

Catoonah was the Indian sachem, sagamore, or leader who sold the settlers the first and largest of eight tracts that made up Ridgefield. "I Catoonah sachem of Ramapoo Indians and Associates within her majesties province of New York in America," begins the 1708 deed in which he turned over title to an estimated 20,000 acres for a mere 100 pounds.

As the deed suggests, Catoonah's home or home-base by 1708 was in New York. Indeed, he was in the real estate business there long before he was selling to Ridgefielders. In 1680, Catoonah (also spelled Catona or Katonah) sold 22 Stamford residents a tract called "The Hopp Ground," which subsequently became the town of Bedford, N.Y. He sold other parcels in the Bedford-Pound Ridge area around 1701-2, and the village of Katonah within the township of Bedford is named after him. It is believed that Catoonah was the grandson or great-grandson of Ponus, the powerful chief who sold Stamford to its settlers.

"The grave of Catona is said to be in Katonah's Woods in the triangle formed by Beaver Dam, Cantitoe, and Girdle Ridge Roads in Bedford," says Jay Harris in *God's Country*, her history of Pound Ridge. Silvio Bedini says he was buried on a farm beneath two boulders.

While Catoonah figured prominently in the establishment of the town, Catoonah Street was apparently not named in honor of the Indian, directly at least, but for a building. The roadway from Main Street to High Ridge was laid out in 1721 and was known by the 1740's as Burt's Lane. Clark's 1856 map of Fairfield County labels it New West Lane, an extension of the name that was being applied to Barry Avenue. By the 1860's, however, deeds and maps were calling it Catoonah Street.

Around 1859, the Catoonah Building Association was formed, and issued capital stock to a group of shareholders. According to a share made out to Zalmom S. Main, dated 1859, and signed by Russell B. Perry, president, and Hiram K. Scott, treasurer, one share equaled \$100. When Scott sold his share in 1868 to Russel B. Keeler for \$500, the deed described it as representing 5-17ths of "the Catoonah Hall building and land belonging to the same, being five shares of capital stock of the Catoonah Hall Association." The land and buildings were described as being on Catoonah Street.

The hall itself had been completed by 1860, according to a related deed. Thus, it appears that the building was named for the Indian, and the street for the building.

Catoonah Hall must have been of some importance to have generated a street name. Little mention of it is found in town histories. However, in a chapter on Ridgefield industries, George L. Rockwell gives us a clue: "The candlestick factory was conducted by the brothers John W. and Francis A. Rockwell. It was operated first in the building afterward the Bailey Inn (on Main Street), then moved to Catoonah Street in a building which stood on the site of Sperry's Livery Stable. A political rally was held in the hall over the shop one evening in September 1868 and that night the building burned, and with it the old Catholic church," which stood next to it. Thus, Catoonah Hall was opposite the fire-house (which, unfortunately for Catoonah Hall, did not exist then).

The Catoonah Hall Building Association seems unique in the history of the town in that shares were sold to build it. It appears from what few records we have of it that the association was formed among local businessmen to erect a

structure sizable enough for large gatherings – such as the fateful political rally. It also seems that at the time, the town had only one other large hall – the Big Shop at Main Street and West Lane.

Catoonah Hall was probably also used for social functions, such as dances, as well as for manufacturing and sales enterprises. Judge Scott's deed indicated it cost about \$1,700 to build, and the return on investment may have been chiefly through rents.

CATTLE PEN LANE

Cattle Pen Lane is a 1,300-foot dead-end road off lower Nod Road, serving the 1983 "Nod Hollow" subdivision of nine lots.

The land had been owned by Walter H. Cook, a Yale University alumnus who bequeathed it to the university upon his death in 1978. Mr. Cook came to Ridgefield in 1941 after retiring from the Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance Company. Yale sold to the developers, John J. Murren and Robert J. Kane. When Mr. Murren asked this writer to suggest a name for his new road, something to do with Yale – such as Yale Lane – was offered since the sale of the land had benefited Connecticut's oldest university. The developer immediately rejected the idea.

"I went to UConn," he said with a smile. "We always hated Yale."

He chose to name the lane after an old stone-walled livestock enclosure alongside the road. Like most of Ridgefield, this was once farmland. Cattle Pen Lane became a town road in 1985.

CAUDATOWA

Various authorities translate Caudatowa as "high ground" and report that it was the native Indians' name for Ridgefield. The name does not appear in early deeds and grants, but is mentioned in Teller's history of the town, published in 1878.

Bolton's *History of Westchester County* (1881) repeatedly mentions the word as "Candatowa" as do other authorities, including John C. Huden, an Indian language expert, who said Candatowa is "a greatly modified" version of the Paugusset word for "great mountain." Candoto, a word said to apply to High Ridge, may be another form of these words.

CAUDATOWA DRIVE

Caudatowa Drive is a short road between Blue Ridge and Rock Roads, part of the Eight Lakes development (*q.v.*). Its name comes from the supposed Indian name for Ridgefield and, if translations are accurate, is a most suitable name for a road that is between 850 and 900 feet above sea level. It was accepted as a town road in 1961.

CAVALRY PLACE

Cavalry Place on West Mountain is part of a 53-acre, 18-lot subdivision by Termont Development Company. The 1979 development includes Armand Road, off which Cavalry Place runs.

The name "Cavalry Court" was suggested by this writer to recall the fact that a French cavalry unit was stationed in nearby barracks during the Revolutionary War (*see* Armand Place). The name caused some problems for people who found "Cavalry Court" somehow difficult to pronounce, and who opted for

Cavalry Place instead. “Cavalry” itself is a tricky word, and many people tend to mix it up with “Calvary,” the place where Jesus Christ was crucified.

The dead-end road is situated off Armand Road. The most recently built section was accepted as a town road in 1985.

CAVE, THE

In 1730, the proprietors granted Lt. Benjamin Benedict 60 acres lying “west of ye Cave.” The grant was part of a subdivision of land that had been purchased from Taporneck and other Indians in 1727 and 1729. The Cave may be what later became known as Sarah Bishop’s Cave (*see* Sarah Bishop Road) on West Mountain in adjacent North Salem, N.Y. – then part of Ridgefield – or it may have been a cave in a hill off southern Ned’s Mountain Road.

CEDAR LANE

Running between South Salem Road and West Lane, Cedar Lane is an old road, shown on both Clark’s (1856) and Beers’ (1867) maps of the town. The name was applied as early as 1912 when it appears on the Whitlock map. Historian Richard E. Venus, a native son, said that years ago, many cedars grew in this neighborhood. Cedars often appear in fields that are left unmown, but are usually eventually crowded or shaded out by the faster-growing and taller deciduous trees, such as maples.

CEDAR MOUNTAIN(S)

Cedar Mountain is a tall rocky ridge, reaching an elevation of about 630 feet above sea level. It runs north-south just to the west of Route 7 and east of Florida Road. The locality was first mentioned in the colonial General Assembly’s grant of Ridgefield’s first-purchase land to the proprietors in 1709, when it was called the “West Cedar Mountain.” On the east side of this hill stood a tree that marked the eastward bend in the boundary between Ridgefield and Fairfield (later Redding).

West Cedar Mountain may have been a name first applied by Fairfield residents, for the mountain is in the easternmost part of Ridgefield. That is probably why the Ridgefield settlers began dropping the “west” and calling it Cedar Mountain or Mountains by the 1720’s. The 1970 US Geological Survey map uses “Cedar Mountain” as the official name.

CEDAR MOUNTAIN ROAD

Cedar Mountain Road was apparently the original name for today’s Florida Road. In a subdivision of common land in 1745, Benjamin Willson received 29 acres “lying west of ye Cedar Mountain Road.”

An unusual map of this subdivision, placed on the town records in 1787 from an original drawn in 1744, locates Willson’s lot just west of Florida Road. The highway was formally laid out on Dec. 6, 1744 by the selectmen, who described it as starting at the Wilton line, running north to Florida Hill Road, then called Abbott’s Mill Road. This path predated the modern-day Route 7, and was thus was part of a main route between Norwalk and Danbury in the 18th Century. Neighborhood tradition says that at least one tavern or inn stood along Florida Road to serve as a stagecoach stop in the 1700’s.

CHARTER OAK COURT

Charter Oak Court is a dead-end road off Limestone Road. It serves the 19.5-acre subdivision of Dennis and Linda Moore, approved in 1975 as one of the earliest of the “Planned Residential Developments.” Under “PRD” smaller than usual house lots are permitted if substantial open space is set aside. In this case, seven lots – one with an existing house on it – were created at about one acre each in a two-acre zone, and 9.3 acres along the Norwalk River was declared open space.

Charter Oak Court, a name selected by Town Planner Oswald Inglese, recalls Connecticut’s most famous tree, which once stood in Hartford. It is said that colony officials hid the state’s charter in a hollow of the trunk to prevent English Governor Edmond Andros from seizing it and control of the colony in 1687. Andros had been attempting to reorganize the New England Colonies and New York into a royal dominion under his leadership. He was unsuccessful in gaining control of Connecticut, which kept the charter that had protected what has been called the most democratic system of government in the colonies.

The tree fell in a storm in 1856 and tiny pieces of furniture and other mementos were carved from much of its wood. The tree was so old and large that the Indians – before the coming of the English in the 1630’s – had revered it. A tree said to have grown from an acorn taken from the Charter Oak stands in Putnam Park in Redding.

An earlier plan for the property called the road Riverview Road, a name that appears on some maps.

CHEKHOV DRIVE

Hagstrom’s Atlas of Fairfield County (1966) labels the private driveway to the old Martin farm on North Salem Road as “Chekhov Drive.”

Oddly enough, Google Maps’ “street view” offers its continuous photographs of the entire length of this private drive that serves a half dozen or so homes on the northwesterly end of Lake Mamanasco. Google does not even provide a name for the 1,500-foot-long accessway, but does offer excellent pictures.

At what had been the Ridgefield Boys School at the end of the driveway, Michael Chekhov trained actors at the Chekhov Theater Studio from about 1938 to 1941. In the 1950s, the late Francis D. Martin (*see Who Was Who* profile) razed most of the school building, erected in the early 1900’s, and the remaining one story building was sold as a house in 1976.

Mikhail Alexandrovich Chekhov, nephew of playwright Anton Chekhov, was born in Russia in 1891 and by the age of 21 was already a noted actor in his homeland. By 1923, he was a director at the Moscow Art Theatre, but his innovative methods eventually led the Communists to label him “alien and reactionary” and a “sick artist.” Chekhov moved to Germany and then England, establishing a well-respected method of training actors at a school there. In 1939, as war was breaking out, he moved his Chekhov Theatre Studio from England to Ridgefield.

While here, Mr. Chekhov made his first appearance in an English-speaking role in public – a Russian War Relief dramatic program on the stage of the old Ridgefield High School (now the Ridgefield Playhouse), performing in each of the three short plays presented. By 1945, he was in Hollywood, where he taught

and acted in films – his portrayal of the psychoanalyst in Alfred Hitchcock's *Spellbound* won him an Academy Award nomination. Among his students were Marilyn Monroe, Jack Palance, Anthony Quinn, Yul Brynner, Gregory Peck, and Akim Tamiroff. He died in 1955, but his school lives on today as the Chekhov Theatre Ensemble in New York City. (Chekhov is also profiled in *Who Was Who on Old Ridgefield*.)

CHELSEA PLACE

Chelsea Place is a dead-end road off upper Barrack Hill Road, serving a 1999 subdivision called Chelsea Estates. The development has five lots on 20.5 acres. The developer was Dan Valentine, then a Ridgefielder, who had a then-toddler daughter named Chelsea.

CHERRY LANE

Cherry Lane, a short dead-end dirt road off Tanton Hill Road, was developed by the Connecticut Land Company in the early 1950's. The name was suggested by George Grunig Jr., who lived on the road and who asked the selectmen in 1957 to register Cherry Lane as the name. However, despite repeated requests, the town refused to accept the road for many years because it failed to meet town road standards.

There are cherry trees in this neighborhood, probably planted for Col. Louis D. Conley's Outpost Nurseries (*see* Outpost Pond). The nurseries extended along both sides of Danbury Road from Copps Hill area to Route 7 in Danbury.

CHESTNUT HILLS ESTATES

Chestnut Hills Estates, a subdivision of about 40 one-acre lots north of Chestnut Hill Road (*q.v.*) in Ridgebury, was developed by Lewis J. Finch, beginning around 1958. It includes Parley Road, Twopence Road, Harding Drive, Finch Drive, and Sarah Bishop Road.

CHESTNUT HILL ROAD

Chestnut Hill Road runs from Ridgebury Road to the New York State line where it connects with Finch Road in North Salem. It existed before 1856. The name does not appear by 1880 in the land records, but was in use by the 1930's.

The name was taken from the American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*), which years ago was common before the chestnut blight of the early 1900's all but wiped out the mature trees of this species from North America. Experiments have been conducted for years by state scientists near New Haven and elsewhere in North America to produce a subspecies or hybrid of the American chestnut that will withstand the blight. Chestnuts were widely used for building houses, and were popular for flooring.

Despite the blight, there are still chestnuts in our woods, young ones growing from the stumps of dead trees. They usually wind up dead after a few years, rarely reaching more than 20 feet in height.

The North Salem part of Chestnut Hill Road was named for the family of the late William R. Finch, prominent for years in that town and often called the "Mayor of North Salem." He died around 1930.

Undoubtedly Chestnut Hill Road's most famous resident was author-illustrator Maurice Sendak, who lived near the New York State line from 1972 until his death in 2012.

CHES(T)NUT RIDGE I

In 1710 Town Clerk John Copp (he was called the "register" then) drew in the town record book a map of the division of "plow lands" into 25 lots for the 25 settling families. Two such lots were shown on "Chesnut Ridge." Copp was the chief surveyor of the new settlement and this drawing – not very accurate in scale or detail – is the earliest known map of Ridgefield. It is interesting to note that he first wrote "Chesnut Hill," then scratched out the "hill" and replaced it with "ridge."

It appears from the loosely drawn map and from many deeds referring to the area that Chestnut Ridge was in the vicinity of Ramapoo Road, Overlook Drive and Farm Hill Road. The term is used throughout the 18th Century and well into the 19th Century. It is almost always spelled "chesnut," which was the common spelling here and elsewhere two centuries ago.

CHES(T)NUT RIDGE II

Philander Camp, son of a noted Ridgebury minister (*see* Camp Land), sold John Taylor eight acres "at a place called Chesnut Ridge" in Ridgebury. This 1810 deed is for land south of George Washington Highway and east of Ridgebury Road, quite probably in or around the Scodon development (*q.v.*).

CHESTRUIN

Chestruin is a peculiar word, as best as can be deciphered from the old records, that occurs in a 1752 deed. Theophilus Taylor of Danbury sold Theophilus Benedict of Danbury eight acres "situate in Ridgefield North Patent lying westerly from ye Bare Mountain lying in ye hollow between said Bare Mountain and ye Chestruin so called."

Although my transcription of the word may be in error, I cannot get any better reading of it, and the word seems to make no sense. The *Oxford English Dictionary* could shed no light, nor could the new *Dictionary of American Regional English*. It is possible that the recording town clerk – or the author of the original deed – erroneously wrote down a term such as "Chestnut Run" (brook) or "Chestnut Ridge." Anyone who'd like to play around with trying to decipher the word can find it on page 31 of Volume Four of the Ridgefield Land Records.

CHICKEN'S ROCK

Chicken's Rock is the large rock on the southwest corner of Great Pond at the western edge of the bathing beach of Martin Park. Those who are aware of the name usually think it has something to do with people being "chicken" to jump off the top of the 15- to 20-foot-high rock and into the pond. Chicken, however, was a person, not a condition.

Writing in the 1920's, George L. Rockwell said: "An interesting Indian character who spent some time in the eastern section of our town was Chicken Warrups, or as he was often called, Chickens. Chickens came from Redding. His original home was in Greenfield Hill (Fairfield)... A large rock on the shores of Great Pond ... is still called Chicken's Rock, as it was a favorite spot

where the old warrior used to sit. In 1749, Chickens exchanged his 100 acres in Redding with John Read for 200 acres in Schaghticoke in the town of Kent. The land in Kent was bounded on the east by the Housatonic River and west by the Kent Mountains. It was near the Indian Reservation, which is familiar to the tourist passing up the Housatonic Valley [west of Route 7]. Chicken Warrups died about 1765. His son, Tom Warrups, served faithfully with the American forces in the Revolutionary War, enlisting from Redding."

In his *Ridgefield in Review*, Silvio A. Bedini says that Chickens was "notorious among the red men of this area," and that he committed a murder in Greenfield Hill just before moving to present-day Redding (then part of Fairfield).

D. Hamilton Hurd, in his *History of Fairfield County* (1881), reports that "the tract of land embraced within the bounds of the present town of Redding was claimed by a small and unimportant tribe of Indians, composed of a few stragglers or disaffected members of the Potatucks of Newtown, the Paugussets of Milford, and the Mohawks of New York. This motley tribe was presided over by a chief bearing the euphonious name of Chicken Warrups, or Sam Mohawk, as he was sometimes called. It is supposed that he was a sagamore or under-chief of the powerful Mohawks, one of the tribes of the celebrated league of the Iroquois which inhabited New York, and who for some reason fled from his tribe and settled on Greenfield Hill. Here he killed an Indian and fled to Redding. He was a shrewd, cunning and important character in the early history of the town" of Fairfield.

In the early 18th Century, Chickens owned considerably more than the 100 acres he sold in 1749. Most of these holdings, in the Lonetown area of Redding, were sold in 1724 to Capt. Samuel Couch of Fairfield: The deed included the provision which reserved "in the whole of same, liberty for myself and my heirs to hunt, fish, and fowl upon the land and in the waters, and further reserving for myself, my children, and grandchildren and their posterity the use of so much land by my present dwelling house or wigwam as the General Assembly of the Colony by themselves or a committee indifferently appointed shall judge necessary for my or their personal improvement, that is to say, my children, children's children and posterity."

On a page of an old account-book kept in Redding in 1815 is a charge made by the selectmen against the state for boarding Eunice Warrups from Nov. 1, 1815 to Jan. 16, 1816. And on another page, it says: "Eunice Warrups, an Indian woman, was born in this town, is upwards of 70 years old; has been absent 50 years; came from New Milford, she says, 1st day of Nov; came to this town; was warned to depart."

This rather harsh-sounding treatment of an old woman, possibly one of Chickens' wives or children, seems strange, and one wonders whether she or the selectmen were aware of her "rights" under the Samuel Couch deed. Towns in the 18th and 19th Centuries were finicky about whom they admitted as residents. They feared indigents of any race because, under law, once indigents had established themselves in a community, the selectmen would become responsible for their welfare and would have to pay out money to support them. Hence, the tight-fisted officials often ordered indigents to leave before these poor people could become welfare cases.

CHIPMUNK LANE

A short dead-end road off Beaver Brook Road in Ridgebury Estates, Chipmunk Lane is named for the rodent so populous in this territory.

Though the creature is cute and popular, only four other Fairfield County towns deemed it worth honoring with a road name by 1985. Perhaps most road namers had had infestations of them in their attics.

Chipmunk Lane became a town road in 1970.

CHRISTOPHER ROAD

Christopher Road, a short, dead-end road off Tackora Trail, was named in 1959 for Christopher Franks, son of James Franks, the developer. Lisa Lane, another road in the subdivision, was named for his daughter.

CIDER MILL LOT

Names of lots – tracts of land within farms or estates owned by one family – are not in most cases covered in this Ridgefield Names history (*see* Lots). However, Cider Mill Lot – and a few others – deserve mention, in this case because it’s one of the first references in the land records to the existence of a cider mill in Ridgefield.

In 1806, Elias and Eunice Smith leased to Benjamin Barberry nearly 10 acres “called the Cider Mill Lot (which formerly belonged to the estate of Daniel Coley esquire, late of said Ridgefield, deceased).” This suggests the mill, probably located on lower Ridgebury Road below Regan Road, existed for some time before 1806.

The fact that references to cider mills start in the beginning of the 19th Century suggests that these facilities for obtaining cider and apple butter were not common or perhaps non-existent during most of the 18th Century. By the mid-19th Century, a half dozen cider mills were operating here, perhaps reflecting a changing attitude in town toward alcohol – for cider back then was not the “juice” we today call cider, but an alcoholic beverage, often with quite a “kick” to it. Also, mills saved farmers a lot of time and work that could be devoted to other operations, and thus may have become more popular as the town — and its collective thirst — grew.

Cider making, a Connecticut and New England tradition in late summer and early autumn, was an important task. The fruit was crushed in a certain way so that the meat was deliberately bruised, usually at a cider mill. Bruising and then exposing the crushed apples to sunlight, or at least the air, for the proper amount of time turned the pomace – or apple cheese – a brown color, a change that added a great deal of sugar and richness to the juice. The cheese was then layered on rye straw or on cloth, and squeezed in a wooden press. A cider mill used water power to operate the bruising and squeezing machinery.

True cider was then allowed to ferment in barrels. Cider was a staple in most households, much as beer and wine are today. Although cider making was carried on commercially to some degree, it was usually a small-scale operation, with neighborhood cider mills and presses serving a community rather than big factories mass producing for sale through stores.

Of the half dozen 19th Century cider mills in town, perhaps the largest and last to operate was Goeppler’s mill, which made both cider and vinegar. It was located at 80 Topstone Road at the very eastern edge of Ridgefield, overlooking the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad tracks. The mill was active in the late 1800s

and early 1900s. Emma Goeppler was still living at the mill site in the 1970s, although the mill itself had ceased operations many years earlier. The cider mill, which once served as a Halloween mask factory, has been turned into a house, as has at least one other cider mill — on Saw Mill Hill Road.

CIRCLE, THE

The intersection of Routes 7 and 35 was a traffic circle from 19XX until 19xx, and was popularly known as The Circle. A nearby diner was called The Circle Diner. Leo F. Carroll, then a state police lieutenant and later the town's first selectman, claimed responsibility for the design, which came to be jocularly known as Carroll's Folly (*q.v.*).

CIRCLE DRIVE

Circle Drive is taken from the layout of the road, roughly a circle. Developed in the late 1950's by Dominick Cadelero of Brookfield, the two segments of the road off North Salem Road were accepted by the town in 1957 and 1963.

CITY DISTRICT

An 1848 deed between members of the Thomas family mentions 39 acres "in the 'City District' so-called." The land was apparently in the Branchville area, but why it was called "City District" is a mystery.

CLAYHOLES

The area around the northern corner of Main and Gilbert Streets was, more than a century ago, known as the Clayholes, according to Rockwell's history. Clay was dug from this then-swampy area, possibly for use as mortar patch in such places as stone foundations and chimneystacks. The resulting "holes" would fill with water and freeze over in winter, making good skating ice. Bedini says the holes were filled in during the 1860's. Since the Clayholes were across Main Street from one of the campsites of the area's Indians, it is quite possible that the natives used the clay here for making pottery.

CLAYTON PLACE

A 1,000-foot-long, dead-end road off Barlow Mountain Road, Clayton Place runs along the north side of Pierrepont Pond. The road was named for Clayton Shields, son of one-time Probate Judge and Mrs. Reed F. Shields. Attorney Shields was representing Jerry Tuccio, the developer, at the time of the Twixt Hills subdivision (*q.v.*), of which Clayton Place is a part. The road was accepted by the town in 1964.

CLEARVIEW DRIVE, TERRACE

Clearview Drive and Terrace are private roads at the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*), presumably with a good view — at least, in the days before all the trees repopulated the fields that existed when the lakes were developed.

COAL MINE, THE

Among the sundry mines operated in Ridgefield during the 18th and 19th Centuries was a coal mine in the ledges along southern Ridgebury Road. According to an 1850 document in the land records, William Barhite leased to the Cedar Mining Company, headed by David Hurlbutt, the right to do "examina-

tions for coal and other minerals and metals” for 99 years. The description of the six-acre tract, “it being a cedar hill or mountain,” places it near the intersection of Ridgebury and Mopus Bridge Roads.

Ten years later, when they were describing the boundaries for the South Ridgebury School District, the selectmen mentioned that the southern line went by “the coal mine at the foot of Ridgebury Mountain,” so Hurlbutt apparently was successful in mining coal from this locality. However, his involvement did not last too long because died in 1858 after a cow he was about to slaughter stabbed him in the head with a horn (*see* Hurlbutt Lane and Hurlbutt’s Pond).

COBBLER’S LANE

Cobbler’s Lane, a short road off South Salem Road, serves seven lots, developed in 1963 as Cobbler’s Knoll by John W. Huffer and Paul G. Widman on land belonging then to Mr. and Mrs. Ward W. Green. It became a town road in 1964. A cobbler – someone who repairs shoes – had probably once owned the property.

According to the 1820 census, there were 40 shoemakers in town, half of whom lived in the West Lane District – in which this subdivision is situated. Most undoubtedly cobbled shoes, too. “C. Northrup” owned land in this vicinity in 1867 and the estate of J. Northrup owned land nearby. James Northrup was one of the shoemakers mentioned in the 1820 census, so perhaps there’s a connection there. Many shoemakers were also farmers, and their craft was practiced chiefly in winter when they had some extra time. (*See also under* Bedford Road.)

COLD SPRING & LANE

Cold Spring, common among Connecticut place names, appears first in an 1810 deed for land on West Mountain, described as “beginning at a heap of stones on the highway commonly called Cold Spring Lane.” In the same year, a deed mentions land of Elnathan Holly as being “near the mill pond, so called, at the outlet of Cold Spring.” An 1818 deed mentions property “west of Mamasasco Pond,” including a parcel at Cold Spring.

These deeds seem to refer to land along a road that, in the 1800’s, followed a path approximately the same as Blue Ridge Road, Caudatowa Drive, and Rock Road. Just where the Cold Spring was is unclear, but perhaps a reader familiar with the neighborhood knows of a strong spring thereabouts. It may have been, perhaps, what is now Turtle Pond (*q.v.*), before it was dammed up for the Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*). The pond’s waters are west of and flow into Lake Mamasasco.

With “Cold Spring” being a place name in at least 20 Connecticut towns, it is not strange that there might be more than one of them in Ridgefield. Deeds recorded in 1819 and 1827 mention a “Cold Spring Meadow” near the “east part of Long Pond Mountain,” possibly placing this Cold Spring near the intersection of Rippowam and Oreneca Roads in the vicinity of Girl Scout Camp Catoonah, west of Round Pond. Or it could be the same as the spring west of Mamasasco.

COLD SPRING LANE II

A 1960 subdivision plan by Clifford A. Winton and Wayne Hicklin for land in Ridgefield and Wilton describes a road off the east side of Nod Hill Road,

about 850 feet north of the Pelham Lane intersection, as “Cold Spring Lane.” Although Leo F. Carroll, then first selectman, gave tentative approval to the road’s plan, the subdivision, called Thunder Lake, was never developed in this part of Ridgefield. Portions in Wilton were subdivided, however. There is no record through 1880 of a “Cold Spring” in this vicinity, although, since any good spring is cold, the name could reasonably have been a neighborhood name for almost any spring in town.

COLLS POINT

Colls Point is found in town records as early as 1717 when a map drawn by the Rev. Thomas Hauley, town clerk, notes “Colls Poynt” near the very south end of Great Swamp. It is the area north of Ivy Hill Road, east of where it crosses the old railroad bed/rail trail and east of Prospect Ridge. The term was used as late as 1851 and probably later.

Coll is an old word with several meanings. One is a simpleton or fool. Another is a cock or pile of hay. But perhaps a third meaning – a pile of wood – was the most probable one. From the earliest time of settlement and until the early 20th Century, Great Swamp (*q.v.*) was a source of wood for the fireplaces of the village homes. It may have been that wood was cut from the swamp and dragged to Colls Point to await sawing into logs and splitting. Wood may also have been stored there to season.

An interesting deed is connected at Colls Point. In 1792, Benjamin Smith and David Olmsted, described as the “donation committee to take ye oversight and management of the benefits appropriated for the use of the schools in Ridgefield,” sold for 11 pounds land at “Colls Point (so-called), being ye same land that said donation committee obtained of Ambrose Olmsted, late deceased of said Ridgefield, by virtue of an execution as may be seen” in an earlier deed. Ambrose Olmsted was a debtor who apparently failed to pay his school taxes and whose estate was slapped with a suit in 1786 to recover the debt. Very few deeds involving the town’s collecting school taxes exist in the land records, so early Ridgefielders must have been conscientious taxpayers. Also noteworthy about the deed is that it mentions “common land” being on the north side of the sale property.

By the 1790’s, most of the common land, owned by the proprietors, had been sold off and the fact that some was left at Colls Point suggests that the point may have been still serving late in the 18th Century whatever purpose it was serving when the town was settled. (*See also* Colts Point.)

COLONIAL GREEN

Colonial Green is a four-lot subdivision of 10.2 acres between South Salem Road and Golf Lane, obtained in 1969 by Czyr Construction Company. It has no road of its own, but does make use of an old railroad bed as a driveway. The Ridgefield and New York Railroad, which was never completed but was issuing stock in 1871, was supposed to go to Titicus (*q.v.*).

COLONIAL HEIGHTS

Colonial Heights is an 89-lot, late-1960’s subdivision including Minuteman Road, Revere Drive, and Yankee Hill Road. Developed by Lewis J. Finch and Paul J. Morganti, it was the town’s first and biggest development using three-acre lots.

COLONIAL LANE

Colonial Lane, developed in the early 1950's, runs off North Salem Road just north of Barlow Mountain Road. The dead-end road was accepted by the town in 1963. The name, in use by 1957, is rather trite but suitable for the area, one of the first sections of Ridgefield outside the village to be developed by the colonial settlers. The modern day developer was Harold "Pinky" Gillum, who was internationally famous for his custom-made fishing rods and flies that were sold around the world. Gillum rods today can command many thousands of dollars.

COLONY LINE

The term "Colony Line" appears frequently in the early deeds to denote what we today would call the state line. The boundary was moved eastward by more than a mile and a half in 1731 (*see* Oblong). It is interesting to note that deeds in 1819 and 1831, long after Connecticut and New York had shed the King, used the term "Colony Line." Perhaps the authors were dyed-in-the-wool Tories.

COLTS POINT

Connecticut Place Names lists "Colts Point" for "Colls Point" (*q.v.*). "Colts" may have been a typographical error or a misunderstanding of the script written word, "Colls." At any rate "Colts Point" was never used in the land records here through 1890, though dozens of references to Colls Point are found.

COMSTOCK BROOK

The east branch of the Comstock Brook, which eventually empties into the Norwalk River at Wilton Center, apparently has its source in a swamp north of Pelham Lane, between Nod and Nod Hill Roads, just inside Ridgefield. This source may have been once called Brimstone Swamp (*q.v.*).

Comstock Brook takes its name from Comstock Ridge or Knoll, a hill in Wilton (west of Route 33 and south of Deforest Road), near which the stream flows. The hill in turn took its name from Capt. Samuel Comstock, said to be the first settler on the ridge. The name appears on US Geological Survey maps.

COMSTOCK COURT

Comstock Court is a dead-end road at the south end of Nod Road at the Wilton line. It serves a 1979 subdivision of Barry N. Finch and Jack Baldaserini, both long-time Ridgefield real estate businessmen. When they started going on the market in the early 1980's, the lots shocked many Ridgefielders by fetching prices of \$200,000 or more, then extraordinary amounts for building plots without sewer or water service. The road takes its name from the nearby brook (*above*).

CONANT ROAD

Conant Road is the only road in town named for a college president. Robert H. Baldwin, president of the Lincoln Development Corporation of Massachusetts, the original subdivider of Westmoreland (*q.v.*), graduated from Harvard College in 1952 when James Bryant Conant was president of the universi-

ty. Jerry Tuccio, who later took over the subdivision, retained the name for the road, a dead-ender off Remington Road that was accepted by the town in 1969.

CONKLIN COURT

Conklin Court exists only on paper as a short lane serving six lots off North Street, just south of Ridgecrest Drive. The property, at the southern end of the old Stonecrest estate, was subdivided in 1953 by Irving B. Sr. and Ethel O. Conklin, but this portion was never developed, having been purchased by St. Mary's Parish, which owns the nearby cemetery. An access path on the St. Mary land may be the route planned for Conklin Court.

In a way, Irving B. Conklin Sr. symbolized the changing nature of Ridgefield – from an agrarian town, to a haven for estates, and then to a bedroom, commuter community. Born in 1899, he came to Ridgefield as a young man and became superintendent of Dr. George G. Shelton's estate. From 1928 till the early 1940s, he owned Conklin's Dairy, Ridgefield's largest and last major dairy farm, and over those years had supplied most of Ridgefield with milk. In 1944 he and Leo Pambianchi started Ridgefield Motors, which grew into Conklin Motors, which later became Kellogg and Theiss, and then Village Pontiac-Cadillac on Danbury Road (the dealership closed in the 1990s, and was replaced by The Party Depot). He later lived at Stonecrest, the large estate on North Street.

Both his farm and the estate he owned were subdivided: the dairy farm includes Farm Hill Road, Overlook Drive and Nutmeg Court, and his later home was also largely subdivided for Stonecrest Road and Dowling Drive; the riding stable he established nearby around 1953 is still in business today. A former president of the Lions Club, he died in Florida in 1966 at the age of 66.

CONRON'S POND

A small body of water on the north side of West Mountain Road, a short distance west of Ramapoo Road, Conron's Pond was named for Joseph H. Conron, a wealthy New Yorker on whose estate-farm it was located.

Conron was living there by 1910, and died in 1931. The family continued to live on the property for some years after his death. The original Conron house, Hillaire, at the top of a hill on the 100-plus acre estate was torn down in the 1960s to make way for the present house, built by James Doubleday.

Around 1973, a developer planned to erect a novel project there, consisting of expensive, clustered, but detached single-family houses that would be owned in condominium fashion. While he received initial approvals from zoning officials for about 40 units, the developer had financial difficulties and abandoned the project before he could even buy the property. Eventually, it was developed into a conventional subdivision, served by today's Sharp Hill and Doubleday Lanes.

Joseph Conran must have made at least one enemy when he came to Ridgefield. The following advertisement appeared in the April 14, 1910 Ridgefield Press:

ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS

Reward for information that would lead to the arrest of the scoundrel who put Paris green in my cow pasture lots, poisoning two of my cows with calves, both dying on Good Friday. The

above reward will be paid by Joseph Conron, Vita Semplace Farm, Ridgefield, Conn.

“Vita Semplace” is either a topographical error or an intended pun. In Italian, “Vita simplice” means “the simple life.” It may have been such a place.

Paris green was a powerful poison used mostly to kill rats and other rodents.

CONTINENTAL DRIVE

Part of the Barrack Heights subdivision, Continental Drive runs from Barrack Hill Road to North Salem Road. Francis D. Martin, the subdivider, named it because troops in the service of the Continental Army camped nearby during the Revolution. As noted under Armand Place and Barrack Hill Road (*q.v.*), a barracks for colonial military police was located up the hill. Most, if not all, of those troops were French.

Continental Drive, which has one of the steepest inclines of any road in town, was accepted by a Town Meeting in 1959.

COOK CLOSE

Cook Close, a lane at Casagmo (*q.v.*), is said to have been named after distant relatives of the Olcott family, on whose former estate Casagmo was developed.

COOPER BROOK

The Cooper Brook rises at the south end of Great Swamp and flows southeasterly between Florida Hill and Branchville Roads down to Branchville where it empties into the Norwalk River near the railroad station. The stream was once important, providing power for one of the earlier and longest-lived saw mill sites, Hoyt’s Saw Mill, at John’s Pond southeast of Cooper Road.

In 1751, the proprietors deeded Benjamin Hoyt land “near his intended saw mill.” Hoyt apparently fulfilled his intentions, for by 1753 deeds begin mentioning “Hoyt’s Saw Mill.” By 1816 Hoyt family deeds were referring to “the old saw mill spot” or the “old mill site,” but a new mill was erected there in 1824, lasting at least into the 1870’s.

The brook takes its name from a barrel-maker who lived nearby (*see below*).

COOPER HILL AND ROAD

Tradition is that Cooper Hill takes its name from a cooper – or barrel-maker – who operated a shop near where Cooper Hill Road crosses the old railroad bed. However, tradition has neglected to pass on the cooper’s name.

Col. Edward M. Knox, a wealthy hat company owner who lived in a huge estate on the north side of Florida Hill Road called Downesbury Manor, is said to have built Cooper Hill Road to get to a tiny railroad station which he also built and named Cooper Station. The station was on the west side of Cooper Hill Road where it crosses the track bed, and once included a post office.

One of the travelers who occasionally got off the train there was Samuel Langhorne Clemens of Redding, a friend of Colonel Knox. Mark Twain, as he was better known, would ride the train from West Redding to Branchville, and then take another train up the branch line to Cooper Station, where he was met by the Colonel.

COOPER ROAD

Cooper Road, now a dead end off Branchville Road, was once longer than it is today. While its eastern end is now at Stony Hill Road, it had extended easterly to Florida Road, connecting nearly opposite today's Hickory Lane.

The western end today begins at Branchville Road. However, before Branchville Road was built in the early 1850s, it may have continued southerly, over a path now used by Branchville Road and by Bloomer Road, connecting to today's Old Branchville Road. This route is shown on a 1745 subdivision map found in old town land records.

COPPER BEECH LANE

Copper Beech Lane, a short, dead-end road off Lee Road in Farmingville, was named for the species of tree that bears copper-colored leaves. Copper beeches are plentiful in the neighborhood, especially on Lee Road, because that's where the former Outpost Nurseries planted and grew them for stock (*see* Outpost Pond). Most were planted around 1940. They are not native American trees, having been imported from Europe as ornamentals, mostly for estates.

The road was developed by Richard Conley's Connecticut Land Company around 1956 and was accepted by the Town Meeting in 1959, when Selectman Paul J. Morganti suggested the name. Connecticut Land was started in the late 1940's as a vehicle for handling the disposition of Outpost Nurseries property, acquired by Col. Louis D. Conley, Richard's father, in the 1910's and 1920's and totaling some 2,000 acres.

Local legend says that many years ago, a murder took place in this vicinity and that the corpse was thrown down an old well, which was then filled in and hidden.

COPP'S CORNER

Copp's Corner is the extreme southeast corner of Ridgefield in Branchville – the junction of the Ridgefield, Redding, and Wilton town lines. In 1716, John Copp, representing Ridgefield, and Andrew Messenger of Norwalk, surveyed what is now the Ridgefield-Wilton line, erecting a pile of stones at the corner of what then marked the joining of the lines of Ridgefield, Norwalk and Fairfield.

However, this action may not have been the origin of the term Copp's Corner. Norwalk land records reveal that in the 1720's, Dr. John Copp, then the town clerk of Norwalk, had a "farm" just below the Ridgefield line along Route 7 in today's Wilton. Copp's Corner was not only surveyed by Copp, but apparently was adjacent to, near or part of Copp's Farm.

Dr. Copp probably did not live on the farm, however, for he was very active in public affairs of Norwalk village, a long distance away by horse. In 2007, a small house in Branchville, said to have been owned by Copp and just across from the Wilton line, was torn down.

"Copp's Corner," sometimes spelled Kopp's Corner, appears only in perambulation records and not in deeds. (A perambulation is a walk along the town boundaries to see if markers are still in place.) The first reference to the term occurs in the land records describing the perambulation of 1767 when "we, the subscribers being appointed by ye select men of ye towns of Fairfield and Ridgefield, have met at Copps Corner so called and preambulated (sic) ye line between said Fairfield and Ridgefield." The term was still in use by the 1832 perambulation.

Although probably never really a Ridgefield resident, John Copp was among the most important people in the early settlement of the town.

Boston Family

William Copp, grandfather of John, set sail from England in 1635 bound for Boston. William was a cordwainer, a worker in leather, particularly shoes. Records of the New York Genealogical Society indicate that he settled in Boston's north end and became a well-to-do businessman, owning two houses and a good deal of land. John Thoreau, grandfather of Henry David Thoreau, later occupied one of the houses.

William Copp had nine children. One was David, father of eight, one of whom was John Copp. Even more than his father, David Copp attained a noteworthy reputation in early Boston. David expanded the cordwainer's business, was the ruling elder of the First Church, clerk of the market, sealer of leather, and adviser to the Boston selectmen on various matters including laying bounds for highways and the listing of properties in town. In a 1930 publication, the genealogical society reported that Copp "was designated by the selectmen to cooperate with the constable in the suppression of excessive drinking and disorders in private houses and licensed places of entertainment."

A friend of the Rev. Cotton Mather, David Copp was described as a highly respected citizen and bearer at funerals of the elite of old Boston. He died in 1713 and is buried in what is still called the Copps Hill Burying Ground, near the Boston Common, where many early Copps and notable Bostonians, including Increase and Cotton Mather were buried.

Copp Comes South

John Copp was born in Boston in 1673. Apparently restless, he looked south for new territory and probably while in his 20's, moved to Connecticut. His name first turns up in 1698 when he married the widow Mary Jagger Phelps in Stamford. Oddly enough, only three years later, he married another widow, this time in Norwalk. Neither marriage resulted in children.

Norwalk records report that in 1701, a town meeting voted to hire Mr. Copp as schoolmaster. The record suggests that Copp had already been well-established as a teacher, perhaps in neighboring Stamford. The meeting left the salary open to negotiation ("reasonable terms"), but did stipulate that part of his payment, 15 pounds, should come from a tuition charged to the pupils ("schoolers") with the payment divided equally among them. He taught both day and night classes.

John Copp was also among the first medical doctors in the colony, and probably the first in Norwalk. In 1705, reports Dr. George Sumner in an 1851 address on "The Early Physicians of Connecticut," Copp "obtained the recommendation of the selectmen of Norwalk and applied for a license to practice medicine." Copp apparently received his license, for in 1710 or 1711, he was appointed a surgeon with a Connecticut regiment, which was to march to Port Royal in Canada to fight the French. Where he got his knowledge of medicine is unknown; *The History of Fairfield County* points out that "the sources for the acquisition of medical knowledge in the colonies were few and scanty."

As early as 1697, people in Norwalk were becoming interested in the Indian land 15 miles to the north. Though high and rocky, the territory had fertile soils, an abundance of wood, and more than 60 miles of streams to serve future mills. John Copp had learned surveying from his father. In 1706 and 1708, he with others was asked to survey land in Ridgefield for purchase by a group of

Norwalk families. Because of various difficulties, those first expeditions never succeeded, but finally Copp alone managed to draw up boundaries for a 20,000-acre piece of land, roughly the south half of the present town. After surveying the area in the summer of 1708, Copp reported back to Norwalk residents that “we went up to view said tract of land and upon our diligent endeavour for a discovery, we find it to be accommodated with upland considerably good and for quantity sufficient for thirty families or more, and as for meadow land it surpasses both in quantity as well as in quality what is common to be found in many larger plantations.”

In September 1708, Copp and two others, representing Ridgefield’s first 26 settling families, paid the Indians 100 pounds sterling for what is called “the first purchase” (there were seven subsequent purchases). The original of the deed is lost, but John Copp, elected as recorder (town clerk) by Ridgefield’s first town meeting in 1709, wrote a copy of its text in the town record book, which can be viewed today – as written in his own hand – in the town hall.

Although a hill in town was named for him, John Copp probably never really owned land in Ridgefield – although for a short period in 1714, he did hold title to property. On April 27, John Tompkins of Bedford, N.Y., deeded him “a full half-right of land within the granted township of Ridgefield ... which being ye one half of a 29th part” of all the common lands and proprietors’ grants in the town.” On Sept. 23, Copp deeded that right to Moses Northrup of Milford. Both sales were for 70 pounds and Copp may have been acting as a trustee, holding the land for one owner until he could find a buyer for it.

Copp’s Services

During the first few years of settlement, Dr. Copp probably stayed here for periods of days, weeks, or maybe months with pioneer families. He helped lay out the town and its Main Street, acted as a physician, and became the first school teacher, instructing the children in a small meeting house somewhere near the present Methodist church (*see* Main Street). Schooling was probably somewhat haphazard since Copp also had his duties in Norwalk and the first official mention of education in the town records does not occur until 1721 when the town meeting approved a school budget of eight pounds!

The earliest Ridgefield town meetings were held in Norwalk until the settlement here became more populated and permanent. However, most of Copp’s recording was probably done in Norwalk, where he was also that town’s clerk from 1708 to 1740. Entries in the Ridgefield records until 1713 and signed “per John Copp recorder” are often not in chronological order, indicating that he would transcribe information as he found time or as it came to him. John Copp’s last entry in the town records was in 1713. The Rev. Thomas Hauley (*see* Hauley’s Ridge), who had just moved to Ridgefield to become the town’s first minister (Congregational), succeeded Copp at both recording and teaching. Mr. Hauley’s house still stands on Main Street at the Branchville Road north corner.

Commenting on his four years in helping the Norwalk settlers in Ridgefield, Silvio A. Bedini writes in his *Ridgefield in Review*, “In view of Copp’s various public trusts during the first several decades of the 18th Century, it is surprising to find that he was able to serve as town register and school teacher from 1709 to 1713.”

Active in Norwalk

Before, during and after his work with Ridgefield, Copp was active in the civic and ecclesiastical life of Norwalk, of Fairfield County, and of Connecticut. He was elected state representative from Norwalk to the General Assembly in 1706, 1716, and 1718-19. In 1711, he was appointed county surveyor and at the governor's request, assisted with a 1716 survey to determine the Connecticut-New York State boundary. In 1719, he assisted Norwalk's town fathers in clearing up confusion over that community's boundaries. In 1726, he was appointed to a town committee to present grievances to county officials.

Copp became increasingly active in the First Congregational Church in Norwalk. He was a deacon, and the records indicate in 1723 he was granted "the second pue from the pulpitt," a position of importance. His wife was placed "in the third pue on the woman's side." During the mid-1720's, Copp served on several church committees that were attempting to settle a dispute between the minister and his parishioners, then most of the townspeople. The dispute had become so heated that in 1726, the town meeting voted to discontinue paying the clergyman his salary.

John Copp's name made its final known appearance in Ridgefield records in 1739 when he came to town to attend the installation of the new Congregational minister, 26-year-old Jonathan Ingersoll. Mr. Hauley had died the year before.

In his will, drawn up in 1749, Copp freed his two Negro slaves, Jack and Sarah, and provided them with support. He died two years later on May 16, 1751, aged 78.

Copp's name is kept alive in Norwalk where there is a Copps Island just off the harbor. It was once owned by John.

COPPS HILL ROAD

"Copps Hill" is a modern term, not found in the early records. It probably stems from belief that "Copps Mountain" (*see below*) exaggerated the loftiness of the ridge to which the original name referred. Copps Hill Road is very old, and descriptions of it seem to appear in pre-1730 land records, but it's not known when the current name was first applied.

Copps Hill and Farmingville Roads used to be offset from each other as they joined Danbury Road. In the late 1980s, the state rebuilt the intersection to make it a symmetrical, four-way junction.

Technically speaking, Copps Hill Road should be spelled Copp's Hill Road, the same format as Cain's Hill Road. However, too many years of "Copps" instead of "Copp's," especially in the commercial contexts of Copps Hill Plaza and Copps Hill Common, has destroyed any chance of the accurate form's being used.

COPP'S MOUNTAIN

Copp's Mountain is the ridge along the east side of North Street. It is the original and correct term for what is today occasionally referred to as Stonecrest Mountain, and what has lent itself to the name, Copps Hill Road.

The term was first used in a 1721 deed in which the settlers purchased land from the American Indians. Why it was named for John Copp is not certain; as mentioned under Copp's Corner, Mr. Copp never lived here on land he owned. However, it is interesting that along the southern end of this ridge is Settlers'

Rock, the place where a scouting party that surveyed Ridgefield is said to have encamped in 1708, before the first purchase of land from the Indians. Copp was probably among those visitors, may have headed the party and thus have been the inspiration for this name.

The term, Copp's Mountain, was frequently used during both the 18th and 19th Centuries. It was sometimes spelled Kopps Mountain, Koppes Mountain or Copse Mountain. It was also called East Mountain (*q.v.*) in the 19th Century,

COPP'S OLD LINE

Copps Old Line appears in deeds from 1748 to the end of the 18th Century, apparently referring to an old border between Danbury and Ridgefield on the town's east side, north of Routes 7 and 35 intersection and running through Spruce Mountain. From deeds, it is certain the line was west of the present boundary between the two towns. When Levi Starr of Danbury sold 80 acres to the Rev. Samuel Camp of Ridgebury in 1781, he described it as lying in "New Patten" (Ridgebury) "on the Spruce Mountain and Short Woods so called," bounded on the "west" by "Copps Old Line."

The perambulation of the Danbury and Ridgefield line in 1792 began at Freeholders Corner (near the end of Laurel Lane) and went north 13 degrees west for two and three quarters miles "to an heap of stones on ye south end of an high rock and from thence to an heap of stones on ye east side of an highway in ye Old Kopp Line," thence north five degrees west to Danbury north-west corner. That places the northern end of Copps Line at Pine Mountain Road and Danbury line. The south end is unclear, but was probably near Great Pond. If so, a large triangle of land – today mostly town- or state-owned park – was apparently thought to belong to Danbury sometime before 1748.

CORBIN DRIVE

Corbin Drive was once used for a private road or driveway off the west side of Limestone Road that has since become a town road called Buckspen Lane (*q.v.*). Corbin Drive appears on older editions of Hagstrom's Atlas of Fairfield County (such as 1966).

The "road" led to the house of Robert Corbin, a member of the town's first Zoning Commission, created in 1946 (and combined in 1965 with the Planning Commission). Mr. Corbin lived there until the early 1970's when he sold the house and more than 20 acres to Albert Gaeta, a popular Ridgefield plumber and village businessman, who subdivided it in 1977 into about a half dozen lots. Mr. Gaeta, who died in 2006, was also a well-known official in town, having been a member of the Police Commission and chief of the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department.

CORES BOGS

Cores Bogs, often spelled Kores Bogs, is believed to be the wetland on both sides of Peaceable Hill Road, west of Westmoreland. Fairly common in the 18th Century, the term appears in deeds as early as the 1720's and last shows up in 1803. Cores is probably a variant spelling of the word "coarse," descriptive of the lumpiness of the bogs or of the vegetation that grew there.

CORN GRASS MEADOW

In 1739, John Whitlock sold Samuel Bennet six acres “at a place called the Corn Grass Meadow,” probably somewhere in the Bennett’s Farm district. The locality itself is of little note except that “Corn Grass Meadow” is a very early-recorded example of the use of a name for a lot within a person’s or family’s farm. Until the late 18th Century, names for lots (*see* Lots) were rarely mentioned in deeds, although they were probably commonly used in conversation among family members. Corn grass (*Panicum clandestinum*), also known as deer tongue grass, is a common grass that grows in moist places to a height of four feet. Its tassels or panicles resemble those found on corn, itself a member of the grass family.

CORNEN AVENUE

Cornen Avenue was an informal but popular name around the turn of the 20th Century for Danbury Road in the vicinity of Fox Hill Village, including the old Danbury Road that today is the main driveway through the condominium complex.

The following is from a biography, written by Karl S. Nash for a history of the Ridgefield Savings Bank for the bank’s 100th anniversary in 1971:

“Peter P. Cornen was the only millionaire among the founders, directors and first officers of the Ridgefield Savings Bank... Mr. Cornen made his fortune in Pennsylvania oil and New York City real estate. He devoted part of it to the beautification of Ridgefield, which he called home for more than 40 years. The maple trees which he planted along Cornen Avenue (Danbury Road) still line parts of the highway, through present day commercialization, featuring gas stations, has diminished the air of tranquility which they provided for the northern entrance to the town. At Mr. Cornen’s death in 1893, The Press said: ‘Cornen Avenue, passing his residence, with its well-laid walls and graceful shade trees, in the future years will be a fitting memorial to the public-spirited citizen.’

“Born in New York City on March 13, 1815... Mr. Cornen lived to the age of 78, ‘a sterling citizen,’ said The Press. “As a boy he attended public schools in New York City and then learned the shipbuilding trade. At age 33, he joined the gold rush to California, making the trip, according to The Press, ‘round the Horn to San Francisco.’ For three years he ‘engaged in mercantile pursuits, his energy, perseverance and keen business foresight adding greatly to his accumulations, so that he ranked with the moneyed men of those days.’ Henry I. Beers, Mr. Cornen’s brother-in-law, was also a ‘49er. They were later partners in the Pennsylvania oil fields.

“After returning East, Mr. Cornen began his real estate activities in New York City. Known as a ‘shrewd buyer,’ he acquired 16 lots on which Grand Central Station now stands. He sold them in 1872 for \$65,000, a big sum in those days.

“It was during the Civil War that Mr. Cornen became a petroleum producer in McClintockville, Pa. Soon he was a millionaire. He and Mr. Beers bought the Smith Farm in Cherry Run, Pa., for \$2,500 and later rejected an offer of \$4 million for it. By 1864, the 50-acre farm was dotted with oil wells, each of which produced from 24 to 250 barrels a day for two years.

“The financial panic of 1873 when the savings bank was only two years old, ‘swallowed a great share of his large fortune,’ said Mr. Cornen’s obituary in The Press. ‘Thereafter he engaged in enterprises on a smaller scale, including real estate here and there, but was a wealthy man at his death. His Ridgefield property consisted of his home of Spanish design, which he had built in 1854, on the corner of Danbury and Farmingville Roads, and about 1,000 acres of land surrounding it. Because of an inordinate fear of fire, Mr. Cornen had the walls of his house studded with brick for better protection. The house became part the Outpost Nurseries property in the 1930’s and, having fallen into disuse, was torn down about 1942.” (The house-wreckers had no idea the walls were brick-filled when they started dismantling the building, a project that consequently took longer than expected. In 1976, the Ridgefield Savings Bank – which Cornen helped establish and which is now called Ridgefield Bank – purchased the site of this house on the north corner of Farmingville and Danbury Roads and some years later, built its headquarters there.)

“A Democrat, he was a state senator in 1867 and in 1871 he served in the House of Representatives. That fall he was elected first selectman and served one year. He was one of the original directors of the Ridgefield and New York Railroad Company (*see* Colonial Green). He was a director and first vice-president of the [Ridgefield Savings] bank for eight years. He was a member of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church and the Odd Fellows Lodge.

“At his death The Press said: ‘Mr. Cornen, in business, through often indulging in transactions involving millions, was governed by none but the most honorable motives. His judgment was considered sound and his opinion once given was seldom erroneous.’”

CORNEN’S BROOK

A picture postcard published around 1920, shows a stream scene and labels it Cornen’s Brook. The card probably referred to the Norwalk River (also known in this vicinity as the Ridgefield Brook, *q.v.*) as it flows north out of Great Swamp across Danbury Road at Fox Hill. Much of this area was owned by Peter Cornen (*see* Cornen Avenue).

CORNER POND

Corner Pond is a small body of water on the Danbury-New Fairfield town line near the New York State boundary, in territory that was part of Ridgefield until 1846. It was so called because it was in the very northwest corner of Ridgefield and is still called Corner Pond today. The name is first noted here in a 1773 deed that mentions the “brook that runs out of Corner Pond.” It is not clear whether the pond is natural or man-made, but Zebedee Briggs had a saw mill on the pond’s outlet in 1778, and ponds were frequently created on streams to serve mills.

CORNERSTONE COURT

Cornerstone Court is a short, dead-end road off Great Pond Road (also called Pickett’s Ridge Road), right on the Redding town line. It serves six lots of a 17-acre, 1986 subdivision, “The Knolls,” by Lance Constructions.

The road is aptly named. It is right next to the monument, or cornerstone, where the eastern border of the town turns from northwesterly to northerly. In 1975, when the last perambulation of the town was undertaken, father and son

perambulators Ted and Bruce Meier described this marker, about 200 feet south of Great Pond Road: "This is not a granite monument [like others], but is a long stone set upright in the rock wall. This is believed to be one of the monuments of the survey and perambulation of March 8, 1888."

COTTAGE STREET

A short road off Barry Avenue, Cottage Street was subdivided around 1946 by Harold O. Davis (1905-1986), who later became the town's last elected chief assessor (from 1952 to 1975). It was called Cottage Street because modest-sized homes were built there.

COUCH'S STATION

George L. Rockwell reports in his *History of Ridgefield* that for years, Couch's Station was situated between Branchville and Topstone Station in Redding on the Danbury and Norwalk railroad line. He notes that Thomas Couch was a partner in the 19th Century iron foundry at the north corner of Florida Hill Road and Route 7. Maps published in 1856 and 1867 make no note of a station in this vicinity, much less a Couch's Station. It may have been simply a loading platform or small freight stop, perhaps near where Simpaug Turnpike goes under the tracks today. In that case, the station would have been in Redding.

Couch's Station could have served chiefly – perhaps only – the foundry, which received pig iron from Norwalk and turned it into agricultural tools, sleigh shoes, stoves, and all kinds of metal parts. The foundry, which operated in the middle and late 19th Century, was on the site of an old grist and saw mill, discussed earlier under Abbott's Mill Road (*q.v.*). Thomas Couch and his wife, Sara, owned the mill from 1783 to 1818. Along with his partner, Ebenezer Burr Sanford, Thomas N. Couch, possibly the elder Couches' son or grandson, acquired the grist and saw mills around 1831. When the foundry was established is not known.

COUNTRY CLUB ROAD

Country Club Road, now a narrow dead-end road off lower West Lane, once extended eastward through the present day Silver Spring Country Club to Silver Spring Road. The portion still extant was once used primarily as a service road to workers' houses and outbuildings on the Swords, Grant, and Sullivan estates in this neighborhood, reported Geno Torcellini, who was golf club manager for many years. While the eastern section of this old farm road stopped being used by the early 1930's when the golf club was built, it was not until Sept. 7, 1957 that the Board of Selectmen voted formally to abandon town title to the section through the course.

COUNTRY ROAD, THE

In 1724, Joseph Benedict sold "Norwalk" Samuel Smith 14 acres "lying on ye Flatt Rock Ridge, bounded west by ye Country Road." The term, common in the first half of the 18th Century, referred to Wilton Road West. It is frequently found in old Connecticut land records as a name for a main road that led through the "country" from one village center to another – in this case, from Ridgefield village to Wilton center (then the center of a parish of Norwalk) or to Norwalk itself. According to *Names and Places of Old Norwalk*, the Post

Road (US Route 1 through coastal towns) was originally called “The Country Road” from as early as 1681.

The term, as applied to Wilton Road West, fell out of use by the 1750’s or 1760’s. However, a 1772 deed mentions “the Country Road leading into New York Government.” This road ran through upper Ridgebury (which at that time extended far north of its present limit) and was probably the modern-day Mill Plain Road in Danbury.

CRADLE ROCK

This intriguing term first pops up in a 1744 grant to Benjamin Hicok of 52 acres “lying at ye Cradle Rock.” Soon after Capt. Samuel Saint John got 64 acres “lying at ye Cradle Rock, back of Round Pond,” placing it on West Mountain.

In 1790, when town officials were called upon to settle a boundary dispute involving two properties “at Cradle Rock so called,” a monument between the tracts was erected “60 rods (990 feet) northwest of a maple tree, which stands at the northeast corner of Round Pond.” A 1791 deed confirms the locale, saying “Cradle Rock, north of Round Pond.” Thus, Cradle Rack was somewhere around Sleepy Hollow, Walnut Hill or Round Lake Roads. An admittedly casual search of the neighborhood some years ago uncovered no rock that seemed to have any characteristics of a cradle. Presumably, the rock either was shaped like a cradle of the period or was a balanced rock that teetered like a cradle.

However, the word “cradle” also meant a place where young are protected or sheltered – perhaps young animals. It’s thus remotely possible that the term referred to a cave or den – a previously mentioned place name, Bear Swamp, indicates those cave dwellers once lived atop West Mountain.

Over the years Cradle Rock may have broken up with the effects of weather, have fallen off its supports, or have been bulldozed aside for the development of Eight Lakes Estates. Or it still could be standing there somewhere among the countless boulders so common atop this part of West Mountain. Perhaps some reader who lives or lived in the neighborhood has come upon such a rock, a lost landmark last mentioned in an 1870 deed.

CRAIGMOOR POND

Craigmoor Pond is the name of the former body of water at the corner of North Salem and Craigmoor Roads, now mostly a swamp.

When the Solley family (*see* Craigmoor Road) sold their property here in 1955, they stipulated that “within two years from the date hereof and as part of the consideration of sale, the grantors agree to construct a dam and relood the pond formerly known as Perch Pond and to be called Craigmoor Pond.”

The newly flooded pond was to be used for boating and fishing, according to the deed.

CRAIGMOOR ROAD

In 1909, Dr. and Mrs. Fred P. Solley Sr. bought the former Sherwood Farm of 88 acres on North Salem Road as a weekend and holiday retreat. Christina Graham, the family nanny who was born in Scotland, had come to be called upon to select titles for the family dwellings (she had named the Solleys’ place at East Hampton). So one day, soon after the purchase, she stood outside the

new house and surveyed the property. In her Scots brogue, she quickly said: "Why, there's nothing but craigs and moors out here."

So the virtually treeless farm was called Craigmoor, a name later applied to the road, then only a path to Lake Mamanasco at the west end of the Solley property.

Christina, who remained with the family all of her life, died in 1952 at the age of 92 and is buried in the Solley family plot at Mapleshade Cemetery. One of the children she cared for was Mrs. George M. (Margaret Solley) Durant of New Canaan, who related this story and who, with her late husband, operated the Keeler and Durant real estate (he) and insurance (she) agency for 23 years in Ridgefield. (By 2008, the agency had become part of Coldwell Banker.)

Dr. Solley practiced internal medicine in the city and died in 1950.

Craigmoor Road was accepted by the town in 1960. At the request of Attorney Herbert V. Camp, who had lived on the road for many years, the Planning and Zoning Commission later named the lakeside wings of the road "Craigmoor Road North" and "Craigmoor Road South."

"Craigmoores" or "Craig-Moors," a term adapted from the above, was used for the subdivision plan for 56 40-by-130-foot lots on the east side of the lake along this road. The plan was filed in 1952 by Margaret Durant, Robert F. Solley, and Frederick W. Solley, children of Dr. and Mrs. Solley. However, few of the lots were developed. The name sometimes erroneously occurs in deeds as "Craig-Moore."

CRANBERRY LANE

Richard E. Venus and Frank Serfilippi, long-time residents of the neighborhood, recalled a cranberry bog years ago in the Silver Spring Swamp (New Pound Bogs), just to the west of this short dead-end road off lower South Olmstead Lane. "It was a beautiful cranberry bog, out in the swamp," said Mr. Venus. "And," he added, "better than those Massachusetts cranberries." Mr. Serfilippi said his family picked the fruit and made cranberry jelly from it. But, he added, it took "a mountain of sugar" to reduce their tartness.

The road is part of a subdivision filed in 1956 by Elizabeth H. Simmons of an old farm that she and her pilot husband, Warren, owned at the intersection of South Olmstead Lane and St. Johns Road. The subdivision included 14 lots and the private road called Orchard Lane. Cranberry Lane was accepted as a town road in 1959.

CRANBERRY MEADOW

Among the town's earliest place names, Cranberry or "Cramberry" Meadow long ago disappeared as a term but only recently as a place. In 1709, the proprietors told Samuel Saint John, Benjamin Willson and James Brown "to take a survey of ye New Pound Boggs and Metitucus, with ye Cramberry Meadow in ye Great Swamp." Thereafter, small portions of this meadow were parceled out to various proprietors who probably harvested the wild cranberries evidently native to this wet land.

Records were very specific about Cranberry Meadow's location. A 1751 deed places "one acre of boggy meadow land ... in ye Cramberry Meadow so called near ye end of Copp's Mountain." A 1748 deed says an acre is "west of ye Great Island, east of Copp's Mountain in ye Cramberry Meadow." An 1805 deed says the meadow is "west of Island Bridge" (which still exists within the

southwest corner of the Fox Hill condominiums property). These descriptions place Cranberry Meadow west of Danbury Road and opposite the condominiums. This is town-owned property where the Ridgefield Recreation Center is. Much of the centuries-old bogs was filled in by Jordan Asketh during the 1960's in the hope of selling the property for commercial or condominium use.

Around 1985, the property was acquired by Edgardo Eppoliti, who cleaned it up and planned a "life-care facility" there. In the mid-1990s, the town bought the land as a possible site for a middle school. In 1998, voters rejected the site for a school, which was subsequently built next to the high school, but eventually approved putting the new recreation center and Founders Hall, the senior center, there.

The term Cranberry Meadow, used as late as the 1820's when it seems to fall out of general use, was almost exclusively spelled "Cramberry" Meadow. Cramberry was a common dialectal pronunciation of the word. A Ridgefield native who was in his 60's in 1975, told me that "as a boy, I said 'cramberry' and had to learn to say 'cranberry'."

Several species of cranberries are found from the Arctic Circle south to New Jersey. The settlers here probably found *Vaccinium macrocarpon*, the large cranberry, a type grown commercially. There is also the small cranberry (*V. oxycoccus*) and the northern mountain-cranberry (*V. vitisidaea*).

Cranberry is from the Old German, *Kranbere*, meaning "crane berry," because the long stamens of the flowers resemble the beak of a crane. Also called bearberry because that animal would feast on them, the cranberry was eaten by the Indians, who probably showed it to the earliest immigrants. Settlers boiled the berries with sugar to create a sauce for meats, especially mutton. By the early 1800's, before cranberries were cultivated commercially, New Englanders were harvesting the wild berries and shipping them to Europe.

CRANK, THE

"Crank," according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is a "crook, bend, winding, meandering; a winding or crooked path, course or channel." In Lebanon, Conn., there is a parish called The Crank which, a historian of that community reports, "was so named on account of the crooked boundary lines."

The one and, it seems, only reference to a "Crank" in the Ridgefield land records occurs in 1788 when Caleb Baldwin of Danbury sold the Proprietors "one piece of land lying in said Ridgefield near the Crank (so called) containing one acre ... being everywhere three rods wide running from north to south through my land..." The purchase was apparently to be used as a highway since three rods was a standard width for roads. But what is this "crank" or crookedness mentioned in only one deed among the thousands filed in the 18th Century?

In 1736, a rectangular section of Ridgebury that had belonged to Ridgefield was broken off and given to Danbury. Danburians had convinced the colony legislature that since all of this Ridgefield land was owned by Danbury residents, who made no use of Ridgefield services, particularly schools, the land should be annexed to Danbury. The parcel extended along nearly the whole length of George Washington Highway from the existing Danbury line almost to Ridgebury Road, and ran north almost to Shadow Lake Road and southward about a quarter of a mile from George Washington Highway. Few old maps

show The Crank, but one that does is Moses Warren's map of Connecticut, published in 1812.

By the early 1800's, this area had been broken up among some 30 property owners, many of whom lived in Ridgefield. They petitioned the state legislature to return jurisdiction to Ridgefield, which it did in May 1820. The Assembly explained that it was reverting to the old boundaries "since said annexment by descent and heirship ... has been much split up and is now owned by near 30 different persons, most of whom reside in said Ridgefield; that great inconvenience arises in ascertaining the true line of said town by reason of said annexment, and that the owners of land therein are obliged to give in lists to two towns, and are often taxed by the two towns for the same land; (and) that the original lines and bounds between said towns as first laid out are well known and established..."

However, with old-fashioned New England caution to protect the community coffers, the annexation agreement noted that "such proportion of the town paupers, now supported by said town of Danbury as the lists of the tract so set off to said town of Ridgefield bears to the list of the whole town of Danbury, shall be taken and supported by said town of Ridgefield."

Edwin Liljegren, who did much research into Ridgebury history, found that this area was for many years after its annexation to Danbury a sort of "no man's land." Dwellers within it were never certain to which town they belonged. They would send their children to school in Ridgefield or Danbury, but may have been taxed by both Ridgefield and Danbury.

The fact that this territory was a jog in the boundaries between the two towns is probably the source of "The Crank." Yet, with only one land record reference to the term, it is difficult to prove that the annexation territory was The Crank, a name that could also have referred to a "crooked path" somewhere in town.

However, the fact that a parish in Lebanon was called The Crank because of its jagged boundary and a place in Middlefield was called the Crank Spring for similar reasons, suggests that the term in Ridgefield was probably applied to reflect this jog in the boundary of the towns. Adding weight to this argument is the fact that the grantor in the deed was from Danbury.

Incidentally, you now know whence the device that once started car engines and churned ice cream got its name. Like the boundary in Ridgebury, a crank is crooked.

CREAMERY LANE

Creamery Lane is an old road, dating into the 18th Century and running between the northern ends of Wilton Roads East and West, just south of their junction with Main Street. It was the original northern end of Wilton Road East or the western end of Whipstick Road. The modern-day segment of Wilton Road East from Creamery Lane north to Main Street was cut through around 1850, according to George L. Rockwell.

The road took its name from a creamery, operated there by a cooperative of farmers in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. The building was on the north side of the road nearly opposite Marcardon Avenue. There, milk was either bottled or separated for the cream that would be churned into butter.

The creamery began operation in March 1889. The Ridgefield Press reported in 1894 that "The Ridgefield Creamery closed its fifth business year March

1, 1894, producing 60,094 pounds of butter, against 44,157 the year before. Sales \$16,402 compared to \$12,500. Patrons earned \$13,375 for cream and milk furnished; expenses \$3,027, 5.5 cents a pound against 6.17 cents. Operators: J.W. Rockwell, John F. Holmes, W. A. Benedict, R. W. Keeler, E. W. Keeler, A. C. Keeler, J. A. Wakeman, and H. A. Barrett.”

From 1942 until the late 1960’s, the creamery building was owned by the Goodwill Baptist Church, a black congregation, and was used for services as well as for apartments. As the number of church members dwindled, the small congregation finally disbanded. In 1976, Robert J. Walker bought the place, converted it to apartments. It was long rumored that the creamery-church-apartment building had been moved to the site from the old Village Green, where it had served as the First Congregational Church from around 1800 to 1888. However, Mr. Walker believed this to be impossible. In renovating the structure extensively, he found that the first floor, rotted and termite-infested, was the only portion of the three-story building that could have been the old creamery. His study of the framing – it was actually two buildings joined together – indicated that the structure was not large enough to have been the old Congregational church, photographs of which he had studied.

At the 1911 Annual Town Meeting, Creamery Lane was referred to as “the Old Creamery Highway” (*q.v.*).

CRESCENT DRIVE

Crescent Drive, a private road at the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*), is so called because of its crescent-shaped route as it extends from Mountain Road to Cross Hill Road.

CREST ROAD

Crest Road, another road at the Ridgefield Lakes, was accepted as a town road by an October 1980 Town Meeting. It traverses the crest of a hill, just west of Bennett’s Farm Road, to which it connects at its north and south ends.

CRIPPLE BUSH WOOD

In 1840, the estate of Russel Gorham transferred to the First School Society of Danbury “the Cripple Bush Wood Land,” described as 13 acres in Ridgebury – probably in the hills east of Pine Mountain Road. The society immediately sold the land to George Benedict of Danbury, apparently to earn money for the school. In a deed written four years later, a member of the Benedict family sold four acres “called the Cripple Bush.”

The *Oxford English Dictionary* reports that one old American meaning of cripple was “a dense thicket or low-lying ground.” However, the *Dictionary of American Regional English* (1985) says that in our region, cripple was also a word for a creek, based on the Dutch, *kreupel*. Cripple land was wet land, and “cripplebush” was another word for swamp. There are a number of Cripplebush Roads, Creeks, Valleys and even a Cripplebush Kill in other towns.

CROSBY COURT

A Revolutionary War secret agent was the inspiration for Crosby Court, a short dead-end road running northerly off Old Trolley Road. It is part of the 1997 Stone Ridge subdivision, created by the town of Ridgefield. It serves five of the 60 lots there.

The name, recommended by this writer, recalls Enoch Crosby, a Revolutionary War spy who was the supposed inspiration for James Fenimore Cooper's novel, *The Spy*. Research done in the 1970s by Ed Liljegren indicated that Crosby owned land on Shadow Lake Road, and may have lived there briefly.

Crosby served with the Fifth Connecticut Regiment, whose members were recruited mostly from Danbury and Ridgebury. After the war he and his brother, Benjamin, had a farm in Southeast, N.Y., a town that borders Ridgebury.

Southeastern New York, a two-volume history published in 1946, said Crosby was born in Harwich, Mass., in 1750, and lived virtually all his life in Putnam County, N.Y. His parents had a farm in Carmel, N.Y.

While his connection with Ridgefield may be tenuous, his neighborhood activities in the Revolution are well documented. "On a warm day in September 1776, he fell in with a man who was a Tory on his way to join the British," says *Southeastern New York*. "It was here that Crosby began his career as a 'spy.' Continuing with this man, he learned of a meeting place of Tories. Leaving his Tory pal, he went to the Committee of Safety and reported and the whole gang was captured. Judge John Jay urged Crosby to serve his country as a secret agent. He agreed, stipulating that in the event of his death, they should do justice to his memory."

Crosby continued to serve as a spy in the region between White Plains and Fishkill, "effecting the capture of many companies that were organizing to join the British." He had many close escapes from death, the book says, citing one in particular. "While spending two nights at the home of his brother-in-law, Solomon Hopkins, near the watering trough on the Carmel-Kent Road, the house was surrounded and a bullet grazed his neck and later the house was plundered and Crosby severely beaten and left for dead. After his recovery, he continued his service." After the war, Crosby went on to hold various civic and church offices in the Town of Southeast, and died a natural death in 1835.

CROSS HIGHWAY

Cross Highway, a rather common term in New England communities, was an early name for Topstone Road and probably Cain's Hill Road as well, and was in use until fairly recent times.

The first reference to the name was in a 1772 deed from Ezekiel Hull to Daniel McDonald, transferring 16 acres "below Umpawaug Pond" and bounded west by Hugh Cain (the fuller) and "northerly by a Cross highway." Cain's fulling mill was on this highway, which was then actually the eastern end of what we today call Cain's Hill Road. In the 1770's, the road we now call Route 7 did not exist – at least as a public highway – in this vicinity.

Cain's Hill and Topstone Roads were an extension of Farmingville Road into Redding. Thus, it was a road that "crossed" over into the next town.

CROSS HILL ROAD

Cross Hill Road, a private road at Ridgefield Lakes, extends from Bennett's Farm Road to Mountain Road and, as the name suggests, crosses a hill.

CROSS POND

Cross Pond, today called Lake Kitchawan, is situated on the Lewisboro-Pound Ridge line in New York State. This line was apparently once the western boundary of Ridgefield, before the Oblong was sliced off from western Con-

necticut in 1731. The pond was originally called Cross River Pond because it is a source of the Cross River, still so called.

The origin of the term “Cross” is believed to be the Cross (or Craws) family, which was living in the Pound Ridge-Bedford vicinity from the 1680’s or early 1700’s. The hamlet of Cross River is along Route 35 in western Lewisboro.

The pond was the eastern boundary for the territory of the Kitchawong Indians, who roamed as far west as the Hudson River but who lived chiefly in Pound Ridge. Hence, the name of the lake, which was applied in the 20th Century, possibly by Dr. Benn Adelman Bryon of Ridgefield, who developed land at the pond for summer cottages early in this century. The pond has also reportedly been called Lake Peppeneghek.

Cross Pond was first mentioned in the Ridgefield land records in the original 1708 purchase from the Indians. The town’s western boundary met “Stanford bound line about a quarter of a mile to ye eastward of Cross River Pond.” Land west of this First Purchase line, to and including part of the pond, was apparently acquired by Ridgefield in the Fourth Purchase from the Indians (the so-called Taporneck Purchase), although the deed does not mention the pond.

CROSS STREET

Wooster Street, from North Salem Road to North Street, used to be called Cross Street early in the century. The road is the only connection across the Titicus River from the beginnings of North Street and North Salem Road at Mapleshade Cemetery all the way up to Scotland, where Barlow Mountain Road provides the cross road.

CROW HILL

Crow Hill was used in the mid-19th Century for a rise along Ridgebury Road, just north of Ned’s Mountain Road. The name was found in an 1865 mortgage deed in which Halcyon Gilbert Bailey borrowed money on his home “at Crow Hill so-called.”

Crows were perhaps common on the hill. At least six towns in Connecticut have Crow Hills, one of which is East Hartford where the locality is so called because it had been owned by a John Crow, one of the first settlers of the colony.

It is possible that Ridgefield’s Crow Hill came from a corruption of Crow, since there was a Crow family in Ridgebury in the 18th Century. Both Ammon and Reuben Crow fought in the Revolution. And so did a Ridgefielder named Edward Crow, whose name may be a variation of Crow. However, as a long-time fan of the crow – probably the region’s cleverest and most-entertaining bird, I prefer to think that it was this often-disparaged creature that was recognized, however briefly, in this name.

H. G. Bailey, incidentally, was somewhat of a town character and ne’er-do-well of the 19th Century. Sometime during the 1860’s, he ran a rather bizarre campaign, complete with posters, for the office of town hayward, a colonial-era official who apprehended and impounded errant livestock, especially swine. The office had probably long been discontinued.

Silvio Bedini, who has a short essay on Bailey in his *Ridgefield in Review*, describes the man as “noted for his mischievous disposition.” His wife apparently didn’t appreciate his carryings on, for she eventually divorced him. His

daughter, Dr. Annie Keeler Bailey, one of Connecticut's first female physicians (profiled in Who Was Who), so disliked her father that she had her name changed to Annie Keeler in 1908. She told the Superior Court in Bridgeport she wanted to "free the honor of her mother's family from the taint arising from the name of her father," according to a story that appeared in newspapers throughout the nation. "Father," she was quoted as saying, "was a man addicted to excessive dissipation, shocking immorality and profanity. He was a disgrace to the family."

The last mention of Crow Hill was an 1873 mortgage deed, again from Halcyon Gilbert Bailey to a bank.

CUSHMAN LANE

Cushman Lane is one of several names, including Lover's Lane and De-Peyster Street, that have been applied to part or all of today's Rockwell Road. It recalls Dr. and Mrs. William F. Cushman, who lived in a house on the north corner of Main Street with this road.

A New York City native, Dr. Cushman bought the place in 1890 from the estate of Abraham Holmes and died there in 1904 at the age of 65. His widow died there in the 1930's. One source says Cushman Lane applied in the early part of the century only to the portion of the road from Main Street to Perry Lane.

D

DANBURY & NORWALK TURNPIKE

Three turnpikes – roads for whose use a toll was charged – existed in Ridgefield during the first half of the 19th Century. One of them was usually called the Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike, even though it should have been called the Norwalk and Danbury Turnpike. The term first appears in the land records in an 1835 deed and was in use as late as 1915 on an old property survey map in the town clerk's office.

A Ridgefield Town Meeting in 1805 mentions a “turnpike” from Danbury to Wilton. Land records as early as 1803 speak of “the Turnpike Road,” but it is not clear whether the reference is to this road or the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike (*q.v.*).

The Norwalk and Danbury Turnpike Company was created by an act of the Connecticut Legislature in October 1795. The southern end was in central Norwalk, at the Post Road. The northern end was actually in today's Bethel; back in 1795, Bethel was a parish of Danbury. The turnpike generally followed the path of today's Route 7 from Norwalk, through Wilton Parish to Georgetown, then passing through today's Branchville on what is today called West Branchville Road, and on up via today's Route 7 to Simpaug Turnpike, which carried it through Redding to Route 53 and on the Bethel section of Danbury. The road was 18 miles long and had only one tollgate! Indications are that by the early 1800s, the company was in financial trouble and was not properly maintaining the road. There are also indications that the route of the turnpike in Ridgefield was later part of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike (*q.v.*)

It seems odd that in the land records, there is no mention of title to turnpike land, either this or others. Someone had to have amassed the property or right of way, yet not a single deed mentioning roadway acquisition has been found. The state chartered the operators of turnpikes, and apparently these operators established a proposed route and filed it with a committee of the General Assembly, which approved, disapproved, or modified the plan. Thus, the turnpike operators apparently didn't have to deal with deeds, though their charter makes it clear that they had to compensate landowners for any property taken for the turnpike. Nowadays, the state files a deed for any land it acquires for roadways. This road and how it worked is covered in more detail under “Sugar Hollow Turnpike.”

In Wilton, Route 7 is today called Danbury Road, probably a shortened version of Norwalk and Danbury Road, which had earlier been the Norwalk and Danbury Turnpike.

“Turnpike” is a term derived from the wooden turnstile-like device which blocked the road at toll stations.

DANBURY AND RIDGEFIELD TURNPIKE

The Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike extended from the present intersection of Haviland and Limestone Roads north along the path of the present Danbury Road (Route 35) to Route 7, and then north over Route 7 through Sugar

Hollow, coming out at the end of the runway at the south side of Danbury Airport. (Although this road ran through the Sugar Hollow, it was not called the Sugar Hollow Turnpike. The Sugar Hollow Turnpike [q.v.] extended from the south end of the Sugar Hollow down to Wilton, and also from the north end of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike through Mill Plain to New York State.)

Research by Ed Liljegren of Ridgebury has placed the site of a toll station for this turnpike just north of the Ridgefield-Danbury line, on the west side of Route 7, a bit south of Bennett's Farm Road. The stone foundation, looking only like a stone wall, stood very close to the road, but was destroyed in the widening of Route 7 in 2005.

Ridgefielders were considering a new route to Danbury as early as 1787; a Town Meeting that December "voted that ye selectmen view a place for a road to Danbury and make a report to a future meeting." The old road to Danbury (see Danbury Road) was rough, long, and hilly. What's more, after the Revolution, the state government pressed towns to improve intertown highways, and consequently the communications and commerce among communities. However, it appears that Danburians – Joseph M. and Ebenezer B. White – eventually got the ball rolling and built this road. They were incorporated by the General Assembly as "The Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike Company" by an act of the Connecticut General Assembly in May 1801, and by 1803 references to a "turnpike road" in this vicinity were appearing in our land records.

George Rockwell in his *History of Ridgefield* says Sturges Selleck completed the road through Sugar Hollow in 1812. Selleck, an incorporator of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike in 1829, had a farm on what is now the Bennett's Pond State Park property on Bennett's Farms Road at Fox Hill.

The name continued to be used into the 1850's. By 1870, two deeds referred to "the old Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike Road," suggesting it was by then a toll-free road.

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The Ridgefield and Danbury Turnpike is another name for the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike (q.v.). While the latter is the correct name, "Ridgefield and Danbury Turnpike" was also commonly used, perhaps by Ridgefielders who thought their town should be mentioned first. At any rate, the backward title first appears in 1848 and was still in use in the early part of the 20th Century when a map filed in the town clerk's office used this label.

There had been talk of building a new road to Danbury as early as 1787. At that time, the route from Ridgefield to Danbury went up Danbury Road, across Haviland and Picketts Ridge, north through Starrs Plain, and then over a now-abandoned highway across Moses Mountain to Wooster Heights in Danbury. This route was a hilly and not very direct, and the valley of Sugar Hollow was an inviting alternative. Unfortunately, it was very swampy and running a reliable road through it would require a lot of earth moving, particularly at the Danbury end. It would be an expensive undertaking that no government was interested in. However, private enterprise came to the rescue.

"The Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike Company" was established in May 1801 by an act of the state legislature. The new company consisted of Joseph M. White and Ebenezer White of Danbury, "together with such other persons as shall associate with them." It is not clear when they built the road, but Rockwell in his history said it was constructed in 1812 by Sturges Selleck who lived

at Fox Hill – now Bennett’s Pond State Park – along eastern Bennett’s Farm Road.

The turnpike began at the intersection of Haviland and Limestone Roads and headed north through Sugar Hollow to the intersection of Old Sugar Hollow and Miry Brook Roads (at the south end of Danbury Airport). For most of its way it followed the modern path of upper Danbury Road (Route 35) and Route 7. Although it ran through Sugar Hollow, it was not the “Sugar Hollow Turnpike” or the “Sugar Hollow Road” that it’s called today in Danbury. The Sugar Hollow Turnpike, built some years later, followed the path of today’s Route 7 from the Florida District of Ridgefield north to the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike – joining the same at today’s intersection of Routes 7 and 35. Northbound travelers then used the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike to Danbury. But the Sugar Hollow Turnpike then continued across what is now Danbury Airport and went over to Mill Plain, then northwesterly to New York state. Thus, the Sugar Hollow Turnpike led to both ends of the Sugar Hollow, but did not pass through it. The tollhouse for the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike was situated on the Danbury-Ridgefield line, just south of Bennett’s Farm Road. Its stone foundation was still visible in the 1990s but vanished when the state widened the road to four lanes.

To this day, Route 7 from Route 35 to the Danbury line is called Danbury Road instead of Ethan Allan Highway – the name used for the rest of Route 7 in Ridgefield. This goes back to the days when that section of modern-day Route 7 was the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike, existing some 20 years before the Sugar Hollow Turnpike that became today’s U.S. Route 7.

The company that built the road had to get back its investment. The act establishing the turnpike company set up the following toll schedule:

	Cts.	Mls.
For every loaded ox-cart	12	5
Every empty do	6	2
Every empty wagon	8	0
Every empty do	4	0
Every loaded sled	8	2
Every empty do	4	0
Every loaded two-horse sleigh	8	0
Every empty do	4	0
Every one-horse sleigh, loaded	6	0
Every empty do	3	0
Every pleasure sleigh	8	0
Every four-wheel pleasure carriage	25	0
Every chair, chaise, or sulkey	12	5
Every drift or led horse, neat cattle or mule	2	0
Every man and horse	4	0
Every sheep or swine	0	5

“Cts.” are cents and “mls.” are mills, the latter being equal to a tenth of a cent. “Do.” was an old-fashioned way of abbreviating “ditto.”

As was part of the turnpike law back then, the special act also provided that “all persons going to or returning from funerals, all persons going to or returning from public worship, and their traveling to and from mills, and all officers or soldiers on days of military exercise on command, who must necessarily pass through such gate, and all those who live near the place where such gate is

erected, whose necessary daily calling requires their passing through such gate, shall be exempted from paying any toll.”

The turnpike company was allowed to earn a profit of 12% per year. Once the tolls charged had earned enough income to pay for the construction of the road, “said turnpike road shall be free and said company shall receive toll no longer.”

The turnpike company was closely watched and controlled by the state. It had to submit annual reports to a court, and it could not make changes in the route of the road without state legislative approval. For instance, in May 1832, the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike Company received approval to make changes in the path after “shewing that their road passes over several difficult hills, one near the northern extremity of said road in Danbury and another near the southern extremity thereof in Ridgefield.” The special act set up a committee to select better alternate routes and to determine fair compensation for persons whose land would be taken for the road.

Just when the road became free is not clear. By 1870, it was called the “old Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike,” indicating the toll gate was gone by then.

DANBURY CORNERS

Danbury Corners is the intersection of Main Street and Danbury Road, or Routes 35 and 116, also often called Joe’s Corner (*q.v.*)

DANBURY HILL

Danbury Hill is an early 20th Century term for the area along Danbury Road from the end of Main Street north to the flats at Cops Hill Plaza, just before Farmingville Road. It was so called because the beginning of the road to Danbury went down this hill, which had also been called Island Hill (*q.v.*) as late as the 1930’s.

DANBURY OLD CART PATH

Probably the earliest named road in Ridgefield, the Danbury Old Cart Path is mentioned in the first purchase of land from the Indians in 1708. The deed says the town’s southeast corner (Branchville) was marked “at a rock with stone lai’d thereon that lyeth upon ye west side of Norwalk River about 20 rod northward of ye crossing or where Danbury old cart path crosseth the river...”

In Branchville, this road probably followed approximately the same path as the present Portland Avenue, West Branchville Road, Branchville Road, Florida Road, a little bit of Route 7, and then over Simpaug Turnpike into Redding. From there it went to Bethel (originally a parish of Danbury) to reach Danbury village. It could also have met the eastern end of Picketts Ridge Road in Redding, crossed over to Starrs Plain and then up over Moses Mountain, which was the main 1700’s route to Danbury (*see* Danbury Road).

The route, probably an old Indian trail, joined Norwalk (settled in 1651) with Danbury (1685) and existed years before Ridgefield was settled.

DANBURY ROAD (PATH)

Danbury Road is another of Ridgefield’s earliest road names, first appearing in the land records in a 1718 deed in which the proprietors gave Nathan Saint John an acre “lying west of Danbury Rhode and north of ye path yt goest to Timothy Keeler’s meadow in ye Great Swamp under Copp’s Mountain.”

The original route of this road was quite different from the present-day Danbury Road, Route 35, which extends from Main Street almost directly north to Route 7 and on to the Danbury line. The old road began at the north end of Main Street, about where it does today, followed the present path down Danbury or Island Hill and out past Copps Hill Plaza. At today's Fox Hill Village, it followed the main road through the condominium development and returned to the present highway. At the intersection of Limestone and Haviland Roads, called Mine Hill, Danbury Road veered eastward over Haviland Road, across Route 7 (non-existent in the 18th Century), and over Pickett's Ridge Road into Redding. The route turned north over Starr's Plain Road into Danbury. After crossing through the Starr's Plain community, it passed east of Lake Waubeeka (meaning "a crossing place"), up and over Moses Mountain, the hill east of Route 7.

Sugar Hollow, the path of Route 7 today, was extremely swampy, a condition that early road builders generally avoided rather than eliminated through draining and filling, and thus the old route took the "high road" to Danbury. The old Danbury Road came out on what is now called Wooster Heights in Danbury. In fact, a dirt road still exists at this northern end and is called "Old Boston Post Road" by the city of Danbury. For a while in the 18th Century, Danbury Road was part of the "northern" main road from New York to Hartford and Boston; the southern route was the "Post Road," U.S. Route 1, along Long Island Sound (*see* Post Road).

There was an alternate Danbury Road, sometimes called Danbury Path, which ran northeastward from the center of Fox Hill condominiums, connected with Limekiln Road, which led up to Haviland. This route went through some fairly swampy territory and was probably impassible at various times of the year, particularly spring. In winter it would have been fine for sleds, sledges and sleighs if the ground and water were frozen.

This shorter bypass was called Norrins Ridge Road or Orange Ridge Road and existed at least by 1750 when a deed refers to land "on ye east part of the town, near a place called Lime-Stone, by the road that leads from Ridgefield to Danbury, ye lower way."

Present day Danbury Road, north of Haviland Road, was not built until around 1801 or 1802 and then it was a turnpike (*see* Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike). Being a shorter route, people were probably willing to pay to use it. However, the section over Buck Hill was undoubtedly difficult to cross in muddy seasons. On a map published in 1912, this section of Route 35 was labeled "the Hill Road" while Haviland Road was still being called Danbury Road.

Even in fairly modern times, the path of Danbury Road has been changed. As mentioned above, it formerly passed through what is now Fox Hill condominiums until the 1920's or early 1930's when the state installed the straight highway. A little farther north, the road used to pass across the front lawn of the Ridgefield Baptist Church property. The little north-south lane, called Old Danbury Road, on the east side of Danbury Road running off Haviland Road is another original section. And down in the valley before Buck Hill, opposite Old Pierce Road, there's another old section off the west side of the highway.

Most of these improvements, which did away with or soothed out curves, were done by the state in the 1920's and 30's. The state at first called the road

Route 3, which included Main Street, West Lane, and South Salem Road, but was using Route 35 by the 1930's.

Reflecting the route of the old turnpike, the name Danbury Road today also applies to Route 7 from Route 35 north to the Danbury line. Route 7 south of Route 35 is called Ethan Allen Highway (*q.v.*)

"Danbury" literally means "fortified place of the Danes" and was taken from the name of a town in England. The community had also been called Swampfield and was once nicknamed "Beantown" because the land was said to have been bought from the Indians for a bag of beans (there are other stories of that name's origin). The Indians called the place *Pahquioque*, meaning "open place."

In early 1987 and then again around 2000, groups of Danbury Road business people tried to have the name of the southern section of the road changed to North Main Street, saying that the area had nothing to do with Danbury and shouldn't bear its name. They also felt the common interests of the town's two main business districts could be more closely tied if they bore names that connected them i.e., Main Street and North Main Street.

The proposal sparked a good deal of opposition from those who said it would cause confusion and who felt that a name that's been in use for nearly three centuries should stay in use. Some also felt that Danbury Road merchants were trying to cash in on the "flavor" of historic Main Street.

In 1987, Historian Richard E. Venus wrote *The Press*, saying changing Danbury Road's name would not do anything to make that area look better. "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet," he said. Thereafter, merchants and landlords concentrated on improving the appearing of this section of Danbury Road, which had long been called Gasoline Alley (*q.v.*).

DAVIS LANE

Now just a short road, Davis Lane once extended farther west from Nod Road, then turned 90 degrees north and ran halfway between Nod Road and Wilton Road East up to Whipstick Road. A path still exists there, used chiefly by children and horses.

Clinton Davis lived on the corner of Nod Road and Davis Lane from at least 1912 until the 1930's. He was a dairy farmer and, according to a nephew, former tax assessor Harold O. Davis (1905-1986), was "a good talker." His daughter, Josephine Davis Weed, lived in the family homestead until the early 1980's.

DAWN LANE

Dawn Lane, a dead-end road off Haviland Road, was named for Dawn Lounsbury, daughter of Everett Lounsbury, the developer. The town accepted it in 1969.

The pond at the foot of Dawn Lane was offered to the town in the 1970s as a recreational site, particularly as a skating place. The offer was refused because town officials felt that the ownership of the pond was not worth the possible liability.

DEER HILL

In a deed drawn in 1744, Ebenezer Lobdell sold Stephen Gray 13 acres "at a place called Deer Hill." The name never appears again, and the location is

unclear, though it was probably in the Limestone or northern Farmingville districts where both Lobdell and Gray had land.

DEER HILL DRIVE

Deer Hill Drive, a dead-end road off Cedar Lane, was laid out in 1955 and accepted by the town in 1959. The developer was Earl DeWitt Etheridge, a Pan-American Airlines captain, who named the subdivision Mill River Hollow after the name of the stream feeding a pond at the west end of the 15-lot development.

The road's name was probably selected for the many deer in the area. It is hardly an unusual name; by 1985, 22 of the 23 towns in Fairfield County had roads named after this animal, the largest of our common wild mammals. There is no known pre-1880 record of Deer Hill in this vicinity, so Mr. Etheridge did not call up an ancient name for his road. At least one map (1967) labels the western leg of this road as "Deer Run Road," a name not recognized by the town.

In the 1950s, deer were uncommon and fairly rarely seen creatures in Ridgefield. Now plentiful throughout town, deer are often spotted, even on Main Street in the village. In fact, the deer population had become such a problem by the 2000s that the town formed a Deer Committee, which deliberated for nine months and decided that controlled hunting should be employed to curb the deer population. The committee cited the high incidence of Lyme disease, damage to native vegetation, and large number of car-deer accidents (Over the five-year period between April 2000 and May 2005, 883 deer on or along Ridgefield's roads were tagged by the Ridgefield police and reported dead to the State of Connecticut. Though very high, the total was estimated to be only a fraction of the actual number because many accidents were not reported and many struck deer wander off before dying of their injuries.)

Deer have overpopulated the town in part because people killed off or chased away their natural enemies, such as wolves. We also provided ideal conditions for these edge browsers, offering lots of woodland for protection and lawn edges for eating.

DEER PIT, THE

This very old and rather strange name appears in three deeds filed in 1721 and 1722, and then promptly disappears. In 1721, the proprietors gave Jonah Keeler "five acres lying southeast of ye Deer Pitt..." Samuel Saint John in the same year received 20 acres there, and in 1722 was granted another 20 acres "lying at ye Deer Pitt" and 4.5 acres "lying on ye east end of his Deer pit lott."

The location is not known for certain. Because the name never appears after this period, the Deer Pit may have been within The Oblong, the one and three-quarter mile wide slice of the west side of Ridgefield that was ceded to New York in 1731.

Both Keelers and Saint Johns held land in or near the section of The Oblong known as the Southwest Ridges, now southeastern Lewisboro. In 1731, Samuel Saint John sold his house "on ye road to the Southwest Ridges," perhaps what is now lower West Lane. A branch of the Keeler family settled very early in the area around the intersection of Routes 35 and 123 in Lewisboro and Ridgefield. So the Deer Pit may have been somewhere along Route 123 in Lewisboro.

A deer pit, a hole in the ground covered with sticks and brush, was a method of trapping deer – in the same fashion that wolf pits were used. The Deer Pit was probably dug by the Indians, who used deer meat for food, hide for clothing, and bones for tools.

DEER TRACK HILL ROAD

A town highway map published in 1958 indicates much of Deer Track Hill Road is an old, abandoned highway that led from Route 7 to Fire Hill Road. It joined the east side of Route 7 about 500 feet south of New Road intersection, and ran northeasterly. Part of the east end of Riverside Drive in Stonehenge Estates (to where it joins Fire Hill Road) apparently was built atop this path.

The road may have been a deer track, but it's more likely that people, seeing the vestiges of an overgrown old road through the woods, simply thought of it as a deer path. It does not appear on maps of the town published in 1856 and 1867.

DEPEYSTER STREET

DePeyster Street, yet another old title for today's Rockwell Road, was named for the Misses Augusta, Elizabeth and Cornelia DePeyster who in 1895 bought the former Perry homestead on Main Street at the south side of Rockwell Road. The name appears on a 1900 map showing the then-proposed village sewer system.

DEPOT HILL STREET

Prospect Street is called "Depot Hill Street" on a 1941 New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad map of the Ridgefield station area. The hill leading from the station up to the library and Main Street was informally called Depot Hill or Station Hill for many years – *see* Prospect Street.

DEPOT ROAD

Depot Road is the little lane that leads from Route 7, opposite Route 102 Branchville Road, across the Norwalk River to the north end of Branchville railroad station or "depot." Road was closed in October 2019 because bridge was in bad shape and no one wanted to pay to build a new one.

The north-south road on the east side of the tracks was the original path of what we now call Route 7, and is often called West Branchville Road or Old Main Highway.

Depot Road was once Branchville Road's east end, before today's Route 7 in Branchville was built in the 1920s, creating a separate road. It may be the only regularly used road in Ridgefield without a single residence or business on it.

DEVENS LANE

Devens Lane is another of those "roads" that appear only on subdivision maps and were never developed, often having been turned into accessways to a couple of houses or driveways to single houses. This one appears on a 1958 subdivision off West Lane, east of Golf Lane. Both it and "Taylor Lane" in this subdivision by Melish Thompson do not exist today. The source of the names is unknown.

DEVIL'S RUN ROAD.

Although the name appears on few if any maps, "Devil's Run Road" was for years applied to the dirt road that runs from Bennett's Farm Road at Fox Hill north to the Bennett's Ponds. This is today the main roadway into the Bennett's Pond State Park.

The road was part of Col. Louis D. Conley's massive estate, begun around 1914. In the 1970s, Elise Conley Cox (1909-1994), his daughter, took this writer on a walk down this dirt road. She recalled that as a child, she knew the path as Devil's Run Road, but she did not know the reason for the name. Mrs. Cox said that the road had once been part of an old mail route to Danbury, possibly connecting with the south end of Pine Mountain Road.

Deeds in the 1800's and early 1900's mention a "mountain road from Miry Brook to Starrs Plain," which apparently passed north of the Bennett's Ponds and probably also connected with Devil's Run Road. The late Harold Iles of Redding, who lived at the Conley estate in the 1920's, recalled that the road ran north across the stream connecting the ponds, and up into Danbury.

One Ridgefielder, who has known the road for years (it was frequented by teenagers for the usual back-road recreations), maintained that the name describes the poor condition and wilderness-like setting of the road. The story goes that once you drove down the road, you wouldn't be able to get back – and the devil would scoop you up and carry you away into the woods in Ichabod Crane-like fashion.

In his book *American Place Names*, George R. Stewart says that "except when based upon Indian belief, there is no evidence that any of the numerous names [using "devil"] arise from genuine belief in a devil." Often, he indicates, the name is used to reflect the roughness of the terrain. For example, "Devil's Canyon is a repeated name, and is quasi-descriptive, suggesting a place so difficult to pass that it must have been maliciously made by the devil. Devils Den, also a repeated name, is aided by alliteration, and indicates any unusually ferocious-looking rock formation."

While "devil" names are more numerous out West, there are at least 40 towns in Connecticut with place names mentioning the devil – showing that the technique of using the word to describe rough or wild terrain was not unusual in this part of the country. *Connecticut Place Names* records no other town with a "Devil's Run," however.

DILLMAN COURT

Dillman Court runs off Chestnut Hill Road, serving a 50-acre, 1984 subdivision by the Portland Corporation. The Planning and Zoning Commission selected the name in November 1984 to recognize Michael Dillman, a civil engineer who was involved in the design of many subdivisions in Ridgefield and area towns over the years. Mr. Dillman, who had died earlier that year, "was an outstanding professional (who) served well this community and many of its residents for many years," wrote Town Planner Oswald Inglese. Mr. Dillman, a Redding resident, was also well known as a collector and user of model railroad trains of all vintages. He used to surprise more than a few people after installing a train whistle as his car's horn.

DLHY COURT

Dlhy Court is the road leading into the town-owned golf course, originally known as Dlhy Ridge (*see below*), but more commonly called the Ridgefield Golf Course today.

Because the name is hard to spell, even though it's only four letters long, there have been efforts to change it. In 1988, in a letter to the Planning and Zoning Commission, golf course pro Vincent Adams tried to get the commission to rename the driveway "Golf Court" or "Golf Road." The commission wisely voted Nov. 14 of that year to retained Dlhy Court, pointing out the probable confusion of the new name with Golf Lane (*q.v.*) at the south side of town.

DLHY RIDGE

Town officials concocted "Dlhy Ridge" in the early 1970's when they were looking for a name for the new municipal golf course, opened in 1974. It is the only place name in town that has no vowels.

The name recalls Joseph and Suzanna Dlhy (pronounced dill-ee, with the accent on the first syllable) whose farm now forms a large portion of the course (land was also purchased from the Leighton family). Joseph Dlhy came to the United States from Czechoslovakia in 1910 and five years later, when he married Suzanna Boron, moved to Ridgefield. He was active in agricultural organizations in the area until his death in 1965. Suzanna Dlhy, who sold the land to the town in the late 1960's, died in 1976.

Because so many people had trouble spelling and pronouncing Dlhy, the town gradually phased out "Dlhy Ridge Municipal Golf Course" and phased in "Ridgefield Golf Course."

DOGWOOD DRIVE

Dogwood Drive is another of the tree-named roads inspired by the vast Outpost Nurseries holdings. A dead-end lane off upper Danbury Road, Dogwood Drive was named by Richard Conley of Connecticut Land Company for the dogwoods, both wild and planted by his father, Col. Louis D. Conley (*see* Outpost Pond). Perr Katz developed most of the lots and the town accepted Dogwood Drive in 1957.

Although there are several kinds of native dogwoods, this road is named for the most familiar variety. The Flowering Dogwood or Cornelian Tree bears large, four-petaled flowers in spring. Each petal is nicked at the outside edge and the indentation is tinted pink.

The tree is found wild throughout Connecticut and usually reaches a height of about 20 feet; in the South, it can grow to 40 feet.

While many of the area's dogwoods have been suffering from a disease that gradually kills them, the blight is apparently not as severe as the one that has virtually wiped out the American chestnut.

Farmers used to watch for the leaves of the dogwood to unfold — just after the flowers — because that was said to be the time to plant Indian corn. The bark of its roots was used once as a substitute for quinine.

DONNELLY DRIVE

Donnelly Drive, which extends from St. Johns Road to Silver Hill Road, was built in the 1950's. It was named for Joseph H. Donnelly, attorney, former probate judge, and former town counsel who, with Perry Scott, developed the

subdivision. Part of the subdivision traversed property that had been a portion of the Donnelly homestead on Wilton Road West. The road was accepted by Town Meeting in 1956.

Judge Donnelly, who owned the Donnelly (Governor Street) Shopping Center and other sizable commercial and residential properties, had long been one of the major property owners in town. Although the town was more than two centuries old when he arrived in 1931, Judge Donnelly was Ridgefield's first full-time practicing attorney. (By his death in March 1992, three dozen lawyers had offices in town.)

An astute real estate investor, Judge Donnelly was the town's 10th highest property taxpayer at the time of his death. He built the shopping center that the old Hay Day/Balducci's Market anchored, owned Main Street retail buildings, subdivided Donnelly Drive, Marcardon Avenue, and the Scodon area (he's the "don" of Scodon; bank president Carlton Scofield is the Sco). From 1935 to 1948, Judge Donnelly was the town attorney and was instrumental in getting zoning adopted. He was probate judge (whence his title) from 1941 to 1949, served on the Police Commission, was state representative from 1939 to 1941, and often moderated Town Meetings. He aided people — helping efforts like the Salvation Army, visiting nurses, and fire department. He "helped an awful lot of people — behind the scenes," his partner, Paul S. McNamara, told The Ridgefield Press. "He was reserved and preferred to remain anonymous."

DOUBLEDAY LANE

Doubleday Lane is a 725-foot road off West Mountain Road, serving part of the 1980 West Mountain Pines subdivision of Carl Lecher. The road was named for James Doubleday, who bought the property in the mid-1950's. Mr. Doubleday built the large house at the top of the hill (replacing an earlier mansion, Hillaire, that he had razed and that had belonged to Joseph Conron — *see* Conron's Pond). He and his wife Elizabeth bought and razed several mansions, replacing them with more modern houses. Doubleday Lane became a town road around 1985.

DOUGLAS LANE

Douglas Lane at Lakeland Hills off Bennett's Farm Road was developed in the 1950's by the late Harold Goldsmith on part of the old Todd brothers' farm. According to Annette Zelson, the road was named for Douglas Rosskamp, son of Paul Rosskamp, surveyor for Mr. Goldsmith on the project, who lived nearby. Douglas, she said, was born on or close to the day development of Lakeland Hills was begun. The Rosskamps later moved upstate. Douglas Lane was accepted as a town road in 1956.

DOWLING DRIVE

Dowling Drive is another road named for a former probate judge and town counsel. Charles Elliott, who developed the road between Ridgecrest Drive and Stonecrest Road, selected the name of his attorney, John E. Dowling (1922-2004).

One of only a couple of Ridgefield natives to return to town to practice law, Eddie Dowling may also have been Ridgefield's favorite — and most entertaining — attorney. "He's the sweetest guy around," said Superior Court Judge Pa-

tricia Geen at a 1985 dinner in his honor. He is a “classic Irishman, a rare jewel,” added Judge Howard J. Moraghan.

Born in 1922 on High Ridge, Dowling drove a school bus while attending Danbury State Teachers College, and went off to war in 1942. There he won the Soldiers Medal, the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star for heroism displayed in April 1945 when his anti-tank gun was blown off a road in France. Though he suffered shrapnel wounds to his back and lung, he dragged two of his comrades to safety. A modest man, Mr. Dowling rarely talked of his war exploits and did not even receive his medals until 40 years after the war.

After his discharge, he obtained a law degree from Fordham, and spent three years as an FBI agent in Illinois and Texas. He returned to town in 1950 and accomplished the then-incredible: As a Democrat he was elected judge of probate; the previous Democrat to win the office was D. Smith Sholes in 1879. He was only 29 years old, the youngest probate judge then in Connecticut. (For years he had a license plate, ED-29, commemorating that event.)

Dowling continued to practice law here for most of the next half century, but also served the community as a member of the Board of Finance and the Veterans Park School Building Committee, as town attorney in the late 1960s, and as chief prosecutor in the Danbury Circuit Court. Famed for his sharp, wry wit, he regaled many with tales from his long career. Some stories were of his FBI days, such as the time, in a Midwestern field, he stalked a criminal who turned out to be a scarecrow. Some described his unusual law cases, such as the Bethel woman who left her sizable estate to a name she discovered using a Ouija board. And many were about life in Ridgefield, such as the time the Rev. Hugh Shields, who had been complaining for weeks about a pothole at a local gas station, grabbed a pole and went “fishing” in it to emphasize his point. But most of all, he’s remembered as a caring man. “He’s helped Ridgefield a lot,” The Ridgefield Press once said. “He’s one of the nicest guys in town, and if somebody needs a lawyer and can’t afford to pay, he’s the one most apt to help.”

Dowling is profiled in more detail in a Who Was Who posting on this group.

Developed in the 1950’s, the road was not accepted by the town until 1975. Some subdivision maps show the western end of the road as “Elliott Drive.”

DOWNESBURY COURT

Downesbury Court, a dead-end road off the north side of Florida Hill Road, serves a late-1970’s subdivision by Roger D. Carpenter and William S. Valus. It became a town road in 1980.

The land was part of Downesbury Manor, the 300-acre estate of Col. Edward M. Knox, a hat manufacturer and Civil War hero, whose mansion had 45 rooms. Colonel Knox was wounded at Gettysburg, for which he received a Congressional Medal of Honor. Knox was a friend of Mark Twain, who used to ride over from Redding to visit (*see* High Valley Road).

Most of the land has found its way into such subdivisions as High Valley, Ridgewood, and Harvey Roads. Downesbury Court was originally proposed to be called Woodland Hill Court, but the name was abandoned because of the confusion it would have caused with similar-sounding names.

Mr. Carpenter, who died in 1987, was a popular and well-known architect in Ridgefield, and contributed many hundreds of volunteer hours to the town, advising it on architectural questions – even the design of parking lots.

DRUID LANE

Druid is one of those place names that is incorrect, but no one really cares – or should. It was so called because people connect Druids with Stonehenge in England. And the development into which Druid Lane leads from Route 7 is called Stonehenge Estates because the Stonehenge Inn is just across the highway.

But Druids had nothing to do with the creation of England's Stonehenge, the ceremonial stone structure on Salisbury Plain. According to Tom Burnam in *The Dictionary of Misinformation* (1975), "it used to be thought — and still is by many — that Stonehenge was erected by the Druids... Even now there is a modern sect called the Ancient Order of Druids, which annually celebrates at Stonehenge the solstice sunrise. Stonehenge, however, is a Bronze Age creation, going back to the second millennium BC, whereas the Druids in Britain were of the Iron Age, arriving there in the middle of the Third Century BC — that is, more than a thousand years later."

Druid Lane was originally called Jerry's Court, after the development's builder, Jerry Tuccio. But residents in the mid-1960's petitioned the selectmen to change it to Druid Lane.

The road was developed in the early 1960's and was accepted as a town road in 1964.

DUMP ROAD

Dump Road is another name for Old Quarry Road, according to a reference in the minutes of the Board of Selectmen in October 1957. The road was one of two entrances to the old town dump, later a landfill, and now the site of a "transfer station" from which Ridgefield's trash is hauled away to a waste-to-energy plant.

The dump operated from early in the 20th Century until the town closed it in August 1980 – Ridgefield acted under order from the state Department of Environmental Protection, which said the landfill was polluting Great Swamp (*q.v.*) and the Norwalk River. Decades of trash lie under the present transfer station, school bus yard, and highway department storage area, extending back to where the WREF radio antenna is located.

DUTCHMAN SWAMP

In 1740, when the estate of James Bennett (of Bennett's Farm) was being broken up among his heirs, son Ephraim received around nine acres "lying in Dutchman Swamp" and bounded on all sides by common land. The name is rather odd, especially for one originating from early 18th Century Ridgefield. However, a possible derivation can be pieced together.

John Stirdevant (or Sturdevant), one of the original proprietors, came from a Dutch family, either first or second generation. He may well have been nicknamed "the Dutchman" by his fellow settlers. Stirdevant owned land in the vicinity of Dutchman Swamp, for in 1741, he sold Ephraim Bennett 11 acres in two parcels "in Bennets Farm at Buckspen Swamp." Buckspen Swamp (*q.v.*)

was north of Fox Hill Lake, east of Shady Lane. Dutchman Swamp was probably close by since Ephraim owned land at both places.

DUTTON LANE

A 1914 drawing of the landscaping plan for what is now “the old high school” bears a penciled-in label of Dutton Lane for what is today eastern Governor Street (as it runs between the school and the police station).

E.P. Dutton of High Ridge, founder of the still-extant book publishing imprint bearing his name, was the chief contributor among a group of Ridgefielders who bought land on East Ridge for a new grammar school and in 1912 gave the property to the town. The new school was completed in 1915. In 1927, the high school grades were included in the building, which was expanded several times over the years and finally closed in 1972. The old school, now called the Richard E. Venus Municipal Building, is in 2017 used by the school board offices, town land-use agencies,, the Ridgefield Playhouse, the corporate headquarters of The Chefs’ Warehouse, and others.

Dutton Lane may have been suggested as a name for the street to show appreciation of Mr. Dutton’s contribution. If it was ever actually used, the name never stuck.

E

EAST FARM LANE

East Farm Lane is a 1,300-foot road running off the easterly side of New Road, part of a 1983 subdivision by Michel and Mario Morin. It became a town road around 1985.

The subdivision is on part of the old Lee property, as in Lee Road, and it was said that this was part of the Lees' "East Farm."

EAST MEADOW

The East Meadow or Meadows was the relatively flat land that lies along the upper Norwalk River, especially around the Great and Little Ponds, and perhaps as far south as New Road. The name, appearing as both singular and plural, shows up as early as 1717 and was used as late as 1826. The Norwalk River in this vicinity was sometimes called East Meadow River in the early 1700's.

EAST MOUNTAIN I

Several deeds written between 1820 and 1837 mention East Mountain, which appears to be a neighborhood (Scotland District) term for Copps or Stonecrest Mountain (*q.v.*), the ridge along which North Street runs. The "mountain," reaching more than 800 feet above sea level in places, is "east" of much of north-central Ridgefield, though it is not the easternmost "mountain" in town.

EAST MOUNTAIN II

The description of the perambulation of the Ridgefield and Redding line in 1828 notes that the third monument north of the southeast corner of town (in Branchville) "is upon the side of the East Mountain, a few rods west of the high peak on Elisha Gilbert's lot."

This description places the monument on the steep hill along the east side of Route 7, north of Branchville and south of Redding. This "East Mountain" is mostly in western Redding, where it was probably called something else—perhaps West Mountain!

EAST PUMPKIN RIDGE

Pompion or Pumpkin Ridge (*q.v.*) is the long, wide ridge about midway between Ridgefield village and Branchville. Part of it has been called Biddle Hill in the 20th Century. Only one reference to "East Pumpkin Ridge" has been found – in a 1774 deed. East Pumpkin Ridge apparently referred to the eastern slope of this ridge, perhaps in the vicinity of the western intersection of Branchville and Old Branchville Roads.

EAST RIDGE AND ROAD

East Ridge Road, sometimes called East Ridge Avenue, is a fairly modern name for the old road stretching between Prospect Street and Branchville Road,

just east of Main Street. It is not as accurate as its earlier name, Middle Ridge Avenue, and not the first road here to be called East Ridge.

Clark's map of Fairfield County shows this road existing in 1856. Its purpose then probably was chiefly as a path around the fields east of Main Street, which were pasture and croplands from the earliest settlement of the community.

The name, East Ridge Avenue, originally applied to what we now call Prospect Ridge Road, according to a 1900 sewer map of the village. It is a fitting name for that road because the ridge is the highest elevation east of Main Street (called Town Ridge by the settlers). So also, Middle Ridge Avenue is a more accurate name for the road that is between and parallel to the tops of East Ridge and the Town Ridge. It is not clear when Middle Ridge Avenue became known as East Ridge, and East Ridge as Prospect Ridge. A property map filed in 1919 used Middle Ridge Avenue. In fact, a map for land owned by Walter and Marion Hustis, drawn in October 1959, said "Middle Ridge Road," even though the road was commonly known as East Ridge long before 1959.

If all that isn't confusing enough, a road map of Ridgefield drawn in 1912 labels today's East Ridge as "Orchard Lane" (*q.v.*), probably because Governor Phineas Lounsbury's apple orchard was situated nearby. Governor Lounsbury's house is now the Community Center.

EAST RIVER

The Norwalk River along Route 7 was occasionally called East River in the 18th Century. The first such reference was in a 1718 deed from the proprietors to Milford Samuel Smith (as opposed to Norwalk Samuel Smith) for four acres "on ye Walnutt Ridge west of ye East River."

The name was probably a shortened form of East Meadow River (*see* East Meadow), just as Great Pond is probably an abbreviated version of Great East Meadow Pond.

The Norwalk River, of course, parallels the eastern boundary of the town.

EAST WOODS

East Woods is another old and lost term for an area in Ridgebury, probably in the vicinity of Ned's Mountain or a little east and north of Lake Windwing. The term first appears in a 1774 deed for 40 acres "in ye East Woods" and is used occasionally well into the 19th Century; the last mention is in an 1841 deed. A 1790 deed says East Woods is "about a mile from Ridgebury (Congregational) Church," but doesn't tell in which direction. However, being East Woods, one might assume it's eastward.

EDMOND TOWN

Edmond Town was a 19th Century name for a neighborhood along Florida Road, about half way between Florida Hill and Branchville Roads. In the 1700s and 1800s, the easterly end of today's Cooper Road, which now dead-ends long before Florida Road, joined Florida Road.

This junction was called Edmond Town because it was long the home of the Edmond family. When the name appears in an 1874 deed, Willis Edmond was living there. There were also several other nearby houses, perhaps built by or owned by relatives.

It seems odd for such a small, seemingly off-the-beaten-path neighborhood to pick up a “town” name. However, Florida Road had long been part of the main north-south route from Norwalk to Danbury — before the building of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike to the east — and there was probably at least some sort of stage stop here in the 18th and early 19th Centuries. When the turnpike was built and later the railroad with its station to the south at Branchville (Ridgefield Station), whatever businesses might have existed at Edmond Town probably closed for lack of traffic.

EIGHT LAKES

Eight Lakes is the town’s largest subdivision, consisting of several hundred lots — from tiny ones around Lake Mamasasco to one-acre parcels up on West Mountain, particularly its northeastern slope.

More than 1,750 acres in Connecticut and New York had been amassed around the turn of the century by Henry B. Anderson and others who had visions of creating a “park” of large homes for the wealthy. In the construction of roads through the property, Mr. Anderson’s right-hand man was Eldridge N. Bailey, later first selectman of the town. Many of the roads Bailey his crews of young Italian immigrants made are now town roads. Mr. Anderson built his own mansion on the west slope of the mountain in New York State, overlooking three lakes, but his wife died suddenly and he never occupied the building, which eventually fell to ruin.

Atop the mountain at its north slope in New York State, Mr. Anderson built a restaurant, naming it The Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*) after a 1907 novel of that title. It was just across the state line on the New York extension of Old Sib Road. The restaurant, often called Anderson’s Tea House, catered to wealthy New York businessmen and — some say — their girl friends. It closed around 1940 and the building was razed in 1946.

By 1951, J. Wesley Seward and William H. Hayes of New York City had acquired the land. They sold 78 parcels of it, ranging from a few acres to more than 100 acres each in Lewisboro, North Salem, and Ridgefield, to the Port of Missing Men Inc. This group of New York City developers then set about subdividing more than 37 Ridgefield tracts, totaling between 500 to 600 acres. In the process, more than 100 subdivision maps were filed with the town clerk between 1951 and 1954.

Some 10 miles of trails and paths, many of them blazed by early Italian immigrants working for Mr. Anderson, became subdivision roads and new ones were added. The roads include Walnut Hill Road, Birch Court, Rock Road, Scott Ridge Road, Blue Ridge Road, Caudatowa Drive, Sleepy Hollow Road, Round Lake Road, First through 12th Lanes, Mamasasco Road, and the west ends of both Barrack Hill and Old Sib Roads. At times during the 1950’s, as many as 20 salesmen for Eight Lakes were working in town over weekends, selling houses and lots in the development.

The name, Eight Lakes, comes from the number of lakes and ponds encompassed or touched on by the Anderson property in both states: Lake Mamasasco, Turtle Pond, and Round Pond in Ridgefield; Lakes Rippowam, Oscaleta, and Waccabuc in Lewisboro; and two small man-made ponds — one once called Pine Lake — in the wilds of West Mountain in southern North Salem, now mostly parkland owned by Westchester County. Turtle Pond, also called Hidden Lake, is the only Anderson-made pond on the Connecticut side.

EIGHTH LANE

Eighth Lane is one of those not-too-creative names – as in First through Twelfth Lanes – for the short roads, most of them dead-enders, off the west side of Mamanasco Road, part of the Eight Lakes development described above.

ELEVEN LEVELS AND ROAD

Eleven Levels is a large subdivision under development from the mid-1970's well into the 1980's off both West Mountain and Old West Mountain Roads. The 5,450-foot-long main road running through the development is called Eleven Levels Road. While the subdivision itself has been labeled Eleven Levels, the development is often also called West Mountain Estates.

The subdivision is part of an old estate called Eleven Levels, referring to the number of degrees of elevation that ripple through the property as it rolls down the eastern slope of West Mountain. However, the number may have been less accurately chosen for its mellifluousness with the word “levels” than its actual topography. (Ten Levels or Twelve Levels just doesn't cut it.)

Arthur C. Fraser began amassing the property by buying 31 acres in 1907. By the time of his death in 1934, he had acquired 14 parcels totaling 180 acres and extending all the way between West Mountain and Barrack Hill Roads. When his estate was appraised in 1936, the value of the entire 180 acres was \$8,958. In 2007, a single acre there might fetch a half million dollars.

Called in his *Ridgefield Press* obituary “one of (the) best patent attorneys in (the) United States,” Fraser probably built the house that the obituary described as a “beautiful summer home.” He was a benefactor of many charities in New York City and maintained his office and his winter home in Brooklyn (*see also* Fraser's Pond.)

Grosvenor Atterbury and John A. Tompkins designed the Eleven Levels house in 1907. Atterbury was a prominent Yale-educated architect who specialized in “weekend homes of the wealthy.” Several pictures of Eleven Levels were featured in a 1919 issue of *The Architectural Review*. (In May 2017, the 6,000-square-foot house is on the market for \$2.4 million.)

Fraser's widow, Rose McLane Fraser, sold the estate to Joseph M. Shapiro in 1941. A native of Russia, Mr. Shapiro founded in 1929 the Simplicity Patterns Company, long famous for its designs for home-made clothing. He headed the firm until the 1960's when he died. Shapiro sold the place in 1952 to Paul and Elizabeth Arnold, the creators of Arnold bread.

The Arnolds sold the estate to Jerry Tuccio in 1959. A year later Mr. Tuccio, who lived for many years in the main house, applied to the town Planning Commission for the 62 lots on 100 acres, at first called Highland Acres, but eventually called Eleven Levels. A protracted battle ensued between the officials and the developer over the number and size of the lots. During the debate, Mr. Tuccio maintained he was being unfairly denied his right to develop his land reasonably, and at one point uttered the declaration, much quoted at the time, “This is Ridgefield and not Russia!”

Eventually the subdivision was approved (around 1968), but it wasn't until eight years later that house-building there began. Other roads in the development include Armand Place, Green Lane, Old Wagon Road, and Trail's End Lane.

ELEVENTH LANE

Eleventh Lane, one of the First-through-Twelfth Lane roads off Manasco Road, is part of the Eight Lakes development.

ELLIOTT DRIVE

Some subdivision maps label the western end of Dowling Drive as Elliott Drive. Charles Elliott, who died in 1983, developed the property in the 1950's, but the name is not recognized as a town road name.

ELM BRANCH

The Elm Branch, a name long ago lost, refers to one of two brooks (often called “branches” years ago) that rise west of Silver Spring Road and east of the New York State line. Frequently used in the 18th Century as a landmark, the Elm Branch was first mentioned in a 1717 proprietors’ deed for land described as “lying on ye Elm Branch.” Subsequent deeds place the stream near the state line and a 1772 reference speaks of property at “the head of the Elm Branch” as being in Ridgefield, though much of the brook flows through Lewisboro.

The Elm Branch is probably the stream that rises in a swamp near Flat Rock Drive, winds southward for about a mile and enters New York State where it continues its southward flow into Scott’s Reservoir in Lewisboro, which serves Norwalk. The outlet of the reservoir flows into the west branch of the Silvermine River, which eventually empties into Long Island Sound. It may be no accident that the road in Lewisboro that parallels this brook is called Elmwood Road; the territory was probably well populated with elms years ago.

Once more common than it is today, the American elm has suffered from both insect pests and Dutch elm disease, but not to extinction. The distinctive vase-shaped form of the elm can still be seen, especially on back roads and in woods where, if spaced far enough apart, they have not caught the disease.

Ridgefielders caught a bit of “elm fever” in 1986 when the owners of a shopping center on Main Street wanted to cut down an elm to move their entrance to be more closely opposite Prospect Street. In the wake of a public outcry – right down to “Save the Elm” t-shirts, the plan was abandoned and Main Street’s last elm remained untouched for years. In 1986, “experts” claimed the tree would not last long anyway, but they were wrong. The tree survived 27 more years. However, by 2013, the tree was dying and in November that year, it was chopped down. And within a year, the state had started planning a re-aligned intersection.

Although most towns in the area, if not the nation, have streets named for the elm, modern-day Ridgefield has somehow managed to ignore this tree.

EQUIVALENCY LINE, THE

Occasionally an 18th Century deed will mention the “Equivalency Line,” a reference to the state line. As is explained more fully under The Oblong (*q.v.*), Connecticut exchanged land with New York in 1731. Connecticut got the Greenwich panhandle and New York got a one and three-quarter mile wide strip up the western side of Connecticut. The new state line – the present one – was called the Equivalency Line because it represented what New York received in exchange for its land. In other words, it marked the “equivalent” of the panhandle.

ETHAN ALLEN HIGHWAY

Ethan Allen Highway is the only road through Ridgefield that bears the same name in three states – unless one considers “Route 7” a name. (Several road names, such as West Lane and Oscaleta Road, cross one state line.) Ethan Allen Highway is, of course, Route 7, and technically bears that name all along its 312-mile length from Norwalk to the Vermont-Canada border. In some towns local names are used, such as Sugar Hollow Road in Danbury, and Danbury Road in Wilton and a short distance in Ridgefield.

According to *The American Guide*, a 1949 condensation of the famous WPA Federal Writers Project travel guide series, the road is called Ethan Allen Highway “because it passes through the Green Mountains (Vermont) where Ethan Allen (who was born in Connecticut) and his Green Mountain Boys fought for independence of Vermont from New York domination and at the same time put down Tory opposition during (the) Revolution and in 1775 launched their successful attack on Fort Ticonderoga.” However, *Connecticut*, the original 1938 volume written by workers of the Federal Writers’ Project, says, “US 7 is known as the Ethan Allen Highway because it was the route taken by the eager-eyed recruits from Connecticut who hurried north to join the Green Mountain Boys.” Take your pick.

In capturing Fort Ticonderoga from the British, the first victory of the Revolution, Colonel Allen uttered the now-famous words: “I demand it in the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress.” That remark rather annoyed Samuel G. Goodrich (Peter Parley), the 19th Century author and historian who was born in Ridgefield in 1793, four years after Allen’s death. Goodrich was rather reserved in recording the man’s feats. In *A Pictorial History of the United States ... for the Use of Schools and Families* (1843), he observed that “Colonel Allen, though a brave man, was not always exemplary in his language. Like many other brave men... he had defects in character. His declaration to the British officers savored strongly both of profanity and untruth.”

Goodrich, a man of morals innate in a New England minister’s son, reported that Allen’s wife was a “pious woman,” who taught her children “the truths of Christianity.” However, one daughter, “inclined to the same strange opinions of her father,” had openly professed not to believe in Christianity.

“When about to die, she sent word to her father that she wished to converse with him.

“‘I am about to die,’ she said. ‘Shall I believe in the principles you have taught me or shall I believe in what my mother has taught me?’”

“The father became agitated, his chin quivered, his whole frame shook, and after waiting a few moments, he replied, ‘Believe what your mother has taught you!’”

To Goodrich, the minister’s son, that statement was probably the high point of Allen’s life.

Ethan Allen Highway was so called at least by 1935 when it appears in *The Connecticut Guide*, published by the Emergency Relief Commission in Hartford. In Ridgefield today, Ethan Allen Highway is used as an address from the Wilton line north to the Route 35 intersection. From there to the Danbury line is Danbury Road. The road here has also been known as the Sugar Hollow Turnpike and the Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike.

EUSTIS LANE

Eustis Lane off Old Branchville Road serves a 1999 subdivision by John N. Sturges. Nearly 35 acres that had belonged to the late Alexander and Edwina Dick was divided into 11 lots.

Edwina Eustis Dick was a singer who spent nearly as much time helping others as she did working at her career. Born in New York in 1908, Mrs. Dick was one of the youngest singers to win a scholarship to Juilliard. A contralto, she sang leading roles with opera companies in New York, Philadelphia, Detroit, and other cities, and was a soloist with the New York Philharmonic and other leading orchestras, singing under Stokowski, Toscanini, Reiner, Iturbi, and Metropoulos. Her voice can still be heard on Sony Masterworks recordings.

In the 1930s, she worked with the Musicians Emergency Aid to help create jobs for unemployed musicians. During World War II, Miss Eustis performed more than 1,000 times during a two and a half year USO tour that took her to all five Atlantic and three Pacific theatres. She also sang before the Shah of Iran and King Farouk in anti-German propaganda concerts. After the war, she undertook a pioneering project at a Long Island hospital in music therapy for the mentally ill, which led to doctors' classifying music as "therapy." She also trained young musicians in the new field of music therapy, and the American Music Therapy Association offers an annual scholarship in her name.

Both locally and nationally, Mrs. Dick and her husband, attorney Alexander C. Dick, were active in Republican politics. She lived from the 1950s through the 1980s on Old Branchville Road, and died in Southbury in 1997 at the age of 88.

EVANS CIRCLE

Evans Circle is a non-existent road, shown on some maps of the mid-20th Century as running off the west side of Silver Spring Road near the Wilton line. The late G. Evans Hubbard of Wilton probably proposed it; he owned the land (and was a historian of Wilton and founder of The Wilton Bulletin newspaper). For some reason, his subdivision was never built, but the Hubbard family sold the land in the mid-1980's when it was developed as Southridge Court (*q.v.*).

EVERGREEN PLACE

A short dead-end road, Evergreen Place runs off Pheasant Lane, which runs off George Washington Highway in Ridgebury. It is part of the Scodon III subdivision approved around 1974 for Jerry Tuccio, and subsequently developed by Carl Lecher and others. There are evergreens in the area.

F

FACTORY POND

Factory Pond once existed east of Route 7, north of Topstone Road. The “factory” was David and Daniel Banks’ woolen factory, a successor to Hugh Cain’s fulling mill, which stood on the Norwalk River just about 100 feet north of Topstone Road. It began to be called a factory instead of a mill around 1839 when the term first appears in the land records in a list of debts against the property.

The Banks family, which had acquired the mill from Cain in 1789, had possibly expanded the business enough that it came to be considered a factory, the first use in Ridgefield land records of the term “factory” to denote a business. The pond stored the water to power the factory but the dam that held back the waters probably burst many years ago. Stone remnants of it are still visible in the river.

FAIRFIELD COURT

Fairfield Court is a short dead-end road off Manor Road at Ridgefield Manor Estates (*q.v.*). Probably named for the county in which Ridgefield is situated, the road was accepted by Town Meeting in 1961.

The county took its name from Fairfield town, the county seat years ago and once a much more significant seat of government than it is now. A portion of Westport and much of Bridgeport (the last county seat) as well as Redding were parts of Fairfield town in the 17th and 18th Centuries, before they became independent towns. The name, Fairfield, may have been simply descriptive of the town, settled in 1639, prompting one historian to observe that the name is “one of the rare evidences that the settlers had an aesthetic sense.” It could also have been named after Fairfield in Kent, England. (A Fairfield also exists in Worcestershire, but it comes from the word, Forfeld, with the less aesthetic meaning of “pig.”)

The old county system of government was abandoned around 1955 when the county commissioners were abolished by a vote of the state Legislature.

FAIRGROUNDS, THE

The annual Ridgefield Fair and Cattle Show, sponsored by the Ridgefield Agricultural Society, began in 1858 and lasted until 1881. The first fairgrounds—then for a one-day event—was on Gilbert Street. As the affair grew in popularity and size and lasted two days, it was moved to Governor Street at what’s now Veterans Park. Finally it found permanent home at the “Fair Grounds” east of Wilton Road West, opposite Olmstead Lane. By then, probably at least 1865, it was a four-day event — Tuesday through Friday — and was large enough so that, one year, 112 yoke of oxen were exhibited.

“It seems almost impossible to realize at the present time that such a number could have been assembled,” wrote historian George L. Rockwell in 1927, noting that when they lined up to parade into the fairgrounds, the oxen

extended from just south of Branchville Road down Main Street and Wilton Road West to the entrance opposite Olmstead Lane.

The fair in late September or early October—it varied from year to year—was a typical country fair, with exhibits of products, produce and livestock, music, food, and awards. An old awards list contains 31 categories for ribbons: field crops; grains; grass seed; vegetables; fruit; floriculture; bread; dairy; honey; preserved fruit; pickles; cakes; wines; ladies' industrials; fine arts; musical instruments; domestic products; farming utensils; poultry; sheep; swine; oxen; draught oxen; working oxen and steers; milch cows and heifers; thoroughbred stock; fatted cattle; stallions; colts; family horses; and road horses.

Rockwell reported that one of the more unusual attractions one year was a very early “automobile,” exhibited in the 1870s by a Stamford man named Simon Ingersoll. “The automobile may be described as being a large box set on small wheels, narrow gauge, and steam was the motive power,” he said. “The machine was driven up and down Main Street, exciting much curiosity and wonder. At the Fair Grounds, it was speeded around the track.”

The track, which appears on the 1867 Beers Atlas of Fairfield County as a “race course,” was designed for trotters. Remnants of the track were visible well into the 1950s.

While such fairs were fun, they also functioned as agricultural “conventions.” Farmers got to see the latest products—and mid-19th Century agricultural markets were booming with new machines, tools and seed varieties. They could hear lectures on improved farming techniques.

Equally as important, they also got to chat with a wider group of farmers, and could discuss and critique some of the modern-day advances. At a fair, “they saw, gathered up in a small compass, what was going on in the farmer’s world, and this within a single day or two,” said an 1860s book on farming. “Thus, they accumulated a fund of knowledge which they could not have acquired had they remained at home.”

Jared Nash, a farmer who lived on Silver Spring Road and whose 1864-65 diary exists, reported his family went to the fair each year. He had no comment on the event, just the weather. But in her diary, Anna Marie Resseguie was more critical. She wrote under Sept. 18 to 20, 1866: “Days of our annual Fair; rainy, small attendance, inferior display.”

The fair ceased operation in 1881, possibly because of competition from the Danbury Fair (which operated for more than a century where the mall of the same name now stands). The Ridgefield fairgrounds had included a sizable exhibition building, which was dismantled after the fair closed. True to the Yankee spirit of not wasting, the lumber from the building was used to build the Sperry livery stable, which stood across from the firehouse on Catoonah Street. However, one might wonder about the quality of the wood or the design: The building collapsed from the weight of the snow on its roof after a storm in January 1948.

The Fair Grounds was historic before the fair. It had been the location of the British overnight encampment after the Battle of Ridgefield in 1777. Today, the land for the fair and the British is occupied by homes on Wilton Road West and Soundview Road.

FAIRVIEW AVENUE

Probably named for the “fair view” of both town and West Mountain, Fairview Avenue was originally called Fairview Street and was part of Dr. Benn Adelmarr Bryon’s Bryon Park (*q.v.*) subdivision of around 1909. The road runs between Barry Avenue and Bryon Avenue. The area was covered with blueberries and blackberries around the turn of the 20th Century. Thus, it was probably farm land that was allowed to lie unplowed, with few if any trees to block the view.

FALLOW, THE

In 1856, Daniel Edmond deeded Esther Edmond parcels that included a “piece called the Fallow,” consisting of six acres near the Redding line and in the “11th School District,” or Florida District. That would place the land east of Route 7 about opposite Florida Hill Road. While “fallow” is generally used adjectivally to refer to a field that’s unplanted for a season or two, an old meaning was land that contained cut timber ready for burning. Also, in the old days land was often flooded to kill timber and brush to make it suitable for meadow, and recently cleared woodland was called a fallow.

FARM HILL ROAD

Developed by Judge Joseph H. Donnelly (*see* Donnelly Drive), Farm Hill Road is part of the Ramapoo Hills subdivision (*q.v.*), plans for which were filed with the town in 1956. The road, accepted by the Town Meeting in 1963, traverses pastures of the old Conklin dairy farm, operated from around 1928 to 1948. Irving B. Conklin Sr., who had purchased the place from Ernest O. Wilson, had about 100 cows and supplied much milk in town. Mr. Conklin sold the farm to John Sturges, who operated it until around 1953.

FARMERS MILLS

A single deed – from 1869 – for a Ridgefield land transfer from one New Fairfield resident to another describes the 3.5 acres as being in “Farmers Mills District.” Judging from the names of surrounding property owners, the parcel was in Farmingville and the name was probably a misunderstanding or transcription error for Farmingville.

FARMERSVILLE

Another interesting variant of Farmingville, Farmersville is first found in an 1841 deed from Henry L. W. Burritt to Elizabeth Burritt for 16 acres in what is today Farmingville. In 1841 “Farmingville” was a rather new term and may not have been solid in the minds of Ridgefielders. Henry Burritt, who lived in Whitehaven, Md., may have been unfamiliar with the term and misunderstood it.

The fact that the town clerk at the time put quotation marks, unusual punctuation in land records of the era, around “Farmersville” when recording the deed indicates that the term may have been unusual and he wanted to emphasize that it was so written in the deed. However, it appears that Farmersville might simply have been an accepted, though little-used, variation of the then-new place name, Farmingville; the name shows up at least two more times in the land records, both in 1852, 11 years after its first appearance. One deed refers to land at “Farmer’s Ville” and the other says “Farmer’s Ville District.”

FARMINGVILLE

Farmingville is the section of town that extends generally east of Great Swamp to the Redding line. The name first appears in an 1839 deed and has also been applied to a school district and to the road (*q.v.*).

Probably the earliest definition of the school district that includes Farmingville (and parts of Limestone District) occurs in 1784 when all of the town was divided into five full school districts and two half districts. (Full districts had to pay to “keep” school at least three months a year while half districts had to do so only six weeks. For the other six weeks of a term, the other half of the district – which was in an adjoining town – was responsible.)

At this time informal names were not officially applied to the districts, and they were called by numbers, such as the Third School District. Farmingville, which was the Fifth School District in 1784, was defined as: “To begin at the south east corner of the Third District [around Danbury Road near Fox Hill] to run as far northerly on the east line thereof as the turn-of the river [near Danbury Road at Buck Hill], then to run east to the river, then along the river to Ressegues saw mill [south of Little Pond], then to run easterly a strait line across , the south end of Burt’s Pond [Great Pond] to Redding line, then southerly along s’d line, to the Cross Highway [Topstone Road] leading to Kains [mill], then westerly taking in the houses off the south side of said highway [Cain’s Hill and eastern Farmingville Roads] to Nathan Burr’s – including it – then westerly to a strait course to the southeast corner of the Second District [around Danbury Road and Grove Street], then northerly on the east line of the Second District to [John] Waters barn [near Fox Hill], then westerly to said southeast corner of the Third District at the river where it began.”

By 1867, the town had 14 school districts and half districts, and Farmingville was numbered the 12th. At this time the district was smaller, the northern boundary running parallel to and south of Haviland Road and the south line parallel to and north of Florida Hill Road (see map).

Throughout the 18th Century and into the early 19th Century, before it had a name, this territory was frequently referred to in deeds simply as “east of the Great Swamp.” By the 1840’s and 1850’s, the term Farmingville was in common use.

The name referred to the fact that the district, one of the flattest areas in this hilly, rocky town, was very popular for farming.

The suffix “ville” is almost solely a post-Revolutionary naming technique (one of the few exceptions is Charlottesville, Va., named in 1762). According to George R. Stewart in his *Names on the Land*, “in a very short time, -ville became so well Americanized that few people thought of its ever having been anything else.” Even the Pennsylvania Germans were fond of it, and thus we find such odd combinations as Trumbauersville, Kleinville, and Schwenkville.

Stewart adds that “no feature of American naming has provoked fiercer attack than the prevalence of this suffix. It has been called ostentatious and lacking in good taste,” particularly by those who disliked linking English names with French suffixes. But the French, notes Stewart, fought on our side in the Revolution. “To reject -ville is to deny something very deeply rooted in the American past.”

Farmingville was home not just to farms. Several industries were situated here, including a busy limekiln that once stood on the north side of Farm-

ingville Road just before New Road and another at the present intersection of Lee and Limekiln Roads. Down on the Norwalk River several important mills were established, most notably Cain's or Banks' mill (*see* Cain's Hill Road). A cider mill was located somewhere off New Road.

In the early 1800s, Farmingville was also known as Woodchuck (*q.v.*)

FARMINGVILLE ROAD

Farmingville Road is an old highway, extending from Danbury Road to the junction of Lounsbury and Cain's Hill Roads. However, it is obvious from the geography and from old maps that Cain's Hill Road and Topstone Road are actually continuations of Farmingville Road. In fact, Farmingville Road was once a main route from central Ridgefield to western Redding, via Topstone Road to Topstone (Sanford Station), and is shown as such on Blodget's 1792 map of Connecticut.

The Farmingville Road of 1900 was rather different from today's route in other ways. Originally, it extended across present Lee Road to Limekiln Road and across that road back to the modern highway at the south end of Limekiln Road. It thus skirted the northern edge of the main body of Great Swamp, an area years ago called the Reed or Ready Swamp (*q.v.*).

The first straightaway across the swamp was built around 1914. Folks in Farmingville called it "Bailey's New Road" because E. N. Bailey was first selectman when it was built. Robert A. Lee, who grew up in Farmingville in the early 20th Century, could recall as a young man having to walk to town from his family's home at the corner of Farmingville and New Roads. When he approached Blackman Road and saw the long, straight, flat strip on a hot summer's day, "it was very discouraging," he said.

That stretch of Farmingville Road has also been rather troublesome to past highway officials because of its instability. Laid across constantly settling swamp, the road suffered from potholes, breakups and weak edges. In the 1970's alone, this writer saw three multi-ton trucks, including a couple of cement mixers, that had rolled over into the swamp. Each had come too close to the edge of the pavement which sank from the weight and tipped the rigs into the swamp.

Farther east, Farmingville Road in front of the present school, used to run a rod or so south of its present route. The road was moved to the north when the "new" schoolhouse was built at the turn of the 20th Century and a little red 19th Century schoolhouse was torn down. The latter stood at the west edge of what is now the driveway to the modern Farmingville Elementary School. Two stone pillars, erected by the late Louis Morris Starr, mark the western end of the old road that became the driveway to Mr. Starr's home on the corner opposite Cain's Hill Road.

The "new" schoolhouse was given to the town by Governor George Lounsbury with the provision that church services be conducted in it every Sunday (few were actually held there). Lounsbury had grown up in Farmingville (*see* Lounsbury Road), and apparently had no love for the little red schoolhouse that he had attended.

In the 1940's, after the district schoolhouses had been consolidated into the bigger central schools, the schoolhouse was sold to Alexander Alland, a photographer, who moved it to West Mountain in North Salem, N.Y. He used it as a studio for his photography work, and later it became a dance studio and then an

artist's studio. It stands there today, on the road to South Salem from Mountain Lakes Camp.

FARMS

Not too many years ago and for most of Ridgefield's history, farms covered much of the town. The more significant of these were handy for describing localities. "That place is just beyond the Jones farm," someone might have said in giving directions.

In a few cases, farms were significant enough that their names lasted longer than their owners. Bennett's Farm, as in the road and the old school district, dates back to before 1740. Bates Farm Road, a newer name and a much smaller farm, is still a place name, even though its namesake long ago turned into part of the Ridgefield Lakes development.

In the 18th Century, there were several sizable farms whose names appeared fairly frequently as localities in old records then, but eventually disappeared from use, such as Governor Fitch's Farm (see *Fitch's Farm*) and Knapp's Farm (q.v.) Among the many 19th Century farm names that appear in land records as landmarks were the Crane Farm, the Dean Farm, the Keeler Farm (probably several of them), the Limestone Farm, and the Society Farm – the last, an interesting name that I've not yet been able to research.

FARRAR LANE

Farrar Lane was named not for the more famous of the two Farrars who lived here, but for a certainly noteworthy one. The short old road, running between Tackora Trail and North Salem Road, recalls Sidney D. Farrar, father of Geraldine Farrar, the Metropolitan Opera star; he owned a farm bordering the road.

Born in Paris, Maine, Sidney Douglas Farrar was named for the then governor of the state, Sidney Douglas, a friend of Farrar's father. Farrar became a baseball star when the sport was in its fledgling years. By 1879 he was playing with the Philadelphia Nationals, one of the first professional teams. Being a ballplayer paid not nearly the salary then that it does now, so Mr. Farrar was a storekeeper off-season in Melrose, Mass. There he spent most of his life and there he and his wife, Henrietta, had Geraldine, their only child. In 1886, the girl was but four years old and, according to Mr. Farrar's obituary in *The Ridgefield Press*, "she having shown unmistakable musical talent, Mr. Farrar gave up baseball and devoted himself very strenuously to giving his daughter a musical education."

His efforts and her talents proved successful, for after an education in Paris and Berlin, Geraldine made her debut at the Royal Opera House in Berlin in 1901 – at the age of 19 – playing Marguerite in "Faust." She was soon named a member of the Berlin Royal Opera, but joined the Met in 1906, singing there until 1922. When she retired at the age of 40, Miss Farrar made her home in Ridgefield (chiefly at her father's prompting) and had houses on West Lane and later New Street.

Mr. Farrar was a prominent citizen of Melrose which, before it became a city more than a half century ago, was governed by a board of selectmen, much like our own. At one time, Mr. Farrar ran for a seat on the board. "There was a great drive to defeat him," The Press once reported. "In the southern part of town there were some factories and Mr. Farrar had always been a friend of the

factory worker. The election progressed through the day and at 4:30 in the afternoon, when the factories were let out, 600 men marched to the polls and swept their friend, Mr. Farrar, into office.”

Mr. Farrar and his wife were both talented singers and would often appear in community musical programs. She died in 1923 and in the same year, Mr. Farrar moved to Ridgefield, buying the North Salem Road farmhouse and 30 acres from Joseph T. Hubbard and calling it “Farrar’s Thirty Acres.” He became active in the community, and served for a while as a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank. He died in 1935. When his estate was probated, his possessions included a 1927 Locomobile sedan and 200 shares of International Telephone and Telegraph stock, then worth about \$1,375.

His daughter sold the place to Mrs. Mary L. Olcott, who named the farm High Pastures. Real estate broker James Hackert acquired the farmland in the 1960’s, subdivided it and named the road serving the lots High Pastures Court.

Farrar Lane existed long before Mr. Farrar came to Ridgefield, and appears on Clark’s 1856 map of Fairfield County. According to some deeds, it was formerly considered to be the southern end of Mamanasco Road.

FIELD CREST DRIVE

Field Crest Drive runs off the west side of lower Wilton Road West, apparently along or across the crest of a field. The late Charles W. Weitzel Sr., founder of a plumbing firm of that name, subdivided the property, long used for farming. Mr. Weitzel was the town’s part-time sanitarian for many years, and retired around 1970. He died in 1973.

The name appears first on a 1955 map for Parting Brook Estates, but development of the property did not begin until the 1960’s. The first section of the road, ending in a cul-de-sac, was accepted by the town in 1968. The road was extended to join with Silver Brook Road around 1976.

FIFTH LANE

Fifth Lane is another of the “numbered” dead-end roads at Lake Mamanasco, part of the Eight Lakes development.

FILLMORE LANE

Fillmore Lane, a short dead-end road off Ritch Drive, was named by and for Leslie D. Fillmore of Stamford who, in 1956, bought and developed three lots on this road. He purchased the land from Harold Ritch, the subdivider. A name memorializing a Stamford builder of several houses hardly seems very suitable. The town accepted the road in 1963.

FINCH DRIVE

Finch Drive extends between Chestnut Hill Road and Harding Drive at the Chestnut Hills subdivision in Ridgebury, and was named for Lewis J. Finch (1916-2003), its developer. The road was begun around 1958 and accepted by the town in 1963.

Mr. Finch, a Ridgefield native, had been a real estate agent and a developer for many years. In 1956 he established Lewis J. Finch Real Estate, which operated on Main Street for many years. Over his career, he developed some 800 acres in Ridgefield, including Rolling Hills, Hunter Heights, Colonial Heights,

and Chestnut Hills, plus several small shopping centers, such as 590 Danbury Road. He had also subdivided in area towns such as Lewisboro and Westport.

Nicknamed "Bub" because he was the only brother to three sisters, Mr. Finch served as chairman of the Republican Town Committee, as president of the Ridgefield Boys' Club, a longtime Lions Club member, and a board member, trustee and president of the Ridgefield Library.

FIRE HILL

Fire Hill is an oval-shaped hill, half way between Great Pond and Umpawaug Pond. Most of the hill, which reaches an elevation of nearly 700 feet above sea level, is in Redding, but the southwest slope crosses into Ridgefield along Route 7, opposite Stonehenge Inn.

One explanation for the name was offered to us by the late Emma Goeppler, a long-time resident of West Redding (who once operated the old cider mill at Topstone). She said years ago, ashes from the steam locomotives that passed along the southeastern foot of the hill would regularly catch the hillside fields and woods afire. "That section burned almost every year," she said. She recalled meeting a neighborhood woman who told Mrs. Goeppler that her insurance company "won't take a customer who lives on Fire Hill."

Her story is entertaining, perhaps explaining why the name Fire Hill has survived. But the origin was not train-started fires, for Fire Hill was being called that at least three years before the railroad came (in 1850) to the Norwalk River valley. In a deed written in 1847, David and Elizabeth Platt and Harry and Eliza Ann Gilbert sold Bradley Hull 10 acres "at a place called Fire Hill."

One tradition is that the hill served as a location for signal fires during the Revolution or at some other time, perhaps when American Indians inhabited the region. However, Fire Hill is by no means the highest hill in that vicinity (both Topstone Mountain to the south and Great Pond Mountain to the north are taller). If it were a Revolutionary signal fire location, it is strange that it took so long after the Revolution for the name to appear in the land records.

The name might simply recall some large conflagration on the hill, or perhaps some landowner's custom of burning off the vegetation regularly. The early settlers did this. According to the Rev. S. G. Goodrich, writing in 1800: "In the first settlement of the town, the inhabitants annually burnt over the high rough land for the benefit of the wild feed that grew on them, which was a great injury to the old trees and entirely prevented the young from growing; but since that practice has ceased, our rough lands have a most beautiful thriving young growth coming on, which promises plenty of timber."

FIRE HILL ACRES

Fire Hill Acres is the original name for the 61-lot subdivision, now commonly called Stonehenge Estates, on the southwestern slope of Fire Hill off Route 7. The subdivision map, filed in 1963, includes Jerry's Court (named for subdivider Jerry Tuccio, but now called Druid Lane), Riverside Drive, Longview Drive, and Bobby's Court (named for Jerry's son, Robert).

FIRE HILL ROAD

Fire Hill Road skirts the top of Fire Hill, extending from Pickett's Ridge in Redding southward into Ridgefield, then along the Ridgefield town line and

back into Redding, emerging at Simpaug Turnpike. Some maps label the Ridgefield section as “East Fire Hill Road.”

FIRST LANE

First Lane is the northernmost of the “number lanes” off Mamasco Road, most of which were part of the Eight Lakes development (*q.v.*).

FISHER LANE

Fisher Lane is a short dead-end road running easterly off Old Trolley Road, just north of George Washington Highway, at Stone Ridge Estates (*q.v.*). The Board of Selectmen chose the name to honor Charles R. Fisher, the town engineer in the 1990s and 2000s who designed the subdivision that became Stone Ridge Estates.

FISHKILL ROAD, THE

Sometime during the Revolution, the land of James Morehouse on North Salem Road near the New York State line was declared forfeit to the state. Morehouse evidently was among the Loyalists who fled the colony. In 1783, John Lawrence, the treasurer of the state, sold Morehouse’s property – 50 acres, a house, and a barn, noting that “the road from Ridgefield to Fishkill (is) running through said land.”

This is the only reference in Ridgefield’s land records to North Salem Road’s being considered the road to Fishkill, a Hudson River Valley town near Beacon, about half-way between Peekskill and Poughkeepsie. The property description was probably written by a state official who considered Fishkill the most important town the traveler would come across if he continued along this highway.

FITCH’S FARM

Sometime during the 1700’s, Thomas Fitch IV, governor of Connecticut from 1754 to 1766, acquired at least 132 acres in Redding. Fitch’s Farm or Governor Fitch’s Farm, as it came to be known, extended along northern Route 7 north of Great Pond, probably in the vicinity of modern-day Laurel Lane and the Laurelwood and Ridgefield Crossings senior citizen communities in 2007), Ridgefield territory that was until 1786 part of Redding.

Born in 1700 to a founding and wealthy family of Norwalk, Thomas Fitch IV was the first Norwalk man to graduate from a college (Yale, 1721). He served as a representative from Norwalk and later as chief justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court. Although he led Connecticut during the difficult French and Indian War, he may be more famous as the father of Col. Thomas Fitch V, reputed to have been the inspiration for “Yankee Doodle Dandy.”

According to *The Birth of Yankee Doodle* by Ferenz Fedor of Norwalk (Vantage, 1976), Colonel Fitch led a rather tatterdemalion group of volunteers that hiked to upper New York in 1755 to fight the French and Indians. As the men marched into Fort Crailo near Albany with feathers in their caps, “the volunteers from Norwalk inspired Dr. Shockburgh to write the words to the now famous ‘Yankee Doodle’ song, which became one of the most famous marching songs ever written,” Mr. Fedor reported.

Governor Fitch died in 1774 and his farm passed on to his heirs. One of these was a son, Jonathan Fitch (1723-93), who apparently got into financial

difficulties. The Ridgefield land records report that in 1787, Samuel Squire of Fairfield sued “Jonathan Fitch of New Haven, sheriff of said New Haven County,” to recover a 126-pound debt, and obtained as settlement from the County Court 132 acres of land – Fitch’s Farm. Squire subsequently sold the land to Thomas Sherwood, noting that it “is commonly known by the name of Governor Fitch’s Farm, lying in the northwest corner of the town of Redding, lately sett off to the township of Ridgefield.”

A year earlier (1786), Sherwood and others petitioned the state legislature that a piece of Redding be annexed to Ridgefield because most of its inhabitants found it “inconvenient ... to attend public business in said Reading.” William Blodgett’s map (published in 1792, but not up-to-date) shows a triangular wedge of Redding extending nearly a mile into Ridgefield, north of Great Pond. Other boundaries on the map were not very accurate, but the document gives a clue as to the location of both the farm and the annexed territory.

The terms “Governor Fitch’s Farm” and “Fitch’s Farm” appeared fairly frequently in the land records in the 1780’s and 1790’s, but thereafter disappeared; it was probably later called Sherwood’s Farm (*q.v.*). Although the farm had been called Fitch’s, the governor probably never lived there. He may have maintained the land for growing crops, sending up crews from his Norwalk home to work the fields.

FLAGGY BOGGS

In 1717, both Norwalk Samuel Smith and Timothy Keeler received proprietors’ grants for land at “ye Flaggy Boggs.” These two deeds, the only ones mentioning the name, give no clue as to the location. The word “flaggy” means “abounding in flags or reeds,” a flag being a type of large, coarse grass. Such a place could be found almost anywhere in Ridgefield, though doubtless this locale was somewhere near the village since that was the first area settled. Quite possibly, it was on the fringes of the Great Swamp – perhaps it was the area later called Reed Swamp (*q.v.*), situated in the triangle created by Lee, Limekiln and Farmingville Roads.

As a term descriptive of furniture material, “flag” was common in the 19th Century. When Harvey K. Smith borrowed \$2,232 from Amos Smith in 1845, he put up all his property, including the contents of his house, as mortgage collateral. Among the household possessions was “one set (of) flagg bottomed chairs.” It was like saying cane-bottomed chairs.

FLAT ROCK

Flat Rock is an early Ridgefield name that remains alive today in a somewhat inappropriately named road. The term was in use as early as 1716 when the proprietors deeded James Benedict five acres “lying near ye end of ye Flatt Rock Ridge.” A year later Thomas Hauley, the first minister, received land on the south side of “ye Flatt Rock Hill.”

Even the rock itself is mentioned occasionally as in the mid-1700’s deed in which Ebenezer Nash of Norwalk (probably today’s Wilton) sells Oliver Whitlock a house and 40 acres bounded on the north by “the Flatt Rock.”

The Flat Rock District includes approximately the areas on both sides of Wilton Road West (Route 33) from the south end of Main Street to Wilton. It takes its name from a massive stratum of rock that surfaces mostly between St. John’s Road and Wilton Road West. It can also be seen near the site of the Flat

Rock Schoolhouse, which stood just off the east side of the former “Twin Maples” rest stop (*q.v.*) on Wilton Road West. Portions of the rock ledge can also be seen along the eastern end of Whipstick Road at Nod Road and on southern Olmstead Lane.

The “Flat Rock” stratum enters Ridgefield below ground at the town’s southwest corner, surfaces here and there, and last appears above-ground on Prospect Ridge at the Congregate Housing on Prospect Ridge. A small outcropping can be seen in the cellar of the old house, the foundation of which was erected around the rock to avoid the expense of having it removed. From there the ledge sinks under the Great Swamp and disappears until Danbury where it surfaces for the last time in the south part of the city. This “rock” is said to be part of the same shelf on which Manhattan Island’s many skyscrapers have been built.

There were several other localities associated with Flat Rock, such as the **Flat Rock Hill** and **Ridge** mentioned above. A 1717 deed mentions land “near ye **Flatt Rock Brook**, east of ye Rhode.” This is the east branch of the Silvermine River, also later called the Beaver Brook, which flows southward east of Wilton Road West. The Rev. Daniel W. Teller wrote in 1878 that an area around Soundview Road was called **Flat Rock Woods**.

Jamie O. Shafer owned for many years what may be the oldest extant house in the Flat Rock District. The center-chimney, fully restored farmhouse was built in the 1730’s by Joseph Osborne, son of Richard Osborne, one of the very early settlers of the town. The home on Wilton Road West has been called “the house on Flat Rock Ridge,” and is just south of one of the main surfacings of the Flat Rock. (The house used to stand close to the road, typical of an old house, but the Allen and Jamie Shafer moved it back a bit in the 1960s.)

Flat Rock was for many years a school district, although it is not certain when the district was formed and picked up the name. The first deed reference occurs in 1862 when a description mentions “Flatrock School District.”

In the 18th Century school districts were usually referred to by numbers. The Flat Rock District did not exist by 1784 when the First and Fourth School Districts covered almost all of southern Ridgefield, except the Branchville corner. The Flat Rock School District may have been created around 1845; that year that Hiram L. Seymour deeded the committee of the Ninth School District land “at the southwest corner of my farm” at Flat Rock. The deed makes no mention of an existing schoolhouse, as was the custom if a land acquisition was for a replacement schoolhouse. The schoolhouse that was standing by 1856 was situated at what would have been the southwest corner of Seymour’s farm, so this deed may have been Seymour’s providing land for the first Flat Rock Schoolhouse.

By 1867, “Flat Rock District,” also called District Nine, included all of Wilton Road West, St. John’s Road, southern Silver Spring Road, and southern Wilton Road East.

The schoolhouse remained in operation until 1915 when the district was consolidated with the center district and the young scholars attended classes in what is today the “old high school” on East Ridge (now called the Richard E. Venus Municipal Building). Pupils were “bused” there in a horse-drawn wagon operated by Edward R. Scribner. The schoolhouse was razed in 1928.

FLAT ROCK DRIVE

This dead-end road, beginning at lower West Lane near the New York State line, should probably not have been named Flat Rock Drive since the territory it traverses was never in the Flat Rock District. Developed by Perry Katz, the road took its name from the Flat Rock Corporation, the organization formed in 1929 to build the Silver Spring Country Club. Mr. Katz had acquired his land from this corporation. The road was accepted by Town Meeting in 1965.

FLAT ROCK ROAD

Maps published in 1912 and 1936 label today's Wilton Road West (Route 33) as "Flat Rock Road." In a 1975 interview, Joseph Bacchiochi (1906-92), an old-time Ridgefielder, also remembered the road's being called that.

Since the road goes smack down the middle of the Flat Rock District, Flat Rock Road is perhaps more fitting than Wilton Road West, a cumbersome name frequently confused with Wilton Road East, and vice versa. Originally, this highway was called "The Country Road" (*q.v.*), a name appearing frequently in pre-1750 deeds.

A map in the town clerk's office, showing the property of Dr. Royal C. Van Etten in 1929, labels St. John's Road as "Flat Rock Road." This is probably a surveyor's error.

FLORIDA

Florida is one of the real mysteries among Ridgefield's old place names. To this day, no one knows its derivation. The first mention in the Ridgefield land records occurs in an 1827 deed in which William Edmond of Newtown sold Robert C. Edmond three acres "at a place called Florida," bounded on the east by the Redding line.

George L. Rockwell wrote in his *History of Ridgefield* (1927) that "Florida District is mentioned in the early records of Ridgefield. The author has endeavored to ascertain why this district was thus named, but for 40 years no information as to the nomenclature of this portion of our town has been forthcoming. Old residents, whose grandparents lived in Florida before the Revolution, have been unable to shed any light upon the matter, and so reasons for this district's being called Florida must be left to the imagination or to conjecture."

Here are some possible explanations:

- The United States in the early 1800's was shaped such that the distance from north to south was greater than the distance east to west. So was Ridgefield, even more so than today; at that time the town extended all the way from Wilton north to New Fairfield. Florida District was situated in the southeast corner of Ridgefield (the Florida school district originally included Branchville), just as the territory of Florida was in the southeast corner of the United States. Some imaginative person may have found a name-worthy similarity there.
- The peninsula of Florida was ceded by the Spanish to the United States in 1819. It is possible that someone thought this a significant event and decided to name the school district to commemorate it.
- Someone named "Florida" may have been a prominent character in the neighborhood. However, no surname "Florida" exists in our land records and a careful eye to thousands of deeds written during more than a century preceding the 1827 deed uncovered no given name of Florida,

which presumably would have belonged to a woman. The closest was a “Philetta” Blackman (later Philetta Buttery), who owned land in this district as early as 1825. By slurring and drawling Philetta, it’s possible to come close to the sound of Florida. But the possibility seems remote, and “Florida,” the Ridgefield name, is consistently spelled correctly as in the state name in the land records.

- Some prominent resident of Florida District may have been born in Florida territory. However, an exhaustive search of thousands of death records (which usually listed the place of birth from the 1840’s on) failed to uncover one Ridgefielder who had been born there. This does not exclude the possibility since the Floridian may have moved on from here before his or her death, or the birthplace was simply not recorded in our records.
- The reverse connection could have occurred. For example, there is a locality in New Canaan called “Michigan” supposedly because two early New Canaanites moved to the state of Michigan and later inherited some property in their old Connecticut neighborhood. That land came to be called the “Michigan Lots,” because the owners lived in Michigan, and later the whole area around them became “Michigan.” New Canaan has a Michigan Road today.
- Someone from the district could have been a hero – even a victim – of the First Seminole War (1816-18) in Florida. However, Mr. Rockwell, who extensively researched Ridgefielders’ military records, could find no one who served in that campaign.
- The word “Florida” is derived from words meaning “flowers,” and can mean “flowered” or “flowery.” An unusual abundance of wild flowers in the area might have prompted someone with knowledge of Spanish to coin this name for the locality. Jill Kelley, a resident of Florida Hill Road in the late 20th and early 21st Centuries, suggested that it may have been the territory’s wealth of mountain laurel that inspired the name. Or perhaps it was the population of the common dogwood, appropriately named *Cornus florida*.
- Florida could have been a corrupted form of an American Indian word for the area. However, I could find no record of an Indian word even remotely resembling Florida. What is more, words beginning with an “F” sound were extremely rare among Indians of the Northeast.
- Florida was a “half school district” when defined by the town in 1784 (though not at the time using the Florida name). The other half of the district was in the town of Redding. It may be that “Florida” originated there, even though the word does not appear anywhere in the geography of that town. Interviews with persons familiar with Redding history and a cursory search of Redding histories and maps has uncovered no clues. However, Redding land records have not been searched, and the answer may lie there.
- The name could have originated from some off-beat, long-forgotten and unrecorded incident of the past. In the town of Meriden, there is a neighborhood called “Oregon.” A history of that town says, “two small boys used to run away to this fairly wild region of Meriden and say they had been to ‘Oregon.’ The name was picked up by townspeople and thus

the name Oregon Road was given to the new road built through that district.”

- Last, but perhaps not least, Florida was “one of the exotics which were favored in the post-Revolutionary period” for place names in Massachusetts and other states, says George R. Stewart in his book, *“American Place Names.”* Thus, it may simply have been a “fad” name applied to the area so that it – like Farmingville, Ridgebury, Flat Rock, etc. – would have a name of its own.

It is curious that most of the early deeds – from the late 1820’s to the 1840’s – that refer to Florida speak of land close to or bordering on the Redding line, and apparently on the hill east of Florida Road, not far south of Florida Hill Road. Thus, the original place called Florida seems very limited in territory.

A schoolhouse existed in Florida District as early as 1761, and probably stood near the corner of Florida and Florida Hill Roads where later schoolhouses were situated. It is described in 1761 as “near Platt’s Mill,” which stood at the northwest corner of today’s intersection of Florida Hill Road and Route 7. School districts were set up for the first time in 1773 and in a 1784 definition of districts, Florida was labeled the “Second Half District,” encompassing the whole southeast corner of town. The term “Florida District” was in use by 1835, when it appears in a deed.

By 1867, a separate district had been established at Branchville, a growing community since arrival of the railroad 17 years earlier. Florida was squeezed in between Branchville and Farmingville, still a half-district whose schoolhouse was shared by Redding children. The later schoolhouse in Florida District, also called the 11th School District in the mid-1800’s, was located on the south side of Florida Hill Road, a little west of the junction with Florida Road and just about on Mrs. Kelly’s property. The last of the Florida schoolhouses was torn down around 1934 and was the only outlying one-room schoolhouse made of brick.

Among Connecticut localities named after states, Florida is found only in Ridgefield and formerly in Redding as it applied to that half district. Other state names that are place names in Connecticut include Kansas, Maryland, Nebraska, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington (for a reason other than the state), and Wyoming, besides the aforementioned Michigan and Oregon.

FLORIDA HILL ESTATES

Florida Hill Estates, a subdivision of 36 acres into 31 one-acre lots off the north side of Florida Hill Road, is served by Ridgewood Road (from Florida Hill Road to Harvey Road) and was developed around 1960 by William P. Connors and Harry Richmond, who also did the nearby Meadow Woods (*q.v.*).

FLORIDA HILL

According to the US Geological Survey, Florida Hill is the little round hill, 620 feet above sea level, situated southeast of Florida Hill Road about 1,200 feet west of the Florida Road junction.

FLORIDA HILL ROAD

Florida Hill Road, one of our more narrow and winding thoroughfares, is also one of our oldest roads, and was once a major route eastward to northern Fairfield, now Redding.

The road existed by the 1740's; on Dec. 6, 1744, when the selectmen officially laid out the right of way for the path now called Florida Road, they said it terminated on the north at "ye Mill road." The Mill Road was undoubtedly Florida Hill Road's common name through much of the 18th Century because it led from the center of town to a grist mill, erected by Peter Burr in 1737 at the northwest corner of Florida Hill Road and Route 7, now occupied by the stone house called Moongate (*q.v.*). It later became the site of Couch and Sanford's iron foundry (*see* Abbott's Mill Road, Couch's Station, Miller's Pond, and Moongate Trail). That it was a major route eastward is confirmed by Samuel Huntington's map of Connecticut, drawn in 1792, which shows only major highways and clearly depicts Florida Hill Road leading from the center of Ridgefield to Redding.

The extension of Florida Hill Road into this neighboring town is called Old Redding Road. Although Florida Hill and Old Redding Roads are connected dog-leg fashion by Route 7, this was not always so; it used to be a single highway. In former times, Florida Hill Road veered northward just after crossing the bridge over the Norwalk River and just before reaching Route 7. It then turned east to join with Route 7 exactly opposite Old Redding Road (this route existed almost a century before Route 7 was even there). The northward jog was removed around 1926 when Nathaniel L. Miller, Moongate's first owner, and others petitioned the town to do away with the turn north and to have Florida Hill Road meet Route 7 straight-away from the bridge.

When Florida Hill Road picked up its modern name has not been determined. It was not so called before 1880.

FLORIDA ROAD

Florida Road is another very old highway. It was formally laid out in 1744, but may have existed before the right of way was defined.

Old town records indicate Florida Road was a portion of a highway that began at the Wilton line (probably more or less on the path of modern Route 7), ran north through Branchville, across the Cooper Brook in the vicinity of the intersection of Branchville Road and Route 7, and then north along the present path to Florida Hill Road. In the distribution of lots in the proprietors' Sixth 20 Acre Division of grants in 1745, Florida Road was called "ye Cedar Mountain Road" because Cedar Mountain parallels the road to the east.

Florida Road was probably the 18th Century precursor of Route 7. North of Branchville the modern-day Route 7 traverses territory that was probably too wet or steep for the settlers to handle.

Thus, Florida Road would have been a portion of a main highway between Norwalk and Danbury. It connected with Florida Hill Road, which, probably at the Florida Hill-Old Redding Road junction, joined with a third road on the present path of Route 7, which led up to Simpaug Turnpike. From there travelers would probably go either to Starr's Plain and over Moses Mountain, or eastward to and over Brushy Hill, into Danbury. Or they could have traveled a little more eastward, up present-day Route 53 into Bethel, then part of Danbury.

There have been reports that one, possibly two taverns, were situated along Florida Road in the 1700's and early 1800's to serve passengers of Norwalk-Danbury stagecoaches.

Florida Road has long been one of the most picturesque back roads in town, its old-fashioned charm marred only by high-tension power lines, which cross the road about midpoint in its length and travel up the old railroad bed to Ridgefield village. When the new transmission line was proposed in the mid-1970's to replace lower-voltage lines on wooden poles, residents of Florida Road and other nearby areas raised a storm of protest. As a result, the size of the poles was reduced and the color toned down.

Florida Road's flavor and quiet were also threatened for some 40 years by plans for the new Route 7 expressway. The plans were shelved in the 1990s.

Florida Road was known by that name as early as 1900 when a book of photos, called *Glimpses of Ridgefield*, was published and contained a picture so labeled.

FLY BROOK

Fly Brook refers to a stream that was apparently noteworthy for the insect population in its vicinity or for the speed of its waters (a meaning of "fly"). The term is mentioned in several deeds written between 1815 and 1828, but the locality has not been pinpointed. However, based on the names of landowners in deeds in which the name was cited, Fly Brook appears to have been in the vicinity of Nod, Branchville and Whipstick Roads.

The name is unusual; a Fly Pond in Norwich is the only "fly" place name mentioned in *Connecticut Place Names*. However, in Westchester County, there is a Fly Brook at Whitehall Corners near the Muscote Reservoir, about 15 miles to the west of Ridgefield. Another Fly Brook is found in Minnewaska State Park, near New Paltz, N.Y.

In *American Place Names*, George R. Stewart says the name is rare, "the insect apparently not being of sufficient note to occasion naming." In places where there were many Dutch settlers, it was sometimes an Anglicization of *vallei*, the word for valley. Stewart says Fly, Ohio, was so called chiefly because it was easy to pronounce and spell.

FOLLIOTT'S RIDGE

Folliott's Ridge was applied to an area west of North Salem Road in the vicinity of Barrack Hill Road. The name, found in an 1803 deed, is derived from Bartlet Folliott, who owned the land in at least 1785 when this area was still being called "Toilsome" by townspeople.

FOOTE'S HILL

Main Street from near Casagmo's entrance north to Pound Street was called Foote's Hill in the mid-1800's, according to Silvio Bedini. Eli Foote, a blacksmith, was born in 1799 in Weston. In 1823 he married Mary Edmond of Florida District and two years later bought the house and blacksmith shop of Caleb Grumman on Main Street (possibly the Coffey place opposite the Casagmo entrance) for \$1,200. Mr. Foote died of "acute gastritis" in 1864, aged 65.

FORE HILLS

When Nehemiah Keeler deeded five acres to sons Nehemiah Jr. and Adon-erham in 1834, he said the land was “at a place called the Fore Hills.” This locality was probably just north of our town line in the Ridgebury section of Danbury (then part of Ridgefield), west of Briar Ridge Road. The term may have referred to the fact that the hills there are “before” the more elevated regions to the north (such as Jo’s Hill, *q.v.*).

FOREST DRIVE

Forest Drive, a short dead-end road off White Birch Road, was developed in part around 1962 by a firm called Hanco Inc. It was probably named for the woods in the neighborhood.

FORGE POND

Forge Pond was the body of water at the southwest corner of North Salem and Craigmoor Roads, so called at least in the 1830’s because an old iron works was powered by the water stored there.

In 1789, Elias Reed, a part owner of the gristmill on the shore of Lake Mamanasco, gave Timothy Keeler Jr., Nathan Dauchy and Elijah Keeler “the privilege of making a dam...and raising a pond of water for the purpose of carrying on an iron works ... on land southwest of Reed’s house” for seven shillings and six pence per acre annually. The pond was on the stream from which the waters of Lake Mamanasco flow. Reed’s gristmill would have already used the water to turn its wheels, but waterpower for an iron works would require a second pond downstream.

Four years after the Reed agreement, the heirs of Isaac Keeler, whose gristmill at North Salem and Sherwood Roads had been burned by the British in 1777, sold another Isaac Keeler, of North Salem, the old mill site “for the purpose of erecting an iron works.” The iron works was probably a large-scale blacksmith shop, a small factory for turning pig iron into tools, axles, tires, straps, hinges, and other devices that farmers would use. The waterpower was probably needed to turn equipment needed to work the metal.

The works was in place by 1790, when a deed for neighboring land mentions it. However, the operation was evidently short-lived, for by 1797, deeds were referring to land “where the iron works lately stood.” Perhaps it, too, burned down.

Although the iron works apparently didn’t last long, Forge Pond was being so called in 1833. By then, however, it was storing power for a gristmill and a saw mill operating on the site of the old iron works.

In modern times this pond has been called Perch Pond. However, since the dam long ago deteriorated to the point where it will not hold water, there is no pond today, only a large swampy area on the south side of Craigmoor Road that’s gradually turning into a pasture. The Garden of Ideas, a private nursery/arboretum/art gallery, created a boardwalk trail through the swamp, which was open to the public in the early 21st Century.

FORT HILL

“Fort Hill” has intrigued many students of Ridgefield history, especially Silvio Bedini of the Smithsonian Institution, who devoted nearly two pages to it in his 1958 book, *Ridgefield in Review*. He was unable to explain the term’s

origin, although he assumed it was connected with the Revolutionary War – as have many other people.

The name appears on Beers 1867 map for what appears to be a structure on the northern corner of Barrack Hill and North Salem Roads. Around the turn of the 20th Century, James F. Kennedy purchased property across North Salem Road and, having heard old-timers call the section Fort Hill – or having seen the atlas reference, he named his house Fort Hill, erecting round, stone gate pillars with the inscription, “Fort Hill, 1777,” on each. He clearly believed the name referred to a Revolutionary War edifice or event, probably related to the Battle of Ridgefield in 1777; battle skirmishes occurred along this stretch of roadway.

However, Fort Hill had no connection with the Revolution – even though there was a military outpost up on “Barrack” Hill.

The earliest book of the town land records contains a deed in which the proprietors give Ebenezer Smith “seven acres and three roods, lying in Titicus, north of Fort Hill.” The deed was written Feb. 15, 1721 — 55 years before the Revolution.

So whose fort was it?

“Fort” in old senses meant a strong place, rocky and high, with a view over a wide terrain, or a place where animals lived – synonymous with “den.” These meanings, however, seem unlikely sources of the name.

Fort Hill could have referred to some protective place erected by the earliest Ridgefield settlers as a defense against the American Indians. This, too, seems unlikely since there was no known trouble with the native people in this part of Connecticut at the time Ridgefield was being settled. Moreover, the location was not close enough to the village to provide a quick retreat for the main concentration of population. Nor was there any record of the settlers’ building such a structure.

Western Connecticut was at the eastern reaches of 17th Century Dutch settlements along the Hudson River. The eastern boundary of a land grant called “van Cortlandt Manor” was not precisely established and may have included territory that is now Ridgefield. There is evidence that in the 1600’s, the Dutch had fort-like structures around the distant perimeters of their grants; they may have had one here.

The most likely derivation, however, was an Indian fortress. At least 20 towns in Connecticut have localities named Fort Hill and, as far as is known, these places are named for Indian forts in all but two cases. In addition, the location here was a logical one from the Indians’ standpoint. According to tradition and some archaeological evidence, the Indians inhabiting our region had encampments both at Lake Mamasasco (summer) and near the modern village (winter) before the settlers came. Fort Hill would have been almost equidistant from the two campsites, making it handy in case of attack (assuming the Indians had some advance warning). Much of the length of North Salem Road follows an old Indian trail (Tackora Trail [*q.v.*] probably predates the corresponding segment of North Salem Road).

The site of the fort – probably a little way up Barrack Hill Road – would command a good view of the countryside to the north and east. And presumably, attacks would have come from the north, where the Mohawks lived. In Newtown, the nearest community to Ridgefield having a Fort Hill, the

Pootatucks are supposed to have erected their fort on the Housatonic River to protect themselves from Mohawks, reports a history of that town.

If the fort were Indian in origin, its design must be left to conjecture. Indians of the Northeast built both round and square or rectangular walls around the protected area. Some walls were quite tall, others man-high. Usually, they were made of vertically placed sticks, which would explain why there are no known remnants of the fort. Pinpointing its location might be interesting – and painstaking – work for local archaeologists.

The term, Fort Hill, appears in land records from time to time throughout the 18th and early 19th Centuries. Oddly enough, a name that lasted so long is recalled today only in Mr. Kennedy's misdated gateposts.

FOSTER'S MILL POND

"Foster's Mill Pond" and "Foster's Pond" appear in several deeds from the early 1840's, and probably referred to Lake Mamanasco (*q.v.*). In the early 1800's, Jonah Foster owned several mills in the Scotland District, including a good portion of the gristmill at Mamanasco, a sawmill at North Salem Road opposite Craigmoor Road, and a saw mill and fulling mill along Ledges Road. He was dead by 1849 when his "estate" was selling its interest in the mills. The names evidently died with him.

FOUNTAIN, THE

Today when we mention "the fountain," everyone thinks of the Cass Gilbert Fountain (*q.v.*) at Main Street and West Lane. But in the 19th Century, another "fountain" existed a little to the north on Main Street.

In 1837, Isaac Lewis sold Abner Brush one third interest in "a spring or fountain of water with the appurtenances thereof, situated on my homestead, on the west side of Town Street, and west side of David Hurlbutt's home lot, including the one third of lead pipes laid in the aqueduct [*sic*] in which said water is now conducted from said fountain to the west side of my dwelling houses, together with the privilege of passing and repassing through my land to repair said fountain or water works, and aqueduct, and pipe or pipes, and to lay down new ones – and replace the same as may be found necessary from said spring to the west side of my dwelling house as aforesaid, and the same privilege from thence southwardly through my garden to the highway, where said pipe is now laid."

A year later, another document in the land records indicates that at least five people – Smith B. Keeler, Abner Brush, Isaac Lewis, William Hawley, and Abijah Ressiguie – were using the fountain. Ressiguie owned the Keeler Tavern across the road from most of the properties apparently being served by this very early Ridgefield water system. Platt Brush, who operated a carriage factory on the site of the present First Congregational Church, got permission to connect to the water system in 1838. (That factory is now the Big Shop – *see* Big Shop Lane.) How long this water system lasted and how many people it eventually served is not known.

FOUNTAIN, CASS GILBERT

If there is a single landmark by which visitors remember Ridgefield, it's probably the Cass Gilbert Fountain. Standing in the triangle of the intersection

of Main Street and West Lane, the fountain is seen by all who enter the village from the west or south, and by most who pass through.

Made of Italian marble, the fountain was erected in the fall of 1915 by Gilbert, who bought what is now the nearby Keeler Tavern Museum in 1907 and lived there until his death. Cass Gilbert designed many major buildings, including the US Supreme Court in Washington, the Woolworth Building – once the tallest building in the world and still one of New York’s most beautiful “skyscrapers,” the US Custom House in New York, the main libraries of St. Louis and Detroit, and the state capitols of Minnesota, Arkansas, and West Virginia. He also drew the general plans for the Universities of Texas and Minnesota.

Said one biographer: “Although almost all of Mr. Gilbert’s buildings were intended for strictly utilitarian purposes, it was characteristic of him that he insisted upon grace and beauty as much as practicability and therein lay one of the highest attributes of his genius. This quality is seen not alone in the Woolworth Building, but in scores of other buildings which he designed.”

Cass Gilbert not only designed buildings but also held high offices: He was the president of the National Academy of Design, and of the American Institute of Architects. He was appointed chairman of the Council of Fine Arts by President Theodore Roosevelt, and was reappointed by Presidents Taft and Wilson.

A native of Zanesville, Ohio Gilbert was born in 1859, son of Samuel Augustus Gilbert, a brigadier general in the Union army. He grew up in St. Paul, Minn., and studied architecture at MIT. He opened his first office in St. Paul in 1883, but soon moved to New York City. He died in 1934 while on one of his frequent trips to England, where his work was much appreciated. Only three years earlier he had been elected to the Royal Academy of Arts, the only American to be so honored since John Singer Sargent, the painter.

In his obituary, The London Times called him “the most remarkable architect of his generation in America... His range and versatility were extraordinary. Like his old master, Stanford White, he was attached to no traditional style. He was both an architect and an executive, able to direct staffs and carry out his own designs, and from the beginning his work bore the impress of his personality.”

Whether his personality can be seen in the fountain is a moot point. The structure features a raised bowl spouting streams of water (using a recirculating pump). The base provided a pool of water to passing horses in the day when they were the main mode of transportation. The fountain is at the junction of two main roads into town, and the highest point on Main Street (800 feet above sea level), ideally positioned to offer refreshment to horses that had made the long climb up Wilton Road West or West Lane. Neighborhood dogs also took advantage of the water.

Over the years both the man and nature have taken their tolls. The surface of the fountain is no longer smooth and finely carved, having been worn by years of weathering, including acid rain. And over the years, errant automobiles, often with drivers a tad intoxicated, have hit the fountain. A hit-and-run motorist’s car shattered the structure one summer in the early 1980’s, and it had to be carefully pieced together and glued with special epoxy by Dr. Robert Mead. Ironically, Dr. Mead lived next to the Keeler Tavern in a brick house that Julia Gilbert, Cass’s widow, had erected as a monument and museum to her husband’s works. For some reason, that plan fell through, and the “museum”

was sold as a house. Recently, the Keeler Tavern bought back the Mead house and now use it as part of the museum complex.

Because it considers the fountain a “hazard,” the state highway department has repeatedly suggested that it be moved. However, town officials and townspeople have vehemently opposed the proposal, most recently after the worst of the accidents involving the fountain. In June 2003, a Stamford man who had been drinking crashed his Hummer into the structure, smashing it into dozens of pieces. It took a pair of professional repairers many months to put it back together at a cost of more than \$100,000. While some recommended the fountain be moved – or replaced with a non-breakable plastic version – a town commission agreed to keep it where it was, but to raise it higher off the ground and improve hidden bumpers around it.

Various devices for protecting the fountain from the harsh winters and the harsher cars have been explored over the years. Architect John Kinnear designed a cover, which is erected in the cold months to protect the stone. Various reflectorized sign-and-fence combinations have been put up facing west, the direction most of the crashing autos come from. But despite careening cars, stone-eating acids, and hard-hearted state officials, the fountain remains in its triangle, perhaps the smallest structure ever designed by a great man who was world famous for big buildings.

FOUR CORNERS

The intersection of Barrack Hill Road and Old West Mountain Road was long known as the Four Corners. The name first appears in an 1839 deed in which Czar Jones sold Jared Mead eight acres “near the ‘Four Corner’ so called.” Four years later, Lewis C. Hunt sold Horatio Mills five acres “near the ‘Four Corners’ and known as the Ben-Burt lot” (*see Burt’s Lane and Burt’s Pond*), and thereafter the name was always in the plural form, *Corners*.

While only two corners exist at this intersection today, the junction was four-way until the early 20th Century. A road, almost opposite Old West Mountain Road, went northerly down the side of West Mountain to Tackora Trail, intersecting a little south of Old Sib Road. This road was shown on maps as late as 1908.

Like almost all other old four-way road junctions, Four Corners was an offset intersection. In fact, few symmetrical four-way intersections exist in town. Most occur along Route 7, the old Sugar Hollow Turnpike, a road that was not built until after 1800 when most of the town’s major roads had long been established. Three symmetrical intersections exist along this road: at Haviland and Pickett’s Ridge Roads, at Cain’s Hill and Topstone Roads, and at Branchville Road. (One used to exist at Florida Hill and Old Redding Roads (*see Florida Hill Road*.) The four-way intersection at Danbury, Farmingville and Cops Hills Road was also offset until the late 1980s when the state moved Cops Hill and Farmingville Roads moved opposite each other.

In the Northeast, a symmetrical four-corner intersection (with corners each forming 90 degree angles) is uncommon outside of cities, partly because the design was not as necessary in the 18th and 19th Centuries as it is today for traffic control. It was unusual for two travelers to meet at a country intersection in the 18th Century and since they would be moving so slowly anyway, there was virtually no chance of them or their animal-drawn vehicles colliding. Thus, in those days, offset intersections were as easy to negotiate as symmetrical ones.

Yet how many modern-day motorists and town planners have cursed the likes of the intersection of Prospect Street with East Ridge and Grove Street, or Catoonah Street and Bailey Avenue with Main Street? The latter was so confusing in times of heavy traffic that town officials in the early 1970's decided to make Bailey Avenue one-way so cars could not enter this dog-leg from Bailey Avenue.

Intersections often occurred more by happenstance than by design, especially in a town so full of hills, ridges and streams. New roads sprang off old roads as the need arose — to gain access to newly settled territory or as short cuts. Often a path between fields became a road if it turned out to serve some popular purpose. Usually, roads followed property lines to avoid splitting tracts in two; exceptions were made, however, to avoid swamps, sharp drops, or other geographical features difficult to negotiate.

Four-way intersections often result from the crossing of two main or through highways. In an area as hilly as Ridgefield, roads usually followed the contours of the land — valleys and ridges — spreading out like tentacles from the village located near the center of the township. There was little occasion for highways to intersect at 90-degree angles.

The term Four Corners lasted into the 20th Century. In his boyhood (up to 1925), Karl S. Nash of Main Street went berrying with his family at Four Corners. The name might have survived until today if one of the roads had not fallen out of use. The old road down to Tackora Trail was officially abandoned by action of an October 1941 Town Meeting, but the road had long been little used, probably because it was so steep and difficult to negotiate and maintain.

At least ten other towns in Connecticut have places named "Four Corners."

Also note that the four-corner intersection at Titicus has also been called Four Corners, or Titicus Corners (*q.v.*).

FOURTH LANE

This is another of the short, dead-end roads off Mamasasco Road at Eight Lakes.

FOX DRIVE

Fox Drive is a short, dead-end road off Aspen Ledges Drive at the Ridgefield Knolls. Edgar P. Bickford, a surveyor on the project, said the name resulted from the surveyors' noticing many red foxes in the vicinity when development was beginning around 1959.

The Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich reported in 1800 that Ridgefield still had both red and gray foxes, even though, he said, the likes of deer, beaver, bears, wolves, panthers, and wildcats were "extinct" by then. Today, both species as well as the "extinct" beaver and deer, plus bobcat, occasional bear, and perhaps a wildcat (mountain lion), are found in town. Wolves are still "extinct."

The gray fox, which lives in almost every part of the United States, is smaller than the red fox, and is quite shy and secretive; consequently, it is more rarely seen. It favors swamps and woods as opposed to the open lands frequented by the red fox. Gray foxes are short-lived — 18 months maximum, 11 months average — but make up for it in fertility: 50 pairs can produce 225 pups in the spring. The gray fox feeds chiefly on mice while the red is omnivorous — and as a result has been considered a pest by farmers. Unlike the red fox, it can climb trees; the gray fox is the only wild canine that can do that.

Red foxes will attack even cows and horses if hungry enough, and are fond of poultry. They will also eat sweet corn and fruit, like plums, as well as larger insects, such as grasshoppers. They are also common carriers of rabies.

FOX FLAT

Fox Flat was a 19th Century name for the flatland on the west side of North Street, south of and opposite Pine Crest Drive. First mentioned as “Fox Flat, so-called” in an 1835 deed, the name also turned up in deeds from the 1840’s and 1850’s. The area, remarkably flat considering the lofty hills in the immediate neighborhood, was probably the bottom of a lake a thousand or so years ago. In the 18th and 19th Centuries, red foxes on the hunt no doubt frequented the flat.

FOX HILL

Fox Hill is a fairly modern name for the hill, 740 feet above sea level, to the west of Route 7 along Bennett’s Farm Road (formerly Maplewood Road), in Bennett’s Pond State Park. In 1914, Col. Louis D. Conley, who had just retired as a tinfoil manufacturing executive in New York, built his retirement home – more like a mansion – at the summit of Fox Hill, calling the place Outpost Farm because it was to be an outpost from the hectic city and business life.

More as a hobby than a business, he began the Outpost Nurseries. By his death in 1931, he had amassed some 2,000 acres of nursery land in northeastern Ridgefield. (Conley is profiled in a separate Who Was Who on this Old Ridgefield group).

His house later became the Fox Hill Inn, opened by Fred Barker in 1946, and operated from 1961 to 1970 by John Yervant, who sold the property to IBM. Faced with damage from vandals and with insurance risks, IBM razed the mansion in 1975. Today, thanks to the town, the state owns it (*see* Bennett’s Pond State Park).

The name Fox Hill does not appear in the land records before 1890 for this locality, so the name is of fairly modern origin.

FOX HILL LAKE

One of the so-called “Ridgefield Lakes,” Fox Hill Lake is just west of and 200 feet lower than Fox Hill. It is an artificial lake, created by the Pequot Realty Company of Bridgeport in the mid-1920’s. Its waters flow northerly into the Bennett’s Ponds, from there into the Saugatuck River and Saugatuck Reservoir, situated in Redding and Easton. From there, the water flows into Saugatuck Harbor in Westport, and Long Island Sound.

The land under the lake was originally meadows and swamp.

Small lots surround the lake. Many of the original homes were built as summer cottages for people from New York City. Most are now winterized and used year-round.

FOX HILL VILLAGE

Fox Hill Village is the name that David L. Paul of New York City finally selected for the town’s first residential condominium development, on Danbury Road north of Farmingville Road. Construction of the 286 units began in the early 1970’s, and was completed in 1977.

It was originally to be called Oreneca Village because the region to the east (rear) of the 28-acres was once called Norrins Ridge (*q.v.*), a corrupted form of

Oreneca. Also known as Tackora, Oreneca was an American Indian leader who signed several of the early deeds of land to settlers.

However, after residents of Oreneca Road, on West Mountain, complained that their mail would be misdirected to the condominiums, Paul considered "Outpost Village" because the property had been the site of the old Outpost Inn, founded by Col. Louis D. Conley (*see* Outpost Pond). In fact, Paul had planned to use the old inn building as a community center, but it burned in a mysterious fire as construction of the project was about to begin. Outpost Village was also rejected because "Outpost" was still a business name used by the real estate holding firm that descended from Outpost Nurseries.

Finally, Paul chose Fox Hill, named for the site of Colonel Conley's house and center of Outpost Farm and Nurseries. Unfortunately, the condominium project has only this tenuous relationship with the true Fox Hill some two miles away, and the name is not really suitable.

When he named the alleys, sidewalks, and lanes in Fox Hill Village, Paul went on a botanical binge. Following is a list of the "lanes" and "paths" there: Cottonwood, Lime, Juniper, Melon, Nectar, Honeysuckle, Greenbriar, Persimmon, Olive, Sugar Maple, Forest, Edelweiss, Daisy, Cottonwood, Blackberry, Apricot, Plum, Raspberry, Sandalwood, Vine, Teaberry, Orange, Apple, Blueberry, Quince, Cypress, Dogberry, Elderberry, Grape, Hollyberry, Juneberry, Kumquat (!), Meadow, Nettle, Lemon, and Redwood. There is also Frog Hollow, Quarry Corner, Hilltop Court, Stone Court, and Drive, Kiwi Corner, Outpost Court, and Island Path.

Fox Hill Drive is the main route from Danbury Road through the property and back to Danbury Road. This was the original path of Danbury Road until the 1920's when the state straightened the highway. The little stone bridge (or its predecessors) that traverses the Norwalk River (Ridgefield Brook) on Fox Hill Drive was known to the settlers as "Island Bridge" as early as 1717.

An interesting aside is the fact that Fox Hill Village was the site of the last known "billboard" sign in Ridgefield. The sign stood along Danbury Road, between the highway and the pond, and had been erected to advertise the Outpost Inn in the days before the town had banned the use of billboard signs. One Thursday soon after Paul purchased the property, The Ridgefield Press published an article that mentioned the fact that old sign there was the last billboard in town. An hour or two after the paper came out, Paul saw the story, and immediately ordered one of his workmen to fire up a bulldozer and knock down the sign, whereupon he called an editor of the paper and proudly announced that Ridgefield was now a town completely without billboard signs.

FOX HILLS

Long before there was a "Fox Hill," there were "Fox Hills" in Ridgebury. In 1802, Theophilus Benedict of Danbury sold 12 acres "being the west part of my farm, including what I call Fox Hills and sheep pasture." This was the first recorded use of fox as a place name here, and the wording suggests that Theophilus coined the name.

Fox Hills continued to be used, at least through 1846. However, an 1859 mortgage for land here used "at Fox Hill" in the description, and two 1876 deeds mentioned land "at Fox Hill, so-called." All referred to territory in the vicinity of Shadow Lake and Beaver Brook Roads, west of Briar Ridge Road in northern Ridgebury. The area was probably noted for its fox population.

FRANKLIN HEIGHTS

Franklin Heights is a small, 1960's subdivision of 11.5 acres between Barry Avenue and Nutmeg Court, which roads serve the lots. Developer Lewis J. Finch named the subdivision for Professor Fabian Franklin and his daughter, Margaret, who owned the property early in this century.

Born in Hungary in 1853, Professor Franklin was an unusual man, talented in several seemingly unrelated fields. During his lifetime he was a civil engineer, surveyor, professor of mathematics at Johns Hopkins University, editor of *The Baltimore News* and later associate editor of *The New York Evening Post*, and author of several books on economics and Prohibition. At his death in 1939, *The New York Times* wrote in an editorial: "The scientist, economist, and journalist were different facets of a harmonious personality combining extraordinary gifts of mind and heart, vibrant with learning, wit and a broad humanity. Dr. Franklin was beyond question one of the great conversationalists of our day and worthy to be compared with the giants of the art, not excluding his favorite Lord Macaulay."

In the 1920's Margaret Franklin roomed at the home of Dr. Henry W. Allen on Main Street, (later the Sheehan place, razed in the early 1980's to make way for the Ridgefield Library expansion). In the interest of good health, she liked fresh air and slept outdoors, summer and winter. Her bed was in a specially constructed wire cage, with a canvas cover, fastened just outside her bedroom's double window on the north side of Dr. Allen's house. Her sleeping in this cage in mid-winter presented a rather unusual sight, according to those who saw it.

FRANK'S CORNERS

Frank's Corners is an old name of uncertain origin for the intersection of Ridgebury, Spring Valley and Mopus Bridge Roads. It was in use in 1912.

FRASER'S POND

Fraser's Pond is on the north side of West Mountain Road, a little east of Eleven Levels Road, and was probably created as part of the Eleven Levels estate. The pond is named for Arthur C. Fraser, a noted patent attorney, who amassed the 180-acre estate and lived there for many years (*see* Eleven Levels).

FREEHOLDER'S CORNER

Freeholder's Corner is an unusual term that first appears on the land records in a 1734 deed for land far away from the corner itself. The deed, from Joshua Lobdell to Recompense Thomas, was for property on the Danbury line. At that time the boundary between the two towns was somewhat unclear so the two parties had to refer to the nearest known and certain marker – at Freeholder's Corner. This known bound was described in a deed as being in a line from a small tree at Umpawaug Pond in Redding north to "a monument called ye Freeholder's Corner, being a birch tree with a heap of stones laid about it, and well-known..." The line then ran northwestward several miles up to Ridgebury.

The location of Freeholder's Corner is precisely defined in perambulations of the town as the junction of the boundaries of Ridgefield, Danbury and Redding, which today is near the east end of Laurel Lane. A perambulation was a walking of the town lines by officials (perambulators) of the two townships. They did not survey the lines, but merely checked to see that the boundary markers – rocks, monuments, trees, or pipes – were standing in place. The state

law requiring that towns periodically perambulate their boundaries was repealed in the 1980s, but by then Ridgefield was rarely obeying that law. The last perambulation was in 1975, and it had been the first in decades.

The first perambulation to mention this name occurred in 1786, and the term was transcribed then as “Freehold Corner.” Perambulations in 1792, 1800, and 1808 referred to either Freeholder’s or Freehold Corner.

A freeholder was someone who owned at least 40 shillings’ worth of property, free and clear, and thus had a right to vote in certain elections and meetings. In 1750, meadowland in Hartford County was being assessed at 15 shillings per acre; upland pasture at eight shillings. A person owning three acres of meadow or five of pasture thus met the 40 shilling requirement to be a freeholder. In fact, to own real property virtually meant one could qualify to vote.

But why was this corner called Freeholder’s as early as 1734? A possibility is that land in this area was of uncertain ownership and had simply been claimed by a number of people or was owned by squatting. The corner was north of the land Ridgefield proprietors had bought from the American Indians and may have been south of the land Danbury owned in the early 1700’s. It was also in the northwestern corner of Redding – originally Fairfield – and again Fairfield’s jurisdiction over this area was in question. Thus, being free and possibly unclaimed territory in the early 1700’s, tracts there may have been acquired by simply staking out claims.

FROG’S POINT

A peculiar name, Frog’s Point first appears in the land records in an 1842 deed in which Darius Holly mortgaged to Hanford Sellick three acres “on the Mountain at Frog’s Point so called.” An 1843 deed refers to six acres “on the West Mountain near Frog’s Point.” The locality seems to be somewhere near the intersection of Peaceable Hill Road and Peaceable Ridge Road.

Although the name probably was a reference to the amphibian, it’s also possible that it was slang for a Frenchman or Dutchman who lived or owned land near the point. Frog has been used as a term for a Dutchman since the 1600’s. The French were contemptuously called frogs or frog-eaters because of their taste for the legs of this creature. Interestingly enough, the Dauchy family, of French origin, owned land for many years at or near Frog’s Point.

FULLING MILL LANE

Fulling Mill Lane, which extends from Cain’s Hill Road to New Road, is named for Hugh Cain’s fulling mill, erected in 1771 on the Norwalk River at the corner of Route 7 and Topstone Road – a site the lane overlooked before the trees returned (*see* Cain’s Hill).

A fulling mill fulled, a process most people today know little about. “When woolen cloth came off the loom, it had a loose weave, was dirty, and generally unattractive,” wrote Martha and Murray Zimiles in *Early American Mills*. “Fulling was the process that... cleaned, felted and shrank the cloth. Cloth was placed in a vat of water with some detergent or caustic substance such as animal urine or fuller’s earth. The cloth was pounded, wrung, and turned, again pounded and wrung until the desired consistency was attained.”

In ancient times, such as in Rome, the cloth was stamped like grapes with feet. The word “full” is derived from the Old French, *fuler*, which means to

walk or tread upon. The common surname, Walker, is derived from this occupation.

According to the Zimiles, the first water-powered fulling mill in America was erected in 1643 and by 1810, there were nearly 1,700 of them recorded. Like many, Cain's fulling mill was later modernized and expanded to include weaving, and by the 1840's was being called a factory instead of a mill. But who would like to live on "Factory Lane"?

There was at least one other fulling mill in town and another mill that did fulling on the side.

Fulling Mill Lane, accepted as a town road in 1964, was developed by Harry Richmond and William Connors, who also did Meadow Woods and Florida Hill Estates.

FURNACE POND

In 1853, Maria Couch gave the heirs of Thomas Couch "the Pond Lot so-called," which was bordered on the west by "Furnace Pond." The water was probably what's today called Miller's Pond (*q.v.*), west of Route 7 just north of Florida Hill Road. In the 1800's the Couch family operated an iron foundry here, centered on a furnace (*see* Couch's Station).

G

GAY ROAD

Gay Road, a short path between lower Wilton Road East and Spectacle Lane, is an old but now little-used highway, which appears on maps as early as 1856. It takes its name from Ulysses Gay, who lived nearby.

A native of Towners in nearby New York State, Ulysses Simpson Grant Gay was born in 1869, the year his namesake was elected president. In 1900, he came to Ridgefield, buying a house and 20 acres from Anna Seymour and establishing a farm, which he held until his death in 1953 at the age of 83. The house, which stands on the east side of lower Spectacle Lane almost opposite Gay Road, may have been built sometime between 1856 and 1867 by S. M. Seymour, who was probably the husband or father of Anna.

Mr. Gay had a large family, and many descendants still live in the area. As recently as the 1980's, the Gay family had large reunions here.

The road leading from near the main highway (Wilton Road West, Route 33) to this place probably became known as Gay Road because years ago the Gay farm would have been the only major landmark on the route.

Just south of the Gay homestead is an old road running eastward, an extension of Gay Road across Spectacle Lane. This has been variously called Gay Road or Old Gay Road, and may have once connected to Nod Road. Thus, as a shortcut from the southwest part of town to the south central "Nod" area, it may have been a more popular road in the 19th Century than in the 20th.

Gay Road was closed for a couple of years as the town replaced a bridge carrying the road over the east branch of the Silvermine River (really at brook at this point). The bridge was completed in 2016.

GAY'S HILL

Gay's Hill is a subdivision of 15 acres into seven lots on the east side of Spectacle Lane. Developer Marcelino Lavin of Wilton, who also did Table Rock Estates (*q.v.*) on St. Johns Road, received town approval for the subdivision in 1977.

Although one of the surveys of the property notes that this area was called Spectacle Brook Ridge, at least in the 1940's, Mr. Lavin in titling the subdivision chose to recall Farmer Gay, who once owned part of the property (*see* Gay Road). Mr. Lavin acquired the land from the Henri Doll. Mr. Doll, who headed the Schlumberger-Doll Research Center here, acquired the house and much of the land from Arthur W. Northrop, who had Ferndale Farm there from around 1890 to the late 1930's.

GEORGE WASHINGTON HIGHWAY

George Washington Highway is one of several roads honoring the first president, but the only one for which the name carries real significance. It commemorates a visit by the then commander of American revolutionary forces, but the commemoration once had more mileage attached to it.

According to Silvio A. Bedini in his *Ridgefield in Review*, “George Washington’s visit to Ridgefield is probably the greatest bone of contention among local historians, some of whom believed that Washington passed through Ridgefield at least twice and possibly a third time. In addition to Washington’s stay in Ridgebury, it is believed that Washington visited Colonel Philip Burr Bradley’s home (on Main Street at what is now Ballard Park) on one or more occasions.”

Bedini reports that “it was in the course of Washington’s fourth journey through Connecticut that he stopped in Ridgebury. He was to meet the Comte de Rochambeau, commander-in-chief of the French forces in America, and he arranged for an interview in Hartford to take place 20 Sept. 1780. Washington traveled from his headquarters...in Bergen County, N.J., and met with General Benedict Arnold in Peekskill.”

Washington then probably entered Ridgefield from North Salem, via either Mopus Bridge Road or North Salem Road. He followed Ridgebury Road north to the village of Ridgebury, arriving on the afternoon of Sept. 19. Most of the party, including Marquis de Lafayette and Colonel Alexander Hamilton, stayed the night at Ensign Samuel Keeler’s tavern, which once stood north of the Congregational Church, while Washington himself spent the night at the home of Dr. David Burr, south of the church (and long ago demolished).

When he left the next day, the general probably took the road eastward from Ridgebury to Danbury that is today called George Washington Highway in his honor.

However, Ridgebury Road – from North Salem Road north to Ridgebury Congregational Church – was once also called George Washington Highway to include almost the entire route General Washington followed through town. That name was first applied around 1932, when it was chosen to commemorate the general during the celebration of the bicentennial of his birth. In 1959, First Selectman Leo F. Carroll had the original name of Ridgebury Road restored to the highway. Despite this action, deeds were being written into the 1990s still calling Ridgebury Road “George Washington Highway.”

Both Ridgebury Road (*q.v.*) and George Washington Highway are very old roads, dating back to before 1750 and probably to the first settlement of Ridgebury in the 1730’s or before.

Washington Street at Peatt Park off Danbury Road and Old Washington Road have no connection with George’s having been at or near those places. In fact, Old Washington Road (*q.v.*) may recall someone other than the president.

At any rate, it is probably fitting – though confusing – that the name of the most famous American has been applied to more roads in Ridgefield than the name of any other person. Three people connected with Washington’s Ridgebury visit – Lafayette, Rochambeau and Hamilton – have also found their way into Ridgefield’s geographical names, the first two as roads at Peatt Park and the third as a road at Westmoreland.

GILBERT STREET

Gilbert Street is a fairly modern name for a very old road – so old, in fact, that it was probably among the first to be laid out by the early settlers of the village in the 1710’s and 1720’s. It served as the main route from the village to the forests and later pastures of West Mountain until the construction of Barry

Avenue (New West Lane) in the 1840's provided a shorter and better path via Catoonah Street to the mountain.

A 1900 map labels Gilbert Street as Ramapoo Road (*q.v.*), showing its close association with the old highway to West Mountain that still exists. However, by 1908, the section of Ramapoo Road from Main Street to High Ridge was being called Gilbert Street, according to a map published that year.

Who was the namesake? Probably William Henry Gilbert, who lived at the intersection of New and Gilbert Streets. For a long time, he had one of the few houses along the street and was probably the most notable personality on it. Born Farmingville in 1842, William H. Gilbert spent most of his life as a carpenter. However, he was also a partner in the old Gilbert mill at Titicus, the scene of a minor and brief deluge with which he was connected.

George L. Rockwell told it this way:

The Flood

"The Titicus Flood occurred in September 1866, caused by the bursting of the dam on New Pond. The Gilbert brothers, Aaron B. and William H., built the dam in order to store water for their mill farther down in Titicus. People predicted that the pond would never fill up. On the day of the cataclysm, Aaron Gilbert had been called away. It was raining torrents and a great volume of water was pouring over the dam, and William Gilbert went over to look at it, as he had some fears whether it would stand. There was a tremendous rock on the west end of the dam that the Searles brothers...who built the dam, had drawn in with a team of oxen.

"Mr. Gilbert had just returned from an inspection of the east side of the dam, as he thought that end would go first if the dam should break. He had scarcely reached the west side and was standing upon the above-mentioned rock when he felt it teeter beneath him. He jumped off just in time, as the dam at that moment burst at this point, and a great torrent of water poured down the valley. The flood was four or five feet high... The few witnesses related that the column of rushing water resembled a tidal wave. The flood immediately carried away a barn and Jabez Gilbert's tannery office, along with much of his tanning equipment.

"Charles Smith 2nd lived in the house by the Titicus Bridge along North Salem Road at Mapleshade Road. Mrs. Smith's mother was downstairs in the basement baking bread. Her daughter called her, and she came upstairs just in time, for she had barely taken her foot from the last step before the flood carried away the stairs, as it flooded the basement...

"Philip N. Smith, son of Charles, saw the flood coming and rushing out, unhitched a horse that was standing in front of the store. The horse would have been drowned had it remained attached to the post..."

The late Marion H. Nash, former librarian of the Ridgefield Library, and her mother, Mrs. John D. Nash, whose husband operated the Titicus Store, were others who survived the Titicus Flood. Mrs. Nash suffered a broken ankle when she ran up the bank just south of the store with her six-year-old daughter in tow. Marion Nash later recalled the event vividly and disputed some of Historian Rockwell's details of it.

Many millers

Several clans of Gilberts settled in Ridgefield in the 18th and early 19th Centuries. They were noted as millers. Josiah Gilbert was building a gristmill at Limestone in 1773 and Abner Gilbert later had a share in it. Harvey Gilbert had

a saw mill (and a 226-acre farm) in Scotland District, probably on the Titicus River, in the 1830's. Harry Gilbert, William's father, had title to an old flax mill in Farmingville in the 1840's while James Gilbert acquired a shingle mill at Titicus in 1848.

Probably the best known of the Gilbert millers was Jabez Mix Gilbert, who was operating a gristmill at Titicus by 1812 and a saw mill there by 1819. He apparently devoted most of his attention, however, to his tannery, which was operating by 1822 and lasted many decades.

The last of the many Gilberts who lived in town over the past two centuries still bearing the family name was Aaron Victor Gilbert, who died in 1987. He lived on New Street, very near William Gilbert's homestead and also near the Gilbert brothers' grist and cider mills on the Titicus River along Saw Mill Hill Road. Aaron V. Gilbert was a grandson of Aaron Bishop Gilbert and a grand-nephew of William H. Gilbert. As a child he knew both men. In fact, when he was in his early teens, he used to work at the family grist and cider mills.

The Two Mills

The Gilbert mills, in a building still standing, were co-owned by the brothers but operated almost single-handedly by Aaron B. Gilbert. At the gristmill upstairs, Aaron would grind wheat and rye into flour for many Ridgefield kitchens and corn into feed for many farms. Water from the Titicus was diverted through a sluice to an undershot wheel that powered the equipment. Inside the mill were three different stone wheels, each capable of grinding a finer product. Food for livestock, for instance, was coarsely ground.

"All the farmers around here came to get their feed ground up for their cattle," Aaron V. Gilbert, then 78, recalled in a 1978 interview.

Aaron had an orchard and each season would make some 50 barrels of cider at the downstairs mill. Apples were coarsely ground in the mill, powered by the water wheel. The resulting "cheese" was placed in a hand-operated press and squeezed by large screws to produce the cider. Two of these screws, hand carved by Aaron himself, were for years displayed at a little lane just beyond the old Titicus Schoolhouse (American Legion Hall) on North Salem Road. Most of the cider was laid up for vinegar, which Aaron sold at the train depot to stores in Danbury and Norwalk.

Many people would come to the mill to make their own cider, Aaron V. Gilbert said. His grandfather would grind the apples and the growers would then do their own pressing. The mill had two presses, each capable of producing seven barrels at a time.

Like his brother William, Aaron B. Gilbert was a carpenter. He learned the trade while working on the old Fairfield County Courthouse, still standing on Main Street in Danbury. The Ridgefielder walked to and from the job there every day. The pay was only 75 cents a day, according to his grandson.

Aaron V. Gilbert recalled that his grand uncle William was commonly called "Gin" Gilbert because of his fondness for that beverage. The brothers Gilbert often got together over a glass of gin.

William H. Gilbert moved to Gilbert Street in 1885, buying the house from two other Gilberts. Samuel Gilbert, whose relation – if any – to William is unclear, had been living there since at least 1867. In 1879, he sold the house to Smith Gilbert, possibly his son, reserving the right to live there for the rest of his life. But in 1885, both Smith and Samuel sold their rights to William

From 1884 to 1888, William Gilbert was a selectman, suggesting he had been rather active in community affairs.

William Gilbert died in 1916 at the age of 73. He and other members of the family are buried under an imposing monument at the Ridgefield Cemetery, the stone for which was quarried from Gilbert land on the west side of New Street, north of Gilbert Street.

The Gilbert place, one of the few flat-roofed 19th Century houses in town and most recently owned by the Moorhead family was torn down around 2011 to make way for a three-story, eight-unit apartment building that looks like a large house.

GILBERT'S UPPER POND

Gilbert's Upper Pond was another form of the name "Upper Pond," used in the 1840's and 1850's at least. It recognized Jabez Mix Gilbert, who at various times had various mills powered by the water from the pond (*see above*), but was most famous for his tanning works at Titicus. Gilbert owned the water rights to the pond.

GINO'S WAY

Gino's Way is a short, dead-end road off High Ridge Avenue, between Barry Avenue and Ramapoo Road, serving six lots developed around 2010 by Don and Jim Sturges of Sturges Brothers Fine Home Builders. The 2.5 acres at 213 High Ridge Avenue had long been the homestead of the Gino Polverari, long-time superintendent of the Ridgefield Water Supply Company.

GLEN ACRES

Glen Acres is a 32-lot subdivision of 35.4 acres, owned at the time of division by James Franks, on the east side of Tally-Ho Road (*q.v.*) and the north side of Haviland Road. The subdivision, approved in 1963, was part of the old Elizabeth Glendinning farm and consequently the name may have deliberately punned on the nature of the terrain and its former owner's name.

The homebuilder was Edward Stoll. According to a contemporary brochure advertising the subdivision, his Glen Acres houses were "a place to live in old-fashioned spaciousness – with the charm of yesteryear and the convenience of today. Edward Stoll has climaxed 42 years of building by introducing the magic luxury of space, which greets you at every turn from the moment you enter these lavishly created homes."

Three models were available, featuring "four master bedrooms, two luxurious baths, closets galore, spacious formal dining room, oversized two-car garage," plus "the glamorous 'Tappan'-equipped kitchen with its sunlit, separate breakfast room." And all within "a short walk to Ridgefield's famed beach and recreation area."

The price? Houses started at \$23,900.

GLEN ROAD

Glen Road, a short, dead-end lane off Buck Hill Road, was developed around 1954 by Perry Scott and Richard Conley, head of the Connecticut Land Company. Mr. Conley, whose father had owned this territory as part of his Outpost Nurseries (*see Outpost Pond*), named the road because of the glen it traverses.

GLENBROOK COURT

A short dead-end road off Standish Drive, Glenbrook Court is in a glen near a brook. The road was laid out in 1965 and accepted by a town meeting in 1968. It was extended in the mid-1980's. Glenbrook Court is part of the Meadow Woods development (*q.v.*), developed by Harry Richmond and William Connors.

GOLF LANE

Although not a green or a fairway is in sight, Golf Lane is a fitting name for this narrow, old road running between West Lane and Peaceable Street. Golf Lane once led to the Ridgefield Golf Club, a 65-acre course built in 1894. Most of the course later became Jack B. Ward's Ward Acres Farm, where show horses were raised, but in the 1980s and 1990s, was subdivided and today holds houses instead of horses or duffers.

The Country Club of Ridgefield was among the earliest golf courses in the United States, and was one of the first two in Fairfield County. Also called the Ridgefield Golf Club, the 65-acre, nine-hole course was started in 1894—the same year the United States Golf Association was founded—and incorporated and completed in 1895. (The first courses in the country date from 1887 in Quogue, N.Y., Foxburg, Pa., and West Orange N.J.)

The Ridgefield Press on Aug. 2, 1895, said, "Probably the new Country Club will be ready for its members by the middle of September, judging from the activity of the building committee, and golf will then be as popular as in other watering places."

The Press was careful to point out how the project was affecting the local economy. "The bid of Contractor William Sunderland of Danbury, who built the Olcott country-seat (Casagmo mansion on Main Street), has been accepted and the mason work will be done by Hiram Davis & Company. The mason's material will be furnished by H.D. Keeler."

By 1901, Harper's Official Golf Guide reported that the club had an entrance fee—a share of stock—of \$300 (about \$7,000 in today's money). Annual dues were \$25 (\$580). The layout was: Hole 1. 324 yards, 2. 196, 3. 267, 4. 178, 5. 208, 6. 282, 7. 310, 8. 245, and 9. 260.

Officers were George G. Haven Jr., president; George C. Shelton, M.D., vice president; and Albert H. Storer, secretary-treasurer. All were no doubt millionaires, and all—no surprise—lived within a mile of the course.

The Ridgefield Golf Club closed in 1932 when the 18-hole Silver Spring Country Club course opened. However, the clubhouse managed to survive until the early 1980's. The late Francis D. Martin had moved the building in the 1930s to Grove Street where he used it as a goat barn. Later it housed a silver-smithing firm and a plastics company, and then, in the 1950's, was incorporated into the scientific laboratories of the New England Institute for Medical Research. The institute closed around 1982 and its buildings became the object of vandals. One day, the old clubhouse portion was ignited by an arsonist, and was heavily damaged. The institute buildings, including the clubhouse, were razed by the mid-1980's to make way for the Executive Pavilion office condominium.

Golf Lane was so called as early as 1902 when the name appears on a vicinity map of the golf course. However, the road existed long before the

course, and is shown on the earliest road map of Ridgefield in 1856. It was probably in use as early as the 1700's as a shortcut from Peaceable Street to West Lane.

GOVERNOR STREET

Governor Street takes its name from Governor Phineas C. Lounsbury who for many years lived on a Main Street estate along the south side of the road.

Governor Street from Main Street to East Ridge was built in 1887. The Ridgefield Press reported on Sept. 16 of that year, "Work on the new street was commenced this week. It is to be a broad, well-built avenue, and when finished, should be called Governor Street."

The portion from East Ridge to Prospect Ridge was probably built around 1914 in conjunction with the construction of the new school, now the Venus Office Building.

Governor Lounsbury, whose property is now Veterans Park – including the Community Center, the elementary school and playing fields — was living on Main Street by the 1870's. When the Community Center building – his second house – was to be built, he had his first home moved to Governor Street just west of the Boys & Girls Club; that building, most recently used as offices, was torn down to make way for the new Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association headquarters.

His homestead was interesting in that it included perhaps the first wind-powered water well in town. The well was in place by 1878, when it was pictured in Teller's *History of Ridgefield*.

Phineas Chapman Lounsbury was born in Farmingville in 1841, the sixth child of Nathan and Delia Lounsbury, who had moved here from Pound Ridge two years earlier. He and his brother, George, who also became governor of Connecticut, acquired their political interests from their father, who had held several town offices and was a member of the state legislature.

According to his own reminiscences, Phineas left town at 16 to seek his fortune, which he put at \$10,000, and then returned to marry Jennie Wright. When he died in 1925, his estate was estimated to be worth close to a million dollars (nearly \$14 million in 2017 dollars).

He worked in the shoe manufacturing business with his brother, George, and was led into politics after the Civil War by an interest in public speaking. He was elected in 1874 to the state legislature where he specialized in temperance issues, including helping to frame the state's stiff option law that remained virtually unchanged until the advent of Prohibition. When he was owner of The Ridgefield Press some years later, he forbade any liquor advertising and, once when his instructions were disobeyed, immediately sold the paper.

After his term in the legislature, he returned to New York City to head the Merchants Exchange National Bank. He took part in the campaign for James G. Blaine in 1884 (Blaine's son, also James G., later lived on High Ridge), and three years later was elected Connecticut governor on the Republican ticket.

Phineas Lounsbury retired from active political life in 1896 and built his Grovelawn, modeled after the Connecticut building at the Columbian Exposition of 1893. At one time, the mansion and estate, kept up in lavish style, had 14 people employed in the house and 12 on the grounds.

Many hundreds of people from near and far attended his 1925 funeral at the Methodist Church, where he had been chairman of the Board of Trustees. The

house was acquired by the town in 1945 and soon thereafter, leased for \$1 a year to the Community Center, which maintains it from fees it charges. (*See also Lounsbury Road and Veterans Park*).

GRAND VIEW DRIVE

Grand View Drive, a rather ordinary-sounding road name, is actually a somewhat clever pun, descriptive of not only the terrain but also the history of the property. This development of about 47 acres on the east side of Barrack Hill Road has a grand view, but it was also once owned by a couple named LeGrand.

The property had been the Benjamin Levy estate which, in the 1940's, consisted of about 80 acres running from Barrack Hill Road to Lake Mamasasco. Both Mr. Levy, president of Charles of the Ritz, and Mrs. Levy died in 1952. More than 20 years later, the Levy family donated 30 acres of the former estate to the town, and it's now Levy Park on the east side of Barrack Hill Road.

In 1953, the estate was sold to Jean C. and Nina LeGrand. Mr. LeGrand, a Frenchman, was vice-president of Schlumberger-Doll, the oil well research firm that had a research center here. In 1957 and 1958, the LeGrands sold much of their land to Peter Lorenzini, the builder, and Norman Craig, the jeweler, who subdivided it to create Grand View Drive. In reporting the sale of the estate to the LeGrands, *The Press* said in January 1953, the property "commands one of the finest views in the town." And thus the name is doubly suitable.

GRASSY ISLAND

The early settlers applied the name Grassy Island to the strip of land along both sides of Danbury Road (Route 35) from the foot of Island or Danbury Hill north to the river at Fox Hill Village condominiums. Much of this area, ignominiously called Gasoline Alley for many years, today is heavily commercially developed and includes Copps Hill Plaza and several smaller shopping centers, as well as office buildings.

The name appears as early as 1717 when the proprietors apportioned lots there. For example, Richard Osborn received four acres "lying at ye Great Swamp on ye east side of ye Grassie Island." Osborn also received two acres of "plowland lying on Grassie Ridge," which may have been today's Island Hill (*q.v.*) and Peatt Park (*q.v.*) neighborhoods.

While old place names that have fallen out of use are generally difficult to place today, various deeds locate Grassy Island west or south of the "branch" or stream that flows out of Great Swamp. One deed mentions land "lying in a sprang of ye Great Swamp, south of ye Grassy Island." This suggests that the island may have extended eastward along Farmingville Road for a short distance. However, the boundaries of the island would be impossible to accurately estimate today because so much filling, draining, and excavating have taken place over the past three centuries. In addition, the water level of Great Swamp has probably changed somewhat at the same time.

Why an "island"? The land was almost surrounded by swamp or streams. The early settlers called several inland localities "islands," although none was actually surrounded by unbroken water.

Grassy Island was probably the source of the name Island Hill, remembered today as Island Hill Avenue. The hill overlooks the island.

Island Bridge, an old and frequently cited name for the bridge over the Norwalk River at Fox Hill Drive (the old Danbury Road), connected Grassy Island with Great Island to the north.

Grassy Island continued to appear in land records until 1789. However, Robert A. Lee recalled that in his boyhood around 1900, the triangular area of Great Swamp now surrounded by Farmingville, Lee and Limekiln Roads, was called Grassy Swamp. This name may have been connected with Grassy Island to the west, but it's more likely that Farmingville residents coined the term simply because the swamp was grassy.

GRASSY RIDGE

Grassy Ridge may have been an old name for Island Hill and the lower end of Copp's Mountain (*see* Grassy Island).

GRASSY SWAMP

Grassy Swamp was a turn-of-the-20th-century name for the swamp on the north side of Farmingville Road, below Lee Road – actually, a part of Great Swamp (*see* Grassy Island).

GREAT DITCH

The Great Ditch first appears in a 1774 deed for a house and five acres. Daniel Rockwell, giving up his interest in the property to Abraham Rockwell, says the land is bounded on the west “by ye Great Ditch so-called.”

In 1792, David Rockwell sued Abner Rockwell of Massachusetts and obtained in the settlement two acres bounded westerly “by ye Great Ditch in Mope's Boggs so called.”

The Great Ditch was probably west of Ridgebury Road, north of Chestnut Hill Road, and south of Old West Lane (Canterbury Lane). In fact, the ditch probably ran through the Dlh Ridge Golf Course (*q.v.*) and carried a branch of the Mopus Brook in this area. Judging from all the Rockwells who held land in its vicinity, the ditch could have been excavated by that family in the early 1770's.

Ditches were commonly dug in the 18th Century to drain wetlands, just as they are today. Driving through south-central Florida, one will come across many drainage and flood control ditches with such names as “Rim Ditch” and “Slough Ditch.” Some have only numbers to identify them.

Old-fashioned drainage ditches were not all simply gutters dug in the ground. Many consisted of stones, buried in troughs under the ground. The space around the stones provided enough room for the water to flow along the path of the ditch and the stones themselves prevented erosion of the soil from filling in the water passage. However, the Great Ditch was probably only a long, open trench dug to direct water out of or to the Mopus Brook.

While there were probably many ditches draining wetlands in Ridgefield, Great Ditch seems to stand out as the only one with a name that was regularly cited in deeds. This may have been because its digging was a sizable undertaking at the time. Various deeds, particularly in the second half of the 18th Century, cite ditches, but few had names. There was another Great Ditch mentioned in an 1824 deed as being near Daniel Lee's house in Farmingville, but it appears only once in the land records. Gideon Smith had land at “the Ditch Meadow” in Scotland District in 1796.

GREAT EAST MEADOW POND

In 1769, Daniel Dean leased to Samuel Lobdell the right to raise the level of what was “commonly called the Great East Meadow Pond, otherwise sometimes called Burt’s Pond.” The surface was to be raised two inches in height, and five inches in width “at ye dam at the outlet,” from March 15 to April 15 each year “in order to catch fish.” Why Samuel Lobdell needed the pond raised for only a month a year to catch fish is unclear. But the lease contains the first mention in the land records of Great Pond, which today is a popular recreation spot.

The Great East Meadow Pond was so-called because it was one of two ponds situated at East Meadow, as the neighborhood was called in the 18th Century. The other may have been called the Little East Meadow Pond, today’s Little Pond, but the term “Little East Meadow Pond” never appears in the land records. In fact, “Little Pond” isn’t mentioned at all until 1848.

The term “Great East Meadow Pond” is of note because of how it was shortened to just “Great Pond” over the years. Obviously, Great Pond is much easier to say.

GREAT HILL

Great Hill is a common and very old name. While the term itself is still alive in the form of a road name, there were at least three others in Ridgefield in the 18th Century. One Great Hill was much more frequently mentioned than the one that survives at Limestone.

The term first appears in a 1740 grant of the proprietors to Benjamin Hecock’s (Hickox) heirs of land “on ye Great Hill east of ye Long Pond.” Long Pond, now Lakes Oscaleta, Waccabuc, and Rippowam, was situated in a part of Lewisboro, N.Y., that was once within the borders of Ridgefield. A small part of the east end of this collective water body is still in Ridgefield.

Subsequent deeds place this Great Hill as “southward of ye Round Pond so called” (1763), “southeasterly from Long Pond” (1774), and “south of Round Pond” (1780). Thus, it is probably the hill along West Mountain Road at Old West Mountain Road, and along Oreneca Road. The peak, 880 feet above sea level, is the site of the Ridgefield Academy. Deeds continue to cite this “Great Hill” until 1876.

Great Hill was used in Limestone District as early as 1754 when Darius Lobdell sold John Lobdell eight acres “lying...on ye south end of the Great Hill at Limestone.” Whether this was the Great Hill after which Great Hill Road (*q.v.*) was named cannot easily be determined. The Great Hill in Limestone District is never again cited in the land records through 1890, suggesting that this name for the hill had fallen out of use.

Of course, Great Hill is a very simple name, the kind that could be applied to any sizable hill anywhere. At least 27 towns in Connecticut have Great Hills – Great was a most popular adjective in 17th and 18th Century New England place naming. The word was used in the sense of large or tall, not “wonderful,” as it is commonly used today.

Another Great Hill was mentioned in 1759 when the proprietors gave Nathan Sherwood “four acres of swamp land under ye Great Hill in ye New Patent” (Ridgebury). This was probably in the vicinity of Old Stagecoach and Ridgebury Roads, but the name appears only once in the land records.

Yet another Great Hill appears in an 1800 deed for land in the vicinity of Jo's Hill in Danbury, then part of Ridgefield.

GREAT HILL ROAD

Great Hill Road, extending today from Limestone Road to Bennett's Farm Road, is a very old highway that – apparently – has been called Great Hill Road only in recent times.

In the 18th Century, this was “the road to Bennett's Farm.” Neither Limestone Road nor upper Danbury Road existed then, and this highway would have been the main route to the area now called the Ridgefield Lakes and then called Bennett's Farm.

Interestingly enough, in the 19th Century, Great Hill Road was sometimes called “the Old Road to Ridgebury” to distinguish it from the “New Road,” what we today call Limestone Road, which was built in the early 1850's as a straighter and flatter road to the north. For example, an 1855 deed speaks of land through which passed “the old road leading from Ridgefield to Ridgebury.” This suggests that Great Hill and Bennett's Farm Roads had been a popular route to Ridgebury, at least for people in the northeastern part of town.

The road was identified in very early deeds. In 1739, the proprietors gave Ebenezer Lobdell three acres “lying between Danbury Rhode and ye Rhode that goes up to Bennetts...” In the same year, Abraham Bennit received four acres “lying westerly of ye road that leads to Bennits Farm.” In 1740 the selectmen refer to “this highway that is laid out through Joseph Keeler's land, continueth along ye road that now is up to Bennits and from thence as far as our concern is.” The selectmen appear to have been defining the route of the existing road so that it could be classified as a town road. In 1755, Elizabeth Keeler sold Daniel Bennit five acres “at ye Turn of the River (*q.v.*) so called on ye east side of ye road that leadeth to Bennits Farm.”

All of these references indicate that Great Hill Road should really be considered Bennett's Farm Road – at least, it clearly was in the 18th Century. It should be Bennett's Farm Road just as North Salem Road is the road to North Salem, Danbury Road is the road to Danbury, and Branchville Road is the road to Branchville.

When this highway became Great Hill Road has not yet been ascertained. It was not so labeled on the 1946 zoning map of Ridgefield.

The “Great Hill” here is probably Buck Hill, across whose western slope the road is laid out. The segment of Great Hill Road from where it crosses the Norwalk River (near its south end) to its highest elevation rises 160 feet (from 520 to 680 feet above sea level) over a distance of about 1,000 feet of roadway. That's a pretty great hill.

GREAT ISLAND

Great Island appears to have referred to the ridge along Danbury Road from Fox Hill Village condominiums north to approximately the intersection of Haviland and Limestone Roads. This area, almost surrounded either by the Norwalk River (Ridgefield Brook) or fingers of the Great Swamp, was apparently called Great Island to differentiate it from the smaller Grassy Island, just to the south.

The two “islands” were connected by the “Island Bridge,” which today carries Fox Hill Drive at the condominiums over the Norwalk River. This main road through the condominiums was once a segment of Danbury Road.

Great Island was first mentioned in a 1712 proprietors’ deed when referring to 2 1/2 acres of “meadowland lying near (undecipherable) on ye Great Island, being some part of ye Great Swamp, lay’d out on ye account of ye Best Meadow Division.” The Best Meadow (*q.v.*) was a very early subdivision among the first settlers or proprietors.

Great Island was last mentioned in a 1748 deed in which James Wallace of Salem, N.Y., sold Joseph Keeler one acre of boggy meadow lying “west of ye Great Island, east of Copps Mountain, in ye Cranberry Meadow.” However, Great Island may have been later abbreviated as just “the Island,” a term appearing well into the 19th Century.

GREAT LEDGES

Great Ledges was an early term for Asproom (Aspen) Ledges (*q.v.*), the steep bank on the north side of Ledges Road. The name appears in a 1753 proprietors’ deed to Stephen Smith for five acres lying “at ye Asproom Mountain, west of ye Great Ledges.”

GREAT MEADOW

Great Meadow was another of those old terms that was used for several localities in town.

- One, mentioned as early as 1780, was situated on lower West Lane, south of Cedar Lane. It was owned chiefly by members of the Northrup family, which had several farms in the West Lane district in the 18th and 19th Centuries. This locality was called Great Meadow as late as 1835.
- Another, first cited in 1781, was situated “at the Island so called,” probably Grassy Island (*q.v.*), along Danbury Road. It was owned by the Dauchy family.
- The Stebbins clan had a Great Meadow “on the Titicus Plain so called...east side of the river,” mentioned in 1797.
- In 1798, John Perry and James Norris sold Samuel Saintjohn an acre “lying in the Great Meadow so called in Ridgebury Parish.” This was probably in northern Ridgebury, perhaps near Shadow Lake Road.
- The Warren family had a Great Meadow in Limestone District, according to a 1795 deed. The meadow was probably near Great Pond in a neighborhood that was called “East Meadow” in the 1700’s and early 1800’s.

In all cases the term probably disappeared because the greatness of the meadows was diminished by original owners’ selling off portions of them to other farmers.

GREAT PASTURE

Great Pasture, another example of the propensity for calling places “great,” was located near both Whipstick and Miller’s Ridges in the Nod Road area.

First mentioned around 1769, the term continued to be used in deeds through 1805. Land at Great Pasture was owned by the Sturdevant, Benedict, Smith, and Keeler families during the period the term was in use.

GREAT POND

Great Pond is one of a handful of original, natural ponds in Ridgefield. Largely spring-fed, it has long been known for its beauty, as a source of recreation, and as an aid to industry.

Great Pond is first noted in the town records not by its modern name, but by its Indian name, Nesopack (*q.v.*). This occurs in a description of the first purchase of land from the Indians in 1708. The eastern boundary of the town was described as running from a tree at the shore of Umpawaug Pond northerly “into a pond called Nesopack and continues ye same course untill it meets with a second pond called Aokeels, crossing by ye south end of both ponds...” Aokeels or Aokeets is Little Pond on the west side of Route 7, just south of the Route 35 intersection.

Nesopack never appears again in the land records, perhaps indicating that the settlers did not fancy the name. One wonders why a mouthful like Mamanasco, another Indian pond name, survived.

In the first half of the 18th Century, Great Pond was probably owned by only one or two families who kept title to the land over many years, for the pond is very rarely mentioned. The first reference occurs in 1769 when Daniel Dean, who owned most or all of the pond, leased a fishing right to Samuel Lobdell. This deed calls it “Great East Meadow Pond.”

The first use of “Great Pond” occurs in a 1774 deed. In 1780, when Hezekiah Smith purchased a house and grist mill, near the intersection of Stonehenge and Still Roads, the deed noted that the sale included “the privileges of the Great Pond that was obtained from Daniel Dean.” Thus, before 1780, the waters of Great Pond were being used to help power at least one mill.

Dean apparently held title to Great Pond for a long time, for in 1792 he sold a half-acre “joining the Great Pond (so-called) at the outlet of the pond...with the privileges of turning the water course through said land.”

This was for another mill downstream. Several mills, in fact, were eventually using water stored at Great Pond. Most were on the Norwalk River and relied on the stored water at Great Pond for power when the river was running low. Today, the outlet of Great Pond enters the river just north of Pickett’s Ridge Road and east of Route 7.

Great Pond was also called Burt’s Pond during some of the 18th Century, although this fact is mentioned only once in the land records (1769). It is believed that Benjamin Burt, the blacksmith, had land there early in the 1700’s. In the early 19th Century, the pond was occasionally called Smith’s Great Pond (1828) or Smith’s Pond (1835). Ezra Smith had land there. No doubt these farmers used the pond to water their livestock.

Today, Great Pond is most noted as a recreation site. The town of Ridgefield’s only public beach is at Martin Park, a gift to the town in 1970 by Francis D. Martin. Mr. Martin and volunteers had created the beach, which opened in June 1954.

The Gilbert and Bennett Manufacturing Company in Georgetown owned the pond and land under it until the late 1990s. Water was important in its industrial processing. Were the Norwalk River to run low, the mill could obtain extra water from the pond. Proposals were announced in 1988 to convert the mill into a village of houses, condominiums, offices and shops and in 2005, the

project was finally approved. Mill water rights were no longer needed, and the town of Ridgefield now has full title to the pond.

Great Pond, whose surface covers about five acres, is the town's deepest body of water. On a fishing outing, Peter Keeler once took a depth finder. The deepest spot he found was 34 feet.

The pond is undoubtedly deeper and bigger today than it was when the settlers found it. Damming has raised its level and increased its surface area. But even when it was smaller, the hills and the rocky cliff shores certainly provided a beautiful sight. No wonder it is said that Chickens Warrups, the Indian leader, used to sit for long periods atop Chickens' Rock (*q.v.*), gazing out over the clean, clear waters of the pond.

Keeping those waters clean and clear has been a constant concern of the Planning and Zoning Commission, which received repeated applications for commercial and condominium use of the property on the north side of the pond. Commissioners feared that the quality and quantity of the water, as well as the beauty of the view, would be spoiled by development, and tried over 20 years – with long-time land owner George Bakes – to find a middle ground. Bakes owned what was once Camp Adventure, a summer camp for poor city children run in the 1950's and 1960's by the Volunteers of America on the northeastern shore of the pond. Middle ground was finally reached in 1992, when the commission approved two uses for the land, in the process gaining an open space donation of all the property along the northern shore of Great Pond. Laurelwood, the nursing home that was in 2005 called Laurel Ridge, opened in 1994 and Chancellor Park, housing for senior citizens that was in 2008 called Ridgefield Crossings, opened in 1999. In addition, from 2006 to 2008, Toll Brothers of Horsham, Pa., built 73 age-restricted condominiums at Regency at Ridgefield on this site.

At least 17 other Great Ponds exist in Connecticut.

GREAT POND MOUNTAIN

Great Pond Mountain is the hill just northeast of Great Pond. Situated on the line between Ridgefield and Redding, the hill reaches 790 feet above sea level, making it the highest point in eastern Ridgefield, south of where Route 7 crosses the line. "Great Pond Mountain" is first mentioned in the perambulation of the town boundaries in 1808.

GREAT POND ROAD

Great Pond Road is what the town labels the road leading from Route 7 past the entrance to Martin Park and the Great Pond Club, and on to Pickett's Ridge. Although the road has been called by this name since at least 1946, it was formerly and is perhaps more properly called Pickett's Ridge Road (*q.v.*), for it is the road leading to Pickett's Ridge in Redding.

In the 18th Century, this was part of the road to Danbury, a route that included Haviland Road. From Pickett's Ridge Road in Redding, the route ran northward over Starr's Plain Road to a no-longer-usable road across Moses Mountain to Wooster Heights in Danbury. Vestiges of this old road still exist on Moses Mountain north of Lake Waubeka and a small portion is still used off Wooster Heights.

GREAT ROCKS

In 1717, the proprietors deeded Richard Osborn 19 acres “lying eastward of ye Country Road (Wilton Road), bounded west by highway, south by Norwalk (now Wilton) bounds, east by ye Great Rocks and common (land), west by ye Country Road.”

The Great Rocks, cited only in this deed through 1855, are along an old road, the southerly extension of Spectacle Lane. Karl S. Nash recalled that in the 1930s, a maple tree was growing in the middle of the large cluster of rocks, slowly splitting one of the boulders in two.

GREAT ROCKS PLACE

Great Rocks Place is the name for a short, dead-end road off Wilton Road West near the Wilton line. The name, suggested by this writer to recall the above locality, was accepted by the Board of Selectmen in October 1980, but was mistakenly transcribed as Great Rock Place.

GREAT SPRING

Mentioned in only one deed, the Great Spring was probably situated in what is now western Danbury but what was once northern Ridgefield. It was cited in a 1734 deed that wasn’t recorded on the land records until 1763.

GREAT SWAMP

One of Ridgefield’s finest and perhaps least appreciated natural resources, Great Swamp is a large wetland that occupies hundreds of acres in the east central part of town. It is probably the floor of an old lake created by the melting of the last glacier some 20,000 years ago.

The swamp is bounded approximately by Ivy Hill Road on the south, Ivy Hill, Blackman, and Limekiln Roads on the east, Farmingville and Lee Roads on the north, and Danbury Road and Prospect Ridge on the west. Although most of the swamp is south of Farmingville Road, a finger of it stretches north behind Fox Hill condominiums almost to Haviland Road.

At the time of the town’s settlement, Great Swamp was probably much larger than it is today. It certainly extended across Danbury Road at Fox Hill Village, an area known as the Cranberry Meadow, most of which has since been filled in. (In 1709, the proprietors commissioned “a survey of ye New Pound Boggs, and the Titicus, with ye Cranberry Meadow in ye Great Swamp” to lay out lots. This finger of the swamp, which once reached nearly a mile north of Copps Hill Road on the west side of Danbury Road, was mentioned in a 1719 deed for land at the “north sprang [spring] of ye 1,000 Acre Swamp, on ye east side of Copps Mountain.”)

Great Swamp is one of the town’s oldest place names. In the first years of the town’s settlement, the locality was occasionally also called “Thousand Acre Swamp” (*q.v.*), although the term was rather rare. Sometimes when it was used, it was in conjunction with the more common term. For example, in 1714, when Benjamin Willson sold some land to the new minister, Thomas Hauley, he described it as “lying in and commonly known as by ye name of ye Great or Thousand Acre Swamp.” The term, Thousand Acre Swamp, lasted as late as 1758.

The first settlers were quick to recognize the value of Great Swamp, particularly as a source of wood for village fireplaces. Because the land was general-

ly not suitable for clearing into fields, pastures or meadows, the swamp was ideal for growing wood, being so close to the village. Careful cutting could yield many years of fuel.

Until fairly recent times, Great Swamp continued to be used as a wood source. Robert A. Lee (1889-1984), who grew up in Farmingville, recalled the wood-cutting that went at the turn of the 20th Century. "You could go on Great Swamp only in the winter when it was frozen," he said. The farmers used oxen to draw the sledges that would carry the wood across the frozen surface. "The farmers didn't like to use horses," he said. "If they fell through (the ice), they would struggle and injure themselves."

Access to woodlots was gained by various roads that led into the swamp. The Hauley map shows one road, probably an extension of Sunset Lane or Prospect Street, which led across the swamp to Blackman Road. This path was usable well into the last century and vestiges of it could still be seen in the 1990s.

Near this road was "the Island," an elevated area in the middle of the swamp. In the 1920's it was a source of ground pine, then becoming hard to find. Youngsters used to go out to the island to get the evergreens for Christmas wreaths. Later, the plant became scarce and was on the list of endangered species.

Francis D. Martin remembered that from around 1910 to the 1930's, Jack Walker, a postmaster here, did quite a business in wood from the swamp. Walker arranged the cutting so that his woodsmen moved from woodlot to woodlot over a 20-year period, doing one section each year. By the end of 20 years, the first-cut section had regrown enough to be cut again.

Ditches – some still visible in the late 20th Century – separated the old woodlots. These may have dated from the early 1700's, serving a combination purpose of defining borders and helping to drain the swamp.

During the Depression, Martin continued Walker's woodcutting operations, hiring 26 men to do it. Trucks, he said, could easily drive out into the swamp when it was frozen in winter. Some old roads into the swamp still exist, though most have become overgrown by now.

Martin owned a sizable chunk of Great Swamp at the time, and sold the town part of what became the dump, now the site of the transfer station, recycling center and school bus parking lots. This sale occurred sometime after the town had already begun dumping on his land. "I could have sued the town for a barrel," he said with a smile during a 1978 interview.

During that interview, Martin said he had long had an idea for a use for Great Swamp. "I had wonderful plans for Great Swamp," he said. "I never gave them to anybody." And he declined to reveal them even then, and they died with him.

In the 1700's, there may have been some use of the swamp for certain water-loving crops, such as cranberries, which were native to parts of the Great Swamp, and Marsh Marigolds or cowslips, whose leaves were boiled and eaten as spinach. Martin participated in another popular swamp industry early in the century. As a youth he and friends used to hunt skunks in Great Swamp to sell to Bissell's drug store. "Skunk grease," he explained, "is the greatest thing ever heard of for colds."

Since Great Swamp was of considerable importance, much of it was divided up into lots in 1718, one of the earliest subdivisions. Each proprietor – 27 of

them at the time – received a lot of around 12 acres. This subdivision was described in an unusual “Mapp of ye Great Swamp Drawn by Me, Thomas Hauley, Register,” which is filed in the land records in the town hall.

A year later, the proprietors voted to allow owners of lots to “ditch, clear or otherwise improve ye main branch (stream) running through said swamp for ye draining or drawing ye same dry for ye advantages of ye proprietors.” Lot owners also received permission to dig drainage ditches to remove “springyness or moistness” from the land.

Efforts to remove “springyness or moistness” from much of the swamp were probably futile. Great Swamp is remarkably flat throughout. Its elevation is 575 feet above sea level, according to the U.S. Geological Survey, and 581 feet, according to aerial imaging done in 2004. Moreover, the swamp is steadily fed by many springs.

It is this subterranean water that makes Great Swamp an important resource today and maybe even more important in the future. Beneath the bottom of the swamp is a huge and extensive aquifer – an underground reservoir – that could be a major source of community drinking water, should surface supplies become inadequate to serve future and larger populations. It is chiefly because of this water source that the state ordered Ridgefield to shut down its dump back in the late 1970’s; leachate from decomposing wastes right overhead threatened pollute the aquifer. The dump closed in 1980, when a trash transfer station took over.

In modern times, the swamp has had little “practical” use. In the 1940’s or 1950’s, someone experimented with raising rice on a 100-acre section, but apparently met with little success. This same tract later proved, however, that swampland is hardly worthless. A man who bought it around 1960 for \$10,000 sold most of the tract to the state around 1975 for more than \$400,000.

The state acquired this and most of the rest of Great Swamp to protect it – not for the wildlife that breeds and dwells there, nor for the aquifer under it, though both are certainly worthy ends. The state’s interest is flood control: Great Swamp is the headwaters of the Norwalk River, which in 1955 flooded and caused millions of dollars of damage in Ridgefield, Redding, Wilton, and Norwalk.

The Norwalk River Flood Control Project, designed by the US Army Corps of Engineers, sets up a series of earthen dams along the river. These dams will hold back water in times of heavy rain and prevent the water from rushing with too much force down the river valley. One dam has been built across the outlet of the swamp at Fox Hill condominiums and has, in an emergency, the ability to raise the water level a couple of feet – equal to millions of gallons when spread across the entire surface of the swamp. It was used in the April 2007 flood to hold back waters.

As a fringe benefit – perhaps as the most visible and lasting benefit – of the flood program, Great Swamp is forever preserved as a refuge for the myriad forms of plant and animal life that live there.

Because it is state property, hunting is allowed there in season. Deer and turkey are the chief game.

GREAT SWAMP II

There was another “Great Swamp” in Ridgefield besides the large one described above. According to a 1798 deed, Benjamin Barberry sold Matthew

Northrop Jr. an acre “lying in the Great Swamp so called in Ridgebury Parish.” The location was more commonly called New Purchase Swamp (*q.v.*), north of Ridgefield High School and south of Mopus Bridge and Ridgebury Roads.

GREEN LANE

Green Lane is a short, dead-end road of about 950 feet off Eleven Levels Road on West Mountain. The name was used in Jerry Tuccio’s mid-1960’s plans for the property, but its origin is unknown. Perhaps it recalled former town engineer, John Green, or perhaps it just reflected the color of the vegetation.

GREENFIELD STREET

Greenfield Street, off Barry Avenue, is part of the early 20th Century Bryon Park (*q.v.*) development. Before the area was subdivided around 1910, the land was a “green field,” at least in the growing season.

Over the years the road has suffered from a bit of an identity crisis, demonstrated by the town’s signs for the road. For a while in 1986, the sign on the north end said “Greenfield Street” while on the south end, it was “Greenfield Avenue.”

GREENRIDGE DRIVE

Greenridge Drive is a short, private, dead-end road off Rita Road at the Ridgefield Lakes. The road traverses a ridge, presumably green at times.

GRIFFIN HILL ROAD

Griffin Hill Road is a lane in the extreme eastern part of Ridgefield, off Fire Hill Road. In fact, the junction of Griffin Lane and Fire Hill Roads is crossed by the Redding-Ridgefield line; to get there, you must go through Redding.

Although Griffins were living in Redding and Ridgefield in the 18th Century, this name comes from a New York City Griffin of the 20th Century. In April 1924, a subdivision map of 63 small lots on the southeast side of Fire Hill was filed with the Ridgefield town clerk, labeled “property of V. Mulligan, Topstone, Conn.” This property had been acquired around 1910 by Edward T. Mulligan of New York City, who a few years later transferred it to Virginia D. L. H. Mulligan, apparently his wife. In 1915, Isabel R. Griffin of New York City contracted to buy seven lots there for \$413. Later she acquired more lots. And it is for Isabel Griffin that the road running by her property was named.

In 1941, Isabel Griffin filed a change of name on the land records and officially became Isabel Connor. But the road is still called Griffin.

GRIFFITH LANE

Griffith Lane, a dead-end road off the east side of High Ridge, was named for Mr. and Mrs. William H. Griffith, who created it. Mrs. Griffith was a niece of Governor Phineas C. Lounsbury, who built the Community Center building as his home in the 1890’s (*see* Governor Street). The governor had owned the Griffith Lane property and the former McManus house on the corner of High Ridge and Griffith Lane once served as a storage tank for Mr. Lounsbury’s water supply. It has exterior walls a couple feet thick.

Mrs. Griffith inherited the property upon the governor’s death. With her husband, a Bridgeport banker, she had the property subdivided into 11 quarter-

acre and two one-acre lots in 1938, using the name of The Rondax Company. Houses began to be built there within a few years.

GROVE RIDGE

According to *Connecticut Place Names*, a publication of the Connecticut Historical Society, Grove Ridge was “a steep ridge east of Pumping Station Swamp.” This would place it on the east side of Oscaleta Road, between West Mountain and Pumping Station Roads. The historical society’s source is a state boundary survey, done in 1957. Although the hill, of which this is the western slope, was long known as Great Hill, a search of land records from 1709 through 1885 has uncovered no reference to it as “Grove Ridge.”

GROVE STREET

A very old road with perhaps a very old name, Grove Street extends from Prospect Street to Danbury Road and today serves chiefly as a bypass to Main Street and lower Danbury Road.

Interviews with many old-timers many years ago produced no clues as to the precise origin of the name, which has been in use at least since 1908, when it first appears on a map. The road is shown on the first map of the town, published in 1856. However, based on old highway descriptions in the 18th Century town records, it probably existed before 1730.

A clue to its name may be found in a 1796 deed in which the proprietors grant Jacob Dauchy “seven rods of land, on ye south side of his land west of ye Grove.” This property, a thin strip, seems to have been near Grove Street, and the mention of “ye Grove” may be the first recorded reference to it.

In this connection, an interesting and unusual map is on file in the town clerk’s office. Recorded with the clerk in the 1930’s but apparently drawn some time between 1870 and 1895, the map describes the site of the old Stebbins homestead (the present location of Casagmo). Carefully labeled on the map are the locations of the house, barn, a lane, the “burial place Patriots,” rail fences, streams, swamp and – beyond the east boundary – a place labeled “Grove” (including the quotation marks). Apparently the grove was extant just before the turn of the century, but was not part of the famous Stebbins homestead (*see* Casagmo).

An interesting deed was filed in 1877 when the Rev. Daniel W. Teller, the town’s first historian, sold Ann Bailey a piece of land at “Miss Abby Smith’s Grove,” a parcel that appears to have been near Grove Street, though the road was not mentioned by name.

One possibility is that the Grove was once common land, planted in the early 1700’s with apple and other fruit trees to supply the village homes with fruit. Common land existed in this neighborhood as late as 1796 when the above-cited deed was drawn for common land bordering the Grove, but eventually all common land was sold off. Perhaps the Smith family bought part or all of the Grove. Whatever the origin of the Grove, it no longer exists. The east side of Casagmo – near the tennis courts – covers most of it.

GUN HILL FARMS

Gun Hill Farms is reportedly one of the names of the Robert Roache subdivision that includes Powderhorn Drive and Old Musket Lane (*q.v.*). It has also been called Big Gun Hill.

H

HAGEMEYER'S POND

Hagemeyers' Pond is a small, man-made body of water between western Ivy Hill Road and Branchville Road, named for Mr. and Mrs. Frank E. Hagemeyer who once owned it and a sizable house nearby. The name appears on no official map, and has been handed down by word of mouth. Recent US Geological Survey maps give the pond no name, and Hagemeyers' Pond is as good as any. The waters from the pond flow into the southern end of Great Swamp, connecting there with the beginning of Cooper Brook, which flows down to Branchville and empties into the Norwalk River and Long Island Sound. Ice from the pond was stored in a building that is, in 2017, a garage on the property of Jane Belote.

HALPIN LANE

Halpin Lane is an odd little lane, which runs from Prospect Ridge Road opposite the old high school, eastward down to the old railroad bed. The road once led to the small farm of James Halpin and on into Great Swamp. Mr. Halpin, who died in 1911, aged about 90, was for many years a laborer in town. He came here from Ireland in the mid-19th Century. He had a son, James, who spelled his name Halpine, who lived there after the father's death.

Until around 1970 Halpin Lane was a dirt driveway; it was paved only after the town bought the former Holy Ghost fathers novitiate and converted the building into a Board of Education headquarters. Although the Holy Ghost fathers had owned the land on both sides of the dirt lane, the town had owned the road itself for many years.

In 1987, the town moved the school board offices to the Branchville School building and converted the novitiate into congregate housing for the elderly, with the help of an addition. The Nolan brothers, private builders from Danbury, erected lower-cost, federally subsidized apartments on town-owned land on the north side of Halpin Lane, where the Marine Corps League has leased a small building for its headquarters.

Halpin Lane has for years served as access to the barns at the eastern end of the road used by the Ridgefield Guild of Artists and by the Ridgefield Theater Barn, earlier known as the Ridgefield Workshop for the Performing Arts. It's also an access to the Northeast Utilities electrical substation and to the town's community gardens.

HAMILTON ROAD

Hamilton Road, running between Remington and Holmes Roads at Westmoreland, was named for Alexander Hamilton. As a colonel in the Continental Army, Hamilton visited Ridgefield with George Washington in 1780, staying overnight in Ridgebury. Hamilton Road became a town road in 1969.

Incidentally, Aaron Burr, the ex-vice president of the United States who killed Hamilton in a duel, was descended from Burrs who lived in Redding and Wilton in the 1700's and was related to several Ridgefield Burrs.

HARAHAWMIS

Another form of Narahawmis (*q.v.*), Harahawmis is found in histories of Lewisboro, N.Y. (*q.v.*). *A History of the Town of Lewisboro*, published in 1981 by the Town of Lewisboro, says Harahawmis was the “Kitchawan-Waccabuc area,” which was part of Ridgefield before 1731 (*see Oblong*).

HARDING DRIVE

Developer Lewis J. Finch named Harding Drive at Chestnut Hill Estates in Ridgebury for his mother, Alice Finch, who died in October 1977 and was a well-known Ridgefielder. It became a town road in 1964.

Born Alice Harding in New York City in 1889, Mrs. Finch came to Ridgefield in 1913 when she married Harold E. Finch, a noted citizen of the town and longtime chairman of the Republican Party here. (Son Lewis also became chairman of the GOP, and his grandson, Barry, was in the 1980s a member of the Republican Town Committee.)

A businesswoman for 50 years, Mrs. Finch operated a fruit and vegetable stand in the early 1920’s along the old section of Danbury Road north of Haviland Road. In 1927 she and her husband acquired the United Cigar Store in the Scott Block, where Liberta’s Liquor Store is now. Later, the shop moved across Main Street, then back across the street to where the Ridgefield News and Office Supply (Squash’s), its successor, is now.

Mrs. Finch was the original owner and operator of Ridgefield’s only motel, the Green Doors (The Ridgefield Motor Inn, now Days Inn, is in Redding). She opened the motel on Route 7 just south of Route 35 in 1952, retiring in 1967. The motel was razed in the early 1980’s to make way for what became a series of restaurants — John’s Best Pizza in 2017.

Mrs. Finch was active in the Women’s Republican Club and the Sunshine Society, which aided invalids. For many years she was Republican registrar of voters.

HARRISON COURT

Harrison Court, a dead-end road off Sleepy Hollow Road, recalls a Ridgefielder who was a renowned book collector and Harvard benefactor. In 1996, John N. Sturges subdivided 43.8 acres into 10 building lots plus 21.4 acres of open space on the north side of Round Pond. The parcel was owned by himself and Jean M. Horblit, widow of Harrison Horblit, whose first name is recalled in the road name.

A widely known and respected collector of antique books and manuscripts, Harrison D. Horblit was also a philanthropist who, along with his wife, often made incalculably valuable contributions to many organizations — including those interested in the history of Ridgefield.

Born in Boston in 1912, Horblit graduated from Harvard in 1933 and became a textile executive. But his avocation as a collector made him known around the world. His specialty was antique books and manuscripts related to the history of science, mathematics and navigation, and his own book, *One Hundred Books Famous in Science*, is still considered a bible in its field. Much of his collection of rare books and manuscripts, including many from the 1400s and 1500s, was donated to Harvard’s Houghton Library. Jean Horblit gave a large collection of old photographs and daguerreotypes from as early as 1839 to

Houghton, which, in 1999, mounted a major exhibition, The Harrison D. Horblit Collection of Early Photography.

Mr. Horblit was also interested in local history. In 1973, when a group of Ridgefielders tried to buy a 1780 English print of the Battle of Ridgefield at a Sotheby's auction, they quickly ran out of money. Horblit stepped in and eventually paid \$16,000 (about \$75,000 in 2009) for an item Sotheby's had valued at under \$2,500. "This print belongs in Ridgefield if it belongs anywhere," he said at the time. Three months after his death in 1988, Mrs. Horblit donated the print to the Keeler Tavern Museum.

Jean Horblit, a benefactor of the Ridgefield Historical Society, was born in New Haven, attended Columbia University, and became a textile designer and stylist for Marshall Field & Company. She has been a collector of antique Japanese woodblock prints, illustrated books and maps known as Ukiyo-e or "images of a floating world," which cover scenes from everyday life of the people. Her prints and books have been exhibited at the Hammond Museum, Princeton University, and Katonah Gallery, and a rare 17th Century map of Tokaido was shown at the New York Museum of Natural History.

The Horblits lived in a magnificent English Georgian-style mansion, which Mrs. Horblit sold in 2004. Built in 1930 from limestone imported from France, "Oreneca" was all but abandoned by its owner, Philip D. Wagoner, after the death of his wife a few years later. When the Horblits bought the place in 1965, the property was so overgrown they did not know the house overlooked Round Pond.

The mansion and 12 acres with outbuildings sold for \$6.9 million in December 2004; at the time, it was the largest price ever paid for a house in Ridgefield. The average price of a house in Ridgefield then was around \$700,000.

HARVEY ROAD

Harvey Road off the north side of Florida Hill Road is one of two roads in town named for Harvey D. Tanton, Republican first selectman from 1951 to 1953 (*see* Tanton Hill Road). The road existed by 1952 and was accepted as a town road in 1961. Some say Bertha Bollas suggested the name. She was involved in the development of houses there and, even in her 70's, smoked cigars.

HAULEY PLACE

For more than a half century, Ridgefield had no place named to recall one of the more prominent of the first settlers. But that changed in 1978 when a developer created Hauley Place, a short, dead-end road off Lounsbury Road.

As noted below, the Rev. Thomas Hauley was Ridgefield's first minister, and probably its first resident teacher and town clerk. Until the early 1800's, only Hauley's Ridge, an area of Farmingville, made use of the name, and for a while around the turn of this century, there was a Hawley Street (*q.v.*)

Back in 1978, William R. Hornibrook first proposed using Thomas Hauley Place as the road serving his subdivision, but that was shortened to Hauley Place. Mr. Hornibrook was aware that this area or nearby land had long ago been called Hauley's Ridge, and that the town lacked any name recalling Mr. Hauley himself. It was an excellent example of resurrecting an old name and keeping alive some of the town's early history.

The Board of Selectmen accepted Hauley Place as a town road in 1980.

HAULEY'S RIDGE

A very old name that long ago fell out of use, Hauley's Ridge referred to territory north of Florida Hill Road, generally east of Ivy Hill Road – including Meadow Woods and perhaps including the land traversed by Blackman and Lounsbury Roads.

The origin of the name was a farm, operated on the ridge by the Hauley family. The founder of the clan here, the Rev. Thomas Hauley, probably received land thereabouts as part of his compensation for becoming the town's first minister in 1713. Mr. Hauley lived in the gambrel-roofed house still standing on the north corner of Main Street and Branchville Road. While the house has had many owners in recent years, it had remained in the Hauley or Hawley family well into the 20th Century.

Although Mr. Hauley's house was on Main Street, it was not unusual for village dwellers to have farms some distance away and even to have barns, other buildings and equipment on them.

A native of Northampton, Mass., Mr. Hauley graduated from Harvard College in 1709 and was ordained in 1712. His wife was Abigail Gould of prominent Fairfield family and the two came to the Ridgefield wilderness as newlyweds. He was the first minister of what is now called the First Congregational Church. Back then, however, the operations of the church and the town were virtually the same – “government” meetings were held in the church, church records and town records were kept together, and the minister was the only schoolteacher.

As probably the most educated of the first settlers, he was the natural choice to be the teacher (John Copp of Norwalk may have done that job temporarily until Mr. Hauley's arrival). At first school was probably taught in the Meeting House on Main Street, but by 1721 or 1722 a schoolhouse had apparently been built. Mr. Hauley was also the logical choice as the keeper of the town records – the “register” or town clerk. He carried on that task until his death and today, in the town clerk's office, anyone can see scores of pages of documents written by Mr. Hauley in his neat and sometimes ornate script.

Minister Hauley died in 1738 – his headstone can be seen at the old town cemetery along Mapleshade Road. He was 49 years old, but in the early 1700s, he was an old man; life expectancy was only around 40. (That rose to only 47 by 1900.)

Land records indicate that Thomas Hauley, the minister's son, and possibly Joseph Hauley, another son, may have been living in the Hauley's Ridge area in the 1730's. In 1740, Gamaliel Northrup sold Joseph Hauley “land lying over ye Great Swamp, eastwards of Mr. Hauley's Farm, so called.” In the Proprietors' Sixth 20-Acre Division in 1745, Lot 24 was described as “lying south of Hauley's Ridge” and Lots 28 and 26 were said to be east of Mr. Hauley's farm. The fact that the phrase is “Mr. Hauley” indicates the writer was respectfully referring to the minister, even though he had died seven years earlier. Son Thomas Hauley had land at Hauley's Ridge at least by 1745 when he sold property to Daniel Sherwood and described it as “lying behind ye Great Swamp at the northwest part of my farm.”

By 1777, many descendants of the Rev. Thomas Hauley owned land on or about the ridge, including Ebenezer, Gould, Thomas, Hezekiah, Elisha, Joseph, and Talcott Hauley, and Abigail Hauley Rockwell. It is doubtful that all were

living there then, but most or all of them probably spent some part of their lives on the ridge.

Hauley, incidentally, was spelled in that fashion until Benjamin Smith became town clerk and register of records in 1785 and began spelling it Hawley, the modern version. His predecessor Stephen Smith, town clerk from 1747 to 1785, had always written it Hauley, as had Minister Hauley himself. And, after all, he was a Harvard graduate and should have been able to spell his own name correctly.

Hauley's Ridge, a term that first appeared around 1720, was last mentioned in the land records in 1805. The name was probably supplanted in part by Ivy Hill, which is at the south end of the ridge.

HAVILAND HILL

The Annual Town Meeting in 1898 discussed cutting away portions of "Haviland Hill," probably the area along Danbury Road, opposite Haviland Road and south of the Limestone gasoline station. Danbury Road used to avoid this hill, as can be seen by the old route of the highway, which veers off eastward at the intersection with Haviland Road and reconnects nearly opposite the gas station. If the town didn't flatten it at the turn of the century, the State Highway Department did in the 1920's when it put the straight section of Danbury Road in place. Haviland Hill may have been what was earlier called "Limestone Hill" (*q.v.*).

HAVILAND ROAD

Haviland Road is an old highway whose function has changed much over the years. It extends from Danbury Road, opposite Limestone Road, eastward to Route 7 and is now used mostly to serve neighborhood homes and as a short-cut to and from Route 7 and Martin Park.

However, from at least 1720 until the early 1800's, Haviland Road was considered part of the main road to Danbury, running from Route 35 over to Pickett's Ridge. As noted under "Danbury Road," the 18th Century route to Danbury went north through Starr's Plain and over Moses Mountain – all east of the present Route 7.

By the early 1800's, the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike began taking traffic to Danbury via the present path of upper Danbury Road and Route 7. But even then, travelers might take Haviland Road over to the Sugar Hollow Turnpike (Route 7 south of Route 35) rather than deal with the southern end of Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike. At times Haviland Road may have been preferable to today's Danbury Road between Haviland and Route 7 because it was comparatively flat and easier for beasts of burden to handle, especially in mud season. The 1912 Whitlock road map of Ridgefield labels Haviland Road as "Danbury Road." Upper Danbury Road (north of Haviland) was "the Hill Road."

In 1801, Jacob Haviland of Paulington, Dutchess County, N.Y., bought Michael Warren's 150-acre farm "at Limestone." Most of the farm was on the north side of Haviland Road. Over the years Jacob and his descendants acquired even more land so that the farm stretched along most of both sides of Haviland Road between Routes 35 and 7.

Before they brought their name here, the Havilands had made an impression in nearby New York State. In 1731, a Jacob Haviland Jr. became the first

landowner in what is now the town of Patterson in Putnam County. His two large lots were within the Oblong, which had just been transferred from Connecticut to New York. One lot included a large portion of what is still called Haviland Hollow in the town of Patterson. It had been in this neighborhood that Benjamin Haviland settled and where, in 1750, a Jacob Haviland built a house that was still standing in the 1940's.

The Haviland family continued to farm in Ridgefield until around 1920 when Reed Haviland sold the homestead and about 100 acres to Charles and Hulda Ritch. Their son, Harold Ritch, later developed much of this land into Ritch Drive, Fillmore Lane and Hulda Lane. The old Haviland house, much modified and now bearing columns in the front, still stands on the north side of Haviland Road, near the intersection with Ritch Drive. Members of the family continued to live in town for many years after the sale.

Col. Louis D. Conley acquired parts of the farm for his Outpost Nurseries (*see* Outpost Pond).

Haviland Road was so called at least from 1946 when the name appears on the town's first zoning map. However, the name was not used on a 1935 road atlas of the town.

HAWLEY COURT

In 1962, DiNapoli Development Company of Bridgeport obtained a subdivision of five lots off Florida Hill Road to be served by a short dead-end road. That was the year that the First Congregational Church was celebrating its 250th anniversary. With this in mind, First Selectman Leo F. Carroll decided that it would be fitting to name this new road Hawley Court, commemorating the first minister of the Congregational Church here, Thomas Hauley. The church was pleased with the name and even wrote Mr. Carroll, praising him on the choice.

However, the subdivision was never fully developed and the road was never built. And it would be more than 15 years before another name came along to help keep Thomas Hauley's name alive (*see* Hauley Place).

HAWLEY STREET

Hawley Street was for a while applied to the western end of Branchville Road, where it connects with Main Street. The name, which appears on maps published as late as 1936, reflected the fact that the Hawley family had lived on the northeast corner of this road and Main Street from 1713 until into the 20th Century.

When this road was built around 1830, it was called New Lane. By 1867 it was being labeled Railroad Avenue because it led from the village via the old Branchville road to the depot in Branchville (then called Ridgefield Station or Beers Station). Railroad Avenue probably fell out of use soon after 1870 when the branch railroad line was built to the village, ending at a station where Ridgefield Supply is now. Villagers no longer needed to go all the way to Branchville for a train.

By 1900, a map of the village was calling the road Hawley Street, and S. L. Hawley was living in the Hawley homestead. By 1946, however, the official town zoning map was labeling it "Branchville Road."

It is interesting to note that around the turn of the century, six of the nine roads off Main Street were named for people who lived or owned property on their corners: DePeyster Street (now Rockwell Road), Hawley Street, Governor

Street (for Governor Phineas C. Lounsbury), Bailey Avenue, Gilbert Street, and King Lane. (West Lane had been called that since the 18th Century; Prospect and Market Streets picked up their names in the mid-19th Century).

HAWTHORNE CIRCLE

Hawthorne Circle appears on some maps as a short, dead-end road off the eastern side of southern Poplar Road, part of Armando Salvestrini's Ridgefield Garden's development. It is a private road, designed to serve about four lots. The name is probably incorrectly spelled and should be Hawthorn, the name of the native plant. All the modern roads in the vicinity – Poplar, Linden, Willow, Copper Beech – were named for plants because this territory was once part of the huge Outpost Nurseries.

HAWTHORNE HILL ROAD

Hawthorne Hill Road is a small road for which there were once bigger plans. It is also one of the few roads in town whose name is incorrect. Now only a short lane off Ridgebury Road and partly serving as a route to Bridle Trail, Hawthorne Hill Road was once planned to extend westerly more than twice its present length to reconnect with Bridle Trail, which was supposed to run on to Spring Valley Road. The entire subdivision was to have 64 lots, as shown on a map filed around 1957 by the Spring Valley Corporation.

At least part of the 98-acre former farm, owned by or under option to Richard Conley of the Connecticut Land Company at that time, was once considered as a site for the Ridgebury Elementary School. The location was rejected because of poor soils. And it was probably the quality of the soils and the steep slopes that discouraged further development of the subdivision, too.

Hawthorne Hill Road was named for the plant, of which there were many on the property. Thus, the spelling is incorrect and should be *Hawthorn*.

Coincidentally, Ridgefield does have a connection with the famous *Hawthorne*. Hildegard Hawthorne Oskison, a granddaughter of Nathaniel Hawthorne, lived for 12 years on East Ridge and later at The Elms Inn. She wrote biographies, including one about her grandfather, *The Romantic Rebel*. She died in 1952.

However, Richard Owen Carey, a subsequent owner of the Connecticut Land Company, said the road was without question named for the plant, not the author. He did not know where the incorrect spelling came from. *Hawthorne* has appeared on maps of the town since 1960. The road became a town highway in 1961.

A group of thorny shrubs native to this area, the hawthorns are frequently found in fields that have been abandoned for farming. They were once used as hedges in England and, in fact, the “haw” of hawthorn is derived from the same word as hedge.

HAYES LANE

Hayes Lane is a dead-end road off Olmstead Lane, named for Clifford Hayes who filed the road and subdivision plan for seven one-acre lots in 1948. Subsequently, more lots were developed. Most of the territory was swamp that Mr. Hayes filled in. (For his own home Mr. Hayes built the house on Danbury Road that later belonged to actor Cyril Ritchard, famous for his portrayals of Captain Hook in Peter Pan.)

Mr. Hayes also operated a roadside eating place, called Poor Ole Cliff's, on Route 7 north of Route 35. When he left town in the 1950's, he took the name with him and opened another Poor Ole Cliff's on Marathon, one of the Florida Keys.

HEAD OF THE BOGS

In 1812, members of the Seymour family transferred four acres to Sarah Seymour, describing it as being "at a place called the Head of the Bogs." This was at the north end of what we today call Silver Spring Swamp and what was then called the New Pound Bogs, the long swamp east of Silver Spring Road and west of South Olmstead Lane and St. Johns Road.

The term "Head" is found in old geographical names and descriptions, particularly along coastlines, for the part of a body of water that is opposite the water's outlet. The "Head of the Harbor" on Nantucket Island is the part of Nantucket Harbor farthest from the opening to the sea. In this case, the Head of the Bogs was at the opposite end of the swamp from the outlet brook where St. Johns Road crosses to Silver Spring Road.

The term appears only twice in the land records between 1709 and 1880. The other mention, also involving Seymour land, was in 1837.

HEART BRAND ESTATES

Heart Brand Estates is a subdivision off Route 7 including Ashbee Lane and Richardson Drive, developed around 1962 by Everett Lounsbury Jr. The reason for the name has not been learned. Perhaps there was some fancied resemblance between the layout of the roads and a cattle brand.

HEIRS LANE, HIGHWAY, WAY

Heirs Lane, Heirs Highway, and Heirs Way are all names that appear occasionally in the land records. For example, in 1869, Stephen L. Hoyt of Lewisboro sold Henry Mead, also of Lewisboro, 17 acres in Ridgefield, one of whose boundaries was "Heirs Highway." Several maps of the town, including the Kaiser Handi-Book map of 1978, show this dead-end road as a driveway off the north side of Pumping Station Road near the New York state line. It leads to a couple of houses and a water tank then owned by the Ridgefield Water Supply Company.

The name is interesting. My guess is that it originated in some old bequest. The will's author may have given to some heirs property reachable only via this strip of land. Thus, the route to the land of the person's heirs became locally known as Heirs Highway.

The name appears on maps as Lane, Highway, or Way. Despite its modest dimensions and use, "highway" is probably the most accurate since it appears to be the original name.

HEMLOCK HILLS

Hemlock Hills off Ned's Mountain and Old Mill Roads consists of more than 350 acres that were transformed from a conservationist's nightmare to a conservationist's dream. It is one of the town's finest and wildest refuges or parks.

The name was chosen by the late Otto H. Lippolt, who acquired the land in many parcels, often from tax sales during the Depression. He planned a Ridgefield Lakes-type development for summer cottages there.

In 1946, when the town adopted zoning, this area was designated R-4, a district specifically set up for summer cottages on 2,500-square-foot lots. In theory, if the land were developed to its maximum density, more than 6,000 summer cottages could have been crammed into this forest. Mr. Lippolt, who had done other Ridgebury subdivisions south of George Washington Highway, would not have developed the area at nearly that density, for he had, as a friend said in a tribute to him after his death, “the outdoorsman’s love of the land.”

A well-driller by profession, Mr. Lippolt had gone far enough with his plans to install roads and drainage culverts, and had built some year-round houses in the neighborhood. But he died in 1965 before the bulk of Hemlock Hills was developed.

Two years later, after much debate and negotiation with Mr. Lippolt’s estate, the town under First Selectman Leo F. Carroll agreed to pay about \$1,000 an acre for the 357 acres at Hemlock Hills and another 220 acres east of Pine Mountain Road (now called Pine Mountain Refuge). Mr. Carroll said at the time that it was the best land bargain the town would ever run across. Considering the fact that subdivided even under three-acre zoning, the 570 acres would have been worth more than \$50 million by 2005, he certainly seems to have been correct!

However, more important, some of Ridgefield’s wildest land has been permanently preserved as a haven for the many kinds of fauna and flora found there. Hemlock Hills, with its huge evergreens and its extensive deciduous forests, its swamps and even meadowland, is a home to almost every species of mammal, bird, reptile, wildflower and fern found in town. (Some species of wildflowers are abundant there, and perhaps nowhere else in town.)

Mr. Lippolt’s roads now serve as paths for hikers (and as fire roads), and there are both formal and natural trails through portions of the property. In 1982, two students at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies did a 64-page “Natural Resource Inventory,” with recommendations for managing the land. In their report, they said, “today’s forest is the direct result of the area’s post-settlement land use history. Until the early 1900’s numerous landowners held small lots in Hemlock Hills, each with a slightly different use-history of cutting and grazing. Thus the resulting matrix of secondary growth is a blended patchwork of early and mid-successional species. If left undisturbed by man and nature, the area will eventually return to a shady hemlock forest reminiscent of pre-colonial days.”

Man has, for once, done his part in providing the protection.

Hemlock Hills was, of course, named for the trees, some of which reach more than 80 feet in height, especially near Ned’s Mountain Road. Years ago the wood was not considered of much value, except for railroad ties – it holds spikes very well – and for the tannin in the bark. It is not suited for carpentry, nor is it good for fires because of its tendency to produce sparks.

Perhaps the fact that the hemlock – disdained by the early settlers – covered much of this area in the 18th Century led to the name of Bogus (*q.v.*), which was applied to this neighborhood and suggests that it was not considered too valuable. The old Bogus Road is the main dirt road running through Hemlock Hills from Ned’s Mountain Road to Skytop Road.

HEMLOCK HOLE

A 1742 description of Timothy Benedict's land says it is "at the Hemlock Hole near Mount Robinson." Mount Robinson is in present-day Danbury, but was part of Ridgefield before 1846. The mountain is just west of the Richter Park golf course off Aunt Hack's Ridge Road. A "hole" was a low spot in the terrain.

HERITAGE LANE

Heritage Lane, a little dead-end road off Barrack Hill Road, is part of the large Eight Lakes development on West Mountain. It is one of those "historical" names – like Settlers Lane, Patriots' Place, Kingswood Court – that really don't mean much, but sound nice.

HERMIT LANE

Hermit Lane is a short, dead-end road off the south side of Florida Hill Road, developed by Carl Lecher. It became a town road in October 1980.

The road was named for George Washington Gilbert, a Ridgefield native who lived like a hermit in the crumbling ruins of his family's 18th Century salt-box. Gilbert was one of the town's characters of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.

Born in 1847 at the family homestead on Florida Hill Road, he was educated at a private boys school in the village. Little is known of how he spent his early adulthood, but for his last 40 years, he lived alone on Florida Hill Road. "By his own account, he became a hermit following the death of the girl he planned to marry," said Silvio A. Bedini in *Ridgefield in Review*.

Although he lived by himself and rarely visited the village – existing on a budget of about 30 cents a week, Gilbert was not without visitors. Hundreds of people, young and old, would call on him each year and "he related many strange tales and yarns which gained in detail and wonder with each narration," wrote George L. Rockwell in his *History of Ridgefield*. He enjoyed posing tricky mathematical questions, such as "What is a third and a half of a third of 10?" and showing people the sword that his grandfather had supposedly captured from a Hessian soldier at the Battle of Monmouth during the Revolution.

He also took people to his cellar where there was a stone in the chimney basement that bore a striking resemblance to the profile of Queen Victoria. Usually barefoot, Mr. Gilbert invariably dressed in a cotton shirt, overalls hung by suspenders, and an old straw hat.

Gilbert's home literally fell apart around him and for a while, he had to move his bed onto the hearth of the old fireplace, the chimney being the only shelter left. Finally, Col. Edward M. Knox, whose huge estate was down the road, had a cottage built for the hermit. It was there, on Jan. 6, 1924, during a bitter cold spell, that Mr. Gilbert froze to death. He is buried at the New Florida Cemetery at Route 7 and Simpaug Turnpike under a stone that reads: "The Hermit of Ridgefield." His father, Jeremiah (d. 1860), and mother, Eliza (d. 1884), lie next to him.

HERRICK LANE

Herrick Lane was a name for a portion of an old road that ran west of and parallel to High Ridge Road – from Peaceable Street south. Today's Shadow Lane is the southern half of this road, which served as an access to the rear of

the large High Ridge houses. The northern end of Herrick Lane is now a driveway. The middle section no longer exists.

Gerard and Lois Herrick owned one of the houses that bordered this lane – the second house from the corner of Peaceable Street. Gerard Herrick was a pioneer designer of helicopter-type aircraft, one of which used to be stored in a barn out back along Herrick Lane; it is now in the Smithsonian Institution. Mrs. Herrick continued to live in the house until around 1980.

Long before the military developed vertical take-off and landing aircraft, like the Osprey, Gerardus Post Herrick of High Ridge had invented an aircraft that did that.

Gerardus Herrick, who generally went by the name of Gerard, was a rather eccentric but talented lawyer and a skilled research engineer. Born in 1873, he was a member of the 13th generation of the Post family to live in New York City since the clan arrived in 1654. He graduated from Princeton and became an attorney. After serving as a captain in World War I in the Army Air Service—not as a pilot but as a gunnery officer—he came up with the idea of a convertible aircraft that could fly either fixed-wing like a conventional plane or vertically as an “autogyro.” In the 1920s and 1930s, he partnered with a couple of aircraft manufacturers to build a working model of his autogyro.

“The first aircraft, the HV-1, was ready on Nov. 6, 1931,” the Smithsonian Institution says. “The test pilot, Merrill Lambert, made several successful test flights in both fixed- and rotating-wing mode, but when he attempted an in-flight transition between the two, the aircraft fell out of control and crashed. Lambert bailed out of the aircraft, but was killed when his parachute failed to open.” However, an analysis of the accident found the basic design was sound, and Herrick continued to develop what he called a “vertoplane.”

The plane was a fixed-wing monoplane with a large overhead propeller, shaped somewhat like a smaller wing. The aircraft could take off as a monoplane and once in the air, convert to a hovering aircraft using the large overhead propeller. It could then land in a very small area. The aircraft could also take off vertically, but could not convert to horizontal flight in mid-air, and had to remain a “helicopter” until it landed.

A new version, the HV-2a, began flying successfully in 1936, cruising at 100 mph as a fixed-wing plane and 65 mph in autogyro mode. The 2,300-pound aircraft needed only 60 feet of runway to take off. Unfortunately, the aircraft’s “remarkable performance did not justify production as the weight penalties imposed by carrying both rotary and fixed wing structures eliminated its commercial advantage over conventional airplanes,” the Smithsonian said.

Herrick continued to work on convertible airplane ideas and unsuccessfully tried to gain investor and government support until his death in 1955. He didn’t limit his interests to aircraft, however, and over the years the attorney/engineer wrote a manual for small-arms instructors, and did research work into blast furnaces, steam engines, lenses, and rifle sights.

“Gerard Post Herrick was one of the earliest to advocate combining fixed-wing flight with rotary-wing flight,” wrote Dr. Bruch H. Charnov in a study of the inventor. “He has been given little notice by vertical flight historians, quite unjustifiably becoming one of the forgotten rotary-wing pioneers, the champion of a concept that even today in various forms seeks legitimacy.”

He and his wife, Lois, had their High Ridge home here starting in the 1920s. A large garage in back once housed the HV-2a, historian Dick Venus

recalled. After Lois Herrick died in 1983, Mr. Venus was at an estate sale on the property when he came across “the largest propeller that I had ever seen, lying on the floor of the garage. No doubt this enormous thing could lift a house right off the ground if you had a machine with the energy to turn it.” He concluded it was a spare for the HV-2a, which had already been donated to the Smithsonian Institution.

Incidentally, Herrick was a cousin of Myron T. Herrick, the U.S. ambassador to France who greeted Charles Lindbergh on his arrival in Paris in 1927. Myron must have been popular: He’s the only American ambassador to France with a street in Paris named after him.

HESSIAN DRIVE

Hessian Drive commemorates a disputed piece of Ridgefield history. Developed in 1959 by James B. Franks to serve eight lots at his “Buffalo Creek Acres” off North Salem Road, Hessian Drive recalls the German soldiers who were said to have aided the British when Tryon’s troops came through Ridgefield in April 1777 and fought the colonials in the Battle of Ridgefield.

According to George L. Rockwell, the skeletons of two men, believed to be Hessian soldiers, were uncovered in sand being excavated in 1874 on property across North Salem Road from Hessian Drive. Mr. Rockwell said, “The bodies had been interred at a depth of four feet and the skeletons were lying near each other, side by side. Dr. A. Y. Paddock, for whom the sand was being drawn, took possession of the skeletons. One was almost perfect and Dr. Paddock exhibited it at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. He was offered \$200 for the skeleton, which offer was refused.”

After Dr. Archibald Paddock’s tragic death in 1889 (he killed himself after accidentally shooting his son to death), his house was being moved when the skeleton was found in – of all places – a sealed closet. Its whereabouts today is unknown.

There has been some disagreement over whether Hessians actually participated in the Battle of Ridgefield. Tradition had always said so, and an 1888 history reported so. A list of injured soldiers on the British side included one “Ensign Menichin,” which Mr. Rockwell took to be a German-sounding name. However, Silvio A. Bedini said in *Ridgefield in Review*, “the presence of Hessians during (the) raid has been subject of considerable debate among local historians...The major source for the belief that Hessians fought at Ridgefield was the discovery of the bodies of two Hessian soldiers...

“Modern historians are inclined to the belief that Hessian soldiers did not form part of the British forces that took part in the burning of Danbury or the Battle of Ridgefield.” Based on a comprehensive study of war records, several historians believe that it is a case of mistaken identity – that observers back in 1777 mistook the unusually tall hat of the British grenadier and the grenadier plates for those of Hessians.

In his 2003 history of the Battle of Ridgefield called *Farmers Against the Crown*, Keith Jones joins the historians who pooh-pooh the Hessian participation and believe the buried men were Redcoats. “Tryon’s own records clearly indicate no hired German mercenary units accompanied his expedition,” Jones said.

No matter whose the skeletons were, they held up Hessians as far as the developer Franks was concerned. Hessian Drive became a town road in 1962.

HIBBART PLACE

An undated map in the town clerk's office shows a subdivision north of the Gilbert Street and Ramapoo Road intersection, served by a road called Hibbart Place. Joseph W. Hibbart, who owned the land there from the 1880's into the first quarter of the 20th Century, was a local merchant. Among his enterprises was the Round Lake Ice Company, which cut and delivered ice from Round Pond on West Mountain, as well as from Upper Pond, New Pond, and from Hurlbutt's Pond, no longer extant, in the vicinity of Rowland Lane off East Ridge. In the early 1900s, Hibbart's Market, which sold meat, fish, fruit and, of course, ice, was in a store occupied in 2007 by Cappiello's Jewelry Store on Main Street.

For some reason, the road and subdivision were never built.

HICKORY DRIVE

In 1959, Otto Lippolt, the well-driller who over the years collected many hundreds of Ridgebury acres, filed a map for a 72-lot subdivision on about 90 acres bordering Ridgebury Road and George Washington Highway (surrounding the Ridgebury Congregational Church's Shield's Hall property). Among the several planned roads was Hickory Drive. The subdivision, called Ridgebury Acres, was never developed as planned, although one of its proposed roads – Old Trolley Road – now has houses along it (*see* Stone Ridge Estates).

HICKORY LANE

A short dead-end road off the east side of Florida Road, Hickory Lane serves seven one-acre lots, according to the plan filed in 1958 by Kustaa Havunoja of Redding. It became a town road in 1962.

Although the road goes up the side of a hill called Cedar Mountain since settlement times, Hickory Lane commemorates another kind of common native tree. Several species of hickory, including the pecan, shagbark, pignut, and black, are native to this area. All have been valued for their strength, and the hickories have been used for many years for tool handles, chair backs, and other purposes requiring a strong wood. It is also an excellent fireplace wood, and was a source of charcoal. The nuts, of course, are popular with both humans and wildlife.

HIDDEN LAKE

Hidden Lake is a modern and incorrect name for Turtle Pond (*q.v.*), the small man-made body of water on the southwest side of Old Sib Road. It picked up the new name when Eight Lakes Estates was developed in the early 1950's and the subdividers decided "Hidden Lake" was a more alluring name than Turtle Pond – alluring, presumably, to homebuyers.

Although Old Sib Road runs right along its shore, Turtle Pond is to a degree "hidden" by steep embankments around much of its perimeter.

HIDDEN LAKE COURT

Hidden Lake Court, a short dead-end lane off Old Sib Road, was originally (1952) planned to connect with Barrack Hill Road to the south. However, such a route would rise from 650 feet above sea level to more than 900 feet in a short distance of about 1,000 feet. The terrain was simply too steep, so a 1953 map filed for Eight Lakes Estates proposed a road only about 250 feet long.

The road, at the southeast end of Hidden Lake, is more hidden than the lake (*q.v.*).

HIGHCLIFF TERRACE

Highcliff Terrace, running off Bennett's Farm Road just south of Bates Farm Road, is one of the many small private roads at the Ridgefield Lakes. There's a steep embankment just to the south.

HIGHLAND ACRES

Highland Acres is the original subdivision name for Jerry Tuccio's Eleven Levels development off West Mountain and Old West Mountain Roads, now generally called West Mountain Estates. The land is high.

HIGH MEADOWS ROAD

In 1959, John and Louise Meyers filed a subdivision plan with the town clerk for nine lots on 12 acres off Regan Road. It was served by High Meadows Road, a name descriptive of the terrain. The subdivision and the road were never developed.

HIGH PASTURE COURT

High Pasture Court, off North Salem Road, is a subdivision of the old Hubbell and later Sidney D. Farrar farm. Farrar, a professional baseball player in the 1880's and father of the Metropolitan Opera star Geraldine Farrar, owned the farm from 1923 until his death in 1935 (*see* Farrar Lane).

The 30-acre farm was subsequently owned by the late Mrs. Mary L. Olcott, who called the place High Pastures, a name less personal and less entertaining than "Farrar's Thirty Acres," which its previous owner had used. James Hackert, a Ridgefield real estate agent, retained the name when he subdivided the property into 17 lots in 1965.

HIGH RIDGE

Simple, like so many of the early New England place names, High Ridge is just what its name says, and was so called from the earliest settlement of the town.

According to the Rev. S. G. Goodrich in 1800, the Indians called the place Candoto (*q.v.*), which one authority translates as "the top of the hill" or "highest place." Among the ridges of Ridgefield, it is one of the highest and is certainly the loftiest locality in or near the center of town. The U.S. Geological Survey measures the top of the ridge at 860 feet above sea level (at about 55 High Ridge). Round Pond on West Mountain is only 778 feet (but at its highest point near Sturges Park at the end of Oreneca Road, West Mountain reaches 1,000 feet). Main Street at the town hall is about 735 feet and East Ridge at its highest points (at the old high school and at the Ridgefield Skating Center) is only 750 feet.

High Ridge's elevation was hard to ignore, and the earliest map of the village area, drawn by John Copp in 1710 to show plowland lots, locates "ye High Ridge." Candoto never appears in the early land records – we must take Minister Goodrich's word for the word's existence – but High Ridge frequently does. For example, when Joseph Hobart sold James Benedict land in 1724, he called

it “my High Ridge lott.” In the late 1700’s and in the early 1800’s, the name sometimes appears in deeds as one word, “Highridge.”

A Different Ridge

High Ridge in the 18th Century was much different from what we see today as we drive along High Ridge Avenue from King Lane to West Lane. Copp and the proprietors chose this area as prime planting land – high, dry, open to a full day of sunlight, and very close to the village homes. Any trees there were probably felled almost immediately after the settlers came, and planting of the soil began right away.

It is believed that no houses were built on High Ridge until Mr. Goodrich erected his around 1794 near the southern end, at the head of Parley Lane. Being ideally farmland but also very open to the harsh northwestern winds of winter, High Ridge was avoided as a site for homes; the Main Street “valley” to the east, between High Ridge and East Ridge, was more protected and suitable for houses.

The minister’s son, Samuel G. Goodrich (who wrote more than 100 books under the name of Peter Parley), was very much taken by High Ridge, his childhood home. It was one of the first places he went when he visited the town in 1855, more than 40 years after leaving.

The View in 1855

“We went thither, soon finding ourselves in the old Keeler lot on the top of High Ridge, so familiar to our youthful rambles,” he wrote his brother, Charles, at the time. “With all the vividness of my early recollections, I really had no adequate idea of the beauty of the scene, as now presented to us. The circle of view was indeed less than I had imagined, for I once thought it immense; but the objects were more striking, more vividly tinted, more picturesquely disposed.

“Long Island Sound, which extends for 60 miles before the eye, except as it is hidden here and there by intercepting hills and trees, seems nearer than it did to the inexperienced vision of my childhood. I could distinguish the different kinds of vessels on the water, and the island itself – stretched out in a long blue line beyond – presents its cloud-like tissues of forest, alternating with patches of yellow sandbanks along the shore. I could distinctly indicate the site of Norwalk; and the spires peering through the mass of trees to the eastward, spoke suggestive of the beautiful towns and villages that line the northern banks of the Sound.

“West Mountain seemed nearer and less imposing than I had imagined, but the seas of mountains beyond, terminating in the Highlands of the Hudson, more than fulfilled my remembrances. The scene has no abrupt and startling grandeur from this point of view, but in that kind of beauty which consists in blending the peace and quietude of cultivated valleys with the sublimity of the mountains – all in the enchantment of distance, and all mantled with the vivid hues of summer – it equals the fairest scenes in Italy...”

The Ridge in 1878

The Rev. Daniel W. Teller gave this description of High Ridge in his *History of Ridgefield*, published in 1878:

“J. Howard King Esq. of Albany has ... remodeled and greatly improved his summer home ... He has also purchased the property on High Ridge and is greatly improving it. The street has been widened and adorned with young

shade trees, in the same manner as Prospect Avenue, rustic gateways put up, and a pleasant observatory erected on the very top of the hill.

“There are many fine views in town, but none which equal in every particular the view to be obtained from the summit of this delightful ridge. On a clear bright morning, or just at evening, one may sit here and feast his eye upon almost all that is beautiful in nature; the deep blue waters of the Sound, reflecting the slanting rays of sunlight; the clear white thread of sand which marks the shore of Long Island; the purple haze of the still more remote parts of the island, which gradually lose themselves in the boundaries of vision; the gently receding fields, which seem imperceptibly to dip down to the very surface of the waters, dotted here and there with farm-houses and church-spires, and last but not least, the broken and uneven upland, which reminds one of the ‘hill country of Judea,’ leading away the eye towards the sun rising.”

During Teller’s term as 10th minister of the First Congregational Church (also the church of Goodrich, its third minister), High Ridge began to take on a new life. Farmland for more than six generations, it was now becoming an attractive location for the summer homes of wealthy New Yorkers. It had those wonderful views noted by Goodrich and Teller, was close to the village, and, well, who cared in summer about winter’s icy blasts? Half-dozen sizable mansions were erected on the west side facing the view that extended for miles across rolling hills and placid lakes to the cliffs of the Hudson River Valley. To the east, one could see West Rock in New Haven; but to the rich, sunsets were preferable to sunrises as views.

The Trees Come

Of course, this was before the trees. Today countless trees obscure most of the highly praised High Ridge panoramas. People today forget that we now have many more trees in town than existed a hundred years ago. Trees and farming did not mix well, and most of the land in agrarian Ridgefield had been cleared by 1800 and was under cultivation. Thus, those views were not only unfettered, but tended to be more of patchworks of fields than of today’s woodlands.

High Ridge has had other names, mostly short-lived. Francis D. Martin recalled that when he was a child around the turn of the 20th Century, it was called West Ridge, a logical complement to East Ridge on the other side of Main Street. It was also called King’s Ridge (*q.v.*), for J. Howard King, who, as Teller noted, began the home development there. And since many of the houses were subsequently owned by people in the book publishing world, it was also informally called Publisher’s Row (*q.v.*).

HIGH RIDGE AVENUE

High Ridge Avenue – often called just High Ridge today (and originally, High Ridge Road) – dates back to the 18th Century and served chiefly as an access to the farming lots along the ridge. On High Ridge itself (from King Lane to West Lane), it borders the back (west) property lines of the original Main Street home lots, laid out in 1708.

The name, “High Ridge Road,” first appears on the land records in 1833. Pre-1875 deed references always say “road,” never “avenue” as modern maps call it. (If road and avenue are not enough, Beers’ atlas of 1867 called it High Ridge Street.) The road-to-avenue switch probably occurred in the late 1800s when J. Howard King was promoting the ridge as site for fancy summer homes

for wealthy New Yorkers; in the 19th Century, “avenue” was a trendy French word for city streets that were tree-lined and, presumably, nicer than most city streets.

Karl S. Nash of Main Street recalled that early in the 20th Century, High Ridge Avenue applied only to the section from Catoonah Street south to West Lane. From Catoonah north to Gilbert Street was called Maple Avenue, for the trees along it. Today, the entire distance from Gilbert Street to West Lane is considered High Ridge Avenue, although the High Ridge itself is only from King Lane southward.

The south end of the road may have originally included today’s Parley Lane. The “short cut” from the top of Parley Lane to West Lane, passing by Shadow Lane, apparently was not established until the 1800s.

The town bought the right to what appears to be the south end of High Ridge Avenue in 1851; however, the deed notes that the path had been used for “a number of years” as a public road under a lease from the Rev. Samuel M. Phelps of the Congregational church. The Parley Lane route is in some ways preferable to the new route. It is less steep, a benefit in slippery winter weather, and it does not have the dangerous curve-plus-blind-intersection (at Shadow Lane) of the newer road.

An 1875 deed speaks of land on the “east side of High Road, so called,” land that was clearly on what we today call High Ridge. An 1868 mortgage on the same land refers to “High Ridge Road” so it is likely that the “High Road” is only a transcription error.

HIGH VALLEY & ROAD

High Valley, off the north side of Florida Hill Road, is a subdivision of 23 two-acre lots, obtained in 1969 by Giles and Barry Montgomery, the father and son developers of Twin Ridge. It consists of 51.6 acres. Development includes High Valley Court and Road, and North Valley Road.

The land was part of the large estate of Col. Edward M. Knox, a hat manufacturer and Civil War hero, whose huge house had 45 rooms. Colonel Knox was wounded at Gettysburg, for which he received a Congressional Medal of Honor.

The property is rich in history. The grounds and an old house that stood on the estate once belonged to Hezekiah Hawley, a Revolutionary War hero, whose son, Ebenezer, fought in the War of 1812 and was a prominent figure in early 19th Century Ridgefield. Later George Washington Gilbert, the “hermit of Ridgefield,” lived at the edge of the grounds (*see* Hermit Lane).

The house at Downesbury Manor, as the 300-acre estate was called but sometimes spelled Downsbury, was built sometime around the turn of the century by Henry DeB. Schenck, who lived there only a few years. Schenck raised angora goats there and sold the wool. After Colonel Knox bought the place, he made many improvements, including an indoor riding ring, miles of bridle paths, elaborate gardens, and a five-story water tower. Vestiges of the garden, fountain, and pool were still visible in the woods in the 1970’s.

“His stable was one of the best in town and his kindness and geniality are often recalled,” wrote Harvey H. Keeler of Ridgefield in a 1938 edition of *The Bridgeport Sunday Post*. “He was a close friend of Mark Twain who occasionally drove (or rode the train) from his home in Redding for a visit. In the spacious living room, these two men passed many hours, chatting before the open

fireplace, which is flanked with rare and beautiful tiles bought by Colonel Knox from the Spanish Alhambra on one of his European trips.”

The colonel died in 1916. Subsequent owners included Pierre Cartier, the jeweler, who bought the place from the Knox estate and lived there summers for a short while. Also for a short time, the Holy Ghost Fathers used the estate; they also occupied the former school office building on Prospect Ridge as a novitiate until around 1970. About 1928, Dr. Clyde Kennedy Miller bought the estate and used it as a summer hotel. Then, around 10 years later, an all-year sports club began operation there, but did not last long. In 1942, Downsbury Manor became a Western-style dude ranch, called the Circle F Ranch. Nothing tried at the manor was successful, and the castle-like house was razed in August 1953. (*See also* Downsbury Court.)

HIGHVIEW DRIVE

Highview Drive, off Knollwood Drive, is part of the large Ridgefield Knolls development, built in the late 1950's and early 1960's on Ridgefield or Asproom Mountain. Edgar P. Bickford of Danbury, the developer's surveyor, said the road was named simply for its view which includes Lake Windwing and Ned's Mountain to the north. Its elevation ranges from 680 to 720 feet above sea level.

HIGHVIEW ROAD

More than a mile away from Highview Drive is Highview Road, one of the private lanes at the Ridgefield Lakes. It runs from Great Hill Road to Lakeview Drive.

If the town government ever sets about ridding Ridgefield of confusing names, one of the Highviews must go. The similarity of the two names can lead to dangerous mistakes – fire engines or ambulances might rush to an emergency on Highview Drive and wind up on Highview Road.

Incidentally, Highview Drive beats out Highview Road in the height of its views. The latter is 590 to 650 feet above sea level.

HILLCREST COURT

Hillcrest Court is a short dead-end lane off upper Barrack Hill Road, part of the Eight Lakes development. As the name suggests, it is at the crest of a hill, some 920 feet above sea level. It's not surprising that in a town as high and hilly as Ridgefield that we would see roads named with hill-combination words. What may be a little surprising is how few of them there are – just this and the one that follows.

HILLSDALE AVENUE

Traversing a hill and a dale, Hillsdale Avenue is part of an old subdivision of a hayfield along lower Danbury Road at Island Hill.

Conrad Rockelein, a German barber whose shop was on Main Street and later at his home on Mountain View Avenue, filed the original subdivision plan for this neighborhood in 1910. It included about 30 lots, 75 by 250 feet in size, on 19.4 acres. No street names were shown on the map. A new plan was filed in 1927, called Mountain View Park. On this map, the road is labeled “Hillsdale Street.” A map published for the town in 1958 also uses that name, but modern maps as well as telephone book addresses use “Avenue.” The switch probably

occurred because the two other roads in the neighborhood, Mountain View and Island Hill, are both Avenues.

HOBBY DRIVE

Hobby Drive has nothing to do with leisure-time activities. Jackson Hobby farmed the land there around the turn of the 20th Century. Part of a subdivision by a corporation called Scotland Knolls, the road off North Salem Road was created around 1955 and serves about 23 lots.

Jackson Hobby came here from Danbury in 1886, buying 60 acres that included much of the old Town Farm, a place where indigent people were put to work to help support their welfare costs. Hobby did not buy the Town Farm building itself on North Salem Road, where the workers had lived. Mr. Hobby's house was situated on Sherwood Road near Ledges Road. In 1914, he sold his property, "known as the Town Farm," to Seth Low Pierrepont (*see* Pierrepont Drive).

HOGHOLLER, SMITH'S

An interesting neighborhood name with a rather limited life and use, "Hogholler" appears in only one deed. In 1749, Thomas Smith sold Gideon Smith 2.5 acres "on Asproom Mountain near Ebenezer Smith's hogholler, so called." The word is probably a variation of "hogwallow," which is a "hollow or ditch in which pigs wallow." However, the *Oxford England Dictionary* also notes a specifically American use of the term to refer to "a natural depression having this appearance."

Exactly where it was located is hard to say, but the Hogholler was probably at either Ridgefield Knolls or Twixt Hills, both modern subdivisions on Asproom or Ridgebury Mountain. Curiously enough, a 1746 deed refers to 11 acres "lying...under Asproom near Wallis's Hoghole so called." The deed was from Ebenezer, Daniel and Job Smith to Gideon Smith. Whether the two references were to the same locality is not known.

HOLLOW, THE

Pre-1840 deeds occasionally refer to land in Ridgebury at "the Hollow." For example, in 1821, the estate of David Meeker sold Daniel Sanford land "in the Hollow at Ridgebury." The term, first mentioned in 1821, was a shortened form of Ridgebury Hollow, first noted in 1794 and probably applying to a valley in what is now western Danbury (but then northern Ridgefield) near Mill Plain (*see* Ridgebury Hollow).

HOLLOWAY LOT

Although this history has not attempted to cover in detail the hundreds of different lot names that were used on Ridgefield's farms over the first two centuries of the town's history, the "Holloway Lott" is an interesting example of how the brief ownership of land can, however accidentally, preserve an owner's name for many years.

In 1737, George Halloway came to town from Danbury and purchased six acres "at Toilsome," a hilly area on the west side of North Salem Road around Continental Drive and Barrack Hill Road. Later, he also bought land along Danbury Road where he may have settled. Only two years after buying it, he

sold the six acres. By 1740, he had disposed of all his holdings and moved to the newly opened wilderness at Cornwall.

In 1787, almost a half century after Halloway had sold his Toilsome land, John Lawrence, the state treasurer, sold Allen Hays a portion of the confiscated property of Jeremiah Smith, whom he called “an absentee.” (Smith was probably a Tory who fled the town during the Revolution.) In his description of the land, Lawrence said it was “well-known as the Holloway Lott” and added that it was about a mile north of the Meeting House in the village. The family of Allen Hayes, who died in Canaan, sold “the Holloway Lott” in 1792, still using the term recalling a man who left town more than 50 years earlier and who had owned the land for only two years.

HOLMES ROAD

Holmes Road at Westmoreland, a name once used to identify a different road, recalls the Holmes family who owned farmland here from the 1860’s into the early part of this century. The road was named for the farm of the brothers Irving and Orville Holmes, whose farmhouse on Barry Avenue was in 2009 the home of the late Fred P. Montanari, a former selectman. Orville Holmes was the first selectman of Ridgefield for three one-year terms from 1916 to 1918. Francis D. Martin recalled that around 1910 to 1915, the Holmes brothers were paying youngsters 10 cents a day to weed onions in their fields in this neighborhood.

Today’s Holmes Road was originally called Lincoln Road, for the original subdivider of Westmoreland, the Lincoln Development Corporation of Lincoln, Mass. The name was changed in 1966 for fear it would be confused with Lincoln Lane off Branchville Road.

Before 1966, today’s Remington Road was called Holmes Road.

Holmes Road was accepted as a town highway in 1969.

HONEY HOLLOW

Sounding more like a cutesy name in a modern subdivision, Honey Hollow is actually an antique. It first appears in a deed in 1846, just before northern Ridgefield was ceded to Danbury. The name was probably applied to a locality near the junction of modern-day Aunt Hack Hill Road and Middle River Road. How long the name stuck is not known.

This and the following name may have stemmed from the fact that the spot was well-known for its wild bee hives and the sweets contained from them. Honey Hill in Wilton was so called from 1706 because of the abundance of wild bees in its woods. (Honey Grove, Texas, was named in 1836 by Davy Crockett because he found wild honey in a tree there.)

Although honey was a treat much appreciated by the early settlers and the word made for pretty sounding place names, few of the 169 towns in Connecticut have old place names employing the word honey. According to *Connecticut Place Names*, only eight towns had honey places in the 1980s. Honey Hill is the most popular (four towns), but there are place places like Honeypot Brook and Glen, and a place simply called “Honey Spot.”

HONEY WOODS

This attractive name is, like the above, in western Danbury, probably near Mill Plain around the intersection of Route 6 and Old Ridgebury Road. In

1830, the only time Honey Woods was cited in a deed, this area was part of Ridgefield.

It is odd – and unfortunate – that both of these fine old names were in the wrong place to have lived up our own modern geography. It is all the more odd that olden Ridgefield had two “Honey” localities when about 90% of the towns in the state apparently had none.

HOP MEADOW BRANCH

Although the Hop Meadow Branch – and the Hop Meadow itself – were more famous in Wilton, the stream originates in this town and the name was picked up and used by Ridgefielders. The Hop Meadow Branch appears to be the brook that runs east of and parallel to lower Wilton Road East in Ridgefield. Once into Wilton it turns westward and crosses into Lewisboro, N.Y. Today, this is often called the east branch of the Silvermine River (*q.v.*)

It was an important brook to the early settlers, for a tree somewhere on its bank in Wilton officially marked a point three quarters of a mile north of which was the boundary line between Ridgefield and the Wilton parish of Norwalk. The brook and the tree were mentioned in 1710 when the boundary was set up, and in 1716 when it was checked.

The Hop Meadow, a well-known locality in Wilton, was near the northwest corner of the town above Bald Hill. David H. Van Hoosear, a Wilton historian, called it “a large low tract of land ... a short distance north of the Methodist Church,” which formerly stood on the west side of Ridgefield Road (Route 33), a little south of Ruscoe Road. The name appears frequently in the Norwalk land records when Wilton was a parish of that town. However, the brook is also mentioned in Ridgefield transactions, such as in 1732 when the proprietors deeded Daniel Olmsted 11 acres “lying southeasterly of his Six Acre Division, west of ye Hopp Meadow Branch.”

Its approximate location in Ridgefield is described in a pre-1750 deed in which the proprietors grant Samuel Olmsted 1 ½ acres “lying southerly at ye road yt leads to ye Spectacles and east of ye Hop Meadow Branch.” (The road to the Spectacles in this case was probably Wilton Road East; the Spectacles were a pair of ponds in Wilton – *see* Spectacle Lane).

The name fell out of use in deeds after the middle of the 18th Century. However, Mrs. Charles Russell of Wilton Road East told us in the 1970’s that the brook which crossed her property, on which she had lived for 40 years, was called the “Hops Meadow Brook.” This is near the headwaters of the stream identified above. A deed in 1770 seems to identify Mrs. Russell’s stream as the Beaver Brook, but stream names tend to change as fast as the property owners along their banks.

Hops, plants that are members of the mulberry family, are found both cultivated and wild, and have been used for brewing beer and for feeding livestock. Because Hop Meadow appears so early – 1710 was only nine years after northern Norwalk was settled – the hops in the meadow were probably wild, though they could have been someone’s cultivated field. The Hop Brook in Bridgewater was “so called from the enormous quantity of wild hops found growing on its banks,” says a history of that town.

HOPPER'S POND

Hopper's Pond at the north side of the junction of Old South Salem and South Salem Roads was created in the 1920's by Reginald M. Lewis by damming up one of the tiny tributaries of the Stamford Mill River. Although Mr. Lewis wanted it as a duck pond for his farm, it also served as an important source of ice for Ridgefielders in the pre-refrigerator days.

Mr. Lewis, son of the wealthy F. E. Lewis (whose large, beautiful mansion was situated a little eastward where Ridgefield Manor Estates is now), bought the farm where the pond is as a hobby. He hired Richard Hopper as superintendent and Mr. Hopper, who lived nearby, gave his name to the pond.

This small body of water has also been called Scripps Pond and Lacha Linne (*q.v.*). By 2009, Hopper's Pond had pretty much disappeared as weeds filled its small area.

HORSE POUND AND SWAMP

From the earliest settlement of the town throughout the 18th Century, the Horse Pound was a well-known locality that was cited in many deeds. Today, its location is uncertain and the fact of its existence is so little known that none of the town's several histories has even mentioned it.

Pounds were common in town throughout the 18th Century and into the 19th. Usually consisting of stone walls, sometimes topped with wood fencing, they were like corrals and were used to hold animals that had strayed from farms and had been captured by town wardens or farmers. However, no other pound in the many records of old Ridgefield seemed specifically designed for one kind of animal. The fact that this was described as a "horse" pound was unusual.

The existence of the pound was first mentioned in 1717, only a few years after settlement began, when the proprietors deeded several people one-acre parcels "Lying all together on ye hill on ye east side of Horse Pound Swamp, bounded north by Bedford Rhoad and all other ways by common land." Bedford Road was, in this case, today's Old South Salem Road (in the 1700's the original South Salem Road as it left town). A 1718 deed mentions land "south of Bedford Road, on ye brook yt runs out of ye Horse Pound Swamp." This may have been one of the branches of the Stamford Mill River, which crosses the two South Salem Roads near the New York State line.

A 1729 deed refers to land "by ye Horse Pound on West Mountain." West Mountain extends south to New York State line at South Salem Road. This closeness to the state line is confirmed by 1750 and 1759 deeds which mention land at "ye Horse Pound near ye Oblong." The Oblong was the strip along the state line that was ceded to New York in 1731. Subsequent deeds continue to place the pound north of Bedford Rhoad, near the state line, and either on "a hill" or on West Mountain.

The last mention of what was by then called "the old horse pound" occurred in a 1796 deed. (A 1793 deed says "*Horse Pond*," but this is probably a transcription error.) Apparently, the pound had fallen out of use by the latter part of the century.

The various citations seem to place the pound west of lower Peaceable Street, perhaps near the old Pinchbeck Nursery. This seems an unusual place for the community's only horse pound, so near the western edge and the south-

ern half of the town. However, this could have been an area where horses were bred and raised, and where they were most apt to escape from their owners' properties. Or, it may have been that the pound was used to hold horses from all over town that were sent to this area to graze on common land. Common, or town-owned, property existed near the pound until at least the 1790's, by which time most common land elsewhere in town had been sold off. (The town had a common sheep pasture in the early years of its settlement.) Or, the existence of the pound in this part of town could simply have meant that it was the first area of the community to be heavily settled. What was probably the second animal pound, erected by 1716, was in this same quadrant of the town (at the intersection of Silver Spring and St. Johns Road). The first pound in town was in the village green on Main Street.

The Horse Pound Swamp, mentioned in many deeds, was probably the wetland on both sides of lower Peaceable Street, west of Mead Ridge.

HOW'S LIMEKILN

References to How's Limekiln appear occasionally in early records. For instance, in a 1793 deed Stephen Smith gives his son George five acres "lying near How's Limekiln." This kiln, owned at that time by Epenetus How(e), was near the intersection of Ramapoo Hill Road, Barry Avenue and West Mountain Road. The kiln, perhaps the town's first, is discussed under "Limekiln Hill."

HOWES COURT

Howes Court is another Turner Hill (*q.v.*) road with circus connections, reflecting the fact that circus animals were once housed for the winter on land near and possibly including the Turner Hill subdivision in the very northwest corner of the town

In 1815, Nathan A. Howes of nearby Putnam County, N.Y., established what might be considered a precursor of the American circus by touring the region with Old Bet, an elephant belonged to Hachaliah Bailey of Somers. Old Bet was only the second elephant to be imported into the United States. Howes' shows were done under a tent – "he is believed to have been the first to exhibit a circus attraction under canvas in this country," said Ridgefield historian Silvio A. Bedini. It is likely that Howes exhibited Old Bet in Ridgefield at some point.

HUCKLEBERRY HILL

Huckleberry Hill, mentioned once in the pre-1880 land records, is possibly the 817-foot-high hill just west of Bridle Trail and between Spring Valley and Ridgebury Roads. The name appears in an 1810 deed from Elias and Eunice Smith to Benjamin Barberry for "one piece of rough and unenclosed woodland, lying on and adjoining Huckleberry Hill so called."

This is one of several localities named in the 18th or 19th Centuries for the native fruits – Cranberry Meadow and Whortleberry Hill, for examples. Huckleberries, edible members of the Heath family, are common shrubs bearing dark blue to black berries.

HUCKLEBERRY LANE

Huckleberry Lane is a short dead-end road off Wilton Road East, subdivided around 1960 from Margaret Starr Jessup's property, which fronted on Main

Street. The road was accepted by the town in 1961. Old timers report that the area was a popular berry-picking spot.

HULDA LANE

Hulda Lane, which runs between Danbury and Haviland Roads, was named for Hulda Ritch, mother of Harold A. Ritch, who subdivided the family homestead (*see* Ritch Drive) around 1954. Mrs. Ritch and her husband, Charles, had purchased the former Haviland farm there around 1920 and had lived on it for many years. She died in 1944.

HULL PLACE

Hull Place, a dead-end road built around 1977 off Ivy Hill Road, was named by Carl Lecher, the subdivider, to honor Harry E. Hull (1899-1987), a former first selectman.

Lecher had purchased and subdivided a piece of Hull's homestead off Danbury Road around 1975. He wanted to name the little accessway leading to the three houses after Hull. However, the Planning and Zoning Commission would not allow the naming of a private accessway – only public roads are supposed to carry official names that can be considered as mailing addresses.

When Lecher proposed Hull Place for a subsequent subdivision of about 10 lots in the fall of 1976, the commission had a debate over whether there was any precedent for naming a road after a living person. Commissioners were unaware that not only was Harvey D. Tanton alive when River Road was changed to Tanton Hill Road, Tanton himself seconded the motion on the Board of Selectmen to change the name to honor himself. Tanton was also a former first selectman. Woodcock Lane is said to honor former First Selectman J. Mortimer Woodcock, and there are many other examples of roads named for people while they were alive.

Harry Hull, who died in 1987 at the age of 88, was a painting contractor by trade and served four two-year terms as first selectman from 1947 to 1957 (interrupted by one term of Tanton as chief executive). That was quite a feat for a Democrat in a strongly Republican town.

A Ridgefield native, Hull served in World War I, during which he saw much action in France at such places as Marie Louise Sector, the Paris-Metz road, Vaux, Chateau Thierry, and the St. Mihiel front. Over the years, he had been a member of almost every board and commission in town. To newer residents, he was best known as the grand marshal of the Memorial Day Parade, a post he held over a half century.

In a 1975 testimonial for Mr. Hull, Norman Myrick said: "He stands tall among us as the essence of an ideal that finds its full expression in the proud and noble title, Citizen of the Republic."

Hull's wife, the former Elsie Rux, whom he met when she moved to Ridgefield at the age of four, died in 1977.

HUNT COURT

Hunt Court, a short dead-end road off Lynn Place, is another circus-related name at the Turner Hill (*q.v.*) subdivision in Ridgebury.

Members of the Hunt family lived in the Scotland District, near the New York line, and were also numerous in nearby North Salem, N.Y. Historian Silvio Bedini reports that George V. R. Hunt of upper Scotland District, "trav-

eled with the circus on several occasions as a vendor of candy and refreshments. The Hunt family kept an elephant named Bolivar on their farm and utilized it for carrying loads of grain on its back. It frequently terrified horses on the highway.” One of the Hunt farms was later owned by Nobel Prize-winning playwright, Eugene O’Neill (*see* O’Neill Court).

HUNT MOUNTAIN

Titicus Mountain, the hill along the west side of North Salem Road near the New York State line, is sometimes called Hunt Mountain because members of the Hunt family were living on or near its slopes from around the year 1800 well into the 20th Century. Hunt Mountain is more properly applied to this mountain on the New York side of the state line in North Salem, where the name is well established. In Ridgefield, Titicus Mountain is more suitable.

It was on the side of this mountain just across the line in New York State that an Eastern Airlines plane crashed and burned in 1963. Only four people were killed.

HUNTER HEIGHTS

Although plenty of hunting goes on in adjacent Great Swamp, Hunter Heights has nothing to do with killing animals. A subdivision of about 65 acres of farmland off Blackman Road, Hunter Heights and its two roads were named for the Hunter family, which owned the property for 28 years. The subdivision by Lewis J. Finch, approved in 1968, consists of 25 one-acre lots plus nearly 30 acres of open space in Great Swamp.

Back in the 18th Century, this land was probably owned by the Hawley family, descendants of the town’s first minister, Thomas Hauley. Around 1805, John Blackman of Fairfield moved to the area and his family owned the land well into the 20th Century. In 1925, Eva M. Schork (*nee* Blackman) sold 45 acres and an old Blackman farmhouse to F. Heyward and Martha Hunter of Pelham Manor, N.Y. The Hunters used the place as a summer home until 1948, calling it Lacy Green because of the way “the trees met over the lane (Blackman Road) ‘like green lace’ as my mother used to say,” reported Russell Hunter of Los Angeles, who spent his summers there as a child. “The name was also taken from my grandmother’s place in England,” Mr. Hunter said. His grandmother had come to the states in 1889, five years after her husband, to run a ranch in Chadron, Nebr. His mother was born there in 1890, during the last of the Indian Wars.

Both his grandmother, who died in 1932 and grandfather, who died in 1936, are buried in a little cemetery at Hunter Heights on what was, in 1989, the Marthaler property. “The stone wall surrounding it was built with (grandfather’s) hands and the periwinkle which grows over it was also planted by him,” Russell Hunter said.

F. Heywood Hunter, Russell’s father, was a teacher in New York City. “Those were the days,” recalled Russell, “when one could have an apartment in town, a house in Ridgefield, a car, a maid, and send me to private school on \$5,000 a year. Less, actually. I think that he never saw more than \$4,400 in any one year.” His father paid only \$5,000 for the place (which sold in 1948 for \$35,000; in 2017, 25 one-acre lots would be worth many millions).

“When we bought it, it had no water, no electricity, no gas, and no telephone,” Mr. Hunter said. “And only a small lawn in front of the house. What is

now Blackman Road was – I think – unnamed and was a country dirt lane with tracks where the automobile tires ran on either side of a grass strip down the middle.”

The house and property were much improved over the years, but the family still used kerosene lamps and had no telephones until well into the 1940’s, “principally because either the electric or the phone company wanted \$25 a pole to bring service in and it did not seem reasonable.”

Russell Hunter, who had just earned his Ph.D. at the age of 54 when interviewed in 1978, reminisced about growing up at Lacy Green. “Our pleasures in my childhood there were simple ones. I used to walk the fields and woods, getting lost in the Great Swamp more times than I care to remember. I think that my present sense of direction dates from that time – the fact that I learned how to find my way out of what was a pretty wild area in those days, and very large for a small child.”

“I used to walk over to the Stollers (farm on Farmingville Road) and play with the Stolle children, but this was my only contact with kids my own age since that was not an era in which parents drove children around that they be amused. I made my own amusements.

“As a family, we pushed back a lot of the wild to create a rather large lawn and complex of gardens. I remember the lawn itself took four hours to cut. We had in addition both flower and vegetable gardens which supplied us with flowers for the house and vegetables for the table. There were apple, pear and cherry trees. Mother used to do a lot of preserving in those days. In later years, my father kept bees. In a sense, I suppose we were ‘almost farmers’ in the summer time, and I have happy memories of producing from those gardens.”

Mr. Hunter visited the place in the spring of 1977. “It was a curious experience...So much was gone – the water tank, the pumphouse and spring, the old barn we used as a garage, our old flower and vegetable gardens, so many of the old landmarks in the woods, which I used to use in my tramping.

“I was glad to see my grandparents’ graveyard well cared for, but so much was – just gone. I felt very strange knowing that the familiar to the children there now was unfamiliar to me, and that the things which were a part of my own childhood had simply vanished.

“Not that I bemoan progress. I felt that progress had come to Lacy Green in a very tasteful fashion. It was just a wrench to see, to discover, that what I had regarded as constants simply were gone.”

F. Heyward Hunter died in 1948 and shortly thereafter, Martha Hunter sold the place to Jeannette Fox Parker, an attorney, woman’s rights activist, and a flamboyant chairman of Ridgefield’s Zoning Commission. Her husband, Albert, also an attorney in New York City, was a founder of Albert Einstein College of Yeshiva University. In 1965, the Parkers sold 65 acres and buildings to Mr. Finch.

HUNTER LANE, LANE WEST

Hunter Lane, the main road leading through Hunter Heights to a cul de sac, was named for the Hunter family (*see above*). It became a town road in 1970. Hunter Lane West, or West Hunter Lane as it is sometimes called, runs between Blackman Road and Hunter Lane. A rather unexciting variation of Hunter Lane, the name should probably be changed to recall another former property owner, such as the Parkers.

HUNTING RIDGE

Hunting Ridge is the name given to a subdivision of 27 acres into 11 lots on the south side of New Road. The subdivision was obtained in the fall of 1986 by the descendants of Robert Lee, part of whose farmland was subdivided. Lost Mine Place serves the development.

The name was originally proposed for the road, but was rejected because of possible confusion with Hunter Lane. The name was probably selected because it sounded good, though no doubt the land has often been used for hunting over the years.

HURLBUTT LANE

Hurlbutt Lane is an old name for Market Street, so called because Hurlbutt's Market stood right next to the road near the corner of Main Street.

David Hurlbutt established the market sometime before 1850 in a small building that stood near his house, which still stands on the south corner of Main and Market Streets. According to Silvio Bedini, Hurlbutt started out as a hatter and later became a butcher, and built his market on land he bought from his close friend, the well-to-do Joshua I. King.

Ironically, Hurlbutt was killed by a cow he was himself trying to butcher in 1858. By then, his son, Sereno, had taken over the operation of the store. Sereno Hurlbutt later became the town's tax collector for many years in the late 19th Century, and was involved in other businesses, such as the Rockwell candlestick factory on Catoonah Street and the carriage factory, now the Big Shop housing restaurants and shops at the back of the municipal parking lot. He died in 1904.

Hurlbutt Lane is mentioned by Laura Curie Allee Shields in her book, *Memories*. Mrs. Shields – then Laura Allee – and her husband, Dr. William Hanford Allee, bought the Hurlbutt house in 1906 from Mrs. Julia Hurlbutt and Miss Julia Hurlbutt. The Allees called it Homeland and she lived there many years, as did her daughter Dorothy Detzer.

In *Memories*, she recalls that “Market Street was then just a lane that went through to East Ridge, and in winter was almost impassable with mud. We implored our neighbor, Mrs. Ebenezer Keeler, to put her ashes on the road, and we did the same, and in the course of 25 years we had quite a road.

“In May 1914 the town dignified the side lane enough to call it Market Street. Years before, Sereno Hurlbutt had a meat market and slaughter house where our garage now stands. Up to that time it had been called Hurlbutt Lane, which to my mind was very much more elegant, to say the least. But the town fathers insisted upon Market Street.”

HURLBUTT'S POND

One of David Hurlbutt's several interests in town was an ice business to supply local households with refrigeration. The ice came from Hurlbutt's Pond, now mostly swamp west of East Ridge, between Branchville Road and Market Street. The pond that preceded the swamp was much larger, including the Rowland Lane neighborhood.

Near the pond stood an ice house to store the cakes of ice in warmer months. The ice house was in operation by 1849 when David and Julia Hurlbutt leased portions of it to a group of Ridgefielders that included William Hawley, Joshua King, Samuel Lobdell, and Henry Smith. Joseph W. Hibbart, another

market operator, later obtained ice from Hurlbutt's Pond. (See Coal Mine for another Hurlbutt endeavor.)

HUSSAR'S CAMP PLACE

Hussar's Camp Place serves part of a 61-acre subdivision along a ridge west of Ridgebury Road and south of Chestnut Hill Road, once part of the late Daniel and Louise McKeon's Arigideen Farm. Dillon Associates received approval for 17 lots there in February 1987.

The name recalls an event in July 1781 when 4,800 French troops under Comte Rochambeau (*see* Rochambeau Avenue) came to Ridgebury. They were on their way from Rhode Island to the Hudson River where they would join American forces for an attack on New York. According to Mr. McKeon, a student of Ridgebury history, there were 600 artillery, 600 cavalry and 3,600 light infantry, including the hussars under the Duc De Lauzun. The Legion of De Lauzun was composed of 300 horse and 300 light infantry.

In Ridgebury, there were two encampments. The main body of troops stayed on the ridge east of the Ridgebury Congregational Church's Shields Hall and north of George Washington Highway. The other division made its camp on the hill where the subdivision is. This encampment was occupied by hussars (light cavalry), grenadiers (infantry) and chasseurs (rapid-action troops) under Alexander Berthier. Berthier reported in his diary, "The second Brigade left Newtown and marched 15 miles to Ridgebury where it arrived at 11 o'clock. It was preceded on its march by an advance detachment of grenadiers and chasseurs. I was ordered to lead them and to find a good position for them a mile ahead of the Brigade on the road to New York where they camped after stationing sentries at all points leading in from enemy territory."

The word "hussar" originated in 15th Century Hungary where it referred to a light cavalry soldier. The word comes from the Serbo-Croatian term for "brigand" or "pirate."

Because chaplains accompanied the troops, Ridgefield historian Silvio Bedini believed that a Catholic mass was celebrated in the encampment. That may have been the first Catholic service to have taken place in Ridgefield, a fact that was marked in 1981 and 2006 celebrations on or near the site. (However, Bedini also notes that about 160 French cavalry of the Partisan Legion under Colonel Charles Armand had an encampment off Barrack Hill Road during the summer of 1779, and may have had a chaplain to celebrate mass.)

"Arigideen," incidentally, has a story behind it, too. According to Louise McKeon, it is "the name of a small river in County Cork, Ireland, where Dan's grandfather was born. It means 'little silver stream' because the salmon would go up river and in the water cast a silver shadow."

"When we came here in 1937, we named the farm Harkaway Farm, ordered writing paper, etc., and the first day we received mail so addressed, Jim Smith, our carrier, told us that Ada Phair called her place that – and that morning had gone down and registered the name for 25 cents at Town Hall. So we picked Arigideen, feeling nobody else would take that name. It is difficult to pronounce, but we are happy with it."

In the first two decades of the 20th Century, the old Arigideen Farm is called Double H Farm, for E. Hunter Harrison (1944-2017), who owned the spread and raised jumper and hunter horses there.



INDIAN CAVE ROAD

Indian Cave Road at Twin Ridge is one of the few modern thoroughfares that take its name from Ridgefield's folklore or legend. The road, which connects Twin Ridge Road to Rising Ridge Road and then continues to a cul de sac, was named for "Tony's Cave," situated nearby and to the north. According to Historian George L. Rockwell, "Tony was an Indian, who, strange as it may seem, hid in this cave to escape service in the Revolution."

Whether or not his hiding was strange, Tony is not mentioned anywhere in the government or land records of the town, and the reliability of the tale cannot be determined. The story was probably handed down by generations of the Keeler family, who farmed what is now the Twin Ridge area from the 18th Century to well into the 20th Century.

In 2008, Ridgefielder Chris McQuilkin went hunting for Tony's Cave. "After much field research with my budding explorers in tow, we managed to locate the cave," he said. "Fascinating to see ancient scorch marks on the walls suggesting an inhabitant predating all that we know." He also wondered whether bears might use the cave for hibernation, noting that in January 2008, "we spotted large paw prints in the snow at the cave's entrance."

Giles and Barry Montgomery, the father and son team that subdivided Twin Ridge in the early 1960's, built and named Indian Cave Road. It became a town road in 1968.

IRON WORKS I

Deeds in the late 1700's and early 1800's sometimes locate property by referring to the Iron Works, a short-lived operation near Lake Mamasasco whose waters it used.

In 1789, Elias Reed, owner of several mills, allowed Timothy Keeler Jr., Nathan Dauchy, and Elijah Keeler "the privilege of making a dam ... and raising a pond of water for the purpose of carrying on an iron works" along the stream that flows out of Lake Mamasasco. Reed, who lived nearby, also held an interest in the grist mill at Mamasasco (*see* Mamasasco Lake). The rent for the land to be ponded was seven shillings, six pence per acre per year. At the same time, the heirs of Isaac Keeler, whose grist mill here was burned by the British in 1777, sold the mill site to another Isaac Keeler. The 1½ acres was "near the dwelling house of ... Elijah Keeler, being the old mill place where the grist mill lately stood that was burnt..." This land was to be used "for the purpose of erecting an iron works."

The operation must have been underway a year later, for two 1790 deeds locate land "near ye Iron Works." However, by 1797, only seven years later, a deed says that a parcel was situated "where the Iron Works lately stood..." Even as late as 1834, deeds mention places near or at "where the old Iron Works stood." That location was along North Salem Road, between Sherwood and Ridgebury Roads, in the little valley through which the stream from Mamasasco flows to the Titicus River. Across the highway – toward Mamasasco and south of Craigmoor Road – is what's left of the pond that was known for many years as Forge Pond (*q.v.*) because it was used by the Iron Works, evi-

dently to operate equipment and perhaps to cool hot iron. This was probably the pond raised by Dauchy and the two Keelers, and after the Iron Works ceased, it was used to power grist and saw mills on or near the old works site.

The Iron Works probably converted iron ore to pig iron. Whether various implements were then manufactured from the iron at that location is unknown. The source of the ore is an intriguing question. There was no rail or water transportation to haul in large quantities of it and, so far as is known, there was no nearby mine to provide enough ore to feed an iron furnace. It is known that iron ore is among the minerals found in Ridgefield, and several references to “ore” can be found in the land records between 1717 and 1830. However, the word iron is never mentioned and “ore” could have referred to any mineral deposit, including limestone, which was plentiful. In fact, limestone was often used as a “flux” that removed impurities during the iron refining.

However, a map of Connecticut, drawn by Samuel Huntington, Esquire, in 1792, bears the legend “Iron mines” in a section of Ridgebury north of George Washington Highway and along Briar Ridge Road. This map is not known for its accuracy in placing landmarks, but it nonetheless makes it clear that iron mines existed in Ridgebury at the time the Iron Works was in operation. Perhaps the works got its ore from there.

It would not be unusual for the works to be located so far to the south of the mines, for the location was the only section of southern Ridgebury that had enough water to support an operation of this sort. (The northern Mamasasco neighborhood was a part of Ridgebury Parish in the 1800’s.)

The usual iron works included a 20- to 40-foot-high furnace made of stone. Ore was heated to melting in crucibles inside the furnace, and the impure slag that rose to the top was skimmed off. Water was needed to operate the huge bellows that would pump air onto the fire. Because it wasn’t easy to build up the 2,200-degree heat needed for refining, furnaces ran constantly, and were shut down only for repairs or cleaning. Workers had to be present constantly to feed the fire and “tap” the molten ore at least twice a day.

Why did the Iron Works last so short a time? Perhaps the supply of good ore was quickly exhausted.

Another possibility was problems with the availability of fuel. Iron furnaces required large quantities of charcoal, obtained by slowly burning wood in closed mounds. There may have been a shortage of wood, or an unwillingness of woodlot owners to part with what wood they did have. (Many hundreds of square miles of forest were felled in northwestern Connecticut to feed the iron furnaces of Salisbury and Kent.)

Yet another possibility is that a competing iron works at Starrs Plain ran the Ridgefield operation out of business – *see below*. Still, it is interesting that Ridgefield once had, however briefly, its own “little Pittsburgh.”

IRON WORKS II

The land records also mention an iron works at Starrs Plain in Danbury that received its water supply from Ridgefield. In 1792, Benjamin Sellick of Danbury leased Eliakim and Abijah Peck of Danbury eight acres in Ridgefield “at Bennits Farm or Pond... for the purpose of raising a dam across the stream that leads to said iron works and save the water for the use of said works during the term of five years.”

The stream is the one that flows out of the Bennett's Ponds and the Ridge-field Lakes, and the works probably stood on or about the pond that still exists along Route 7, opposite Bennett's Farm Road just into Danbury.

ISLAND, THE

"The Island" was a shortened form for Grassy Island, the area along Danbury Road roughly from Copps Hill Common north to the southern entrance to Fox Hill condominiums. The area was called an island because it was almost surrounded by swampland in the 18th and early 19th Centuries. Much of the swamp has since been filled in, particularly on the south and west sides of the Island.

The name Grassy Island fell out of use in the 1780's. Around the same time, "ye Island" or "the Island" began to appear more frequently in the land records. However, as early as 1709, the proprietors had described a division of meadowland north of the village as "lay'd out on ye south side of ye Island." The term continued to be used to describe this neighborhood throughout the 19th Century.

ISLAND BRIDGE

As early as 1717, deeds mentioned the Island Bridge, perhaps the first and most famous bridge in town in the 18th Century. The bridge still exists, although it no longer serves a public road as it did for more than two centuries. Still stone, though certainly not the original structure, Island Bridge now carries Outpost Road over the Norwalk River near the south entrance of Fox Hill condominiums. Outpost Road is an abandoned section of the old Danbury Road.

The bridge brought the Danbury Road across the river, also called Ridge-field Brook, as the stream came out of its source, the Great Swamp. It connected the north end of Grassy Island to the south end of Great Island (*see also* Island River).

Among the earliest references was a 1717 grant from the proprietors to Thomas Rockwell for two acres "eastward of ye Island Bridge." Frequently, land along upper Danbury Road was described as being "over ye Island Bridge."

By the end of the 18th Century, references to Island Bridge become rare in the land records. It is hardly ever mentioned as a landmark in the 19th Century.

ISLAND HILL, AVENUE

People today are often perplexed by the old name, Island Hill, recalled in Island Hill Avenue. Even people who lived in this neighborhood early in the 20th Century could not explain the origin of the term. (One suggested that the name stemmed from the tendency during heavy snowstorms for the area around Grove Street and Danbury Road to become a "sea of snow" with the hill to the west an "island" in the snow.)

The answer, of course, is that Island Hill overlooked "the Island" (*q.v.*). In fact, it had views of both Grassy and Great Islands.

Although "the Island" was in use at the town's founding in 1709, the term Island Hill does not appear until 1820 when members of the Dauchy family transferred title to three acres "on the top of the Island Hill." Thanks to Conrad Rockelein, the German barber who subdivided Mountain View Park in 1910,

this old name is retained today in Island Hill Avenue. The street was so called at least by 1927.

ISLAND MEADOW

The will of Deacon Thomas Smith, penned in 1743, mentions land at “Island Meadow.” By 1809, the same land was part of the estate of David Scott, probably inherited through his wife who was a granddaughter of Deacon Smith, reports Ed Liljigren, who did much research into Ridgebury area history in the 1970’s.

This island was located on the bend of North Street where it curves just before meeting Barlow Mountain Road, and appears to have been about 10 acres. This area may have been earlier known as Turkey Island or Jug Island (*q.v.*) and Island Meadow may have been the last remnant of those names.

Incidentally, according to Mr. Liljigren, Deacon Smith was an interesting fellow whom histories of the town have ignored, “especially when compared to later Deacons Olmsted and Benedict. Records of the period indicate he was highly respected. His concern for the welfare of his two deaf mute sons, as indicated in his will, is also worthy of note.”

ISLAND RIVER

When Richard Portman sold Daniel Bennett of Fairfield a house and lot “near Island Bridge” in 1747, he described the parcel as bounded on the north by “the Island River.” When in 1801, this same parcel, or one near it, was sold, it was also described as being bounded northward by “the Island River.” The river was the Norwalk River, also called the Ridgefield Brook (*q.v.*) or Cornen’s Brook (*q.v.*) in this area, and it was so called because it separated Grassy from Great Island (*q.v.*).

IVES COURT

Ives Court is a short, dead-end road off Pine Mountain Road, part of a subdivision of 11 lots by Nancy Purdy of Norwalk. When she applied for the subdivision around 1982, Ms. Purdy suggested Laurel Brook Court as a name. Planning and Zoning Commissioner Joseph Heyman objected, saying it would be confused with Laurel Lane, miles away off Route 7. The Conservation Commission came up with Ives Court to recall the family, from which the commission had recently obtained 12 acres of open space to the east of the Purdy land. The Ives piece connected two large holdings of town-owned open space – the Hemlock Hills and the Pine Mountain refuges, totaling more than 500 acres – and thus was a particularly valuable acquisition.

The Ives property is also significant because it is said that composer Charles Ives, a native of Danbury and resident of Redding, used to seek inspiration by visiting a family-owned cabin on the property.

IVY HILL

Ivy Hill, which reaches an elevation of about 760 feet above sea level, is northeasterly of the intersection of Ivy Hill and Florida Hill Roads on the lower end of what was called Hawley’s Ridge (*q.v.*) in the mid-18th Century. The summit is at the intersection of Standish Drive and Revere Place.

“Ivy Hill” first appears in the land records in a 1797 deed in which the proprietors granted James Scott “one piece of land lying in Ridgefield on the

Ivy Hill, east of the Great Swamp.” Thereafter, the name appears frequently in deeds.

In interviews in the early 1970’s, old-timers told me the area was known for its ivy. Thomas J. McGlynn used to pick ivy in that vicinity early in the 20th Century, and John Mullen recalled that ivy used to cover the old coal-powered electricity generating station on Ivy Hill Road (where the railroad tracks crossed).

IVY HILL ROAD

Ivy Hill Road, the old route from town to the Ivy Hill neighborhood, runs from Branchville Road to the junction of Blackman and Lounsbury Roads. It was so called at least by 1919 when the name appears on a property survey map filed in the town clerk’s office. The road dates back to the 18th Century.

IVY SWAMP BROOK

Deeds from 1838 and 1844 mention Ivy Swamp Brook on the south end of “Mamanasco Mill Pond” – Lake Mamanasco. This is probably the brook that flows out of Turtle Pond (*q.v.*) down the side of Titicus Mountain into the lake. This waterway may be the Punch Brook (*q.v.*) mentioned as a landmark in the second purchase of land from the Indians.

Ivy Swamp may have been what is now called Turtle Pond, a man-made pond that could easily have been a swamp back then and is gradually reverting to swamp today. The Burt family, which owned the land in this area for many years, may have coined the name.

J

JACKSON COURT

Jackson Court is a short, dead-end road off the north side of King Lane. The handful of house lots was subdivided from land of the former Jackson family estate, whose house sits at the corner of Main Street and King Lane.

When Carl Lecher and Nicholas DiNapoli Jr. proposed the subdivision in 1978, Joshua's Court was suggested to recall Lt. Joshua King, who built the original house at the corner of Main Street and King Lane (*q.v.*) in the late 1700's. They also suggested King's Way, but that was subject to confusion with King Lane. The Planning and Zoning Commission opted for Jackson Court, which it felt sounded better and which recalled the family that had recently owned the property.

The Jacksons came to Ridgefield in 1916 when Richard Arbuthnot Jackson purchased the stately home as a summer place, which he called Anascote (a kind of Spanish fabric). Born in Richmond, Ind., in 1858, Jackson had been a railroad attorney and executive. He once headed the Rock Island Line and at his retirement in 1916, had been vice-president and general counsel for the Great Northern Rail Road.

At Anascote he installed the fancy stonewall still surrounding the property. It prompted locals to call him "Stonewall" Jackson, partly in humor and partly to distinguish him from another well-known Richard Jackson in town. Francis D. Martin maintained that the upward-pointed stones along the King Lane segment of the wall were designed to prevent young Jackson family servants from sitting on the wall, socializing with local youths (see more about this was discussed under King Lane).

Richard Jackson died in a fall in Florida in 1934, aged 76. Though it was the height of the Depression, he left his widow, Anna Scott Jackson, an estate valued at \$400,000 – millions in today's money. His survivors included a son, Fielding V. Jackson, who with his family moved to Anascote shortly after his father's death. A Yale graduate, he had been a stockbroker and became a member of the New York Stock Exchange. He was long active in St. Stephen's Church. Fielding Jackson died in 1962, a year older than his father had been at his death. His widow, Julia Tower Jackson, continued to live in the house until the mid-1970's. She died in 1988.

The road was accepted as a town road in 1980.

JAGGER LANE

Old Joe Jagger would be amazed to know that his name still lives – on some maps at least – more than two centuries after his death. The little steep path that led up to his modest home can still be seen, but is no longer used for a public thoroughfare as it once was.

Jagger Lane, also appearing as Jaegger Lane, runs from behind the Pamby Motors building on Route 7 up to Bennett's Farm Road, opposite the site of the old Fox Hill Inn, now Bennett's Pond State Park. It may have been the predecessor of the eastern end of Bennett's Farm Road, which now comes out on Route 7 in Danbury just north of the Ridgefield town line.

Joseph Jagger came to town in 1774, buying 2.5 acres “with dwelling house ... lying easterly of Bennets Farm so called.” The house probably stood on the hill southeasterly of Bennett’s Farm Road overlooking the valley of today’s Route 7 (a road that did not exist then). Jagger came here from Redding and was in his 70’s at the time. Perhaps this was his “retirement home.”

He appears to have sold the place in 1792 for only six pounds. He was about 90 years old then and perhaps wanted to move into the village or could not afford to take care of the house, or was physically unable to do so.

Writing in 1800, the Rev. S. G. Goodrich reported that there were three “foreigners in the town who are paupers,” one of whom was “named Jagger ... an old man about 95 years, an Englishman who served under the Duke of Cumberland at the Battle of Culloden in 1745, and was in Flanders with the regiment previous to that battle.”

Rev. Goodrich said that Jagger “wrought jet work in cedar since he has been in this country, till he was near 80 years old and he will to this day ... sing a martial air he learned in Flanders and cry, ‘God save King George.’” (Jet work may have meant inlaying cedar with pieces of polished black coal to form decorative articles.)

Samuel Goodrich, the minister’s son who went on to write scores of books under the name of Peter Parley, mentioned Joseph Jagger in his autobiography, *Recollections of A Lifetime*. “We had a professed beggar, called Jagger, who had served in the armies of more than one of the Georges, and insisted upon crying ‘God save the king!’ even on the 4th of July, and when openly threatened by the boys with a gratuitous ride on a rail,” he said.

The town at this time was supplying welfare payments of about seven shillings a week to a family to care for “Old Jagger.”

His death is noted in the usually brief town records with this comparatively lengthy statement: “Joseph Jagger dead December 24th 1802, supposed to be one hundred years old.” This and the fact that Goodrich mentions the man in a report that described few other individuals in town indicate that Jagger was a well-known and colorful character of late 18th Century Ridgefield.

Two years after his death, the land records mention the sale of property “known as the Jagger Lott.” Deeds drawn in 1817, 1821, and 1835 refer to “Jagger Road.” By 1867, deeds are calling it Jagger Lane. This name was still in use in 1915 when Col. Louis D. Conley had his land surveyed and the road was so called on a property map. Other maps of the early 20th Century also show the road. By 1946, when the town published its first zoning map, it no longer appeared, except on U.S. Geological Survey maps, which describe it as an unimproved dirt road.

Elise Conley Cox of New York City, daughter of the Colonel Conley, recalled that as a child, she used to go sledding down this road, which was surrounded by her father’s property and was probably used a good deal by his estate workers.

JAGUAR LANE

This interesting variation of Jagger Lane appears on Whitlock’s 1912 map of Ridgefield. Evidently, the cartographer misunderstood the correct name, or thought Jagger was an incorrect spelling of Jaguar.

JAMBS, THE

This peculiar name, both occasional and long-lasting in its appearances in the land records, first occurs in 1775 when the proprietors granted Daniel Benedict of Danbury three acres “in the eastern part of Ridgebury Society at a place called ye Jamsb.” In 1788, Lemuel Abbott Jr. sold the proprietors a three-rod wide strip for a highway “at the James so called.” In 1837, John G. Barton of Danbury bought “the Jamsb lot” in Ridgebury, and in 1850 his estate sold land “near the ‘Jams’ so called.”

Jamsb has several old meanings. One was a bed of clay or stone running across a mineral vein. As mentioned previously, there were iron mines in this vicinity (*see* Iron Works I). There may have been some connection. Another very old meaning was “an angular turn or corner in a street or way.” On the east side of Ridgebury, where George Washington Highway crosses into Danbury, is an offset intersection of Briar Ridge Road, Miry Brook Road, Pine Mountain Road, and George Washington Highway. There were several turns or angles to this junction of four roads, and these could have merited the name, the Jamsb, though it seems unlikely.

After my first speculations on the Jamsb were published in 1978, Ridgebury historian Ed Liljegren wrote me: “The definition of ‘jam(b)’ changes in various editions of Webster’s from ‘a thick bed of stone which hinders them (miners) when pursuing the veins of ore’ (1836) to ‘a mass of mineral or stone in a quarry or pit standing upright, more or less distinct from neighboring or adjoining parts.’ This latter definition is more in keeping with the root of the word, meaning a leg or support. In any case, I suspect that this is the definition the settlers had in mind.

“The Jamsb were located in the Short Woods (*q.v.*) which turns out to be on Ned’s Mountain, most probably on the western slope. The Jamsb lot was located adjacent to Capt. Henry Whitney’s Bogus Lot – so described in his will. The most probable location was straddling what is now called Ned’s Lane, which once went through to Old Stagecoach Road.

“Both Ned’s Lane and Old Stagecoach Road were built about the time that Lemuel Abbott deeded part of his land to the proprietors for a road. If you travel down Ned’s Lane as far as it reasonably passable, you can see a spectacular rock formation, which could have well given rise to the name of the Jamsb.

“It is also possible that the land lies along Bogus Road, but I think that less likely than Ned’s Lane.”

JAPORNICK’S DIVISION

Japornick’s Division, employing an incorrect version of the Indian Tapornick’s name, was an early 18th Century proprietors’ subdivision on West Mountain. George L. Rockwell and several early town clerks, among others, misinterpreted the handwriting of Thomas Hauley, the first town clerk, when he wrote Tapornick’s Division (*q.v.*). His “T” looked much like a more modern “J” in script.

JEFFERSON DRIVE

Jefferson Drive, which runs between Branchville Road and Lincoln Lane, was developed in the early 1950’s as part of the Washington Park Estates. Bert Ison, the developer, named the road after the nation’s third President, Thomas Jefferson. Other roads at Washington Park Estates recall the first, second and

16th Presidents. Only the first is known to have ever set foot in the town, although a Vice-President under the 16th once spoke here. The road was accepted by a July 1956 Town Meeting.

JEFFRO DRIVE

Otto H. Jespersen and William B. Rodier, whose surnames were modified and combined to form the portmanteau name, developed Jeffro Drive, a dead-end road off Ivy Hill Road. (Jeffro apparently sounds better than Jespro, Jesro, Jero, Rojesp, etc.)

A native of Copenhagen, Mr. Jespersen (1900-1982) served in the Danish King's Bodyguards for two years before coming to the United States at the age of 26. He moved to Ridgefield in 1937 to work for Outpost Nurseries, retiring after 35 years. He also had an upholstery and antiques restoration business until he moved to New Hampshire around 1970. Jespersen was active in the Boys Club, of which he was once president, and was a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Board of Tax Review, and the Democratic Town Committee, on which he served 20 years, part of the time as chairman. He was named Rotary Citizen of the Year in 1963. His home was the former power station from early in the 20th century on Ivy Hill Road.

Mr. Rodier (1912-1999), a landscape contractor who had also worked for Outpost, was one of the three founders of the Ridgefield Symphonette, now called the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra. He was a violinist. He also served on the town's school building committees in the 1960's and on the Park Commission. His wife, Marywade, founded Rodier Florists in the 1950s, a business still operating under that name today in Ridgefield.

Jeffro Drive appears as Jespersen Drive on at least one (1960) map of the town.

JERRY'S COURT

Jerry's Court, the name applied to the road leading into Stonehenge Estates off Route 7 when Jerry Tuccio subdivided the property, was so called for Mr. Tuccio's son, Jerry. Residents didn't like the name, however, and by petition to the selectmen, had it changed to Druid Lane in 1966. Bobby's Court, named for another Tuccio son, had better luck surviving.

JESPERSON DRIVE

See Jeffro Drive.

JO'S HILLS

Now part of Danbury, just north of Mill Plain, "Jo's Hills" were part of Ridgefield from 1731 to 1846. The name appears in the Ridgefield records by the 1740's and as late as 1810.

Although some have thought that the hills were once the home of an Indian named Jo, research done by Imogene Heireth of Danbury indicated that Jo was probably Joseph Crane and that Jo's probably comes from Jos., an abbreviation for Joseph that was commonly used in records dealing with Mr. Crane. Mrs. Heireth found an early reference to "Jos. Crane's Hills" in upper Mill Plain.

Joseph Crane Sr. was living in Fairfield in 1741 but by 1744 was in the town of Southeast, Putnam County, N.Y., where he operated mills near the Connecticut border. The Oblong, as this area was known, had been split off

from Connecticut in 1731 in an exchange of land with New York. Crane may have acquired his land when it was part of Connecticut, for he owned the hills just across the line in Connecticut.

Danburians today retain the name as Joe's Hill Road. In Ridgefield records, the name always appears as "Jo's Hills." Technically, perhaps, the real name is "Jos. Hills" or even "Jos.'s Hills." All early records use the plural, "Hills."

JOHN'S POND

John's Pond, north of Branchville Road between Cooper Road and Stony Hill Road,, has existed in one form or another for more than 200 years. It appears that a pond was created on the site around 1751 to supply water power to the saw mill of Benjamin Hoyt (or Hayt, Haight). The mill, built at about this time, was operated by the Hoyt family well into the 19th Century, although the operation may have been abandoned from time to time. A mill was operating there in 1867, according to *Beers Atlas*. An 1866 deed indicates the pond then was called simply "Saw Mill Pond."

The modern name came from Norman John, who reportedly repaired the old dam or built a new one in the 1930's and created a new and larger (about six acres) pond on the site. (Oddly enough, in 1977, the president of the John's Pond Association of neighboring landowners was Mrs. John Norman!)

The pond shore was the site of a camp in the 1930's, according to one neighbor. During the famous hurricane of 1938, a nearby goldfish pond overflowed and sent goldfish pouring into John's Pond, where they thrived for many years. For a long time the state refused to stock the pond with trout because the goldfish were taking the food. The goldfish, some as long as six inches, were still in the pond in the 1960's, although they are probably gone now, if for no other reason than the fact that the pond dried out in 1977 when dam difficulties were experienced. For many years, Dr. Alice Paul, the suffragist and author of the long-proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, owned a sizable portion of the pond shore.

John's Pond is fed by the waters of the Cooper Brook, which continues on to the Norwalk River in Branchville and eventually ends up in Long Island Sound.

JOHNSON HILL

A deed in 1858 mentions "the Johnson Hill land," whose exact location has not yet been determined. From owners in the vicinity, the locality would seem to have been in the northern part of the village, perhaps around Grove Street or along southern North Salem Road. Strangely, however, no one named Johnson owned land anywhere in this area before 1860. There was also a Johnson's Pond off Wilton Road East in the first half of the 20th Century.

JONES POND

This on-again, off-again pond existed early in the 20th century along Farmingville Road, opposite New Road. Though I've found no written confirmation that the name "Jones Pond" was used, it is probable that it was at least a neighborhood name since the pond was on David L. Jones' farm (called Walnut Grove).

The pond is an interesting example of how small bodies of water were used on a farm. During the summer, there was no pond, only a bog on which "bog

hay” was grown. The hay was cut in late summer and baled. Then, according to Robert A. Lee, who lived across the road from the pond around 1900, two long poles were inserted under each bale. They were carried to the barn by two persons, each holding ends of the poles. In the barn it was used for bedding animals. After the cut hay had been removed, timber slats were inserted in an outlet or sluice in a stone dam at the end of the pond, causing water to back up and thus creating a pond. By winter, the pond was frozen and neighbors had a source for cutting ice used for refrigeration. Mr. Lee said the Jones, Lee, Starr and Lounsbury families all cut ice on the pond, each storing it for summer in small ice houses on their farms.

After Mr. Jones died in 1917, the pond was retained year-round because no one wanted to cut hay any more. Karl S. Nash, Mr. Jones’ grandson, said many birds – including kingfishers and Pied-billed Grebes – visited the pond. Mr. Nash also recalled one summer day when he and two others caught 150 frogs on the pond. All 300 legs were consumed.

Eventually, the wooden portion of the dam rotted and burst. When the old farm was subdivided and developed for Walnut Grove Estates, the bog was preserved as permanent open space and is still there today.

JONES RIDGE

Jones Ridge, a name which shows up in the land records as early as 1789, appears to have applied to a ridge near the intersection of Branchville and Rockwell Roads. The Jones family had land on the ridge, at least from the Revolutionary period, and Ebenezer Jones was living thereabouts in 1789. Benjamin Jones had land there in 1838, the last time that the name shows up in the records.

JOE’S CORNER

Joe’s Corner describes the portion of the intersection of Danbury Road and Main Street where Country Corners, the convenience store, is today. However, in common use, the name has come to include the entire intersection, one of the busiest in town.

Joe’s Corner picked up its name from the Joseph brothers, Mustapha C. Joseph and James Joseph, who operated the store at this corner for more than a half century. M. C. Joseph, a native of a part of Syria that is now Lebanon, opened “Joe’s Store” in 1918 at what was then called Danbury Corners. He operated the business until his death in 1938 at the age of 48. His brother was much longer-lived. James took over and owned the place until his death in 1972 at the age of 91.

The original Joe’s Store, once clapboard-sided, is the little brick building on Danbury Road, just to the east of Country Corners, used as a candy shop in recent years. According to Francis D. Martin, the larger building that is now Country Corners was built around 1905 by James Kennedy, contractor and mason, as his office. It was taken over by the Josephs in the 1920’s to serve an expanding business at Joe’s Store.

Until two or three years before his death, James Joseph waited on customers. After that he just watched the passing scene, sitting all day long in a chair, inside or outside the store, depending on the weather. He had come to the United States in 1903 and joined his brother in the operation of the Square Deal

Store in Danbury. The two also sold fruit and vegetables in Ridgefield, first by horse and wagon and later by automobile, until opening a store here.

James, called Jimmy Joe, became a US citizen in 1958 but could not at the time become a voter because he was unable, in several attempts, to pass the literacy test (although he did read and write in Syrian). When the literacy test was abolished as a citizenship qualification in the late 1960s, Mr. Joseph came to then Town Clerk Ruth M. Hurzeler and, with great pride, finally became a voter after having lived and worked in this country for more than 65 years.

Both Mr. Joseph and Miss Hurzeler had tears in their eyes as the new voter was sworn in.

Over the years there has been talk of the state's putting a traffic light at this intersection, but town officials have opposed the move, feeling that the current arrangement — though a bit chancy and somewhat confusing to newcomers — works fine. There are enough lights along Route 35 from Copps Hill south to Governor Street, they have said.

JUDGES LANE

One evening in 1974, Carl Lecher, the developer, and Paul McNamara, his attorney, were sitting in Mr. McNamara's office before going to a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting dealing with this subdivision. They wanted a suitable name for the new private road off Rockwell Road and parallel to Main Street. Judge Joseph H. Donnelly, senior partner in the law firm, walked through the office and it occurred to the two that Judges Lane would be most appropriate because not only Judge Donnelly, but also Judge Reed F. Shields used to live very near the property. Both were former Probate Court judges in Ridgefield.

Another name considered, but quickly abandoned, was "Judges Court."

JUG (?) ISLAND

Two early 18th Century deeds mention a locality in Scotland District with a name that is unclear. The script of the town clerk recording the deeds could be interpreted as Joy, Jay, Jug or even Ivy Island.

In a 1728 deed, Benjamin Stebbins sold James Scott two acres of "bogg-land and upland ... lying east from said Scott's house on Titicus River" and bounded on the east by "ye Jug (?) Island." The other reference occurs in 1739 when Stebbins sells John Stirdevant an acre "at ye Jug (?) Island near said Stirdevant's house" and bounded on the east by "ye river." The location was probably the Norwalk River west of Danbury Road, perhaps in the vicinity of Tanton Hill or Limestone Roads.

If it was Jug Island, the locality could have been so named because the piece of dry land was shaped like a jug and surrounded by a swamp. If Jay, it could have been known for its bird population. If Jog, it could have been some variation in a boundary line or in the terrain. If Ivy, it might have been covered with the plant. If Joy, who knows...

K

KEELER CLOSE

Keeler Close is a private lane at Casagmo, the apartment complex off northern Main Street, and was named for the Keeler family – *see below*. With the construction of Casagmo in the late 1960's came a new form of road name. We had streets, lanes, roads, places, circles, courts, and avenues, but no “close” (pronounced as in “he was close by”). The word is British for a narrow lane or alley – a “close” or “enclosed” place.

KEELER DRIVE

Keeler Drive, the main road through Pleasant View Estates in northwestern Ridgebury, is named for the Keeler family – specifically, for Nehemiah Lyman “Fuzzy” Keeler’s family. The Keelers had owned and farmed this land for two centuries until around 1968 when some 200 acres were sold to Jerry Tuccio, who subdivided it. The Keeler family lived in the “Pink House,” a saltbox on the west side of Ridgebury Road, opposite Shadow Lake Road. The house was built around 1735 and became a Keeler house in 1795 when the heirs of Timothy Street sold it to a Nehemiah Keeler. The Ridgebury landmark was razed in 2009, much to the consternation of the community.

The Keeler clan, an ancient and notable one in Ridgefield and the surrounding towns, is among the few of the original settling families that still has descendants living in town and in the immediate area. The 1989 Ridgefield phone book had eight Keeler listings and the Danbury book had 22. By 2006, only one Keeler was listed in Ridgefield and 10 in Danbury.

According to one account, the Keelers came to this country from London in the early 1600's. Ralph Keeler, living in Hartford in 1639, became an early settler of Norwalk, serving as “chimney viewer” in 1645. A carpenter, he probably erected or worked on many of Norwalk's early homes. His son, Samuel Keeler (1656-1713), probably also a carpenter, was a veteran of the Great Swamp Fight against the Pequot Indians at Kingston, R.I., in 1675, and for his service, received a grant of land in Norwalk. He was among the proprietors of Ridgefield, drawing in the 1709 lottery a lot on the lower west side of Main Street and also buying one on the lower east side, just above the Keeler Tavern.

An unusual little hand-written genealogy of the early Ridgefield Keelers, compiled in the 1830's by an unknown person, tells that “on the decease of Samuel, Sarah Keeler, by partition deed of his estate, dated Feb. 17, 1716-17, has sons Samuel, Benjamin of Norwalk and Joseph, Jonah, Timothy of Ridgefield, agreed as follows, viz.: Samuel takes real estate in Norwalk, also 76 pounds person; Joseph takes real estate in Norwalk, also 102 pounds; Benjamin takes real estate in Norwalk, also 55 acres farm in Wilton near Grassmeadows, also 76 pounds personal; Jonah takes in Ridgefield eight acres on Town Ridge lower end, bounded S. by David Scott, east, west and north on highway. Timothy takes the late homestead of his father, lot 25, also two opposite on the east side street, also other lands, also land at Chesnut Ridge, Western Ridge, others.” (Most of the “Norwalk” land was probably in what's today Wilton.)

This genealogy maintains that Samuel Keeler Sr., with his wife, Sarah, came from Devonshire, England, to Cow Bay, Long Island, before settling in Norwalk. At any rate, his son, Samuel, came to Ridgefield with his father in 1708, but soon returned to Norwalk, perhaps disliking the pioneering. Joseph later came to Ridgefield and died here in 1757. Benjamin settled in Wilton and started a branch of the family there. Jonah settled here, dying in 1764. Timothy also stayed here, and died in 1748.

From these few sprang a very large family of hundreds of people who were prominent in all aspects of town life – farmers, millers, businessmen, soldiers, and persons of virtually every other trade, and who, over the years, held virtually every town office. In fact, no other Ridgefield family contributed as many soldiers to the Revolutionary cause – 17 Ridgefield Keelers signed up and fought as officers and enlisted men. In addition there was one Keeler in the War of 1812, eight in the Civil War, two in World War I and four in World War II.

Although Keelers settled throughout the town – and in Wilton, Danbury, North Salem, and South Salem – there were three major enclaves of the family here. Several properties in the village belonged to the Keeler family from the town's founding well into the 19th Century. Another group settled at the Ridgefield-Lewisboro line along South Salem Road. In fact, there were probably more 18th and 19th Century Keelers living just over the line in South Salem section of Lewisboro than on the Ridgefield side of the border, a situation that stemmed from the fact that, before 1731, eastern Lewisboro was part of Ridgefield, and the Keelers probably purchased land there while it was still in Connecticut.

Northern Ridgebury was home to many Keelers from as early as 1743 when Jonah Keeler, son of Samuel Sr., received a grant of 106 acres on the west side of Ridgebury Road, just south of Keeler Drive, and probably including part of Pleasant View Estates. Samuel Keeler, son of Jonah, owned and occupied the land by 1748, according to research done by Edwin Liljegren. Samuel was one of the very first settlers of Ridgebury, and much farmland remained in the Keeler family well into this century – the last big piece going in 1968 for Pleasant View Estates.

When N. Lyman Keeler died in April 2005, *The Ridgefield Press* carried this editorial:

"The passing of Nehemiah Lyman Keeler is both sad and historic, and should not go unnoticed. Fuzzy Keeler was a last link with what Ridgefield was for most of its existence: A community of hard-working farmers, most of whom were born here and most of whom spent their lives in fields and barns tending crops and livestock. For much of his life, he tilled land and milked cows, just as generations of Keelers had before him.

"Fuzzy was a direct descendant of the pioneers who came to the hilly, rock-riddled woods in 1708 to create a new settlement. One of his Keeler ancestors built the house in which he was born. It was the same house in which he died in last Thursday. Those settlers of long ago were strong and hearty men and women.

"That strength and sense of adventure could be seen in Mr. Keeler, who didn't retire until he was 90 – the same age he took his last motorcycle ride. He saw Ridgefield transformed from a town of farms, dirt roads, and horse-drawn buggies into a bustling suburb in which not a single real farm remains.

“Over the years many people have been called ‘Mr. Ridgefield,’ chiefly for their involvement in town affairs. But few have had more Ridgefield in them than Fuzzy Keeler, a man who was born, lived and died in the home of his ancestors and who had worked the same land those ancestors carved from the wilderness nearly three centuries ago.”

KEELER LANE

Keeler Lane is an old road that apparently connected Barry Avenue below Peaceable Ridge Road to another old lane, called Bypass Road. This route, which parallels Peaceable Ridge, was probably a shortcut between Barry Avenue and western Peaceable Street, avoiding the steep climb up Peaceable Ridge. Keeler Lane, or portions of it, may now be Woodcock Lane, a dead-end road serving a small subdivision.

Keeler Lane was so called in some 20th Century records for a Keeler family that lived on Barry Avenue in this vicinity as early as 1867 and well into the 20th Century. The road probably began as a lane on the family’s farm.

KEELER’S RIDGE

Keeler’s Ridge was mentioned in the 1786 perambulation of the Wilton and Ridgefield town line. It seems to have been situated near Silver Spring Road, perhaps below Silver Spring Park. Jeremiah Keeler had land in the vicinity in 1792. By 1828, Walter, Matthew, William, and Anna Keeler all had land in the neighborhood.

KELLOGG STREET

Kellogg Street, which runs between Mulberry Street and Ramapoo Road, does not appear on maps until early in the 20th Century, and began being called Kellogg Street possibly as early as the 1920’s, certainly by the 1930’s.

Some old-timers believed the name recalls Hiram J. Kellogg, who was born in Ridgefield in 1850 and died in the 1920’s. Mr. Kellogg lived on North Salem Road and at various times owned a good deal of land in town. An 1873 deed from Hiram Kellogg (probably his father) to Hiram J. Kellogg provides him with 15 acres “on West Mountain” – this could well be in the vicinity of today’s Kellogg Street. Mr. Kellogg was a well-known member of the community, having served as a selectman in 1887 and first selectman a year later. Kelloggs date back to the mid-1700’s in Ridgefield. Three Kelloggs from Ridgefield served in the Revolution.

KENDRA COURT

Kendra Court off North Salem Road serves Robert Cioffoletti’s 1990s subdivision of the former Bedini property, once used for gravel mining and septic system waste disposal.

The road was named for his daughter, who was two months old when the family moved here from Newtown to Ridgefield in 1981. (Mrs. Cioffoletti, the former Catherine Bolander, had earlier lived on Mamasasco Road for 15 years.)

KENT LANE

Kent Lane is a short, private road, serving several homes off the east side of Main Street, between Branchville Road and the Keeler Tavern.

Milton R. Kent of Danbury bought land and buildings here in 1945 and established the Kent Apartment House in what had been the Campbell home in recent years. He named the little lane after himself, for the name was used in deeds of 1951 and 1953 when he was disposing of his holdings to several parties. He was living in Redding Ridge by 1951.

The lane was paved for the first time in 1977.

KETCHAM ROAD

The naming of Ketcham Road, which runs off Pin Pack Road, occurred before there was a Ketcham to name it after. Technically speaking, that is.

When Howard Ketcham, a New York City business executive, bought the land on this little road in 1938, it was already being called Ketcham Road. Apparently, before purchasing the house and 13 acres from Mary T. Carini, Mr. Ketcham had the property surveyed and, for want of another name, labeled an old farm road on the property as Ketcham Road. The name appears on that 1938 map, the first time it is used. He bought the property later the same year.

Mr. Ketcham sold the house and land to Anne B. Finkelstein in 1944 and moved to Westfield, N.J. And despite only a six-year stay here, his name lives on. When the sale took place, The Ridgefield Press described the property as being “on Ketcham Road, off Roscoe Road.”

Barry Finch subdivided some of the lots along this road, which is an old path that once joined Pin Pack Road with Ramapoo Road via Casey Lane.

KIAH’S BROOK LANE

Kiah’s Brook Lane is a fine example of a road’s keeping an old and colorful name alive long after its namesake has been forgotten. Although the name may lead some people to think it is of Indian origin, Kiah is derived from Hezekiah Scott, who lived and carried on several businesses along the brook and was called by neighbors “Uncle Kiah.” According to historian Silvio Bedini, Hezekiah Scott was a weaver who also operated a whiskey and cider distillery and a saw mill on Uncle Kiah’s Brook near what is now the junction of Ledges and Sherwood Roads. Scott himself lived on Barlow Mountain Roads, at the corner of today’s Lookout Point Drive, overlooking Pierrepont Pond.

“Hezekiah Scott was a colorful figure in the community and he remembered and often related having voted in every administration from Madison to Hayes,” Mr. Bedini reports.

Scott was born on Christmas Day in 1789, son of James Scott II and Lucretia Scott. The Scotts (of Scotland District, in which this brook is situated), came here in 1712, four years after the town was established, and members of the family still live in town. Uncle Kiah Scott died in 1876 at the age of 87, three weeks after having voted for Rutherford B. Hayes; it was the 17th Presidential election in which he had cast a ballot.

Kiah’s Brook today flows out of Pierrepont Pond, also called Lake Narane-ka, which in Uncle Kiah’s day was but swamp and pasture. The brook joins the Titicus River west of the intersection of Sherwood and Ledges Roads.

Kiah’s Brook Lane was developed and named by William Peatt Jr. around 1960. Mr. Peatt reported that part of the road, a dead-end off Ledges Road, was

laid over the foundation of some building, perhaps the distillery of Hezekiah Scott, or perhaps a blacksmith shop. It became a town road in 1963.

The Kiah's Brook Refuge on Barlow Mountain Road is a strip of brookside open space that was once part of the Luquer family property, purchased by the town as a school site. Scotland and Barlow Mountain Schools were built on the land to the south. The refuge has long been used by students for environmental studies.

KILN HILL LANE

Kiln Hill Lane, a short dead-end road on the north side of Barry Avenue, recalls an old limekiln that was operated for many years near the corner of Barry Avenue and Ramapoo Road, about three quarters of a mile up the road. The limekiln is discussed under Limekiln Hill (*q.v.*).

The road serves the subdivision developed on George and Rose Kaiser's former poultry farm, a subdivision that brought to a formal close a battle over the property that had lasted several years and gain brief national attention.

In 1973, the Suburban Action Institute and its offshoot, Garden Cities Development Company, contracted with the Kaisers to buy the 10.8 acres to erect about 108 apartments for low- to moderate-income families. Known for its efforts to get towns to allow low-income families to live in the suburbs through zoning changes, SAI actually planned a rather conservative development here, compared with its one-time proposal for 4,600 apartments in a New Jersey town and nearly 3,000 units in neighboring Lewisboro, N.Y.

The Planning and Zoning Commission denied the SAI-Garden Cities application for rezoning later that year, citing traffic and sewer problems. In 1974, SAI's Paul Davidoff and others involved in the application sued the town in Federal District Court, charging that "lily-white" Ridgefield was trying to zone out minorities and lower-income groups in general. However, because of internal squabbles and financial problems, the plaintiffs failed to pursue the case and it was eventually thrown out of court for lack of prosecution – its allegations were never ruled on.

The land was later subdivided by the Kaisers and purchased for development by Michael Futterman's Ivy Ridge Corporation. This writer, called upon to suggest a name for the road, recommended Turkey Hill, Turkey Ridge, Turkey Meadow, or some such name recalling the fact that the Kaisers farm was the last poultry farm to operate in Ridgefield.

The poultry-raising operations had ceased around 1971 because of new, stringent state health codes for poultry-selling farms. For many years Ridgefielders had bought their Thanksgiving turkeys and other poultry at the Kaiser Farm. Before the Kaisers came from Monroe in 1953 to buy it, the place was called the Big Jim Farm, operated by Big Jim Smith.

Planning and Zoning Commissioners did not take kindly to the turkey names, perhaps thinking they had a negative connotation. The writer then suggested Kiln Hill, and the planners accepted it, perhaps because they thought it was more "respectable." Oddly enough, a few years later, developer Robert Tuccio used "Wild Turkey" for a new road up the mountain from this site. Kiln Hill Lane was developed around 1977.

The Kaisers moved to Florida, but periodically returned to Ridgefield to visit. Mr. Kaiser often observed that it was a shame that the apartments were not built because the lack of affordable housing continued to be an ever-grow-

ing problem in the town. Mr. Kaiser, who died in 1987, was born in North White Plains, N.Y., in a house that had once been George Washington's headquarters in the Revolution and is now a museum. Rose Kaiser Burroughs, who remarried and lived in Newtown, died in 2007.

KIMBERLY COURT

Kimberly Court is a short, dead-end road off upper Rippowam Road near the NY line, just south of Sturges Park, serving a 1989 subdivision.

KING LANE

King Lane, the short road from Main Street to High Ridge, recalls one of Ridgefield's most prominent families, from just after the Revolution into the 20th Century. It made its mark on regional history by producing notable soldiers and businessmen.

In Ridgefield history, the King family began in 1783 when Joshua King of Bridgewater, "state of Massachusetts Bay," and James Dole of Albany, N.Y., paid 150 pounds to Hezekiah Johnson of Wallingford to buy a house, barn, and six acres on the east side of Main Street, opposite today's King Lane. There the two established a store, called King and Dole in what is today the second story of the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum's office building.

Joshua King was born in 1758 in Braintree, Mass. At the age of 17, he enlisted in the army of the Revolution, initially as a cornet and later serving as a lieutenant in the Second Regiment of the Light Dragoons. During the war he was stationed near the Connecticut-New York line. "It was while in service here," a family history says, "that there appeared one morning at headquarters an adjutant and four men belonging to the Connecticut Militia, having in charge a prisoner who looked somewhat like a gentleman in reduced circumstances. He had on a purple coat with gold lace, worn threadbare, a small-brimmed tarnished beaver hat, nankeen small-clothes, and long white top-boots. His hair was tied in a queue, with a long black band, and his clothes were travel-stained.

"Lt. King, to whom the prisoner was delivered, saw at once that he had to do with a person of more than ordinary importance, and his own barber coming in to shave him, the same service was offered to the stranger and gladly accepted.

"When the ribbon was taken from his hair, the lieutenant observed that it was full of powder which, with other circumstances, confirmed his previous impression.

"After being shaved the prisoner asked the privilege of going to bed till his linen and small-clothes could be washed, but this was made unnecessary by Lt. King, offering a change of clothing, which was accepted.

"These little courtesies so won the confidence of the prisoner that he revealed to Lt. King the fact that he was none other than Major John Andre, the adjutant-general of the British army, and that he had been arrested inside American lines. Asking for a pen and paper, he proceeded to write to General Washington, but before midnight, orders came from the commander-in-chief to forward the prisoner at once to headquarters, and this was also done under charge of Lt. King."

The story of Lt. King's brief acquaintance with Benedict Arnold's spy-mate is told in a letter written by King in 1817 to a friend, and reprinted in Teller's, Rockwell's, and in part in Bedini's histories of Ridgefield. The King family

history, written by Henry P. Phelps, adds that Lt. King “remained at headquarters till the execution and even walked with him to the gallows on which the brave and gallant Englishman met his shameful death.”

Lt. King, sometimes addressed as General King because he held that rank in the postwar Connecticut militia, became acquainted with Ridgefield during the war, liked the town, and decided to settle here. In 1784, a year after his arrival, he married one of the highest-placed women in town. Anne Ingersoll was the daughter of the Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll, second minister of the First Congregational Church, and sister of Jonathan Ingersoll Jr., who was to become lieutenant governor of Connecticut from 1816 to 1823.

As a merchant he was evidently quite successful, for Lt. King was soon a wealthy man. (Dole dropped out of the business soon after it started.) King bought much land – he became perhaps the largest private property owner in town in his time; certainly he held more than any other non-farmer. He was also a sort of one-man bank, dealing out mortgages to many residents. He also had interests in several mills in town.

Lt. King served several terms in the General Assembly and was a member of the 1818 convention that framed the modern Connecticut Constitution.

Joshua and Anne King had 10 children – four sons and six daughters. Samuel G. Goodrich (Peter Parley) described them in his *Recollections of A Lifetime*: “All reached maturity and constituted one of the comeliest groups I have ever known. The girls all married, save one; three of the sons – among the handsomest men of their time – professed bachelorism; a proof of what all shrewd observers know, that handsome men, spontaneously enjoying the smiles of the sex, feel no need of resigning their liberty, while ugly men are forced to capitulate on bended knees and accept the severe conditions of matrimony as the only happy issue out of their solitude.” This, from the son of a minister!

Lt. King died in 1839, a year after his wife. Two of his sons remained closely connected with Ridgefield, though one only as a summer resident. Born here in 1794, Rufus H. King moved to Albany where he became one of the city’s foremost businessmen, serving among other things as the president of the New York State Bank and of the Albany Savings Bank. Rufus frequently visited the family homestead, on the north corner of Main Street and King Lane. He was a colonel in the New York State militia and two of his offspring were attached to the military: a son, also Rufus H., became a general in the militia, and a daughter, Anna, married General Franklin Townsend.

For a while, his youngest brother, Joshua Ingersoll King (1801-1887) was a partner with Rufus in a dry goods business in Albany, but upon the death of his father, Joshua returned to the family homestead.

In an 1855 visit to his native town, S. G. Goodrich met Joshua I. King and described him as “not only the successor but in some things the repetition of his father. He represents him in person, and has many of his qualities. He has re-modeled the grounds around the old family mansion, amplifying and embellishing them with much judgment.

“The house itself is unchanged, except by paint and the introduction of certain articles of furniture and tasteful decorations – testimonials of the proprietor’s repeated visits to Europe. Here, being a bachelor, he has gathered some of his nieces, and here he receives the members of the King dynasty down to the third generation – all seeming to regard it as the Jerusalem of the family.

The summer gathering here is delightful, bringing hither the refinements of the best society of New York, Philadelphia and other places.”

In July 1889, the homestead, probably built by Lt. King in the 1780’s or 1790’s, was destroyed by fire, together with many heirlooms and family portraits. One of the finest houses in 19th Century Ridgefield, it stood a little north of the site of the present mansion house and much closer to Main Street; it was being renovated at the time of its burning. The existing house, built by Charles S. Nash, is almost the same design as its predecessor. Construction on it began in 1894.

In the 1800’s, several buildings – at least two of them houses – stood on the property. Joshua I. King occupied the main house while J. Howard King of Albany, son of Col. Rufus H. King, may have had the place right on the corner, calling it “Peaceable Cottage” and using it chiefly as a summer retreat.

Joshua I. King was 85 at the time of his death in 1887, and his death record in the town hall lists no occupation. He probably was involved in investments, for his probate records mention his holding many stocks and bonds, and he probably lived off the income from these.

Lt. King’s daughter, Sophia, married William McHarg of Albany, and one of their sons was also prominent in Ridgefield as a summer resident. Henry King McHarg donated the land at Main Street and West Lane for the construction of the present First Congregational Church. His widow, Elizabeth, lived on Nod Road until shortly before her death in 1976. She pioneered the organic gardening movement in this area in the 1930’s.

J. Howard King, who was another wealthy Albany businessman, considered himself a resident of that city, but was well-known here as a summer visitor. And it was here that he died in 1900. His house at the corner of King Lane and High Ridge was also destroyed by fire. He had daughters – Irene, Winona, and Henrietta – “the first girls who ever smoked in Ridgefield,” Francis D. Martin maintained in a 1978 interview. The three of them apparently recognized the evils of their ways, for, according to Mr. Martin, they offered Malchus Knapp, then a boy, \$100 if he would not smoke a cigarette until he was 21. Knapp kept the bargain – in fact, he never smoked in his lifetime – and collected the \$100.

The stone wall along King Lane has a rather unusual feature that was not always there. Mr. Martin said that the local young men used to go courting the “pot rasslers” – kitchen maids – from Mr. King’s household. Men and maidens would sit together atop the then flat-topped wall, a situation Mr. King found uncomely. So he had the pointed rocks installed, making the wall most uncomfortable for seating, Mr. Martin claimed.

Among the frequent visitors at the King homestead were Mary King, cousin of J. Howard, and Tom King, son of Rufus H., who would play polo here with other wealthy Ridgefielders.

At J. Howard King’s death, the property was turned over to a group of trustees who eventually sold off the holdings. For a while, the King family continued to use the main house. The building that Lt. King had opened as a country store in the 1780’s had by 1900 become a house and the business itself eventually became D. F. Bedient Company at Main and Bailey Avenue. The complete Ridgefield estate – three houses and some 66 acres (including 44 acres of “wood lots” at Silver Spring) was valued at \$49,500 in 1900 (about \$1.5 million in 2017 dollars).

When the mansion house and its 11 acres plus 35 acres at Silver Spring were sold to Richard A. Jackson of Stevenson, Md., in 1922, the price was \$67,000 – more than twice the appraised value of those properties in 1900 and a very hefty sum in its day. When the homestead alone, occupied until the mid-1970's by Mrs. Fielding V. Jackson, Richard's daughter-in-law, was sold by the Jackson family in July 1978, the price was \$390,000. A few years earlier, Mrs. Jackson had given the woodlots – probably acquired by Lt. King 180 years earlier – to the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield to remain open space in perpetuity.

King Lane was so called from at least 1867 when the name appears on Beers Atlas as "Kings Lane." A 1924 map says "King's Lane," Today, the "s" and the apostrophe are both gone.

A postcard from around 1910 labels King Lane as Peaceable Street, possibly a reference to nearby Peaceable Cottage.

KING LOTS

The King Lots are an example of how age and legend can distort the actual source of a name.

In his *Ridgefield in Review*, historian Silvio Bedini recounted the legend: "Local tradition relates that the Burt family of Mamanasco which was descended from the first blacksmith (Benjamin Burt) were Tories and that the Burt property was confiscated by the Government during the Revolution and sold at public auction. This property was located along Lake Mamanasco and included the area from North Salem Road between Pond Road and Tackora Trail along the lakefront, a piece of property that was later designated as the King Lotts since it had been owned by adherents to the King."

While the legend about the Burt family may be true, there may be another explanation for the name. Although all of the Burts of Mamanasco weren't Tories, two were – Benjamin, a son or grandson of the blacksmith, and David. Evidently, the two fled the country. Two lots amounting to nearly 20 acres were among the Burt lake lands that were confiscated by the state after they left the country.

It wasn't until 1804 that the state got around to selling this land – 7.5 acres on the lake "being part of the confiscated estate of Benjamin Burt" and six acres belonging to Benjamin and David together. The buyer? Lt. Joshua King.

Thus, it is quite likely that the "King Lotts," a name that doesn't appear in the land records until an 1856 deed, came from Joshua, and not the royalist ways of the Burts. However, it may also be that the name made a lasting impression because of its double-meaning. It could be, in effect, one of Ridgefield's few place-name puns.

KING'S GRANT PARK

King's Grant Park is a subdivision of nine lots off Seymour and South Olmstead Lanes. The name is said to be derived from a tradition that this land and other property of the Seymour family came via a grant from a king of England. No mention of such a grant has been found in all town hall records, or in any of the histories of the town or region, and the name may reflect some ancient connection with the King family (above).

KING'S HIGHWAY

In 1745, when Jonathan Rockwell gave his homestead on Main Street to his son, John Rockwell, he described the three acres as being bounded on the west by “ye King’s Highway.” The Rockwell deed contains the only recorded use of this term in the Ridgefield land records, and therefore it’s a rather interesting reference.

Main Street was part of a main route between New York, Hartford and Boston, and was considered for some time as the “Upper Post Road” to differentiate it from the Lower Post Road – now U.S. Route 1 along the coast. Mail and stages traveled the road and the colonial government generally supervised its maintenance and suitability for through traffic. Thus, it was a highway of the king’s government, or a king’s highway. It is like saying a “state highway” today.

Several towns in Connecticut, including Fairfield, Bridgeport, Westport, Chester, and Milford, still use King’s Highway as a road name. Many others probably once did, but quickly abandoned the term during the Revolution and never resurrected it. (*See also Main Street and Post Road*)

KING’S RIDGE

King’s Ridge is an informal term for High Ridge, used mostly during and just after the lifetime of J. Howard King, who died in 1900 and who maintained a summer place on the northern corner of Main Street and King Lane (*q.v.*).

The Rev. Daniel Teller reported in 1878 that Mr. King was responsible for beginning the conversion of the southern half of High Ridge from agricultural fields to the sites for large mansions, some of which still occupy the ridge. He planted many of the old trees that still line the street. Members of the King family had much land on the ridge from the late 1700’s to the late 1800’s, and still maintained a little land there until 1923 when the last of the King holdings were sold.

KING’S WAY

King’s Way is the name of a late 1979’s subdivision off King Lane that is served by Jackson Court. The developer originally suggested calling the road King’s Way, after the King family which once owned the property, but the Planning and Zoning Commission felt it would be confusing to have two King roads. (*See Jackson Court, King Lane*)

KINGSWOOD PLACE

While our other “King” names all have a place in the history or legend of Ridgefield, Kingswood Place has none. In some towns, “kingswood” may have significance. However, in Ridgefield, it is one of those meaningless, made-up names that the Planning and Zoning Commission has allowed developers to use, apparently believing they are distinctive in sound and seemingly reputable in character.

In February 1978, in a story by Macklin Reid entitled “For Thou Art A Road and We Do Dub Thee...” The Press reported on the commission’s rather lengthy and often entertaining discussion of what Finch Realty Company’s then-new subdivision road off Ashbee Lane should be called. Three names had been suggested: Kingswood Lane, by the subdivider; Clapboard Tree Lane, by

this writer; and Nob Hill Place, by someone apparently embarrassed to admit its authorship.

"The commission had no problem disposing of Nob Hill Place, which all agreed would be easily confused with the existing Nod Hill Road and Nod Road – already confusing enough," the story said. Good for the commission.

"Most of the commissioners also found similar objections to Clapboard Place, Clapboard Hill or Clapboard Tree Place – the variations increased as the discussion went on. Clapboard something-or-other roads existed in most of the surrounding towns, they said. Confusing again."

Commissioners wondered why the name was suggested. A nearby ridge had been called Clapboard Tree Ridge (*q.v.*) in the early 1700's, probably because good wood for clapboarding the sides the earliest Ridgefield homes was taken from trees there. Only about a dozen towns are listed as having "Clapboard" names in *Connecticut Place Names*, a huge compendium published by the Connecticut Historical Society.

Kingswood itself is not without significance in some communities. In pre-Revolutionary times, representatives of the government would seek out the best trees in the forest and mark them to be felled for use by the crown, mostly in shipbuilding. Tall, straight trees for masts were particularly sought-after, for instance. These trees, bearing the "King's mark," would be considered "King's wood." (There were times, of course, when there was also "Queen's wood.")

Kingswood, Clapboard and Nob weren't the only names the commission considered. The new road, explained Commissioner Daniel M. McKeon, "is right off Ashbee Lane (*q.v.*), which is named after old Charlie Ashbee. He used to dress up as Santa Claus. Maybe we should call it Santa Claus Place."

"Mr. McKeon's suggestion had some appeal," Mr. Reid reported. "Commissioners Mark Erwin and Dr. (Nelson) Gelfman played with some variations – Santa Place, Santa Claus Circle ..." From here discussion wandered into the merits of lanes and drives versus circles and places.

"Mr. Chairman," said an apparently impatient Joseph Heyman, "I would like to move that the road be named Kingswood Place, the name suggested by the developer."

"What about Santa Claus?" protested Mr. McKeon.

Mr. Heyman shook his head gravely. "I don't think you should bring religion into road names."

After commissioners eventually approved the name, two conversations were overheard during a break in the meeting.

"Your (own) name is religious," Dr. Gelfman told Mr. Heyman. "It might offend someone to have to call you Joseph."

The doctor, who voted against Kingswood, also confessed his reason for his dislike of the new name. "Kingswood," he grimaced. "It's a typically pompous name."

A few feet away, Commissioner Erwin reworked strategy with Mr. McKeon.

"Maybe if we tried St. Nicholas Place?" he mused.

But it was too late.

LAKE KITCHAWAN

Lake Kitchawan is the modern name for Cross Pond, which runs along the Lewisboro-Pound Ridge line in New York State. This line was once the western

boundary of Ridgefield before the Oblong (*q.v.*) was sliced off from western Connecticut in 1731 in a land exchange with New York State that netted Connecticut what is now Greenwich.

The pond was the eastern boundary for the Kitchawong Indians, who roamed as far west as the Hudson River but who lived chiefly in Pound Ridge. Dr. Benn Adelmarr Bryon of Ridgefield may have first applied the name. In the early part of the century, he started the development of summer cottages or camps around the lake (*see* Bryon Avenue).

KNAPP ESTATES

Knapp Estates is a small subdivision of 10.8 acres off Topstone Road. The Topstone Trading Company developed the land, formerly owned by the Knapp family, around 1979.

KNAP'S FARM

Knap's Farm is an old place name, once applied to a section of town in the same fashion as Bennett's Farm was. But unlike Bennett's Farm, Knap's Farm did not survive, first appearing around 1740 and last in 1790. Edwin Liljegren, a former Ridgeburian who was an avid student of Ridgebury history, contributed the following information.

The story of Knap's (or Knapp's) farm really began in May 1697 when the Colonial Assembly granted to "Isaac Hall of Fairfield 150 acres of land to be taken up where it may not prejudice any former grant to any town or particular person." Hall had requested 250 acres for his service as a surgeon during a war. He must have claimed his land before the proprietors of Ridgefield purchased Ridgebury from the Indians, and by 1740 it was sold to Moses Knap, and it was known as Knap's Farm. The area, however, continued to be called Zack's Ridge (*q.v.*) in other references in the colonial records.

Isaac Hall and Moses Knap also both owned land in the Lonetown section of Redding, near John Read's farm. (It is Read's name that lent itself to Redding, now Redding.) In 1747, when Moses Knap sold 100 acres to Josiah and Timothy Foster and Nathan Sherwood, the name of Knap's Farm pretty much died, although it appeared occasionally, including in deeds of 1750, 1751, and 1790. The land was a coffin-shaped parcel along the southwest side of Old Stagecoach Road, which did not exist at the time. It included much of the former McKeon family's Arigadeen Farm of the last half of the 20th Century and in 2011, Double H Farm, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Hunter Harrison.

Two other parcels such as this were laid out before Ridgefield purchased the land. One was the Taylor-Benedict farm along George Washington Highway – an area called The Crank (*q.v.*). The other is the Sherwood Farm, lying on a hillside, which slopes to Mill Plain, an area later annexed to Danbury. Knapps continued to own some land at or about Knap's Farm at least as late as 1793 when William Knapp of Greenwich still had title to 14 acres "southeasterly from and near to Henry Whitney's dwelling house" – a house owned by the Harrisons, that was moved from Old Stagecoach to the corner of Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach around 2010, and restored to its original size.

KNOCHE ROAD

Knoche Road is another name for Pelham Lane, which runs between Nod Road and Nod Hill Road on the Wilton-Ridgefield border. "Knoche Road"

appears on modern U.S. Geological Survey maps, but on few other modern maps, which use Pelham Lane instead – probably correctly so, for Pelhams predate Knoches as property owners in the neighborhood.

The Knoche family came to that area in 1893 when Robert W. Keeler of Wilton sold John and Joseph Knoche property in Ridgefield and Wilton along or near Pelham Lane. But John R. Pelham was already living there by 1888. Thus, if the road should be named for the first of the two families to live there, it should be Pelham. But if it would be named for the family that has lived there longer, Knoche easily wins because the Joseph Knoche family is still there.

Joseph Knoche Sr. built the fine stonewalls along both sides of the road, much of which is now part of Weir Farm (*q.v.*). In fact, in 1945, Mahonri Young (1877-1957), J. Alden Weir's son-in-law and an artist famed for his Mormon sculptures, created the widely known etching, "Joe Knoche Builds a New Stone Wall."

A sharp curve in the road near the Knoche property is called **Knoche's Corner**, according to the late Theodore M. Meier in his 1975 report on the perambulation of the Ridgefield-Wilton line.

Pelham Lane/Knoche Road may be the same road referred to in the mid-1700's as Ressigues Lane (*q.v.*).

KNOLLS, THE

The Knolls was a common nickname for the Ridgefield Knolls subdivision (*q.v.*). It was also the name of a small, 1986 subdivision on the Redding line, served by Cornerstone Court (*q.v.*).

KNOLLWOOD DRIVE

Knollwood Drive, which runs from Bennett's Farm Road over Ridgebury Mountain to the intersection of Barlow Mountain and Old Barlow Mountain Roads, was built around 1960 by Robert Kaufman as part of his Ridgefield Knolls subdivision. According to Edgar P. Bickford, surveyor on the project, it was the first road at the Knolls. The road name is derived from the subdivision name, Ridgefield Knolls, referring to the knolls in the neighborhood.

The road, not accepted as a town road until 1968, was originally called Topstone Drive after Mr. Kaufman's Topstone Development Company. But Mr. Kaufman changed the name to avoid confusion with Topstone Road, which runs from Route 7 into Redding a few miles away from this development.

KOPPS MOUNTAIN

Kopps Mountain is a version of Copp's Mountain, frequently appearing in the land records beginning in 1786 when Benjamin Smith became the town clerk. Copp's Mountain, named for John Copp, the man who surveyed the town and was its first town clerk, is the hill parallel to and east of North Street.

KORES BOGGS

Kores Boggs is a version of Cores Boggs or Core's Boggs, a very old name for a locality in the Peaceable Street neighborhood. The place is mentioned as early as the 1720's, and the spelling switches throughout the 18th Century between Cores and Kores. The writers were probably trying to spell "coarse," descriptive of the surface of the bogs or of the vegetation in them.

L

LACHA LINNE

Lacha Linne is a name applied to the old Hopper's Pond (*q.v.*), just north of the intersection of South Salem and Old South Salem Roads. The name is Gaelic for "duck pond" and ducks had for years inhabited the pond, along with lots of duckweed. Owned in 2011 by Anne Blackwell, the pond has mostly dried up. It was called Lacha Linne for many years by owners, although some old-timers preferred to call it Hopper's Pond after a man who lived nearby in the 1920's. "Lacha Linne" may have been chosen by Reginald Lewis, a former owner of the pond, or by Robert P. Scripps (*see* Scripps Pond).

LAFAYETTE AVENUE

Lafayette Avenue, which runs off Copps Hill Road to Washington Street, recalls the Marquis de Lafayette, who accompanied General George Washington, Col. Alexander Hamilton and others from New Jersey to Hartford in September 1780. The group stopped in Ridgebury for the night of Sept. 19-20, staying at various houses and taverns near the Ridgebury Congregational Church.

Fortunately, the road name does not use the French nobleman's full name. Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier Lafayette was born in 1757. He was a captain in a dragoon regiment at Metz when, in the summer of 1776, he heard that the American colonies had declared their independence. He decided to aid them and secretly obtained a ship in which he, the Baron de Kalb and 10 other officers set sail, eluding officers sent to prevent his departure.

He fought in many battles, was injured at Brandywine while rallying the retreating Americans, and was one of the members of the court which tried and convicted Major John Andre (whom Lt. Joshua King of King Lane [*q.v.*] had guarded till his hanging).

After the war, both Washington and Congress heartily thanked him for his services to the nation. He returned to France, where he was a major general and where he served in many military and government positions through times of turmoil and of peace, and was once jailed for five years. In 1824, he made a triumphant return visit to this country and was so popular that Congress voted him a grant of \$200,000 and a whole township of land. He died in 1834 in France. One of his sons, incidentally, was named George Washington Lafayette.

Lafayette Avenue was developed and named by the late William T. Peatt Sr. as part of Peatt Park (*q.v.*).

LAKE NUMBER 1, 2, 3 and 4

When the Ridgefield Lakes were subdivided for summer cottages in the 1920's, maps gave the new, man-made lakes numbers instead of names, and to this day deeds for properties at the large development often refer to the lakes by numbers.

Lake Number One is now commonly called Wataba or Rainbow Lake.

Lake Number Two is a small body of water on the north side of Fox Hill Lake, just north of Bennett's Farm Road. It has little water and apparently no common name.

Lake Number Three was not developed and today is just a creek and a drawing on old maps. In fact, portions of it were subdivided and now have houses where water was to be. The planned lake was west of Lakeside Drive, north of Mountain Road, and east of Bennett's Farm Road.

Lake Number Four is Fox Hill Lake.

LAKE ROAD

Lake Road is a small loop road off Mountain Road at the west end of Rainbow Lake, one of many private roads at the Ridgefield Lakes.

LAKELAND HILLS

Lakeland Hills is a subdivision of 27 lots obtained in 1954 by Harold Goldsmith for about 30 acres on the north side of Bennett's Farm Road, opposite the Ridgebury School site. The development includes Skytop Road, Douglas Lane, and North Shore Drive. The name refers to the hills to the north and to Lake Windwing (*q.v.*), which Mr. Goldsmith created on the east side of the subdivision.

LAKESIDE DRIVE

Including what is probably the last dirt road in Ridgefield of consequence, Lakeside Drive is a nearly mile-long road that connects at each end to Bennett's Farm Road. From its north end, it heads eastward as a dirt road, skirting the south edge of Rainbow Lake, one of the Ridgefield Lakes. It then crosses Cross Hill Road and becomes paved, heading southerly along the western shore of upper Fox Hill Lake and eventually ending at Bennett's Farm. At least the dirt portion is a private road, although the town provides some maintenance for public safety.

LAKEVIEW DRIVE

Lakeview Drive is another of the many narrow private roads at the Ridgefield Lakes. It runs from Great Hill Road south to Highview Road generally along the east shore of Fox Hill Lake.

LAKEVIEW ROAD

Lakeview Road has been used for two roads in the past, but none today.

In the early 1900's, the name was applied – perhaps casually – to Tackora Trail because of its view of Lake Mamanasco. (In those days of farming, there weren't nearly as many trees which today block the view of the lake.)

For a while in the 1960's, the name was also used for Bayberry Hill Road, from Branchville Road to the loop, because it overlooked John's Pond to the north. The name was changed because of confusion with already existing Lakeside Drive four miles away. And besides, who could really consider John's Pond a "lake"?

LANCASTER FIELD

Lancaster Field at Ridgefield High School was named for Steven Michael Lancaster, son of Frank W. and Bernice Lancaster. Steven died in October 1971 of leukemia after having been a star athlete at the high school.

LANGSTROTH DRIVE

Langstroth Drive, which extends from George Washington Highway to Sophia Drive, is named for Dr. Francis Ward Langstroth, whose farm became the Scodon subdivision, which includes this road.

Dr. Langstroth, who had been a physician on Long Island, came to Ridgefield in 1922, buying the 79-acre farm of Alexander Baylis of New York City. He did not practice medicine here and for most of his days was retired, although he did raise Irish setters. He was a frequent speaker at town meetings and would sometimes deliver “fiery” orations, according to one old-timer. While here he married Sophia Langstroth, for whom Sophia Drive is named. Dr. Langstroth and his wife moved to Florida in the 1950’s where he died in 1962. His wife remarried and was known as Sophia L. Kearney until her death in the early 1970’s in St. Petersburg.

The road was built in the 1960’s by subdividers Carleton A. Scofield and Judge Joseph H. Donnelly (whence the name, Scodon). It is sometimes incorrectly spelled Langstroff.

LANTERN DRIVE

Lantern Drive recalls something that never existed.

When Robert E. Roache subdivided this tract off Limekiln Road, he had a pair of pillars erected at the end of the road with the intention of putting lanterns on them – adding a bit of “class” to the subdivision’s entrance. However, he either never got around to installing them or he feared the lanterns would be stolen or vandalized. At any rate, the lanterns never appeared, even though the brick pillars were probably wired for them.

Mr. Roache, who had a reputation for building good houses and who later moved to Carefree, Ariz., called the subdivision Lantern Hills. It was developed around 1962 and the road accepted by the town in 1963. By 2010, the lanterns had still not appeared. Perhaps the name should have been changed to Pillar Place.

LAUREL HILL ROAD

Laurel Hill Road, a dead-end lane running off lower Florida Road, was probably developed by William Maki around 1951; a map filed then shows it labeled “new road” as part of his property. The name was in use by 1954.

The road is named for the state flower, the Mountain Laurel, which grows aplenty there and throughout the wooded sections of town. Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) has been called the most beautiful American shrub. “It’s fragrant and the massed richness of its white and pink blossoms so vividly contrast with the darker colors of the forests and fields that they have continually attracted the attention of travelers since the earliest days of our colonization,” one authority wrote. Although this evergreen plant is fairly common here, it is illegal to pick it.

LAUREL LANE

Laurel Lane, a short, dead-end road off upper Route 7 (where Ullman Devices company is in 2011), is but a vestige of what it used to be.

The road once connected Ridgefield with the Starr's Plain hamlet of southern Danbury, and appears in town records as early as 1828 when a perambulation of the town line notes that the corner boundary marker (for Ridgefield, Redding and Danbury) stood "in the highway about 50 rods west of Starr's Plain Burying Ground." The "highway" is Laurel Lane, which then continued eastward to join Starr's Plain and Starr's Ridge Roads. It was apparently a fairly important route because Starr's Plain was a fairly well-developed commercial village by the 19th Century. The road is shown as going to Starr's Plain as late as 1936 and even one 1960's map shows it as a through road, although it has not been used as such for many years.

The road is named for the shrub, which may have been planted there as part of the Outpost Nurseries stock, or which simply grew wild there. The name was in use as early as 1936 when the nursery – with offices nearby on Route 7 – were still thriving.

LAWSON LANE

Lawson Lane, a private way at Casagmo, is one of several thoroughfares there named for the ancestors or family of Mary L.B. Olcott, the last resident of the Casagmo mansion that preceded the apartment/condominium complex. David L. Paul, builder of the apartments, picked the names from a genealogy published by Miss Olcott in 1954.

Her connection with Lawson is somewhat remote, and is apparently to the family of one John Lawson of Ireland, who came to the United States in the mid-1800's. His son, Robert (1828-1904), the most notable of the clan in the genealogy, was a merchant in New York City and operated Lawson Brothers, importers of fine laces and curtains. He probably never set foot in Ridgefield, yet a name recalls him or his family — perhaps because of its alliteration.

LEDGES ROAD

Ledges Road is one of the oldest roads in the northern part of town and existed certainly by 1800, and probably long before. The ledges referred to are the Asproom or Great Ledges (*q.v.*), mentioned as early as 1753 ("Great Ledges") in a deed. They are the steep hillside on the north side of the road, which was being called "Ledge Road" as early as 1909, according to an old property survey.

Ledges Road was one of the last of the old roads in town to be paved, and it was a dirt-surfaced highway until around 1967.

LEE LANE

Lee Lane was an early 20th Century name for the present-day Wheeler Road in Ridgebury, so-called because the Lee sisters lived in a house at the corner of the road and Spring Valley Road. The house was later owned for many years by Mr. and Mrs. John N. Wheeler, whence the modern name.

LEE ROAD

Once part of Farmingville Road, Lee Road is an old highway, whose name recalls a family that lived in Farmingville for more than two centuries. The

name applies today to the road that extends from Farmingville Road to Limekiln Road. This was once the route of Farmingville Road, skirting the north side of the main body of Great Swamp and laid out early in the 18th Century. It became its "own" road in 1914 when the town built the straight section of Farmingville Road across the swamp from Lee Road to Limekiln and Blackman Roads.

The Lee family in Ridgefield history predates the founding of the town itself. In 1697, 11 years before the town's settlement, William Lees I (1655-1741) was one of the Norwalk residents who petitioned the General Assembly to allow the creation of Ridgefield. Although he probably visited the town, William Lees never lived here.

His son, Joseph Lees, came to Ridgefield and bought the Matthew Saintjohn homestead on Main Street in 1723. In 1734, he was buying land on Grassy Island near Farmingville, but by 1737 he had moved to Salisbury in northwestern Connecticut.

The founder of the Ridgefield Lee clan was William Lee II (1710-1785), half brother of Joseph and perhaps the first to drop the "s" from Lees. In 1762, he bought 92 acres and a house in Farmingville. This land, probably along Lee Road, was the beginning of acquisitions of hundreds of acres in Farmingville by the Lee family over the next century.

Over the years, dozens of Lees lived in Farmingville, where they were, as their district's name suggestions, chiefly farmers, but also millers. Their ranks included William, founder of the clan, who operated a noted saw mill in Farmingville as early as 1767; John and Daniel, who had a grist mill near today's Stonehenge Inn; Chapman, who had a cider mill at Farmingville; William (1844), Aaron, and Edwin Lee, who operated limekilns in the area; Aaron W. Lee, first selectman in 1880 and 1881; and Fred C. Lee, who held the same office in 1893.

Aaron W. Lee was one of many Ridgefielders injured in the Civil War. He, Henry W. Keeler, Jacob Austin, Lawrence Carney, John H. Harrington, Edwin D. Pickett (*see* Pickett's Ridge Road), Warren Rufus, Joseph S. Whitlock, and Nephi Whitlock (*see* Whitlock Lane), were all wounded on July 1, 1863, at the Battle of Gettysburg. Carney, Pickett and Joseph Whitlock died from their wounds.

When he returned from the war, Aaron Lee helped establish the Grand Army Post here and suggested that it be named in memory of Edwin Pickett, who died next to him in a trench. (Neither Pickett nor the others at Gettysburg were the first Ridgefielders to give their lives in the Civil War; Henry Keeler was killed in the bloody battle of Antietam Sept. 17, 1862, only six weeks after he enlisted.)

One of the last of the Ridgefield Lees still bearing the family name was Robert Aaron Lee, son of Fred C. Lee and grandson of Aaron W. Lee. Mr. Lee lived in Greenwich in his later years, but kept property in Farmingville until his death in 1982 at the age of 94. He left Ridgefield as a permanent residence in 1903, but frequently visited the town and was a director of the Ridgefield Savings Bank (now Fairfield County Bank) for many years. For many years, Mr. Lee's daughter, Barbara Lee Johnson, lived on Lee family land along New Road until her death in 2001.

Sadly, the last person to bear the Lee name in Farmingville was convicted of killing an acquaintance in 1987. The shooting took place in the Lee family

homestead on Farmingville Road, reportedly the result of a dispute over drugs. William Lee, a grandson of Robert A. Lee, was sent to prison.

LEWIS DRIVE

Lewis Drive extends from Shadow Lane to Golf Lane, part of the Ridgefield Manor Estates. It's named for Frederic Elliott Lewis, who owned the huge mansion and estate there early in the 20th Century.

Ridgefield had many great estates then, but few surpassed Frederic E. Lewis's "Upagenstit." At one time this spread on West Lane employed nearly 100 people. The garage alone held 15 cars, according to town historian Richard E. Venus, and the estate was equipped with an indoor swimming pool (natatorium) and houses for workers – many still exist along West Lane and on Lewis Drive. His place was so big that, with little modification, it became a college in the 1940s. President of Adams Express Company, a competitor of American Express and Wells Fargo, Mr. Lewis came here from Tarrytown, N.Y., in 1907, buying 100 acres and buildings on and near West Lane from Henry B. Anderson. He tore down Anderson's house and reportedly spent several million dollars to build his own mansion and to landscape the property with exotic trees and shrubs – many of which still live on the lawns of Manor Estates.

Mr. Lewis was a director of the First National Bank of Ridgefield, but behind the scenes he was also a major philanthropist. "He was a friend of the worthy needy and he freely, but absolutely anonymously, has contributed largely to the relief of the distressed," said his obituary when he died in 1919 at age 60. "The extent of his philanthropic work will never be known as he never spoke of it and would not permit others to mention it. Many a worthy case that received timely help will never know the identity of their benefactor."

His widow, Mary Russell Lewis, continued to live in the estate until 1934 when it was sold to bridge expert Ely Culbertson. She was a member of the Russell family that established the National City Bank in New York City. Here, she founded the Red Cross unit and was for 31 years vice president of the District Nursing Association.

Both of the Lewis sons, Reginald and Wadsworth, maintained homes here, the former on South Salem Road and the latter, on Great Hill Road. Wadsworth R. Lewis, who died in 1942, left the bulk of his estate in a trust fund that still benefits many civic and charitable endeavors in town.

Development of Lewis Drive began in the mid-1950's after the mansion was razed, but the road wasn't accepted as a town road until 1969. The older houses toward the eastern end had been used for servants and other caretakers on the Lewis estate.

LEWISBORO

Lewisboro is the only border town whose name has not found its way into the geography of Ridgefield. But because part of Lewisboro was once within Ridgefield, its name should be noted here.

Originally called Salem, present-day Lewisboro was once one town with North Salem. Later, after North Salem became its own entity, the town became known as Lower Salem, a name changed in 1840 to Lewisboro to honor John Lewis, who had contributed much money to support the town's schools. The word "Lewisboro" first appears in the Ridgefield land records in 1842.

South Salem – the locality mentioned in South Salem Road – is a hamlet within the town of Lewisboro, as are Vista, Cross River, Waccabuc, and Goldens Bridge.

LIBRARY HILL

Library Hill is an informal name applied to western Prospect Street, chiefly in the first quarter of the 20th Century. It was so called because the Ridgefield Library, built in 1901, is at the “top” of the hill at Main Street.

LIGI’S WAY

Ligi’s Way connects Farmingville Road to South Street. In late April 2011, the Board of Selectmen agreed to rename Bypass Road after Police Chief Richard Ligi, a lifelong Ridgefielder and 40-year veteran of the force, who died of heart problems in 2008.

There was no dispute that the chief deserved the honor, but what to name it — Richie’s Road? Ligi Lane? Ligi Street? — led to some colorful discussion.

Selectman Di Masters suggested the alliterative “Ligi Lane,” but most seemed to agree with Selectman Maureen Kozlark that it was “a stretch” to call the road a lane.

“There’s substance to a ‘road,’ “ John Katz, Planning and Zoning Commission member, said. “Chief Ligi was a man of substance.”

“Call it whatever you want, it’s a road,” Mr. Marconi said before the meeting.

But a quip by Selectman Andy Bodner ended the conversation.

“He always got his way,” Selectman Andy Bodner said Wednesday night, amid discussions of whether to call it a “lane” a “road” or a “street.”

The selectmen voted unanimously to rename the road, apostrophe included, to “Ligi’s Way.”

The road was never formally named since its construction about a decade ago, but had been called Bypass Road (*q.v.*). That, coupled with the fact that there are no addresses on it made it simple to name without confusion.

For Richard Ligi, working for the Ridgefield Police had been almost a lifetime affair. He was so young when he joined the department in 1967 that he wasn’t allowed to carry a gun, and had to do clerical work. He was attending Post College in Waterbury and, as soon as he turned 21 in 1969, he was sworn in as a full-time officer. From there promotions came steadily, to sergeant in 1977, lieutenant in 1980, captain in 1990 and major in 1996. When Thomas Rotunda retired in 1999, the Police Commission unanimously chose Major Ligi as the town’s fourth police chief, the second one to be a native son.

Chief Ligi has been especially noted and praised for his involvement with youth. He coached Little League and other sports, and has helped develop anti-drinking and drug programs such as Party Patrols and Cops and Shops; the former cracks down on “keg parties” and the latter used underground police as liquor store clerks. The chief also worked to improve how youth viewed the police, such as expanding the involvement of the youth officer in the schools and their students, and proposing a “school resource officer” who could work with kids at the high school daily. “Relationships create better rapport, and that rapport may help kids better understand what we’re doing,” he said in 1999.

LIMEKILN

When Nathan Murphy of Salem, N.Y., sold Jonathan Ingersoll six acres in 1763, he described it as “lying in Ridgefield at Lime Kiln, so called.” This name, applied as if it were a geographical district (such as Flat Rock, Limestone or Ridgebury), never appears again in the land records. It may have been a very localized term, used only by a few people, and which never caught on. The name probably applied to the neighborhood of Limekiln Hill (*q.v.*), which was at the west ends of Barry Avenue and Ramapoo Road.

LIMEKILN CORNER

Limekiln Corner is an early 20th Century and possibly late 19th Century term for the intersection of Lee and Limekiln Roads. This junction was originally at a bend – or corner – on Farmingville Road until 1914 when the straight path of Farmingville Road through Great Swamp was built to bypass this highway.

At the northwest corner of this junction of Lee and Limekiln Roads, a limekiln stood, probably built and operated by the Lee family. Limestone for it probably came from Limestone Hill or Mine Hill to the north.

A limekiln consisted of a furnace for heating up and converting limestone (calcium carbonate) to lime (calcium oxide) by driving out water. Lime was used for many purposes, including the manufacture of plaster and mortar and for fertilizer.

LIMEKILN HILL

Limekiln Hill, a name not used in nearly two centuries, was once commonly applied to the four-way intersection of Barry Avenue, Ramapoo road, West Mountain Road, and Peaceable Ridge Road, near which a large limekiln operated for many years.

The first mention of a limekiln in Ridgefield occurs in 1742 when Joshua Lobdell gives his son, Caleb, 10 acres “at Chesnut Ridge near ye lime pit or kill, so called.”

A year later, the Annual Town Meeting in December voted that “a highway (be) laid out, beginning at ye road leading from ye Limekiln to Bedford Road near ye south end of Burr’s (Burt’s) Blacksmith Ridge ...” Bedford Road was today’s South Salem and Old South Salem Roads; the road to it was probably Peaceable Hill and Ridge Roads, which led to Peaceable Street which in turn connected to Old South Salem Road near the New York State line. Both references are probably to the same limekiln.

In 1751, Silas Keeler sold the Rev. Jonathan Ingersoll land that was “west of ye Town Platt (the village), ye east part of it lying west of ye High Ridge and near by it, beginning at ye foot of said ridge or hill and runs west to Limekiln Hill so called.” This seems to be in the same neighborhood as the two earlier references.

After its first mention, the term Limekiln Hill shows up fairly frequently in the land records until late in the 18th Century. Its last appearance was in a 1792 deed.

The origin of the limekiln on the hill is unclear; its builder has not been discovered. By 1821, what appears to be the same limekiln – or at least one on the same site – was being operated by Joel Gilbert. In 1836, after Joel Gilbert had died, Jared Mead paid \$2,243 for Gilbert’s homestead and his “limekills

and rock.” Later still, Russell Canfield operated the kiln and according to historian George L. Rockwell, “at this kiln 10 cords of wood were burned (a day) ... Lime was carted as far as Stamford and Greenwich from this establishment.”

The kiln or furnace was situated on the northerly side of Ramapoo Road, a little west of Mulberry Street. Kiln Hill Lane off Barry Avenue was named for this site.

LIMEKILN ROAD

An old highway extending between Farmingville and Haviland Roads, Limekiln Road certainly existed by 1856 when it appears on the first map of the town, and probably dates back at least a century earlier, perhaps to the 1730’s.

As explained under Limekiln Corner, the lower end of the road – between Lee and Farmingville Roads – was originally part of Farmingville Road.

Limekiln Road used to be, probably chiefly in the 18th Century, part of a shortcut to the northeastern part of town. Travelers from the village to Danbury could go up Danbury Road to the vicinity of Fox Hill condominiums, then turn eastward over Norrins Ridge to the vicinity of the present-day intersection of Poplar and Limekiln Roads. From there they would take Limekiln Road to Haviland, and follow Haviland across to Pickett’s Ridge. As noted under Danbury Road (*q.v.*), the old highway to Danbury led from Pickett’s Ridge through Starr’s Plain and across Moses Mountain to Wooster Heights.

The road was so called because of the limekiln, which stood at the northwest corner of Lee and Limekiln Roads. The kiln was probably built and operated by the Lee family.

LIMESTONE ACRES

Limestone Acres is a 23-lot subdivision off the western side of lower Limestone Road. A map of the subdivision, which includes Shields Lane, was filed by developer Jerry Tuccio in 1966.

LIMESTONE, LIMESTONE HILL

Limestone is one of the oldest place names in Ridgefield, alive today in a relatively modern name for a fairly modern road. The term “Limestone” dates back to at least 1712. A deed filed that year from the Proprietors to Joseph Keeler mentions nine acres “north of Limestone Hill.” A 1717 deed refers to “Lime Stone Hill.”

The main body of the hill was probably situated just north of the intersection of Limestone, Haviland and Danbury Roads – where the gasoline service station is today. What is now fairly flat was once higher; decades of mining the limestone helped to flatten the territory to its present level.

Mine Hill

This area was also often called Mine Hill because it was so well worked for limestone, a substance valuable to any 18th and 19th Century community. The hill extended southeastward to include the ridge traversed by Poplar Road.

Limestone Hill was the most noteworthy feature of the neighborhood and probably had a good deal of exposed limestone rock in order for the settlers to have named it so soon in the town’s history. By 1740, deeds and road descriptions were speaking simply of “Limestone” as a region. For example, the selectmen in May 1740 took three roods of land from Joseph Keeler “at ye east end, west side, of his own land at Limestone” for a highway.

After 1750, the Limestone area was becoming settled enough to warrant the establishment of some regional services. The Town Meeting in 1752 voted that “there shall be a woman school kept at Limestone ... ye ensuing summer season.” This is the first reference to a schoolhouse there, but one may have been established earlier. (Incidentally, it was a “woman school” in the summer because all the “men” – actually boys – would be too busy working in the fields and on the farms to attend school at that time of year.)

The Pound

The Annual Town Meeting on Dec. 8, 1789 “voted that a lawful pound may be erected in some part of the town that is called Bennits Farm...” But only a few months later, voters reversed the decision and decided to erect the pound at “Limestone, near the parting of roads near the dwelling house of Ebenezer Lobdell, and not Bennetts Farm....” This turnabout was perhaps an indication that Limestone had become a fairly populated and influential part of the town by this time. It had, after all, a couple of mills, and a store over by Stonehenge and Still Roads (and later even had a post office in that little commercial hamlet).

By 1834, land records refer to “Limestone District,” a term that lasted well into the 20th Century. (When Samuel Stebbins was town clerk from 1801 to 1836, the name was sometimes recorded as “Lymestone.”) Limestone school district in the mid-1800’s included all of upper Danbury Road, lower Limestone Road, lower Great Hill Road, Route 7 from its intersection with Danbury Road south to New Road, Haviland Road, and upper Limekiln Road. Also called District Number Three, it was one of the smaller school districts in the area it covered, but was probably as populated as any. The schoolhouse originally stood at the intersection of Haviland and Still Roads – near the Limestone hamlet. However, the last Limestone schoolhouse was on Danbury Road, just north of the gasoline station. It was closed in 1939 and later converted into a house by Lewis J. Finch, and it still serves as a house today.

The Mineral

Limestone was mined in various parts of northern Ridgefield for use as plaster and mortar after it had been “dried” in a kiln. The most extensive deposits were found in the Limestone, Bennett’s Farm and Farmingville Districts. The biggest mine appears to have been at Limestone Hill.

Evidence of the abundance of the mineral is found in the number of limekilns that operated in the area. The Selleck or Sellick family had a kiln along the north side of Bennett’s Farm Road (a little east of Knollwood Drive) as early as 1817; this structure still stands and may be the only limekiln still existing in town. By 1820, Andrew Barnum and Phineas Chapman operated a kiln in Farmingville near New Road. William Lee had another one in Farmingville by 1844 (*see* Lee Road). There was a large kiln on Limekiln Hill (*q.v.*). And there was another, owned by Rufus Canfield and leased to Albert Keeler and Hiram Bouton (1851) on an old road west of Nod Road and south of Whipstick Road.

Evidence that limestone is common is found today in the widespread use of water softeners to remove particularly this mineral from tap water.

LIMESTONE RIVER

According to historian George L. Rockwell, people who lived in the eastern Limestone District (from around Little Pond south to New Road) sometimes

called the Norwalk River in that neighborhood the “Limestone River.” The name does not appear in pre-1880 land records, however. In the 18th Century, the river here was often called the East River (*q.v.*).

LIMESTONE ROAD

Limestone Road extends from Danbury Road to Bennett’s Farm Road, and bears the name of the district in which its southern end begins. However, 75% of the length of the road is in the Bennett’s Farm District. And even the lower end was not originally considered Limestone Road. In the 18th Century, the section from Danbury Road to Great Hill Road (including Limestone Road Extension) was all part of Great Hill Road – only it wasn’t called Great Hill Road. The most common name then was “the road to Bennett’s Farm” or Bennett’s Farm Road.

Limestone Road from Great Hill Road north through the woods – and much swamp – to Bennett’s Farm Road was not built until 1852 after 31 people petitioned the Select Men for the new road – and said they would contribute \$185 toward costs. At that time and until at least 1856, this route was called “the New Road” or “the New Road from Limestone to Ridgebury.”

The flat and straight Limestone Road bypass was built a century after the hilly and curving Great Hill Road. Although the settlers certainly would have preferred a flat, straight road, 18th Century highways were laid out over the terrain that required the least amount of construction work and had the driest surface. The narrow wheels of carts could negotiate curves and hills, but could easily get stuck in muddy sections of road where water tended not to drain well. Those who laid out Great Hill Road as the route to Bennett’s Farm and as the road from Limestone to Ridgebury did so because it was the driest path. Later, when manpower, money and perhaps some slightly improved technology were available to fill and lay a highway across flat wetland, Limestone Road was built., but it was never perfect. Limestone Road was not paved until well into the 20th Century; until then, it was always a problem in wet times. Paul Morganti could remember its being swampy and impassable when he was a child in the 1910’s and 1920’s. Even in the 21st Century, the second through the Limestone Refuge area may flood in times of heavy rain.

LIMESTONE ROAD EXTENSION

Limestone Road Extension is the original route of the eastern end of Limestone Road. The straighter, newer section was cut through around 1960. The name, Limestone Road Extension, is one of the sillier ones since it is not really an extension, but the old route of Limestone Road. A better name should have been used – and still could be.

LIMESTONE TERRACE

Limestone Terrace is a short, dead-end road off the west side of Limestone Road, a little south of and opposite Rita Road. It was created around 1961 by Great Hill Lakes Inc., one of William Winthrop’s corporations that developed much of Ridgefield Lakes.

LINCOLN LANE

Lincoln Lane extends from Branchville Road to Old Washington Road and is part of Washington Park Estates, a subdivision started around 1951 by Bert

Ison. The road was named for Abraham Lincoln, although the 16th President never visited Ridgefield. However, his vice-president from 1861 to 1865, Hannibal Hamlin of Maine, spoke here in 1864. No geographical name recalls Mr. Hamlin, however. In fact, few people today would even recognize this vice-president's name – *anywhere*.

Lincoln, incidentally, is a popular fellow with road namers. A few years ago, of the 23 towns in Fairfield County, 11 had roads named after Lincoln. Exactly the same number of towns had roads named for George Washington.

LINCOLN ROAD

So popular was the name here that we almost had two Lincoln roadways, but not for the same reasons. On some maps, dated as late as 1967, Holmes Road at Westmoreland is called Lincoln Road, a name that recalled not the President, but the original subdivider of Westmoreland, the Lincoln Development Corporation of Lincoln, Mass. The name was changed because of confusion with Lincoln Lane, two miles away.

LINDEN ROAD

Linden Road, a short dead-end road off Poplar Road, was developed starting in the 1960's by Armando Salvestrini, who named it for the trees in the vicinity. It is possible that Linden Road, along with lower Poplar Road, comprise the eastern end of an old 18th and 19th Century highway that ran from Danbury Road at Fox Hill Village to Limekiln Road, and that this was called Norrins Ridge Road.

The lindens or basswoods are a small group of trees that grow up to 80 feet in height. They have been of little commercial value, although the strong roots have been used to manufacture cord. In nature, however, linden flowers are valued for the nectar collected by honeybees; the buds and fruits are eaten by many wild animals; and the twigs are food for deer and rabbits.

The lindens in this neighborhood may have been planted stock of the huge Outpost Nurseries, which operated in this neighborhood from the 1920's through the 1950's (*see* Outpost Pond).

LIPPOLT POND

At least one 1960's map labels the narrow body of water on the west side of Old Mill Road as Lippolt Pond. Although a pond probably once existed here, it is shown on a 1957 map as "proposed pond." The pond is more commonly called Old Mill Pond (*q.v.*). The little island in it has been called Bear Island, probably because of the nearby Bear (or Bare) Mountain.

The builder and owner was Otto H. Lippolt, who developed the neighborhood in the 1950's and early 1960's. Mr. Lippolt, a well-liked well-driller who died in 1965, owned much of northeastern Ridgefield, having acquired hundreds of acres through tax sales during the Depression. Much of the land was never surveyed, and it was often said that Mr. Lippolt bought several parcels more than once without knowing it. (He and his land are discussed in more detail under "Hemlock Hills.")

LISA LANE

James B. Franks (1922-1995), who named the road after his daughter, developed Lisa Lane, a dead-end road off the west side of Tackora Trail. Nearby

Christopher Road was named for his son. The roads are in the 1957 subdivision called Mamanasco Lake Park.

LITTLE POND

Little Pond, the complement to Great Pond, is on the west side of Route 7, a little south of the intersection with Route 35. The pond was first called Ao-keets or Aokeels (*q.v.*) by the native Indians, but that name never appeared in deeds in the land records and shows up only in the first survey of the town's boundaries.

Oddly enough, the pond was not mentioned at all in the Ridgefield land records until 1848. Why was it never mentioned by name in first 140 years of the town's history? One possibility is only one family — or a couple families — may have owned the land surrounding the pond during the period. Usually, a pond makes a good landmark for a property boundary; but if no property bordering it is divided and sold, then the pond may get no notice in the deed descriptions of the land records.

Another possibility, perhaps more likely, is that Little Pond was originally part of Redding. A chunk of Ridgefield north of Great Pond was for many years part of the Fitch's Farm (*q.v.*), which was considered part of Redding until 1786.

Possibly a division of land prompted the first mention of the pond in 1848 when David Taylor of Redding sold Hanford Bates three roods (three quarters of an acre) bounded on the east by the Sugar Hollow Turnpike Road and on the west "by the Little Pond."

Clark's map of Fairfield County (1856) also labels it Little Pond, indicating the name was well established by then. It may have been well established long before, but we have no record of it.

LITTLE RIDGE ROAD

Little Ridge Road, a dead-end lane off Indian Cave Road, was part of the 1964 Twin Ridge subdivision by Giles and Barry Montgomery. It became a town highway in 1968. The road's name appears to be simply descriptive of a little ridge there; the name was not taken from an old geographical term.

LOAF HILL

"Loaf Hill" is a term mentioned in Geographical Positions in the State of Connecticut Geodesy, an 1890 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey publication. According to Connecticut Place Names, the locality is one-half mile west of Fox Hill Lake. This is clearly the same hilltop locally called Asproom Loaf (*q.v.*), Asproom Loft, Aspen Loaf, and Aspine Loaf in various 18th and 19th Century land records, and what is generally called today Barlow Mountain. It is situated in Pierrepont State Park and the top, at an elevation of 950 feet above sea level, commands a fine view.

The term "loaf" was common years ago to refer to the shape of a hill. Most often in the Northeast, the term was Sugarloaf, referring to the conical shape of an old-fashioned loaf of sugar.

LOCKWOOD'S CORNERS

Ridgefield historian George L. Rockwell mentions in 1927 that there was in the 19th Century a store at "Lockwoods Corners" run by the Haviland family.

Lockwoods or Lockwood's Corners was the intersection of Danbury, Limestone, and Haviland Roads, so called at least in the mid-19th Century because Charles S. Lockwood lived at the southern corner of Danbury and Limestone Roads. Mr. Lockwood bought the 29 acres and home from Jacob Dauchy in 1844 and was living there as late as 1867. Lockwoods were an old but small family in Ridgefield, probably founded by Peter Lockwood of Norwalk, who came to Farmingville in 1744. The clan was much more numerous in Norwalk.

The corners were recognized as an important crossroads. In 1787, the Annual Town Meeting voted "there be for the future one advertisement for a Town Meeting set up at the parting of the pathes in Limestone near the dwelling house of Ebenezer Lobdell." This was the old-fashioned signpost, the equivalent of the bulletin board in today's town clerk's office or the legal notices in the newspaper. Several of them were set up at strategic places around town where a significant number of people would pass by and could see local announcements.

In 1789, an animal pound for Limestone was set up at this intersection on Ebenezer Lobdell's property, and Ebenezer was made keeper of the pound. Lobdell's property may have been what was later Lockwood's property.

The intersection was even more important after 1801 when it became the southern terminus of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike, the lower mile of which is now upper Danbury Road (except in a few places where the old road was straightened by the state highway department in the 1920s or 30s). The turnpike made traveling to Danbury much quicker and simpler. The original path of this turnpike still exists just a tad east of present-day Danbury Road, running between Haviland and Danbury Roads and called Old Danbury Road (*q.v.*)

LONG BOGS

The Long Bogs, mentioned only once in the land records through 1880, was situated in northern Ridgebury, possibly near the present-day Mill Plain section of Danbury or somewhat north of it. According to that only citation – in an 1806 deed – it was probably very near the New York State line.

Long was a popular adjective in early place-naming. Ridgefield had at least nine different pre-1850 names beginning with long while in the state, more than three dozen different variations are found. Towns like Longmeadow in Massachusetts and Long Branch in New Jersey acquired their names from what were locality names within the communities. Perhaps the best known of the Northeastern long names is Long Island, a typically simple early American descriptive name.

LONG BRIDGE

Long Bridge was probably more a road than a "bridge" in the common sense of the word. The term was applied to a section of western Farmingville Road, from the first curve just east of Danbury Road to the south end of Norrins Ridge, just west of Lee Road.

The name first appeared in a 1753 deed, mentioning 14 acres "lying westerly of ye Long Bridge." Soon after, the town took from Nehemiah Stebbins "about 52 pole (of land) at ye Long Bridge at ye Great Swamp for highway." Thereafter the name appears occasionally.

The wetland here was apparently filled by early settlers, creating an earthen “bridge” so that Farmingville Road could be run across the northern part of Great Swamp to the valuable farmland on the east side of the swamp. It was a flat, easy route, but apparently not one without its problems. The Town Meeting in 1831 was asked to appoint a committee to view the road from Long Bridge to Danbury Road “and report to this meeting on the expedience of widening the same.”

The meeting turned down the study, for reasons not explained. However, the Annual Town Meeting in 1837 voted that Nathan Smith, Ebenezer Hawley, and William Howe serve as a committee to lay out land “in some convenient place, and near to, and to repair the road across Long Bridge at the Great Swamp so called.” The 1838 Annual Town Meeting accepted the report and laid out the road “from the southwesterly corner of Edmond Beers homelot, about one half a rod of land... comprising the little rocky hill there situate and appraised the damage at \$10.” Beers also got to cut down and use all the trees on the confiscated land.

One problem experienced by the Farmingville Road users and prompting the new road may have been that the “bridge” would sink into the centuries-old muck of Great Swamp underneath the fill.

LONG MEADOW

Deeds written in 1774, 1802, and 1846 mention Long Meadow, a locality in Ridgebury, probably along Ridgebury Road near Regan or Old Stagecoach Roads. Two 1774 deeds cite the place; in one, Elnathan Sturges gives his son, Elnathan Jr., 52 acres west of “ye Long Meadow”; in the other, Elnathan Jr. buys from Ichabod Doolittle, land “by ye north end of a great ledge of rocks a little west of Long Meadow so called.

Doolittle in the 18th Century operated a well-known tavern on the west side of Ridgebury Road near today’s Hawthorne Hill Road. A few remnants of its stone foundation were once visible along the edge of the road and may still be there.

LONG POND I

Long Pond occasionally appears in early land records referring to a body of water that is now “bodies” of water and which are not even in Ridgefield.

References occur as early as 1729. In March of that year, the proprietors bought from the Indian leader Taporneck a strip of land on the western side of town, particularly around West Mountain, that extended into what is now New York State. The purchase included half of Lake Waccabuc and all of Lakes Rippowam and Oscaleta (*q.v. all three*), now situated in the town of Lewisboro, N.Y. However, back then, the three lakes were considered one long body of water, and probably were one body of water. And it was called Long Pond.

The pond was well known and apparently well liked by the Indians who, in an earlier deed, referred to themselves as Taporneck and Moses, “Indians belonging to Wepack or long pond so called...” The 1729 deed selling most or all of the land around Long Pond mentions a boundary marker at the outlet of the pond, “near ye lower fishing place.”

Seven Indians, some of whom bore rather colorful names, signed this deed. Besides Taporneck and Moses, there were Samm, Ammon, Wett Hams, Pawquenongi, and Crow. Whether they were planning to move westward, as

did other local natives, is not known. But two subsequent Indian deeds for land in Ridgebury did not mention any of the above natives.

Ridgefield's ownership of this territory didn't last long, for it was part of the Oblong (*q.v.*) that in 1731 was given to New York colony in exchange for Greenwich. Yet, the name still popped up in Ridgefield records, such as in 1733 when the proprietors deeded James Northrup 11 acres at "ye Long Pond Boggs." A small section of wetland, east of Lakes Rippowam and Oscaleta, was and still is within Connecticut.

In deeding David Scott 18 acres in the 1730's, the proprietors mention that it's "lying on ye West Mountain by the Indian path that goeth to ye Long Pond." Around 1740, Benjamin Hecock's (Hickox) heirs received from the proprietors land "on ye Great Hill, east of Ye Long Pond." And about the same time, the proprietors granted Ebenezer Smith five and one-half acres "lying near ye Long Pond, and bounded west by Government Line or their Oblong lott."

Years of filling around the shore lines and bogs, plus the natural erosion of soil from West Mountain – soil that ended up in and filled Long Pond – made the body of water shallower and created three smaller ponds, which today have been developed with small-lot houses and cottages somewhat in the manner of the Ridgefield Lakes.

Ridgefield records continued to mention Long Pond until 1761; a 1797 map of Lewisboro shows "North Long Pond" and "South Long Pond" for Rippowam and Oscaleta.

LONG POND II

As early as 1740, deeds were mentioning another Long Pond. In that year, when the estate of James Bennett, founder of Bennett's Farm, was divided among his heirs, Gersham Bennett got 20 acres "by ye Long Pond." In 1743, Alexander Ressequie sold Benjamin Wilson Jr. two parcels, partly in Danbury and partly in Ridgefield, "and situate near ye Long Pond, so called, one of ye said pieces contains 96 acres and three rods of land ... lying at ye mouth of ye river coming out of ye Long Pond."

The deeds make it clear that what they were calling Long Pond is what we today call the Bennett's Ponds (*q.v.*), north of Fox Hill and Bennett's Farm Road near Route 7, in Bennett's Pond State Park. Again, one body of water later got shallower to make two distinct ponds.

The conversion of the name from Long Pond to Bennett's Pond or Ponds began around 1753 when a deed mentions 90 acres "at ye Long Pond above Bennetts Farm." By 1779, a deed was referring to "Bennetts Long Pond." After that, the word Long disappears as a place name altogether.

LONG POND MOUNTAIN

In 1760, Stephen Olmsted sold John Olmsted his house and land "lying near ye Long Pond Mountain" and on "Colony line." Deeds in 1815, 1819, and 1827 also mention Long Pond Mountain. The term refers to the very steep hill on the north shore of Lake Rippowam, a hill that extends into Ridgefield along Rippowam Road. In New York State, the hill or mountain is in both Lewisboro and North Salem.

The hill is one of the steepest in the area, rising from 471 feet above sea level at Lake Rippowam to 900 feet high just about 1,000 feet north of the

lake's shoreline. A little bit farther north, the mountain reaches 976 feet at the southeast corner of the town of North Salem.

The locality is sometimes called East Long Pond Mountain in New York records.

LONG RIDGE

The existence of the term Long Ridge in Ridgefield records was very brief. Its one and only appearance in a deed was in March 1723 when the Proprietors deeded Matthew Saintjohn three acres on "ye Long Ridge." However, in a circumstance unusual for such a short-lived term, Long Ridge also appears on a very early map, that of the division of land in the Southwest Ridges. And Long Ridge was noted near the southwestern-most part of the Ridges.

Since most of the Southwest Ridges was in territory that was part of the Oblong, ceded to New York in 1731, the disappearance of the name Long Ridge in Ridgefield records is not surprising. Odds are the locality was along the southern end of the straight section of Elmwood Road in today's Lewisboro, N.Y.

LONG STONE

The Long Stone is an odd and interesting locality that figured into a rarely mentioned but noteworthy change in the boundaries of the town.

Back in 1786, the Connecticut General Assembly received a petition from "Abner Gilbert, Nehemiah Sherwood and Thomas Sherwood, inhabitants of the town of Reading, shewing to this Assembly that they live upon an extreme point of the town of Reading, and that it is inconvenient for them to attend public business in said Reading, and praying to be annexed to the town of Ridgefield." The assembly agreed to transfer to Ridgefield the chunk of Redding "lying westerly of a straight line, drawn from the southwesterly corner of the township of Danbury to the perambulation bounds between the towns of Redding and Ridgefield, known by the name of Long Stone, about 480 rods easterly from the westerly corner of sd. Reading township..."

The exact size or extent of this piece of land is difficult to calculate from the sketchy description of the boundaries of the annex. However, a 1792 map of Connecticut by Samuel Huntington shows a triangular sliver of Redding projecting well into Ridgefield north of Great Pond, perhaps even a mile or more into the Fox Hill area west of today's Route 7 just below the Danbury town line. This map is not noted for its accurate placement of boundaries or landmarks; actually, it was not up-to-date in showing the sliver six years after it was ceded to Ridgefield. However, it gives at least a clue as to the shape and size of the ceded territory. I suspect that the south side of the boundary line should be angled farther to the south to be more accurate.

Long Stone was about 200 feet south of Pickett's Ridge Road (also called Great Pond Road) on the town line. Whether the annex line angled its way up and around Great Pond and over to the vicinity of Pamby Motors (2011) and beyond is not clear; at least part of Great Pond belonged to Ridgefield before the annexation.

Long Stone was mentioned again in the perambulation (boundary inspection) of the Ridgefield-Redding line in 1786. From near "Umpowog" Pond, the line ran northwesterly "to the well-known Long Stone west of Banks house ... from thence we run with a chain and compass north 5 degrees west to the Free-

hold Corner (*q.v.*) being the southwest corner of Danbury..." The stone had thus become the point at which the modern town line changes direction from a northwest course to almost directly north. This change of course may be the result, in part at least, of the annexation.

Long Stone is not mentioned in the perambulation of 1808. In 1828, the perambulation description speaks only of "a long stone" in a wall. By 1888, only a "monument" in a "stone fence" is noted. The Long Stone had been long forgotten by then.

LONG SWAMP

Long Swamp is an old name for an area that has probably changed markedly over the two centuries since the place was first mentioned. The name first occurs in three 1744 deeds when the proprietors were parceling out land along upper North Street. One deed to Samuel Gates is for five acres "lying easterly of ye Long Swamp, upon ye Brushy Ridge, so called..." Another deed to Thomas Hyatt transferred 46 acres "lying across ye north end of ye Long Swamp," and a third, to Jonah Keeler, was for 35 acres "lying west of ye road yt leads up behind ye Long Swamp."

These descriptions, and later ones, indicate that Long Swamp ran along the Titicus River, east of North Salem Road and west of North Street, extending from somewhere north of Mapleshade Road to Barlow Mountain Road, although the name may have applied to swampland even farther north. While this area is still swampy, it probably contains not nearly as much wetland as it did in the early 18th Century. Over the years wetlands were drained for pasture or filled for development.

The swamp is undoubtedly a vestige of a long lake that covered the Titicus River Valley and extended into New York State. The melting of the last glacier some 25,000 years ago probably created the lake, which gradually got smaller as its sources of water diminished and as erosion and sedimentation filled in the basin bottom.

Long Swamp is also mentioned in 1807, 1847, and 1848. Most references seem to be land below Barlow Mountain Road.

LONGVIEW DRIVE

Longview Drive, which runs off Riverside Drive at Stonehenge Estates (also called Fire Hill Acres), is so called for the view of the Norwalk River Valley and, from some points, beyond. The road rises from about 465 feet above sea level at its west end to almost 580 feet at its easternmost end. Built by Jerry Tuccio, the road became a town highway in 1964.

LOOKOUT DRIVE, ROAD

Lookout Drive and Lookout Road are private roads off Lakeview Drive at the Ridgefield Lakes. They look out over Fox Hill Lake and cause some degree of confusion with each other and with the following.

LOOKOUT POINT

If two Lookouts at Ridgefield Lakes aren't bad enough, there's also Lookout Point at Pierrepont Lake (Lake Naraneke). This road, developed by Jerry Tuccio in connection with Twixt Hills, is a dead-end off Barlow Mountain

Road and serves homes on a peninsula projecting into the pond. It became a town road in 1961.

LOREN LANE

Loren Lane, a short dead-end road off Mamasasco Road, was named for Peter Paul Lorenzini (1916-2004), who developed it in the late 1950's. A native of Mahopac, N.Y., Mr. Lorenzini came to Ridgefield around 1940 and after doing defense industry work in Bridgeport during World War II, went into the home-building business. He also subdivided and built the Soundview Road neighborhood, and also built many houses on Split Level Road and at Eight Lakes (*q.v.*). A lifelong member of the Ridgefield Volunteer Fire Department, he retired in 1970 to Fort Pierce, Fla., where he died.

LOST MINE PLACE

Lost Mine Place is a dead-end road off the south side of New Road, serving the Hunting Ridge subdivision.

The land, originally part of the Lee family's farms, probably belonged to Lees back into the 1700's. For a long time, it was on the farm of Robert A. Lee, who died in 1982. Five years later, 27 acres of the farm was sold to Lost Mine Limited Partnership for \$1.6-million. The firm had obtained approval for an 11-lot subdivision in 1986.

The developer originally proposed calling the road Hunting Ridge Place, but the name was rejected as being too close to Hunter Lane, also in Farmingville. This writer was asked for his suggestion, and he and his son, Ben, came up with Lost Mine Place.

Years ago, the late Stanley Walker had related reports that an old silver mine had existed in what is now woods off the north side of New Road. While he spent many hours searching for the mine, he was never able to locate it. Mr. Walker suspected that its opening was covered up, either to hide it or to prevent people from falling into it. Robert A. Lee, who was born on the Lee farm in 1889, had also heard the reports of the mine, but did not know its location.

Silver was not unknown in this area, as might be expected from the existence of the well-known section of Norwalk, called Silvermine. (Ridgefield's Silver Spring area, however, was supposedly named not for the mineral but for the silvery clarity of the spring itself.)

Wilton also had an interesting silver mine off present-day Route 7 somewhere near Georgetown. This mine has a history of greed attached to it. According to Hamilton Hurd's *History of Fairfield County* (1881), the mine was first worked around 1765. "It appears that it was originally divided into shares and worked for a short time before the Revolutionary War, and that the manager or overseer, after having sent away all the ore that had been dug, under pretense of having it examined, suddenly left 'between two days,' leaving the shareholders minus the amount of their subscriptions, and also their share of 'the rocks.'"

"After it was known for a certainty that the superintendent did not intend to return and resume work, the stockholders began to look around to see if there was not some property left that could be made available towards paying them for money invested and labor rendered. Tradition says that all the property to be found consisted of an old Negro slave and a pair of oxen, which were sold for the benefit of creditors. It is also said that many persons in comfortable circum-

stances, who had subscribed liberally towards working the mine, were by this operation considerably reduced in circumstances.”

Sometime after the Revolution, “some Englishmen,” who went into partnership with the owner, Capt. Azar Belden, again worked the mine. “They put up their machinery, which was a common windlass worked by hand, and soon commenced business in a small way, digging to a depth of about 150 feet. They built a small shanty in the woods near where they lived, and where, during the night-time, they coined a considerable amount of bullion. They kept their silver hid from the vigilance of officers and sightseers. After having worked the mine some time, they suddenly absconded, taking their treasure and about five barrels of ore with them.”

Perhaps they figured it was their compensation for losing the Revolution.

LOTS

No type of place name was more common in 18th and 19th Century Ridgefield than those applied to the privately owned lots that made up most of the farms in town. Fields, pastures, meadows, and woods were often given names. Frequently, the names reflected land features (hills, ditches, brooks, ridges, crops); sometimes they recalled former owners or family members.

There were literally thousands of lot names, many of them common and used on many farms. A large number of lot names are recorded in deeds that are in town records; many others never made it on the record. Often, a lot would be referred to informally as something like “the back 40” or “the front 20,” the numbers referring to the acreage. Names like these rarely appear in records.

One of the most remarkable collections of lot names is found in a series of deeds filed in 1861 when the heirs of Ebenezer Hoyt split up the late Mr. Hoyt’s farm on Florida and Florida Hill Roads. In doing the heirs recorded the names of more than 30 lots, including: Lower Zeb Lot, Upper Zeb Lot, Seth Meadow, Seth Swamp, Wilkey Lot, Ben Meadow, Edmond Meadow, Upper Swamp, Spring Lot, Tom Lots, Second Jones Meadow, Square Meadow, Old Orchard, Southeast Lot, Northeast Lot, Barn Meadow, Rear Tree Meadow, Sawed Bars Lot, Ben Woods, South Lot, Upper Sidehill Lot, Ridge Meadow, South Corn Lot, Butternut Tree Lot, Sheep Lot, Tim Orchard, Corner Lot, Barn Lot Orchard, Ben Jones Woods, Big Rock Lot, Rock Lot, Lower Lot, and Anna Orchard. The Hoyts were obviously fond of naming lots, especially after people — most probably children, relatives, or former owners.

In a study of a community’s place name, it is almost impossible to cover in detail all of the lot names on record, and especially to identify their exact locations today. I have, in a few cases, gone into detail on some lot names, if they served to make an interesting point or later became more substantial place names. However, because lot names should not go unnoticed, the following list of about 130 names and the years in which they were recorded has been compiled to give an idea of the types of names that were used here.

Most of the cited names were recorded between 1790 and 1860, a period that saw the greatest use of lot names in Ridgefield. However, many were in use both before and after this period. Anyone who grew up in farming country or has grandparents who are farmers will no doubt see familiar names in this list — or at least, quickly sense how the names came to be.

Adder Meadow, 1830
Aunt Hanna Lot, 1848

Back Lee Lot, 1857
Barn Lot, 1816

Barn Pasture, 1799
 Beaver Lot, 1817
 Belden Stubble Lot, 1830
 Ben Burt Lot, 1844
 Bogg Lot, 1793
 Bradley Lot, 1827
 Bridge Lot, 1841
 Brush Lot, 1823
 Buckwheat Lot, 1820
 Burritt Lot, 1831
 Burying Hill Lot, 1853
 Bush Lots, 1831
 Cain Lot, 1842 (for miller Hugh Cain)
 Camp Lot, 1848 (for the Rev. Samuel Camp of Ridgebury)
 Cold Spring Meadow, 1861
 Common Lot, 1817
 Corn Lot, 1833
 Corner Meadow, 1822
 Country Bog Meadow, 1795
 Cow Lot, 1802
 Cow Pasture, 1842
 Country Bog Meadow, 1795
 Dauchy Lot, 1855
 Davis Lot, 1803
 Dayton Orchard, 1854
 Ditch Meadow, 1835
 Doctor Lot, 1832 (once owned by Dr. Nehemiah Perry Sr.)
 East Lot, 1834
 East Pasture, 1786
 Eight Acre Lot, 1813
 Elm Tree Lot, 1847
 Farquar Lot, 1814
 Flat Meadow, 1859
 Foster Lot, 1847
 Fox Lot, 1849
 Four Acre Lot, 1850
 Gate Lot, 1845
 Gilbert Lot, 1841
 Grass Lot, 1811
 Great Field, 1761
 Great Lott, 1807
 Great Sheep Pasture, 1836
 Great Stalk Lot, 1787
 Hill Lot, 1799
 Hollow Lot, 1799
 House Lot, 1860
 House Orchard, 1840
 Irish Wood Land, 1853 (probably an interesting but lost story there)
 Isaac Lot, 1809
 Island Meadow, 1824
 Israel Lot, 1830 (for former owner, Israel Mead)
 Ivy Lot, 1840
 Jim Lot, 1866
 John Northrop Flat, 1867
 Josiah Lot, 1830
 Keeler Meadow, 1818
 King Lot, 1837
 Limekiln Lot, 1799
 Little Lot, 1820
 Little Meadow, 1849
 Long Lot, 1838
 Lower Meadow, 1833
 Lower Stalk Lot, 1854
 Mead Lot, 1828
 Mead Sprout Land, 1853
 Middle Lee Lot, 1851
 Middle Lot, 1833
 Mill Lot, 1815
 Mountain Lot, 1817
 Mountain Wood Lot, 1830
 Mutton Lot, 1875
 Mygatt Lot, 1844
 Ninety Acre Lot, 1798
 North Benj. Burt Lot, 1834
 North Brook Lot, 1857
 North Mill Pond Lot, 1802
 Oliver Lot, 1847
 Old Asproom Lot, 1803
 Old Field, 1803
 Old Hill Lot, 1835
 Old Lot, 1835
 Old Orchard, 1820
 Old Plain Lot, 1813
 Old Portman Orchard, 1835
 Old Ridge Lot, 1835
 Old Side Hill Lot, 1820
 Orchard Lot, 1799
 Pasture Lot, 1714
 Paul Lot, 1838
 Pickett Lot, 1804
 Plow Lot, 1827
 Pond Lot, 1813
 Pond Meadow, 1854
 Pound Meadow, 1857
 Ram Pasture, 1799

Raney Lot, 1872
 Ridge Lot, 1839
 Rock Orchard, 1833
 Rock Spring Lot, 1805
 Rundle Meadow, 1839
 Rye Lot, 1833
 St. John Meadow, 1855
 Sand Hill Burt Lot, 1856
 School House Meadow, 1840
 Scott Meadow, 1824
 Scribner Lot, 1828
 Seven Acre Wood, 1849
 Side Hill Lot, 1802
 Side Hill Woods, 1840
 Sorrel Lot, 1793
 South Brook Lot, 1859
 South Home Lot, 1866
 Southwest Wood Lot, 1861
 Spring Lot, 1793
 Stalk Lot, 1828
 Still Lot, 1793
 Stone Lot, 1822
 Stony Wood, 1820
 Strawberry Lot, 1851

Street Lot, 1849 (for a family named Street)
 Sturdevant Lot, 1846
 Swamp Lot, 1861
 Swamp Meadow, 1807
 Swamp Wood Lot, 1855
 Tall Walnut Lot, 1830
 Tamarack Lot, 1826
 Town House Lot, 1860 (the town hall land)
 Town Lot, 1856
 Upper Lot, 1828
 Upper Meadow, 1840
 Waterous Lot, 1852 (a family of that name)
 West Buck Wheat Lot, 1838
 West Hawley Lot, 1855
 West Lot, 1805
 West Meadow, 1801
 Wet Well Lot, 1833
 Whitewood Grove, 1819
 Zeb Lot, 1824
 Zoph Lot, 1822

LOUNSBURY LANE

Lounsbury Lane is an old road that connected Lounsbury Road to Florida Hill Road. The highway appears on Clark's map of Fairfield County in 1856. For most of this century it has been an unusable pathway between fields at its northern end and through woods at its southern end, which is a little west of the Florida Road intersection. However, in the late 1980's, John Sturges received approval to develop some lots along the southern end, whose route was modified somewhat to avoid wetlands. The name, derived from the same source as Lounsbury Road (*below*), was in use by at least 1946 when it appears on the town's first official zoning map. However, the name is probably much older, dating from around the turn of the century.

LOUNSBURY RIDGE

Lounsbury Ridge is the name of a 1983 subdivision by Carl Lecher of 21 acres off the north side of Lounsbury Road and served by Banks Hill Place (*q.v.*). Mr. Lecher's other developments include Hull Place, Evergreen Place, Pheasant Lane, Hermit Lane, and Quail Ridge condominiums.

LOUNSBURY ROAD

Lounsbury Road recalls one of the most notable families in Ridgefield, one that produced two governors of the state.

The road, extending from Ivy Hill and Blackman Roads on the west to Farmingville and Cain's Hill Roads on the east, probably existed from the 18th Century, serving as an extension of Ivy Hill Road on the route to Cain's Hill Road, a main route to eastern Redding. By the turn of the 20th Century, it was being called Lounsbury Road.

The story of the Lounsburies begins in New York State in and around Pound Ridge. There the Lounsbury and Scofield families had settled at the end of the 17th Century, probably via Stamford (which once owned Pound Ridge). In 1823, members of those two prominent families joined when Nathan Lounsbury (born in 1807 in Stamford) and Delia Ann Scofield (born in 1809 in Patterson, N.Y.) were married in Pound Ridge. The couple lived in Pound Ridge for a while, but for some reason, decided to move to Connecticut.

In 1839, they paid \$1,300 for the Wakeman Godfrey farm in Farmingville, consisting of 46 acres and buildings on the west side of what is now Lounsbury Road. Nathan, who died in 1894, was active in community politics and held several town offices. Besides being the only Connecticut woman to be the mother of two governors, Delia is believed to have been the first woman from Ridgefield to have formally served the country during a war; she was a nurse in an Army hospital in Washington, D.C., during the Civil War. She died a year after her husband. Nathan and Delia had six children, the oldest of which were George Edward Lounsbury and Phineas Chapman Lounsbury.

George, born in 1838 in Pound Ridge, graduated from Yale in 1863 with highest honors, and attended divinity school. He served as a deacon in Episcopal churches in Thompsonville and Suffield for several years, but abandoned the ministry because of throat difficulties. He then founded Lounsbury, Mathewson and Company, shoe manufacturers, in South Norwalk, heading it until he died. He was active in the Republican Party and in 1894 was elected to the state senate from this district by a large majority, and won re-election later by an even bigger margin. In 1898, he was nominated for governor on the first ballot, and then joined the GOP in sweeping the state.

Of his two-year term as governor, *The Hartford Courant* said: "In looks, manner and oratory, there was a decided suggestion of the South in George E. Lounsbury... At the state house, he was a useful and ornamental senator, and if no hard problems came his way as governor, he at least performed the routine and ceremonial duties with ease and a becoming dignity."

After only one term, he retired from politics and became the first president of the First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield (now part of Wells Fargo). He lived in the family homestead, called The Hickories, until his death in 1904.

Though younger, Phineas preceded his brother as the state's chief executive. Born in 1841 in Ridgefield, he left town at the age of 16 to, as he put it, seek his fortune, which he set at \$10,000, so he could return to marry Jenny Wright. At the time of his death in 1925, he was worth many times his youthful goal: his estate was valued at close to \$1 million. For a while he worked in his brother's shoe factory and like his brother, his interests also turned to politics. In 1874, he was elected to the State Legislature where he was particularly interested in the temperance movement. (When he owned The Ridgefield Press some years later, he forbade the acceptance of any liquor advertising and immediately sold the paper when his instructions were disobeyed.)

After a term in the Legislature, he went to New York City to head the Merchants Exchange National Bank and participated in the presidential campaign of James G. Blaine in 1884 (Blaine's son later lived on High Ridge Road). Three years later, he was elected governor of Connecticut, serving one term. In 1896, he retired from active politics and built his Main Street home, Grovelawn, now the Community Center, which took 14 servants inside and 12 out-

side to keep running to his satisfaction. His previous house on the same site was moved to Governor Street (named for him) and now serves as the Donnelly and McNamara office building, just west of the Boys' Club.

The Hickories, still the name of the Lounsbury farm, is in 2014 owned by the Brewster family, which operates it as an organic farm and has many public programs there. In 1996, the town paid \$2 million for development rights to 101 acres of the Brewster farm, the first such arrangement in the town's history.

LOVERS LANE

Every town seems to have a lovers lane, whether or not it's on the map – and it's usually not. The name of Ridgefield's Lovers Lane probably never appeared on a map – none we've seen anyway. However, everyone in the early part of the century knew where it was: today's Rockwell Road, or at least its western leg. That was where village lovers could find a bit of privacy, usually under cover of darkness, for whatever their warm hearts moved them to do. Undoubtedly, modern lovers also have their lanes, but none, as far as we can tell, has become as well recognized and titled as was the original.

In Connecticut, incidentally, there is a Lovers' Island, and Lovers' Leap, and a Lovers' Rock.

LOWER MILL POND

Lower Mill Pond is another name for Lower Pond (*below*), the old complement to Upper Pond. It's now a very small pond along the Titicus River on the south side of Saw Mill Hill Road, just below Roberts Pond (which is much more modern than Upper or Lower Ponds). According to Beers map of 1867, Lower Pond was several times larger in the 19th Century than it is today.

The term was first mentioned in an 1846 deed, describing land on the "Lower Mill Pond of Jabez M. Gilbert." Jabez Mix Gilbert, who had a couple of mills downstream, may have built Lower Pond to power the mills.

LOWER POND

When Lewis Stuart sold James Gilbert a sawmill on the Titicus River in 1852, Gilbert got use of both "Upper and Lower Ponds." The deed described Lower Pond as also being called "Saw Mill Pond." Thus, Lower Mill Pond, as above, later split into two names: simply Lower Pond or Saw Mill Pond, each name retaining something of the original. It was typical for names to get simpler as they got older; Mamanasco Mill Pond became Mamanasco Pond or Lake, or even simpler, Burt's Pond; and the Great East Meadow Pond became Great Pond.

The fact that two ponds – and later a third, New Pond – served the Titicus region indicates a great need for water there in the 19th Century. In the mid-1800's there were at least a grist mill, a saw mill (maybe two), a cider mill, a tannery, a sash and blind factory, and a shingle factory operating along the south side of Saw Mill Hill Road, west of North Salem Road. All of these operations required waterpower, and ponds represented a way of storing water – like a battery does electricity – to run the machinery evenly, particularly when the river wasn't being supplied by much rainwater runoff.

M

MADELINE DRIVE

Madeline Drive, off Bennett's Farm Road, is one of the more modern roads to be developed at the Ridgefield Lakes. The road was one of a couple created in 1958 when Ridgefield Lakes Inc., headed by William L. Winthrop, subdivided 20 acres just north of Fox Hill Lake. Madeline was the wife of John Tuite, a surveyor with Henrici Inc., which worked on the subdivision.

MAIN STREET

No road in Ridgefield is better known than Main Street. And that is as it should be, for it is the "main street" from which all important roads in the 18th and 19th Centuries emanated and which most modern state highways in town still join today.

Probably the oldest road in town built by settlers, Main Street was created around 1709, shortly after the lots on each side of it were laid out by the Proprietors and distributed to the first settlers in a lottery. The road stretched along the middle of three north-south ridges in what was then the geographical center of the land purchased from the American Indians.

The road was not formally laid out until Dec. 26, 1721, when the town fathers defined it as "eight rodde weadth" (132 feet wide) from just south of Casagmo to around the Village Green at the head of Branchville Road. The road, however, extended south to the intersection of Wilton Roads East and West from the earliest times.

The Town Street

Through the years the road has had several names. The earliest was "the Town Street," employed by at least 1712 and lasting well into the 19th Century. Often in the 19th Century, it was called Ridgefield Street (a term Teller uses in his 1878 history of the town). Around the turn of the century, it was commonly called the Village Street. It has also been called Kings Highway and Post Road (*q.v.*).

Main Street as a term began to be used shortly after the turn of the 19th Century. It was certainly in use by 1818 when a couple of deeds refer to "Main Street" or, more commonly then, "the Main Street."

S. G. Goodrich in 1855 calls it "the Main Street," but by then, many references had dropped the "the," as the word "main" rather than the meaning behind "main" dominated the name. Main Street had grown to become a name, rather than a description.

Over the centuries, little has changed in the path of Main Street. It used to split in two around the Village Green, but that arrangement was abandoned after 1888 when the Congregational Church was removed, and before 1900. The north end of the road used to bypass Foote's Hill and turn eastward into today's Casagmo, then bear north and come out somewhere near Joe's Corner.

The Main Street, which wasn't paved until 1926, served all the important buildings of the community. The two oldest – the Hauley House (1713) and the Indian Trading Post (ca. 1710) – still stand along the road. Until 1965, all but

two of the town's churches were on Main Street (the exceptions were St. Mary's Church, which has always been on Catoonah Street, a short distance west of Main Street, and Ridgebury Congregational Church, which is on the "main street" of the old village of Ridgebury). Most of the community's stores were along Main Street, except for a few neighborhood enterprises at such places as Limestone, Ridgebury, Scott's Ridge, and Titicus. Factories, so dreaded today, and even a mill or two, were part of the face of Main Street in the 19th Century, particularly the first half.

Commercial Center

The earliest commercial center on the street and in Ridgefield was probably situated around the intersection of West Lane. Here, there were stores, small factories, shops, and, of course, the Keeler Tavern, a community center of sorts that included for many years the post office and main stagecoach stop. Gradually, for reasons unknown – except perhaps to be closer to the population center of the town – the commercial district moved north to its present location, leaving the southern two-thirds of the road to residences and churches.

Today the southern portion is often cited by newcomers and visitors as one of the features of the town they like most. It is so valued by townspeople that it was placed in a historic district in 1965 and in the late 1970's, on the National Register of Historic Places. Its sidewalks are popular with walkers and runners, serving as a long, narrow town park.

The southerly section of Main Street also moved the admiration of Mr. Goodrich, the native son and author of the many 19th Century "Peter Parley" books. In 1855, on his return to town after a long absence, he wrote the following in a letter to his brother, Charles: "At last we came into the main street. This is the same – yet not the same. All the distances seemed less than as I had marked them in my memory (as a child growing up on High Ridge a half century earlier). From the meeting-house to 'Squire Keeler's' – which I thought to be a quarter of a mile – it is but thirty rods. At the same time the undulations seemed more frequent and abrupt. The old houses are mostly gone, and more sumptuous ones are in their place. A certain neatness and elegance have succeeded to the plain and primitive characteristics of other days.

Majestic Trees

"The street, on the whole," he continued, "is one of the most beautiful I know of. It is more than a mile in length and a hundred and twenty feet in width, ornamented with two continuous lines of trees – elms, sycamores, and sugar-maples – save only here and there a brief interval. Some of these, in front of the more imposing houses, are truly majestic.

"The entire street is carpeted with a green sod, soft as velvet to the feet. The high-road runs in the middle, with a footwalk on either side. These passages are not paved, but are covered with gravel, and so neatly cut that they appear like pleasure-grounds. All is so bright and so tasteful that you might expect to see some imperative sign-board, warning you, on peril of the law, not to tread upon the grass. Yet, as I learned, all this embellishment flows spontaneously from the choice of the people, and not from police regulations.

"The general aspect of the street, however, let me observe, is not sumptuous, like Hartford and New Haven, or even Fairfield. There is still a certain quaintness and primness about the place. Here and there you see old respectable houses, showing the dim vestiges of ancient paint, while the contiguous gardens, groaning with rich fruits and vegetables, and the stately rows of

elms in front, declare it to be taste, and not necessity, that thus cherishes the reverend hue of unsophisticated clapboards, and the venerable rust with which times baptizes unprotected shingles.

Studied Rusticity

“There is a stillness about the town which lends favor to this characteristic of studied rusticity. There is no fast driving, no shouting, no railroad whistle – for you must remember that the station of the Danbury and Norwalk line is three miles off. Few people are to be seen in the streets, and those who do appear move with an air of leisure and tranquility. It would seem dull and almost melancholy, were it not that all around is so thrifty, so tidy, so really comfortable. Houses – white and brown – with green window-blinds, and embowered in lilacs and fruit-trees, and seen beneath the arches of wide-spreading American elms – the finest of the whole elm family – can never be otherwise than cheerful.”

Daniel W. Teller, Congregational minister and first historian of the town, wrote in 1878 that “Ridgefield Street, the only part of the town which makes any pretensions of being a village, is situated on the exact spot where, eightscore and 10 years ago, the first settlers located. Embowered in trees of a century’s growth, with walks and lawns well-kept, the first impression of every stranger is its home-like appearance.

“A quiet like that of the Sabbath rests upon it, and an atmosphere wholesome and moral everywhere pervades it. It is in every respect a fine specimen of an old New England town, where culture and refinement have long enough existed to stamp themselves upon the very faces as well as the hearts and homes of the people.”

Thirty years later Mary Everest Rockwell wrote in a magazine article on the town’s 200th anniversary that “there is no fairer scene in fair Connecticut than Ridgefield’s Main Street, a mile or so of fine houses and velvety lawns, shaded by giant elms and maples. Cool, restful shadows, songs of birds, glimpses of sunny fields attract and charm the visitor, beguiling him into a fancy that this is some lovely old-world park rather than a thoroughfare of a New England village.”

In 1927, George L. Rockwell, another historian of the town, wrote, with a tendency toward exaggeration, that “the Main Street of Ridgefield is well-known throughout the nation. Our forefathers wisely laid out our street a generous width. Nature, aided by the art of man, has made this village street famous, with the arching trees and shaded lawns, its colonial dwellings and refined homes of modern times.”

A booklet, published in 1935 by the Lions Club and The Ridgefield Press to sing the praises of Ridgefield to tourists and prospective homeowners during the Depression, outstripped even Rockwell in heaping praise. On Main Street, the anonymous author was entirely unrestrained: “Main Street, prosaically named as it is, doubtless is the most beautiful public highway to be found anywhere in the United States. Wide and straight, lined with centuries old elms, with ample sidewalks on either side, set well back and with lovely grassy plots between, Main Street is always a joy to behold.”

Main Street is part of three numbered state highways. From Danbury Road south to West Lane, it’s Route 35. From West Lane south, it’s Route 33. And between Catoonah Street and Branchville Road, it’s also Route 102.

MALLORY HILL ROAD

Mallory Hill Road, in the extreme southeast corner of town, runs in a loop from Wilridge Road to White Birches Road.

Joseph Leo Dioguardi, one of Ridgefield's earliest large-scale subdividers, began developing the neighborhood as early as 1914, creating small lots mostly of a quarter acre that people of modest means could buy for \$10 down and an equally modest payment per month. He built some of the houses himself. A native of Cowara, Italy, Mr. Dioguardi was born around 1890, son of Angelo and Annanthonny Benignio Dioguardi, and started out here as a farmer. He died in 1973.

Built in the late 1940's, Mallory Hill Road was so called at least from 1949. The road was named for the Mallory family, which had lived thereabouts since 1800 when Nathan Mallory was reported in the Ridgefield land records as having property on the Ridgefield-Wilton.

MALLORY POND

At least one map (Hearne Brothers, ca. 1965) labels Shadow Lake as "Mallory Pond." The small body of water, now owned by the town, is south of the eastern end of Shadow Lake Road.

For many years in the first half of the century, the pond was owned by Harry B. Mallory, who stocked it with game fish. Mallory's manor house, on the north side of Shadow Lake Road, was acquired by Boehringer Ingelheim Ltd., which used it for a while to accommodate visiting executives but tore it down in one of the company's expansions on the site.

Mr. Mallory, who died in 1964, was a member of the family that operated the Mallory Hat Company in Danbury and a founder of the Danbury Savings and Loan Association. He was very much afraid of fire, and built his house to be virtually fireproof. Besides having stone walls and a slate roof, the building was equipped with sliding steel doors that automatically closed when unusually high heat was detected, thus confining a fire to one area.

The pond was created sometime after 1909. Some reports indicate Mr. Mallory built it. A sportsman, he used its waters for fishing and to encourage wildlife to live on his sizable estate.

MAMANASCO

Mamanasco is a uniquely Ridgefield name that applies to a lake, a hill, a ridge, a mountain, and a road, and which for more than three centuries has twisted the tongues of Ridgefielders who try to pronounce it. Even today, there are natives of the town who say, "Manamasco."

There is disagreement over what this American Indian word, sometimes modified in its form, means. Tradition and historians have held that it means "grassy pond," certainly a possibility if one considers that Mamanasco Lake was probably a dying pond when the settlers arrived (see Mamanasco Lake). However, the source of this meaning may have been an erroneous interpretation of the phrasing of the deed, in which the settlers bought their first piece of land from the Indians. In defining the bounds of the purchase, the deed says the line "extends to a place called Mamanasquag, where is a oak tree marked on ye north side of the outlet of water that comes out from a sort of grassy pond, which is known and called by said name..."

Note that the deed does not state flatly that Mamanasquag is the lake, but says only that it is a “place.” Quite possibly, it was the name for the whole area. “Quag” or “quog” or “ock” sounds at the end of our Indians’ words were locative, and essentially meant “place.”

Mamanasco is a name that John C. Huden, an expert on the languages of New England Indians, translates as “united outlets,” or “two sharing the same outlet.” In other words, there may have been two ponds (one grassy) where there is one today. Remember that the Bennett’s Ponds north of Bennett’s Farm Road were once one body of water, and that lakes Rippowam, Oreneca, and Oscaleta in Lewisboro were once one “Long Pond.” Often, old glacially formed lakes that are dying break up into more than one body of water as they become shallower. At Mamanasco, this downsizing may have been happening when the settlers came along and dammed up the outlet, making two ponds one again.

Huden, incidentally, didn’t have the advantage of seeing the full, early version of the word. But the addition of the concept of “place” (from -quag or -quog) does not really seriously alter the meaning.

Mamanasco has at least 12 versions of spellings in the Ridgefield land records. Among the variations are: Mamanasquag (1709), Mamanasquogg (1716), Mamanusco (1741), Mamanausco (1745), Mamanusqua (1745), Mamansquog (pre-1750), Mammenusquah (pre-1750), Mamenasco (1746), Mamenasqua (1750), Mammenasco (1790), and Mammenusquag (1797). Tough to say — and to spell!

MAMANASCO HILL

Mamanasco Hill is a very old name for the ridge to the northeast of Mamanasco Lake, an area that includes North Salem Road, upper Pond Road, Circle Drive, Hobby Drive, and Colonial Lane. The name appears as early as 1717 when the Proprietors deeded the town’s first official miller, Daniel Sherwood, an acre of meadow “lying on ye west side of Titicus River, east of Mamanasco Hill.” The locality is further pinpointed in a 1722 deed in which Jonathan Abbott sold Alexander Resseguie a meadow “lying near ye north end of Mamanasco Hill where ye Mill Brook runs into Titicus River.” (The Mill Brook is the outlet to Mamanasco Lake and meets the Titicus between Sherwood and Ridgebury Roads, a little west of Ledges Road.)

As a term, Mamanasco Hill was short-lived, disappearing from the land records by the 1720’s. Later, the name Mamanasco Ridge appeared briefly, but both terms were eventually replaced with Scott’s Ridge (q.v.) in the 1830’s.

MAMANASCO LAKE, POND

Mamanasco Lake, the town’s largest body of water, has long been an important Ridgefield resource, created by nature, enlarged by the pioneers, and now fighting off slowly succumbing to both natural and man-induced changes. According to the Mamanasco Beach Club, the lake is 4,750 feet long, 1,500 feet wide, and is about 96 acres. The deepest part of the lake, in its central basin, is 10 feet, and it has an average depth of five to six feet.

The lake was probably more vital to residents before the 20th Century than it is today when it is largely decorative and recreational. To the local American Indians, who camped along the shore at its southern end, the lake provided food, shelter, and clothing in the fish it contained, the game it drew to its edges, and the waterfowl that landed on its surface. Many arrowheads and spearheads

found along the shoreline have attested to the natives' interest in hunting in this area.

Mamasasco Lake was undoubtedly a good deal different in appearance around 1708 when the settlers first set eyes on it. If we are to accept the traditional meaning of "mamasasco," it was in part at least a "grassy pond." If we favor John Huden's translation, "two sharing the same outlet," we have an image of two separate ponds flowing into one stream and perhaps surrounded by swamp.

Either description is quite possible. For the Titicus River Valley was once the bottom of a long glacial lake that slowly dwindled in size as the melting ice, its chief source of water, disappeared. Mamasasco Lake could be a small vestige of that large lake and was probably getting smaller all the time. Hence, it was "grassy" or shallow, or was so shallow that it had separated into two smaller ponds.

Rockwell says that Mamasasco was created by beavers damming up the outlet. That, too, is a possible origin, although he must have relied on the tradition of many generations to come up with that story; there is nothing in the town records to suggest that Mamasasco was a beaver pond – and beavers were mentioned in connection with other bodies of water.

The settlers quickly saw in the Mamasasco basin an excellent place for a larger lake to store plenty of water for a grist mill, a necessary industry to supply the settlers with flour. So on Nov. 20, 1716, the Proprietors voted "yt (that) ye pond known and commonly called by ye name of Mamasquogg Pond, with ye outlet thereof, shall be sequestered for ye use of such miller or millers successively as shall be agreed by ye said town, and Proprietors, so long as they shall make, maintain and keep in good rigg, a good sufficient grist mill there for ye use and benefit of ye town and Proprietors of Ridgefield..."

And on Jan. 26, 1717, the proprietors turned over the milling rights to Daniel Sherwood, who presumably built the first grist mill at the outlet shortly thereafter. Whether the town was dissatisfied with Sherwood, or he with the town, is unknown, but the first miller did not last long. By 1721, Samuel Saintjohn operated the place, then Nathan Whitney, then Joseph Keeler, Seaborn Burt, and a whole raft of people until the late 19th Century.

It is interesting to note that in 1779, the Proprietors, for a reason they did not clearly explain in the record, took the title to the mill away from the heirs of Seaborn Burt and sold it for 3,130 pounds to Benjamin Chapman of Salem (probably today's North Salem). The Mamasasco Burts were noted Tories, and some headed off to British-held territory, such as Canada, during the Revolution. Some of these "deserting" loyalists had their land confiscated and that's probably what happened here (see Burt's Pond).

In giving Chapman the title, the Proprietors used the original contract wording to demand that he keep the place in "good rig and order," etc. They also set the exact same miller's tolls that had been in effect in 1717: no more than two quarts out of each bushel of wheat or rye, three quarts out of each bushel of corn, and one quart out of each bushel of malt. Inflation seemed unheard of then.

In 1797, the Proprietors, a dying breed who held very little land by then, sold their last interest in the mill and pond for \$50. By then whoever owned the mill owned the entire lake.

During the 18th and 19th Centuries, the pond was very often called Mamanasco Mill Pond, a term that indicates how the townspeople thought of it. It had several other names, too: Reed's Mill Pond and Burt's Mill Pond, both for men who operated the mill, and Birch Pond, from a mispronunciation of Burt's Pond. Note that it was always called a "pond"; not until the 20th Century, when people evidently wanted to make more of it than the word "pond" suggested, was it called Mamanasco Lake (or Lake Mamanasco). Among old-timers, the term Burt's Pond or the bastardized Birch survived until very late in the 20th Century.

The Mamanasco Mill, as it was called, remained operating in various forms almost until the 20th Century. The remains that could still be seen in modern times near the old outlet at the end of Pond Road had no connection with Sherwood's original mill, which was probably torn down. One mill on the site burned down, and the one whose remains still existed by the late 20th Century was probably a mid-19th Century paper mill. Sometime, probably in the 20th Century, the outlet of the pond was moved from the site at the end of Pond Road to a spot a little northeasterly toward Craigmoor Road.

Like the Indians, early Ridgefielders apparently made considerable use of the lake for fishing. In fact, it seems they made too much use of it. Evidently in an effort to conserve the fish population, the Annual Town Meeting in 1844 voted "that no person shall be permitted to take fish from Mamanasco Pond for the period from one year from this date under penalty of four dollars for each offense, one half payable into the town treasury and the other half to the person who shall prosecute the same to effect."

Today, Mamanasco Lake is pretty to look at and popular for boating, fishing, swimming, and ice skating. One of two state-owned boat launches in town is here. But because of a wise ordinance that forbids the use of gasoline motorboats, powerboat owners avoid the place, leaving it safe for those who favor wind, oar or paddle power.

The Eight Lakes Community Association and other neighborhood groups have private beaches along Mamanasco Lake, but the town, despite owning the beautiful Richardson Park along piece of shoreline, has never seriously considered creating a public beach. It is said that the water is too shallow and weedy in the park's most likely spots for a beach, although it is much deeper near the tall rocks (from which some of the more daring of our residents, past and present, still jump).

Mamanasco also has its problems. With so much development along and above its western shore, pollutants from septic systems and lawn treatments drain into the lake. These substances are chiefly nutrients that encourage the growth of plant life.

Aside from being unattractive to view and to swim through, a superabundance of plant life can lead to the slow death of a lake. As the plants die each year, they sink, decay, gradually build up the bottom, and at the same time add to the nutrient content of the water, accelerating the growth of more plants and further raising the bottom. Over the years residents of the lake neighborhood through the Mamanasco Lake Improvement Fund have been fighting the plants with education programs, as well as chemicals. At one point they also bought a weed-harvester, a vessel that pulled up the weeds so they can be dumped on shore. Their efforts may succeed in putting off the lake's death – just as the

pioneers slowed the dying process by damming up the outlet and making the lake deeper. But it's a continuing battle.

Even the dam has been a source of contention for some. Attorney Herbert V. Camp, a former state representative from Ridgefield and longtime owner of the dam, maintained that the spillway was at the proper level. At least one homeowner across the lake disagreed, and unsuccessfully argued for years, sometimes in court, that the lake was too high and that it flooded his septic system.

An odd phenomenon that used to occur at Mamanasco was the rising and sinking of small grass islands. One of these remains toward the south end of the lake, but it no longer sinks. The islands would surface in the spring, float around in the summer, and sink in the fall, apparently supported by gas build-ups from decaying matter underneath them. The existing grassy island is a popular nesting spot for many birds of different species. Since there is no high and dry land that man or sizable beast could set foot on, they feel relatively secure. Another nearby island, consisting largely of rock, is a popular spot for visiting boaters.

In the 20th Century, the Peatt family operated a small resort on the northwestern shore of Mamanasco. The resort consisted of cabins, a beach, and a main lodge, where food was served and supplies could be purchased or boats rented. The restaurant and beach remained in operation until the early 1980's, and the cabins are now long-term rentals or have been sold.

In the 1940s and 50s, the Hilsenrad family operated Mamanasco Lake Lodge, a small resort at the southern end of the lake. The main building, a mansion built early in the 20th century and once owned by a mobster, is now a religious center for the Society of St. Pius X Catholic order, which operates a church, a school and a retreat center on the property.

MAMANASCO LAKE PARK

Mamanasco Lake Park is the name of the 1957 subdivision on the southern end of the lake that includes Lisa Lane and Christopher Road. It was developed by James B. Franks (1922-1995).

MAMANASCO MOUNTAIN

In 1809, the Proprietors surveyed and laid out to David Scott nine acres "lying on Mammenasco Mountain, northerly from sd. Scott's grist mill." Scott's mill at this time was either the Mamanasco Mill or one eastward of it – he had interests in two mills. The "mountain" was probably the hill, about 650 feet above sea level, at Richardson Park, west of Ridgefield High School and at the northwestern end of the lake. The term appears only this time in the land records.

MAMANASCO RIDGE

When Jonah Foster sold Thomas Hyatt 36 poles of land in 1797, he described it as "east from Mamanasco Ridge." This is probably the same locality as Mamanasco Hill, later Scott's Ridge (q.v. both), the ridge crossed by North Salem Road in the lower Mamanasco Lake area.

MAMANASCO ROAD

Mamasasco Road existed before 1856 when it appears on the first detailed map of the town. Until early in the 20th Century, it was little more than a dirt path around the lake, providing access to its shores for fishing.

Development came to the road in the 1920s or 30s when William Peatt Sr. created his resort, consisting mostly of summer camps. The Peatt beach and recreation area were functioning until the early 1980's. At around the same time Peatt arrived, the Helmuth Cottages were built there, also to serve as summer camps.

Later, in the early 1950's, more land along the road was developed in connection with the huge Eight Lakes subdivision. Like the Ridgefield Lakes, this area was zoned "R-4" back in 1946, when zoning was adopted, allowing summer cottages to be built on 2,500 square foot lots. That's 25 by 100 feet, or about one-20th of an acre. According to the old zoning regulations, only summer camps could be built on lots that small; year-round houses erected in R-4 zones had to comply with the R-3 zone lot size – at least 7,500 square feet. However, many of the cottages were converted to year-round dwellings over the years, even though the lots were too small to properly support year-round septic systems, one reason why Mamasasco Lake has suffered from too many nutrients that encourage growth of vegetation that chokes the lake.

Farrar Lane, which runs between North Salem Road and Tackora Trail, was once considered the southern end of Mamasasco Road.

MAMANASSEE, LAKE

Lake Mamasassee is a peculiar variation of Mamasasco that appears on some official State of Connecticut highway maps, including those aimed at tourists. The spelling comes from a cartographer's misreading or misunderstanding of the actual name, and perhaps confusion with the Dutch "zee," for sea. Some commercial mapmakers, such as Champion, have also copied the mistake.

MANOR ROAD

Manor Road, which runs from West Lane to Lewis Drive, is the main road through the Ridgefield Manor Estates (*q.v.*).

This was also the main driveway leading to Upagenstit, the mansion or "manor house" of F. E. Lewis, who had the drive built so well that it included yellow brick gutters and "street lights."

Created early in the 20th century and developed for housing in the late 1950's, Manor Road became a town highway in 1969.

MAPLE AVENUE

According to Karl S. Nash (1908-1992), who grew up in Ridgefield in the early part of the 20th Century, the northern end of High Ridge Avenue — from Peaceable Street/King Lane to at least Barry Avenue — was called Maple Avenue in the early 1900's.

The selectmen changed the name to do away with confusion over the use of two names for what amounts to the same road.

The road, like other places that follow here, was named for the most common of our native trees.

MAPLE GROVE

Maple Grove, a picnicking spot in the early part of the 20th Century, was situated on the original Norran's Ridge Road, a now-abandoned highway which ran from behind the Fox Hill Village condominiums eastward to Limekiln Road.

Mrs. Laura Whitehead of Nod Road, a resident for a half century, fondly recalled in the late 1970's Sunday picnics there amid the maples. The property was part of the Outpost Nurseries holdings.

MAPLESHADE ROAD

Mapleshade Road, whose bordering lands are home more to the dead than the living, runs from North Street to North Salem Road, along the north side of the Ridgefield Cemetery.

It is an old road, predating 1856, and was created either to provide convenient access to the plots at the rear – and oldest – part of the cemetery, or to provide a more convenient connection between lower North Salem Road and North Street, both ancient highways.

The name of the road probably came from the name of a section of the graveyard. Mapleshade Cemetery is the portion that is bordered by the intersection of North Street and Mapleshade Road, and was so called by at least 1889. It is a common cemetery name in the United States.

MAPLEWOOD ROAD

Maplewood Road today is but a shadow of its former self.

Until Aug. 9, 1973, Maplewood was the name applied to what is now eastern Bennett's Farm Road from Route 7 to near Great Hill Road. On that date, the selectmen, acting on a citizens' petition, changed the name from Maplewood to Bennett's Farm. The petitioners maintained that it was historically more accurate to apply the name, Bennett's Farm Road, which already existed for another highway, to this road as well. That, however, is not the case.

The original 18th Century Bennett's Farm Road in this area was what we now call Great Hill Road – it was the road from town to the Bennett's Farm section (generally, the Ridgefield Lakes today). In earlier Ridgefield, Maplewood Road was never considered the road to Bennett's Farm, or Bennett's Farm Road; in the Starrs Plain section of Danbury, however, it might have been considered that.

Actually, the east end of this road is fairly new, having been formally laid out in 1854, more than a century after people were calling the area Bennett's Farm. In that year, Hanford Selleck deeded to the town land for a road "commencing at the west end of the barn that formerly belonged to Eli Griffin, northeasterly course to the Danbury line 60 rods long, two wide." This section runs from the vicinity of the parking area for Bennett's Pond State Park down the hill to Route 7 (then called the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike). It replaced Jagger Lane, a steep and difficult 18th Century road that ran southeasterly from near the Bennett's Pond State Park entrance to Route 7.

Danbury, which owns a short section of what we call Bennett's Farm Road – from Route 7 westerly about 500 feet – continued to call it Maplewood Road for many years, despite Ridgefield's having changed the name. However, the Danbury end is now called Bennett's Farm Road.

Today, Maplewood Road is a name applied only to the short path that runs southwesterly from Bennett's Farm Road to Great Hill Road. This was the old western end of what had been called Maplewood Road.

While it may not have been historically accurate, changing the name was probably for the better: It avoided confusion with Mapleshade Road, which frequently happened among emergency responders years ago.

Where Maplewood came from is unclear. Rockwell suggests that it originated from the name of Sturges Selleck's 19th Century farm, most of which was later absorbed into Col. Louis D. Conley's Outpost Farm and later still, the Fox Hill Inn property.

However, the name may have had a more modern origin. The late Harold Iles of Redding, who lived at Outpost Farm from 1923 to 1928, recalled that the old Maplewood Inn stood on Route 7 at the foot of Maplewood Road – on the present site of a group of shops and a restaurant. The large main inn building burned some years ago, but some small outbuildings may still remain on the site.

The inn may have taken its name from Selleck's farm; the Selleck family owned the inn property in the 19th Century.

Back in the 1920's Mr. Iles said, Holstein cows were a new breed hereabouts and Ira Vail, who had a large cattle breeding farm at Peach Lake, North Salem, used to drive his Holsteins across Ridgebury to the Maplewood Inn, where they would be sold or distributed to farms in this area.

Today's short stretch of Maplewood Road was one of the last dirt roads in town. It wasn't paved until the 1980s.

MARCARDON AVENUE

One of the most frequently misspelled road names in town, Marcardon Avenue, for some reason, often appears as Marcadon Avenue.

The name is a combination of the first three letters of the surnames of the three men who subdivided it: the late Francis D. Martin, jeweler and banker; the late Arthur J. Carnall, insurance man and real estate agent; and Joseph H. Donnelly, attorney, developer and former probate judge.

The three filed the subdivision in 1939. It consisted of 35 lots on Marcardon Avenue, Media Lane (now Soundview Road), Wilton Road East, and Creamery Lane.

Yet, despite the fact that the name had been around for 50 years, even the town's street signs used to spell it incorrectly as Marcadon, cheating the late Mr. Carnall out of "equal status." In recent years signs with the correct spelling were erected.

MARIE LANE

Marie Lane, a short road at the Ridgefield Lakes, was named for Marie Tuite, daughter of John Tuite, a surveyor of the 1958 subdivision by Ridgefield Lakes Inc. Nearby is Madeline Drive, named for the surveyor's wife.

MARJOY POND

A modern name for what was for two centuries called Upper Pond (*q.v.*), so called because a subdivision of nearby land was called Mar-Joy. The pond is surrounded by the Mar-Joy open space, donated as part of the subdivision.

MARKET STREET

In cities, the name of Market Street (Avenue, Place, etc.) usually denoted the place where the open-air food businesses sold their wares. In Ridgefield, Market Street's origin is more modest: A single small store that specialized in meat.

Laura Curie Allee Shields lived for many years at the southern corner of Main and Market Streets. In her autobiography, *Memories*, published in 1940, she writes: "Market Street was then (1906) just a lane that went through to East Ridge, and in winter was almost impassable with the mud. We implored our neighbor, Mrs. Ebenezer Keeler, to put her ashes in the road, and we did the same, and in the course of 25 years, we had quite a road.

"In May 1914, the town dignified the side lane, enough to call it 'Market Street.' Years before, Sereno Hurlbutt had a meat market and slaughter house where our garage now stands. Up to that time, it had been called 'Hurlbutt Lane,' which to my mind was very much more elegant, to say the least. But the town fathers insisted upon Market Street."

Beers atlas, published in 1867, notes a "slaughter house" existed behind Hurlbutt's market. One can imagine Mrs. Shields's reaction if the town fathers had suggested calling her lane "Slaughterhouse Street."

Inelegant or not, Market Street was not a name that was picked out of the air in 1914. Maps of the village drawn in 1856, 1867 and 1893 all label the road "Market Street," and the name appears in an 1875 deed. Hurlbutt Lane, which never appeared on a map, was probably an informal name.

David Hurlbutt established the market sometime before 1850; he and his wife, Julia, were living in the house on Main Street at the corner of Market Street by 1837. The house was much smaller then than it is today. David Hurlbutt was, in 1849, also involved in an ice house, which he owned nearby and leased to a group of villagers.

David died in 1858 after being gored in the head by the horn of a cow he was trying to butcher. By then, Sereno Stuart Hurlbutt, his son, had taken over the store and he continued operating it until just before his death in 1904. Sereno Hurlbutt was a prominent citizen, having served as tax collector for many years, as a constable, and in other offices. He was also involved in several business enterprises, such as the Rockwell Candlestick Factory on Catoonah Street.

MARSHALL ROAD

Marshall Road, part of the Westmoreland subdivision (*q.v.*), runs off Peaceable Street to a dead end. Named by the Lincoln Development Company of Massachusetts, which filed the original subdivision plan, it was developed by Jerry Tuccio and became a town road in 1969.

The road was probably named for John Marshall (1755-1835), third chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. A native of Virginia and a graduate of New Jersey College (later Princeton), he was an officer in the Revolution, a diplomat, secretary of water, secretary of state, chief justice, and the author of several books, including a five-volume biography of George Washington.

As far as is known, he had no connection with Ridgefield. His predecessor as chief justice was Oliver Ellsworth of Connecticut, the only man from this state to serve on the court.

MARTIN'S CORNER (CURVE)

Martin's Corner or Curve is an informal term for the sharp curve in North Salem Road, a little north of Mamasasco Road and Ridgefield High School. The curve was bordered on the west by the late Francis D. Martin's farm, whence the name (*see below*).

The term was probably most frequently used by the police, who found it handy to identify the scene of many an auto accident.

MARTIN PARK

Martin Park is probably Ridgefield's most popular and – especially on a hot day in summer – populous park. It consists of 9.4 acres on the south end of Great Pond, and its name commemorates the man who developed and operated the park for many years and who, in 1970, gave it to the town.

Though born in West Park, N.Y., on Sept. 19, 1893, Francis D. Martin was probably more a Ridgefielder than almost any other resident. The son of J. S. Louis and Franceska Martin, who were of Swiss and German origin respectively, Martin came to Ridgefield at the age of three. His father was for 50 years superintendent of Gov. Phineas C. Lounsbury's Main Street estate including what we now call the Community Center, and his family lived in a house on the south side of Governor Street, where the Wells Fargo bank parking lot is now.

Martin attended school on Bailey Avenue "where there were no toilets and no running water, just a pail with a dipper from which everyone drank and no one got typhoid fever," he once wrote.

He began working at the age of six, carrying mail to the Vinton School for girls on East Ridge (now the Ridgefield police station). By age 11, he was a lunch carrier as well and at 12, he began caddying at 15 cents a round. A year later, he got the job of night operator for the telephone company at \$3.50 a week – five cents an hour – working from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. According to his own account, he would then go home, eat breakfast and catch the 7:35 train for Norwalk High School (Ridgefield didn't have a high school then), where he was captain of the basketball and baseball teams. At basketball, he said, he was high scorer in the state in his final year on a team that had a 21-1 record and won the state championship. The same year, he reported, he pitched Norwalk High's baseball squad to a 19-1 record, and had the highest batting average, .421.

Martin left high school to attend the Philadelphia College of Horology and Optics, completing the three-year program in nine months. He returned home in 1911 and, at the age of 17, opened Ridgefield's first jewelry and optical store.

Every Night

"For the first 23 years, I never failed being in my place of business later than 4:30 in the morning," he wrote. "And we kept the stores in Ridgefield open every night in those days."

The young businessman became active in the community. He was elected to the Official Board of the Methodist Church, was a scoutmaster of Ridgefield's first Boy Scout troop in 1912, was a fund-raiser for the county YMCA, a state commissioner of opticians, a founder of the Promoter's Club (forerunner of the Lions Club), a 27-year member of the Board of Finance, chairman of the

Boys' Club, first president of the Lions Club, and chairman of the Red Cross during World War II.

In his younger adult days he also played regional baseball and basketball and, in 1916, pitched three no-hitters for the Woosters of Danbury. That September, he said, he tried out for the Chicago White Sox, was offered a full contract, but refused because he was about to be married to Doris Godfrey, who became his wife of more than 60 years.

Four Projects

In 1934, he was seriously injured in a skating accident, nearly dying from a fractured skull. While he was laid up, Martin decided to undertake "five projects to benefit Ridgefield and my fellow man." He completed four.

"The Depression was on, and business was very bad at that time," he wrote of his first plan. "Foremost in my thought was that in 30 years, wealth would be gone and Ridgefield needed some kind of industry, but no factories, as we are a beautiful residential community."

So he began buying various properties near the village, particularly along Grove Street and Old Quarry Road. Some people thought he was crazy, he said. One teacher even told his son's class, "Wise people buy high and dry land; foolish people along railroads, town dumps, and filter beds."

Eventually, however, the land was zoned for light industry and, improved by Martin, became home to such companies as Schlumberger and Digitech. Because he wanted to encourage economic development, he said, he sold the piece to Schlumberger for only \$1,000 an acre for 20 acres, and gave the firm another 10.

Martin's second project was "to give Ridgefield its first modern store" and as a result, he said, he opened "the finest country jewelry store in America," something he designed and arranged while he was still in bed recuperating. By the time he sold his business to Helen Craig in 1950, he calculated that he had personally repaired 125,000 watches and 25,000 clocks.

His third project was the acquisition of many run-down properties in need of help. Several of these were on Main Street and included the Denton Block – shacks behind which he had torn down. He also bought the Gilbert Block and the Tudor-style buildings erected by Lucius H. Biglow and later called the Martin Block (and now the Amatuzzi Block).

In 1941 he bought the old Ridgefield Boys School on North Salem Road. "I purchased this with the sole purpose in my mind of keeping out of Ridgefield a very undesirable group of people who were after it," he said without further explanation (it was apparently an organization of Nazi sympathizers). Although he said he was not at first certain what he was going to do with the place, he eventually decided to make it his home and much of the building was razed to make it more home-sized. (The property was once among the sites considered for the world headquarters of the United Nations, now in Manhattan.)

Beginning in the early 1940's and for many years, Martin headed the Branchville Fresh Air Camp, which handled some 100 children a year through the Herald Tribune Fresh Air Fund. The camp was on the site of today's Branchville School building, used by the board of Education for its offices.

Around 1950, Martin purchased the 14 acres at the corner of Danbury and Copps Hill Roads "for the sole purpose that when Ridgefield (was) large enough, we would have a shopping center outside congested areas with parking

room for over 1,000 cars.” The spot is now Copps Hill Plaza, which was not built until the early 1970’s.

Favorite Project

Mr. Martin’s fourth project was his favorite. “While still in bed, I laid great plans to have an exceptionally fine swimming place for the people of Ridgefield – a place that would be absolutely clean, well-guarded by the police and lifeguards.”

He and others acquired the land. Volunteers created a beach in 1953. Fees high enough only to cover costs of operating the private park were charged.

When the Great Pond Holding Corporation deeded the property to the town in 1970, Martin had only two stipulations. “It is the wish of Francis D. Martin,” the deed says of one, “that this park be continuously self-supporting.” He did not want taxpayers who don’t use the beach to have to pay for it and thus, the town is obligated to charge fees that cover the costs of the park.

The only other stipulation was that “said premises will be known as Francis D. Martin Park.”

The Gilbert and Bennett Manufacturing Company in Georgetown long owned a portion of the park, including a section of the beach. The former wire mill, which is at this writing in 2017 proposed as the site of a housing, retail and office community, controlled the dam to the pond and, when it needed extra water for its manufacturing processes, could lower the pond, sending the water four miles down the Norwalk River to the company’s Factory Pond in Georgetown. Fortunately for swimmers, Gilbert and Bennett hardly ever did this and eventually turned over ownership to the town of Ridgefield.

Once in Redding

If it were not for an odd set of circumstances back in the 18th Century, there would probably not be a Martin Park today. According to information uncovered in research for this history, the entire Great Pond was part of Redding after all of the Ridgefield settlers’ purchases had been made from the Indians.

However, in 1786, Redding residents who lived around Great Pond and near the intersection of Routes 7 and 35 petitioned the General Assembly to be made a part of Ridgefield. They felt it was easier for them to go to Ridgefield center for church and for Town Meetings than to Redding center. The legislature agreed and allowed Ridgefield to annex this land. Nobody then ever thought that the pond, then serving as water storage for a grist and saw mill, would one day become such a priceless recreational site.

Even in the late 1980’s and in 1990, studies were being done to preserve the purity of Great Pond, which is largely spring-fed. Most if not all of the land bordering the pond is now protected; much of it is owned by the town of Ridgefield and part by the Great Pond Club.

Incidentally, on a fishing outing, Peter Keeler once took a depth finder to Great Pond. The deepest spot he found was 34 feet.

Martin died in 1982 at the age of 88. In many conversations and interviews with this writer, he never revealed what his fifth project was.

MARTIN ROAD

Martin Road is a name applied to a private road serving a six-lot, 22-acre subdivision of part of Francis D. Martin’s Farview Farm.

The Planning and Zoning Commission, which approved the subdivision in June 1981, suggested the name to honor Mr. Martin, a community benefactor for many decades, as described under Martin Park.

MARY'S LANE

Mary's or Mary Lane is a short, dead-end road off Barry Avenue, named for Mary McManus, wife of Peter A. McManus, contractor and former Ridgefield state representative.

The McManuses owned the property which in 1951 they subdivided into seven lots of about one-half acre each, served by Mary's Lane.

Among the McManuses children was James McManus, the town's building inspector for many years, and the Joseph McManus, longtime sheriff and constable here. Members of the family still live here today.

McDONALD'S MILL POND

McDonald's Mill Pond, mentioned in a 1772 deed, is what we today call Miller's Pond, the small body of water on the Norwalk River just west of Route 7 and north of Florida Hill Road.

The name came from the fact that Daniel McDonald operated a grist mill that used the pond for water power and that was probably situated on the site of the present stone house, called Moongate (*q.v.*). One of the town's earliest mills, McDonald's grist mill was, like the more famous Mamasasco Mill, controlled by the proprietors – the settling landowners. For when McDonald sold the mill to James Conklin in 1780, he mentioned that if Conklin failed to keep the mill “in good trim and order,” it would be forfeited to the proprietors, who in 1737 had given Peter Burr permission to build “a good and sufficient grist mill” there.

This mill, far from Mamasasco in the northwestern part of the town, probably served people from eastern Ridgefield including parts of the village and western Redding. As noted earlier, Florida Hill Road – the road from the village to the mill – was frequently called “the Mill Road” in the 18th Century, and was once called Abbott's Mill Road, when David Abbott operated the mill for about two years during the 1740's.

Daniel McDonald eventually moved to Watertown, Conn., by 1792.

McKEON PLACE

McKeon Place recalls Daniel Manning McKeon, sometimes called “The Squire of Ridgebury,” a gentleman farmer who was a leading proponent of planning and zoning in Ridgefield who had been a leader in town government, in the Catholic Church, and in local and regional conservation and organic farming movements for more than 60 years. The road at Turner Hill (*q.v.*) is a short, dead-end road off Turner Road (though it was once planned to connect at both ends with Turner Road).

Dan McKeon operated probably the last working farm in Ridgefield, a spread that he and his late wife, Louise, acquired in 1938 and that had been farmed since the early 1700s (*see* Zack's Ridge and Knap's Farm). The McK-eon house had been a stagecoach stop in the 1800s. When new owner Hunter Harrison bought the farm, he moved the house from Old Stagecoach Road to Ridgebury Road at the corner of Old Stagecoach, at the same time removing some more modern wings from the building.

A native of New York City and son of a family that helped establish St. Patrick's Cathedral, McKeon graduated from Yale in 1928 and was a stockbroker, retiring in 1965. The McKeons bought a 135-acre farm, Arigideen, on Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads, and maintained as many as 45 Brown Swiss dairy cows over the years. The dairy operation, Ridgefield's last, closed in August 2000, causing much sadness among Ridgefielders so accustomed to seeing cows at Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads. Later, the town bought some of the McKeon land, and an upstate New York farmer pastured his cows there several summers.

In 1958, McKeon was appointed a charter member of the Planning Commission. A year later, he was elected its chairman, and when the Planning and Zoning Commissions were combined in 1962, he was its first chairman. He retired in 1993.

A lifelong Republican, McKeon was considered a possible Eisenhower appointee as U.S. ambassador to Ireland in 1952. Active in the Catholic Church, he and Louise flew to Rome to attend the canonization of St. Elizabeth Seton, the first American saint, and later, he was instrumental in the establishment of St. Elizabeth Seton Parish in Ridgebury, where he was a trustee and on the parish advisory council.

McKeon was considered an expert on early Ridgebury and was especially interested in the role French soldiers played in the American Revolution. In 1781, French troops under Rochambeau and Lauzun camped on the McKeon farm (it's believed that the first Catholic Mass ever celebrated in town took place there), and for years McKeon was a part of an American regiment that portrayed the French troops, in both the U.S. and France. An excellent horseman, he was a longtime master and member of the Goldens Bridge Hunt Club.

The McKeons were involved in the preservation of the Keeler Tavern, and in the establishment of historic districts in the village. Mr. McKeon in 1950 was appointed to the Connecticut Conservation Commission. He also later served on the Fairfield County Soil and Water Conservation Board of Supervisors, and had been active in the organic farming movement since 1947. In the spring of 1971, when a huge outbreak of gypsy moth caterpillars was expected, the selectmen hired a helicopter service to spray the town with insecticide. McKeon led other conservationists in threatening to sue the sprayer, arguing that the spraying would kill useful insects and might harm people. The sprayer backed out, and the caterpillars eventually died of a natural disease.

McKeon died in 2001 at the age of 94. In 2005, the McKeon family's Arigideen Farm, a property that included 87 acres, was sold Hunter Harrison, a railroad executive, for \$12 million, the highest price ever paid for a residential property in Ridgefield.

McKEON'S POND

At least one map (Hearne, ca. 1965) shows McKeon Pond as the name of a small pond on the Daniel M. McKeons' Arigideen Farm at the northeast corner of Old Stagecoach and Ridgebury Roads.

The pond, which was used among other things for watering the McKeons' cows, is a source of the Mopus Brook, which flows northward from the pond to the vicinity of the Ridgefield Golf Course, and then southerly to the Titicus River, whose waters feed the New York City water supply system. It is proba-

bly a very old pond, for the farming use of the property dates back into the mid-18th Century (see Zack's Ridge and Knap's Farm).

McLAURY'S HILL

Ridgebury Road from Spring Valley Road intersection to north of Regan Road was called McLaury's Hill in a 1955 Ridgefield Press article. Mr. and Mrs. John E. McLaury once had a house on the hill, just beyond the sharp curve.

The house formerly belonged to B. Sturges Selleck, a well-known Ridgefielder who lived into the 1920's and who was the grandfather of Beverly S. Crofut, who died in early 1990. Mr. Crofut recalled that the hill had long ago been called Selleck's Hill, for his grandfather.

Around 1928, the Selleck house was purchased by Ellis B. and Mary McLaury for their son, John E. McLaury. John and his wife lived there about 10 years, operating a chicken farm, and then moved to Bermuda. Ellis was the head of the McLaury Marble Corporation in The Bronx.

Ellis and Mary McLaury in 1928 bought playwright Eugene O'Neill's house on North Salem Road and also acquired other tracts in the area. (When the McLaury's bought the O'Neill place, they wanted to make sure what they were getting: they stipulated the purchase include "the electric lighting fixtures, the range, the furnace, the window shades, and window screens in the house.")

MEAD RIDGE

Mead Ridge is a development of 19 lots on the north side of South Salem Road, served by Mead Ridge Road and two spurs – Mead Ridge Drive and Lane.

The property was subdivided by Henri Engelbert, who in 1948 came from New York City to purchase a house and 49 acres from Eleanor C. Peil that had earlier been part of Reginald M. Lewis's estate and farm (see Hopper's Pond). For many years before Lewis – perhaps some 200 years – the property had been a Keeler family farm.

Mr. Engelbert subdivided the land in 1958. The development was named for his wife, Lydia Mead Englebert, who was descended from the old Ridgefield Mead family. Meads were living here as early as 1722 when Theophilus Mead of Norwalk bought two acres on North Salem Road. Israel Mead had land at Grassy Island in 1729.

Meads had generally lived on the western side of town, and in eastern Lewisboro, where there is a Mead Street today. Meads also lived in the neighborhood of Mead Ridge – in 1795, Jeremiah Mead bought a half-acre and a house on West Lane, near the schoolhouse.

MEADOW WOODS

Meadow Woods is a 1965 subdivision of 92 acres into 53 one-acre lots on Lounsbury and Ivy Hill Roads, and served by Standish Drive, Revere Lane, and Glenbrook Court.

The subdivision was developed by Harry Richmond and Bill Connors, both of Norwalk, who named the place for the combination of meadowland and woodland that made up the tract.

MEDIA LANE

Media Lane is an old name for the northern end of Soundview Road. It was so called in the 1939 subdivision of Marcardon Avenue by Francis D. Martin, Arthur J. Carnall, and Joseph H. Donnelly, that included lots on the east side of "Media Lane."

The name, probably referring to the fact that the road was midway between Wilton Road West and Wilton Road East, was still being used as late as 1952 on some maps. By 1954, Soundview Road had taken over.

At some point after Mar, Car, and Don sold their property, it was renamed Media Manor and the new owners sought septic system permits for the houses they proposed to build. Dr. Francis B. Woodford, the town health officer, and John J. McCarthy, the town's first sanitarian, refused to issue the permits because the soil on the small lots would not, they felt, adequately handle the effluent, and could pollute the planned wells on the lots.

The owners sued the town for \$750,000 and the case went to Superior Court in Bridgeport in 1958. It was the first case which Romeo G. Petroni, later a Superior Court judge himself, undertook after he was appointed the town attorney by his father-in-law, First Selectman Leo F. Carroll. After protracted questioning of witnesses pro and con (and a visit by the Superior Court judge to the scene of the action), the Media Manor plaintiffs made a deal to sell their property and withdrew their court case. Subsequently, septic tank permits were issued after arrangements were made to have town water piped into the development – eliminating the need for wells.

MEETING HOUSE YARD

The Meeting House Yard was the formal name for the village green that stood along Main Street at the head of Branchville Road. The term was used as early as 1721 and as late as 1823.

The green included part of the front lawn of today's Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church, and extended southward to include part of Patrick and Diane Crehan's front lawn. Laid out in 1721, it served as the site of the Congregational Church until around 1888. When the new church was opened that year, the old church was removed and the green abandoned and absorbed into neighboring lawns.

The earliest church building was situated almost in the middle of Main Street which, at the time, may have been slightly east of its present location and which also ran around the green. The building was called a "meeting house" because that's where people met for services and other functions. In the earliest years of Ridgefield, it also served as the town hall, where records were kept and Town Meetings took place.

During the Revolution, the militia practiced on the Meeting House Yard, which was probably also the site of other community activities, such as picnics, summertime lectures and prayer meetings, and fairs.

Although it is unfortunate that Ridgefield has lost its village green, it must be admitted that the green was not imposing, like those of Litchfield or New Milford. It was a rather small rectangle. As laid out, the yard measured 16 by 20 rods (330 by 264 feet) totaling just about two acres. Part of that probably included the highway ground which encircled the green or "church yard," as George L. Rockwell recalled its being called.

MEMORY LANE

Memory Lane, one of those cutesy and awful names that creep into a town's geography, is a short private road off West Lane. It serves a subdivision of about four acres into three lots, filed by Myrtle L. Englund (for her husband, Eugene) of Norwalk, in 1956. The land had formerly been part of the Elizabeth Swords Grant estate.

METITICUS (et al.)

Metiticus and variations of it are early and more accurate versions of the word, Titicus, a name for places that will be discussed in detail in a later column.

George L. Rockwell found that a 1609 map, "Westchester under the Indians," gave the word as Mutighticoos. That's a pretty hefty Indian word to handle and the settlers of Ridgefield took to simpler versions.

Among the earliest was Metiticus, as in "Metiticus Swamp" (1709), "Metititus Brook" (1716) and "Metiticus Hill" (also 1716). In a single proprietors' grant in 1717, Town Clerk Thomas Hauley refers to property near "Titicus Mountain" and land along "Metiticus River."

Other variations include "Matiticus Hill" (1716) "Metittecus River" (1750), and "Metitecus River" (1766). The word "Titicus" was always more common than "Metiticus" and by the Revolution, had completely taken over as the name for the brook, crossroads, hill, mountain, plain, ridge, river, road, school district, swamp, and village.

MIDDLE POND

In 1794, Recomense Thomas sold Dorcas Andrews (wife of Jonathan Andrews) 40 acres in Ridgebury, including "the mansion house and barn" and bounded on the north by "Middle Pond."

Based on boundary descriptions, the pond was probably situated near the present Ridgefield Golf Course or near the end of Canterbury Lane.

The name suggests that there were at least two other ponds on each side of this one, all probably for watering cows. All long ago dried up or became swampland.

MIDDLE RIDGE

Middle Ridge was the turn-of-the-century name for what we today call East Ridge. At that time, what we call Prospect Ridge was considered East Ridge.

A 1900 map of the then-proposed village sewer system labels today's East Ridge Road as Middle Ridge Avenue, and Prospect Ridge Road as East Ridge Avenue.

Property maps filed with the town clerk in 1907 and in 1919 also use "Middle Ridge Avenue" for East Ridge. Even a 1959 map of Walter and Marion Hustis's property on East Ridge Avenue says "Middle Ridge Avenue."

Why and exactly when the names were changed has not been discovered. However, the terms "East Ridge" and "Middle Ridge" were not mentioned on the land records before 1875, so both names were relatively new ones around the turn of the century.

MIDDLEBROOK LANE

Middlebrook Lane, a name that appears to be geographically descriptive, actually has nothing to do with a brook or the position of a road to a brook.

The name was given to a new road off Branchville Road – east of Bayberry Hill Road – by the developer, Ronald Hubbard, in 1979. The road serves nine or 10 lots.

Hubbard obtained the name by tracing the property's ownership back to the mid-19th Century when, he found, it belonged to the Middlebrook family. The Middlebrook or Middlebrooks clan was mostly from northern Wilton, but in 1795, family members began buying land just across the line in the Nod Hill section of Ridgefield. Samuel, Jonathan, Somers, and William Middlebrook(s) were all early 19th Century landowners in this area.

When he was looking for names for this road, Hubbard approached this writer for suggestions. Among those offered was Wolfpit Lane, because near this road, the settlers had dug pits to trap and kill off the wolf population it feared would attack their livestock. The developer quickly rejected the name, fearing it would affect the sales of his houses. "It sounds too much like armpit," he said.

The fact that the name did not seem to affect values in Wilton and Bethel, both of which have Wolfpit Roads, did not sway him.

A year or so later, Hubbard suddenly disappeared from town, reportedly for more western climes and left Middlebrook Road uncompleted. The town had to step in and finish the work. The selectmen accepted the road in August 1982.

MIDROCKS ROAD

Midrocks Road, which runs between Bennett's Farm and Limestone Roads – amid rocks – was built chiefly to serve a subdivision of 15 lots of one-third to two-thirds acre. Nicholas R. DiNapoli Sr. and Jr. obtained the subdivision in 1961.

The name appears to have been first suggested as early as 1959 when the Board of Selectmen minutes mention it, possibly a suggestion from Philip M. Merriam, who lived nearby on Limestone Road. Midrocks Road was accepted as a town highway in 1962.

MILL BROOK

The Mill Brook was the old name for the stream that connects Mamanasco Lake to the Titicus River, flowing under North Salem Road near Sherwood Road.

The name, not commonly mentioned in the land records, first appears in a 1722 deed in which Jonathan Abbott sold Alexander Resseguie an acre of meadow "lying near ye north end of Mamanasco Hill where ye Mill Brook runs into Titicus River."

The stream, which is the outlet of the lake, was the immediate source of the power for the famous Mamanasco Mill; hence, the name. It is not an uncommon name, either: there are "mill brooks" in at least 37 towns in Connecticut.

MILL BROOK SWAMP

In a pre-1725 deed, the proprietors granted Lemuel Morehouse three acres “lying in ye Mill Brook Swamp,” situated between Sherwood and Ridgebury Roads, a little south of Ledges Road.

MILL PATH

Mill Path was one of the earliest names for North Salem Road, and was so called because it led from the village to Mamanasco Mill, three miles out of town.

The name appears as early as 1722 when Samuel Saintjohn sold Theophilus Mead of Norwalk two acres “lying on ye west side of ye Mill Path, between ye saw mill and Toilsome Path.” (The saw mill was at Titicus crossroads while Toilsome Path was up near Barrack Hill Road.)

Soon after, the road was more formally called “the Mill Road” or “the road to Mamanasco Mill.” North Salem Road is a fairly modern name.

MILL PLAIN

Much of the Mill Plain section of Danbury was once within the bounds of Ridgefield, having been in the center of New Patent. Probably the first reference to the name in the Ridgefield land records occurs in a 1769 deed of Micajah Starr to Samuel Starr for 20 acres near a stream “that runs into ye Mill Plain Pond.”

Mill Plain Pond was what is today called Lake Kenosha (also spelled Kanosha or Kenosia). The pond or lake was probably created in the early to mid-1700s to store water power for a mill, but since the outlet of the pond was always in Danbury, we have no record of whose mill it was. The west half of the pond was in Ridgefield in the 18th and first half of the 19th Centuries.

In his *History of Danbury* (1895), James M. Bailey says that “Mill Plain...derived its name, according to tradition, from a mill that was a little east of the present Fair Grounds, which had so high a dam that it flooded the swamps by Mill Plain Pond. This sheet of water is now known as Lake Kenosia, and is quite a pleasure resort.

“The first house built in Mill Plain was erected probably about 1720, and belonged to Nathaniel Stevens...‘Burchard’s Store’ at the western boundary of old-time Mill Plain, was its commercial centre, and had quite a wide reputation. It was one of the first to put shirts out for making, and the women would come from far and near for the work, taking in payment goods from the store.

“There were several shoe shops where, besides custom work, shoes were made for a firm in New Canaan. Most of the energy of the people was directed to farming.

“Lake Kenosia, now a popular summer resort for the people of Danbury and its vicinity, was known in the old days as Mill Plain Pond, and many of the older residents can remember boating upon the lake in moonlit evenings or enjoying picnics under the shade of the trees along its banks.

“In 1860, George Hallock, who saw a future for the lake as a pleasure resort, built the Kenosia Hotel, which was opened on August 16th of that year. The hotel was short-lived, as it was destroyed by fire on November 23rd of the same year. Soon after the opening of the house, its landlord, as an especial attraction, arranged ‘a race between the noted trotters Flora Temple and Widow McChree at Kenosia Trotting Park.’”

The brook flowing into the pond was called “**Mill Plain River**” in an 1825 Ridgefield deed. The first mention in the Ridgefield records of simply “Mill Plain” is found in an 1818 deed.

Eventually, Mill Plain became the name for a school district, and a post office operated there as early as 1831. Town Meetings in Ridgefield appointed highway surveyors (inspectors) for Mill Plain as late as 1845. It was around then that Mill Plain — and other Ridgefield lands to the north and south — were ceded to Danbury.

An 1844 deed described a dam at the outlet of Mill Plain Pond, saying it is very near the “Sugar Hollow Turnpike Road.” The present-day Kenosha Avenue — running from Route 6 south to Backus Avenue near the Danbury airport and the mall — was once part of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike Road (*q.v.*), which extended all the way to Wilton. Oddly enough, the section of road through the Sugar Hollow was not part of this turnpike, but of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike (*q.v.*). Sugar Hollow Turnpike took over at each end of the Sugar Hollow.

MILL POND

The term Mill Pond was used to describe many ponds in Ridgefield, all obviously associated with mills.

Mamasasco Pond was often called simply “the Mill Pond,” for example. So were Upper and Lower Ponds near Titicus.

MILL RIVER HOLLOW

Mill River Hollow is the 15-lot subdivision off Cedar Lane, served by Deer Hill Drive. The 1955 development by Earl D. Etheridge was so called because it overlooks the headwaters of the Stamford Mill River, or Mill River, just to the west.

MILL RIVER POND

Mill River Pond was a name for the body of water that existed off the south side of South Salem Road and the western end of the above-mentioned Deer Hill Drive.

The pond was created in the 1940’s by the damming of the Stamford Mill River, though earlier ponds may have existed there for milling purposes.

The dam burst in the late 1970’s and despite various efforts to try to get it rebuilt, the cost and probably the insurance liabilities involved were too much for the owner, and the pond has turned into a meadow and is on its way to becoming a forest.

MILL ROAD

As noted earlier, Mill Road was an early name for North Salem Road because it led from the village to Mamasasco Mill. However, it was also a name for Florida Hill Road. For example, in 1744, when the selectmen laid out Florida Road, they said that it ended on the north at “ye Mill Road.” The Mill Road went from the village to a gristmill along the Norwalk River at the north corner of Florida Hill Road and Route 7.

This road was also called by the names of owners of the grist mill to which it led. For instance, when David Abbott owned the mill, it was called Abbott’s

Mill Road (1745); when Daniel Cables had the mill, the path was called “the road that leads to Cables’ Mill.”

There was another “Mill Road.” In 1796, the proprietors laid out to Michael Warren 60 rods “on the south side of his farm at Limestone,” bounded on the south by “the Mill Road.” Warren owned what was later to become the Haviland farm, and the road was probably what we today call Haviland Road.

MILL VIEW TERRACE

Mill View Terrace is a short dead-end road off Nursery Road. Lewis J. Finch, who developed and named the road around 1963, said he selected the name because the property overlooks the site of what was once “a tremendous mill.”

The neighborhood was always a popular spot for mills in the 18th and 19th Centuries. It had, of course, the Norwalk River, but it also had the water storage capacity of Great Pond as well as another smaller pond along today’s Stonehenge Road.

As early as 1745, Richard Olmsted operated a grist mill in this area, probably at the corner of Stonehenge and Still Roads where an old stone dam still exists. Later, the Lobdell family and then the Smith family had the mill. In the 19th Century, the area was known as Taylor’s Corners because the Taylor family operated the mill.

There was also a saw mill and a fulling mill here. However, at the south end of the pond that still exists on the Stonehenge Inn property stood another grist mill. Thus, Mill View Terrace, which has views of no mills today, runs along land that once overlooked perhaps three or four different milling establishments.

MILLER’S POND

Miller’s Pond’s, an old but man-made body of water, is situated on the west side of Route 7, just north of Florida Hill Road. Oddly enough, although this was a mill pond long used by millers (as described under McDonald’s Mill Pond), the name is not derived from that former use, but a former owner.

The pond is so called because it belonged from 1925 to 1970 to the late Nathaniel Miller, president of a newsprint firm. He lived in the house — which he rebuilt from an old mill building — next to where Florida Hill Road crosses the Norwalk River. He called the place “Moongate” (q.v.), named for the circular, moonlike opening in the pond dam that allows the water to flow through. Miller died in 1974 in upstate Connecticut, cared for by his companion, Juan Ayala, who said he was a Spanish nobleman.

The pond was probably created around 1737 when Peter Burr built the grist mill on the site of Moongate.

During the mid-19th Century, the pond served an iron foundry, operated by Ebenezer Burr Sanford and Thomas N. Couch on the site of the old grist mill. This foundry, according to George L. Rockwell, was the only one existing between New Haven and the Hudson River. Here, “milling” of cog-wheels, shafts, gears, stoves, railroad car parts, and other iron devices was done as well as the smithing of plow shares, tools and sleigh shoes, and castings of all sorts of iron implements.

Today, the area above Miller’s Pond is proposed to form a part of the water-holding system of the Norwalk River Flood Control Project. In times of

heavy rainfall, water is supposed to back up over a wide area for a half mile or so upstream to prevent its rushing too quickly downstream. An earthen dam is supposed to be erected just north of the pond. However, the project has been tied closely to the new Route 7 expressway, which would have through this area, and the flood control project was delayed many years, expecting a decision on the road.

That came in the early 2000s, when the state decided not to build “Super 7.” (The expected coming of the expressway was why Miller said he sold Moongate and moved upstate.) Since then, the state has gradually been removing from its flood control lands buildings that had been leased to families and businesses. Fortunately for Moongate, the house and grounds escaped flood-control takeover.

MILLER’S RIDGE

Miller’s Ridge is a very early name that lasted nearly a century and a half, yet long ago disappeared.

The name first showed up in a 1717 deed from the proprietors to Joseph Crampton for 2½ acres “lying on ye upper end of ye Miller’s Ridge.” Crampton also had land “near ye lower end of ye Miller’s Ridge and east of ye Brimstone Swamp,” which he sold to Timothy Keeler in 1718. Thereafter the name appears frequently in the land records until 1875 when the last known reference is found in a deed.

The north end of the ridge began around the intersection of Wilton Road East and Whipstick Road. The ridge extended southward along the east side of Wilton Road East until around Spectacle Lane where it met Spectacle Ridge.

The name originated from a very early mill that stood on the east branch of the Silvermine River (really just a brook here), a short distance below Whipstick Road and just east of Wilton Road East. Since the name existed by 1717, it had to have been one of the first mills in town.

The mill was probably a saw mill, and an important saw mill, too. At a proprietors meeting on Dec. 14, 1714 (probably in Norwalk), it was voted that Joseph Keeler, Ebenezer Smith, Matthew Saintjohn, and James Benedict and their associates “shall have liberty to build or erect a saw mill at Steep Brook or any other stream where it shall not prejudice the privileges and public interests of ye town.”

Steep Brook was a stream at the northern end of the village, running through today’s Casagmo, across Grove Street, and down into Great Swamp. It isn’t much more than a creek today and, although it was probably bigger in the early 1700s, Steep Brook apparently was found to have an insufficient supply of water – or no place to build a mill pond – because subsequent land records don’t mention a saw mill on Steep Brook or in this part of town.

So the group presumably looked elsewhere in the village and selected a stream below the south end of the “Town Ridge.” Here there was plenty of land for a mill pond, two small streams converging to supply water, and a location close to the center of town.

The location was important. The village was just being built by the new settlers; they needed plenty of lumber for their homes and they wanted convenient access to the saw mill. Plenty of handy trees were available on the very land that was being cleared for homesites and fields.

Thus, this was probably the town's earliest mill – and its earliest industrial facility. It was also long-lived.

By 1749, the proprietors are recorded as giving Matthew Seamore (Seymour) and Matthew Benedict permission to build a mill on a stream near Ichabod Cole's house – in this same neighborhood, and perhaps on the same site. Maybe the original mill had fallen into disrepair, had burned, or had been destroyed in a flood.

This mill site continued operating into the 19th Century – although it apparently went through periods when it was not used – and was still functioning in 1867. For many years in the last century, members of the Benedict family – perhaps descendants of Matthew – operated it.

Today, all that is left is a wet meadow where the mill pond used to be, a long earth-covered stone dam stretching from Wilton Road East to Whipstick Road, and some remnants of a 19th Century mill.

In the early 1980s, when I last inspected the site, an old iron mechanism that connected the water wheel to the milling machinery was still visible, lying in the stream just below the dam. Strewn around the site were stones from the foundation and sluice walls, some old barrel hoops (perhaps staves were made here), and iron “tires” from wheels whose wood long ago rotted away. Most metal articles probably date from the late 19th Century.

The dam, incidentally, is one of the longest around here, and part or all of it may have been built in 1717 or before. The structure is almost 600 feet long and was still in good condition in the early 1980s. Were it to be used today, however, a house and barn at the corner of Wilton Road East and Whipstick Road would wind up with wet feet.

MILLERS LANE

Millers Lane serves part of a five-lot subdivision of 11 acres off Saw Mill Hill Road and Kellogg Street. Five Stars Land Development used the name, one of several recommended by this writer, to recall the mills that operated along Saw Mill Hill Road.

MILLSTONE BROOK

Millstone Brook is an ancient and short-lived name, apparently for the upper Titicus River or one of its branches. At least, early references to it and its sister locality, Millstone Rocks, seem to place it along Saw Mill Hill Road or near there.

Millstone Brook is mentioned in the minutes of the Dec. 16, 1721 Annual Town Meeting in connection with a boundary description: “...and from James Wallis's homelot to ye Millstone Brook is 20 rod(s) north and from said brook, all ye commonland between Benjamin Willson's land and a lottment of said land sold to Timothy Canfield and down to Chesnut Ridge Brook.”

Early millstones were probably created from a quarry hereabouts, possibly the Millstone Rocks (*q.v.*). (*See also* Millstone Court)

MILLSTONE COURT

Millstone Court is a short dead-end road off Ramapoo Road, serving some of the seven lots in a 1993 subdivision by Donald and James Sturges.

This writer recommended the name because of the subdivision's probable proximity to the Millstone Brook (*above*) and Millstone Rocks (*below*), but it turns out that the name was appropriate for an even better reason.

Denise Fuda, who grew up nearby, recalls that in her youth in the 1960s "there were many millstones left there." These were probably quarried at this or near this site, perhaps in both the 18th and 19th Centuries, for use at the Titicus and other mills in town (*see* Millstone Rocks).

The Millstone Court neighborhood was later a huge gravel and sand pit. For many years abandoned heavy equipment was left rusting on the property. When the land was cleaned up for development, some of the machinery was reportedly buried.

MILLSTONE ROCKS

Millstone Rocks was undoubtedly connected with Millstone Brook, although the two places were never mentioned together in the land records.

However, a 1722 deed, in which Zedediah Canfield sold land to Timothy Canfield, says the eight acres "lyeth between ye Chesnut Ridge Brook and ye Millstone Rocks."

In 1726, Timothy Canfield sold this property, also mentioning the proximity to the Millstone Rocks, the last time the locality appears in the land records.

It's possible the name was derived from the practice of quarrying millstones from rock at this place. Cut from granite or sandstone in the shape of a wheel with a hole in the center for its axle, millstones were used to grind meal from corn, rye, wheat, and other grains. By this time there was a grist mill at Mamanasco Pond; it would have required millstones. Soon a closer mill was built at Titicus. Another grist mill operated at the present site of Moongate on Florida Hill Road near today's Route 7 and still another, near the old Stonehenge Inn.

MIMOSA

Mimosa and its roads – Mimosa Circle, Court, and Place – are the result of a 1966 subdivision of a North Street estate of the same name.

The estate was amassed around 1934 by Morris Simon, who bought a small old house and land from William Peatt Sr., enlarged the building considerably, landscaped the grounds, and added many improvements, such as a tennis courts and a bomb shelter. Simon was a wealthy man who had invented a method of extruding wire through diamonds, a device called a diamond wire die.

In 1946, Richard L. Blum bought the house and, in the early 1950s, Milton Biow acquired the place. Biow was an advertising executive credited with coming up with the idea of sending in box tops from cereals for premiums. He also created the famous cigarette advertising slogan, "Call for Philip Morris." He used the place mainly as a summer home.

Either he or Simon planted Mimosa trees on the property and called the estate Mimosa. The trees, native of warmer climates, did not survive long, but the name did.

When developer Jerry Tuccio bought the place in 1965 for subdivision, he at first wanted to call the main road into the development "Airline Circle" because so many airline pilots were buying his houses in the early 1960s.

The Planning and Zoning Commission rejected the name, feeling it wasn't an appropriate name in Ridgefield, and Mimosa was used instead.

The Mimosa development consisted of 91 lots cut from 123 acres. The similarity of the road names has caused some problems. There has been concern that an ambulance, for example, might have difficulty finding a home if an emergency call comes in and the street designation – Circle, Court or Place – is slurred or otherwise unclear.

Mimosa was the scene of a rather unusual mystery in the 1980s, *The Mimosa Stabber*. The following is from my book, *Hidden History of Ridgefield*:

It was a parent's worst nightmare. In separate incidents, two young teenagers were accosted and stabbed in woods bordering the Mimosa subdivision off North Street.

A little before 9 p.m. on Nov. 21, 1982, a few days before Thanksgiving, a 14-year-old boy had gone to the edge of woodland behind his house on Mimosa Circle to untangle a dog chain. Suddenly, he was "pulled into the woods and stabbed in the stomach," The Ridgefield Press reported. He was taken to the hospital and underwent exploratory surgery for the wound.

In its first statement on the incident, police did not specify that the boy was attacked. "As the victim entered the wooded area, he received a stab-type wound to the stomach," a press release said the next day. "Exactly how the wound was sustained is undetermined at this time." Detectives apparently wondered whether the wound was sustained in a fall.

However, five days later, a girl, also 14 years old, was walking in woods bordering Mimosa, when she passed a man in his mid-20s. The man then turned and "assaulted her with a sharp instrument," inflicting a minor cut to the right side of her abdomen.

Ridgefield Police Capt. Richard Bellagamba told reporters the department believed both stabbings were the work of one person who was "someone who knows the area."

The girl described the assailant as "a white male in his mid-twenties, approximately 5 feet 10 inches tall, with medium-length brown hair." Using her facial descriptions, a composite drawing of a suspect was put together and distributed widely.

The initial uncertainty over how the boy's wound had occurred prompted many Mimosa neighbors to speculate that he may have simply fallen on something sharp or might even have been attacked by a deer. However, said a Mimosa resident at the time, the second stabbing made the boy's claim of being attacked "very, very believable."

The attacks prompted Mimosa residents as well as many in other neighborhoods along North Street to get involved in safety campaigns. Parents were told to maintain a closer watch over their children, lock their doors, and keep outdoor lights shining in their yards. A Mimosa Homeowners Association letter to all residents advised, "children should not go into the woods anywhere for the time being" and that "people should travel in pairs."

School Superintendent Elliott Landon recommended, temporarily at least, that children not walk each day to the nearby Scotland School (Barlow Mountain was closed then).

A Mimosa resident told The Press that neighbors felt the assailant appeared very familiar with the woods, and was either someone who had lived in the area, or someone who had spent a great deal of time there, such as a former resident or a friend of a resident.

For many weeks afterward, police flooded the area with patrols and investigated a number of leads. "There was much manpower expended on the case," current Police Chief John Roche recalled; he was a patrolman at the time. However, in the end, no one was ever charged.

And no more stabbings occurred.

MINE HILL

The chief ingredient in the plaster on the walls of many an old Ridgefield home may have come from Mine Hill, which appears to have been a major source of limestone – and hence, lime – in the town during the 18th and 19th Centuries.

The earliest mention of this name appears in a 1789 deed from Ebenezer Lobdell to Benjamin Smith for six acres "lying at Limestone near the Mine Hill so called."

However, even earlier, this area had been known as the "Mine Lott" (*see below*). Earlier, it was probably "Limestone Hill," a name first mentioned in 1717 (*q.v.*)

Based on various descriptions, the Mine Hill seems to have been a hill that, because of all the mining of it, has virtually disappeared. It was situated along Danbury Road, just north of Haviland and Limestone Roads, in the vicinity of the Limestone Shell service station (a name of wonderful, though accidental appropriateness since limestone is actually composed of the shells of ancient sea creatures, such as mollusks). Remnants of the limestone in the earth can be seen today in the white rocks still lying on the ground in what clearly is an excavated piece of ground along the west side of Danbury Road.

Additional evidence of a hill here is provided by the original route of Danbury Road which, in this area, still exists just east of the main highway, running off the western end of Haviland Road north to Danbury Road a little above the gas station. This road, now forming a long, wooded triangle, once ran around the hill. Later, after the hill had been mined down almost flat, the state put the straight section of Danbury Road through to avoid the curve-and-intersection combination that formerly existed.

The last person to work down the hill was the late Dominic Gaeta, who in the 1950's bulldozed about five feet off the remaining mound in connection with erecting a small house there.

The term "Mine Hill" was last mentioned in an 1818 deed.

MINE LAND

Another variation of Mine Hill is the "Mine Land," first appearing in an 1847 deed when Jacob Dauchy sold Azariah Smith seven acres at Limestone, bounded by "the Mine Land, so called." It was again mentioned in an 1852 deed.

Perhaps by this time, the hill had been almost completely removed, making the former name, Mine Hill, obsolete or at least unrealistic.

MINE LOTT

The first mention of the limestone mining operation at Limestone District occurs in a 1753 deed in which the proprietors sell Ebenezer Lobdell 10 acres "north of Norren's Boggs" and bounded on the east by "ye Mine Lott."

Back in 1747, Lobdell had sold one-eighth shares in 3 ½ acres “at ye Short Hills lying near Limestone...with all my right and title to one-eighth part of all ye mines and minerals lying on or within said tract.” That may have been when the mining began, at least on a formal and large scale. However, it should be noted that as early as 1712, deeds were referring to Limestone Hill in the same area. Obviously, the settlers knew about the wealth of the mineral from very early times.

By 1760, when Isaac Sherwood sold his eighth share in “ye Mine Lott” to Daniel Bradley for 20 shillings, other partners were John Lobdell, Ebenezer Lobdell, James Brown, Samuel Isaacs, James and Charles Monk. In 1796, Stephen Bradley, an heir of Daniel Bradley, sold a share, also for 20 shillings.

The Mine Lott continued to appear in the land records fairly frequently until 1830. In that year Sarah Warren sold Reed Haviland two acres “near and west of the house of said Haviland and known by the name of the Mine Lot or Ore Bed.”

This reference to Ore Bed recalls a circa 1717 deed from the proprietors to Henry Whitney for 8 ½ acres “lying in a place called ye Ore Yard” with no further description. Perhaps limestone was mined here as early as that.

MINUTEMAN ROAD

Minuteman Road, part of the Colonial Heights subdivision on West Mountain, extends from Oscaleta Road to Revere Drive. The road was accepted by the Town Meeting in 1970.

Colonial Heights, an 89-lot subdivision with road names of a “Revolutionary era” flavor, was developed by Lewis J. Finch and Paul Morganti, who selected the names. It was the first three-acre-lot subdivision ever developed here – ironically, the total acreage was 333 – and the largest ever subdivided using true three-acre lots. Most developments in three-acre zones have taken advantage of Planned Residential Development rules that allow lots smaller than three-acres, provided sizable chunks of open space are permanently preserved. Thus, while much of western and northwestern Ridgefield is zoned three-acre, few three-acre lots exist outside Colonial Heights.

Minuteman Road, of course, recalls the “Minutemen” of Revolutionary War fame. They had, however, no connection with Ridgefield; as far as is known, no Ridgefielders served with that group of local militia, based in Massachusetts. They were so-called because they were supposed to be ready to march on a minute’s notice.

The name sometimes appears erroneously in addresses as Minute Man Road.

MIRY BROOK

Miry Brook in Ridgebury is the subject of a popular – but incorrect – legend about the origin of its name.

In his *History of Ridgefield* (1927), George L. Rockwell mentions the legend in connection with the burning of Danbury on April 26, 1777. The British troops, having accomplished their aim of destroying colonial stores in Danbury, left that town for their ships at Long Island Sound, marching via western Danbury to Ridgebury.

“A portion of the troops,” says Rockwell, “passed out by way of South Street and the upper end of Mountainville Avenue, then over Hull’s Hill...At

Miry Brook several patriots had removed the bridge from over the brook. It is said that the cannon of the British became mired, and the name of Miry Brook was given to this stream because of this incident.”

The incident of the mired cannon may have happened; that it gave rise to the stream’s name did not.

In 1741, 36 years before the cannon incident, Daniel Taylor Jr. of Danbury sold Joshua Barnum of Kent “my farm of land lying over ye Miery Brook, so called, nigh adjoining to ye west bounds of Danbury township and contained within ye bounds of Ridgefield New Patten.”

Miry was not all that unusual a name for a stream; it means simply that the waterway was swampy. There is also a Miry Brook in Litchfield and in Morris.

However, there is an interesting theory as to how this brook did get its name. According to historian Imogene Hiereth of the Scott Fanton Museum in Danbury, both the Wildman and the Ambler families, who were early settlers of the Miry Brook area, came from a section of Bedford, N.Y., called Miry Brook. Thus, one or the other, or both, families may have brought their hometown name with them to Connecticut.

Although Miry Brook is more a Danbury than a Ridgefield name, the stream finds its origin in Ridgefield. It is not clear just which of several Ridgebury brooks should be considered the source stream of Miry Brook. Perhaps it is the one that flows out of Shadow Lake, the only sizable body of water connected with Miry Brook’s upper watershed (although the pond is of 20th Century origin). Berthier’s map, used by the colonial military, shows four streams, all emanating from ponds, feeding the Miry Brook in Ridgebury in 1781.

At any rate, the streams may have all converged into the Miry Brook by the time it crosses into Danbury just south of George Washington Highway. Just before Miry Brook enters Danbury, the Wolf Pond Run or Brook, which flows north along the west side of Pine Mountain Road, joins it. In Danbury, Miry Brook proceeds eastward, flowing into the Still River northwest of the Danbury Fair Mall. Eventually, waters from the Miry Brook enter the Housatonic River near New Milford, and flow south into Long Island South at Stratford and Milford.

A section of Danbury picked up the name “Miry Brook” by the 1800s. This area, which was by the 1860s a school district of that name, extended from the Ridgefield east boundary at Ridgebury eastward to the present-day Route 7 and Wooster Heights, and included the present Danbury Fair Mall and the Danbury Airport. There is also the long Miry Brook Road, running from the Ridgefield line (the extension of George Washington Highway), around the airport to Route 7 at Wooster Heights.

Although this was a Danbury neighborhood and school district, a portion of Ridgefield may also have been called Miry Brook. For example, an 1830 deed mentions land “in Ridgefield at Miry Brook, so called.”

Moreover, on Beers’ 1867 map of Ridgefield, there is an unnamed school district, encompassing northeastern Ridgefield, including Pine Mountain Road, eastern George Washington Highway, and southern Briar Ridge Road. There were only five houses in this area at that time.

It was common practice for a town to create school districts in conjunction with neighboring communities when it would be easier for the children in one town to attend a district school in another town. In this case, the homes were all near the intersection of George Washington Highway, Briar Ridge, Pine Moun-

tain, and Miry Brook Roads. Danbury's Miry Brook Schoolhouse, near the present Wooster School, was less than a mile away from these homesteads. Ridgefield's nearest school was the Ridgebury schoolhouse, at the intersection of Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads, more than two miles away.

Thus, this fairly sizable section of Ridgefield, with only a handful of families living in it, was probably called Miry Brook because of its association with the Danbury schoolhouse as well as its being traversed by the Miry Brook.

MIXVILLE

According to the book, "Connecticut Place Names," an 1885 Rand McNally atlas lists Mixville as a community in Ridgefield. Through 1885, the land records make no mention of such a place. The map was probably in error.

MONT-LAC

French for "mountain lake," Mont-Lac was apparently a name being used after the Civil War for West Mountain, probably to give that locale a touch of class. (Apparently for the same reason, High Ridge Road was changed to High Ridge Avenue, and Prospect Street was being called Prospect Avenue.) The name appears from time to time in the Ridgefield Press in the 1870s. The "lake" is probably Round Pond.

That name may have carried over to the name of the Westchester County park, Mountain Lakes, just across the state line, part of the old Port of Missing Men resort.

MOONGATE TRAIL

A 1958 subdivision map, filed by James B. Franks, shows a short road off lower Florida Hill Road – near Route 7 – and labels it Moongate Trail. The road was part of a nine-lot subdivision, never developed, of land around Miller's Pond.

The name comes from the nearby house, next to a Norwalk River dam with a circular, moonlike outlet. The house was first called Moongate by Nathaniel Miller, who built it on the foundation of an old mill (see Miller's Pond and Abbott's Mill Road).

The name appears in the Board of Selectmen minutes as early as 1959 for a road in this area.

MOPUS

Mopus is one of the interesting old names that date back to the town's founding, and that fortunately have survived until today. Unfortunately, it's origin hasn't.

The word, identifying several places in the northwestern part of town, appears in many versions, including Mopoos, Mopoas, Mopo's, Mopoes, Mopoo, Mopo, Mopoo's, and Mopose. The spelling, Mopus, is fairly modern, first appearing around 1841. Thereafter, it became the preferred form in land-record transactions.

Although no one knows for certain what the name's origin is, speculation is that Mopus recalls an American Indian who inhabited the area west of Spring Valley Road, including sections of eastern North Salem, N.Y. In his book, "The Place Names of Westchester County, N.Y.," Richard M. Lederer Jr. says Mopus

Brook “was probably named after an Indian whose name sounded something like that.”

The variety of spellings indicates that his actual name may have been Mopo or Mopoo; the “s” at the end may have been possessive, as in Mopo’s or Mopoo’s, both of which show up in land records. Mopus, the modern spelling, may thus be a corruption, as Aspen is of the Indian word, Asproom.

None of the several deeds from the Indians to the first settlers mentions someone named “Mopo.” However, among the signers of these deeds were a “Sam Moses,” a “Mokens,” “Old Mosos,” “Young Mosos,” and “Tom Mosos.” It is possible that one or more of these names was transcribed on the deeds incorrectly and that one of the signers was Mopo or Mopoo. Or that the place should be called Mosos or Mokens!

Although the word was rarely used without another word, such as brook or ridge, Mopus was a place name of its own. An 1802 deed refers to a meadow “at a place called Mopo’s.” In 1842, a deed describes land “lying at Mopus, a place so called.”

Besides a brook, bridge, swamp, road, and ridge, Mopus has lent its name to an unlikely subject. The writer once had a cat that was among a litter called Eenie, Meenie, Minie, and Moe. Moe did not seem an attractive name by itself, and soon Moe-Puss evolved, which was conveniently converted to Mopus.

MOPUS BRIDGE, ROAD

Neither Mopus Bridge nor Mopus Bridge Road are very significant places today. Yet they are both old, interesting and probably once more important than they are now.

Mopus Bridge was first mentioned in 1849 when Lelah Bates of Bedford, N.Y., gave Lewis and Betsy June the right to cross land owned by the Bates “near the Mopus Bridge.” However, the bridge certainly existed long before the name appeared.

In 1841, town officials mentioned an “old Mopus Road” in changing the route of the highway. The old road may be what we now call Wheeler Road. Present-day Mopus Bridge Road extends from Ridgebury and Spring Valley Roads westward to New York State.

It is believed that Mopus Bridge Road is a very early highway that existed at least by the time of the Revolution when General George Washington passed through the town and stayed at Ridgebury center. Some historians think that Washington and his entourage came across Mopus Bridge Road on the 1780 journey.

One reason for this belief is the fact that a Washington-commissioned map of the area (Erskine-DeWitt map 43-D, ca. 1779) seems to show Mopus Bridge Road as the best route from Salem Center to Ridgebury center. This same route is also shown on a 1770s map, “drawn by Abraham Close of Salem,” as part of the main road from “Upper Salem” (North Salem) to Danbury, while North Salem Road is shown as the main road southward to Norwalk.

In fact, there is reason to suspect that Mopus Bridge Road predated the building of the western end of North Salem Road. The two run parallel to each other and Mopus Bridge generally runs over flatter land – typical of many early road layouts. If such was the case, the earliest road from Ridgefield to Salem Center would have taken riders from modern North Salem Road over Sher-

wood Road to Ledges Road, over a piece of Ridgebury Road, across Mopus Bridge Road and onto North Salem's Wallace Road.

The swampiness of the Mopus Bridge Road probably soon encouraged the creation of North Salem Road, the higher and drier road to the south.

Mopus Bridge Road was one of the last in town to be paved. Before the late 1960s, it was a dirt path.

Though the road is among the town's most-rural and least-traveled thoroughfares, one of Ridgefield's worst transportation accidents occurred along it.

On the warm and sunny afternoon of June 11, 1983, a single-engine Beechcraft had just taken off from nearby Danbury Airport, when the pilot radioed Danbury Tower, "Mayday, Mayday, Bonanza going down. I am at right now Ridgefield."

Eyewitnesses reported it experienced some kind of engine trouble and a power failure. Paul Hampden of Mopus Bridge Road heard a loud noise, went to a window "and saw the plane just over the tree tops at about 500 feet distances and perhaps 200 feet above my eye level," he told investigators. "It was obviously in trouble, with no power, engine apparently stuttering."

"I heard a pop," said Matthew Browne of nearby Ridgebury Road. "I looked up and could see the guy was trying to hold the plane steady but it rolled over on its back and went down. I never felt so helpless before in my whole life, seeing that thing go down."

The plane plummeted into a field on the south side of Mopus Bridge Road, a short distance from the New York State line and across from the Hampden house.

Killed were brothers Joseph and Henry Lutter and their sister, Jennifer Lutter Brooks, all natives of Georgetown. So was the pilot, Robert L. Brooks of Brewster, N.Y., the father in law of Jennifer. They had been out for a pleasure ride.

All four died instantly. The three siblings are buried together at St. Mary Cemetery, their names together on one stone.

A subsequent investigation by the Federal Aeronautical Administration determined that a seal connected with the fuel tank had been cracked, allowing gasoline to leak and leading to "fuel starvation."

It was the second four-fatality plane crash in Ridgefield; the first occurred in 1959 on Pine Mountain when four people from Patterson, N.Y. died.

MOPUS BROOK

Mopus Brook is the little stream that runs under – needless to say – Mopus Bridge and Mopus Bridge Road. It was mentioned as early as 1721 in the "Third Purchase" from the native Indians, a deed that describes a boundary "crossing the end of a plain ridge of land over Mopoos Brook."

The brook has two branches. The eastern one rises in McKeon's Pond near the northern corner of Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads, then proceeds northerly through Chestnut Hill Estates to a swamp west of the Ridgefield Golf Course. It then runs south along Spring Valley Road a short distance, and veers westward to connect to the main stream.

The west branch rises from a small pond and a swamp near Finch Road (the North Salem, N.Y., extension of our Chestnut Hill Road) and flows south to meet the east branch. The Mopus Brook then connects with the Titicus River in a swamp a short distance south of Mopus Bridge.

A short way west of the brook and the bridge is the home of Paul Hampden (1907-2006), who moved there in 1910 at the age of three when his father, the late and noted Shakespearian actor, Walter Hampden, bought a farmhouse there.

Mr. Hampden, noted for his sense of humor when he served on the Planning and Zoning Commission in the 1960s and 70s and later in his poems and essays to The Ridgefield Press, once offered the following origin of “Mopus Brook”:

Mopus Brook

“Mopus Brook, K.C.B., K.B.E., and one-time viceroy of India, fell into disgrace. The circumstances are obscure, so well did Whitehall hush them up, or as Charles James Fox put it, covered its tracks. Even the palace was kept in the dark. At all events, Brook was banished to this continent, and when the colonies rebelled, he raised a troop of horse.

“It is uncertain which side he was on at the beginning, but this band, known as Brook’s Bullies, struck terror into the heart of every housewife for miles around. Not a meat pie was safe. Due to the presence among his followers of some Hessians, who had deserted when their quartermaster tried to pay them off with wooden Maria Theresa dollars, these raiders were sometimes known as the Kuche Kommando.

“Brook was an awesome figure of a man, four foot six in his stocking feet and as wide as he was tall. His strength was prodigious. He was known to have lifted a pretzel above his head and snap it between thumb and forefinger.

“Of course, he was a dandy and a ladies man. Lafayette called him *mon petit galant*. When he finally defected to the American side, Washington refused to make him a colonel because, as he said, since officers had to provide their own uniforms, he would strip the colonies of all the gold braid, lace and sash ribbon, and there would be none left for others.

“It is known that he marched with DeLauzun, and on a hot afternoon paused at a little rivulet to bathe his feet. From that day to this, that stream has been known as Mopus’ Brook.”

Mr. Hampden added by way of a footnote: “All this is just the tip of the iceberg, as if were. I am sure that if Jack pursues his researches diligently, he will uncover more legendary lore concerning this little-known figure. He could begin by consulting me, preferably with Bob Scala standing by to minister to our comfort.” Mr. Scala was the operator of The Elms Inn, whose tap room was no doubt in Mr. Hampden’s mind as he wrote of Mopus Brook.

MOPUS RIDGE

The “Second Purchase” of Ridgefield land from the Indians in 1713 mentions a boundary crossing the “lower end of Mopoo’s Ridge.”

Most of this ridge is in North Salem today, but before 1731 was part of Ridgefield. The ridge runs from western Mopus Bridge Road northwesterly for about a mile and a half to a short distance north of Finch Road in North Salem.

Some 1730 deeds for land in what is now North Salem refer to property on “West Mopoo” and “on Mopo.” This may have been Mopus Ridge and perhaps even the home of Mopo, the Indian, if he existed (see “Mopus”).

MOPUS SWAMP

The Mopus Swamp or Mopus Boggs is the wetland north of Chestnut Hill Road and west of Chestnut Hill Estates and the Ridgefield Golf Course.

The place is mentioned before 1750 as “Mopo’s Bog or Boggs” and in 1787 as “Mopoo’s Swamp.”

MORGANTI COURT

Morganti Court is a 900-foot road, created as part of a June 1983 subdivision of 22.6 acres off the east side of Wilton Road West, near the Wilton town line.

Six lots of 1.6 to 2 acres were formed, while 15 acres toward the east end of the property were set aside as permanent open space. This preserve is a ravine that includes a portion of the Great Rocks, whose ancient name is preserved in the name of the road just to the south, Great Rocks Place.

This land had long been in the Morganti family, and was subdivided by John Morganti and Sons, a longtime contracting firm in Ridgefield.

Attorney Paul McNamara, who represented Morganti in seeking the subdivision, said John S. Morganti himself used excavate from the backlands of this property years ago. Reportedly, clay for surfacing tennis courts came from here. Mr. Morganti also personally planted a row of maples, 25 to 30 feet apart, that still stands off the easterly side of Wilton Road West, behind some of the houses.

A 15-year-old from Italy who spoke hardly a word of English when he arrived in America, Giovanni Silvio Morganti fathered a multimillion dollar company and a family that have both been major forces in the shaping of Ridgefield in the 20th Century.

Mr. Morganti got off the boat from Genoa on the morning of April 17, 1903, with about \$50 in his pocket. He took a train from New York to Ridgefield and that afternoon, was hard at work on the construction of the new sewer lines in the village.

After some jobs in New Haven and then two years at the Ridgefield Electric Company’s powerhouse alongside the old railroad tracks on Ivy Hill Road, Morganti worked for contractors on building houses, including some of the High Ridge mansions – Altnacraig among them.

In 1907, he decided to return to Italy to visit his parents for Christmas, only to be pressed into service by the Italian army and sent to Italian Somaliland to help build a railroad. There, he contracted malaria and was sent back to Italy, spending 83 days in a hospital.

Two years after his impressment into the Italian Army, Morganti decided it was time to go “home.” With the help of three friends, two of them Ridgefielders, he snuck across the border into France and eventually returned to America in February 1910.

Four years later, he started his own contracting firm, which grew to be among the 400 largest in the nation and employed many Ridgefielders over the decades. It has erected buildings throughout the eastern United States, and in the Middle East. Among Morganti’s projects in town were the East Ridge Middle School, Yankee Ridge shopping center, and Ridgefield Commerce Park. Morganti built Wilton High School, much of Danbury Hospital, and many other schools, hospitals, and public buildings in the Northeast.

John Morganti and Sons built and/or paved many of the roads in Ridgefield, and did some small-scale subdivisions. But large industrial and public buildings were the specialty of the firm.

Though he was reluctant to remain in the Italian Army, John Morganti had no qualms about joining the United States forces in World War I. He served in the Marne and Argonne campaigns in France with the 77th Infantry, fought in a half dozen major battles, and was wounded in the forehead.

Morganti remained active in his company until the early 1960s when his son, Paul J. Morganti, took over as president. Paul Morganti was also well known in town, serving in the 1950s and early 60s as a selectman, and then again in the 1990s in the same position. John's other sons, John, Joseph, and Robert, were also been well-known in the community.

The company was sold in 1988, but has maintained the name of Morganti Inc. In 1993, the firm announced it was moving its headquarters from Ridgefield to Danbury.

John Morganti and his wife, the former Elizabeth Eramo, marked their 47th wedding anniversary in January 1965, three months before John's death. He died on April 17, just 62 years and two days after he arrived in Ridgefield, an eager teenager from Italy.

MOUNTAIN, THE

"The Mountain" is a term appearing in many old deeds, and was frequently used in the same way as one would say land "near the pond" or "on the Branch."

However, in the 18th Century, the Mountain was more often than not used in connection with just one mountain: Asproom or Ridgebury Mountain. It was frequently so called from the 1740s into the 1790s.

Later, the Mountain is also sometimes used in reference to West Mountain.

MOUNTAIN LAKE

According to *Connecticut Place Names*, a compilation of some 25,000 localities in the state, Mountain Lake was a term used for a body of water in Scotland District.

The book cites as its source a quotation from Rockwell's *History of Ridgefield* – "The area around Mountain Lake northwesterly of the village..." – and says it's on page 426. No such reference appears on page 426 or, as far as we have found, anywhere else in Rockwell.

However, one of the lakes associated with the old Port of Missing Men resort property (*see* Port Road) was a pond in North Salem, N.Y., across the Ridgefield line from Scotland District, that may have been known as Mountain Lake. In fact, today the County of Westchester runs a summer camp, called Mountain Lakes Camp, and located off the west side of Hawley Road in mountainous woods of West Mountain. The Ridgefield portion of the old resort land was developed as Eight Lakes Estates (*q.v.*) – one of the eight lakes may have been Mountain Lake in New York. Also there was apparently an effort in the 1870s to rename West Mountain "Mont-Lac" (*q.v.*).

MOUNTAIN PARK

Mountain Park is a 1987 subdivision off 23 acres of Mountain Road into five two-acre lots, plus 11 acres of open space bordering the existing Hemlock

Hills/Pine Mountain refuge complex. The developer was Ridgefield Lakes Partners, which included restaurateur Fred Orrico.

MOUNTAIN RAVINE ROAD

Mountain Ravine Road was a name applied to a road that was within a proposed portion of the Lakeland Hills and Hemlock Hills developments in Ridgebury.

According to a map of the subdivision, “Ravine Road” or “Mountain Ravine Road” went off the end of Skytop Road, paralleled North Shore Drive, and then veered northward through Hemlock Hills Refuge to Ned’s Mountain Road, opposite Bogus Road.

This whole road still exists as a dirt path, and was the original route of Bogus Road, which dates from the 18th Century.

Neither the southern part of Otto Lippolt’s Hemlock Hills nor the northern part of Harold Goldsmith’s Lakeland Hills ever got further than lots on paper, and now both properties are town-owned open space. So Mountain Ravine Road was never developed, and the name has all but disappeared.

MOUNTAIN ROAD

Mountain Road is a very common name that has been applied to at least three roads in Ridgefield:

Probably the earliest Mountain Road was today’s Barry Avenue. The name was first recorded in an 1856 deed, and was appearing as late as 1910 on a map of property of David Childlow and John Light. It was the road from the village to the closest “mountain,” i.e., West Mountain.

Another 19th Century Mountain Road was an old highway that led from Route 7 over the Pine Mountain ridge to Pine Mountain Road. It was mentioned in an 1854 deed as “the Mountain Road leading to Buttonwood Swamp” (which was north of Bennett’s Pond). The term was used as late as 1940 in a deed.

The still-existing Mountain Road at the Ridgefield Lakes runs around Rainbow or Wataba Lake, from Bennett’s Farm Road to Shady Lane. According to a 1958 map of Ridgefield, drawn by Henrici Associates and commissioned by the town, the western section of Mountain Road is the southern end of an “old highway” which connects with Pine Mountain Road and leads to Miry Brook. This upper section of “old highway” was probably little more than an access to wood lots, for it does not show up on either of the two major mid-19th Century maps of the town (dated 1856 and 1867). Nor is it mentioned as a route of the British troops on the way from Miry Brook to Ridgefield and the Battle of Ridgefield, although that trail seems shorter than the Bogus Road route the troops are said to have taken. A glance at a topographical map explains why it was never a popular highway – elevations range from 580 feet above sea level to nearly 800 feet in many rocky ridges.

Fortunately, two of the three applications of Mountain Road have fallen out of use. Unfortunately, two nearby Mountain Roads exist in neighboring towns – one in the Redding section of Georgetown and one in the Wilton section of Georgetown. Some years ago, someone placed a classified advertisement for a big tag sale in The Ridgefield Press, The Redding Pilot and The Wilton Bulletin, saying the sale was on Mountain Road but neglecting to include the town.

Tag sale fans were driving around three towns, trying to find the correct Mountain Road.

MOUNTAIN VIEW AVENUE

Mountain View Avenue, which runs between Hillsdale Avenue and Danbury Road, is part of the 1910 subdivision called Mountain View Park (*see below*).

MOUNTAIN VIEW PARK

Mountain View Park is a subdivision of 19.4 acres into 75-by-250 foot lots, first mapped in 1910. It was not until a new subdivision plan was filed in 1927 that the names of Mountain View Park and of the three roads – Island Hill Avenue, Hillsdale “Street” and Mountain View Avenue – appear.

The land was a hayfield when Conrad Rockelein, a town barber and native of Germany, acquired the property for a subdivision he felt would serve many of the immigrant Italian and German families that had been coming to town from 1900 onward and were becoming prosperous enough to acquire houses of their own. He named the development for its views of Titicus Mountain to the west and Cops Mountain to the north – views obscured today by trees that have been planted and have matured since Rockelein’s day.

MOUNTAINTOP ROAD

Mountaintop Road, a dead-end lane, shows up on a 1959 subdivision map of the northern section of Hemlock Hills. It was supposed to run off Bear Mountain Road, but was never developed by Otto H. Lippolt.

MULBERRY STREET

Mulberry Street is a fairly new name for an old highway that existed at least by 1856 and probably much earlier. Until it got its present name, Mulberry Street was considered simply a part of Saw Mill Hill Road, connecting the Titicus area with West Mountain.

The name is applied to the portion of the road between Pin Pack Road and Ramapoo Road. When it first came into use has not been discovered. The term existed by 1946 when it was shown on the town’s first zoning map; in fact, that map uses Mulberry Street as a name for today’s Saw Mill Hill Road as well. The Ridgefield Press in 1942 referred to Mulberry Street as the eastern end of Saw Mill Hill Road.

Interviewed in the 1970s, oldtimers recalled mulberry trees in this area. Both White and Red Mulberry trees can be found hereabouts. White Mulberry, a native of China, was imported in the 1700s and 1800s to support silkworms, when there was an effort to grow them for the silk industry. The White Mulberry spread and hybridized with the native Red Mulberry, a species found throughout most of eastern the United States. A tree that reaches 30 to 60 feet in height, Red Mulberry bears red berries that are considered quite delicious by both humans and a wide variety of wildlife.

The name itself is common in towns and cities of the Northeast, and even contributed to the title of Dr. Seuss’s first book, “And To Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street.”

MUNDLE

In a 1721 deed, the proprietors granted Benjamin Wilson 17 ½ acres “lying on ye west of ye Mundle.”

The proprietors’ meaning or whether the word has been correctly transcribed is unknown. An old word, mundle, means a “stirring stick,” seemingly an unlikely description for a locality – unless it were somehow shaped like such a stick.

MURDOCK’S CORNERS

Some Ridgefielders informally called the intersection of Chestnut Hill and Spring Valley Roads “Murdock’s Corners,” recalled Josephine Murdock Donaldson of Allendale, N.J., in a 1970s letter. Her family had lived in what became author-illustrator Maurice Sendak’s house on Chestnut Hill Road from 1918 to 1964, and Mrs. Donaldson and her sister still owned land in the neighborhood into the 1970s.

Joseph Smith, postman in that neighborhood in the 1930s, coined the term because the Murdock mailbox was situated at the intersection, the end of the line for the mail route in those days. The house is several hundred feet to the west on Chestnut Hill Road.

Mrs. Donaldson still had a piece of mail from the 1930s, addressed: “H. H. Murdock, Murdock’s Corners, Ridgefield, Conn.,” which was delivered to that box.

MYRA BROOK

Connecticut Place Names reports that a Rand McNally map of 1885 labels a portion of Ridgebury as “Myra Brook.” This is undoubtedly either a typographical or a transcription error for Miry Brook (*q.v.*).

N

NANCY'S LANE

Several deeds, some as late as 1990, report that Regan Road was sometimes called Nancy's Lane years ago. The origin is not known.

NARAHAWMIS

The first purchase of land from the Indians describes the southwest corner of the 20,000-acre tract as "Narahawmis," the native Indians' name for the region.

According to the 1708 deed, the western boundary of the purchase ran down along "ye east side of another mountain, called Asoquatah (West Mountain) until it meets Stanford Bound Line, about a quarter of a mile to ye eastward of Cross River Pond, where stands a marked white oak tree with stones about it, and is ye South West Corner, and from said marked tree (eastward) along by Stanford line untill it comes to Norwalk purchase..." The deed goes on to identify the corners of the tract by their Indian names, and says the "South West Corner" was "Narahawmis." Or at least, that's how George L. Rockwell read the word, which he transcribed for his *History of Ridgefield*. In some histories of Lewisboro, the name appears as Harahawmis.

This area is north of the Vista section of today's Lewisboro, N.Y. A portion of New Canaan was originally part of Stamford, which explains Ridgefield's having once bordered on "Stanford." In those days the northern line of the western "toe" of Connecticut was farther north and included lower Lewisboro (Vista), Pound Ridge and Bedford, N.Y.

The precise location of what the Indians considered "Narahawmis" may never be known. However, if it was literally a quarter of a mile east of Cross River Pond (now Lake Kitchawan), it would be around Kitchawan Road and Old Church Lane in Lewisboro.

The meaning of Narahawmis, probably a rather unskilled transcription of the Indian word, is not known. Nicholas Shoumatoff, a scholar who studied the language of the Indians of this region, suggested the word might be translated: "He is carrying something on his back." How that relates to a place in Lewisboro centuries ago must be left to conjecture, but it may refer to something the natives mined or cut from this area.

The word never appears in a subsequent deed in Ridgefield through 1731 when this area was ceded to New York Colony.

LAKE NARANeka

Lake Naraneka (pronounced nair-a-NEE-ka) is the original and accurate name for what is today more commonly called Pierrepont Pond, a body of water along Barlow Mountain Road created by the late Seth Low Pierrepont. Pierrepont disliked the current popular name and complained to state authorities back in the early 1950s when he found "Pierrepont Lake" being used on state maps.

Pierrepont said in a letter to The Ridgefield Press in April 1938 that the lake was created from “an old impassable swamp” in which woods were cleared in 1936 and 1937 by “quite a number of men.”

A. Bacchiochi and Sons built the dam, and it took about six months for the pond to fill up. Water went over the spillway for the first time on March 30, 1938.

“We are calling it Lake Naraneka after one of the Indian chiefs who signed the deed to the town of Ridgefield,” Pierrepont said.

In 1955, he reported that some years earlier, when he was having a small pond built near his home up on the mountain, the gardener came across a spoon-shaped piece of cedar, bearing marks of all the Indian signers of the deed, and probably used by them to drink spring water. This may have been Pierrepont’s inspiration for the name.

In his will, Pierrepont gave to the state around 312 acres for what is now Pierrepont State Park, which includes much of the shoreline and land under Lake Naraneka. In the will he also expressed hope that his wife or her heirs would turn over the rest of the lakefront property to the state. However, Mrs. Pierrepont chose to sell the upper portion of the pond and the Twixthills estate to Jerry Tuccio, who subdivided the land and put a private beach on part of the shore for use by neighborhood homeowners.

The Indian for whom the pond was named was also called Oreneca or Tackora, and was the Sachem of the Titicus Village of the local Indians. He may have had a house in this vicinity. He will be discussed more under Norrans Ridge, Oreneca Road, and Tackora Trail.

In the 1980s, it became evident that the dam was in need of repairs. A taxing district – the first such district in Ridgefield – was formed to raise money from neighborhood property owners and undertake the costly repairs. The district also maintains the beach.

Lake Naraneka – and before it, the swamp – forms the headquarters of the Kiah’s Brook (*q.v.*), which runs alongside Ledges Road and into the Titicus River. It is thus one of the sources of New York City’s drinking water supply.

NED’S LANE

Ned’s Lane is a short dead-end road off the south side of Ned’s Mountain Road (*see below*) near its Ridgebury Road junction.

NED’S MOUNTAIN ROAD

Ned’s Mountain was named for Edward “Uncle Ned” Armstrong who, with his wife, “Aunt Betsey” Armstrong, had a small compound on Ned’s Lane and who in the first half of the 19th Century operated a station on the Underground Railroad there. The African-American couple hid enslaved people fleeing the South in a cave somewhere on the “mountain,” as mentioned in two 1878 newspaper articles. Two of the Armstrongs’ grandchildren fought in the Civil War and one was among the last Union soldiers to tie. (For a history of Ned’s Mountain and its people, see the book, *Uncle Ned’s Mountain*, by Sanders.)

The name did not appear in the Ridgefield land records before 1885, but was in use by the 1940s. The US Army Map Service was calling it “Ned Mountain” in 1946.

Ned’s Mountain Road runs from Ridgebury Road, opposite Chestnut Hill Road, eastward and northward to the south end of Old Mill Road. Much of this

narrow, winding path – dirt-surfaced until the 1950s or early 1960s – was probably used to gain access to wood lots in the 18th and 19th Centuries, when the area was commonly called Bogus. Wood lots supplied fuel for fireplaces and stoves.

The peak of Ned’s Mountain is south of Ned’s Mountain Road and east of Ned’s Lane. At 962 feet above sea level, it may not be a mountain by upper New England standards, but it’s pretty lofty for Ridgefield.

NEGRO ROCKS

In 1855, Abigail Bradley sold Rufus Roberts one-half acre, “situate on the top of the ‘Negro Rocks’ so called.”

This is the only reference to this place, probably a neighborhood name, between 1708 and 1880. The list of bordering property owners in the deed indicates the locality may have been somewhere along Great Hill Road, perhaps near Buck Hill Road. This area is notoriously rocky.

There is no clue as to the origin of the same. Similar localities in Connecticut (Negro Brook, Negro Hill, Negro Pond, etc.) have usually gotten their names because an African-American family lived nearby. In the same way, names like Indian Cave sprang up. However, in this case, the name could also have been descriptive of the color of the surface of the rocks.

NESOPACK

In the first purchase of 20,000 acres from the native Indians, the deed to the settlers describes the eastern boundary line as passing across “a pond called Nesopack.” This was probably the original and native name for Great Pond (*q.v.*). The translation of this word – or variations of it in other towns – has been the subject of some debate and conjecture. John C. Huden, who lists it as “Nisopack” in his *Indian Place Names of New England*, calls it a Mahican word meaning “double pond” or “two ponds.”

That’s logical, considering that Little Pond is very close by, on the west side of Route 7. It might be that the pair of ponds was called Nesopack, or that the whole neighborhood around the ponds was Nesopack, named for the two ponds, just as the large Bennett’s Farm section of town was named for one farm.

However, Huden also notes the existence of Nesopack Pond in Berkshire County, Mass., and says it’s Mahican for “eels pond” or literally, “they come two by two” – that is, silver eels, which travel in pairs.

Yet, for Nesepack Pond in Addison County, Vt., he speculates that it’s an Abnaki word for “two ponds.”

Arthur H. Hughes and Morse S. Allen, in *Connecticut Place Names*, liken Ridgefield’s Nesopack to Nashapog or Neeshapoug, a place in Goshen. It is translated “two ponds,” from *neesh*, two, and *paug*, pond. That is probably close to the original pronunciation of Nesopack.

Hughes and Allen also note the appearance of “NisoPark” in the 1892 (only) edition of the annual State Register and Manual, in its list of villages without post offices within towns. The one-year appearance of this name suggests a mistaken reading or understanding of Great Pond’s name. However, the appearance is mysterious – where did it come from? Nesopack or Nisopack never occurred in another Ridgefield deed after the 1708 Indian purchase, and was not a popular local place name. The Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich, writing in

the year 1800, mentions the name in connection with a list of Indian place names. He spelled it “Nisopack,” which is probably the source of that spelling which appears in modern histories.

The modern name, apparently simpler and easier to say, began appearing as Great East Meadow Pond in 1769 and was Great Pond by 1780. The pond was probably a popular fishing place for the Indians. It was certainly one of the favorite places of Chickens Warrups, a chief – who legend has it – used sit atop Chickens Rock at the south end of the pond and enjoy beauty of the view (*see* Chickens Rock).

NEW BRIDGE

In the division of the estate of Samuel Smith Esq. in 1787, there is mention of land “in the Great Swamp south of the New Bridge.”

Samuel Smith also had land at the “Long Bridge” near the western end of Farmingville Road, and the “New Bridge” may have referred to the recent erection of a bridge at “Long Bridge.”

Long Bridge, as best we can surmise, was a combination of a raised-mound portion of Farmingville Road and of a true wooden bridge. The mound was fill, used to raise the road above the swamp, while the bridge would have allowed the water to flow out of the swamp. This outlet is the beginning of the Norwalk River – here sometimes called the Ridgefield Brook – which still flows under Farmingville Road in this “Long Bridge” or “New Bridge” vicinity.

Perhaps New Bridge was new because an earlier one had washed out or was rotting. The term does not appear again in the land records.

NEW CANAAN ROAD

The portion of West Lane (*q.v.*) from the schoolhouse southwesterly to the New York state line was sometimes called New Canaan Road because it was the main route from Ridgefield to New Canaan. A 1936 map of Ridgefield so labels it.

Back in 1805, Timothy Keeler mentions in a deed “the road that leads to New Canaan.” Such phrases often led to a shorter, more efficient title; North Salem Road was once “the road to North Salem.”

New Canaan Road was a somewhat unusual name, however. All of our other town-name roads – Danbury, Wilton, Redding, North Salem, and South Salem – lead to communities that border Ridgefield. New Canaan Road actually led to Lewisboro, and there is quite a bit of distance to traverse in New York before one reaches New Canaan.

Perhaps that is why New Canaan Road was not a popular and lasting name. However, it is more likely that the name “West Lane” survived because the continuation of the highway in Lewisboro is also known as West Lane. It would be odd to have West Lane run from the fountain to the schoolhouse, then turn into New Canaan Road, and then – in Lewisboro – become West Lane again.

Of course, in Lewisboro, West Lane is a somewhat odd name in that it is in the easternmost part of town and is generally used as a route connecting to territory eastward in Connecticut. But then, it would hardly have been called New Canaan Road either, since it’s really a road to Ridgefield. However, there’s already a Ridgefield Avenue in Lewisboro. So it’s no surprise that we have West Lane sticking as a name in Lewisboro. In fact, the road was probably

established and named West Lane when that portion of Lewisboro was still part of Ridgefield – back before 1730.

Although there are no signs saying so, West Lane from South Salem Road to the state line has long been a state highway. In fact, from the fountain to New York State, it was part of the original Route 35, then called Route 35A. In 1934, South Salem Road was fixed up and became the state highway to South Salem.

Today lower West Lane is officially labeled Route 835, but like West Mountain Road (Route 822), also a state highway, no signs announce its state highway status. It's what's called a "secret route." Lower West Lane is secret and unsigned because, like West Mountain Road, it leads to a local road when it crosses the state line. State policy has been to post numbers on — i.e., "advertise" — only state highways that lead to state highways in the border states.

NEW LANE

New Lane is the original name of Branchville Road as it comes off Main Street.

The name first appears in the minutes of a Town Meeting held Oct. 3, 1831, when a committee was "appointed to view New Lane, so called, and report to this meeting on the expediency of widening same." Later the committee reported the road itself was wide enough, "were all encroachments on said lane removed." However, still later, it was apparently decided that more land for the road was needed because, as an 1832 deed indicates, the road "has become narrow and difficult in certain seasons for teams and carriages to pass each other."

To widen the road, land eight feet deep was taken from Elisha Hawley's homestead on the north side of the road for a distance of 36 rods (576 feet).

Exactly when the "lane" was established is uncertain. Evidently it was only a short time before 1831 since the road was then called "new" and had never before been mentioned under that name.

It probably extended from Main Street only to East Ridge; the East Ridge to Ivy Hill Road section of Branchville Road had probably already been established by this time.

The lane may once have been a private path, and may have been taken over by the town as a short-cut from Main Street to the main highway to Pumpkin Ridge and, beyond it, to Branchville (though that name was not yet in use, and that neighborhood was largely farmland then). Before New Lane was created, villagers generally used Rockwell Road off lower Main Street to travel to southeastern sections of town.

New Lane last appears in an 1841 deed. By mid-century, it was being called Railroad Avenue (*q.v.*) because it led to the new Ridgefield railroad station in what is now Branchville.

NEW LOTS

Several deeds in 1817 and 1818 mention "the New Lots." One 1818 deed describes land at "New Lots, a place so called."

The New Lots appear to have been along North Street, perhaps near Wooster Street. Why they were "new" is unclear; perhaps the proprietors had divested themselves of some of their last holdings of public land in the form of small lots. The proprietors were the original landowners among the settlers and they

at one time held all the private land in town. It was at about this time that the proprietors disbanded, having sold off all of their land.

NEW PATENT

New Patent, usually spelled with two T's, was the first name applied to what we today call Ridgebury (*q.v.*). It was so called because the town already had one patent from 1714, confirming in the eyes of the colony and Queen Anne of England that the settlers had the title to the town's land.

On June 1, 1731, Governor Talcott signed the "New Pattennt" for land bounded on the south by Ridgefield, east by Danbury, north by New Fairfield, and west by the colony line. The grant came "together with all woods, timber, underwood, uplands, arable lands, meadows, pastures, ponds, waters, rivers, brooks, islands, fishing, fowlings, huntings, mines, minerals, quarries, and previous stones" – a rather all-inclusive list.

It is believed that the proprietors obtained the right to this land as an exchange for the land that Ridgefield lost to New York Colony in that same year when Connecticut ceded the Oblong (*q.v.*). The Oblong was a one-and-three-quarter-mile-wide strip down the west side of Connecticut, given to its neighbor in exchange for Greenwich and Stamford, towns that had been in New York.

However, it was not until 1739 that the proprietors actually cleared title to the New Patent. They paid three American Indians – Betty, Jacob Turkey, and Mokquaroose – six pounds and five shillings for thousands of acres. By today's standards, that payment was probably not more than a few hundred dollars.

After the Indians sold the land, Ridgefielders began settling in earnest in the upper sections of Ridgebury. A meeting house had been built around 1738 and a second parish or ecclesiastical society was established in 1769. It was around then that the term "Ridgebury" came into use. However, New Patent continued to be used until as late as 1784 when it last shows up in a deed.

New Patent extended from the vicinity of the intersection of Ledges and Ridgebury Roads northward all the way to New Fairfield – quite a chunk of land.

Not all, however, had been turned over to the proprietors. A wide strip, called The Crank (*q.v.*), straddled both sides of George Washington Highway. The land there belonged to Danbury residents and was for a long time part of the Town of Danbury. The area around Regan and upper Old Stagecoach Roads had been deeded to Dr. Isaac Hull or Hall of Stratfield before this time, and was later known as Knapp's Farm for a subsequent owner.

There may also have been other pre-patent grants in the part of New Patent that is now western Danbury. One reason to suspect this is a map of the division of New Patent lands, drawn in 1740-41 when the parcels were divided off into the "4th Twenty Acre Division." Large gaps of land are shown on the map, hinting that perhaps there were preceding owners who, like Dr. Hull, received grants on unsettled and untitled lands within the colony as rewards for special services, such as in the military.

This division map, a 1787 copy of which appears in the land records, shows a total of 29 lots – one for each proprietor. They vary from 29 acres to 120 acres. The variation in size may be due to the quality of the land – territory that was of better quality and closer to town was divided into smaller lots while land that was hilly or rocky and far from town was parceled into bigger pieces.

Many Ridgefield families wound up moving into this territory. Well into the 19th Century, names like Keeler, Rockwell, Benedict, Osborn, Abbott, Hoyt, and Bennett – many of them probably from early Ridgefield clans – dotted maps of northern Ridgefield and western Danbury, some still farming the land grants of 1740-41. A few original families – such as Keeler – remained well into the late 20th Century.

In 1846, upper New Patent was turned over to Danbury. This was a reasonable decision considering the distance that had to be traveled by someone near the New Fairfield line just to attend Town Meetings and other community functions in Ridgefield, the center of which was nearly 15 miles away. In fact, during the late 1700s, there had been efforts to make Ridgebury a separate town.

A 1750 deed mentions “New Pattent Road” which was either today’s Sherwood Road or Ridgebury Road. It was the road to New Patent.

NEW POND

New Pond is a body of water west of New Road, south of Saw Mill Hill Road, and east and north of Ramapoo Road.

Aaron B. and William H. Gilbert, who operated mills on the Titicus River near North Salem Road, created the pond in the mid-1800s. The pond was “new” because it supplemented the long-existing Upper and Lower Ponds.

Milling operations along the upper Titicus River, south of Saw Mill Hill Road, had expanded markedly since the first mill was erected sometime before 1750, and additional water storage capacity was needed. A long, dry period could shut down many establishments, including the saw, grist, bark and cider mills. (The bark mill ground up tree bark to obtain tannin, a powder used in tanning hides at the Titicus tannery.)

In September 1868, the dam at this pond burst, causing the so-called “Titicus Flood.” George L. Rockwell says that William Gilbert was inspecting the dam during a heavy rainfall when it broke and he barely escaped with his life.

A wall of water, said to have been four feet high, swept down the river valley, washing away several buildings, including a barn and D. Harvey Valden’s tannery office. The flood “cleaned out every vat in the tan-yard and deposited boards, timbers, fence rails, and skins of half-dressed leather across the flat beyond the road,” Rockwell wrote. A couple of people were nearly drowned.

One eyewitness claimed the rushing water “roared like an earthquake,” though it is doubtful that the fellow ever heard an earthquake, let alone one that roared.

“A singular incident occurred” in the cellar of the home of John D. Nash, Titicus postmaster, Rockwell reported. “A basket of eggs was raised by the flood and floated around on top of the water. When the flood subsided, the basket was found deposited on the top stair, which had not been torn loose (the rest of the stairs had been swept away) ... Not an egg was broken.” Mr. Nash’s wife, however, suffered a broken ankle while rescuing her young daughter, Marion, from the swirling waters.

New Pond was a popular place for skating early in this century. Francis D. Martin sponsored skating parties there in the 1920s and 1930s. The pond had also served as a source of ice for the town’s iceboxes, precursors of the refrigerator. Ice houses owned by Joseph W. Hibbard, later a selectman, stood on the south and west sides of the pond early in the 20th Century.

In the early 1960s, a neighbor removed some stones from the dam to irrigate his vegetable garden, and the pond drained dry. Some years later, Martin Freeman of Saw Mill Hill Road repaired the dam, resurrecting the pond. However, Mr. Freeman reported in 1979 that the draining of the pond had killed all the carp that lived there, and caused the great blue herons that nested by its shores to seek homes elsewhere. Perhaps at least the herons have returned by now.

NEW POUND BOG(G)S

New Pound Boggs and New Pound Ridge are among the many names from early Ridgefield that have, unfortunately, disappeared from our geography. Their existence creates something of a mystery, one that may never be solved.

Early town records quite frequently mention New Pound Boggs or New Pound Ridge. The bogs, sometimes called “swamp,” are what we now call Silver Spring Swamp, the wetland east of Silver Spring Road and west of St. Johns Road and South Olmstead Lane.

This long swamp ends in a pond near the intersection of St. Johns and Silver Spring Roads. The water level in the swamp and the pond is maintained today by the pond’s man-made dam, but there is evidence that the bogs were created by animals – early records mention “ye Beaver Dam” in this vicinity.

Precisely how New Pound Boggs got its name is unknown. The locality is first mentioned in 1709 when the proprietors instructed three men “to take a survey of ye New Pound Boggs and Metiticus...” to lay out lots.

This action, mentioning New Pound Boggs, occurred in the very year of the earliest settlement of Ridgefield. It is doubtful that more than a trading post and a few tiny homes or huts existed here at that time. Yet we have mentioned of a “new pound,” the kind of reference that usually suggests that there is an “old pound” – i.e., an existing pound – already in town.

Pounds were small, fenced lots where stray livestock could be held by wardens until reclaimed by the owner. Their use would indicate a settled area, one in which there were farms with livestock. It seems hard to believe that a wilderness that had just been purchased from the Indians already had a “New Pound,” or, for that matter, any pound at all.

What adds to the confusion a little is that a pound definitely did later exist in this neighborhood. It stood on the west side of Silver Spring Road, opposite the St. Johns Road intersection. When this pound was built has not been ascertained from early town records, which do not appear to mention its creation.

A possible explanation of the mysterious pound and name is that land in this vicinity was being used for pasturing before Ridgefield’s creation. Only a mile or so south of the pound site was the northern boundary for the town of Norwalk (now Wilton). That area was under settlement by the year 1700. The Norwalk folk could have had an agreement with the Indians, allowing the use – but not the settlement – of Indian lands north of Norwalk. In that case, there could have been a pound in Ridgefield before there was a Ridgefield.

Also possible is that a pound existed at the very north end of Norwalk along Silver Spring Road near the New York Colony line. The nearby ridge could have picked up the name “New Pound Ridge,” a ridge and name that extended into Ridgefield. However, we have found no record of the use of “New Pound Ridge” or of a “new pound” in Norwalk or Wilton records.

Still another possibility is that the name was picked up from the nearby New York community of Pound Ridge (as New Hartford was from Hartford, New Milford from Milford, New Fairfield from Fairfield, etc.). When it was founded, Ridgefield bordered Pound Ridge, though that border was about two miles west of New Pound Ridge. Other than that, there seemed little connection between that town and Ridgefield; none of the proprietors or very first settlers hailed from Pound Ridge; and based on old records, there seemed to be little communication or commerce with Pound Ridge.

A final – and perhaps most likely – possibility is that the first settlers established a pound on Main Street in the year 1709 and had already made plans for another pound at Silver Spring and St. Johns Roads neighborhood. Though the pound was not yet built, the new locality could have been called “New Pound Ridge” because one was planned.

As noted before, the bogs were subdivided very early. Although bogs or swamps today seem of little commercial value, they were important back then. They were used as pasture as well as for growing cranberries. As recently as 70 years ago, cranberries were still to be found in these bogs.

So important were the New Pound Boggs that the proprietors in 1717 sequestered “all ye land from ye head of ye New Pound Boggs Swamp, with a direct line to ye path as it enters upon ye going up to ye foot of ye first Southwest Ridge.” (A “going up” was a path.) Although the description is very vague in modern geography, it appears that this sequester included a good chunk of the upper bogs, which the proprietors wanted to protect – possibly for communal cranberry bogs.

There are indications that New Pound Boggs extended farther south in the 18th Century than the swamp does today. For example, the proprietors deeded Samuel Saint John in 1721 “19 acres lying west of ye New Pound Boggs Swamp at ye north end of Norwalk.” Another early deed mentions three acres “lying below ye New Pound Boggs,” and bounded on the south by the Norwalk line.

The term New Pound Boggs continued to be used throughout most of the 18th Century. The last reference occurs in a 1792 deed for land at “New Pound Bogg Swamp.”

NEW POUND RIDGE

Perhaps not as old as New Pound Boggs but certainly longer-lived was the name New Pound Ridge, a term applied to the ridge on the west side of Silver Spring Road, running southward from the Silver Spring Country Club to the New York State line near Wilton.

The term first shows up as “New Pound Bogs Ridge” in 1716. Soon after, the “bogs” or “boggs” was dropped.

New Pound Ridge continued to appear in deeds as late as 1847. And it was at about this time that a new and shorter form appear. An 1841 mortgage describes land “at ‘New Pound’ so called” and an 1842 deed mentions property on the New York-Connecticut line as “at New Pound.”

New Pound Ridge also occurs in different formats: New Poundridge” (1803) and “Newpound Ridge” (1774 and 1784).

NEW PURCHASE, and SWAMP

New Purchase Swamp is the sizable wetland behind the Ridgefield High School, extending along both sides of the Titicus River from Sherwood Road and lower Ridgebury Road westward into New York State. It includes the confluence of the Mopus Brook and Titicus River.

This territory was acquired on March 18, 1715 in the second purchase of land from the Indians. This purchase consisted of the territory around the high school, or westerly and northerly of Lake Mamanasco. Since it followed the first purchase by six years, it was considered the “New Purchase.” Moreover, it retained that name for more than a century, even though there were six subsequent purchases from the Indians through 1739 that were “newer

Although “New Purchase Bridge” was being mentioned in the 1730s, it wasn’t until 1743 that the first deed reference to the “New Purchase” was recorded. In that deed, James Wallis of “The Oblong” sold Timothy Foster seven acres “lying in Titicus Swamp in ye New Purchase.” Both the Wallace and Foster families were early and longtime residents of the New Purchase neighborhood.

“Ye New Purchase Swamp” first appears in 1750. New Purchase Swamp continued as a term until 1846, but an 1878 deed mentions property at “Purchase Swamp.”

An 1805 deed speaks of “Ridgefield New Purchase,” a somewhat unusual distinction probably used to differentiate it from the section of New Purchase acquired by North Salem when Connecticut ceded The Oblong to New York.

New Purchase Bridge, mentioned in several 1730s deeds, was probably a bridge over the Titicus on Sherwood Road or Ridgebury Road. I suspect it was on Sherwood Road (*q.v.*), which, I believe, was the original route of Ridgebury Road (*q.v.*)

NEW ROAD (I)

At least four roads in town have been called New Road at one time or another, but only one survives under that name.

New Road, which runs between Farmingville Road and Route 7, was probably a simple, early descriptive name that caught on. Many roads were called “new” just after they were built and before they acquired formal names. A few were called “new” quite a few years after they were built (as will be seen in some subsequent examples, including New Lane and New Street).

New Road was clearly built as an alternative to the older, steeper, more curving Cain’s Hill Road – the extension of Farmingville Road that connects to Topstone Road, a main route years ago to Redding.

The late Emma Goepler, who lived for many years at the cider mill at Topstone (formerly Sanford’s Station) in West Redding, recalled the difficulty that West Reddingites had early in the 20th Century negotiating Cain’s Hill Road with horse-drawn vehicles on their way to Ridgefield. Most were willing to go the extra distance to use New Road, she said in a 1979 interview.

George L. Rockwell maintained that the road, which he called “New Street” in 1927, was built in 1856. Certainly, it existed by then, for it is shown on Clark’s map of Fairfield County, published that year. It is probable that, since it took a while for new roads to show up on such maps, it was built before 1856. It may well have been an old Lee family farm road before 1800.

Rockwell tells an entertaining story connected with the construction of the road. "One day when the Gilbert family was absent from their home, someone entered the house and stole the silver spoons. One handle was found near the chopping block at the woodpile where an axe had evidently been used to cut the spoon in two. For many years that was the last that was heard of the silver spoons until 1856 when New Street was built...While digging near the residence of Edwin A. Lee (near the corner of Farmingville Road)...a flat stone was lifted and beneath it were found the silver spoons – six bowls and five handles – just as they were placed there by the thief.

"Why they were hidden there, and why they were never removed will ever be a mystery. It is assumed that the thief either forgot under just what stone he hid his booty, or else became terror-stricken and was afraid to go after it."

NEW ROAD (II)

In 1835, when Phebe Thrall sold John Bates six acres "near the house of Widow Lucy Bennett," she described the land as being "on the New Road." That New Road was today's Limestone Road – from Great Hill Road northward to Bennett's Farm Road.

Back then, Great Hill Road was considered part of Bennett's Farm Road; it was the road from town to the Bennett's Farm district. Anyone who has driven over Great Hill Road knows why the flatter Limestone Road would be a better path to travel in a horse- or ox-drawn vehicle.

This New Road was a highway from Limestone District to Ridgebury and was shorter in length than the old route over Great Hill and Bennett's Farm Roads.

Why didn't the settlers build Limestone Road in the first place? Because Bennett's Farm district (mostly the area around the Ridgefield Lakes) was settled before Ridgebury. Great Hill Road may have led up more directly to that farming settlement.

In addition, Limestone Road crosses a good deal of territory that was swampy. In building highways, early settlers avoided wetland where possible, preferring higher, well-drained routes. By the 19th Century, money, manpower and perhaps techniques were available to fill or drain the land for flatter highways. Or maybe the growing population in the area simply clamored for a better road.

An 1878 deed still called this route "New Road."

NEW ROAD (III)

Another "New Road" was the highway built to bypass Old Branchville Road. Today, it is much of lower Branchville Road.

Train service had come to town in 1850 when the Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road was laid, passing through the southeastern corner of Ridgefield at a place the Indians called Wheer Cock but which had no "English" name until the railroad arrived. Then it was called Ridgefield Depot or Beers Station.

The arrival of rail service almost immediately sparked cries for a better road from the Ridgefield village to the depot. The old Branchville Road was too steep in some places and too swampy in others to suit the operators of passenger stages and heavy freight wagons that met each train and headed back up to town, a rise of more than 400 feet.

So, in 1851, the town acquired land for all the New Road, paying widely varying prices. While some community-minded people sold strips of their property as long as 950 feet for only a dollar, others cashed in on the new highway. Stephen Jones charged \$100 for 330 feet of roadbed; Benjamin Godfrey, \$45 for 922 feet; and Ebenezer Hoyt, only \$50 for 2,545 feet. Some land was no doubt better than other pieces, contributing to the price variations.

At first this new highway was “the New Road to the Depot” (1853, 1854). An 1854 deed calls it “Ridgefield New Road,” taking the “outlying” position that it was the road “to Ridgefield” instead of the road to the Depot.

An 1856 deed calls it “Railroad Avenue,” but probably refers to the section near the depot rather than at the other end. It was called “the New Road toward the Ridgefield Station” in 1857, by which time its newness was fading, as was the name.

The term “Branchville” did not come into use until just after 1870 when the branch railroad was built from the depot into the village – sort of obviating the need for the new Branchville Road.

The New Road extended from today’s western intersection of Branchville and Old Branchville Roads (at Pumpkin Ridge) to the eastern intersection, near Branchville Cemetery.

NEW ROAD (IV)

In the 18th and early 19th centuries, the way to go from the village to West Mountain (Round Pond neighborhood) was to head up Gilbert Street and across Ramapoo Road to West Mountain Road and then to Oscaleta Road.

Sometime before 1840, townspeople got tired of that round-around way and built a shorter, more direct route up the mountain. At first they called it New Road, then New West Lane, then Mountain Road, and finally Barry Avenue, the name that remains today.

A deed in 1854 called it “the New Road” and by 1872 it was still being described as “New Highway.” However, throughout this period, it was more commonly called New West Lane (*q.v.*).

NEW STREET

New Street, the newest of the “new” roads, runs from Gilbert Street to North Salem Road at Titicus. Privately built at the beginning of the 20th Century, it served one of the first modern-day, small-lot subdivisions.

The minutes of the 1907 Annual Town Meeting mention that the road – no name is given – had been built “recently” by Fred C. Lee and others “from near the old Pound site to a point near the Titicus Schoolhouse.” Fred C. Lee, first selectman in 1893, lived at the corner of Main and Pound Streets.

A year later, the Annual Town Meeting accepted the new road as a town highway.

New Street was so called simply from being a new street, a description that caught on as a name (as probably happened with New Road). It is possible that the name stuck because the road is just to the west of New Pond.

“Street,” incidentally, is a name usually used for a thoroughfare in a village or city, while a “road” was more rural in setting. Once, while talking to a town official in Redding, which prides itself on its ruralness, I made the mistake of using the word “street” in connection with a Redding roadway. “We

have no streets in Redding,” the official interrupted. “We have only roads and some lanes.” They also have a couple of turnpikes and a highway or two.)

Italian families that had recently arrived in America built most of the older houses still standing along New Street. The men served as gardeners on estates or laborers on such projects as the sewer and water system installations in the village. Many were skilled masons.

The land had been mostly swamp that the new settlers drained, reported the late Francis D. Martin (1893-1982), who witnessed the development of that neighborhood early in the century.

“They (the Italian families) built those houses out of solid swamp and rock, and built very beautiful homes by working very hard,” Martin recalled in the 1970s. “It was a mess in there, and they deserve a lot of credit.”

NEW WEST LANE

New West Lane is a name that once applied to two roads in town, but was primarily an early name for Barry Avenue.

The term first appeared in an 1844 deed in which Rufus Canfield sold Betsy Sears two acres and buildings “in New West Lane, so called.” This deed probably passed only a few years after the creation of this highway from High Ridge to the intersection of West Mountain and Ramapoo Roads, serving as a shorter route to West Mountain. It was at first called New Road (*see* New Road IV).

The road was a “new West Lane” because it served territory to the west of the center of town and was newer than the original West Lane, which is still so called. The term continued to be applied to the road through the 1860s and appears on Beers 1867 map.

However, Clark’s 1856 map uses “New West Lane” as a name for Catoonah Street. Beers map 11 years later employs “Catoonah Street.” Whether it was a Clark mapmaker’s error or whether New West Lane was for a while in the 1840s and 1850s applied to Catoonah Street is unknown. No deed has been found using “New West Lane” for Catoonah Street.

NINTH LANE

Ninth Lane is another of the little dead-end lanes off the west side of Manasco Road, developed in the 1950s as part of Eight Lakes Estates.

NOD

Nod is one of our old and wonderfully old-sounding names, one that has been preserved in no fewer than three road names in Ridgefield and one in Wilton. It may be one of our very few Biblical place names, and the only one that has survived to modern times.

In Ridgefield, Nod is generally the area along Nod Hill Road and Pelham Lane. The Nod Hill neighborhood straddles the Wilton-Ridgefield line and the name first appears in Wilton records.

Why would a place be called Nod by early settlers? “The Land of Nod, east of Eden” was the place where Cain went after slaying Abel (Genesis 4:16). Thus, it would seem to connote a place that is not very well thought of. It may be that the hills, the rocky soils or the distance from the village of Norwalk combined to give it a reputation as a difficult place, a place fit for a murderer.

In his *Annals of Wilton* (1940), David H. Van Hoosear tells a story that offers a different reason.

"Tradition has it," said Mr. Van Hoosear, "that a certain Isaac St. John – or his father – owned land there and in summertime would ride out with his workmen from Norwalk. Arising very early – to enable them to get a fair-sized day's work done – they would oft-times grow sleepy by the time the hills were reached, and the horses were allowed to walk. It was noticed that Isaac would nod in his sleep with the movement of his horse, and the workmen designated it Nod Hills, a name which stuck and they have been so called ever since."

It is interesting to note that Jonathan Swift, writing in the 1730s, was the first writer to use the term "Land of Nod" as a pun for sleeping.

Is Van Hoosear's story true? It sounds more like a story made up to explain a name than an explanation based in fact. But who knows.

There are other Nod localities in the state. One in Avon, says "Connecticut Place Names," is of unknown origin. It may have come from the "Land of Nod" or it may have been an abbreviation for "North District." Perhaps it is no coincidence that our Nod Hill or Hills was at the northernmost part of Norwalk (northern Wilton Parish).

"Land of Nod" is also a village in England, near Market Weighton, Yorkshire. Many Connecticut localities recall places in England. The "Nod" in South Meadows of Hartford may have been a reference to the English village, according to "Connecticut Place Names."

Yet another possibility is that Nod is a variation of some long-lost Indian place name or word.

Van Hoosear found Nod mentioned in Wilton as early as 1757. In Ridgefield, the name first appears in 1786 when James Abbott of Norwalk (probably Wilton Parish) sells a member of his family land and a small house in Ridgefield "lying and being at Nod." The name appears again in 1788 (another James Abbott deed), and in 1819, but does not show up again through 1880.

However, the name obviously was remembered, for two old and one new Ridgefield roads are named Nod today.

NOD HILL

According to U.S. Geological Survey maps (1949-1970), Nod Hill is the elevation of land just east of Nod Hill Road, a little north of the Beers family cemetery. This hill reaches 660 feet above sea level.

There is evidence that the whole area, including a section of northern Wilton, was called the Nod Hills in the 1700s.

NOD HILL ROAD

Nod Hill Road is an old highway running from Old Branchville Road south to the Wilton line where it connects with a road of the same name.

The highway existed before 1856 and probably is of 18th Century origin, having been designed to connect northeastern Wilton with southeastern Ridgefield.

The 1934 assessor's map of the town labels the highway as "Branchville Hill Road."

NOD ROAD

Bearing unfortunate and confusing similarity in name to the above, Nod Road extends from Branchville Road to the town line, where it connects with Wilton's Whipstick Road. It is, like the above, an old highway, predating 1856.

Nod Road extends along Whipstick Ridge and was originally called Whipstick Road. According to Aldo Tulipani, who grew up there early in this century, the name "Nod Road" was selected by a group of wealthy residents of the road, who decided they did not like "Whipstick." They may have selected "Nod" because the road led to territory in Wilton that was in that town's Nod School District.

"Nod Road" was being applied to this highway by 1927 when it appeared on a property map filed in the town clerk's office. However, many townspeople used Whipstick Road for many years. It was, after all, the more accurate and appropriate name.

NOD WEST DRIVE

Nod West Drive is a short, dead-end road off the west side of lower Nod Road. It serves four, two-acre parcels, part of a 1964 subdivision by John, Robert, and Paul Morganti.

The name is a little confusing and rather unnecessary, in view of the two other Nod-named roads in that part of town. Perhaps it will someday be changed to recall an early landmark that borders Nod West Drive: the Brimstone Swamp. Then again, residents of the road might not take kindly to the underworldly sound of Brimstone Drive.

NOORICUS RIDGE

In his 1800 description of the town, the Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich says: "There is the appearance of sundry Indian graves at a place called Nooricus Ridge." This is probably Norrans Ridge, east of Fox Hill Village (*below*).

LAKE NORONEKE

Lake Noroneke, more a pond than a lake, is a private, man-made body of water south of Old Branchville Road, a little west of Nod Hill Road. The pond and its name appear on current U. S. Geological Survey maps of the town (Bethel Quadrant).

John R. Eustis, a retired advertising executive who came here in 1936, built the pond shortly thereafter, reported Edwina Eustis Dick, the opera singer and his daughter, who lived on the property until the early 1980s.

The site of the pond had, before the turn of the century, been an apple orchard, reported Lois Owens, who with her father and sister had lived in the Eustis-Dick house at the turn of the 20th Century. However, Herbert Spencer Grimes, who owned all of the land in that neighborhood early in this century, had dammed up brooks in the area, which created what Mrs. Dick described as "an unsightly swamp" where the orchard had been. The pond did away with the problem.

Mr. Eustis named his pond after an Indian, also called Oreneca, from whom the settlers bought land. At about the same time that Mr. Eustis was creating his pond, Seth Low Pierrepont was building one of his own in the northern part of town. Coincidentally, Mr. Pierrepont called his pond Lake Naraneka for the same Indian. The variation in spelling is not unusual with Indian names, but

especially with this Indian's name, as will be demonstrated under Norrans Ridge.

John C. Huden, in his *Indian Place Names of New England*, notes the appearance of Noroneke Lake on a map and, not knowing its origin, attempts to translate it as a Mahican word for "dry land" or Paugusett for "far-off land."

NORRANORWA'S SPRANG

Norranorwa's Sprang was a locality at Great Swamp. The name appears on the Rev. Thomas Hauley's "Mapp of ye Great Swamp," drawn in 1718, and in various deeds. The map seems to place it along Farmingville Road (now Lee Road in this section) a little west of Limekiln Road.

For many years I had assumed that "sprang" was a variant of "spring," but the more I thought about the word, the more I doubted the meaning. "Sprang" as a variant of spring would be very rare – not even recognized in the 12-volume Oxford English Dictionary.

An old meaning of "sprang" is a "branch or shoot" of a plant. Branch, of course, is another word for a brook or stream, and it's possible that "sprang" referred to a stream or brook hereabouts (maybe even a brook that flows out of a spring!).

While the more likely origin would seem to be a misspelling of spring, based on its local pronunciation, I now tend to believe "sprang" meant a brook. One sign of that is the fact that the second word is always spelled "sprang" in all its half-dozen appearances in the Ridgefield land records – between 1718 and 1751. One would think that the misspelling would eventually be corrected during that period. What's more "sprang" does not appear in any other contemporary place name in Ridgefield; the word "spring" does (*see* Peespunk).

"Norranorwa" comes from the name of the Indian, also called Oreneca (*see* the following entry). He was no doubt associated with the spring or brook; perhaps he lived nearby on Norrans Ridge, a variant of the same name or word.

The locality's significance is not clear, except as a landmark. It must have been sizable and noticeable since it was in or about Great Swamp, a naturally wet and large locality. The swamp, in fact, is largely spring-fed from a huge aquifer. It may have been used as a source of water for grazing livestock.

Norranorwa occurs in various spellings, as does the nearby locality, today called Norrans Ridge (*q.v.*). It is found in deeds between 1717 and 1751 as a landmark, such as in the deed for property "on ye east side of ye swamp, in or near Norranorwas Sprang."

NORRANS RIDGE

Norrans Ridge is a locality whose name came about through years of modification by tongues that found the Indian language difficult to pronounce.

The name first appears in 1712 when the proprietors deeded Richard Olmsted land "at Nawranawoos Ridge." From there the name passed through many variations, as demonstrated by the following examples taken from deeds:

Nawranawoos 1712

Nornorways 1717, 1749, 1796

Norranorwas 1718, 1801

Nornornans 1738

Norrans 1738

Norrans 1739, 1801, 1811, 1826, 1858

Norrens 1751, 1785

Norways 1769

Nooricus*

(* This version appears in the Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich's 1800 essay on the town.)

The name also appears as "Norrins Ridge" in Silvio Bedini's "Ridgefield in Review," although that spelling could not be found in any pre-1800 deed.

The ultimate corruption of Nawranawoos or Norranorwa had occurred by the 20th Century. Writing in his *History of Ridgefield* (1927), George L. Rockwell calls the place "Orange Ridge." From Nawranawoos to Orange in 200 years!

The origin of the original version of the name is subject to conjecture. Most likely, it is a version of an Indian's name – possibly Oreneca, whose name as we have seen sometimes appears as Naraneke or Noroneke. Oreneca was sachem of the Ramapoo Indians, who inhabited the area and whose burial ground may have been on this ridge.

The English transcription of the Indian's language sounds were rarely accurate, so it's not unusual to see wide variations in what must have been – to the natives – a common word. However, the word, even in its shortest forms – Norrans, for instance – almost always ends in 's', strongly suggesting that it was the Anglicized possessive of an Indian's name, just as Mopus was probably once Mopoo's.

Another possibility is that the Farmingville region or perhaps the whole town was called Nornorwoo or something like it. The sound "nau" in the language of the Indians of this area meant "far" while "nawaas" or "nowaas" referred to the general Connecticut region of New England. Combined, they may have meant something like "the far edge of the (Connecticut) region." Such a boundary could have consisted of the lower Berkshires, which include (in Ridgefield) West Mountain, Ridgebury Mountain and Pine Mountain.

Norrans Ridge extends from the Farmingville Road area (where Norrans Ridge Drive is), northeastward of Lee Road, northerly to and along Poplar Road. It reaches an elevation of about 630 feet above sea level, and about 75% of its border is swamp. (Great Swamp's elevation is about 570 feet above sea level.)

Norranorwa's Sprang (above) probably got its name from the ridge; at least, the ridge is mentioned a few years before it appears.

Norrens Boggs, a term that first appears in 1717 as Norways Boggs, was also a common name, referring probably to the swamp to the west of the ridge.

Norrans Bridge appears as early as 1721 and seems to be the filled strip of land carrying Farmingville Road across Great Swamp between Danbury Road and Norrans Ridge. The term appears again in 1755. (This was apparently the "New Bridge" location mentioned in 1787.)

NORRANS RIDGE DRIVE

Norrans Ridge Drive is a looping road off Farmingville Road, serving the Beechwood subdivision (*q.v.*)

The 27-lot subdivision, approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission in March 1987, was at the time one of the most expensive developments in town, with new houses running from \$600,000 to more than \$1 million in price.

The subdivider was CV Realty, headed by Charles Szentkuti, a well-known homebuilder. Szentkuti had earlier built one of the town's first office condominiums, the Executive Pavilion at 90 Grove Street.

Szentkuti ran into financial problems with the Beechwood development, which was taken over by the Providence, R.I., bank that held the mortgage. The bank changed the name to "Beachwood," inappropriate but perhaps used to distinguish it from the fitting name of Beechwood. Beechwood reflects the copper beech trees planted in the area by Outpost Nurseries, which owned this land from the 1920s into the 1960s (*see* Outpost Pond).

Szentkuti had originally proposed putting condominiums on this land, but that plan was rejected by the Planning and Zoning authorities who believed sewer, water and traffic problems would result.

When the subdivision was proposed, Szentkuti Drive was suggested as the road name. The commission vetoed that, too, feeling it would be difficult for people to spell and pronounce. In addition, the commission has had a history of discouraging the use of developers' names for subdivision roads.

The commission asked this writer for ideas, and the present name was suggested because the road traverses Norrans Ridge (*see above*). It was a name that had long ago fallen out of use, but was worth preserving in a road name.

NORRANS RIDGE ROAD

Norrans Ridge Road, only vestiges of which still exist, ran from Danbury Road to Limekiln Road from the early 1700s until early in the 20th century.

It left Danbury Road along an old portion of that highway which now runs through the Fox Hill condominiums. Stone Drive, one of the private roads at Fox Hill, is probably built on the path of Norrans Ridge Road as it left the old Danbury Road. From there the road went northeasterly, then easterly to meet Limekiln Road at or near the intersection of Poplar Road. Willow Drive and the lower end of Poplar Road were the eastern end of this old highway.

Norrans Ridge Road existed at least by 1750 when it was called "Danbury Path." Although the route went through some fairly swampy territory and was probably impassable at times of the year, Norrans Ridge Road was a shorter route to Danbury (via Haviland Road to Pickett's Ridge to Starrs Plain) than the main Danbury Road (north to and across Haviland Road). Stagecoaches reportedly used this path in the 18th and early 19th Centuries — before the Ridgefield and Danbury Turnpike was built through Sugar Hollow.

In the late 1920s, a Town Meeting gave Norrans Ridge Road to Col. Louis D. Conley, who owned all the land on both sides of the road for its entire length as part of his Outpost Nurseries (*see above*). By then the road was hardly used, except perhaps for Colonel Conley's nursery operations along it.

NORTH AND SOUTH ROAD

In 1844, when Burr Edmond of Redding sold Frederick S. Edmond 55 acres, he described the land as lying on "both sides of the North and South Road in Florida so called."

The term, also used in an 1848 deed, refers to Florida Road, which was for most of the 18th and early 19th Centuries the only north-sound road in Florida District and was the predecessor of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike (today's Route 7). While the turnpike was built around 1829, the older Florida Road was still being called the North and South Road in the 1840s.

This highway was known as the Cedar Mountain Road in the early 1700s.

NORTH DISTRICT

Sometime during the first half of the 19th Century, a school district was established in northern Ridgebury. If it was created before the 1846 ceding of northern Ridgefield to Danbury, then it probably originally included land that is now just south of Mill Plain district in Danbury.

The district and its name existed by 1849 when Walter H. Craft of Danbury sold Catharine Whitney five acres “in North District so called.” The term was also used in an 1857 deed when Ms. Whitney sold her five acres.

More formally, it may have been known as the North Ridgebury District, a term used by Rockwell in his 1927 history of the town.

Just where the original schoolhouse stood is uncertain. It is not shown on either Clark’s 1856 or Beers’ 1867 maps of the town. However, in 1871, the estate of the late Aaron Turner (the circus owner who hired P. T. Barnum as his ticket-taker) apparently sold land for the building of a new schoolhouse. The deed describes a half acre on the west side of Ridgebury Road in ‘School District Number 15’, and adds the proviso that the school district create and maintain forever “a tight stone fence five feet high” between Turner’s land and the schoolhouse. (If the fence were not erected and maintained, the deed was void; I wonder if the stone wall is still there and who might technically own the land if it isn’t!)

The deed suggests that this schoolhouse was near the intersection of Ridgebury and Turner Roads (or, as modern maps usually label them, Ridgebury and Old Ridgebury Roads). A 1908 map shows “school number 6” just opposite this intersection. Probably shortly after that, the schoolhouse was closed because of the small enrollment and its students consolidated into the South Ridgebury schoolhouse, which was at the corner of Ridgebury and Old Stagecoach Roads.

In 1867, the North District served families on both sides of Ridgebury Road north of the Ridgebury Cemetery, plus Shadow Lake Road and Turner Road. It probably also took students from just across the northern line in Danbury.

NORTH LONG POND

A 1797 map of Salem (now Lewisboro), N.Y., uses the name “North Long Pond” for what is now called Lake Rippowam.

The three lakes (Rippowam, Oscaleta and Waccabuc) were once considered a single body of water called Long Pond. When environmental changes – probably from filling and from siltation caused by cutting so many trees for fields and pastures – made the lake shallower and created three ponds, new names came to be used. For a long time, Rippowam was North Long Pond or just North Pond, Lake Oscaleta was South Long Pond or South Pond, and Waccabuc retained the original Long Pond.

Before 1731 when the west border of town was moved (see The Oblong), Rippowam and Oscaleta, plus half of Waccabuc, were in Ridgefield. Today, the swamp at the east end of Rippowam and Oscaleta is still within the Ridgefield borders – swamp that was almost certainly part of Long Pond when the settlers arrived.

NORTH MOUNTAIN

North Mountain was an old term for Ridgebury Mountain (q.v) and possibly also Barlow Mountain to the east of Ridgebury Mountain.

The term first appeared in a 1790 deed from Gideon Smith to his grandson, Jonah Foster Jr., for “one piece lying on the North Mountain, being part of the Saintjohn Lott...”

The Saintjohn Lott was a more common name than North Mountain – appearing frequently in the late 1700s. It was named for Nathan Saintjohn, who received an early grant of a sizable chunk of land there.

Another deed, from Gideon Smith to Isaiah Smith in 1793, was for 3 ½ acres “in the north part of the Saintjohn Lott, so called, on Asproom Mountain.” This indicates the lot – probably nearly 100 acres – was located on what modern maps called Ridgebury Mountain, where Twixt Hills and Ridgefield Knolls (q.v) are now.

North Mountain, a term that was in use as late as 1855, probably was derived from the fact that the mountain was north of most of the population of town. The term was relative, of course, for to Ridgeburians, North Mountain was south. And Ridgeburians had higher hills of their own to the north of North Mountain.

Hence, it’s not surprising that the name has disappeared from the map as Ridgebury became a more settled section of Ridgefield.

NORTH PATTENT

North Patent was another term for Ridgebury, used chiefly around the 1750s. A variation of New Patent, it reflected the fact that Ridgebury was created under a 1731 patent from the colony’s governor, and was north of the original patent, which created Ridgebury Parish. Ridgebury was also called Second Patent for that reason. (Patent was invariably spelled Patent by the early Ridgefielders.)

NORTH SALEM ROAD

North Salem Road is a fairly modern name for an old highway, much of which existed before 1720 and parts of which may have predated the settlement of the town. Except for Route 7, it is the longest road in town, measuring 4.24 miles from its beginning at the intersection of Main Street to its end at the New York State line.

North Salem Road – at least portions of it between the village and Lake Mamasasco – was probably based on an Indian trail. From finds of pottery and other relics, it is known an Indian village or seasonal encampment existed at the north end of our village, near the old Elms Inn and Casagmo. Relics also suggest that the natives had villages or regular encampments at Lake Mamasasco, particularly at the southern end. This body of water, though smaller than it is now, was a good source of fish as well as wildfowl and mammals that visited it, and it is reasonable to assume that a path existed between the lake and the main village.

This theory is further supported by indications that the Indians had a fortified position – a defense from attacking tribes – at Fort Hill on Barrack Hill, a locality between the two places and along North Salem Road.

It is perhaps no accident that most of the town’s Indian – or Indian-related – place names, both lost and surviving, are for localities situated near North

Salem Road: Mamasasco, Tackora, Peespunk, Titicus, Tom's Spring, Fort Hill, Asoquatah (West Mountain), Asproomquak (Ridgebury Mountain), and Mopus. They suggest this valley was well-used or well-populated by the Indians.

The villagers needed a route to Lake Mamasasco because around 1717, the town's first grist mill for making flour was built there. This fact is reflected in the earliest name for the highway, "ye road yt leads up to Mamasasco Mill" (1743). And it is logical that the settlers would have made use of an established Indian trail in locating their own road.

Later, in parts of town near the highway, North Salem Road was simply "the Main Road." The first hint of its modern name came in 1792 when a deed described the highway as "the road that runs from Ridgefield to Salem."

In the first half of the 19th Century, land records mention "the main road leading from Ridgefield to North Salem." By the early 20th Century, it became simply North Salem Road, yet another example of a road's taking on the name of its destination.

North Salem was originally part of one large town, Salem, consisting generally of today's North Salem and Lewisboro, N.Y. When they split in the 18th Century (the mountain between the north and south districts made travel and communication between the two difficult), North Salem was called Upper Salem while Lewisboro was called Lower Salem. By 1789, the term North Salem had come into use.

Salem, incidentally, is a form of the Hebrew word for "peace," as well as a shortened form of Jerusalem. It was a popular name in this country, with no fewer than 35 towns so called, plus many others with such variations as North Salem or New Salem.

The original path of North Salem Road may have used today's Tackora Trail, which is a straighter, shorter route between town and Mamasasco. However, 18th Century houses along North Salem Road in this area suggest that the latter is also quite old and it is possible Tackora Trail was built later to bypass wetlands traversed by North Salem Road. If that's the case, Tackora Trail never really caught on as part of the main road, probably because it was hillier and because improvements were made to North Salem Road to make it drier.

The fact that the straighter highway has been called Tackora Trail since early in this century suggests that tradition held it may have been part of the old Indian route – Tackora was one of the Indians who sold land to the first settlers. This tradition is supported by evidence of an Indian encampment situated along the east side of Tackora Trail. For the Indians the hilliness of Tackora Trail would have been no problem since they did not use wheeled vehicles. What's more they'd probably preferred dry feet to the wet feet they might have gotten on the North Salem Road path.

It may also be that, north of Mamasasco, the route to North Salem originally traversed Sherwood, parts of Ledges, Ridgebury, and Mopus Bridge Roads (discussed under Mopus Bridge Road). The section roughly from the high school to the state line may have been built later to avoid wetlands and flooding associated with the New Purchase Swamp (q.v.).

Until modern times, the term North Salem Road was applied to the highway only from Titicus Crossroads (the intersection of Mapleshade and Saw Mill Hill Roads). South of the crossroads was considered part of Main Street (it was so shown on the 1946 zoning map of the town), but was better known as Titicus Hill.

North Salem Road has been a state highway since the 1920s. It was first called State Highway 143. From the 1930s until the late 1960s, it was part of Route 33, the highway that starts in Westport and today ends on Main Street at the fountain. In 1967, the route number was changed to the present 116 in order to correspond with the New York State highway to which it connects. (Route 116 had previously been used for several highways in Litchfield and Hartford Counties.)

North Salem Road's importance as a highway has changed a great deal since it was the road to Mamasasco Mill, the town's first sizable industry. Traffic between rural Ridgefield and even more rural North Salem has never been heavy and North Salem Road during the 18th, 19th, and early 20th Centuries was chiefly a route from the farms north of town to the village. For the past 40 or 50 years, it has been largely residential in use.

Its character changed a bit in 1972 when the Ridgefield High School opened on the corner of North Salem and Ridgebury Roads. The school was built hold more than 1,800 students at capacity – and has held 2,000 uncomfortably – plus more than 150 employees; it is the biggest non-residential center of activity in the town's history. In fact, the population of the high school building alone has been higher than the population of the whole town in 1810 – and that was when Ridgefield extended all the way from Wilton north to New Fairfield! Perhaps some day it will be called High School Road.

Commuting has also changed the nature of North Salem Road. The arrival of large corporations in Ridgebury, such as Boehringer-Ingelheim and in the late 20th Century, Union Carbide, plus the large IBM facility in Somers, N.Y., made Route 116 a relatively busy commuter route.

NORTH SHORE DRIVE

North Shore Drive runs along the north shore of Lake Windwing off Bennett's Farm Road.

The road was mapped in 1954 as part of Harold Goldsmith's Lakeland Hills development. However, only a few houses were built along the western end of the road while the land along the rest was purchased by the town, along with most of Lake Windwing, as parkland.

Today, much of North Shore Drive is a dirt trail, ideal for hiking or biking, that connects with trails that lead up into the woods of the vast Hemlock Hills town preserve or that wander around the fields southeast of Lake Windwing.

NORTH STREET

North Street, which runs from North Salem Road about two miles to Barlow Mountain Road, is a late 18th Century highway that served chiefly the farms on Copp's Mountain, along which it runs. It is so called because it heads almost directly north out of the village.

The name is not antique (it does not appear in a deed before 1883). Its original 19th Century name – Skunk Lane – is more colorful, but probably not the stuff of suburbia.

North Street passed some interesting localities in town. Near the eastern end of Stonecrest Road was the "Bear's Den," mentioned as early as 1795 and by tradition once the home of a bear – probably black. Somewhere near there, an Indian named Poctocton was said to have had a hut by the Norwalk River on the east side of "Stonecrest Mountain," probably in the 19th Century.

Stonecrest itself was quite a place and certainly the most impressive building along North Street during the road's history. Built around 1900 by Dr. Allan S. Apgar, the mansion was later the home of John W. Cox, Democratic national chairman, who entertained there many nationally prominent people, including presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan. The driveway to the house, which was destroyed in a spectacular blaze in 1949, is now Stonecrest Road.

The Apgar house was in the style of Governor P. C. Lounsbury's Grovelawn, now the Community Center. Its main hall was not as wide as the governor's, as Mrs. Lounsbury pointed out to Mrs. Apgar, a guest at a Grovelawn reception.

Farther north, also on the east side, was an old mica and quartz quarry, successfully mined in the 19th Century. It was in a ledge near what is now Mimosas, and was long held by the Lee family of Farmingville.

Also along North Street's northern end is Pierrepont State Park, known for hiking and paddling. At its southern end are the town's largest graveyards, including Mapleshade, Titicus, Ridgefield, and St. Mary Cemeteries.

NORTH VALLEY ROAD

North Valley Road is a dead-end road which runs northerly off High Valley Road. Part of Giles and Barry Montgomery's 1969 High Valley subdivision, North Valley Road was accepted by the town in 1973.

NORTHROP ROAD

Northrop Road was an old name for South Street (*q.v.*), apparently reflecting some past landowner in the neighborhood.

NORTHRUP'S ISLAND

In 1717, the proprietors deeded Joseph Northrup "one rood and eight pole upon an island in ye New Pound Bog Swamp, called Northrup's Island," surrounded by common land.

This deed and a subsequent one indicate that Mr. Northrup had owned part of the island before 1717, and the island had consequently acquired his name.

Northrup's Island was somewhere within the Silver Spring Swamp (between Silver Spring and St. John's Roads), but its location could be difficult to pinpoint today because of changes in the terrain and the water level of the swamp. It may have been in the lower end of the swamp, perhaps south of St. John's Road.

The last mention of the island occurs when Joseph Northrup sold his 12 acres on the island to Henry Whitne (Whitney) in 1729. With the title change, the name died.

NORWALK AND DANBURY TURNPIKE

Norwalk and Danbury Turnpike was the correct name for the turnpike that ran through southeastern Ridgefield in the early 19th Century. Nonetheless, the term does not appear in our records; instead, the road seems to be always referred to as the Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike (*q.v.*)

NORWALK MILL RIVER

There are several examples of place names, which, in their early use, were rather lengthy but which over the years, were shortened for convenience. The

Great East Meadow Pond became Great Pond, and the Stamford Mill River became the Mill River. It may be that the Norwalk River was once formally called the Norwalk Mill River.

A single deed – from the proprietors to Ebenezer Smith in 1712 – mentions land “lying on both side of ye branch or river called Norwalk Mill River, about midway between ye Cedar Mountain and ye East Meadow.”

The deed suggests that, to some people at least, the official name of the stream was Norwalk Mill River. The name probably did not stem from a Ridgefield mill, for there is no evidence of a mill on the Norwalk River that early in the town’s settlement. Perhaps the name was in use in Norwalk, the town just a mile or so to the south and from which most of the first settlers or proprietors came. However, in Norwalk, the stream had been called the “Norwake River” as early as 1640 and “Norwalke” from around 1661. It is not clear whether there was a mill on the river by then.

However, the Norwalk Town Meeting in 1665 granted Henry Whitney permission to build “a good and sufficient ground corne mill ... at the mouth of the Norwake River by the falles.” It is perhaps this mill and later ones upstream in Norwalk and the part of Norwalk that’s now Wilton that led to the stream’s being called a “mill river” at least once in Ridgefield’s land records.

From the 1720s until the late 1800s, a dozen or so mills existed all along the Norwalk River which had indeed become a true mill river (*see below*).

NORWALK RIVER

The Norwalk River takes its name from the town where it empties into Long Island Sound. At seven miles in Ridgefield, it is the longest as well as the largest of the town’s waterways.

The river’s source is the Great Swamp, just northeast of the village of Ridgefield. From there it flows northward for a couple of miles west of Danbury Road, veers eastward at a place years ago called “Turn of the River,” and then flows south along Route 7 into Wilton and down to Norwalk. From its source to its passage into Wilton, the river drops in elevation from about 590 feet above sea level to about 345 feet.

The north-flowing section off Danbury Road is often called the Ridgefield Brook (q.v).

The Norwalk River was an important geographical feature in the history of Ridgefield. The first European-Americans to set foot in Ridgefield may have followed the river north from Norwalk, which had been settled in 1649, 60 years before the creation of Ridgefield. Records indicate that the first settlers of Danbury traveled north from Norwalk along the river in 1687. Its existence probably tempted the more venturesome Norwalkers to explore northward, perhaps in the hope that its source was a lake – a valuable supply of both food and millpower.

The Indians undoubtedly made use of the river in their travels to and from Long Island Sound, source of both fish and shellfish. Before settlers built dams, the river was probably also navigable quite a distance north of Norwalk, probably well into Ridgefield, at least during seasons of high water. Unfortunately, while Norwalk is based on an Indian word, we do not know what the Indians called the stream.

Once Ridgefield was settled, it wasn’t long before townspeople were taking advantage of this resource. Mills were established at various points along the

river. However, because the Norwalk was not too large and not too swift during the first few miles of its course, it was not convenient to build mills along the portions of the river closest to town. And mills were not established at better locations farther downstream in the Norwalk River Valley until a highway network had been established.

The Many Mills

The first mill downstream probably stood near where Limestone Road crosses the river. A saw mill had been established in the 1730s – possibly earlier – by Benjamin Burt, the town’s first blacksmith (or by his son), and was later owned by David Osborn and then Benjamin Stebbins. By 1774, the mill was gone and in 1784, a deed mentions the “old saw mill” there. Stebbins, the last operator, perhaps could not get an adequate year-round supply of water to power a profitable mill.

By the 1740s, Richard Olmsted had a large operation going at Limestone, just above the Stonehenge Inn, where he owned both a grist mill and a bolting mill for cloth. This was later sold to Samuel Lobdell, who ran it for many years and added a saw mill.

Mills continued to be operated at this site until the end of the 19th Century, but not without the help of Great Pond. By 1780, a dam and gutter had been built to control Great Pond’s water supply to the river above the mills.

Downstream, other mills were built, often in conjunction with man-made ponds. A grist mill stood on the site of Stonehenge Inn; a saw mill was operated on the west side of Route 7 between New Road and Cain’s Hill Road; and Hugh Cain established his fulling mill on Topstone Road, just east of Route 7, around 1771. In the 19th Century, Cain’s mill was expanded into a full-scale factory.

Down at the north corner of Florida Hill Road and Route 7, now the site of the home, Moongate, Peter Burr established a gristmill in 1737. Later, a sawmill was added. In the 19th Century, the site supported an iron foundry (*see* Cain’s Hill).

Farther south, a little below and opposite the Days Inn, there were cider, clover, and plaster mills. There was probably at least one mill in Branchville near the Wilton line, although for some reason – perhaps the slow speed of the water in this flat area – Branchville was never a popular site for mills. Just below it, however, in the Redding part of Georgetown, the Gilbert and Bennett Company established in the mid-1800s a wire mill that grew into the large factory complex. Although the mill long ago stopped requiring water from the Norwalk River for power, water was still used in the milling process until the 1980s. The company could, by adjusting a dam it owned at Great Pond several miles north, control somewhat the supply of water into its own pond at Georgetown. Since the 1990s, the mill site has been proposed for a complex of houses, condominiums, stores and offices, but at this writing, still sits largely unused and empty.

Flood Dams

While mill dams held back the water of the Norwalk River at many points during the 18th and 19th Centuries, a new kind of dam is supposed to hold back unruly waters in the 21st Century. In the wake of the 1955 flood of the Norwalk River, which did millions of dollars in damage – especially downstream – and took several lives, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers designed a flood control project to lessen flooding in times of extremely heavy rainfall. In Ridgefield, it

consists of earthen dams – one at the outlet of Great Swamp at Fox Hill condominiums and the other off Route 7 a little north of Florida Hill Road. In normal times, the dams allow the river to flow naturally. However, in heavy rainfall, gates are closed, holding back huge volumes of water, thereby reducing the torrents that caused so much damage in 1955. At Fox Hill, dammed water is stored in the Great Swamp, purchased by the state in the 1960s and 1970s.

Only the Fox Hill dam has been built. Financing and planning delays connected with the once-proposed “New Route 7” have held up the Miller’s Pond dam project, although the state has bought much or all of the land that would be flooded by that dam.

Canals

For a short while, there was talk of bigger things for the Norwalk River. In 1825, discussion was underway over the building of the Erie Canal, a water route from the Hudson River at Albany to the Great Lakes. Danbury’s only connection to the Long Island Sound, the Hudson River or New York City, was by slow, uncomfortable stages and freight wagons. Danbury residents, too, became interested in a canal at this time.

One route studied was up the Norwalk River Valley, probably using the Norwalk River itself. Water from the Umpawaug Pond in Redding was to help supplement the canal’s water supply.

For some reason, that route was rejected in favor of one down the Saugatuck Valley to Redding and Westport. But even that path was abandoned because of the number of locks it would take to connect Danbury, whose Main Street is at 375 feet above tide water, with the Sound.

Perhaps it was just as well, for by 1850, the iron horse was beginning to rule transportation. In 1852, a railroad was completed to connect Danbury with Norwalk, the Sound and the City.

Source of Name

It is perhaps fitting that the stream, which originates in Ridgefield, takes its name from Norwalk, the town from which Ridgefield originated. The name is from the Siwanoy Indian language, although no one is quite certain what it means.

Most authorities believe that the word is a variation of Norwauke or Nayaug, meaning “a point of land.” Roger Williams, however, wrote that since words ending in -ock, -oug, and -aug denote some kind of fish, “hence, my conjecture is that the name has some relation to the abundant fish, clams, oysters, etc., that were found there.”

Some, like 19th Century Connecticut historian Jonathan Trumbull, suspected that the place was named for an individual Indian. Naromake, with a similar-sounding name, was a signer of the deed of Indian lands to the first Norwalk settlers.

Certainly the most entertaining, if least plausible, explanation was a traditional one offered by Connecticut popular historian John Warner Barber in the 1830s. He noted that the Indian deed stated it was for land that extended “from sea, Indian one day walk into the country.” Thus, he suggested, the town’s name was a contraction of “north-walk.”

In *American Place Names*, George R. Stewart suggested that the original Indian name, found in such versions as Norwaack and Norwauke, was modified in spelling (though not in sound) to suggest either a derivation from “walk” or a connection with some town name in England, where the syllables “nor” and

“walk” occur frequently, though never in the same name. As likely as not, however, the early residents of the town spelled it Norwalk or Norwalke simply because that is how the Indian sounds were most easily represented in their English language.

NORWALK ROAD

A 1737 entry in the town record book reports that a “highway (was) laid out at ye New Pound Ridge, beginning at Norwalk Road at ye north end of Mr. Osburn’s land, running southwesterly till it crosses ye brook...”

The description suggests that Norwalk Road was today’s Wilton Road West. And, in fact, Norwalk Road would be a likely name for this highway since it was certainly a main route from Ridgefield to Norwalk during the first few decades of Ridgefield’s settlement, mostly by Norwalk residents. (The road “running southwesterly” may have been St. Johns Road; otherwise, it was a highway no longer in use.)

Mention of this link between parent and child towns appears in the records of both communities. The Ridgefield Town Meeting voted in December 1723 “that ye Rhode to Norwalk pass over ye bald hill (in northern Wilton), where it was laid out by ye jury.” The jury was a committee of representatives of both towns, appointed to pick a path. The same motion was passed at a November 1724 Town Meeting, and Samuel Keeler of Bald Hill in Wilton was warned to move his fence to make way for the road – perhaps explaining the year’s delay in getting the road route settled.

This delay, however, was nothing compared to how long it took to get as far as the motions. Back in December 1713, the Norwalk Town Meeting chose three men as a committee “to make a settlement of a highway or road to Ridgefield, if they and the committee of Ridgefield can agree; and (the meeting) doth fully empower said committee to make restitution to such persons that sd. highway may take land from within the limits of Norwalk township.” (Remember that Norwalk at that time extended all the way up to the southern boundary of Ridgefield; Wilton was only a parish of Norwalk in the 1700s.)

At a typical New England snail’s pace, it apparently took the two towns 10 years to settle on a route.

The creation of this road more than a decade after the settlement of Ridgefield raises the question of how people got back and forth between the two communities before the road was established. Undoubtedly, a path of some sort, crossing various pieces of private and public (common) land, had been used as an early route. But as northern Wilton parish began to be settled in the first 20 or 25 years of the 18th Century, disputes probably arose over what was public highway land and what was private property. A route had to be officially defined – hence the warning to Samuel Keeler.

The original path between the two towns may have been pretty much the same as today’s Route 33 – Wilton Road West in Ridgefield and Ridgefield Road in Wilton. Some changes, such as at Potash Hill (*q.v.*) north of Silver Hill Road), have taken place in the 20th Century.

Another ancient route was Silver Spring Road, which heads south through Ridgefield, Wilton, and New York State to connect with Valley Road in New Canaan and Silvermine Road in Norwalk.

Although another road – the old Danbury Cart Path (*q.v.*) – connected Ridgefield and Norwalk, this route was too far to the eastern side of Ridgefield

to be a convenient road from most of Ridgefield to Norwalk. The cart path generally followed the Norwalk River; the Norwalk Road was a more direct route from the population center of Ridgefield to that of Norwalk.

Besides Norwalk Road and Wilton Road West, this highway has been called the Country Road, Flat Rock Road and just plain Wilton Road. Its northern section, near Main Street, has also been called the Town Street and Main Street. And, of course, it is also state Route 33.

NORWAYS RIDGE

Norways (Norway's) Ridge is a version of Norrans or Nornorwas Ridge (q.v.). The name, which occurs in deeds written between 1717 and 1791, has no connection with the Scandinavian nation.

NURSERY ROAD

Nursery Road was built in 1964 as the main route into Rolling Hills Estates off Still Road. The original section of the road was developed and named by Lewis J. "Bub" Finch, subdivider of Rolling Hills.

In 1985, the Crosswicks Corp. of Wilton subdivided 66 acres between the end of Nursery Road and Limekiln Road and extended Nursery Road to connect with Limekiln. The subdivision, called Overlook Groves, consists of 27 lots.

All of Rolling Hills and Overlook Groves was once part of Col. Louis D. Conley's huge Outpost Nurseries holdings. The nurseries encompassed a couple thousand acres on both sides of Danbury Road and Route 7 from Farmingville and Limestone Districts north into Danbury. Many of the roads on old nursery land are named after trees or shrubs planted as nursery stock — including Dogwood Drive, Copper Beech Lane, Linden Road, Poplar Road, Willow Court, Birch Lane, Laurel Lane, and Cherry Lane.

Outpost, which operated from the 1920s until 1944, maintained that it had the largest single supply of landscape grade material in the world.

NUTMEG COURT

Nutmeg Court, one of two roads in town named for this Connecticut trademark, is a short, dead-end road off Farm Hill Road. Part of Ramapoo Hills, Joseph H. Donnelly's 1956 subdivision, Nutmeg Court was accepted as a town road in 1963.

As far as natural history goes, the nutmeg — the aromatic seed of an East Indian evergreen tree — has nothing to do with Connecticut, much less Ridgefield. But in tradition, it is closely allied through its use in the popular nickname, Nutmeg State, though no one knows for certain why.

Ben Botkin, in his *Treasury of New England Folklore*, suggests that the nickname is derived from the fact that Connecticut merchants were famous for "speculation in wooden spices."

Charles W. Burpee, in *The Story of Connecticut*, reports that "tradition has it that when Connecticut 'Yankees' were peddling tinware in every colony, they also were whittling out wooden nutmegs in great number for the Southern market; hence, the title 'Nutmeg State.'"

Some say the Yankee peddlers used nutmegs as a form of barter with other traders and with settlers. Presumably, then, wooden nutmegs would be counter-

feits, used to pad supplies of real nutmegs. They were the spice trade's version of a wooden nickel.

Nelson L. Alpert of Stamford, in a letter to *The New York Times* in 1977, said that on a visit to northern Ohio some years earlier, he learned that "a northeastern section of Ohio was historically set aside for Connecticut settlers as the Western Reserve when the western section of Connecticut was ceded by the federal government in 1786. Many families settled there from Connecticut. Their household needs were supplied by a steady stream of peddlers from their home state.

"With spices critically important in food preservation and cooking, these Connecticut Yankee peddlers acquired the habit of carrying these relatively light supplies on their backs and the settlers of the Western Reserve came to call the peddlers from home 'Nutmeggers.'"

Mr. Alpert observed at the end of his letter that the official nickname of Connecticut is the Constitution State. Somehow, we doubt that subdividers will ever come up with a "Constitution Court" for Ridgefield. However, anything is possible; after all, we do have a Charter Oak Court.

NUTMEG RIDGE

Nutmeg Ridge, which runs between Branchville Road and Old Washington Road, was first planned in 1950 when a corporation called Ridgefield Hilltop Acres filed a subdivision map.

It labeled this road Biddle Lane after the Biddle family, which had once lived across Branchville Road from the subdivision. For many years, the neighborhood had been called Biddle Hill (*q.v.*) and still appears as such on U.S. Geological Survey maps.

However, when Ridgefield Hilltop Acres Company, headed by A. Edward Major, refiled the plan in 1956, the name of the road had been changed to Nutmeg Ridge. Probably someone had decided that Biddle, while accurate and appropriate, was unattractive. Instead, Nutmeg Ridge was chosen.

The result is that we have a town with a Nutmeg Ridge and a Nutmeg Court, one located two miles from the other. Since both the court and the ridge subdivisions were filed in the same year, it's hard to say who had first claim to "Nutmeg." Nonetheless, the two Nutmegs have caused considerable confusion over the years and one of them probably should be changed. Someday an ambulance needed for an emergency on Nutmeg Court may wind up on Nutmeg Ridge instead, and valuable minutes – maybe even a life – will be lost.

Nutmeg Ridge, part of a 24-lot development, was accepted by the town in two sections in 1958 and 1959.

When sales of the houses began, they were promoted with perhaps the most elaborate sales brochure ever produced for a Ridgefield subdivision. The colorful cover, done like an old cross-stitch picture, plays up the historic side of Ridgefield and calls the ranches and split-levels at the subdivision "early American homes with a 'later American' flavor." While they certainly lacked an early American look on the outside, many had interior touches, like large fireplaces and "exposed beams" that were supposed to be old-looking.

Houses were also given questionably colonial names like Hardwicke House, Seven Oaks, Sky Meadows, Sedgewicke House, and Tulip Hill.



OAK KNOLL

Name applied to former Frederic Remington home after his death; Remington himself called it Lorul Place (*q.v.*).

OAK TREE LANE

Oak Tree Lane, a road so small it doesn't show up on many modern maps, is a dead-end lane off Route 7 between Wilridge Road and Old Town Road in Branchville, at the north side of the Dunkin Donuts building.

The road and lots along it are shown on a 1940 map filed with the town clerk by the developer, Joseph L. Dioguardi. The road name does not appear until a 1950 map, called "Revised map of Pine Tree Lots, owned by Joseph L. Dioguardi, Branchville District."

The road was apparently so called because a huge oak tree, said to have been the largest of its genus in the Georgetown area, was situated along the road. The four-foot diameter, 150-year-old tree on the property of Mr. and Mrs. Edward and Myrna Byron was felled in July 1979 after it was determined to be a hazard because of rot.

There are more than 20 species of oaks, most of them native to our area. Among the most famous American tree genera, oaks provide about half the annual production of hardwood lumber in this country. Most older houses in this area were framed with oak while today, cheaper, faster-growing softwoods are used for construction. Much furniture, particularly Victorian, was made of oak. Nowadays, because supplies don't meet the demand and because of its higher cost, oak is found mostly in small-piece, glued-up floorboards and in some furniture.

Acorns, the fruit of the oak, are one of the most popular products of nature for wildlife. Most herbivorous mammals enjoy dining on them. It is also a main dish of the wild turkey, which has been increasing in numbers as our oak woods expand and numbers of acorns increase.

While this is our only oak place name, the tree has lent its name to many hundreds of localities across the country. Oak Grove is one of the top five most commonplace names in the United States – there are at least 91 communities so called, including seven in Alabama and 12 in Tennessee!

THE OBLONG

The Oblong is a term applied to a one and three-quarter mile wide strip of land along the western border of Connecticut from the Massachusetts line to the north border of New Canaan. This land was deeded by Connecticut to New York in 1731 in exchange for Greenwich and other land, essentially ending a long dispute about the location of the western border of Connecticut.

As a consequence of this trade, much of early Ridgefield is now in New York State. Within the town of Lewisboro, the Oblong includes the village of South Salem and virtually all the territory south to (but not including) Vista, and west to Cross Pond (Lake Kitchawan), plus the east half of Lake Wacabuc.

In North Salem, the village of that town, plus half of Peach Lake would probably be in Ridgefield today, were it not for the Oblong separation. That's quite a chunk of territory, and Ridgefield's loss of it did not please the Proprietors, the first settlers, who had purchased this land from the Indians and had led its settlement.

Ridgefield wanted compensation for its loss, which included rolling hills used for wheat and other crops, and the hilly western slopes of West Mountain, a source of timber. So the General Assembly granted the town a large wedge of territory north of and including part of today's Ridgebury. This grant encompassed the western section of modern-day Danbury all the way to New Fairfield. (The northern part of Ridgebury, now the western part of Danbury, was ceded to Danbury in 1846.)

The Oblong is a term that refers to the shape of the ceded territory. By definition, an oblong is a rectangle that has one dimension – length or width – larger than the other. The ceded land certainly qualified in that respect. It's less than two miles wide and 50 miles long.

The western line of Connecticut was a matter of debate and disagreement long before 1731. In the early 1600s, the Dutch laid claim to all the land west of the Connecticut River as part of New Amsterdam. Nonetheless, English colonists bought lands from the Indians and settled the coastal territories as far west as present-day Rye, N.Y.

In 1654, representatives of the Dutch and English colonists agreed that the boundary should run from a line beginning at Greenwich Bay and extending 20 miles north. In addition, Connecticut received all of Long Island, east of Oyster Bay.

However, in 1664, the British took over New Amsterdam and called the colony New York after James, the Duke of York, who received the land by royal charter. In the same year, the two colonies agreed that the boundary should be generally 20 miles east of the Hudson River, although Connecticut was to have land along the coast that was west of the 20-mile line.

New York eventually decided that the agreement gave Connecticut coastal territory too far west, so in 1683, another conference took place. There it was agreed that Connecticut could retain or obtain title to Greenwich, parts of Stamford, Darien, and New Canaan. The size of all the Connecticut territory west of the 20-mile line was calculated at about 62,000 acres. To compensate New York for this "loss" of land to which it had at times claimed title, Connecticut agreed to give up land along its western border – one and three-quarters miles and 20 rods wide. From the Wilton-New Canaan corner north to Massachusetts, this oblong amounted to 61,440 acres. Hence, the Oblong was also called "The Equivalent" and the new Connecticut border was sometimes called the Equivalency Line. In the exchange, Connecticut also gave up claims to Rye and Bedford, N.Y.

Discussions continued until 1731 when the agreement was completed and money was available to survey the boundaries. Thus, Ridgefielders who had bought and settled lands that were all within the Oblong were not caught unaware that their home colony might change. An example of this foreknowledge is Joseph Hobart's deed to Mathew Seamore for five acres at the Southwest Ridges in 1728. Hobart stipulated that "it is also to be understood that if ye dividing line of ye Governments take ye same (five acres) into York govern-

ment, that I defend it not unto him, or make it good, but only give him up all my right and interest in ye grant of said lands upon him.”

The ceding of land caused some problems with titles, although it appears that most Connecticut people who suddenly became New Yorkers held on to the land they had obtained through deeds filed in Connecticut. Consider, however, the concern of Timothy Canfield, who filed the following statement in the Ridgefield land records in 1739. Mr. Canfield described himself as “living in ye Oblong near Ridgefield, in ye county of West Chester and Government of New York, having formerly purchased six acres of land of James Northrup of Ridgefield ... which land lyes in ye Southwest Ridges so called ... which tract of land was cutt off by ye Government line, whereby my title and property unto said land utterly passed and became void...” Later, however, he indicates that he still had title to the land.

Although the 1731 boundary was official, Connecticut remained dissatisfied with the line, maintaining in 1855 that boundary markers had disappeared or were unclear. A new survey was undertaken that year, but it wasn’t until the 1880-81 sessions of the New York and Connecticut legislatures that the line was ratified and that Congress confirmed it – 235 years after the discussions began.

The term, the Oblong, appears in the Ridgefield land records as late as 1786, but lasted years longer in many New York State towns.

OLCOTT WAY

Olcott Way is one of several private roads at Casagmo (*q.v.*), the condominium development on northern Main Street.

Casagmo’s developer, David L. Paul, chose the name to commemorate the family of George M. Olcott, whose initials form the last three letters of “Casagmo.” “Casa” means “house” and the Olcotts’ large Italianate house stood on the site from the 1890s until, decaying and vandalized, it was razed in 1968.

George Mann Olcott, son of Charles Mann and Maria Cornell Underhill Olcott, was born on Aug. 23, 1835, in Brooklyn, N.Y., and attended Columbia College Grammar School.

“However,” wrote his daughter, Mary, in a family history, “a youthful delight in caricature terminated his school life, for the headmaster ... failed to appreciate a portrait of himself done by the young Mr. Olcott, and a caning was ordered. The boy’s father gave him his choice, either to undergo the caning or leave school. George M. Olcott left school and entered the world of business, where he achieved notable success.”

At age 16, Olcott was a clerk in a wholesale drug firm. By 21, he was a partner in a drug importing company, later called Dodge and Olcott, of which he became president in 1904. He gave up the post when he went blind at the age of 78.

Mr. Olcott was a founder and president of the First National Bank of Ridgefield (which later merged with Union Trust Company), and was a vice president of an insurance company.

On July 30, 1892, Olcott bought from Squire Benjamin Stebbins the old Stebbins homestead, whose saltbox house had stood on northern Main Street from the early 1700s and which served as a hospital during the Battle of Ridgefield. He tore down the house and in 1893, built his own place, Casagmo.

“Mr. Olcott’s heroic acceptance of his blindness increased the love and esteem in which he was universally held,” his daughter wrote. “A serene philosophy of life, an upright and self-sustaining quality was his greatest strength.”

He died Sept. 14, 1917 at Casagmo.

Olcott married Jennie Arnold in 1858 and they had three children, including Mary Louisa Beatrice Olcott, who was born in 1864 and who lived at Casagmo until her death in 1962 at the age of 97. Miss Olcott published *Poems* in 1902 and also wrote articles on gardens and flowers. She was active in the Ridgefield Library, woman suffrage, served on many women’s rights committees, and often spoke at meetings. Her other interests included gardening and breeding prize poodles, game birds and swans, all at Casagmo.

OLD BARLOW MOUNTAIN ROAD

Old Barlow Mountain Road is a section of Barlow Mountain Road that is now either little-used or abandoned. Today, the name is used chiefly for a short, dead-end road near the intersection of Knollwood Drive and Barlow Mountain Road.

As noted under Barlow Mountain Road, today’s “old” road is a portion of the original Barlow Mountain Road, which included the modern road from North Salem Road, past Pierrepont Pond, to a point where it continued over a now-abandoned path to today’s Old Barlow Mountain Road. From there the road went into Pierrepont State Park where its route through the woods, still clearly visible, is used as a walking trail. It comes out of the park along a residential driveway to Limestone Road.

Barlow Mountain Road was named for blacksmith John Barlow whose shop and farm were along the road in what is now parkland. Remnants and foundations can still be seen, and 40 years ago at least, an explorer could find various pieces of farm hardware lying around the old farmyard that was well on its way to becoming a forest.

The path was an old stagecoach road and may have been a route used by American troops on their way to the battle of Ridgefield in April 1777.

In this Ridgefield Names history, this is the first of about two dozen place names, some no longer in use, that begin with the word “old.” Frequently, the word is employed to indicate a road that has been replaced by a more modern highway. Sometimes, however, it refers to a former use of the road or place, or some facility along a road. Sometimes “old” is used as just a quaint-sounding addition to a pre-existing name.

OLD BRANCHVILLE ROAD

Old Branchville Road is another highway whose “old” refers to its replacement as a main road by a newer road. In this case, the newer road is a section of modern-day Branchville Road, Route 102, that was built in 1851 to improve wagon transportation to and from the new train depot about to open at what we now call Branchville.

The Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road opened its line in 1852, with a station at the southwest corner of the town. Old Branchville Road, part of the old route from the village to the area of the new station, was too hilly and, in places, too swampy, for reliable year-round transportation, especially when heavy freight wagons carrying such cargo as coal and lumber, were running between the station and the village.

Old Branchville Road is a very old highway, laid out by the “Select Men” on Dec. 26, 1744. They described the path from its start as “beginning at Fairfield (now Redding) line at ye south end of Cedar Mountain at ye northeast corner of Abraham Bennit’s land, and so running westward between ye Bennit’s land and Matthew Seamore’s till it come to ye west side of ye land at ye Wolfpitts, and from thence westward 8 rodds wide till it comes to ye Pompion Ridge to Smith’s lott and Osburn’s, and thence onward as ye way is now to town...”

Pompion or Pumpkin Ridge is the hill at the top of Branchville Road, just west of the Old Branchville Road-Branchville Road intersection.

Until fairly recently, Old Branchville Road was a dirt lane, in poor condition. Earlier in the century, much of the property along it belonged to the estate of Herbert Spencer Grimes, and there were few houses along it.

Among the landmarks on the road is the Branchville Schoolhouse, an early 20th Century structure. Among the landmarks on the road is the Branchville Schoolhouse, an early 20th Century structure. Another memorable — and mysterious — structure is the stone shell of two small buildings near the Nod Hill Road intersection, once part of the estate of Herbert Spencer Greims and his wife, Mary Hearn Greims. Built by stonemason Joseph Knoche, the structures were never completed. No one knows for certain what their intended purpose was, though theories include an artist’s studio and cottage (Mary Greims was a regionally well-known artist), a hunting lodge or a caretaker’s cottage. The structures are now owned by the town as part of a small piece of open space donated in connection with a subdivision. [They are discussed in more detail in the book, “Ridgefield Chronicles” (The History Press, 2014).]

OLD BURYING YARD, GROUND

The Old Burying Ground, mentioned as such in 19th Century deeds, was the town’s first cemetery. It stands on Wilton Road East below Main Street and just north of Creamery Lane.

The cemetery was laid out in the year of the town’s founding and is marked today with a monument, inscribed: “Ye burying yard lay’d out ye Nov. 25, 1708, by ye first settlers of the Town of Ridgefield.”

The marker lists 40 pioneers buried there as well as “an unknown British soldier killed in the Battle of Ridgefield.” The Village Improvement Society erected the monument in 1931 after time and vandals had destroyed most of the old headstones.

When he was writing his history of Ridgefield in the 1920s, George L. Rockwell found only two tombstones still standing in the Old Burying Ground. By 1973, nothing remained except a small portion of a slate stone, lying flat on the ground, which says “54th year of his age” and which probably belonged to the grave of Captain Matthew Benedict “who departed this life July 7, 1757,” according to town records. Capt. Benedict, born five years before the town was settled, probably came as a small child. By 2001, even that fragment was not visible.

The cemetery originally extended across Wilton Road East and included what are now several lots holding houses on Main Street and Wilton Road East. Rockwell said the current burying ground “is only a portion of the original cemetery, as a road was cut through a section... about 1850, and the tombstones and remains of the early settlers were carted off. The town in town meeting sanctioned this deed.”

Glenna Welsh, author of “The Proprietors of Ridgefield,” later observed: “Mr. Rockwell’s curt closing remark infers that this action should never have been taken, as indeed, it should not.”

It is not clear where the stones and bones were “carted off” to, but the earliest visible gravestones at the next oldest cemetery, Titicus, are dated in the 1730s.

Over the years, the burying ground had not always been well kept, a fact that would have made the old Village Improvement Committee shudder. In 1973, several trees had fallen across the rarely mowed grass, and left to rot. In 1988, local garden clubs cleaned up the property, but by 2001, the cemetery was overgrown, with trash dumped along its perimeter. In recent years, however, garden club members and the town’s Cemetery Committee have kept an eye on the place, preventing it from being overrun. A park bench was even installed so visitors can rest while contemplating the town’s founders.

How did the Village Improvement Committee know who was buried there? Perhaps from looking at the town hall’s death records, which, though they do not specify where burials took place, do tell the death dates. Anyone who died before Titicus was established in 1735 was probably buried at Ye Burying Yard, although some—like Captain Benedict—were buried after Titicus had opened.

Note that the word “Ye” is pronounced “The.” The Y represents the Old English letter, þ, called “thorn,” which was pronounced TH-.

OLD CHURCH ROAD

Old Church Road is a name that was hand-written on a 1935 assessor’s map in the town hall for a road that was on the east side of a triangle of land, on which stood the Episcopal Church of Ridgebury. The road ran from Ned’s Mountain Road northwesterly to Ridgebury Road, and may now be part of a private driveway that still exists in this vicinity.

Ridgebury had been a mission of the Episcopal Church by 1731, the year Ridgebury was patented, although very few people were living in upper Ridgebury then. A church building was probably erected between 1750 and 1760 and remained in operation with visiting ministers until the outbreak of the Revolution, when the Church of England became unpopular. After the war, in 1789, the Ridgebury church was reopened by the minister from Ridgefield, Dr. David Perry, but a year later, was abandoned. The church building was razed in 1810.

An Episcopal cemetery stood near the church within the triangle. Sometime during the 19th Century, it was said, many of the stones were removed by someone – obviously neither religious nor afraid of ghosts – and used for fill around the foundation of a house built at the north tip of the triangle. A few stones were left standing into the 20th Century, but they and their graves were eventually removed to another cemetery.

OLD CREAMERY HIGHWAY

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of 1911 mention “the Old Creamery Highway,” perhaps the earliest name for what we today call Creamery Lane (*q.v.*), the short road that runs between Wilton Roads East and West, just below Main Street. The road was named for a creamery on the north side of the street near Wilton Road East. The fact that the Town Meeting spoke of “Old” Creamery Highway suggests that the creamery was no longer in use; there was no reason to label the highway itself old. The creamery operated in a

building that's now apartments, but was from the 1940s to 1970s the Goodwill Community Baptist Church.

The term "highway," incidentally, tends to convey the image of a major thoroughfare. However, in pre-pavement days, just about any public road could be called a highway.

OLD DANBURY ROAD

Old Danbury Road is the name of the short stretch of highway, just east of Danbury Road, that runs between Haviland and Danbury Roads. It forms the east side of a triangle, and connects to Danbury Road opposite the Limestone service station.

This was the original beginning of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike, which ran from Haviland Road north through Sugar Hollow to Danbury. The turnpike was incorporated in 1801 and built shortly thereafter.

Around 1928, Old Danbury Road was bypassed by the straighter stretch of Danbury Road, which was by then a free state highway.

OLD FARM ROAD

Old Farm Road is a paper highway, having appeared as the main road on a 1957 subdivision map filed by Herman J. Leffert and others. The 100-acre parcel was called Rolling Meadow Estates. The neighborhood, now called Ridgebury Estates, is situated between Briar Ridge and Shadow Lake Roads.

The Leffert subdivision was never developed. Other roads shown on the map are Pasture Lane, Pheasant Lane, Hawk Court, Little Brook Lane, Dairy Court, and Dairy Drive. Although the road was never built, the name of Old Farm Road still appears on some maps and in some records in the town hall.

OLD HILL

Several deeds in the 1830s refer to the Old Hill, a locality that seemed to be near Lake Mamasasco. The name was probably derived from Old Hill Lot – a term in which the "old" modifies "lot." To say that a hill is old is stating the obvious and would not be typical of 18th or 19th Century names.

OLD MAIN HIGHWAY

Old Main Highway is a quaint and accurate name for the road east of and parallel to the railroad tracks and Route 7 in Branchville.

Years ago – at least before 1920 – the Sugar Hollow Turnpike, the highway that is now Route 7, ran on the east side of the tracks in Branchville until several hundred yards north of the train station. Hence this road was part of the "main highway."

The roadway was moved to the west side of the tracks, probably to avoid two crossings over the tracks and over the Norwalk River.

The 1934 assessors' maps call this road "Old Norwalk Road." Modern maps frequently call it West Branchville Road (*q.v.*), one of the most ludicrous of Ridgefield's road names since the road is in the easternmost part of Branchville and the town.

OLD MEETING HOUSE TRACT

Two deeds in the 1850s mention the "Old Meeting House Tract," a term that referred to a parcel on the corner of North Salem Road and North Street.

It was on this plot that the first church building of the Methodist Society was erected in 1824. The structure was used as a church until 1841 when a new Methodist church was erected at the north corner of Main and Catoonah Streets, a site that remained the location of the Methodist church here for more than a century. In the mid-1960s, it was razed and replaced with a brick office-store building when a new church was opened at Main Street and King Lane.

After the first church was vacated, the property was sold to private owners – probably Jared Mead and Lewis Slauson – who converted it into a house. Eventually, the tract became part of the Ridgefield Cemetery, and the Lounsbury family plot today occupies the exact spot where the church stood.

OLD HORSE POUND

The Old Horse Pound, discussed in more detail under Horse Pound Swamp, was a term that appeared in a 1796 deed for six acres “on the Mountain near the Old Horse Pound.”

The horse pound, presumably used to contain stray horses, was established in 1717 somewhere in the southwestern part of town, probably in the vicinity of West Lane or South Salem Road, perhaps near today’s state line.

The fact that it was called “old” in 1796 suggests that it had not been used in some time.

OLD MILL POND

Old Mill Pond was the name used by Otto H. Lippolt on the map of his 1959 Hemlock Hills subdivision for a small body of water on the west side of Old Mill Road.

The name suggests that there was a mill, undoubtedly a saw mill, connected with the pond some years ago. It may not have been a very old mill, for no mention of a saw mill in this neighborhood was found in an inspection of all the town’s land records before 1880.

The pond has also been called Lippolt Pond (*q.v.*)

OLD MILL ROAD

Old Mill Road runs from George Washington Highway to Ned’s Mountain Road, past the Old Mill Pond. It is the main road of Otto Lippolt’s Hemlock Hills subdivision, and was developed in the early 1960s.

OLD MUSKET LANE

Old Musket Lane is a short, dead-end road off Powderhorn Drive. Both roads are part of a subdivision, called Gun Hill Farms, the initial work on which was done by Donald Thomas, but which was named and developed by Robert E. Roche.

Mr. Roche was interested in guns and things Western, and selected these colonial-sounding firearms names.

The subdivision existed by late 1964 when development began. Old Musket Lane was probably built around 1965; it became a town road in 1970.

OLD NOD ROAD

Old Nod Road is another name for Old Branchville Road, according to a deed filed with the town clerk in 1946.

Old Branchville Road connects to Nod Hill Road, which leads up Nod Hill and into Wilton where the road is also called Nod Hill Road.

Old Branchville Road was the original route of a highway from the village to the southeast corner of town. Before Branchville as a community came into being with the arrival of the railroad in 1852, today's Old Branchville Road may have been more commonly thought of as a route to Nod Hill and may have been called the Road to Nod Hill – shortened to Nod Road.

However, today the road is called Old Branchville because it was the original route of the road from the village to Branchville. It was less used after the new, less-hilly route after the railroad arrived.

OLD NORWALK ROAD

Old Norwalk Road is another name for Old Main Road, the narrow highway that parallels Route 7, east of the railroad tracks in Branchville, and that is foolishly also called West Branchville Road. This road was the original path of Route 7 in this vicinity and, to people to the north, like Danburians, it was the Norwalk Road. It was also often called the Danbury-Norwalk Road or Turnpike.

OLD OSCALETA ROAD

Old Oscaleta Road is the name applied to the short, old section of the west end of West Mountain Road into New York State. As the name suggests, the road was once the western extension of Oscaleta Road.

Before the new section of West Mountain Road was built west of Old West Mountain Road, Oscaleta Road served as the main road over the mountain into Lewisboro. Thus, Oscaleta and Old Oscaleta Roads, now separated by a quarter of a mile of West Mountain Road, used to be one highway, which explains the connection between the two names.

For the origin of the name "Oscaleta," see Oscaleta Road

OLD PIERCE ROAD

Old Pierce Road is a little lane, dirt until recently, off Danbury Road, named for Charles Pierce, who lived there. Mr. Pierce worked on the estate of Colonel Louis D. Conley, who in the 1920s owned most of the land on both sides of Danbury Road for his nurseries. The road was little more than a driveway.

In 1979, the road was improved to serve a subdivision of the property of Actor Cyril Ritchard, famed for his portrayal of Captain Hook in *Peter Pan*. Mr. Ritchard had lived in a house on the nearby pond until his death in 1977.

OLD QUARRY ROAD

Old Quarry Road extends from Grove Street to the town transfer and recycling center, the highway department depot, and ends at the intersection of South Street and Ligi's Way.

The road was so called from early in the 20th Century for an old stone quarry, which is still visible on the adjacent Schlumberger-Doll property on the south side of the road. The small quarry was worked in the 19th Century, perhaps even the 18th Century, probably to supply stone for foundations, basements, and fireplaces of Ridgefield homes.

The road was also called Dump Road as late as 1958 (when the name appears in the minutes of a Board of Selectmen's meeting). The dump started back around 1916 or 1917 when a few townspeople began tossing their trash on a small piece of land owned by William Peatt Sr. Mr. Peatt, according to the late Francis D. Martin, didn't mind. Soon, the area became the place to toss your garbage.

Peatt owned a little less than an acre and by the 1920s, it couldn't hold the wastes being disposed of there. Martin tried for three years to get the town to buy his own 10 adjoining acres. Finally, the town agreed, and paid \$500 for what was to become one of the most important pieces of land in town. In the late 1960s, the dump became a landfill (a dump covered each day with dirt). The landfill was closed in the early 1980s and replaced with the current transfer station system. The recycling center was established by the Ridgefield Environmental Action Program (REAP) in the early 1970s.

Before a formal dump was established here, people disposed of their trash on the back corners of their property or at a mutually agreed upon neighborhood dump. These have become sweet pickings for bottle collectors. One of the best old dumps was situated on South Olmstead Lane, but is now covered with houses. Many dumps, buried with fill and by time, remain undiscovered and probably hold plenty of treasures for bottle and memorabilia collectors.

OLD RAM PEN

In 1777, the proprietors granted Benjamin Northrup one rood "lying in the Old Ram pen so called." The pen, along upper West Lane, was connected with the Ram Pasture (*q.v.*).

OLD REDDING ROAD

Old Redding Road is the proper term for the road that leads from Route 7 near Florida Hill Road into Redding. It is sometimes incorrectly called Seventy Acres Road (*q.v.*).

The name is derived from the fact that it was once considered a main highway from Ridgefield to Redding – or "the Redding Road."

Probably the earliest mention of this route was a 1746 deed from Joseph Karley to Ephraim Jackson for "one piece [of land] lying on ye north side of ye road leading to Reading." The parcel was just across the present-day Route 7 from Miller's Pond.

Although today it is a road of its own, Old Redding Road in the 18th Century was merely a part of what we today call Florida Hill Road. Route 7 then was little more than a path, if that, and Florida Hill Road veered north just east of the Norwalk River on the route that made Old Redding Road its continuation.

Some maps, including the 1946 town zoning map and the official town map of 1960, labeled this road Seventy Acres Road. The road in Ridgefield is only about 500 feet long and then becomes Old Redding Road in Redding. It does not even connect with Redding's Seventy Acres Road, which is about a half mile away from the Ridgefield line, and off Mountain Road.

In 1964, when the town had a sign erected saying that this was Seventy Acres Road, Redding First Selectman Bart Sanford wrote Ridgefield First Selectman Leo F. Carroll, asking that the sign be changed to Old Redding Road. He cited confusion caused by the Ridgefield name – which did not match the

Redding end of the road and had no connection with the real Seventy Acres Road. Mr. Carroll immediately ordered a new sign.

The name, “Redding,” is derived from Colonel John Read, an attorney and land speculator, who in 1714 bought a large tract of land from Chicken Warrups, a local American Indian. Read drew up a formal patent, with Chicken Warrups as lord of the manor and himself as a tenant. The territory was called “Reading” by 1717 and by 1729, it was a parish of Fairfield. It broke from Fairfield and incorporated as a town in 1767.

Tradition, says Hughes’ and Allen’s “Connecticut Place Names,” maintains that the unpopularity of Colonel Read by the 1760s was so strong that people decided that the name “be not Reading, but Redding.” However, it is more likely that the new spelling was adopted, suddenly or gradually, because it better reflected the pronunciation of the word.

OLD RIDGEBURY ROAD

Old Ridgebury Road is a name applied to the highway that veers off to the right – northeastward – from upper Ridgebury Road and runs into Danbury where it also bears that name.

According to the Daniel M. McKeon, who had lived more than 60 years in Ridgebury and was a student of its history, the name is incorrect. It should be simply “Ridgebury Road.”

And he’s probably right. There is no reason to call the highway “old” Ridgebury Road because there is no “new” Ridgebury Road that has replaced it. The highway is merely part of Ridgebury Road (*q.v.*) into Danbury’s Mill Plain District (*q.v.*). Before 1846, when northern Ridgebury was ceded to Danbury, the entire length of the highway was within Ridgefield.

The highway called Ridgebury Road that veers off to the left – northwesterly – at this intersection should be considered Turner Road, Mr. McKeon said. Some maps do show this section of road as either Turner Road or Turner Street while others call it Saw Mill Road or Ridgebury Road. Town officials have considered Turner Road to be only the little lane that heads westward into New York State from Saw Mill Road at the Danbury line.

Old Ridgebury Road dates from the 18th Century and connected rural Ridgebury’s center with the bustling little 19th Century business and industrial center of Mill Plain.

OLD SAW MILL POND

In 1856, Elias Gilbert quit claim a lease to Jabez Mix Gilbert for land in west-central Ridgefield, but mentioned that he was not giving up his right to draw water – presumably for a mill – from Upper Pond or from “the Old Saw Mill Pond.” This reference is probably to Saw Mill Pond (*q.v.*) on the south side of Saw Mill Hill Road.

The adjective “old” probably referred to the fact that it was an early pond – or the earliest – of several mill ponds in this neighborhood, used to power the sundry mills at Titicus.

OLD SIB ROAD

Old Sib Road, sometimes called simply Sib Road, is one of the biggest mysteries among Ridgefield’s more than one thousand place names. Who or what “Sib” was has not been ascertained, despite considerable research.

Only one possibility, albeit remote, has so far been found.

Neither the name nor the highway is very old. The road does not show up on maps until the 20th Century, although it may have been an old logging trail in the 19th and maybe even 18th Century. The name, or a name like it, does not show up in any deed before 1885.

Sib itself is an unusual word that long ago fell out of popular use. One meaning, employed into the 19th Century, was “kinship” or “relationship.” Another was “peace,” based on an Old English root. However, that use was last known in the 13th Century!

Interviews with old-timers in the 1970s found no answer. Frank Baxter, whose family had lived in the neighborhood for more than a century, did not know the origin. As a child he called it “Port Road” (*q.v.*) because it led to the Port of Missing Men resort atop West Mountain. (The restaurant was also called Anderson’s Tea House, and the road “Anderson Tea House Road” (*q.v.*) or just “Tea House Road” (*q.v.*)

Julius Tulipani, a former selectman who in his youth helped build the roads around the Port of Missing Men early in the century, knew the road only as Tea House Road. Francis D. Martin, who lived in Ridgefield some 80 years and along Old Sib Road for nearly 40 of them, did not know the origin.

John Mullen, another oldtimer, said in a 1975 interview that the name may have been a corruption of “Sid,” nickname of Sidney D. Farrar. Farrar, a professional baseball player in the 1880s and father of opera star Geraldine Farrar, had a 30-acre farm on North Salem Road from 1923 until his death in 1935 (*see* Farrar Lane). While his land did not border Old Sib Road, it came close to the beginning of the highway at Tackora Trail.

Adding some weight to Mullen’s suggestion are two 1951 maps for portions of the subdivision called Eight Lakes (*q.v.*), through part of which Old Sib Road runs. The two maps (town clerk numbers 2000 and 2001) label the highway “Old Sid Road.” Map #2005 of the same series says “Old Sib Road.”

Francis Martin believed that the connection with Farrar was impossible because he recollected the road’s being called “Sib” before Farrar had his farm nearby. The name made its official debut in 1946, when the town’s first zoning map was published.

Old Sib Road was built around 1908 by laborers, including Julius Tulipani, who were hired by H. B. Anderson. It was part of a network of roads designed for the recreation of users of his resort.

Many of the workers came here after having build a huge dam at Valhalla, N.Y., and quite a few settled here.

While narrow and unspectacular in appearance, Old Sib Road is among the best-built roads in town. According to James Loughlin, who moved to the road in 1952 and had done a little research into it, Old Sib Road is a Telford road, a design, named for its inventor, that employs a stone foundation.

Preliminary work on the road was done by a crew which took large, long stones and stood them on edge on the roadway. Next, a crew with small rocks came along and filled in the gaps between the large stones. Finally, another crew laid gravel and dirt atop the stone base. It was almost as if someone built a tall stone wall on its side.

“That road should be there forever,” said Loughlin. “God help the contractor that has to come in and put pipe in under that road.”

In the past there had been places along the road where modern pavement has worn thin and the stone base could be seen. In some spots, the stones had projected through the pavement.

Old Sib Road, which begins at Tackora Trail, continues into New York State, where it becomes a dirt road in a Westchester County park located in the town of North Salem. The state line is marked with a granite monument on the north side of the road. It is in the North Salem park that the old Port of Missing Men building stood.

Some years ago, North Salem got tired of commuters using this road as a shortcut, and partiers parking along it and tossing their litter there. North Salem erected an earthen pile at the state line to prevent cars from entering the road.

Old Sib Road, one of the highest roads in town, reaches an elevation of 800 feet above sea level along its western end. In the days when it was lined with fields, it was famous for its vistas, particularly its view of Lake Mamanasco some 200 feet below. However, the return and growth of trees has blocked many views.

OLD SOCIETY

The lower half of town – that is, all below Ridgebury – was occasionally called the “Old Society” to differentiate it from the “New” or “Second” Society, which was Ridgebury.

For example, in 1772, Matthew Smith sold Lemuel Morehouse eight acres described as lying “near ye west corner of ye Old Society” (probably somewhere near today’s Ridgefield High School).

In 1796, Josiah Hall sold Abner Gilbert land in “Ridgefield Old Society.”

Ridgefield was settled mostly by Congregationalists, who called their church a “society.” The term came to refer not only to the church group, but to the territory – or parish – that it covered. And considering the closeness of church and state in those days, the naming of a part of town as a “society” is not unusual.

Town and church government were nearly one in the early 18th Century. The townspeople had to apply to the State Legislature in 1712 to have a full-time minister. That first minister, the Rev. Thomas Hauley, received community land as compensation for coming here. He served not only the religious, but the temporal needs of the community, working as town clerk and probably as school teacher. And townspeople were taxed to pay his salary.

The Town Meeting voted in 1723 to build a “Meeting-house.” This was no single-purpose building; for years it served as a church, town hall, and public schoolhouse. Thus, calling a part of town “Old Society” or “First Society” was not strange to theocratic Ridgefield.

The term would have had to come into use sometime after 1761 when the Second Society at Ridgebury was established – with permission of the State Legislature.

OLD SOUTH SALEM ROAD

Old South Salem Road was the original route of South Salem Road (*q.v.*) as it entered New York state. The wider and straighter state highway bypassed the road in the late 1930s.

It is an old road, dating probably from the 1720s. The name will be discussed in more detail under South Salem Road.

OLD STAGECOACH ROAD

Old Stagecoach is a name that accurately reflects this road's history.

The name applies today to an old highway from Ridgebury Road southward to Aspen Ledges Road. The portion between Ridgebury Road and Bennett's Farm Road at the Ridgebury Firehouse was for years considered part of Bennett's Farm Road, but as a result of a 1961 petition by townspeople, the Board of Selectmen renamed it Old Stagecoach Road.

The section south of Bennett's Farm Road had been known as Old Stagecoach (or Stage Coach) Road since at least 1946, but was not a developed road until the late 1950s when Robert Kaufman built the Ridgefield Knolls. However, the whole route, plus a section now abandoned, were part of a highway dating back to at least the middle 1700s.

For many years Old Stagecoach Road was little more than a path through the woods. The rebirth of the roadway was recorded in the Feb. 9, 1950 Press, which reported:

"A few weeks ago, a John Morganti Company bulldozer blazed a fresh path over one of early Ridgefield's historical roadbeds up in Ridgebury. Long overgrown with young saplings and weeds, the roadbed is still referred to by a few old-timers as the Old Stage Coach Road, a relic of the days when it was a stage route from Ridgebury to Norwalk...

"Climbing steeply in a southeasterly direction from Bennett's Farm Road near Pork Hollow Farm, the old road is still discernible between two parallel stone walls. Beyond the point where the Morganti bulldozer stopped (after penetrating slightly less than a mile into the woods), it winds further over the rough, wooden Ridgebury hilltop, picks its way down an almost perpendicular cliff known as 'The Ledges' and is lost somewhere in the Titicus River flatlands where it once connected with North Street...

"The area was once populated, though rather sparsely. The bulldozer trail winds past two or three old fieldstone foundations and chimney remains, at least one of which was built without the aid of mortar. Purpose of the recent activity in that section of Ridgebury is to redevelop it for residences.

"The Old Stage Coach Road nearly bisects a 220-acre tract recently purchased by Lawrence M. Samuel of Limestone Road from the estate of the late George R. Read. Mr. Samuel purchased the property ... for development and resale...

"The property at one time was part of the Rundle Farm, was purchased by George Read near the turn of the century..."

As shown on the town's 1946 zoning map, Old Stagecoach Road continued southwesterly from the modern-day intersection with Aspen Ledges Drive down a steep incline to Ledges Road, coming out a little east (and opposite) of Sherwood Road. This took it down some steep territory – called the Aspen Ledges – a drop of more than 300 feet in elevation over a distance of less than 2,000 feet. It must have been a precarious and uncomfortable trek for a stagecoach.

Beers 1867 atlas shows the route down the Aspen Ledges as going almost directly to the south. This steeper, more direct route may have been the one used by the stage. However, it may also have been a mapmaker's error. (The road does not appear at all on Clark's 1856 map, although it surely existed by then.)

The road's namesake was a stage line established in 1836 by David Hunt of Ridgebury, who lived in a house now owned by Daniel M. McKeon on Old Stagecoach Road, just below Ridgebury Road. Here, the stage left at 2:30 in the morning, bound for Norwalk to meet the steamboat for New York City. It waited in Norwalk for the next boat from New York.

Passengers traveling this line came from Danbury, Mill Plain, and other areas to the north. They could get rides to the Hunt house, where they awaited the stage's early morning departure.

This, of course, was in the days before the railroad. When the New York and New Haven's coastal line was opened in 1847 and the Danbury to Norwalk line followed in 1850, Hunt's run to Norwalk was made old-fashioned and tedious. Stages still ran to places like Branchville (Ridgefield Station) to meet the trains and bring passengers to and from the village, and perhaps runs up to Ridgebury existed, too. But even the village trips were obviated by the opening in 1870 of a branch railroad into the village, probably ending the era of the stage in Ridgefield. (Ridgefield had been on intertown and interstate stage routes probably since the first half of the 18th Century. A main line followed almost the whole length of Route 35 in Ridgefield for a stage that ran from New York to Danbury, and then probably on to Hartford.)

In 1994, the section of the old road was the subject of a dispute between a developer, who wanted to put some houses on the Ledges, and the Conservation Commission, which wanted the route of the old stagecoach road preserved. The developer did not want to rearrange the lots and felt the true route of the old roadway is unclear and unknown.

Old Stagecoach Road is not an uncommon name. There are at least a dozen others in Fairfield County.

OLD STILL ROAD

Old Still Road is a short, dead-end road off Still Hollow Place that is probably not accurately named.

In the 18th Century, Still Road, part of Stonehenge Road, and Still Hollow Place were a portion of a main highway from Ridgefield to Danbury. This portion of the route fell out of use when the straighter and shorter eastern end of Haviland Road and western end of Picketts Ridge Road were built. Today's Old Still Road does not appear to be part of that route, according to Beers Atlas in 1867, though it connects to it.

"Old Still Road" was apparently also another name for Still Road between Haviland and Stonehenge Roads. It appears on a 1915 property map filed with the town clerk's office. (Stonehenge Road is a recent name for an old section of Route 7 — the Sugar Hollow Turnpike — that was abandoned in the 1930s when the state built the straighter section of Route 7.)

The "still" in these several roads refers to a distillery operated in this neighborhood in the 19th Century. Still Road and Old Still Road — and the distillery — will be discussed in more detail under that name.

OLD STONE COURT

Old Stone Court is a 600-foot, tertiary road off Bobby's Court, created by Lewis J. Finch's 1985 subdivision of 10 acres into five lots.

The name, approved by the Board of Selectmen in 1987, is one of those meaningless road names that appear in countless subdivisions. In this case, the

name sort of states the obvious – all stone is “old” — millions of years old. There is no record of this being part of an old highway. And certainly the road, created in the mid-1980s, hardly qualifies as being old.

OLD TOWN ROAD

Old Town Road is a short lane between Route 7 and Wilridge Road, developed in the 1950s by Joseph L. Dioguardi. Sometimes appearing as Olde Town Road, the name was selected by Dioguardi to reflect research he did into the road, one of several he developed in the neighborhood.

According to a letter written by him to the Board of Selectmen in 1963, Dioguardi searched the title of the road back to 1759 and found that it originally extended through Wilton to Pelham Lane at Nod Hill Road. Since its connection with Route 7 is very close to the Wilton line, it is possible that the road was created by Norwalk settlers to run along the northern border of Norwalk – an easterly continuation of Pelham Lane. (Wilton was part of Norwalk in the 17th and 18th Centuries.)

The developed section was accepted as a town road in 1964.

OLD TROLLEY ROAD

Old Trolley Road was for many years a short, dead-end road off the east side of Ridgebury Road between George Washington Highway and Shadow Lake Road. The road was much expanded in the 1990s in the Stone Ridge subdivision and now connects Ridgebury Road with George Washington Highway.

In the 1960s, 70s and 80s, Old Trolley Road served a few lots that were the only part of Otto H. Lippolt’s 1959 “Ridgebury Acres” subdivision of 72 lots that were never developed.

The name preserves a little-known and unsuccessful episode in Ridgefield’s history.

In 1894, an “electric street railway” was started up in Danbury, and formally began operations Jan. 1, 1895. Various routes were established, including ones to Bethel and to Lake Kenosha in Mill Plain, stopping at the Fair Grounds (now the mall).

“Around 1900 there was a boom, akin to the more recent dot-com era, in which there was much excitement about building interurban trolley lines between cities,” writes railroad historian Joseph Brennan. “No plan was too foolish to get funding.

“Some visionaries formed the Danbury and Harlem Traction Company (“traction” was a name for trolley services) to build a route from Danbury to Goldens Bridge station on the New York and Harlem. It was imagined to provide a faster route for passengers and freight than the Danbury Branch.

“The D&HT line branched off the Danbury and Bethel Street Railway near the Fair Grounds and ran through Ridgebury and into New York State. Most of it did not run in streets. From 1900 to 1901 the company purchased land, graded the line, laid track and erected wire, and built a powerhouse. A Danbury and Bethel trolley made a test run, probably in 1901. And that was all. The New York Times reported in 1908 that the route was two-thirds built, and the Bridgeport Herald in 1909 said the track ended ‘six miles short of Goldens Bridge,’ which would be somewhere in North Salem. But the occasion for both reports was the sale and demise of the company,” which had gone bankrupt.

The project was first envisioned by a Danbury lumber merchant named Isaac Ives, uncle of composer Charles Ives, who estimated the new connection with Harlem line to Manhattan would cut the time of a rail trip to New York by 15 minutes.

While tracks were in place between Danbury and Ridgebury center, they probably did not extend beyond Ridgebury. The operation actually ran some test trolleys to Ridgebury, probably in 1901 or 1902, but it is not believed that any scheduled service was ever established.

Some of the trolley bed in Ridgebury and North Salem may have used a bed that had been created years earlier. In 1850, the New York, Housatonic and Northern Railroad was established on paper, and issued \$1 million in stock to build a 40-mile-long railroad from White Plains to Brookfield, passing through Ridgebury and Danbury.

A rail bed was constructed for much or all of the route. It entered Ridgefield from North Salem just north of Chestnut Hill Road, traveled through swamp and the present Dlh Ridge Municipal Golf Course, and reached Ridgebury Road north of the church. From there, it may have used the path that is now Old Trolley Road as it headed into Danbury.

The later trolley line traveled up the middle of Ridgebury Road for about a third of a mile, between Old Trolley Road and Benson Road.

In North Salem, N.Y., much of the old railbed is visible as it wanders through back country and eventually can be seen along Route 121 as it heads southwesterly toward Goldens Bridge.

While the bed was built and is still clearly visible in many places, the tracks were probably never laid. Financial problems spelled doom for the enterprise, which went bankrupt in 1875.

However, a short section of track was laid by 1869 between Danbury and Brookfield, and these were later taken over by other railroads. That part of the line still in use today for freight service.

OLD WAGON ROAD

Old Wagon Road, a 1,600-foot dead-end road off West Mountain Road, is part of the Eleven Levels subdivision (*q.v.*), a development for which Jerry Tuccio received approval in 1969. The road was accepted as a town road in 1978.

The name probably suggests that the road – or part of it – was an old farm path.

OLD WASHINGTON ROAD

Old Washington Road is indeed old. It probably does not, however, commemorate our first president, but someone named for him.

The road, which originally ran between Branchville and Florida Hill Roads, now has a dead end before it reaches Florida Hill Road.

Bert Ison improved the southern part of the road and developed the land along it. His subdivision, which includes other newer roads, is called Washington Park Estates after the road.

Ison said in an interview years ago that the late Raymond and Robert Keeler, whose family had lived since the 18th Century in this neighborhood, told him that the road was not named for George Washington. Instead, it recalls Ridgefield's "hermit," George Washington Gilbert (1847-1924), who once lived

near where Old Washington Road crosses the old railroad bed. Gilbert, a town character in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, lived in an 18th Century house that was literally falling down around him until a wealthy neighbor built him a cabin to occupy. He was described under Hermit Lane (*q.v.*), another road named for him, and was profiled in a Who Was Who entry.

Old Washington Road was called Washington Street on the 1946 zoning map.

OLD WEST LANE

Old West Lane was a 20th Century term for a Ridgebury road, part of which is now called Canterbury Lane (*q.v.*).

As early as 1799, deeds mention “West Lane,” a highway that ran westerly from Ridgebury Road opposite George Washington Highway, to the New York State line. We have been unable to ascertain whether it met with another road in that state. Beers 1867 atlas shows it as an unimproved road while maps from 1856 and 1908 do not even acknowledge its existence. It was probably laid out in the 18th Century as a route to North Salem – a westerly extension of George Washington Highway (*q.v.*) – but fell into disuse, perhaps because there was no suitable continuation of it in New York.

By 1879, a deed was labeling the road “an old highway called West Lane,” a description that was eventually converted into Old West Lane.

On Aug. 24, 1969, the Planning and Zoning Commission approved changing the name to Canterbury Lane because land along it was being subdivided for houses and the commission feared there would be confusion with the West Lane that runs from Ridgefield village into Lewisboro.

OLD WEST MOUNTAIN ROAD

Although there is an Old West Mountain Road and a West Mountain Road, the “old” road does not follow the usual naming rule.

Both Old West Mountain and West Mountain Roads (*q.v.*) are old, dating from the 18th Century and serving different purposes. Unlike many other “old” roads, Old West Mountain Road was not an older road for which a newer one was built as a substitute. The name simply refers to its being an old road on West Mountain.

Old West Mountain Road connects Barrack Hill Road at Four Corners (*q.v.*) with West Mountain Road. Its purpose was probably as a route from the northern or north central part of town to South Salem village. It was also an access to fields and woodlots on the mountain, and to Round Pond, a source of fish.

Silvio Bedini suggests that Old West Mountain Road may have been part of an American Indian trail that connected the Indian settlements at Lake Mamanasco with other settlements in New York state, particularly at Mud Pond in Pound Ridge. The fact that the Indians had a fort somewhere on Barrack Hill (*see* Fort Hill), near the north end of Old West Mountain Road, adds plausibility to the Indian-trail theory.

Old West Mountain Road is a 20th Century name. In the 19th Century, it was sometimes called Burt Road (*q.v.*) because members of that family owned much of the land along it. Even a 1940 deed, using an old property description, calls it Burt Road.

OLD WEST ROAD

Old West Road was another name for what is today called Pumping Station Road (*q.v.*). The term was used as late as the 1930s and early 1940s, but it is not known when the name first came into use. The name is derived from the fact that the road heads west into New York State.

OLMSTEAD LANE

Olmstead Lane, a short road that runs between West Lane and Wilton Road West, is an old highway with a lot of history that bears the name of an old Ridgefield family.

The road probably existed by the 1750s, perhaps serving more as an access to fields than as a highway. It is said that some of the British soldiers moved along this road in April 1777 after the Battle of Ridgefield and while on their way to their overnight camp on Wilton Road West.

That it should be called Olmstead Lane is fitting. Five houses along this short road were either built or owned by members of the Olmstead family (four of those houses still stand). All five were along the leg between West Lane and South Olmstead Lane.

Probably the first of the Olmstead houses was the Stephen Olmsted place, at 75 Olmstead Lane. This dates from sometime in the middle 1750s. Other Olmstead houses are at 91 and 90 Olmstead Lane, and at the corner of Olmstead and West Lanes. The fifth house, just north of the #75, was razed in the 1950s, and a new house was built on the site in 2005.

Old Family

The Olmstead family is an ancient one in this country. Brothers Richard and James Olmstedd and James' nephew, John, came from England in 1632 to Boston. Richard, who eventually moved to Hartford, became one of the petitioners for the founding of Norwalk and, as a settler there starting in 1650, held various important militia and government positions.

Richard's sons, Richard and Daniel, were among the first settlers of Ridgefield.

From this family over the next two centuries sprang a couple of hundred Ridgefield Olmsteads. At least a dozen of them served in the Revolution. Four were officers and two were fairly notable soldiers. One of them was Capt. David Olmsted, about whom the Red Petticoat legend is told (when he learned his wife waved a red petticoat at passing British troops to save their house from being burned – red being a loyalist color – the captain, returning from the battle, reportedly yelled: “Woman, if I had seen you, I would have shot you dead.”) The other was Matthew Olmstead, a guard over Major John Andre at the time of the famous spy's execution.

Whether this is the same Matthew Olmsted of whom S.G. Goodrich wrote in his 1856 “Recollections of A Lifetime,” is not certain. Goodrich called him “Mat Olmstead, the Village Wit” and said of him:

The Wit of Mat Olmstead

“He ... was a day laborer, and though his specialty was the laying of stone fences, he was equally adroit at hoeing corn, mowing, and farm-work in general. He was rather short and thick-set, with a ruddy complexion, and a mouth shutting like a pair of nippers – the lips having an oblique dip to the left, giving a keen and mischievous expression to his face, qualified, however, by more of

mirth than malice. This feature was indicative of his mind and character, for he was sharp in speech and affected a crisp, biting brevity, called dry wit. He had also a turn for practical jokes, and a great many of these were told of him, to which perhaps he had no historical claim."

To illustrate this, Goodrich told the following story, which happened, it was said, one December night in the early 1800s in the bar-room of the Keeler Tavern, where Mat and his friends were "lounging."

A stranger happened in, wearing a "new hat of the latest fashion, and still shining with the gloss of the iron. He seemed conscious of his dignity, and carried his head in such a manner as to invite attention to it. Mat's knowing eye immediately detected the weakness of the stranger."

Goodrich relates the encounter as follows:

"What a very nice hat you've got on," (said Mat). "Pray, who made it?"

"Oh, it came from New York," was the reply.

The stranger took off his hat, gingerly, and handed it to him.

"It is a wonderful nice hat," said Matthew, "and I see it's a real salamander."

"Salamander?" said the other. "What's that?"

"Why a real salamander hat won't burn!"

"No? I never heard of that before. I don't believe it is one of that kind."

"Sartain sure; I'll bet you a mug of flip of it."

"Well, I'll stand you."

"Done. Now I'll just put it under the fore-stick (in the fireplace)?"

"Well."

It being thus arranged, Mat put the hat under the fore-stick into a flowing mass of coals. In an instant, it took fire, collapsed, and rolled into a black, crumpled mass of cinders.

"I du declare," said Mat Olmstead, affecting great astonishment. "It ain't a salamander hat arter all. Well, I'll pay the flip!"

Mat, about whom Goodrich tells other stories, lived in "a little brown tenement situated on a lonesome lane that diverged to the left from the high-road to Salem." The lonesome lane was Olmstead Lane and the "tenement" may be 90 Olmstead Lane.

The road has a long history of residents prominent in civic service, dating back to those who served in the Revolution through the 19th Century to modern times. Perhaps the most notable 19th Century son was James Harvey Olmstead, born at 75 Olmstead Lane in 1830, who went on to become a district attorney, judge, and state central committeeman (Democratic) in Stamford. In recent years, Olmstead Lane has been the home of a postmaster, a Board of Finance chairman, two selectmen, the chairman of the Historic District Commission, the first female school board chairman, a former probate judge, and a town attorney.

It has also been home to authors, artists and actors. Singer-actor David Cassidy, who just died in November 2017, lived at 43 Olmstead Lane in a house that was earlier owned by actors Myles Eason and his wife, Kay Young Eason. Writer and scholar Varian Fry, hailed for saving some 2,000 Jewish authors and artists from the Nazis in World War II, lived at 78 Olmstead Lane. Rosamund Dauer, author of the "Bullfrog" series of children's books (such as "Bullfrog Builds A House") lived at 90 Olmstead Lane. Lillian Gilkes, who lived across the street at 93 Olmstead Lane, was a professor and author of sev-

eral books including “Cora Crane: A Biography of Mrs. Stephen Crane” (about a flamboyant, well-born Bostonian who ran “the smartest ‘sporting house’” in Jacksonville, Fla. and became novelist-poet Crane’s common-law wife).

Olmstead Lane also has one of the town landmarks: The old watering trough that provided horses with a drink early in the 20th Century. It originally stood in the middle of Main Street in front of the town hall, and features an opening at the bottom so village dogs could get a drink, too. The trough, now used as a giant planter, was the gift of Life Magazine founder and publisher John Ames Mitchell who lived nearby at West Lane and South Salem Road.

Olmstead Lane was so called at least by the turn of the 20th Century when the name appears on a state highway department right-of-way map for Wilton Road West. The name does not appear on the land records before 1885.

Ed or Ead?

The family name in Ridgefield was originally spelled Olmsted. Early in the 19th Century, the conversion to Olmstead began. The first “ead” spelling in the land records appeared in 1829.

An interesting document found in the attic of one of the Olmstead houses graphically shows the transition in spelling. Consisting of several pages from the school notebook of David Olmstead (1838-1855), the 1850 document has examples of the 12-year-old boy’s writing exercises. On one page, David practices his own name 14 times. The first through sixth examples say “David Olmsted” while the seventh comes out “David Olmstead” and then the rest return to Olmsted.

It appears that David’s teacher had written down examples of handwriting to copy for penmanship practice. David spelled his name Olmstead, though not everyone in the clan did, and the teacher apparently used the traditional spelling. Not one to go against his teacher’s directions, David spelled his own name incorrectly 13 times, slipping only once into the correct spelling he was accustomed to.

Within the large clan throughout the country, there are still many people – perhaps 50% of them – who spell the name Olmsted.

In Ridgefield a few people with Olmstead blood may remain, though no one is left who bears the name.

O’NEILL COURT

O’Neill Court is a road off North Salem Road, part of the 1982 subdivision by Joseph H. Donnelly called “Scotts Ridge.”

The name recalls playwright Eugene O’Neill, who lived from 1922 to 1927 at “Brook Farm” across North Salem Road from the subdivision.

While Ridgefield has been home to many writers, clearly Eugene Gladstone O’Neill (1888-1953) was the most noted and has been called “America’s preeminent playwright.” He won four Pulitzer Prizes – for *Beyond the Horizon* (1920), *Anna Christie* (1921), *Strange Interlude* (1928), and *Long Day’s Journey into Night* (1956) – as well as the Nobel Prize for literature in 1936.

Born in New York City in 1888, O’Neill was the son of James O’Neill, a poor Irish immigrant who became a leading stage actor of his time. In 1906, he went to Princeton University but was soon suspended for a prank and never returned. In his early years, he was a seaman in New York and a reporter in New London. While recovering from tuberculosis, he was taken reading by Stringberg plays and in 1914 enrolled in a playwrighting program at Harvard.

His first marriage in 1909 ended in divorce, and in 1918 he married Agnes Boulton, a fiction writer. Their daughter, Oona, born when the O'Neills lived here in 1924, became the wife of Charlie Chaplin, the noted film comic. (Angry over his 18-year-old daughter's marrying the much older Chaplin against his wishes, O'Neill disowned Oona and never saw her again.) His marriage to Agnes ended in divorce in 1929. He died in Boston in 1953.

While a Ridgefielder, O'Neill led a quiet life with Agnes, Oona and his young son, Shane. However, by 1926 Eugene O'Neill was using Brook Farm only occasionally, but in a letter to his wife written in September 1927 shortly before he sold the place, he wrote: "Going to Ridgefield made me sad. It's so beautiful right now, and I couldn't help feeling more keenly than ever that that's where our family ought to be. I have half a mind to open (the house) myself, except that it would be so lonely all by myself."

OR-MAR DRIVE

When the original Wooster Heights subdivision was filed in 1963, Or-Mar Drive was used for what is now Settlers Lane. The name recalls the subdividers, real estate agents Orrin and Marion Beers, and was changed in 1971 because the neighborhood did not like the name's sound (*see* Settlers Lane). Oddly enough, although the road name recalled at least part of Marion's name, the subdivision map itself listed the owners as "Orrin A. Beers et ux.," the common but demeaning way husbands and wives were referred to in many public land records until quite recently. Et ux. is the abbreviation for *et uxor*, Latin for "and wife."

ORANGE RIDGE

Orange Ridge was a bastardization of Norran's Ridge, which in turn was a corruption of Nawranawoo's or Norranorwa's Ridge. It referred to the ridge behind Fox Hill Village condominiums on Danbury Road and north of Farmingville Road at Great Swamp. The recently developed Norrans Ridge Road traverses part of this ridge and took its name from these older names.

Orange Ridge was used by George L. Rockwell in his History of Ridgefield.

ORCHARD LANE

Orchard Lane is a private, dead-end, dirt road off St. John's Road, part of a 1956 subdivision by Warren and Elizabeth Simmons. The name probably reflects a former use of the land in the area of the road.

ORCHARD STREET

Orchard Street was the original name for the road that we today call East Ridge Road.

The name first appeared in an 1880 deed in which Lewis H. Bailey sold Hiram Davis an acre bounded on the north by "Prospect Avenue" and on the west by a highway "known as Orchard Street."

The name also appears in 1912 on Whitlock's Atlas. At around the same time, the road was also being called Middle Ridge. Oddly enough, neither name won out, and "East Ridge" came into and remains in common use.

An orchard, owned by the Lounsburry family on its estate (now Veterans Park, was undoubtedly the source of the road's name.

ORE BED

In 1830, Sarah Warren sold Reed Haviland land “near and west of the house of said Haviland and known by the name of the Mine Lot or Ore Bed.”

The Ore Bed was a limestone mining operation near or at the intersection of Haviland, Danbury and Limestone Roads. It was discussed in some detail under “Mine Lot.”

ORE YARD

In about 1717, the proprietors gave Henry Witne (Whitney) eight and a half acres “lying in a place called ye Ore Yard.”

There is no clue in the deed as to its location or purpose, but the Ore Yard may have been the Ore Bed mentioned above.

ORENECA ROAD

Oreneca Road is an old highway on West Mountain. The name today applies to the road as it runs between West Mountain Road northwesterly past Rippowam Road and up to Sturges Park, the former Girl Scout Camp Catoonah.

Legend says that this road was part of an Indian trail that ran from Lake Mamasasco over Old West Mountain Road (*q.v.*), Rippowam Road and into New York State to Mud Pond in Pound Ridge. It was probably this story that led Ridgefielders in the late 19th or early 20th Century to select Indian names for this and Rippowam Road (*q.v.*).

Or perhaps the roads were named after the nearby lakes of the same name in Lewisboro, N.Y.

Oreneca was a sachem of the Ramapoo tribe, the Indians who inhabited Ridgefield when the settlers arrived. The name also appears as Narranoke, Naraneka, or Noroneke. According to the minutes of a proprietors’ meeting in 1715, he was “Tackora, alias Oreneca.”

Little is known about this native, who probably left with his people for parts west after the Indians’ interest in Ridgefield lands was sold. In the first Indian deed to the settlers (1708), he was one of eight signers, and was listed as “Naraneka.” In the second deed (1715), he signed alone as “Oreneca, alias Tackora.” In the third deed (1721), the last he signed, he was “Norreneke.” (It’s little wonder that Oreneca Road is spelled incorrectly so often by the average Ridgefielder today!)

Catoonah, the head sachem of the local Indians, had land in what is now Pound Ridge, where he died. Perhaps Oreneca moved there, or farther west.

The name Oreneca is not all that unusual, and may have been a common Indian word. Similar sounding names appear in Connecticut geography: Oronoka in Stratford, Oronoke in Waterbury, and Oronoque in Milford and Stratford. Various Fairfield County localities bear or bore names like Oronauke, Oronooke, Orronack, and the possibly related Noronoco. John C. Huden translates the basic set of sounds as “curved place” or “land at the bend,” and says it was a Quinipiac word. Probably purely coincidentally, the meaning is perfect for the road, which was once part of that Indian trail with a couple of notable bends (at West Mountain and at Rippowam Roads).

Even in the language of Indians of the Virginia region, there was a word, *oronacah*, meaning any ground that had been planted with corn.

In the 18th Century, Oreneca Road may have been part of the original West Mountain Road, and travelers would have had to go northerly up Oreneca to Rippowam, and then south to Old Oscaleta Road, which led into the South Salem part of Lewisboro. The shortcut from near Old West Mountain Road to the lower end of Rippowam Road may have been established sometime between 1856 (when it does not appear on Clark's map) and 1867 (when it does appear on Beers' map).

Why Oreneca and Rippowam Roads managed to stay in use after the shortcut was built is unclear; most roads leading to "nowhere" in the "outback" were abandoned when bypasses were established. It is possible that Oreneca Road served as a handy route to woodlots along the western border of town as well as as a path to the southern and western shores of Round Pond.

It is not known whether Oreneca and Rippowam Roads preceded the flatter Oscaleta Road as the route to northern Lewisboro.

When David L. Paul was developing his apartment-condominium project on Danbury Road around 1970, he considered calling the place Oreneca Village because an old Indian burial ground was said to be on nearby Norran's Ridge. The few residents of Oreneca Road, particularly the late Harrison Horblit, immediately objected on the grounds that their mail would end up on Danbury Road or the apartments' mail would end up on Oreneca Road.

Paul gave up and instead selected Fox Hill Village – recalling the fact that Col. Louis D. Conley of Fox Hill in Bennett's Farm district had once owned the Outpost Inn on Paul's property.

Oreneca Road was so called by 1907 when the name appears on a property survey, on file in the town clerk's office. Years ago, it was sometimes called Oreneca Trail.

When he built his mansion on Oreneca Road in the early 1930s, Philip D. Wagoner, head of Underwood typewriters, called his estate "Oreneca." The name had earlier been used for a 19th Century hotel, Oreneca House, that stood on Main Street about where the CVS parking lot is today. (That building was moved to High Ridge where it serves as apartments today.)

LAKE ORENECA

A postcard from around 1905 shows a view which is labeled: "Lake Oreneca (Round Pond) and Dr. John G. Perry's Residence." The name was probably used by Dr. Perry or perhaps H. B. Anderson, whose house was nearby, because it was more colorful than Round Pond. Obviously, the name didn't stick with the pond.

OSCALETA ROAD

Oscaleta is an unusual word that has tricked many into believing it is of American Indian origin. It is, in fact, a word from a dialect of Spanish and means "little kiss." Its roots are in the Latin word, *osculum*, "to kiss," and the archaic Spanish, *osculo*, plus a diminutive suffix. The English verb, *osculate*, is a fancy way of saying "kiss."

Old-time Ridgefielders pronounced the word *oss-ka-LEE-ta*, although that's probably not how it is pronounced in its native land.

In nearby Lewisboro, N.Y., a body of water was named South Pond or South Lake in the 19th Century. According to Stanley Newton, a student of Lewisboro history, a man named Richard Hoe Lawrence, a wealthy fellow who

had spent much time in Spain, returned to the United States and acquired a gentleman's farm and lodge on South Pond in the late 1800s. He apparently felt South Pond was too bland a name and, perhaps inspired by the shape of the pond, used a word he had heard and liked in Spain, naming it Lake Oscaleta.

The nearby old road in Lewisboro picked up the name as well, presumably because it was the road that led to Lake Oscaleta. That road runs into Ridgefield's West Mountain Road. Long ago, the western section of West Mountain Road followed the same path as today's Oscaleta Road; it was considered the Connecticut extension of Oscaleta Road.

At the state line, there is still a section of the original old highway, today called Old Oscaleta Road. It is separated for a short distance from Oscaleta Road by the highway we now call West Mountain Road, which was originally a piece of Oscaleta Road.

It is possible that Oscaleta Road was the original main road from Ridgefield's village to upper South Salem (Lewisboro), for it is flatter than the alternate route that, before 1850, would have taken people over Oreneca and Rippowam Roads. It is also possible that Oscaleta Road was built around 1800 as a bypass to the more hilly route. Both routes are very old.

Oscaleta Road in Ridgefield has been so called since at least 1907 when the name was used on a property survey on file in the town clerk's office. Some Westchester County histories spell it Oscaletta, such as in *Oscaletta Lake in "Westchester County and Its People"* (1946). However, Richard M. Lederer, in his *"The Place Names of Westchester County, N.Y."* (1978), uses the Oscaleta spelling as does *"A History of the Town of Lewisboro"* (1981).

The old T. H. Mead estate on lower Rippowam Road was called "Oscaleta" early in this century.

OTTER POND

A deed written in 1835 mentions land "at Otter Pond." From landowners mentioned in the property descriptions, including Selleck, Whitlock, Dan, and Thrall, it appears that the pond was situated in the vicinity of the Ridgefield Lakes (*q.v.*), perhaps at or near Fox Hill Lake (itself, man-made).

The pond evidently no longer exists or has been supplanted by one of the more modern Ridgefield Lakes.

Sometimes called "the playboy of the wild," the otter is a fairly common member of the weasel family, still found along some of our streams, where its frolicking can be observed by those patient enough to seek it out. Otters were undoubtedly more common in the agricultural Ridgefield of 1835 than in the subdivided suburb of the 21st Century, but sightings are still possible.

OUTPOST POND

Outpost Pond on Danbury Road is a small body of water whose name is connected with one of the biggest commercial operations Ridgefield has ever seen – the 2,000-acre Outpost Nurseries. Though small, the pond is the most-seen body of water in Ridgefield, passed by more than 25,000 people a day along busy Route 35, Danbury Road.

The pond was built by Col. Louis D. Conley in the late 1920's, but probably didn't pick up its name until Colonel Conley established his Outpost Inn two months before his death in 1930. It was a famous dining spot, drawing people from miles around for nearly 30 years.

The Colonel, who once led the New York National Guard's "Fighting 69th" Division, built an estate like few others the town has ever seen. At the height of the operation, he owned almost one-tenth of the town, some 30 or 40 houses in which his staff lived, a huge mansion for his family, a sizable farm, kennels for championship dogs, and even his own electrical generating plants and water supplies.

Little of the man-made splendor remains as it was. His 34-room mansion became the Fox Hill Inn along eastern Bennett's Farm Road after 1946, but was torn down in 1975 by the new owner, IBM. The kennels, where later the Coast Guard trained dogs and Gaines tested chow, became the Red Lion Restaurant, torn down in 2006 to make way for apartments.

And the inn, damaged by fire around 1970, was also torn down. Before the fire, David L. Paul had planned to use the inn as a community building for his Fox Hill Village. He considered calling the apartment and condominium complex "Outpost Village," but the Conley family, which still used the business name, opposed the idea.

What mostly remains of the Outpost holdings represents Colonel Conley's greatest contribution to Ridgefield: thousands and thousands of trees.

Born in 1874, Louis D. Conley grew up in New York City where he spent most of his life and where he and his two brothers took over their father's Conley Tinfoil Company, a major U.S. industry of the era. Around 1914, tiring of hot summers in the city, Colonel Conley bought the old Selleck house atop the hill as an "outpost" from New York City.

"It was the most beautiful place in the state of Connecticut and the most difficult to run," said the late Julius Tulipani of High Ridge, who was superintendent of Outpost Farms starting in 1919.

The estate was almost a small, self-contained empire, growing its own crops, raising livestock, operating its own water system with a 90,000 gallon storage tank, and supplying its own generating plant (the generator had two, 4,500-pound flywheels); later, Colonel Conley became one of only a handful of people in the country who set up wind-powered generators.

Most of the people who worked on the farm lived there in houses supplied by the Colonel. They included families whose names are well known in town today: Marinelli, Cassavechia, Servadio, Baldaserini and of course, Tulipani.

Even when he was wintering in New York City, Colonel Conley made use of his Ridgefield farm. He would have fresh milk and butter, packed in ice, sent to the city on the 7:32 a.m. train out of Ridgefield.

In 1923, at the suggestion of a friend, Colonel Conley – who had sold off the family business – established Outpost Nurseries, primarily as a hobby. It wound up a giant business venture. The colonel began buying many pieces of land and eventually owned virtually every parcel along Danbury Road from today's "Gasoline Alley" to Route 7, and almost all of the land along Route 7 from Farmingville into Danbury, plus most of the land between – some 2,000 acres.

He (and his successors) planted hundreds of thousands of trees and shrubs. Most, of course, were sold, but thousands still remain, nursery stock that has now turned into woodland.

By the 1930s Outpost was said to contain the largest single supply of landscape grade material in the world.

Many names of modern roads serving subdivisions on former Outpost land carry the names of the kinds of trees that had been planted there years before. There's Copper Beech Lane, where the copper beeches grew and still grow; Poplar Road, Birch Lane, Linden Road, Cherry Lane, Dogwood Drive and Laurel Lane. In addition, there's Nursery Road.

Outpost Nurseries became one of the largest retail nursery businesses in the East. Among its many jobs between 1925 and World War II were plantings of the 1933 Chicago World's Fair; the 1939 New York City World's Fair; the National Art Gallery in Washington; parks along Riverside Drive and elsewhere in New York City; Harvard, Yale and Williams colleges; Narragansett and Monmouth Raceways; and the estates of such people as Cole Porter, Lowell Thomas, Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (at Hyde Park), Walter Winchell, Robert Montgomery, and the Buckleys at Sharon.

The business was doing so well that nurseries were set up in New Jersey, South Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Long Island to grow trees and shrubs that couldn't be raised in Ridgefield's climate or soil. An office was maintained on Park Avenue in New York while the main office was on Route 7, just north of Route 35, in the stone building that's the centerpiece of Stonehouse Commons (just north of the Routes 7 and 35 intersection).

In 1928, Colonel Conley bought the Danbury Road house, built in 1816 by Albin "Boss" Jennings for his bride, that was to become the Outpost Inn. It opened in July 1930, and over the years, was leased to various restaurateurs including the late Joseph J. Gibney and Laurence I. Graham (who became Wilton's first selectman in the early 1970's). The pond was probably built in 1928, the same year the state abandoned the road that runs into the Fox Hill Village property and replaced it with the straight strip of Route 35 now in use and where the bridge was replaced in 2016-17.

The inn closed around 1960, and the property was acquired by the Shapley School (*see* Shapley Stretch). The school failed and at a foreclosure sale in 1968, David L. Paul purchased the tract to turn into his Fox Hill Village multi-family housing complex. He had planned to convert the house into a community center for the apartments. But a suspicious fire about two years later destroyed the building before any work was done. Paul chose the name Fox Hill for his development because Colonel Conley's mansion was situated on that hill two miles north of the condos.

For many years, Outpost Pond was probably the most popular skating pond in town. With the arrival of the condominiums, public skating ended.

Colonel Conley died Sept. 7, 1930. An editorial in the Danbury Times said: "The colonel has done much to beautify Ridgefield. Attractive buildings have been created, and hundreds of waste acres (that) had been allowed to run to scrub and wild growth, have been cultivated, graded and planted." The nursery became "a splendid public park, running for miles along both sides of roads between Danbury and Ridgefield."

After the colonel's death, the family operated Outpost Nurseries, continuing a large business employing 200 or more people. In 1945, after four years of dealing with labor and gasoline shortages and other difficulties connected with World War II, the family sold the business to the late J. Mortimer Woodcock, who had been Outpost Nurseries' manager (and was from 1967 to 1971, Ridgefield's first selectman). Woodcock bought only 10 acres, but leased 1,000, and changed the name to Woodcock Nurseries.

OVERLOOK DRIVE

Overlook Drive is a road with a semicircular path, attached at each end to Ramapoo Road. Its “overlook” is to the east, its best views being from the westernmost curve of the road, where the elevation above sea level is nearly 720 feet.

The road was part of the 1956 subdivision, Ramapoo Hills (*q.v.*), by Judge Joseph H. Donnelly. The land was once the Conklin dairy farm.

Overlook Drive was accepted as a town road in 1963.

OVERLOOK GROVES

Overlook Groves is a 1985 subdivision of 27 lots on 66 acres east of Limekiln Road. The lots are served by Nursery Road and Whitewood Hollow Court (*q.v.*). The subdivision was created by the Crosswicks Company of Wilton.

P

PALMER COURT

Palmer Court off Route 7, north of New Road, was named for the only Ridgefield police officer to die in the line of duty.

George Hanlon who developed the property in 1996 selected the name after a member of the police department suggested it.

John K. Palmer was killed instantly when his motorcycle collided with a car at East Ridge and Governor Street – right in front of the state police station – on July 31, 1932. Chief Palmer, as he was called, was responding to “the East Ridge ball grounds to investigate the authority of a man to peddle his wares during the afternoon ball game.”

The woman who drove the car was arrested, then required automatically in any fatal accident. However, investigation determined that neither motorist was able to see the other because of high grass at the intersection, and every year thereafter, the selectmen made certain the brush was cut down there.

Chief Palmer, a 53-year-old former state policeman, had been the village district policeman for four years. He took care of parking regulations, supervised “transients” in the town hall lock-up, and was a general “watchman” over the village. He was also a deputy fire warden.

Hundreds attended his funeral at the Methodist Church, including scores of policemen from around the state – among them the commander of the Connecticut State Police.

PARK LANE

Park Lane in Branchville is an old road, based on a private path established by the Ancona family and others, and improved by Morganti Inc. It appears as early as 1934 on a town assessors’ map.

The road leads from Route 7, parallel to and south of Branchville Road, to Playground Road. It serves homes and is an access to the Branchville Playground, the town’s oldest non-school playground, where youth league baseball games are scheduled.

Park Lane became a town road in 1955.

PARK VIEW ACRES

Park View Acres is the name of the 1964 subdivision of 23 lots off Wilton Road West, served by Acre Lane.

It’s not clear why the Symon Brothers Construction Company, which did the subdivision, selected Park View as a name – no parks exist in the area. However, at that time there was a small state highway roadside rest area, called Twin Maples and including a picnic table, on Route 33 in this vicinity; perhaps the Symons considered it enough of a landmark — and park — to name a neighborhood.

Acre Lane is less a mystery. Each lot is one acre in size. The whole tract totaled 23 acres.

PARLEY LANE

Parley Lane may be the town's shortest through road, being only 200 feet in length between West Lane and High Ridge Road.

Parley Lane recalls the pen name of Samuel Griswold Goodrich, son of S. G. Goodrich, third minister of the First Congregational Church. Samuel grew up in the house on High Ridge at the head of Parley Lane. As Peter Parley, he wrote, outlined or edited hundreds of books and magazines in the first half of the 19th century, and is considered by some scholars to be the father of the modern school textbook.

Goodrich was born in 1793 in a house (no longer standing) near the corner of West and Golf Lanes, where his father had moved in 1789. When young Samuel was four, his father had a new home built on High Ridge on four acres that he had purchased in 1794. Samuel spent his childhood there, and left in 1808 to work in a Danbury store and eventually wound up in the publishing field. Literally millions of his books – chiefly histories, biographies and geographies – were sold in the 1800s.

His autobiographical *Recollections of A Lifetime*, published three years before his death in 1859, has more than 200 pages on growing up in Ridgefield at the turn of the 19th Century and is a unique look at the life and characters in this community two centuries ago.

Parley Lane may have been built to bypass the original route of the southern end of High Ridge Road. An engraving, based on a photograph, that appears in Teller's *History of Ridgefield* (1876) shows High Ridge Road turning into Parley Lane – no southern extension of High Ridge is shown.

That southern extension definitely existed by then, for it is shown on older maps. But the engraving suggests that the Parley Lane path was more popular – it is much flatter and easier to negotiate. (Even today, quite a few motorists, especially in winter, will avoid High Ridge and use Parley Lane.)

The lane was probably created informally to avoid the steep end of High Ridge. And it was formally established in 1851 when Isaac Lewis sold the Town of Ridgefield, for all of \$5, a strip of land two by 15 rods “leading from ... West Lane to the High Ridge, so called, near on in front of the dwelling house of Hugh S. Banks (the Parley house), for the use and purpose of a public highway, the same having been used and occupied for said purpose for a number of years under a lease from me to Rev. Samuel M. Phelps.”

Either Mr. Phelps, minister of the First Congregational Church from 1817 to 1829, was a public-spirited citizen who decided to arrange for the more convenient Parley Lane path to help those with horse-drawn vehicles, or perhaps he arranged the lease for his own convenience.

For many years, the only house on Parley Lane was an ornate Victorian style place, built before the turn of the century by William O. Seymour after his career as a civil engineer and bridge builder in the Midwest. Mr. Seymour had earlier conducted a private school in the Parley house. Later he was a state legislator, judge of probate, and state railroad commissioner.

The east lawn of the Seymour house was divided off in the 1900s, and a new house built on it. Consequently, there are now two addresses on Parley Lane.

Parley Lane was so called at least by 1912 when the name appears on a property survey. A 1936 map says “Parley Street.”

PARLEY ROAD

Parley Road, named by Lewis J. Finch for Peter Parley, is situated at Mr. Finch's 1958 subdivision, Chestnut Hills, in Ridgebury. It runs between the northern ends of Harding Drive and Twopence Road.

Samuel Goodrich had no connection with the property and a second road named for him serves only to confuse people, including police officers, firefighters, ambulance drivers, and mail carriers. (One time some years ago a visitor from New York spent 10 minutes talking to this writer on West Lane, trying to figure out if the person he was looking for lived a quarter mile away on Parley Lane or six miles to the north on Parley Road. The directions he was given seemed to indicate Parley Lane, but he had written down Parley Road. He finally opted to wander the roads of Ridgebury, looking for the Road.)

Parley Road became a town road in 1964.

And if it's not confusing enough to have a Parley Road and a Parley Lane far apart in one town, we also have Peter Parley Lane at the West Lane Schoolhouse.

PARLOR ROCK

The late Beverly Crofut reported in 1979 that Parlor Rock was an early 20th Century name for a large, flat-topped rock where Ridgeburians – especially members of the Keeler and Selleck families – used to picnic.

"It was almost like a great big room," said. Crofut. "Nature's own picnic area." The site overlooked the Spring Valley – "a beautiful view," he said.

The rock is off lower Ridgebury Road south of Regan Road.

There is a Parlor Rock in Trumbull, so called because of a natural circular recess which someone likened to a parlor. It was once the center of a well-known amusement park, established in the 1870s by the Housatonic Rail Road. Perhaps our rock got its name from someone's recalling Trumbull's more famous one.

PARTING BROOK

A portion of the subdivision along Field Crest (or Fieldcrest) Drive was called Parting Brook Estates in a 1955 document.

On the border of Wilton and New Canaan is a stream named Parting Brook, so called from at least 1742 because it formed part of the two towns' line – or the parting of the towns.

While the Field Crest Drive neighborhood is very near the Wilton-Ridgefield line, it is possible that the subdivision name referred to a pair of streams on the property that converge at a pond just to the north.

PARTRIDGE DRIVE

Partridge Drive, part of the Ridgefield Knolls, is a dead-end road off Old Stagecoach Road. Although the subdivision dates from 1959, the road did not become a town highway until 1968.

According to the late Edgar P. Bickford, a surveyor on the Knolls project, the name was selected because of the large number of "partridges" noted by field crews when the land was being surveyed and lots laid out.

The first houses developed at the Knolls often suffered from the unusual problem of having these large wild birds fly into the reflections in picture windows, breaking the glass, Mr. Bickford said in a 1975 interview.

The term “partridge” is technically incorrect, and refers to Old World species of the quail and pheasant family. The ruffed grouse, the common game bird, is probably what is meant.

The grouse, incidentally, teaches us something about ourselves: the bird is tame when it lives in the wilderness, but wary when it lives near man.

PASTURE LANE

Pasture Lane is one of those roads that exist only on paper, but occasionally appear in deeds. In this case, the dead-end road was part of the 1957 subdivision of 100 acres in Ridgebury by Herman J. Leffert and others.

The subdivision is now Ridgebury Estates, although the Leffert plan does not match the layout that was developed as Ridgebury Estates by Jerry Tuccio. However, it appears that Pasture Lane, situated off what became Beaver Brook Road between Briar Ridge and Chipmunk Lane, is now an accessway serving two or three homes.

The name reflected the former use of the land. The main road through the Leffert subdivision plan was called Old Farm Road, and follows a path similar to Beaver Brook Road.

PEACEABLE STREET

Well over a century old, Peaceable Street is hardly a new name, dreamed up a 20th Century developer to add “class” to a neighborhood. Yet, it may well have been devised by a 19th Century “developer” to add class to west-central swamplands.

At 1.6 miles, Peaceable Street is one of Ridgefield’s longer town-owned roads, running from the intersection of High Ridge and King Lane westward to Old South Salem Road near the New York State line. It serves the same purpose as Route 35 (West Lane and South Salem Road – together, the old Bedford Road), but was apparently not as popular years ago because it traversed some pretty swampy territory plus had a steep hill east of Golf Lane.

The name’s first appearance on the land records is found in an 1869 quitclaim deed for 16 acres “in Peaceable Street.”

The next mention occurs in an 1870 deed in which David K. Hoyt sells the “Ridgefield and New York Railroad” an acre “situate near the house of Sally Keeler in Peaceable Street so called.” (It is ironic, perhaps, that this second appearance of Peaceable occurred in a deed to a railroad that, if it had been built, would hardly have contributed to the “peace” of the neighborhood. As it was, the railroad, which was to have run to a station at Titicus, never got on the tracks, thanks probably to the new line that was run from the Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road at Branchville to the center of town. This made a second track to a village of 1,000 or so people rather impractical, even though it would have been a much straighter shot down to New York City.)

Why Peaceable? A nice name. Perhaps it was an early example of the modern “pretty” names, aimed at making neighborhoods *sound* attractive. Names like Sleepy Hollow, Kingswood, Sunset, Rainbow, etc. And back then, perhaps even Florida (*q.v.*).

Around the time that Peaceable Street began appearing in deeds, J. Howard King started improving High Ridge in an attempt to woo wealthy New Yorkers to Ridgefield where they could build their massive summer places. Several such country homes were erected on High Ridge Road, which he called High

Ridge Avenue to give it class, as well as along eastern Peaceable Street, and it is possible that King coined “Peaceable” in an effort to add character to the neighborhood overlooked by High Ridge.

The name is not without merit. The neighborhood was probably peaceable. It was mostly land for farming, a rather quiet occupation in the 1800s.

A postcard from around 1910 labels King Lane at Main Street as being Peaceable Street.

PEACEABLE HILL ROAD

Peaceable Hill Road is an old highway that runs from Peaceable Street up the south side of Blacksmith’s Ridge on West Mountain.

For many years, it ended at the east end of Yankee Hill Road near Peaceable Ridge. Originally – since before 1856 – the road proceeded farther north and came out at Oscaleta Road. For most of the 20th Century, this extension of Peaceable Hill Road had been an abandoned dirt highway, but in 1980, the road began to be re-used as Anthony Czyn’s Red Oak Corporation began developing a subdivision along its edges.

Peaceable Hill Road is a modern term, taking its name from Peaceable Street, of which it is a sort of northern branch. The name was in use by 1946 when it appears on the town’s first zoning map.

PEACEABLE RIDGE MANOR

Peaceable Ridge Manor is the 1979 subdivision by John J. Maggio of 12.7 acres into five lots served by Cardinal Court (*q.v.*). It’s off Peaceable Ridge Road.

PEACEABLE RIDGE ROAD

Peaceable Ridge Road is one of several roads whose naming was a mistake. In its case, however, the naming gained national publicity.

Extending from Peaceable Hill Road to West Mountain Road over what was once called Blacksmith’s Ridge (*q.v.*), Peaceable Ridge Road was originally known as Standpipe Road (*q.v.*). However, in 1960, most of the residents of the road decided that Standpipe Road – named for the pair of Ridgefield Water Supply Company pressure-building standpipes along the road – was unattractive. All but one resident of the road petitioned the selectmen for a change.

This attracted the attention of the late Harry Golden, noted humorist, author and nationally syndicated columnist. His column of June 30, 1960, as it appeared in *The New York World Telegram* under the headline “A Case of Economy on Standpipe Road,” follows:

“Up in Ridgefield, Conn., one of the famous commuting towns in Fairfield County, there are 22 residents on Standpipe Road who want the name of their street changed to Peaceable Ridge.

“According to *The New York Times*, Standpipe Road got its name years ago from two big standpipes, part of the town’s reservoir system, both of which still stand, guarding the road.

“But the name won’t do. The residents of Standpipe Road have gotten up a petition asserting they would rather have their mail delivered to a place called Peaceable Ridge because that name bears ‘some allusion to the natural characteristics of the road rather than one descriptive of an artificial utility.’

“No sooner was the petition drawn than the name of Peaceable Ridge became a misnomer. One resident cast dissension. He doesn’t want the name of the road changed. He said Standpipe Road is not only a distinctive name, and accurate, but also very New Englandy. The town selectmen were perfectly willing to honor the petition, but they’re not so sure now.

“Decades from now people will drive along Peaceable Ridge or Standpipe Road and comment, ‘They used to fight about the name of this road.’ Perhaps they ought to call it ‘Nonunanimity Range’ or ‘There’s-Always-One-Man-Hollow.’

“In the suburbs, people are very interested in the right name, or in the right word. No one in the suburbs ever says, ‘We’re broke’ or ‘We have no money.’ They say, ‘We are economizing.’

“I talked to a little seven-year-old suburban girl who had a bright red lunch box. I told her it was very pretty and she said it was brand new. I told her she must have been a good girl to have received such a pretty present and she said, no, she got it because her family was ‘economizing.’

“All those economizers out on Peaceable Ridge are getting more and more exact in inventing new words to describe where they live and what they do. But they do it all by code.”

Less entertaining than Mr. Golden’s column is the fact that the road’s name was changed from something distinctive to something confusingly similar to three other road names: Peaceable Hill and *two* Peaceable Streets (the second being a small portion of a Redding road that enters Ridgefield in Branchville). In an emergency, such as a fire or heart attack, the response might be to western Peaceable Street or Peaceable Hill instead of Ridge. Confusion could take a fire truck or ambulance nearly two miles and several long minutes in the wrong direction.

If a new name were necessary – and we side with the lone dissenter who found Standpipe Road distinctive, accurate, and New Englandy – something less confusing should have been chosen, perhaps reflecting the spectacular views of the Hudson River Valley that can be seen from some of the houses on the west side of the road.

Peaceable Ridge Road is not a particularly old road. It does not appear on 1856 or 1867 maps of the town, but does show up as a path on a 1912 map. It may have been an old access to wood lots or it may have been created — or improved — to gain access to the original standpipe, built shortly after the town’s water system was installed around 1900. By 1922, The Ridgefield Press was complaining that the Ridgefield Water Supply Company was not keeping its standpipe full, with the result that there was insufficient pressure to fight village fires — such as one that destroyed a tenement and adjacent garage on Bailey Avenue that April.

In the early 1980s, the older of the two standpipes on the site collapsed with a huge roar in the middle of the night, and for a long time, only one pipe, built in 1956, stood there. In 2015 Aquarion built two, much larger standpipes, each holding 850,000 gallons of water, and razed the old one.

The bases of the standpipes are at about 810 feet above sea level. One of the few parts of the village water system higher than that is High Ridge, about 860 feet above sea level, which sometimes suffered from low water pressure in the past. The new tanks, however, are probably tall and large enough to eliminate that problem.

PEACH POND

In 1730, the proprietors gave James Benedict a deed for 90 acres “lying at ye south end of ye Peach Pond.” This is the first reference in the Ridgefield Land Records to Peach Lake, the body of water now in North Salem and Southeast, N.Y., but once part of Ridgefield. The southern half of the lake was acquired by the proprietors in the Fifth Purchase from the Indians in 1729, and was lost in 1731 when the Oblong (*q.v.*) was ceded to New York colony.

The Indians called Peach Lake or Pond “Pehquennakonck” (*q.v.*). It is likely that Peach was merely an abbreviated version of the polysyllabic Indian word, and that there was no real connection with the fruit tree in naming the lake.

During the middle decades of 20th century, Peach Lake was, like the Ridgefield Lakes, largely a summer-cottage community. It now has many year-round homes.

PEATT PARK

Peatt Park is a 1928 subdivision that includes Washington Street, Lafayette and Rochambeau Avenues, all off Copps Hill Road.

The 47-lot subdivision, built on what was once an apple orchard, was named for its developer, William T. Peatt Sr., born in nearby New York state in 1886 but a Ridgefielder much of his life. He served with the Army in World War I during which he was wounded and gassed. A carpenter, he came to Ridgefield after the war, around 1919, and by 1928 filed the subdivision plan for Peatt Park.

Besides building homes at Peatt Park, he established the Peatt Resort, consisting of summer camps and a beach at Lake Mamanasco. His family was still operating the beach and snack bar in the early 1980s.

In 1945, Mr. Peatt moved to Florida where he died in 1978 at the age of 92. The Peatt family, including his son William T. Peatt Jr., has been prominent in Ridgefield over the years. Members have served the community in various ways such as in the Ridgefield Fire Department and on the Board of Education.

Ridgefield historian Richard E. Venus tells of a small dispute that arose many years ago when Mr. Peatt wanted to connect his subdivision to the Mountain View Park development of Conrad Rockelein, just to the east. The connection would have occurred through a ravine that separates Rochambeau Avenue and Mountain View Avenue. Mr. Rockelein owned the ravine land, however, and was adamantly opposed to the connection, believing it would become a short-cut and a speedway through a quiet residential neighborhood.

“Con feared that such a move would create a race track for some of the cowboy drivers,” Mr. Venus wrote in the 1980s. “It sure would have made a great roller coaster, unless the ravine was filled in.”

PECK HILL

Peck Hill is an early 19th Century name that, like so many others, has disappeared from our geography. The name first appeared in a deed in 1824 when Jeremiah Smith sold Nathan Gould Stebbins seven acres “on Peck Hill.” It last appears in an 1844 deed wherein the name is “Peck’s Hill.”

The hill is that ascended by the dead-end leg of Continental Drive, off the west side of North Salem Road. It reaches 730 feet above sea level.

Although Pecks were among the earliest settlers of Fairfield County and several Peck families owned land in early Ridgefield, there is no record of a Peck having property anywhere near this area. The land-owning Pecks were on the Danbury border at Starrs Plain or in Ridgebury.

Thus, the name may recall some Peck who leased, rented or otherwise lived on the hill around the turn of the 19th Century.

The late Karl S. Nash enjoyed telling a story about Fred Peck, a well-known Ridgefielder early in the 20th Century. Mr. Peck married Arabella Waite, and their large family lived in the 1920s in a house on the corner of what is now Copps Hill Plaza. Dr. William H. Allee, who engineered a town hall minstrel show a little before the Pecks were married, came up with this line at the performance: "If Fred Peck was in a hurry, would Arabella wait?"

For much of the 20th Century, Ridgefield's best known Peck was Louise D. Peck, a popular conservationist. Though the hill of her surname is not far from her home, she lived not on Peck Hill, but on Woodpecker Hill with her friend, Grace Woodruff.

PEESPUNK

One of the most fascinating and colorful names of Ridgefield's past, Peespunk appears in only very early deeds, though not infrequently. It reflects a little-known custom that was practiced by the first Ridgefielders – the American Indians.

The name first shows up in a 1712 deed in which the proprietors granted "Milford Samuel Smith" land lying on both sides of "Peespunk Spring."

In a later but undated deed (possibly 1717), the proprietors "granted unto ye said Samuel Smith" 10 acres "lying near ye Peespunk Brook." The reference suggests that the brook was near "Tackora's House." Tackora, an Indian leader, had an "old house" on the Titicus River near the New York colony line, according to one of the settlers deeds from the Indians.

Also around 1717, the proprietors gave Daniel Olmsted an acre at Peespunk Brook, bounded on the west by "James Wallis" land. The Wallaces settled the area on the Ridgefield-North Salem line, and much of their holdings eventually became New York land when the Oblong (*q.v.*) was ceded in 1731.

These and other deeds make it clear that the Peespunk Brook and Spring were around what is now the New York line in the Titicus Valley. The fact that the name appears in deeds written after 1731 indicates that at least part of Peespunk was in today's Ridgefield. Some later deeds suggest that it was along North Salem Road, possibly on the west side.

Eventually, deeds simply referred to land "at Peespunk," suggesting that the locality was so well known that it became the name of a whole neighborhood. The word appears in various forms, including Pease Punk (1718) and Peas Punk (1745).

Peespunk is an unusual and interesting word that offers a glimpse of local Indian life not previously noted by Ridgefield historians.

Also spelled Peace Punk, Pesuponck, and Pissepunk in other parts of southern New England, the word comes from "pesuppau-og," meaning "they are sweating." It appears in the languages of the Narragansett and the Paugusett tribes; the latter lived in parts of Fairfield County.

A peespunk or "sweat lodge" was an especially tight hut or cave where American Indian men built hot fires and took ceremonial sweat baths. Roger

Williams, leader of the settlers of Rhode Island, described such sweathouses where the men went “first to cleanse their skin, secondly to purge their bodies...I have seen them run (summer and winter) into brooks to cool them without the least hurt.”

John C. Huden said, “Several such place names are found throughout Connecticut, Rhode Island and New England. For instance, in the southwest part of Huntington, Conn., there is a Pissepunk Hill.

“This hot house,” said Jonathan Trumbull in his *Indian Names in Connecticut* (1881), “is a kind of little cell or cave, six or eight feet over, made in the side of a hill, commonly by some rivulet or brook; into this frequently the men enter after they have exceedingly heated it with store of wood, laid upon an heap of stones in the middle.

“A lot at Indian Hill in Portland (Conn.) is called Hot House Lot, because it had one of these...and a swamp opposite Saybrook Point in Lyme is called Hot-house Swamp for the same circumstance.”

Thus, long before the Finish custom had become a fad in this nation, our American Indians were appreciating saunas.

PEHQUENNAKONCK (LAKE)

Pehquennakonck was the American Indian name for Peach Lake, the body of water in North Salem and Southeast, N.Y., the lower half of which was in Ridgefield before the Oblong was ceded to New York Colony in 1731.

According to *Place Names of Westchester County* by Richard M. Lederer Jr. (1978), the word means “the nearby high place,” perhaps referring to an adjoining hill.

In the language of the Narragansett Indians, paquananauke meant “battle field” or “slaughter place.” If Pehquennakonck is related to that word, it may have referred to some ancient Indian fight that took place nearby.

However, the name may be connected with the Paugusett word, Pequon-nock, which means “a small plantation.”

Pehquennakonck does not appear in our land records. George L. Rockwell mentions it in his *History of Ridgefield* (1927) and various state histories record the word.

It is thought the name “Peach” Lake is but a corruption of the old Indian word.

PELHAM LANE

Pelham Lane is a narrow country road that runs along the Ridgefield-Wilton line between Nod Hill Road and Olmstead Hill Road (the Wilton extension of Nod Road).

The road does not appear on either the Clark (1856) or Beers (1867) maps of the town, but may nonetheless have existed in the form of a farm road from the 1700s. It may, in fact, have been the westerly end of the Old Town Road (*q.v.*), a highway that begins at Route 7 in Branchville and, in the mid-1700s, extended into this area. It may have been called “Ressiguie’s Lane” (*q.v.*) then.

Pelham Lane takes its name from John and Amy Pelham, farmers who were living there by 1888 and perhaps as early as 1874 and left by early in the 20th Century.

Much longer residents of the road are the Knoche family (pronounced knock-ee). Joseph Knoche, who with John Knoche bought a Keeler homestead

there in 1895, built the handsome stonewalls that line the eastern end of the road in the Weir Farm area. The family still lives along the road. Consequently, the road has frequently been called Knoche Road, and is so labeled on many U.S. Geological Survey maps.

However, the Town of Ridgefield and most mapmakers have preferred Pelham Lane, probably the earlier name.

The most famous resident of the road was American impressionist artist J. Alden Weir, whose farm has been turned into a national historic site, operated by the National Parks Service. Weir bought the place in 1882 and lived there until his death in 1919. His daughter, Dorothy, married noted American sculptor Mahonri Young, who lived and worked there from 1931 until his death in 1957. Artist Sperry Andrews later lived and worked there for many years.

The road had long been a small sore spot in relations between the towns of Ridgefield and Wilton. Because it runs along the border, sometimes right on what has been considered the towns' line, there have been some disagreements about how much of the roadway each town should maintain.

Back in the late 1960s, First Selectman J. Mortimer Woodcock tried to get both towns to share the cost of a survey of the town line, but was unsuccessful because Wilton officials, at least, felt the survey would cost more than it was worth.

Perhaps as a consequence of this territorial uncertainty, the pavement of Pelham Lane has at various times in its recent history been in extremely poor condition. In 1972, the president of the Twin Ridge Homeowners' Association, whose neighborhood is on the north side of Pelham Lane, wrote First Selectman Joseph J. McLinden (coincidentally a Twin Ridge resident at that time), complaining of the poor condition of the highway and calling it "the Burma Road."

In his 1975 report on the perambulation of the town lines, Theodore M. Meier, perambulator, discovered the existence of a "sliver" of some 40 acres between Ridgefield and Wilton – from Pelham Lane to Branchville – whose town of ownership is uncertain because of differences between the mapped town line and an old town line formed by stone walls.

"The Ridgefield-Wilton line has never been surveyed," Mr. Meier said. "A survey was proposed in 1966 and again in 1970, but was not accomplished as the towns did not budget the item in the same years. Quotations for the cost of surveying and mapping the line and setting monuments was about \$10,500 in 1966 and ranged from \$20,000 to \$40,000 only four years later. Since applicable laws give precedence to the old stone bounds and prior land use and occupation, it is doubtful that a survey would result in Ridgefield's acquiring the 'sliver' territory."

Ridgefield repaved its portion of the road in 2015-16.

PENNY BROOK

The 1958 subdivision map for Brookview Estates, which includes Aspen Mill Road, Kiah's Brook Lane, and lots on Ledges Road, labels Kiah's Brook (*q.v.*) as "Penny Brook." This is odd, since one of the road names in the subdivision comes from the correct name of the brook.

Why call the road Kiah's Brook and the brook Penny?

The map is about the only place where Penny Brook appears, except for a couple of deeds, and the name has never caught on.

PENT HIGHWAY

Occasionally, old deeds will use the term, “pent highway,” such as in describing land “bounded on the north by pent highway.” The term is not really a road name, but a phrase that refers to a road that has been blocked off by fences or other means.

Usually, these were old town roads that fell out of use and were acquired by the adjoining property owner or owners, who pent them to prevent their use by the public. A pent road could also have been a town-owned road that remained town owned, but for which the selectmen gave permission to have blocked off.

PEPPENEEGEK (LAKE)

Peppeneegek or Peppengheck, an Indian word that appears in various spellings, was the original name for Cross Pond (*q.v.*) and/or Cross River on the Lewisboro-Pound Ridge border. Part of the locality was once in Ridgefield, but was turned over to New York in 1731 in the Oblong exchange.

While “Cross Pond” appears in our Ridgefield land records, “Peppeneegek” does not.

The word, according to Nicholas A. Shoumatoff, an expert in local Indian languages, meant “land picked out, selected or looked at,” or simply “selected land.”

PERCH POND

When the Solley family sold its homestead on North Salem Road to Miss M. Frances Trainor and Margaret Egan in 1955, the deed stipulated that “within two years from the date hereof and as part of the consideration of sale, the grantors agreed to construct a dam and reflood the pond formerly known as Perch Pond and to be called Craigmoor Pond.”

Perch or Craigmoor Pond was a small pond on the south corner of North Salem and Craigmoor Roads. Fed by waters from Lake Mamanasco’s outlet, it was in the 18th Century the pond that stored water for the famous Isaac Keeler grist mill, burned by the British, across North Salem Road. Subsequently, it stored water for an iron works and was called Forge Pond in the first half of the 19th Century.

If the dam cited in the deed was built “within two years,” there is little evidence of its effects in 2017. The “pond” is essentially swamp. It was obviously named for the common fresh water fish that inhabited the pond when it was bigger and that can be caught in nearby Lake Mamanasco.

PERRY LANE

Perry Lane, which runs between Whipstick and Rockwell Roads, is part of an old highway or path that once paralleled Main Street for a longer distance than it does today, and whose name recalls the most prominent medical family to live in town.

In the 18th Century, Perry Lane extended northward to Branchville Road about opposite East Ridge. Like East Ridge, it represented the rear line of the first lots laid out along Main Street, and was probably little more than a cow path. The road north of Rockwell Road may have been abandoned because its terrain was much rougher than Main Street’s, and two north-south roads so close together in this area may have been considered unnecessary.

This route, from East Ridge south to Flat Rock, was said to have been traversed by some British soldiers during the April 1777 Battle of Ridgefield and on their way to the camp grounds at Flat Rock.

Perry Lane recalls the Perry family and specifically Dr. Nehemiah Perry Jr., third generation of a family of physicians who had been serving Ridgefield for more than a century. Dr. Perry had lived with his family farther north on Main Street, where the Community Center is now. After his father, Dr. Nehemiah Perry Sr., died in 1866, junior decided he could not live in a home that held so many memories of family, and built this house still standing at the south side of the intersection of Rockwell Road and Main Street. His property extended back to Perry Lane.

His grandfather, Dr. David Perry, a 1772 graduate of Yale, came to town around 1782 and was, for a while, a minister at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church as well as a physician. He died in 1812.

Dr. Nehemiah Perry Sr. was one of two of David Perry's sons to become doctors. Dr. Samuel Perry, however, moved to the South where he died in 1821, aged 38.

Nehemiah Sr. was probably the best-known of four physicians active in Ridgefield in the early and middle 19th Century. He was a noted chemist and spent much time experimenting with compound medicines, dyes, and spices, all of which were produced at his Glenburgh Mills and Chemicals Works in Georgetown. (Glenburgh was an early name for Georgetown.)

"Certainly many of the doctor's wares brought happiness to the housewife and efficacious remedy," wrote historian George L. Rockwell. Bottles that held Dr. Perry's patent medicines and embossed with his name are still occasionally being dug up from old dumps around town. One of the most famous of his concoctions was "Demulcent Compound for Coughs and Colds."

After Dr. Perry Sr. died in 1866, he was succeeded in practice by son Nehemiah Jr. while another son, Samuel, operated the mill.

When Nehemiah Perry Jr. retired in 1893, it brought to an end 121 years of medical service to the town of Ridgefield by three generations of one family. He lived in the Main Street house until 1895 when he sold the place to the DePeysters of New York City (*see* DePeyster Lane) for the rather remarkable price – at the time – of \$15,000 (about \$440,000 in 2017 dollars). He apparently moved elsewhere to retire.

PETER PARLEY LANE

As if having Parley Lane and Parley Road in the same town wasn't enough, officials deigned to add Peter Parley Lane to Ridgefield's road geography in the late 20th Century. Fortunately, no one lives on the road and probably no one ever will so it won't cause the post office confusion. Occasionally, it confounds the police.

Peter Parley Lane is the short road that links West Lane with South Salem Road just west of the West Lane Schoolhouse. It is often used by people traveling between Route 35 and Silver Spring Road, which meets West Lane here.

Peter Parley Lane is right alongside the schoolhouse that prolific 19th century author Samuel G. Goodrich — whose pen name was Peter Parley — attended as a child in the early 1800s. The school is often called the Peter Parley Schoolhouse, and the little road gets its name from that.

However, a half mile to the east is Parley Lane, which joins West Lane with High Ridge. Thus both Parley Lane and Peter Parley Lane connect to Route 35, a major commuter route in town and location of many auto accidents. And from time to time, police respond to a report of an accident at Parley Lane that is really at Peter Parley Lane — or vice versa.

At least the two are not far apart. It's when emergency vehicles respond to Parley or Peter Parley in the south of town, only to find that the problem is on *Parley Road* in Ridgebury that serious problems can occur.

PHEASANT LANE

Pheasant Lane is a short, dead-end road off George Washington Highway, part of Scodon III, subdivided by Jerry Tuccio around 1972. The 1,565-foot-long road was finally accepted as a town highway in 1985 after lots along it were developed, largely by Carl Lecher.

Scodon III, an extension of the larger 1960s Scodon subdivision to the east, was one of the town's first major Planned Residential Development (PRD) subdivisions, under which smaller than usual house lots are allowed if large parcels of open space are permanently preserved. In this case, 30 acres of prime wildlife habitat was turned into a refuge.

One of the preserve's residents was the common or ring-necked pheasant, a native of Asia introduced in this country as a game bird and once fairly common in town. Larger than the ruffed grouse — males may grow to three feet — the pheasant likes old unowned fields and bushy edges of woods and is often seen flying low for cover when flushed. Its call has been likened to the horn of an antique auto.

However, because most of the town's bushy fields of the 20th Century have turned into woodland (or house lots), pheasants — and ruffed grouse — are rare birds in 21st Century Ridgefield.

PICKEREL POND

Pickerel Pond was an old name for Fox Hill Lake. The name was used in the late 1920s and 1930s, according to people who worked at nearby Outpost Farms at that time. Outpost used to cut ice at the pond.

Pickerels, kinds of pikes, are common fishes of weedy ponds and slower streams. The appearance of fish names in Ridgefield's place names is, however, extremely rare. Except for this and Perch Pond, there are only two, and neither is used any more.

PICKETT'S RIDGE ROAD

Few people today would easily recognize that this hilly, winding back road was once a major highway.

Pickett's Ridge Road is the correct name for what is now often called Great Pond Road. Back in the early 18th Century and perhaps until the construction of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike through Sugar Hollow in the early 1800s, travelers used this road from Ridgefield to Danbury. They went out Haviland Road and across Pickett's Ridge, whence a road went north through Starrs Plain and over Moses Mountain to Wooster Heights in Danbury. Parts of this route, used by stages, the military, post riders, and others, were abandoned after the flatter turnpike was put through. Pickett's Ridge, however, continued to be used as a route between Ridgefield and Redding.

The earliest map showing Pickett's Ridge Road is the Erskine-DeWitt map, drawn around 1780, although the road certainly existed long before that. The map shows a "Lt. Pickett" as a resident of the road in Redding, just before the highway north to Starrs Plain.

The Picketts of Pickett's Ridge probably came from Danbury; a John Pickett died in that town in 1712. Indications are that Danbury Picketts had land in the Starrs Plain area, just north of Pickett's Ridge. By 1723, a Nathan Pickett is listed as a Redding resident, probably on Pickett's Ridge.

By the late 18th and the 19th Centuries, Picketts owned "enormous acreage" on Pickett's Ridge, reported the late Ebba Anderson, a historian of Redding.

Edwin D. Pickett was an offspring of this clan. Described by a friend as a "taciturn country lad," Pickett was working as a clerk in the early 1860s when he enlisted as a corporal in the 17th Regiment from Connecticut in August 1862.

"He rose rapidly, and was promoted to sergeant by mid-November to 1st sergeant a month before his death," wrote Charles Pankenier in his book, "Ridgefield Fights the Civil War." "As 'orderly,' he was entrusted with running the company in the absence of its captain, and in preference to the lieutenants who were his nominal superiors."

On July 1, his regiment was advancing at Barlow's Knoll at Gettysburg. "They were led by the flags that were the symbol of regimental honor — and a high-profile target," Pankenier said. "Years later a comrade would recall: 'Here Orderly Edwin D. Pickett was shot down while grasping the regimental colors, being the third bearer, who had carried them to the death.'"

News of Pickett's fate had reached home by July 6 when Anna Resseguie, daughter of the Keeler Tavern proprietors, noted his death in her diary. Edwin's brother, Rufus Starr Pickett, known as Starr, went to Pennsylvania to retrieve his brother's body and, Resseguie said July 12, "searched some time among the dead at Gettysburg before he was found; his blanket was wrapped about him, his watch and pencil given by Starr, were in his coat sleeve."

Resseguie also reported that at the July 12 funeral, "a long procession of pedestrians, as well as carriages, followed his remains to the grave."

Ridgefield's GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) Post, an American Legion for Civil War veterans, was named for Pickett at the suggestion of Aaron W. Lee of Farmingville, a founder of the post. A close friend of Pickett, Lee was wounded at the same time and woke the morning of July 1 to find his buddy lying dead next to him.

Pickett's Ridge was so called as early as 1840 when the name first appears in the Ridgefield Land Records.

PIERREPONT DRIVE

Pierrepont Drive ascends Ridgebury Mountain from Barlow Mountain Road near Clayton Place to Twixt Hills Road, part of the 1961 Twixt Hills subdivision of Jerry Tuccio.

The road was named for Seth Low Pierrepont, whose estate, Twixthills, included all of the subdivision as well as the adjoining 312-acre state park, the Scotland-Barlow Mountain Schools site, and other now-private property in the area.

A native of Brooklyn, N.Y., Mr. Pierrepont was born Christmas Day, 1884. He was a nephew and namesake of Seth Low, his mother's brother, who had

been mayor of New York City and president of Columbia University, where Pierrepont received his bachelor's degree in 1907. From then until 1913, when he came to Ridgefield and built his home, he was in the diplomatic service in various capacities in Portugal, Italy, Paris, and Chile. He was on domestic duty in the Navy during World War I and, in 1921 and 1922, was assistant secretary general of the Washington Conference on Arms Limitations.

In coming to town, he acquired various parcels of farmland, sometimes complete with houses that he provided for his employees, and assembled an estate of more than 600 acres. The property was so extensive that he hired his own private "police force" to patrol it. The house still stands, somewhat hidden in the woods off Old Barlow Mountain Road.

Pierrepont was quite active in town and state affairs. From 1921 to 1927, he served three terms in the state legislature where he was instrumental in the creation of the modern State Police Department. He was a member of the Ridgefield Board of Finance for 30 years – from its establishment in 1921 until 1951.

Pierrepont was president of the Fairfield County Farm Bureau, was on the Board of Directors of Berea (Ky.) College from 1916 until his death, was a president of the Ridgefield Library, headed Ridgefield's celebration of the Connecticut Tercentenary in 1936, was chairman of the Connecticut Salvage Committee during World War II, led the building committee that erected the south wing of the "Old High School" in 1925-27, was the first president of the Silver Spring Country Club, and was an official of St. Stephen's Church for 40 years (he helped rescue the church's finances after the parish treasurer embezzled a large amount of money around 1915).

At his death on March 31, 1956, The Press in an editorial observed: "His advice and guidance as a member of the Board of Finance for 30 years helped keep the town on an even financial keel through difficult and perplexing times of stress. Conservative by nature he was always prepared to defend his position on civic and financial matters with well-reasoned arguments...Like many other men of considerable means, Mr. Pierrepont performed acts of kindness and generosity without saying anything about them. He was a shy and gentle man of strong character."

PIERREPONT LAKE

Pierrepont Lake or Pond is a 40-acre artificial body of water created by Seth Low Pierrepont on his estate in 1936-37 (*see* Pierrepont Drive). Pierrepont himself called it "Lake Naraneka" (*q.v.*), under which name it is more fully described.

The term "Pierrepont Lake" came into use because it was easier to say (and perhaps to spell) and because it was Mr. Pierrepont's lake for so many years.

The lake borders Barlow Mountain Road, the Twixt Hills subdivision, and Pierrepont State Park. As with other bodies of water in town, gasoline-powered motorboats are not allowed on the lake.

PIERREPONT STATE PARK

Pierrepont State Park (officially called Seth Low Pierrepont State Park) consists of about 312 acres donated by Seth Low Pierrepont in his will. The state took title to the property in 1963, seven years after his death.

The parkland, which includes the 950-foot-high Barlow Mountain, was amassed by Pierrepont in the 1910s and 20s when it was mostly farmland. Today, the park is almost solely forest, with some trails first blazed in the 1970s and improved in the mid-1980s, a parking lot, a launching area for non-motorized boats, and a long stretch of shore along Pierrepont Lake – much of which is within park limits.

In his bequest to the state, Pierrepont prohibited any form of hunting at the park, and the state has followed his wishes, banning same.

Pierrepont had hoped and expected that his wife would bequeath or give the rest of their land to the state to make the park even larger. Her will, however, did not include such a bequest, and the land around the house was sold to Jerry Tuccio for the Twixt Hills subdivision (1961).

PINCHBECK POND

Pinchbeck Pond is a small pond between Old South Salem Road opposite the Peaceable Street intersection, and South Salem Road. It was formed along one of the little tributaries of the Stamford Mill River.

The pond is named for the family who created it and owned part of its shoreline. The Pinchbecks also owned what was once the oldest Ridgefield business continuously operated by the same family.

Pinchbeck Nursery at Old South Salem Road and Peaceable Street was founded in 1895 by William Pinchbeck, a native of England who came to this country as a child. The nursery was first established in nearby South Salem, but was moved to its present location in 1903 when William Pinchbeck built a single greenhouse. The business grew to have some 60,000 square feet under glass (one greenhouse alone was 15,000 square feet) and a couple of acres under cultivation.

Pinchbeck Nursery originally specialized in carnations, but as the market and tastes of Americans changed over the years, the family switched to roses and became a major source of roses for New York City and elsewhere. The nursery eventually carried a wide variety of flowering plants – from rare orchids to common annuals, perennials, shrubs, and trees.

The business was headed for many years by William's son, Joseph G. Pinchbeck, who died in 1977. It was Joseph who created the pond in the 1920s, planning one day to build himself a home on a bluff overlooking it. He abandoned those plans when the state built the new South Salem Road cutoff in 1938.

Joseph's sons, John and Joe (and, for a while, Jay) operated the nursery until 1999 when they sold the business. Both John and Joe had graduated from the Cornell University College of Agriculture.

The property continued to be used as a retail nursery, called Peaceable Farm, until around 2013. In 2017 the property was under consideration for use as a private recreational club.

Many of the old greenhouses have been removed in recent years.

Although long retired from the nursery business, John Pinchbeck continues to shape the outdoor environment. He has been Ridgefield's tree warden for nearly 40 years.

PILGRIM HILL ROAD

Pilgrim Hill Road, a dead-end lane off Danbury Road almost opposite Ritch Drive, was first shown as an undeveloped private road on a 1964 subdivision map and was approved about five years later. However, it wasn't until the 1980s that much development along it took place.

The name was picked out of a hat by the late Bartholomew T. Salerno, the subdivider, and has no historical significance in connection with Ridgefield.

The subdivision consists of six or seven lots.

PIN PACK ROAD

Pin Pack Road, an old highway running between Saw Mill Hill and Barrack Hill Roads, has a name whose origin is clouded in the past.

Legend has it that the road was named for a peddler who lived there many years ago. The peddler is supposed to have sold small household items, like buttons, pins, and eating utensils, carried in a back pack or "pin pack."

The name itself is not that old. While the highway existed by 1856, when it appears on Clark's map, the first recorded name for it appeared in the early 20th Century when it was known as Roscoe Road for the Roscoe (Rusco, Rasco) family that lived there many years. "Pin Pack Road" was in use by 1960, but does not appear on the 1946 town zoning map.

PINE HILL

As a child growing up in Farmingville early in this century, the late Karl S. Nash knew the round-top hill, northwest of the intersection of Farmingville and New Roads, as "Pine Hill." It was a local name, but not a new one.

In 1842, when William Hawkins sold Edwin Lee five acres in Farmingville, he described it as "at Pine Hill." The hill rises 750 feet above sea level, about 100 feet higher than the average terrain of Farmingville.

If there are any pines on Pine Hill today, there are many fewer than grew there at the turn of the century, Nash said.

Pines are one of the most common evergreens around here. White pine has been considered by some the most valuable timber tree in eastern North America, its light, soft, and straight-grain wood being free from knots and nearly free from resin. It has long been used for furniture and can be highly polished.

White pine favors rich woods, and is probably the namesake for most of our pine place names.

In sandy soils can be found the red pine. So called for the color of its bark, the red pine has become a rarity in recent years as most of the town's specimens were killed by a disease peculiar to that species. It is native to northern Canada and was introduced here.

Pitch pine or candlewood pine, so called because slivers of it were lit as candles in the 1600s and early 1700s, can also be found hereabouts in sandy soils. In fact there was once a Candlewood Hill (*q.v.*) in Farmingville. It is quite possible that Candlewood Hill was an early name for this locality.

PINE LAKE ROAD

Pine Lake Road is a long, winding path through West Mountain's woods, but only a small portion of it is in Connecticut.

The road intersects with Barrack Hill Road just before the state line and, 400 feet on, is in New York where it wanders through forests and fairly near

Pine Lake in North Salem. Most or all of this area is owned by Westchester County, and is used for the Mountain Lakes Camp.

The road and probably the lake were constructed around 1908 as part of the extensive grounds of the Port of Missing Men resort (*see* Port Road).

PINE MOUNTAIN

Often called the highest point in Ridgefield, Pine Mountain is a long ridge in what is still wilderness in the northeast corner of the town, north of the Bennett's Ponds and Wataba or Rainbow Lake at the Ridgefield Lakes.

At its highest point, the mountain is about 1,010 feet above sea level, according to the US Geological Survey maps. Historian George L. Rockwell placed the elevation at 1,040 feet. (Main Street at the Fountain is 800 feet.)

The mountain was so-called from at least 1835 when the name first appears in the Ridgefield Land Records. This part of town, hilly and rocky, was never homesteaded and instead served as a source of lumber for construction and wood for fireplaces and stoves of both Ridgefielders and Danburians – many of the latter owned land in this northeast corner. The name suggests that the predominant tree species was pine.

Much, possibly all, of Pine Mountain proper is today owned by the town as parkland. Part of it was acquired from the massive Ridgebury holdings of the late Otto H. Lippolt (*see* Hemlock Hills). Some was bought from the Ives family – whose most illustrious member, composer Charles Ives, is said to have found inspiration for his music in a family shanty that was built in 1903 on the mountain. IBM, which owned much land in the neighborhood, gave the town 35 acres, partly on the mountain. And other land on or nearby the mountain is now part of Bennett's Pond State Park, once largely the holdings of Outpost Farm and Nurseries.

Pine Mountain is also at the end of the 20-mile-long Ives Trail, a hiking route that heads northeasterly from Pine Mountain through Wooster Mountain State Park in Danbury, across Route 7, through Tarrywile Park to Rogers Park (and the Charles Ives homestead), then into Bethel and finally Redding.

PINE MOUNTAIN ROAD

Pine Mountain Road is an old highway, only the northern half of which survives today. It ran from Miry Brook Road in Danbury south to Mountain Road at the Ridgefield Lakes. Probably part of Mountain Road was the south end of Pine Mountain Road; the town's 1946 zoning map shows it that way.

There is also evidence that at least the northern section of Pine Mountain Road was once part of a highway that connected Starrs Plain with Miry Brook, Mill Plain, and Ridgebury. Such a road was mentioned as early as 1792 and in the 1800s was repeatedly referred to as "a mountain road from Miry Brook to Starrs Plain." This route does not appear on 19th Century maps, however.

Only the northern half of what is now called Pine Mountain Road is in use today. Probably because it was so steep and difficult to traverse, part of the road fell out of use long ago, and became little more than a dirt path. The road is not shown on mid-19th Century maps, suggesting it was not popular at that time or that mapmakers ignored the road because no one lived along it.

Not surprisingly the road takes its name from the mountain, just to the east of it.

Pine Mountain Road once presented an unusual problem for town officials. It begins in Danbury, crosses a bridge over the Miry Brook, and in a few yards is in Ridgefield. In the early 1970s Ridgefield residents of the road complained that the bridge over Miry Brook was in such poor condition that fuel oil trucks were afraid to make deliveries for fear the heavy vehicles would cause the bridge to collapse. They said Danbury didn't want to improve the bridge.

Danbury was not too interested in spending money on a bridge that led to Ridgefield and served few, if any, people in Danbury. However, after much negotiating between the two towns, a modest and narrow new bridge – basically a culvert – was installed.

PINECREST DRIVE

Pinecrest Drive is a dead-end road off North Street, serving part of the subdivision called "Pinecrest."

The road was subdivided in 1958 by Richard Mayhew, an airline pilot who also lived on the road. (In his mid-90s in 2017, Mayhew still lives in Ridgefield.) He selected the name "Pinecrest" because so many white pines were found on the property. They were believed to have been planted by its previous owner, Dr. John J. Kiernan, a dentist who practiced in New York City and who died around 1955.

The subdivision of 22 acres into 13 lots also includes Sprucewood Road (*q.v.*), named for another tree found on the property.

PISGAH

Pisgah is a name that has often confused historians in towns where it has appeared. There has been no confusion in Ridgefield, however, for the name has gone unnoticed – or unnoted – by town historians, not to mention geographers.

That's probably because Pisgah appears only one time in the Ridgefield land records, applied to a hill in Ridgebury, quite possibly Pine Mountain (*q.v.*)

Often, the name is taken to be an Indian word or a corruption of one. Indeed, John C. Huden, in *Indian Place Names of New England*, says it could be an Abnaki word for "dark" or a Mahican word for "muddy."

"Many locations by the name are found in New England," he writes. One is in Vermont, very near that state's Mount Hor.

A reading of the Bible would reveal both Hor and Pisgah were mountains that figured prominently in the story of Moses. Thus, Pisgah is undoubtedly Biblical, not Indian, in origin.

In Deuteronomy 34, "Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan...as far as the Western Sea...And the Lord said to him, 'This is the land which I swore to Abraham to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to your descendants. I have let you see it with your own eyes, but you shall not go over there.' " Thus it was from Pisgah that Moses saw the Promised Land he was never to set foot in.

Perhaps to the settlers, Ridgefield was a promised land. At any rate, when Andrew Wood quitclaimed 25 acres to Stephen Bennit in 1785, he described it as being "on the mountain called Pisgah."

Names of neighboring landowners suggest that Pisgah was in the northeast corner of town, north of Bennett's Pond. It could have been Pine Mountain or perhaps Wooster Mountain, a little to the east.

This is rough territory, never used for agriculture or homesteads and limited to woodlots and hunting. Yet, Pine Mountain overlooks the lower hills of Ridgefield to the south and it could be said that it viewed a land promised to those two dozen or so people who migrated here from Long Island Sound communities in the early 1700s.

George R. Stewart in his *Names on the Land* offered another explanation of the use of the term. Early settlers "found the mountains strange and sometimes fearsome," he wrote. "In one way the names reflected this sense of awe. The English did not often name rivers for streams in England for the Bible. But mountains were constantly called for Biblical names."

Hills or mountains in Branford, Colebrook, Newtown, Oxford, Enfield, East Lyme, and Durham were named Pisgah. Often the term is used redundantly, as in Pisgah Hill in Branford, and Mount Pisgah. In Hebrew, *pisgah* means "hill."

In Newtown, in a 1714 deed, the name was spelled "Mountain Pizza!"

Pisgah and Nod are the only Biblical terms uncovered so far in Ridgefield's geographical names.

PLATT'S MILL POND

Platt's Mill Pond is yet another old name for Miller's Pond on the west side of Route 7 north of Florida Hill Road.

Obadiah Platt bought the grist mill there in 1759 and operated it probably until the 1770s, one of a dozen people to run a mill there between its establishment around 1737 to the early 1800s. And, as in this case, the pond sometimes took the name of the miller – as in McDonald's Mill Pond, for a subsequent owner.

In the land records, "Platt's Mill Pond" occurs once, in a 1765 deed from Daniel Jackson to Ephraim Jackson for five acres "on ye west side of Platt's Mill Pond." Platt owned the mill then, for the deed mentions the land was "lying near ye grist mill of Obadiah Platt." Although Daniel McDonald seemed to have owned the mill by 1779, there is a 1786 deed that refers to land in this area as "near Platt's Mill."

PLATTSVILLE

An 1893 atlas labels the area around Branchville as "Plattsville." This is probably a mapmaker's error since that name has not appeared in any deeds or on any other maps of Ridgefield we have seen.

In Easton there is a Plattsville section, located in the very southeastern corner of that town, just as Branchville is in the southeastern corner of Ridgefield. Perhaps the map's labeler confused Ridgefield for Easton.

There also used to be a Plattsville in Bridgeport near Trumbull.

PLAYGROUND ROAD

Playground Road, aptly named, is a road that leads to the Branchville Playground.

The road was installed before the playground – it was built by the town around 1935 to gain access to the field which the Branchville Civic Association

had purchased to create the town's first privately established playground for public use. In fact, it was the first athletic field that was not connected with the school system, said the late Francis D. Martin, who had been active for many years in the Branchville Civic Association. For years the association owned the field – used largely for Babe Ruth baseball – and leased it to the town for \$1 a year.

Playground Road runs between Branchville Road and Park Lane.

PLEASANT VIEW ESTATES

Developer Jerry Tuccio's last major subdivision involved some 88 lots on 200 acres of the former N. Lyman Keeler property off the west side of Ridgebury Road north of the Ridgebury Congregational Church in 1968-69. The development is served by Keeler Drive, Powdermaker Drive, Keeler Place, and Keeler Court.

POCCONOCK TRAIL

Pocconock Trail, sometimes spelled Poconoc, is a dead-end road off Pin Pack Road. It leads through a subdivision, Pin Pack Estates, designed around 1965 by Lewis J. Finch and Jack Coyle (the Ridgefield High School science teacher).

Surveyor Michael Jaykus of Ridgefield named the road and said he was inspired by a road of the same name in a New Canaan subdivision he had worked on.

The source of the word is unclear, but the name itself is not unfamiliar, appearing in at least a dozen Connecticut towns under such sundry forms as Poconock, Poconnuck, Poconock, Poquannoc, Poquannock, Poquannick, Poquannuck, Poquanump, Poquonach, Poquonock, Paquannuck, Paquanauge, and Pacquanach. When the Town of Ridgefield accepted the road in 1970, it spelled it Poconock.

The American Indian term is generally translated as “cleared land” – a suitable name for a road through a subdivision! J. Hammond Trumbull, historian of Connecticut's Indians, wrote in an 1890 letter, “the Indian planting fields were pauque-auke, naturally ‘clear, open,’ or pauqu’un-auke, land made clear, ‘a clearing.’ After it had been once planted and dug over, it was pauquetahhun, ‘open or broken up’...In one form or another, it is found in a dozen places in Connecticut and in other states of the Atlantic Coast.”

Pocconock was also a tribe of Indians, members of the Wappinger Confederacy, who inhabited the area around Windsor and Windsor Locks. A postmaster of the Poquonock post office in Windsor listed 40 different ways of spelling the name on letters received at his office during the year 1882.

So, if you live on Pocconock Trail and people have difficulty spelling your address, it's a problem well over a century old.

POMPION RIDGE

In June 1716, Richard Olmsted sold seven acres to Thomas and Samuel Smith, describing the parcel as being on “Pompion Ridge.” When Olmsted acquired the land from the proprietors four years earlier, the deed said the tract was on “Pumpkin Ridge.”

And so it was for more than a century and a half: the terms Pompion and Pumpkin were interchangeable for the ridge that was later to be called Biddle

Hill. It is situated at the western end of Old Branchville Road and near Branchville, Washington and Jefferson Roads, and Nutmeg Ridge.

Pompion, an old word for pumpkin, was a term often used by the English for this vegetable. "Pumpkin" is, in fact, a corruption of "pompion." One deed, in 1785, called it "Pompkin Ridge," suggesting how the corruption of pompion to pumpkin took place in our language.

The 1716 deed represented the first appearance of Pompion Ridge in the land records, although the term was probably used before that. A common name in the early 1700s, it continued to appear in deeds as late as 1854. Pumpkin Ridge, first used in 1712, did not as frequently appear in the 1700s, Pompion being preferred. Pumpkin becomes more common in the 1800s.

Both names tended to fall out of use by the 1860s and 1870s, although an occasional deed, using an old property description, would carry the term Pumpkin Ridge. Edith Douglas Wettingfeld (1900-1976) recalled Biddle Hill's sometimes being called Pumpkin Ridge during her childhood.

The ridge took its name probably from vegetables cultivated by the settlers. True native pumpkins were found only in the West and Southwest; however, the English knew and grew pumpkins, which were sometimes called "English melons" or, corrupted, "millions." The English used them chiefly for food – soups, pies and jams – while early Americans also used them widely as fodder for cattle and pigs.

Species of squash, members of the same genus, were also called pumpkins years ago, and it is possible that some native plant found on the ridge, with a fruit that looked like a small squash, generated the ridge's name.

POND MOUNTAIN

Pond Mountain is the steep hill just eastward of Bennett's Pond and so named because of its proximity to the pond. The first mention of the name occurred in the late 1700s when Nathan Sellick of Danbury sold James Sturges Jr. and others of Danbury seven acres "lying on ye Pond Mountain so called," and whose south boundary was "running a long ye brook running out of ye Buttonwood Swamp"(q.v.)

The name last appeared in the land records in 1830.

POND ROAD

Pond Road may be the town's oldest dead-end road. Running from North Salem Road at Scott's Ridge down to near Lake Mamanasco, it was built as an access to the grist mill at the outlet of the lake.

The first mill, that of Daniel Sherwood, was erected around 1716 and by then, there must have been some small path leading down to the building. And since several subsequent mills were operated there by quite a few different millers, the road remained in active use until the late 19th Century when, after he last mill closed for good, it became a hardly used path to a house or two. One could still see remains of the last mill (several were built on the site) from the end of Pond Road in the 1980s.

The first name for the road was probably simply "Mill Road." That name was used for it in a 1791 deed.

Though now it is a quiet, sleepy residential road, things were not always peaceful there. At least that is the impression given by the following 1843 entry in the Town Record Book:

The selectmen “being called upon to remove obstructions and nuisances on a certain public highway near the grist mill belonging to the heirs of Jonah Foster, late of Ridgefield, deceased, proceeded according to law to give notice to Charlotte Burt to remove the fence standing on the highway in front of her land, leaving said highway unencumbered, and on her neglecting and refusing to remove said fence...we...employed Francis Foster to remove the same.”

However, something apparently went wrong – perhaps Charlotte stood out there with a gun — and the selectmen were unsuccessful. The record continues: “Said highway which was held enclosed by the said Charlotte Burt, commenced on a point of the highway which leads from the Post Road to North Salem to said grist mill about rood east of the northwest corner of said enclosure...A new highway was laid out across starting at the north end of the old highway, and west over Foster’s heirs and following the present traveled path to the mill.”

A portion of the old highway that ran westward, then southward, was abandoned, apparently satisfying both the Foster heirs and Charlotte. Both Burts and Fosters had lived in that area for many years, and Burts owned the mill before the Fosters gained title to it. Perhaps there was bad blood between the two families – maybe stemming from the Revolution. Jonah Foster had been a captain in the colonial army while most of the Burts of Scott’s Ridge were Tories who, during the war, fled Ridgefield for British-held territory.

POND SWAMP

Pond Swamp is a name that appeared only once in the land records – in 1799 – and apparently referred to land around the intersection of Craigmoor and North Salem Roads. The “pond” was probably Forge Pond, the small body of water at what is now the corner of the two roads. The swamp probably bordered the pond, much as the pond is almost surrounded by swamp (or has become all swamp) today.

The pond could also have been nearby Mamasasco Pond, not known as a “lake” until the 20th Century.

PONDED SWAMP

Ponded Swamp is another once well-known place name that has disappeared from Ridgefield’s geography. Its use spanned more than a century.

The name began appearing in the 1730s. One of the earliest mentions was in a proprietors’ grant to James Scott in 1733 for 10 acres “lying northerly from ye Ponded Swamp.”

In 1740, the Select Men “laid out for a highway between Benjamin Stebins and John Stirdevant(’s land), northerly of Toilsom, two rods wide, this ye that runs up toward ye Ponded Swamp.” The road was quite possibly Barrack Hill Road (*q.v.*), and Ponded Swamp was a section of West Mountain – probably the modern-day swamp on the northerly and southerly sides of Old West Mountain Road, near where it joins Barrack Hill Road. It was “ponded” because the swamp had a high water level; it was probably a dying pond, halfway between a pond and a swamp. Such was typical of small ponds, created by the last glacier. The streams from higher land brought silt that gradually filled smaller ponds. Today the swamp is probably not nearly as ‘ponded’ as it was.

The name appeared frequently in the 18th Century and well into the 19th. The last reference in the Ridgefield Land Records occurred in 1866 in a deed

that spelled it “Pounded Swamp.” Pound is a valid variation, as in “impounded” water.

An 1875 deed mentions 50 acres “near the ‘Sugar Hollow’ cart path where the state line crosses the Pounded Swamp Road so called.” This Pounded Swamp Road may have been today’s Barrack Hill Road.

POOR HOUSE LANE

This colorful name occurs once in the land records, in an 1862 deed in which the estate of Aaron Betts sells Clark Bronson land in Danbury and Ridgefield, bounded on the north “by the Poor House Lane, so called, leading from the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike Road on to the Mountain.”

This property was bounded on the east by the turnpike, indicating that Poor House Lane went off the west side of the turnpike and up toward Pine Mountain.

What was probably this road can still be seen today, barely a path running off Route 7 just north of Bennett’s Farm Road and almost opposite Starrs Plain Road. This is probably the same road that was occasionally referred to in the land records as the “Mountain Road leading from Miry Brook to Starrs Plain,” an 18th Century highway that traversed Pine Mountain.

Why “Poor House” Lane? No record has been found of an official poorhouse or almshouse in this vicinity of either Ridgefield or Danbury. Ridgefield’s official poorhouse, called the Town Farm, operated from the 1880s until the early 1940s on North Salem Road in a house still standing at the corner of Circle Drive; *see* Town Farm.

A poorhouse was a building that housed a community’s impoverished citizens. In those days, this was not many people because families were closer-knit then and were more apt to “take care of their own” and even their friends. Far from being free room and board, the poorhouse put the inhabitants to work, usually farming the accompanying land. Danbury had an alms house beginning in the 1880s on a 100 acre farm at Broadview, near where Danbury Hospital is today.

Perhaps the reference was to an old shanty that was a “poor house.”

POPLAR ROAD

Poplar Road, which runs from Haviland Road to Linden Road, is part of a subdivision first proposed in 1955 called Ridgefield Gardens.

The subdivision was designed by Gustave Iser, but largely built by Armand Salvestrini, who spent many years developing the neighborhood.

The road was so called because of the poplar trees thereabouts, planted probably by Outpost Nurseries, which owned this land for nursery stock from the 1920s until the early 1940s.

Poplars, including native species and those imported from Europe, are used both as ornamentals and for pulpwood, the latter use because they are fast-growing (and short-lived). The seeds, buds, and twigs are important food sources for almost all kinds of herbivorous wildlife in our area. Poplars include aspens and cottonwoods.

It is interesting that a simple, two-syllable word like poplar is frequently mispronounced. Many times we have heard it called “*Popular* Road.” Nearby is Limekiln Road, often pronounced “limekin.” And a popular version of Manasco among some oldtimers was “Manamasco.”

PORT ROAD

Port Road was a common term early in this century for what we now call Old Sib Road. The name was short for “Port of Missing Men Road”—that is, the road that led up to the Port of Missing Men, a resort on West Mountain.

The resort was situated along the New York State extension of Old Sib Road, near what is called Titicus Mountain along Hunt Road in North Salem.

Henry B. Anderson, who had amassed some 1,750 acres in Ridgefield and North Salem, established the resort around 1908. The place was sometimes called Anderson’s Tea House, and Old Sib Road was sometimes referred to as Tea House Road (*q.v.*).

The resort, which lasted into the 1930s, catered to wealthy New York businessmen and, by some accounts, their girlfriends, and the acreage provided places for hunting, fishing, hiking, or perhaps secluded picnicking. The main building was torn down and little evidence remains today of the resort — except for roads. Many Ridgefielders, whose families live in town today, were involved in building and operating the resort over the years.

The name of the place came from a popular 1907 novel of the same title by Meredith Nicholson. At one point in the novel, Armitage, the hero, is hiding out in Virginia for political reasons. As he arrives at a secluded hunting lodge, his companion says, “Here is what they call the Port of Missing Men.”

“Why the name?” asks Armitage.

“There were gray soldiers of many battles – yes? – who fought the long fight against the blue soldiers in the Valley of Virginia, and after the war was over, some of them would not surrender — no; but they marched here, and stayed a long time, and kept their last flag, so the place was called the Port of Missing Men.”

So the fictional port was both a hideout and a hunting lodge, the same as the real resort.

Novelist Mary-Ann Tirone Smith, then a Ridgefielder, chose *The Port of Missing Men* as the title for her 1989 novel about an Olympic swimmer. In this case, however, the “port” was an ocean liner in the era just before World War II. “Like the classic Ship of Fools, *The Port of Missing Men* is both a refuge and a portent, a last harbor in a world about to go mad,” says the dustjacket.

POST ROAD

An 1843 property description says that North Salem Road connected with “the Post Road,” i.e., Main Street. It is one of the few references to that ancient use of this highway running through Ridgefield.

A post road was a mail route, so called because it had “post houses” or post offices along it. Post comes from the French or Italian word for “station.”

Today, of course, almost all highways are “post roads” since mail trucks travel many routes. But in the old days, a post road was considered to be a major highway – a sort of modern interstate – because it passed through the center of villages, was known to have establishments for food and lodging along it, and was in good condition – good for those days, at least.

For its whole length from the New York State line north to Route 7, today’s Route 35 was one of the “northern” post roads, as opposed to the more famous “southern” one that is today called U.S. Route 1 or the Boston Post Road.

Mail traveled along our post road on the way from New York to Hartford and Boston, starting sometime in the 18th Century and lasting probably until it was replaced by train service.

None of the route in Ridgefield was ever formally called "Post Road" and it was rarely informally so called.

However, a portion of the route, a little almost-abandoned dirt road off Wooster Heights in southern Danbury, is still called "Old Boston Post Road." This is because the post road between Ridgefield and Danbury in the 18th Century followed a route that was east of the present-day Route 7, a highway not built until after 1800. The Post Road followed Haviland Road to Pickett's Ridge, then went north through Starr's Plain and over Moses Mountain, coming out via the "Old Boston Post Road" at Wooster Heights.

When the new Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike (*q.v.*) through Sugar Hollow was built, post riders or stages used that route (*see also* Danbury Road).

The Keeler Tavern was probably the town's first post office and the only Ridgefield stop for post riders and coaches in the 18th and early 19th Centuries. It was conveniently situated in what was then the center of the business community of Ridgefield and the tavern provided stage riders with an opportunity for refreshment while mail was being exchanged.

The post road in New York State followed the old path of the modern Route 35. According to a 1797 surveyor's map of Lewisboro, this highway, as it led to South Salem Road, was called the "Boston Post Road," indicating that at that time, it was a major mail route.

In the 1980s, Westchester County historian Richard M. Lederer Jr. did research on the post roads. He was uncertain just when the mail started being carried from New York through Ridgefield to Danbury and Hartford. "A 1714 newspaper says that the mail to Boston alternated by way of Saybrook and by way of Hartford," he said in a letter to this writer in 1987. "The Westchester Road Commissioners laid out a road from Bedford to Ridgefield in 1737. The 1797 map of Lewisboro...shows both of the above as Post Roads. The historian in the Postmaster General's Office says the earliest mail service from Hartford was 1798 by way of Danbury, Ridgefield, North Castle, White Plains. A milestone in Scarsdale bears the date 1771."

POTASH HILL

Potash Hill is the name once applied to the hill on Wilton Road West (Route 33) just north of the Silver Hill Road intersection. The name was well known in the 19th and early 20th Centuries, but has been all but forgotten today.

The name was in use as early as 1831 when the Town Meeting voted to appoint a committee to investigate "the present traveled road leading from Ridgefield to Wilton ... over Flat Rock and Pot Ash Hill, so called..." for a new road. Interestingly enough, a debate over the path of this road lasted many years, and it was not until 1849 that the Town Meeting finally agreed to a straighter route over Potash Hill, one similar to the present road, that cut a quarter of a mile off the trip between Flat Rock Hill and the Wilton line. The old route went to the east, connecting to Wilton Road East, and could until recent years be seen running through woods.

However, it may not have been until many years after 1849 that the new road was actually installed. The straight section of Wilton Road West as it goes

down the hill and passes Silver Hill Road and Fieldcrest Drive was built by the state around 1920.

Potash Hill, with Potash as two words at first and as one word later on, appeared frequently in the mid-19th Century land records. By 1871, the neighborhood had picked up the name. For example, when Jonathan D. Gray of Wilton sold John K. Gray of Wilton two acres, he described it as being “at ‘Potash’ so called.” And a deed a year later between two Ridgefielders mentions three acres “at Potash.”

The source of the name has not been ascertained, but it can be surmised that on or near this hill was a potash manufacturing operation, a common trade of the period. In the town of Torrington, a Potash Hill was so called because “a potash factory was in the meadow at its foot,” according to a local history. In the town of Washington, another Potash Hill was so named because “potash is made at the foot of the hill,” an old history of that town says.

Potash, a substance obtained by burning wood, was used years ago as an alkali in the production of soap. Water was poured through the ash to extract the alkali constituent. This was originally done in a pot; hence, “pot ash.”

Potash was also a popular soil conditioner. For instance, Jared Nash, a farmer who lived on Silver Spring Road opposite St. Johns Road — not far from Potash Hill — reported in his diary May 30, 1866, “I ashed corn.” American Indians also employed this technique. For instance, ashes were the only fertilizer used by the Powhatan Indians of Virginia when they planted corn. Ashes were also used in gardens to discourage slugs.

The late Karl S. Nash recalled that, in the 1920s, he found large quantities of a “white” substance on the surface of the land just west of Wilton Road East, a little north of Silver Hill Road. It was at the intersection of Wilton Road East with an old road, called Potash Hill Road, which connected Wilton Roads East and West — quite probably part of the old Wilton Road that the 1849 Town Meeting wanted to bypass. The white substance was probably the ash from the old potash operation.

In *A Book of Country Things*, based on oral interviews with Walter Needham about 19th Century life in Vermont, the farmer recalled: “If you look in most books about the New England pioneers, you will read where the settlers cut down all the trees and burned them for ashes.

“The Needham side of my family — my father, his father, his father, and his father — burned wood to make potash for soap; that was their business, selling potash, and had been ever since the State of Vermont started. They begun in 1794 and kept it up for three generations. But actually the fellows that wrote the histories got all excited for nothing.

“Good timber was just as valuable then as it is now, and the old-timers had better sense than to destroy it. What the settlers burned was of no value. It was old growth, either hollow or rotten or shaky or poor stuff; it had gone by, the same as an apple that has hung on the tree too long.

“When I was a boy, my own father told me that they was cutting trees and burning them for ashes. The old-growth hemlocks would be four or five feet through, all right, but they was hollow, with just a little shell on the outside. Sometimes they had hollows big enough for a man to get into...”

It is interesting that the 1849 description of the new route of Wilton Road West in the vicinity of Potash Hill mentions “the low land west of P(latt) Brush

saw mill pond.” It is possible that the scrap from the saw mill was used at a nearby potash manufactory.

“Potash” was also applied to a stream along the hill. Deeds in 1843 and 1851 refer to Potash Brook, probably the small stream that runs under Wilton Road West at the foot of Potash Hill, down by Silver Hill Road.

POUND MOUNTAIN

Pound Mountain is the hill north of Turner Road. It is now mostly in Danbury but before much of Ridgebury was ceded to Danbury in 1846, it was entirely within Ridgefield. It’s where Union Carbide built its huge headquarters in the 1980s (now the Matrix Corporate Center) and where the Toll Brothers did the “Rivington” residential community in the 21st century

The hill, 860 feet above sea level at its highest point, overlooked an animal pound situated on or near the ridge east of the Ridgebury Congregational Church. The ridge was called Pound Ridge (below).

A pound was an enclosure – like a corral but usually using stone walls – to hold stray livestock, such as cattle and swine, as well as horses, until their owners claimed them. More than a half dozen of them were established around town at various times. The town government appointed pound keepers, at first called “keepers of the pound key,” to hold the animals until their owners claimed them.

The name “Pound Mountain” begins to appear in deeds connected with the division of lands obtained by the town in the 1731 New Patent. Under this agreement, Ridgefield obtained Ridgebury territory north to New Fairfield.

In fact, Pound Mountain is shown on a map of “the 4th Twenty Acre Division Granted by the Proprietors of Ridgefield & Recorded January ye 23rd AD 1740/41...drawn from the Original by Benj. Smith, Proprietors Clerk, June 12th AD 1787.” The map, on file in the land records in the town hall, was drawn 46 years after the original; it is possible that the name did not appear on the original map and was added by Smith because he knew that is what the hill was being called in 1787. While it is also possible that a pound was already established at the time of division in 1741, it’s more likely it was created after the upper Ridgebury lands were more settled.

In 1737, the town authorized the establishment of a pound in Ridgebury on land set aside for the meeting house or church. At that time the meeting house site was near the intersection of Ridgebury and Ned’s Mountain Road. Thus, this pound was probably not the source of the name.

In 1766, another pound was authorized, this one to be near the burial ground. This reference was probably to the still existing cemetery north of the still existing Ridgebury Congregational Church, which dates from the late 1760s.

However, it is also possible that yet another pound existed on Pound Mountain, though we have been unable to find a reference to it in early government records.

“Pound Mountain” does not appear in deeds until 1792 when Ebenezer and Sarah Pickett of Danbury sold Ezra Nickerson 13 acres “at ye north end of Pound Mountain so called.” The last land record appearance of the name occurs in 1834.

In two deeds (1800, 1818), the name appears as Pond Mountain, although the place cited is clearly Pound Mountain.

POUND RIDGE

Pound Ridge is an old name for the ridge situated north of George Washington Highway and east of Ridgebury Road, according to Ed Liljegren, a Ridgebury historian in the 1970s and early 1980s.

It was on and about this ridge that many of the 4,800 French troops under Comte de Rochambeau camped around July 2, 1781, on their way from Rhode Island to the Hudson River to join with American forces for an attack on New York. Rochambeau instead eventually joined Lafayette at Yorktown.

The name appears in deeds written in 1824 and 1858.

POUND STREET

Pound Street is the only one of several “pound” names (including New Pound Ridge) to survive today, but is also probably the newest of the pound names.

The road runs from Main Street just south of Joe’s Corner and opposite Casagmo, west to New Street and then a little beyond New Street. It is of early 20th Century origin, not appearing on 19th Century maps nor on one of the village drawn in 1900. Pound Street may have been developed in conjunction with the building of New Street around 1908. It originally extended across to Ramapoo Road, but most of that western section has been abandoned.

The road was named for an animal pound, which stood on the northern side of the intersection with Main Street. The pound was established around 1797, possibly replacing one that stood at the lower end of Main Street “near the place where Matthew Seymour’s trading shop stood” or possibly supplementing it. It served as a holding place for loose animals from the northern part of the village, plus Titicus.

The need for the pound had become evident by 1795 when the Annual Town Meeting voted that the new pound should be established on a 400-square-foot parcel on the west side of Main Street, just about opposite the Casagmo entrance. But the 1796 Annual Town Meeting rescinded that action and selected a site farther north on Main Street. And in 1797, the meeting voted “that ye pound near Samuel Stebbins’ dwelling house be established.” At the same meeting, “Samuel Stebbins, Joseph Grey and Cyrus Edmond were chosen to keep ye keys of ye pound(s)” in town. Edmonds’ pound was probably down in Florida District; we do not know where Grey’s was.

Some years ago, the late Robert A. Lee of Farmingville found a deed for the pound land in the papers of his grandfather, Aaron W. Lee, a first selectman in 1880 and 1881, who built a house near the old pound in 1888. This may have been a deed giving title to the old pound land to him.

No record of the town’s acquiring the pound land in the 1790s could be found; perhaps it had already been town-owned or perhaps it belonged to Mr. Stebbins, and title did not transfer to the town until some years later.

The pound was maintained through part of the 19th Century, but by late in the century, neighborhood pounds had fallen out of use, apparently because fencing to keep animals under control had become extensive, more effective and better maintained.

POWDERHORN DRIVE

Powderhorn Drive, a dead-end off Farmingville Road, was named by Robert E. Roache, developer of the 30-acre former Wilder property, once farmland.

Mr. Roache “always wanted to be a cowboy,” said one acquaintance. He wore cowboy boots and a cowboy hat, named the subdivision “Gun Hill Farms,” and later moved to the West. The other road in the subdivision is called Old Musket Lane.

Roache bought the property in the spring of 1964 and immediately began building the first of the planned 23 houses. He was also developer of the earlier 17-acre Lantern Hills (Lantern Drive) subdivision.

Powderhorn Drive became a town road in 1968.

POWDERMAKER DRIVE

Though it might sound like another road named by a would-be cowboy, Powdermaker Drive is named after a psychiatrist, surgeon and author.

Dr. Florence Powdermaker, along with her sister, Hortense, bought the 103-acre former Desmond farm on the west side of upper Ridgebury Road in 1950.

In her obituary in 1966, The New York Times reported that “much of her career in medicine was devoted to the problem of making children feel secure in society.” To that end, she wrote one of her two books, “Children in the Family,” later called “The Intelligent Parents Manual.”

Dr. Powdermaker earned a doctorate from Johns Hopkins University in 1922 and a medical degree from the University of Chicago four years later. She studied in Europe under a Rockefeller Fellowship in 1928 and 1929, and went on to hold various positions in psychiatry in New York City. At one point after World War II, she was a consultant to the supreme allied commander in Japan; one of her specialties was treating servicemen shocked by combat in the war.

She was 71 at the time of her death.

Her sister, Dr. Hortense Powdermaker, was an anthropologist who taught at Queens College for many years. She studied many cultures, including that of Hollywood, about which she wrote the book, “Hollywood, the Dream Factory.” She spent some years in Ridgebury, but lived mostly in New York and later in Berkeley, Calif., where she died in 1970 at the age of 69. A nephew, Allan Powdermaker, also lived on the property for a few years until he moved to New Jersey around 1969.

Part of the Powdermaker land is now Pleasant View Estates, Jerry Tuccio’s last major development here, laid out around 1968. Powdermaker Drive is a dead-end road off Keeler Drive in this subdivision.

PROSPECT HILL

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, Prospect Hill is at the northern end of Prospect Ridge, the area around the old high school tennis courts where the elevation reaches 750 feet above sea level.

It is a common name; more than 40 towns in Connecticut alone have Prospect Hills.

PROSPECT RIDGE AND ROAD

As best as can be figured, Prospect Ridge takes its name from Prospect Hill, which in turn takes its name from Prospect Street. Evidence is that the

name “Prospect Street” existed before “Prospect Ridge” or “Prospect Hill” came into use. In fact, around the turn of the century, Prospect Ridge was known only as “East Ridge” and Prospect Ridge Road was East Ridge Road.

East Ridge is, historically at least, probably the more accurate name for the top of the ridge east of Main Street. Today, however, East Ridge seems to apply only to the land between East Ridge Road and Prospect Ridge Road, while Prospect Ridge applies to the land east of Prospect Ridge Road. It’s all one ridge, but it’s got two names.

Prospect Ridge Road extends from Prospect Street on the north to Ivy Hill Road on the south. It is a road that town officials have over the years eyed as part of a possible village bypass. However, whenever the idea is proposed, opposition is quickly heard from those who note that a bypass means widening the road and destroying the rows of trees along the northern end.

The last proposal to widen Prospect Ridge occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s during the administration of First Selectman Louis J. Fossi. The plan was abandoned in the face of vehement opposition, so town officials decided instead to make Prospect Ridge Road one-way southbound between Prospect and Governor Streets. That reduced the chances of auto accidents along that narrow stretch where people are often distracted by softball games and tennis matches on the parkland on the west side of the road.

Some years later, the one-way portion of Prospect Ridge was reduced to the segment between Prospect Street and Halpin Lane, allowing easier access to the facilities on Halpin Lane such as the Ridgefield Theater Barn, Marine Corps League, and the Ridgefield Guild of Artists gallery and workshop.

PROSPECT STREET (AVENUE)

Prospect Street is one of the most common road names in Fairfield County, and probably in the state and nation. Seventeen of the 23 towns in the county have Prospect Streets, Avenues, Lanes, or Drives. Interestingly enough, six towns without “Prospects” also lack developed 19th Century villages or cities – Easton, Monroe, Redding, Sherman, Weston, and Wilton. Prospect Streets, it seems, are characteristic of older, developed villages and particularly of cities.

The name first appears in the Ridgefield Land Records in 1877, but as “Prospect Avenue.” The Rev. Daniel Teller, in his History of Ridgefield published in 1878, uses “Prospect Avenue.” In the same year, Teller mortgaged his house on “Prospect Avenue.” The town’s sewer map, drawn in 1900, shows “Prospect Avenue.” When the switch to “street” took place is unclear. By 1946, “Prospect Street” was on the town’s first zoning map.

The name was undoubtedly taken from the view or “prospect” one has from Prospect Hill at the top of east end of the road. From there, in the days when the land was almost treeless pastures, one could see the whole village. And one can still view the hills and ridges to the east for miles.

The name may have been created in the post-Civil War era when several major business leaders in town were trying to promote Ridgefield to New Yorkers as a place to build their summer retreats. “Avenue” was a French-based word that connoted a tree-lined thoroughfare and that was fancier than “road” or “street”; High Ridge Road was changed to High Ridge Avenue around this time to give it a more elegant air, suitable for the mansions that would soon be built along it.

The Russians, incidentally, use the word “prospekt” as a type of road; prospekts are avenues of houses or long, straight streets; thus, Nevesky Prospekt in St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad).

Prospect Street is one of our oldest roads, having been laid out at the Dec. 16, 1721 Annual Town Meeting as a “road eastward between ye homelots of Thos. Smith and Ebenezer Smith...thence to Joseph Keelers Six Acre Division and down to Great Swamp.”

For many years and until the mid-1900s, Prospect Street was traversable through Great Swamp to Blackman Road. The swamp portion was undoubtedly risky to travel in wet seasons, but a nice short-cut when the swamp’s higher lands were dry or frozen. Today, the road extends only to the old railroad bed; the section from Prospect Ridge to the end is often called Prospect Street Extension, and leads to the rear of Quail Ridge condominiums.

In the early part of the century, Prospect Street was often referred to as Depot Hill because the train station was in the valley between the two hills traversed by the street. The western end was also called Library Hill because it passed by the library.

The Ridgefield station, now rebuilt and part of Ridgefield Supply Company, was the dominant operation along Prospect Street from the 1870s onward. The tracks actually crossed Prospect Street a little east of Bailey Avenue and ran up along warehouses still standing on the east side of Bailey.

Little was on the south side of Prospect Street between Main and Bailey; in the 1860s an ice house existed about where Dimitri’s Diner is today. By the early 1900s there were various barns, garages and small structures that were by the 1940s turned into stores and a restaurant. Around 1971, these older structures — including the Sport and Toy Caboose, the Tag Sale Shop, Buck Realty, Villa Italia restaurant, Salmagundi, and the Remnant Barn — were torn down to make way for the Yankee Ridge Shopping Center.

Up on the hill several houses existed, the largest of which was probably that of local businessman S.S. Denton.

PUBLISHER’S ROW

Publisher’s Row was an informal nickname for the southern leg of High Ridge Road, according to 20th Century historian Dick Venus. The term seems a bit of a stretch, but in fact, over a period of two centuries, there were at least four people involved in the book publishing field who lived in this small section of road — all on the west side.

The first and oldest was Samuel G. Goodrich, who as a boy lived in the house at #15 near the south end of the road. The house is opposite Parley Lane, which recalls Goodrich’s pen name, Peter Parley, under which he published close to 100 books in the 19th Century and more under his own name.

Up the road at #77 was the newest publisher of the group: Jack Hoeft head-ed Bantam Doubleday Dell in the 1990s. (The Doubleday, incidentally, had no connection with the Doubledays who owned nearby Westmoreland off Peaceable Street and were not involved in publishing.)

At #63, just south of the former Hoeft house, is the longtime home of Edward Payson Dutton who in 1852 founded and ran the famous E.P. Dutton publishing house — an imprint that still exists today, though now owned by Penguin. Dutton helped the town get its first modern school — the big brick build-

ing on East Ridge that over the years held grade from kindergarten to senior year of high school.

Finally, at #87 High Ridge at the corner of Peaceable Street is the 1909 brick mansion of Charles Henry Holt, a member of the family that gave us Henry Holt and Company, an imprint still publishing books today but owned by Macmillan.

PUMP LANE

Pump Lane is a short dead-end road built in the 1950s off lower West Lane near the New York State line.

The road is so-called because the Silver Spring Country Club once had a pump house along it. The pump house, long ago abandoned, supplied water for the club's golf course when it opened in the early 1930s. Achille Bacchiochi, the contractor, installed it in 1932. According to his son, the late Joseph Bacchiochi, a small pond was dug near the road and water was pumped to a pressure tank that was still standing near the road in the mid-1970s.

The golf course is now watered from a pond, enlarged in the 1970s, along Silver Spring Road.

PUMPING STATION ROAD

Pumping Station Road, which runs from Oscaleta Road into New York state (becoming Petit Road at the line), takes its name from the Pumping Station Swamp (below), which it crosses. It is an old road, dating back possibly to the 1700s when it was probably a farm path. Later, it served as a short-cut from the upper village to South Salem, being shorter and less hilly than the old West Mountain Road route.

The road in New York isn't much different from what it was a century ago: a narrow, dirt path through wetland – then pasture, now woods.

PUMPING STATION SWAMP

Pumping Station Swamp runs along the west side of Oscaleta Road between West Mountain Road and Pumping Station Road, with some of the swamp extending south of Pumping Station Road. Its name stemmed, not too surprisingly, from a water pumping station in the swamp.

In the 1870s, Ridgefield began developing as a popular spot for the summer places of wealthy New Yorkers. Most of these large houses, either new or remodeled antiques, were situated in and around the village. This development was sparked by the laying of a spur rail line in 1870 from the main line at Branchville to the village, making travel from New York City to Ridgefield village fairly easy and comfortable.

In 1895, a sizable portion of the village business district burned down in the worst fire in the town's history. The lack of trained firemen and of water to fight this blaze, plus the increased development and value of property in the village, led to the creation of the Ridgefield Water Supply Company a few years later to serve the village's water needs.

The first source of water was Pumping Station Swamp, where a well was put into use in the spring of 1900. From the well, water was forced by the pumping station to a standpipe on Peaceable Hill. A standpipe, higher than any of the customers, provides water pressure. The original standpipe lasted until

the mid-1970s when, in the middle of one night, it collapsed with a huge roar, much to the chagrin of neighbors.

Around 1902, the company began drawing water from Round Pond, a natural pond that had been used for some early saw mills and as a source of ice. Nonetheless, the swamp's aquifer continued to supply much of the company's water from a deep well and, to protect the swamp's watershed, the town in the 1960s created the first three-acre house-lot zoning through the "Pumping Station Valley."

The water company owns 45 acres in and about the swamp, and much of the swamp and Pumping Station Brook south of Pumping Station Road is now permanently preserved town open space, acquired when the nearby development that includes Minute Man Road was subdivided.

Pumping Station Swamp may have been known earlier as Rattlesnake Swamp (*q.v.*).

PUMPKIN RIDGE

Pumpkin Ridge is an old name for the hill at the western end of Old Branchville Road and near Branchville and Washington Roads, Jefferson Drive, and Nutmeg Ridge. It was later called Biddle Hill (*q.v.*).

The name, discussed previously under Pompion Ridge (pompion being another name for pumpkin), was in use as early as 1712 and as late as the turn of the 20th Century. It may have stemmed from wild, pumpkinlike plants found there or from someone's planting a large patch of them there.

George R. Stewart in his "American Place Names" says that "like most vegetables, (pumpkin) has given rise to few names, especially because it carries some derogatory connotation, as in 'pumpkinhead.'" It is for perhaps that reason that Pumpkin Ridge fell out of use.

PUNCH BROOK

In the proprietors' second purchase from the Indians on March 18, 1715, a portion of the boundary is described as "thence something eastward between the mountain and Mamasquogg Pond to the lower end thereof, over a small run then named punch Brook..." This is the only appearance of the name, which possibly referred to the small brook that now runs from Turtle Pond (Hidden Lake) to Mamasasco. (A "run," as mentioned above, is a brook.) The pond was created around 1908 by damming up the stream.

The origin of the word is uncertain. Punch had an old meaning of "short," but usually was applied to something that was also stout.

It is also quite possible that the word is an Anglicized version of an Indian word. If that is the case, punch could be a word based on the sound "pon" or "pown" which among southern New England tribes meant waterfalls or rapids. The stream suggested above drops some 75 feet in a short distance, and probably had some falls or rapids.

Paug or pauk was a sound indicating "pond," and punch might have been a version of this, referring to Mamasasco.

Or Punch could have been a shortened, corrupted form of Peespunk (*q.v.*) or Pease Punk, a locality that may have been in this vicinity, although deeds suggest that Peespunk may have been northwest of Mamasasco.

This stream may have been the same that was later called Ivy Swamp Brook.

Q

QUAIL DRIVE

Quail Drive is a second name for this road, running off Old Stagecoach Road. Originally called Kathy's Court, it was built around 1960 as part of the Ridgefield Knolls subdivision. Kathy Southworth was the daughter of the supervisor of construction on the Knolls project.

In 1969, people who lived on the road petitioned the town to have the name changed. They termed it “an anomaly,” not in keeping with the neighborhood or with names of other roads in town.

The group at first wanted the new name to be “Hickory Bluff.” That went over like a lead balloon at a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, where commissioners noted that a Hickory Lane already exists off Florida Road and that “bluff” was not an acceptable term under the commission's regulations.

The residents next suggested Quail Trail. The commission deemed it too sing-songy, and felt “trail” should denote only a through road. Drive was chosen as a compromise.

Quail is another name for the bobwhite, a fairly common chicken-like bird in these parts.

QUAIL RIDGE

Quail Ridge is the town's third largest condominium project, built in the 1980s by Carl Lecher, who has also built many single-family houses in Ridgefield.

The development covers about 10 acres of former Sullivan family farmland running between Prospect Ridge Road and the Great Swamp.

The Quail Ridge units were larger and more expensive than the previously built condominiums at Casagmo and Fox Hill, and were designed to look colonial rather than modernistic like the earlier projects.

QUAKER RIDGE

Quaker Ridge is the name of the 17-acre subdivision, consisting chiefly of Saunders Lane (*q.v.*) off Farmingville Road. Development began as early as 1949 by P. K. Saunders, a well-to-do Englishman who was president of the Saunders Valve Company of America.. The reason for the name is unknown.

QUARRY ROAD

Quarry Road led from northern North Street to a quartz and mica mine in Copps Mountain, north of (or within) the Mimosa development. The mine appears on Beers' 1867 map, and was apparently worked in the mid-1800s.

The road went from North Street eastward, near Pinecrest Drive, and was mentioned as the south boundary of the former Summ property in a 1977 deed.

QUINCY CLOSE

Quincy Close, a lane at Casagmo, was named by developer David L. Paul for ancestors of George M. Olcott, who built the Casagmo mansion in the 1890s. The house was torn down around 1968 to make way for the condominium project, but the Casagmo name was retained for the development.

According to the Olcott genealogy, Edmund Quincy (1602-1654) came from England in 1633 and settled in Boston. From him, blood somehow flowed into the Olcott clan, but judging from the number of Quincy entries in the genealogy, the relationship was very remote. Paul probably selected the name because it sounded good, rather than because it had an important connection with the Olcotts.

Unfortunately, the name is sometimes confused with Quince Court, one of Paul's fruitily named byways at Fox Hill condominiums on Danbury Road.

R

RAILROAD AVENUE I

The earlier of the town's two Railroad Avenues is what we today call Branchville Road, a name itself of railroad origin.

The railroad from Norwalk to Danbury was established in 1852. Since it generally followed the Norwalk River Valley northward till it reached Simpaug Turnpike, the railroad line touched only a small piece of Ridgefield in the extreme southeast corner of the town.

The road to that part of town was little used in the 18th and early 19th Centuries. The southeast or Copp's Corner of town was mainly a farming area with not even a major mill. When the railroad came through, village merchants pressed for major improvements to the road so that heavy freight wagons, as well as passenger stages, could get to and from the new station. The then-existing route, over what's now Old Branchville Road, was too hilly in some places and too swampy in others.

So in 1852 or 1853, the town built a new road – the section that bypasses Old Branchville Road – and by 1856 the bypass was being called Railroad Avenue. For example, that year, when William B. Thomas mortgaged his property (including 22 acres, two houses and outbuildings), he described the premises as having "Railroad Avenue" running through it.

Soon, however, the whole length of Branchville Road became known as Railroad Avenue; it was, after all, the road from the village to the railroad. Maps in 1867 and 1893 label Branchville Road at Main Street as Railroad Avenue.

Exactly when it fell out of use is not clear, but the replacement – Branchville Road – retains the railroad connection since Branchville was named after the branch railroad spur to the village that started at Branchville Station (*q.v.*).

An interesting early reference to Railroad Avenue occurs in 1862 when George B. Grumman bought an acre and a half in the "10th School District...and being on Railroad Avenue...said land to be used for a burying ground, but not for tillage." That represented the establishment of the Branchville Cemetery, which has served the Georgetown area ever since.

RAILROAD AVENUE II

The more recent Railroad Avenue was what is now called Sunset Lane, the short road between Grove Street and Prospect Street Extension.

Property along the road was subdivided in 1923 by Mrs. Mary Walker and the road was probably called Railroad Avenue soon after. The reason was obvious to the people then; it paralleled the railroad tracks as they came into the village to the station where Ridgefield Supply Company is now. Service on the branch line was abandoned in the early 1960s.

Probably because the name seemed to them to be rather unattractive, residents of Railroad Avenue petitioned the selectmen in April 1957 to change the name to Sunset Lane, a classic meaningless name. The selectmen approved the change in January 1958.

There is evidence that this road existed in the early 1700s and extended into and across the Great Swamp, coming out in Farmingville.

RAINBOW DRIVE

Rainbow Drive is a private road at the Ridgefield Lakes, so small that it does not even show up on some official maps of the town. The dead-end lane, serving a few families, runs off Cross Hill Road toward Rainbow Lake, from which it takes its name.

RAINBOW LAKE

Rainbow Lake is a private, man-made pond, created by damming a stream through pastures in the mid-1920s, and is one of the Ridgefield Lakes.

Rainbow Lake was originally called "Lake Number One" and may have been known as Wataba Lake (*q.v.*) by some.

"Rainbow Lake" may have been chosen as more colorful, pronounceable and better able to encourage real estate sales of the summer cottages or camps along its shore. The name probably came from rainbow trout, a game fish found hereabouts.

Today, some maps show Rainbow, others Wataba. Take your pick.

RAM PASTURE

In 1777, the Proprietors sold Benjamin Northrup three acres "in the old Ram Pasture, so-called." At the same time he was also deeded "one rood lying in the old Ram Pen, so called."

Research done by the late Glenna M. Welsh indicates the Ram Pasture was situated along West Lane (then called Bedford Road) in and about the triangle created by Parley Lane, High Ridge and West Lane.

In the 17th and 18th Centuries, sheep were extremely valuable animals, providing wool for clothing, meat for food, and fat for candles and soap. "Every farmer had about 30 sheep which kept him in light, clothes, mutton, and partly in soap," one Vermont farmer recalled about the 19th Century.

In Massachusetts during the 1600s, reports Alice Morse Earle, sheep were allowed "to graze on the commons; it was forbidden to send them from the colony; no sheep under two years old could be killed to sell; if a dog killed a sheep, the dog's owner must hang him and pay double the cost of the sheep. All persons who were not employed in other ways, as single women, girls, and boys, were required to spin."

In the early days of Ridgefield's settlement, the town itself owned a sizable flock of sheep, pastured on common land and probably tended by a town-hired shepherd or by volunteers. These sheep provided not only food, clothing and lighting, but also fertilizer and education for the town's children.

Periodically, a "sheep meeting" took place. One on Dec. 24, 1742, voted that "the money coming for the hire of the sheep last year shall be given as bounty to help maintain the Town School forever, and when the money is gathered it shall be delivered to the committee that is appointed to take care of the bounty money given by the Government to support ye School..."

"The hire of the sheep" meant that twice a week, a farmer could bid to take the sheep to, as Ridgefield historian George L. Rockwell most delicately put it, "lay in his ploughland during the night, which method was used toward enriching the land."

Apparently the rams for the flock were kept at the Ram Pasture while the sheep were probably held nearby, perhaps in the vicinity of Olmstead Lane.

RAMAPOO ROAD

Ramapoo Road is an old highway, probably the original route from town to West Mountain. It meanders from Gilbert Street westward to the intersection of West Mountain Road and Barry Avenue.

Evidence is that Gilbert Street was originally considered part of Ramapoo Road. Indeed, a 1900 map of the village labels Gilbert Street as "Ramapoo Road." And there are also indications that West Mountain Road was called the same thing; a 1907 property map in the town hall uses "Ramapo Road" for West Mountain Road in the vicinity of Old West Mountain Road. (Ramapo, incidentally, one of at least two common spellings of the word, is used by the Rockland County, N.Y., town.)

In the mid-18th Century, someone who wanted to go from the village to Round Pond had to take a route that traversed today's Gilbert Street, Ramapoo Road, Oscaleta Road, and Rippowam Road. Barry Avenue wasn't built until the mid-19th Century and most of West Mountain Road didn't exist until sometime after the Revolution.

The name "Ramapoo" recalls the name of an American Indian group that lived in Ridgefield. In his "Ridgefield in Review," Silvio Bedini says that "the Indians who inhabited the Ridgefield area were members of the Ramapo and Titicus villages in the Tankiteke sachemdom of the Wappinger tribe."

The term "Ramapoo" appears in the very first Indian deed to the new settlers, dated 1708, which begins: "Know ye that I, Catoonah, sachem of Ramapoo Indians..."

Ramapoo, Ramapo or Ramapough Indians left this area after selling their territories in western Connecticut to the settlers, and their populations seemed to concentrate around northern New Jersey and southern New York. Today, there are some 5,000 people in Rockland County, N.Y., and Passaic and Bergen Counties in New Jersey who consider themselves Ramapo or Ramapough. In 1980, the New Jersey legislature recognized the tribe as Ramapo Lenape Nation. However, efforts to be federally recognized have failed for decades, apparently because the tribe lacks enough historical documentation to prove their bloodlines and cultural traditions.

Theories vary as to what Ramapo or Ramapoo means. John C. Huden, an Indian place names expert, translates the word as "they are in route" or "temporary dwellers," but admits that "other sources give 'stream formed by round ponds' and 'river which empties into round ponds.'"

George R. Stewart, in "American Place Names," has a simpler, more basic translation: "round pond."

It is interesting that Ridgefield has a "Round Pond," to which the old Ramapoo Road led. Could the road to Round Pond been called Ramapoo because the namers knew that ramapoo meant "round pond"?

Ridgefield's Indians were, incidentally, of a type that would match with Huden's translation of "temporary dwellers." They changed camps or villages with the seasons.

RAMAPOO HILL ROAD

Ramapoo Hill Road is part of the Ramapoo Hills subdivision, developed in the mid-1950s by Judge Joseph H. Donnelly (see Donnelly Drive). The dead-end road and the subdivision are so-called because they are along Ramapoo Road.

The development is on the old Conklin Farm, whence Farm Hill Road, another of the subdivision's roads, gets its name.

RATTLE HOLES

Certainly among the more colorful of Ridgefield's old place names, Rattle Holes was an 18th Century locality on the west side of town.

A 1753 deed in which David Northrup transfers his house, barn and land to his son, describes the three acres as "lying at the Rattle Holes, so called, near the West Mountain." The name is probably a variation of one of the following names.

RATTLE SNAKE SWAMP

"Ye Rattle Snake Swamp" is a name which appears in only one deed dated 1718 from the proprietors to Nathan St. John. There is no clue as to the location.

However, in 1733, another deed from the proprietors to Jonathan Rockwell's heirs mentions three acres "lying by a swamp below West Rattle Snake Swamp, north of Bedford Rhode."

Bedford Road is today's South Salem Road – or, in those days, Old South Salem Road in this vicinity.

West Rattle Snake Swamp, also called West Rattle Swamp, was in turn connected with "ye West Rattle Hole," mentioned as early as 1717. West Rattle Hole appears fairly frequently in the land records of the early 1700s. The name's form varies, too, as in the 1721 deed mentioning "ye West Rattleholes." These holes or dens, according to the deed, were "under ye West Mountain." A "West Rattle Rocks" is also mentioned in a 1753 deed.

All these locations, including Rattle Holes, were probably in the vicinity of and west of Peaceable Street and Peaceable Hill Road.

Place names in Connecticut recalling the once common rattlesnake are not unusual. There are many Rattlesnake Hills and Brooks, a Rattlesnake Mountain, etc. The shortened form, "rattle," is not common, however; New Canaan had a Rattle Hill Rocks and Rattle Hole Rocks, and Winchester has a Rattle Valley. No "Rattle Holes" are reported in Hughes and Allen's "Connecticut Place Names." California has some 200 place names recalling the rattlesnake. As George R. Stewart says in "American Place Names," "Since the meeting with a single rattlesnake is often impressive, many of the names are doubtless so given, though such incidents are rarely recorded."

The timber rattlesnake, this area's only rattlesnake species and one now probably extinct in town, was once common in the rocky ledges and hillsides, as well as at the edges of swamps. It is a shy snake and not aggressive, and it takes some bit of disturbing to get the critter to even sound its rattles.

"There were at the first settlement great numbers of rattlesnakes and snakes equally poisonous, but they are almost destroyed," said the Rev. Samuel Goodrich, writing about the state of the town in the year 1800.

Mr. Goodrich explained that “one method for their destruction was the turning of swine among them, which devoured them.” And the town probably had a lot of swine to turn out—by 1800, Goodrich estimated there were 1,500 pigs in a town of 2,000 people. The settlers also made the environment difficult for snakes, clearing most of the woods that both rattlers and copperheads like.

The last rattler report in Ridgefield may have been March 31, 1938, when Joseph Dlhy said his “big hound dog” died after being bitten by a rattlesnake in remote Ridgebury woods. (Dlhy’s farm is now the Ridgefield Golf Course, where Canada geese have been a bigger problem than snakes).

Rattlesnakes are known to still live in hilly parts of Kent, Conn., and may be living in remote sections of Ward Pound Ridge Reservation in nearby New York State.

Ophidiaphobes—persons afraid of snakes—may be somewhat comforted in knowing the odds are extremely slim that they would run across a poisonous snake, and even slimmer they’d be bitten. State wildlife officials report between that in the 54 years between 1950 and 2004, rattlesnakes in Connecticut bit only six people. As for copperheads, their bite is less potent—one expert compared it to a “bad bee sting”—and is probably almost as rare.

All snakes, poisonous or otherwise, are important to our environment, especially in controlling rodents.

RAYMOND’S COURT

Raymond’s Court is a short, dead-end private road off the north side of lower Old Branchville Road, so called for Raymond L. Kirsch Jr., who developed it in the early 1960s.

The road was never completed to town standards, and the Planning and Zoning Commission once tried without success to collect an \$8,000 road bond that was supposed to guarantee money to finish the job. The issue was never pressed too firmly, probably because the state announced around then that Raymond’s Court would disappear if and when a “New Route 7” expressway were built. The new highway’s path would have run right over Raymond’s Court.

READ’S MILL POND

Read’s Mill Pond was another name for Lake Mamanasco, and the term appears in a 1791 deed.

Elias Read (or Reed) was an owner of the gristmill at the outlet of the lake (at the end of today’s Pond Road). The mill is the famous “first grist mill” in Ridgefield, built around 1716 by Daniel Sherwood.

Read started buying shares of the mill in 1781 and continued buying and selling percentages of the business for some years.

Read died in 1795 and his widow or daughter, Hannah, sold her interests in the mill very soon after. It is probable that Read was the chief miller, for in 1783 he bought a house near the mill. And it would seem unlikely that the pond would take the name of a silent financial backer of the business, although several other men were partners.

RED BROOK

In 1830, Timothy Wheeler sold Joel Gilbert 13 acres “in the ‘Red Brook tract’ so called.” Subsequent deeds through 1869 mention Red Brook, some-

times as “at Red Brook,” suggesting that it was a locality that consisted of more than just a brook and encompassed a small neighborhood.

Several deeds say the brook was on West Mountain. Based on property owners in the neighborhood of the brook, it appears to have been somewhere along Barrack Hill Road, perhaps near Old West Mountain Road.

The origin of the name is uncertain. A Red Brook in Armonk, N.Y., is so called because of the red clay on the bottom. It may have referred to a color of the water, picked up seasonally, perhaps from iron ore in the ground.

RED HILL

One deed, dated 1845, mentions land in Ridgefield “on the top of Red Hill.” The seller was from Southeast, N.Y., and the names of the buyers and adjoining property owners suggest that Red Hill was in a section of upper Ridgefield, north of Mill Plain, that was ceded to Danbury in 1846. The name may refer to the color of the soil

RED OAK LANE

Red Oak Lane, a dead-end road off Pumping Station Road, is part of the Colonial Heights subdivision, developed starting around 1965 by Lewis J. Finch and others.

Other roads in the subdivision have colonial-type names, and one was originally planned to be used for this road. However, Mr. Finch said, the name selected was too much like another in town, and Red Oak Lane was chosen instead because of the many red oaks in the area.

The red oak, so called for its reddish brown bark and wood, also has leaves that turn a deep red or orange in the fall

REED SWAMP

Deeds in 1721, 1725 and 1726 mention “ye Reed Swamp” or “ye Ready Swamp.” One deed describes land “lying southerly from the Ready Swamp, so called, on yet east side of ye Great Swamp.” Another talks of land “over ye Great Swamp, southerly of ye Limestone Hill, lying partly in ye Reed Swamp.”

A 1730 deed mentions land that “lyeth over ye West Mountain, northeasterly of ye Ready Swamp.”

The name, which appeared frequently, described the appearance of the swamp – i.e., it had a lot of reeds growing from it. These were also called flags, and there were a couple of Flaggy Swamps and Bogs (q.v.) around town, too.

REGAN ROAD

Often misspelled Reagan, Regan Road was named for the Regan family.

Jeremiah and Mary Driscoll Regan moved in the early 1850s to a small farm whose house stood on the site of the present Ridgebury Firehouse, opposite at the east end of the road. Mary Regan used to wash the family clothes in the brook that runs by the firehouse, reported Richard E. Venus, whose wife, Marie Bishop Venus, was descended from the Regan family.

Jeremiah died in 1902 and Mary in 1886 – only 45 years old. Both are buried in St. Mary’s Cemetery.

The road is an old one, appearing on mid-19th Century maps. Town records indicate it was laid out by the selectmen in 1852.

The road was built through a swamp and when the town tried to improve it in the early 1960s, it had considerable difficulty filling in the bed, which would often sink deep into the muck of the swamp.

The most sensational problem occurred on the night of Sept. 23, 1963, when a 400-foot-long fissure, between five and six feet deep, opened along the road. First Selectman Leo F. Carroll said at the time that quicksand or humus under the road must have led to the earthquake-like break, which cost more than \$50,000 (\$400,000 in 2018 dollars) to repair.

At one point state highway officials were thinking of recommending that the town build a log base to the road, similar to that found along sections of the Alcan Highway. An extensive drainage system was eventually put into the base, and seems to have worked. The road has not split apart since.

"We spent a lot of money on Regan Road," Carroll recalled some years later, with a note of disappointment in his voice.

A 1990 deed for land along the road mentions "Reagan Road, sometimes known as Nancy's Lane." The origin is unknown; perhaps it was a presidential joke of some sort.

REMINGTON ROAD

Remington Road runs between Barry Avenue and Peaceable Hill Road, part of the Westmoreland subdivision of the mid-1960s. The road was originally to be called Holmes Road, a name subsequently applied to a different Westmoreland roadway.

For years, townspeople had wanted a road recalling the noted American artist, Frederic Remington, who had died in 1909 at his home on Barry Avenue after moving here only six months earlier. From shortly after his death well into the 1950s, various movements tried to have Barry Avenue changed to Remington Road. In fact, a 1927 map of property along Barry Avenue called the highway "Remington Road."

The new road at Westmoreland gave the town a perfect opportunity to commemorate Remington: it intersected Barry Avenue not far from Remington's house. So in 1966, the Planning and Zoning Commission agreed to change the old Holmes Road to Remington Road.

Of the many artists who have lived and do live in Ridgefield, perhaps none has gained more fame than Frederic Remington. The following is his obituary as published on the front page of The Ridgefield Press on Thursday, Dec. 30, 1909, under the headline: "Celebrated Artist Dies at His Home in Ridgefield."

Celebrated Artist

Following an operation for appendicitis, Frederic Remington, the foremost of American artists in depicting army and Western life, died Sunday morning between 8 and 9 o'clock in Loral Place, his home in this place. He had been ill for several days. The operation was performed last Thursday by Dr. Robert Abbe of New York, assisted by Dr. Lowe of Ridgefield, and Dr. Stratton of Danbury. The artist rallied after the operation and it was believed he would recover. Complications, however, entered into the case on Saturday and the patient sank rapidly during the night.

Mr. Remington was one of nature's great artists. With his brush and his pencil, he depicted men, animals and things as he saw them and not as a fanciful artist would do such work. He pictured things as he knew they were in all their details.

To his intimate acquaintance with the subjects of artistic treatment and his earnest desire to keep close to human or to animal nature, his great success as an artist was largely due. Nothing seemed to big or too small to escape his artistic eye. That held good, whether he was painting cowboys, Indians or ponies, which he had seen in the West, or soldiers, horses and cannon, which he had seen as a war correspondent.

"When I die," he said not long ago to a friend, "I want my epitaph to be, 'He knew the horse.'"

Mr. Remington was not Western born. In 1861 he was born in Canton, N.Y. He spent most of his boyhood there, and, when he was old enough, was sent to the Vermont Episcopal Institute, in Bennington. After that he attended the Highland Military Academy in Worcester, Mass.

In these two schools he acquired a love for the army which he afterward portrayed so vividly. As a boy he showed a marked aptitude for art, although his father at first desired him to devote himself to literature and become an active newspaper man. He spent a year in the Yale Art School, and went from there to a political clerkship in Albany.

Then, well grounded in the fundamentals of art and possessed of great natural artistic ability, which had been strengthened by a course in the Art Students' League, he went West and lived on a ranch. Yale University conferred on him the degree of master of fine arts, and he was elected an associate member of the Academy of Design.

From drawing and painting he extended his work to sculpture. His statuettes, "The Bronco Buster" and "The Wounded Bunkie," won instant recognition.

The Wounded Bunkie

"The Wounded Bunkie" is regarded by many as Remington's most effective and characteristic efforts. The "bunkie," as all know, is, in the language of Uncle Sam's troopers, the comrade who will share with his friend, and with whom his one particular friend will share the last drop of water in the canteen, the last danger, and the last hope. There is thus a strongly sympathetic interest in the group Remington portrayed.

Nor did Remington content himself with art work as it is generally understood. He began writing word pictures of life in the West and illustrating them with almost inimitable skill. "Pony Tracks" in 1895; "Crooked Traits" in 1898; and "Sundown Leflare" in 1899, were read and appreciated by tens of thousands of book lovers. Nowhere were they read with greater appreciation than in the West, where the scenes and the characters for the stories had been selected.

During the Cuban War, Remington was a war correspondent. His sketches added to his already enviable reputation as an artist, sculptor and writer.

He came honestly by his facility for writing. His father, Pierre Remington, was an editor. After the son had begun his studies in the Yale Art School in 1878, he manifested such sturdy qualities that Walter Camp selected him to be one of his football players.

Remington spent a year in Yale and then left to become confidential clerk for Governor Cornell in Albany. That work was too confining to suit his spirit. He resigned and went to Montana, where he "punched cows" and roughed it four years. That was followed by ranching and raising mules and sheep in Kansas. He traveled from Mexico to Hudson Bay, making drawings which appealed to everyone for their naturalness and fire.

It was on that tour he took part in several Indian campaigns, including the one against the Apaches. From the West he was sent by Harpers to Russia with Poultney Bigelow. They were ejected unceremoniously from that country and went to Germany. There Remington made many sketches bearing on the German army life.

He established a handsome home and studio in New Rochelle, calling it Eodion, or in Chippewa, "the place where I live." It was rich in collections of articles bearing on Indian and cowboy life. He rarely worked from models and denied vehemently accusations made by his detractors that he drew from snapshot photographs.

Two Women

"I drew only two women in my life," he said years ago, "and both were failures. A woman is too soft and delicate for my brush or pencil to portray."

On Oct. 1, 1884, Remington married Miss Eva A. Taten of Gloversville, N.Y., who survives him. A brief prayer service was held in Loral Place and the body was taken to Canton for burial on Tuesday.... The services at the house were conducted by Rev. John H. Chapman, rector of St. Stephen's Church, and were attended only by the immediate relatives and close friends of the artist, some of the latter having come up from New York....

Remington moved to Ridgefield, partly to be closer to his lifelong friend, A. Barton Hepburn, who also came from Canton. Mr. Hepburn, president of the Chase Bank in New York City, lived at Altnacraig, the mansion on High Ridge that burned to the ground in the winter of 1994.

In 1965, Remington's house was declared a national historic landmark. The studio he had in the house has been reproduced in detail at the Remington Art Museum in Ogdensburg, N.Y., where his family once lived.

Probably the largest collection of Remington's work is at The Whitney Gallery of Western Art at Cody, Wyo. Although Remington lived here and died here, not one of his paintings or sculptures is known to exist here.

RESSEGUIE'S LANE

Resseguie's Lane is an old and unusual place name – old in that it dates back more than 260 years and unusual in that it was among the very few 18th Century road names that made use of a family name.

The term appears first in a 1754 inventory of the estate of Alexander Resseguie (pronounced RESS-sik-kee) which mentions "two acres of land yt lies below ye lane called Resseguies Lane." In the same year, two of Mr. Resseguie's sons, Abraham and Isaac, divided up the estate and mentioned the same parcel and lane.

The next and last mention appears in a 1787 deed in which the proprietors gave the heirs of Benjamin Keeler 132 rods "lying at the southeast end of Resseguies Lane, so called."

The lane was probably near the homestead of Alexander Resseguie, which stood near the Wilton line, quite possibly on Nod Road. Resseguie's Lane might be what we today call Pelham Lane.

Alexander Resseguie may have been Ridgefield's wealthiest settler. According to *The Resseguie Family* by John E. Morris (Hartford, 1888), "Alexandre Resseguie was a settler at Norwalk, Conn., in 1709. Tradition has it that he was the younger son of one Alexandre Resseguie, a Huguenot refugee from France, who brought with him from the mother country a small, hair-covered

trunk, studded with iron nails, containing all of the family wealth he was able to secure, consisting largely of title deeds to property in France.

"Hoping to some day regain his abandoned possessions, he educated his eldest son to the profession of the law, intending when the time was ripe, he should return to France and establish a claim to the family estates. This hope was destined never to be realized, for the son died just previous to the time of his intended departure on this mission, and the father, disheartened, abandoned the undertaking. The trunk and papers passed into the possession of the younger son, and at a subsequent period, the latter were, the most of them, destroyed by fire." The fire was said to have been set by the wife of Timothy Resseguie, a grandson, "during a fit of temporary insanity."

Tradition notwithstanding, Morris believed that an "Alexandre de Ressiguier" of France was a silk manufacturer in London in 1696, but there is no evidence of his having come to the colonies. Thus, he lists Alexander of Ridgefield as head of the American family.

Alexander Resseguie was in Ridgefield in 1709, the year of the town's incorporation and the year of his marriage to Sara Bontecou of New York City, also a native of France. He was a farmer.

Alexander managed to amass sizable holdings in Ridgefield and in Norwalk (no doubt in the part of Norwalk that is today Wilton). His inventory at his death in 1752 listed more than 4,000 pounds of value in real estate, mostly in Ridgefield, and included a couple of farms. His homestead alone totaled 2,200 pounds in value, a hefty sum, and he owned parcels of land throughout town, as well as "a Negro wench and child" valued at 350 pounds. Total value of his estate was 10,514 pounds.

For 200 years, the name of Resseguie was well known in Ridgefield and Wilton, and was one of the few French names in a territory settled almost solely by the English. Among the most noted of Alexander's descendants was great-grandson Abijah Resseguie (1791-1887), who for 60 years ran the Keeler Tavern, called then Resseguie's Hotel. Mr. Resseguie had married Anna, the daughter of Timothy and Esther Keeler. Squire Timothy Keeler had long operated the inn, taken over by his son-in-law. (Their daughter, Anna Marie Resseguie, kept a diary, which was turned into a fascinating book, "A View from the Inn: The Journal of Anna Marie Resseguie, 1851-1867," published by the Keeler Tavern Preservation Society in 1993.)

Samuel G. Goodrich wrote in 1856 that "he who wishes to eat with a relish that the Astor House, or Morley's, or the Grand Hotel de Louvre cannot give, should go to Ridgefield and put himself under the care of Mrs. Resseguie. When you go there – as go you must – do not forget to order ham and eggs, for they are such as we ate in our childhood. As to blackberry and huckleberry pies, and similar good gifts, you will find them just as our mother made 50 years ago, when these bounties of Providence were included in the prayer, 'Give us this day, our daily bread,' and were a worthy answer to such a petition."

At Abijah Resseguie's death at age 96, The Press noted that he had started out in life as a carriage maker and eventually had his own firm of Resseguie and Olmstead, which shipped hundreds of wagons to points around the country. He served in various town offices, represented Ridgefield in the General Assembly, and was an official of St. Stephen's Church for many years.

He was fond of telling anecdotes of life in years past. "He was a witness of the last flogging which took place in Ridgefield – that barbarous punishment of

the whipping post, and of the rejoicing of the people when that relic of barbarism was abolished.” The Press said in 1887.

“He was always ready to enjoy a witty story and as a story-teller, he was always popular on the long winter evenings...There was no end to his humor...To show how sturdy he was in his old age, it may not be amiss to state that he attended the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia in 1876, and that at 80 years of age, he tired out the younger members of his party sight-seeing in Washington.”

REVERE DRIVE

Revere Drive, with twin dead-end legs off Minuteman Road, is part of the Colonial Heights subdivision (*q.v.*) on West Mountain. The town accepted the road in 1970, but should not have accepted the name since it is so easily confused with Revere Place, several miles to the east.

Revere Drive was named for Paul Revere who, since he had nothing directly to do with Ridgefield and is well enough known nationally, will not be described here.

REVERE PLACE

Revere Place, another road named for Paul, is situated off Standish (as in Miles) Drive. It is part of the Meadow Woods subdivision (*q.v.*) developed by Harry Richmond and Bill Connors in the mid-1960s. The road, a dead-ender, became a town road in 1968.

RICHARDSON DRIVE

Richardson Drive, a dead-end road off Ashbee Lane, is part of Heart Brand Estates (*q.v.*), developed in the 1960s by Everett Lounsbury Jr.

The road was named for Robert E. Richardson, who worked for many years for the First National Bank of Ridgefield (later Union Trust, First Fidelity, Wachovia, and now Wells Fargo). He was a former Board of Education chairman, served as state grand master of the Connecticut Order of Eastern Star, was on the Board of Tax Review, and was a popular man about town. He died in 1962.

RICHARDSON PARK

Richardson Park, a 29.5-acre recreational area on North Salem Road opposite the high school, is named for Anne S. Richardson, who bequeathed the land to the town.

Richardson built her home on the property in 1915 and lived there until her death in 1965. By her direction in her will, the house was torn down.

The site of Ridgefield High School and Scotts Ridge Middle School, purchased inexpensively from her estate, was part of her property, and the RHS auditorium is named for her.

A native of Bridgeport, Richardson was independently wealthy and had traveled widely with her companion and friend, Edna Schoyer, who died in 1946. Like the unrelated Bob Richardson above, she had been a chairman of the Board of Education. She also helped organize the League of Women Voters here, was active in the Ridgefield Garden Club and its Village Improvement Committee, helped found the Ridgefield Boys Club, and was one of the first members of the Park Commission, which was formed in 1946 and on which she served until her death.

Richardson is one of the town's most attractive parks, bordering on Lake Mamanasco and including the high rock cliffs along its shore (from which generations of daring youngsters have leaped). The many gardens of Miss Richardson had not been well maintained for many years, but in recent times, restoration efforts have taken place. There are still many specimen plants at the park and each spring many Ridgefielders delight in the thousands of daffodils that have gone wild in a field there.

RIDGE, THE

When Reuben Rockwell II and Urania Rockwell sold Amos Baker one-fifth interest in an 11-acre parcel in 1804, the deed described the land as being "on the Ridge so called."

Based on the names of people who owned land in the vicinity of the parcel, it appears that "the Ridge" was East Ridge or Prospect Ridge.

Calling the territory "the Ridge" in a deed suggests that the name was well-established, probably a shortened version of East Ridge, a term that was in use by then. Even today the territory known as East Ridge and Prospect Ridge is often referred to simply as The Ridge. High Ridge, on the other side of Main Street, is rarely called The Ridge, probably because East Ridge-Prospect Ridge is better known because it has so many landmarks, such as the old high school, the middle school, athletic fields, police station, skating center, tennis courts, and housing for the elderly.

RIDGE ROAD I

It's not surprising that a hilly town named Ridgefield would have many names using the word "ridge" singly or in combination with other words. What is surprising is that there is no "Ridge Road" currently in use, though it is a common road name elsewhere (this writer grew up on Ridge Road in Danbury, a town with two active Ridge Roads).

Ridge Road was an old highway leading into the present-day Silver Spring Country Club and through lands to the south. Its north end joined Silver Spring Road at or near the present country club entrance, went west, and then south, paralleling Silver Spring Road, to a point below and opposite St. Johns Road.

In the old days, it served mostly fields owned by the Bennett, Meeker, Olmstead, Nash, and other families who lived along Silver Spring Road. It also led to a stone quarry, owned by James Dunlap, a well-known stonemason around the turn of the century.

The name, which appears on a 1907 property map filed in the town clerk's office, probably came from a shortening of Silver Spring Ridge, which the old road traversed and which term was in use as early as 1789.

RIDGE ROAD II

Ridge Road or Ridge Avenue were informal names for High Ridge Road. The 1902 minutes of the Village Improvement Society used the term Ridge Road.

RIDGEBURY

Ridgembury is the territory generally held today to be north of the Aspen Ledges and west of the Ridgefield Lakes. It has over the years been a hamlet, a school district or two, and a parish. Once, it almost became a town.

It is difficult to say precisely when the first Europeans came to Ridgebury, but they were there before the territory officially began to be purchased by the proprietors of Ridgefield in the 1720s and before the governor of the colony awarded the proprietors a patent for the territory in 1731.

The lands that were to become “Ridgebury” began to be purchased from the American Indians in 1721. The biggest acquisition occurred on Dec. 19, 1739, from three Indians – Betty, Jacob Turkey and Mokquaroose – and was sometimes called the “Betty Grant.” The deed describes the land as “lying within ye New Pattent bounds called in ye Township of Ridgefield as it is butted and bounded on ye east by Danbury township, north by New Fairfield, on ye west by ye Government Line, southerly by our former purchase made of Jacob Turkey.”

This deed completed dealings that had begun a decade earlier when Ridgefield lost a large chunk of its holdings in a trade between Connecticut and New York colonies. “The Oblong” (*q.v.*) was a long slice of land along Connecticut’s west border, one and three quarters mile beyond today’s state line, that was given to New York in exchange for Greenwich and some other territory.

Ridgefield’s proprietors gained nothing from the deal and only lost land. To compensate themselves for the loss, the proprietors sought title to a huge unclaimed tract north of Ridgefield and west of Danbury. The first petition was made in 1727 when it became clear that the Oblong deal was going to occur. The petition was rejected. But when the Oblong transfer did take place in 1731, the proprietors petitioned again, they fared better, and Governor Joseph Talcott, representing King George II, issued a patent to Ridgefielders for the land that year. In 1732, the patent was endorsed by the General Assembly, and the territory became known as “New Patent.”

Part of the standard wording of such patents was an interesting list of things that the patent-holders gained rights to: “all woods, timber, underwood, uplands, arable lands, meadows, pastures, ponds, waters, rivers, brooks, islands, fishings, fowlings, huntings, mines, minerals, quarries, and precious stones upon or within said tract...”

Early settlers

But even before these transactions, a few people owned land in Ridgebury, obtained by direct patent from the colony, usually for services rendered. The Benedict and Taylor clans of Danbury had 300 acres parallel to the north and south sides of George Washington Highway almost to Ridgebury Road. Being Danburians, they wanted this territory to be part of Danbury. For a while, it was annexed to Danbury, but eventually was returned to Ridgefield (*see* The Crank).

Dr. Isaac Hall had 150 acres around Old Stagecoach and Ridgebury Roads by direct grant from the colony in 1697, more than a decade before Ridgefield was even settled. This tract was later known as Knapp’s Farm for a subsequent owner. In the 20th Century it was Samuel Coe’s farm, then Daniel and Louise McKeon’s, and in the 21st Century, Hunter Harrison’s Double H. Farm.

In 1742, soon after the purchase of Betty’s land, the proprietors subdivided the land into 29 lots, ranging from 29 acres (of prime land) to 120 acres (of poor land). Most of these parcels, distributed to the proprietors or their heirs, were in what is now Danbury. The subdivision was called the Fourth 20 Acre Division.

The section of Ridgebury that is now in Ridgefield began to be parceled out around 1732-33 and continued to be handed out by proprietors' grants into the 1740s, according to exhaustive research done by Edwin Liljegren, a former Ridgebury historian. Liljegren even mapped out the first grants and the first settlers—a difficult, puzzle-filled task.

His research indicates that there were settlers in Ridgebury by 1734 when Recompense Thomas erected his house, still standing on the east side of Ridgebury Road, just north of Shadow Lake Road. Most of the settlers came in the 1740s, building their houses along what is now called Ridgebury Road.

By the time of the Revolution, Ridgebury was a populous little hamlet, with taverns, stores, two churches, and even some modest industry, including a comb factory and some mills. Farming, of course, was the chief occupation.

The area had developed quickly. However, the trip from Ridgebury over the hills to Ridgefield to attend services at the official Ridgefield church was proving too difficult. In 1738, tradition says, there was a mission church of the Congregational society in "New Pattent" – as the territory was called and spelled – and the Town Meeting in 1742 said that New Pattent residents could hire their own preacher.

Finally, in 1761, upon petition of Ridgeburians, New Patent was made the "Second Ecclesiastical Society." It was at that point that the new name for the territory was chosen: Ridgebury, using the Ridge of Ridgefield and the bury of Danbury, the two Connecticut towns that virtually surrounded the society.

The first mention of "Ridgebury" in the land records was in 1762 when John Whitlock gave land for a church building "for and in consideration of love and respect that I have and do bear unto ye Dissenting Society in Ridgebury and to promote ye same."

The first mention in the town government records occurs in 1765 when the Annual Town Meeting "granted to ye inhabitants of Ridgebury Parish the liberty of making use of ye yard of Samuel Gates for a pound."

The society was formally organized a few years later and a church building erected around 1769, a year after the first minister, Samuel Camp, was hired. Camp is buried at Ridgebury Cemetery beside his three wives, who have matching – but smaller – gravestones.

A new town?

Now that they had gained the status of a government-sanctioned religious society or parish, Ridgeburians sought independence from Ridgefield, which was rather distant and difficult to reach for such business as voting. At various times the people of Ridgebury petitioned the General Assembly to be made a separate town. This was not at all unusual; many of the towns of Connecticut were once parishes of other towns – Wilton of Norwalk, Redding of Fairfield, Bethel of Danbury, and Brookfield of Danbury and Newtown (it had been the parish of "Newbury.")

Ridgefielders at first opposed, but soon supported the idea. The Town Meeting of March 8, 1787, was asked "whether they (the voters) are willing the parish of Ridgebury should be incorporated into a distinct town." Townspeople responded by voting "unanimously that the town will not make any opposition to the parish of Ridgebury (which, incidentally, included land in Danbury) being incorporated into a distinct town; and they are willing their memorial (request to the General Assembly) should be granted."

Again, in 1792, the voters showed willingness that “the society of Ridgebury should be incorporated and made a distinct town.” And a similar motion passed in 1816.

So why did it not become a distinct town? Possibly because of opposition from Danbury, which would lose some land. But a clue to one problem appears in the record of the 1816 Town Meeting at which Ridgefield voters were unwilling to give up one of their two state representatives to the General Assembly if Ridgebury were made a town. An 1822 Town Meeting also voted against giving up half Ridgefield’s voice in Hartford.

In 1816, the grand list valuation of the First Society (Ridgefield parish) was \$40,175 while Ridgebury was \$15,181. Evidently, the territory was still largely undeveloped and included much poor, hilly, rocky land of little value. Even today, the extreme western portions of Danbury – once part of Ridgebury – are among the last to be developed.

The Rev. S. G. Goodrich reported in 1800 that the First Society had 16,000 acres while Ridgebury had 11,000. Thus, Ridgefield property, including buildings, was worth about \$2.50 per acre while Ridgebury was running about \$1.38 per acre in assessed value.

Annexed

The movement for a free town ended by about 1846 when Danbury annexed most of the land purchased from Betty more than a century earlier. It was a reasonable move. The residents were tied geographically more closely with Danbury than Ridgefield, and many of the northern Ridgebury settlers were Danburians who’d moved westward from their town.

Much of Mill Plain, the most populous and industrialized settlement in Ridgebury, was in Ridgefield, but its residents had to traverse three ranges of hills over eight miles to get to Ridgefield center while it was less than three miles over one small hill to Danbury center.

Ridgefield apparently got nothing in exchange for this transfer – except for fewer headaches. Tax collecting in the upper reaches of Ridgebury – as far as 12 miles away – must have been difficult. Oddly enough, no mention of the transfer has been found in Ridgefield’s town or land records.

School Districts

It is not known precisely when a schoolhouse was established in Ridgebury, but it is likely that the number of residents was enough by the 1740s to support a school.

By the mid-1800s, there were two Ridgebury school districts:

- South Ridgebury District, whose schoolhouse was on Ridgebury Road at the intersection of Old Stagecoach Road, extended south to the Ledges, west to New York State, north to a line through the Ridgebury Cemetery, and eastward to just beyond the present-day Ridgebury School.
- North Ridgebury District, whose schoolhouse was on the west side of Ridgebury Road just below Turner Road, encompassed everything north of Ridgebury Cemetery and also served scholars from the southern area of Mill Plain in Danbury. (Children who lived along eastern George Washington Highway, Briar Ridge Road, and Pine Mountain Road went to school in Danbury at the Miry Brook District schoolhouse.)

Originally, the south boundary of the territory called Ridgebury was south of the Ledges and passed by the north tip of Lake Mamasasco. It included the land on which Ridgefield High School now sits, an area once called “New Pur-

chase.” At one point in the Indian purchases, the north end of Mamasasco was the uppermost limit of the town.

Although the name “Ridgebury” had been created in 1761, deeds as late as 1787 still used the old term, “New Patent.”

RIDGEBURY ESTATES

Ridgebury Estates is a subdivision that includes Beaver Brook Road and Chipmunk Lane. The area was first proposed for development as Rolling Meadow Estates in 1957 by Herman J. Leffert and others. The road through it was to be called Old Farm Road. For some reason, the plan was abandoned.

Then, in the early 1960’s, David Katz and Sons proposed a subdivision there called Sherman Colonial. A great debate with planning and zoning authorities ensued over the lot sizes, and the case went to court. Meanwhile, the town attorney, who would normally have defended the Planning and Zoning Commission, bowed out to avoid a conflict of interest. The commission asked the town for money to defend the suit, but the town declined. So commissioners on their own hired counsel, fighting and winning the case in the Connecticut Supreme Court. However, the town for years refused to pay the lawyers, and the unpaid “Sherman Colonial fees” became almost a running joke in the town hall. Finally, the Board of Finance gave in and appropriated the money, but not without a stern warning against incurring unbudgeted expenses without finance board approval.

That court fight was over whether lots should be one or two acre. In the 1980’s zoning battles continued there, but over whether the subdivision should be surrounded by corporate development zones, which were adopted in the late 1960’s. Ridgeburians wanted the area returned to residential status while several developers as well as town officials who wanted to fatten the tax base favored corporate zoning. Eventually, the town gave up on its corporate zoning, and in the 1990s, most of the land south of Ridgebury Estates was developed as Stone Ridge Estates.

Jerry Tuccio built most of the houses at Ridgebury Estates in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s. He chose the name of Ridgebury Estates. Beaver Brook Road was accepted as a town road in 1970.

RIDGEBURY FARM

Ridgebury Farm is a small subdivision, served by Schoolhouse Place, off northern Ridgebury Road. Attorney Paul S. McNamara subdivided part of the former Lee B. Wood property in 1980. This area was once used to rest circus animals (*see* Turner Road).

RIDGEBURY HOLLOW

In 1794, Matthew and Mary Barnum of Danbury sold Peter Starr of Ridgefield an acre and a half “in Ridgebury Hollow, so called.” This is the first mention of the locality in the land records.

The next mention is in 1811 when Ebenezer Starr, representing an estate, sold David Meeker of Ridgefield land in “Ridgebury Holler so called.” This tract was bounded on the south by a highway and the north by a pond and river. Other deeds mentioned only “the Hollow.” One 1824 deed describes land “in the Hollow at Ridgebury.”

The location was almost certainly the valley along the north side of Route 6, Mill Plain Road, in Danbury near the New York State line – part of Ridgefield before 1846. The pond was Sanford Pond (also called Whiting's or Andrews Ponds on various more modern maps) that is right on the state line. The pond is 456 feet above sea level while the hill to the north is 780 feet high and the hill to the south (the old Union Carbide site) is 782 feet. Between them, you have a hollow.

RIDGEBURY MOUNTAIN

Ridgebury Mountain is the hill on which the Twixt Hills and Ridgefield Knolls developments are situated. It is north of Pierrepont Pond and Ledges Road, and south of Reagan and Bennett's Farms Road. At its highest point the mountain is about 930 feet above sea level, making it one of the higher places in Ridgefield, but hardly a "mountain" by upper New England or Western standards.

The name first appears in town records in 1838 when the Annual Town Meeting voted that Harvey Smith Esq. "be an agent to sell the land lying on or near the Ridgebury Mountain, lately set off to the town of Ridgefield in execution." In 1860, the mountain, virtually uninhabited, formed a part of the south boundary of the Ridgebury School District in a description of those boundaries in the town records.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the mountain's history was in the mid-19th Century when a portion of it was mined for coal. In 1850, William Barhite gave the Cedar Mining Company a 99-year lease on six acres near Ledges and Ridgebury Roads. The mine was in operation in 1860, but it is not known how long the operation lasted nor how much coal was actually obtained from the property.

RIDGEBURY ROAD I

Ridgebury Road is the main highway from Ridgefield to Ridgebury. The name comes from the same informal system of nomenclature that gave us North Salem Road, Danbury Road, Farmingville Road, Florida Road, etc. – i.e., it is a shortened form of the phrase, "the road leading to Ridgebury" or "the road to Ridgebury."

Since settlement of Ridgebury began in the 1730s, it is likely that Ridgebury Road existed by then, or that at least northern parts of it existed.

The road was called "the highway from Ridgefield to Ridgebury" in a 1797 deed. But its first name was "New Pattent Road," which appears in a 1750 deed. New Pat(t)ent was the first name of Ridgebury and referred to the document from the King that allowed the proprietors to possess the territory as part of Ridgefield.

The modern name first appeared in an 1844 deed which mentions "the Ridgebury Road." By the turn of the 20th Century, many deeds and documents mention "Ridgebury Street," particularly as the road passed through the village or hamlet of Ridgebury.

Then, in 1933, during the celebration of the Connecticut Tercentenary and a year after the 200th anniversary of our first President's birth, the road was officially renamed "George Washington Highway" because General Washington had traveled part of its length in September 1780.

This caused confusion. Many people still insisted on calling it Ridgebury Road and newcomers didn't know the old name. Finally, in 1959, First Selectman Leo F. Carroll had the name returned to Ridgebury Road, a term that is more accurate and suitable, though less showy. (The road eastward from the Congregational church at Ridgebury to Danbury's Miry Brook District is still called George Washington Highway.)

The original route of Ridgebury Road from North Salem Road probably ran along Sherwood Road, which is much older than the section of the highway alongside the high school property. The rest of the route is much the same as it was 200 years ago, although it is possible that Spring Valley Road is a predecessor route for the central portion of the road.

There has been confusion over the naming of the upper end of the road. Maps for years have referred to the road going to Saw Mill Road in Danbury as Ridgebury Road or North Ridgebury Road. But Ridgebury Road veers to the right at the fork north of Shadow Lake Road and heads into Danbury, where it is called Old Ridgebury Road. The highway to the left (west) of the fork should be called Turner Road, after Aaron Turner, the circus man, who once lived up there.

An 1893 map of the town calls Ridgebury Road "SH 14," meaning "State Highway 14." If the state ever owned any title to this road, it long ago gave it up. In the early 1970s, however, town officials tried to get the state to take over Ridgebury Road in exchange for the town's taking over Barry Avenue and West Mountain Road (the west leg of Route 102). The state said no dice, not surprising since Ridgebury Road is nearly four miles long and Route 102 west is about three miles long. And the latter was in much better shape at that time.

Ridgefield Road was the subject of a poem, penned by Anton Anderson in the 1990s.

Ridgebury and Ledges

*How you go down Ridgebury Road depends on
your angle of intention. Ridgebury straight
is not Ridgebury at all, but rather Ledges Road.
Ridgebury right is Ridgebury. There is no Ledges left.
In fact there is no Ledges at all, once you
reach Ridgebury but there is a Ledges if you
go straight until you reach Barlow Mountain
Road.
This is Ridgebury down.*

*Ridgebury up is a different matter.
Ridgebury up is straight, across the
stop sign at Ledges (and don't go into
the middle of the intersection and
stop – this only allows you to get hit
on the left, right and from
behind.) Straight up and don't
angle left at Spring Valley
[I call it Hidden Valley, but that
is only confusing, so forget it.
Actually, my family knows what*

*I mean, or thinks they do.
 What I mean is, you don't think
 there's really a road there, but
 there is. You have no idea how long
 it is when you first get on it –
 it's plenty long. Also, there are
 mainly very wealthy people living
 on it who are hidden away from us
 behind big long drives. But, I digress.]
 And go up to Pope's Corner
 (How long it will remain
 Pope's Corner before it becomes
 ugly-modern-poured-concrete-house
 and-do-you-know-how-much-she-paid
 for-it corner ((and while we're on
 the subject, how come she hasn't called
 me up and said, I know how talented
 a poet you are and I have a lot of money
 so how much do you want)).
 And go around the still Pope's
 Corner, which is 170 degree turn
 and really, very, very hard to get
 up in the winter (please, God, don't
 let that fool in front of me get stuck)
 and just as bad going down
 (please, God, don't let me slide
 off the side and roll down the
 hill)
 and don't go right at the top by
 the old barn because that's not really
 Ridgebury either, but Regan Road,
 and so go left up Ridgebury and
 eventually you'll get to the end of
 the Road and the poem (actually, almost,
 but did you know that Regan once fell into
 the swamp next to it? Jack Sanders
 knows that. The town quickly fixed it
 which is more than they did for my
 basement foundation, which they also
 accepted as correct before it started to
 fall in on itself.)*

*So, anyway, that's how you get up and
 down Ridgebury Road, if you know
 where you're going. It's all in the
 intention.*

RIDGEBURY ROAD II

In 1855, Charles Benedict of Danbury sold Henry L. Bates 40 acres through which passed “the old road leading from Ridgefield to Ridgebury.”

This may have been today's Bennett's Farm Road, which is still a road leading from Ridgefield to Ridgebury (via Danbury and Limestone Roads).

The phrasing of the deed suggests that it was once the only road to Ridgebury. However, it is also possible that the road was a once-popular alternate that was no longer popular. Or, the reference could have been to a short section of Bennett's Farm Road, abandoned in favor of a new strip of road.

Henry L. Bates, incidentally, was probably the source of the Bates Farm of Bates Farm Road.

RIDGECREST DRIVE

Ridgecrest Drive is part of the Stonecrest subdivision of Irving B. Conklin Sr., dating from the 1950s. It was so called because the road ran along the crest of a ridge – see discussion of “Ridgefield” below.

RIDGEFIELD

Ridgefield is one of those straightforward, combination names so commonly applied by the English settlers to New England localities. It is an original name, not a copy of a location in England, and was probably dreamed up by someone or ones among the 26 pioneers who purchased the new territory from the Indians in 1708.

The name follows the same system of nomenclature that was used to come up with place names like Springfield, Longmeadow, Deerfield, Stockbridge, Brookfield, Northfield, Norwood, and Medfield, all found in Massachusetts. They represent a description of the territory, whether it be of terrain (Brookfield), wildlife (Deerfield), or location (Norwood or “north wood”).

Many were copies of names used in England. So far as we can tell, however, Ridgefield was not named for any English locality and there is no “Ridgefield” in England. In fact, it is quite likely that Ridgefield represented the first application of that name to a town, although there are at least four other Ridgefields in the United States today.

High land

The source of the word is obvious. The new territory was largely high land. Moreover, the proprietors – the first landowners – selected one of the highest ridges for the settlement of the village. In fact, it is said that the village of Ridgefield has the highest elevation – up to 800 feet above sea level – of any other settled village within view of the sea along the entire East Coast of the United States. I'm not sure how this can be proven, or how far from the sea one can go in search of a higher village, but it can be reasonably said that Ridgefield village is pretty high up for this part of the country.

The Indian word for the area also reflected the loftiness of the locality; *caudatowa* was said to mean “high place.”

New England villages were frequently situated on ridges. In his book, “Norwood, or Village Life in New England (1886),” Henry Ward Beecher mused over this:

“Did the New England settler alight upon hill-tops like a sentinel, or a hawk up the topmost bough, to spy danger at its first appearing?” he asked. “Or had he some unconscious sense of the poetic beauty of the scriptural city set upon a hill – some Jerusalem, lifted up, and seen from afar in all its beauty?”

“Or was he willing to face the sturdy winds of New England hill-tops rather than to take the risk of malaria in the softer air of her valleys?”

“Whatever the reason, the chosen spot in the early days seems to have been a high and broad backed hill, where the summer came last and departed earliest; where, while it lingered, it was purest and sweetest; where winter was most austere, and its winds roared among the trees and shook the framed houses with such awful grandeur, that children needed nothing more to awaken in their imagination the great Coming Judgment, and the final consuming storms when the earth should be shaken and should pass away.”

Plantation

Of course, when the name was dreamed up, there were few “fields” here, the surface of the land being covered chiefly with trees. But the proprietors no doubt envisioned the thousands of acres of fields that would be tilled where so many trees stood. They, in fact, called the new settlement a “plantation,” a word that was used to describe other, earlier Connecticut settlements, such as Norwalk.

“We find it to be accomodated with upland considerably good & for quantity sufficient for thirty families, or more, and as for meadow & and meadow Land something (more or less) surpassing (both for quantity as well as quality) what is comon to be found in many larger plantations,” wrote John Copp and John Raymond upon surveying the Indians lands of Ridgefield in 1708 for a report to the colony legislature.

In 1709, the legislature granted permission for the creation of a new town and in so acting, first used the name of “Ridgfield.” That spelling was common for a few years, but “Ridgefield” soon took over.

Other Ridgefields

Of the four other Ridgefields (Washington, Illinois, New Jersey, and Ohio), at least two are probably named after our town.

Ridgefield, Ohio, is a township situated near such localities as Norwalk, Lyme, Groton, Hartford, Norwich, Oxford, and Sherman, all Connecticut town names. These towns are in what was called “The Firelands,” a territory that was once part of Connecticut’s Western Reserve and which was given to Connecticut residents whose houses were burned by the British during the Revolution. (Ridgefielders claimed 65 losses worth 1,736 pounds.) The huge territory granted to the state in compensation was on and south of Lake Erie, between Cleveland and Toledo.

Ridgefield, Wash., was definitely named for our town. A small place near Oregon, it was founded by the Rev. Aaron L. Lindsley, a Presbyterian minister who had served from 1852 to 1868 as minister of the nearby South Salem (N.Y.) Presbyterian Church. He then went to Oregon, establishing missions and churches.

“When the little missionary community in the wilderness of Clarke County along the Columbia River was established, Dr. Lindsley’s two sons, George and Addison, were among the original settlers,” wrote Ridgefield historian Silvio Bedini. “When a name for the community was being selected, it was their suggestion that it be called Ridgefield in memory of the pleasant little town in Connecticut which they remembered from their childhood...”

In 1953, when the dial telephone system was finally installed in Ridgefield, Wash., the first call made over the new equipment was to Ridgefield, Conn., for an exchange of greetings.

RIDGEFIELD AND DANBURY TURNPIKE

The Ridgefield and Danbury Turnpike is another name for the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike (*q.v.*). While the latter is the correct name, “Ridgefield and Danbury Turnpike” was also commonly used, perhaps by Ridgefielders who thought their town should be mentioned first. At any rate, the backward title first appears in 1848 and was still in use in the early part of the 20th Century when a map filed in the town clerk’s office used this label.

RIDGEFIELD BROOK

Ridgefield Brook is another name for the upstream portion of the Norwalk River. The name is usually applied to the river as it leaves Great Swamp at Farmingville Road, travels past Fox Hill condominiums, crosses Danbury Road and heads northward west of Danbury Road. By the point the river veers eastward from Taylor’s Pond off Limestone Road toward Route 7 to head south to Long Island Sound, it is usually known as the Norwalk River.

The name probably originates from this century – it does not appear in any 18th or 19th Century land records through 1880. The name may have been first applied by a mapmaker who, for some reason, didn’t identify this north-flowing stream with the south-flowing Norwalk River, though it’s pretty clear they are the same.

“Ridgefield Brook” appears on U.S. Geological Survey maps.

RIDGEFIELD GARDENS

Ridgefield Gardens is the name applied to a 1956 subdivision of 46 lots off Limekiln and Haviland Roads. It was designed by Gustave W. Iser, an architect, and developed largely by Armando Salvestrini, who continued developing in the neighborhood well into the 1980s.

The original map showed Poplar Road, Hawthorne Circle, Willow Lane, and Linden Road.

The name reflects the fact that the property was once part of the huge Outpost Nurseries and has numerous trees that were once nursery stock.

RIDGEFIELD HILLS

Ridgefield Hills is a 19-lot subdivision, centered around Woodchuck Lane, developed by Lewis J. Finch and John F. Coyle. The subdivision off Wilton Road West was approved in 1961, and was so called because, from thereabouts, one can look over the hills of Ridgefield as well as Wilton. On a clear day, from the right spot, one can see Long Island Sound.

RIDGEFIELD HILLTOP ACRES

Ridgefield Hilltop Acres is a 1950 subdivision that resulted in the creation of Nutmeg Ridge. The developer was Ridgefield Hilltop Acres Company, whose vice-president was Dr. Frank Rossi. On the subdivision map, the 37 lots line Nutmeg Ridge and one side of “Washington Street.”

The development was so named because it was at the top of Biddle Hill (*q.v.*), called that because the Biddle family once lived there. In fact, the original subdivision map labeled its main road as “Biddle Lane,” which was changed to Nutmeg Ridge, probably because someone found the name “Biddle” unattractive.

RIDGEFIELD KNOLLS

Ridgefield Knolls is one of Ridgefield's largest subdivisions – 238 houses had been built on some 300 acres by Oct. 1, 1975.

The subdivision was designed in the late 1950s on the former Todd brothers dairy farm and includes Knollwood Drive, Senoka Drive, Bob Hill Road, Summit Lane, Aspen Ledges Road, Fox Drive, Rolling Ridge Road, Short Lane, Spire View Road, Partridge Drive, Quail Drive, Todd's Road, Sugar Loaf Mountain Road, Virginia Court and the southern half of Old Stagecoach Road.

The name came from the several small hills – or “knolls” – that make up the top of Ridgebury Mountain, site of the Ridgefield Knolls.

The subdivision was designed and built by the Topstone Development Company, whose president, Robert Kaufman, lives near Topstone Mountain in Redding. He had planned to name Knollwood Drive “Topstone Drive,” but was dissuaded from doing so to avoid confusion with Topstone Road in eastern Ridgefield.

For many years Mr. Kaufman continued to operate the private water company that serves part of the Knolls; Aquarion now owns the water system.

Much of the development was surveyed by the late Edgar P. Bickford of Danbury, whose office was in town from 1956 to 1963. He was a partner in Henrici's Surveying, and named most of the roads for wildlife or scenic qualities, although some (Bob Hill Road, Virginia Court) were named for people.

Though planning of the subdivision started earlier, the property was officially acquired by Mr. Kaufman in 1959 from Gustave Ross and Harold Goldsmith, who had once entertained thoughts of subdividing it themselves. Mr. Goldsmith, a publisher of scores of pulp magazines in the 1930s, developed the nearby Skytop Estates at Lake Windwing.

RIDGEFIELD LAKES

The Ridgefield Lakes is without a doubt the town's largest development. Although Eight Lakes Estates at Mamasasco and West Mountain may cover more territory, the Ridgefield Lakes has more houses, owing to the fact that many homes are on tiny lots. More than 450 houses had been built at the lakes by the early 1980s, and more were being added yearly.

The development of the Ridgefield Lakes was begun in the 1920s by the Pequot Real Estate Development Company. The principal mover in this firm was Andrew C. P. Christensen, a native of Denmark who came to Ridgefield in 1917, buying the old Higgins house (which burned in 1954) on Bennett's Farm Road. He also acquired some 600 acres, much of which later became the Ridgefield Lakes. The late Judge Joseph H. Donnelly recalled that the land was mostly old farms in the Bennett's Farm District, including the Barhite, Johnson, Selleck, and Bates places.

Christensen and Clarence Sturges of Southport dredged what is now Rainbow or Wataba Lake and began subdivision planning. The Ridgefield Press reported on April 17, 1923 that “John Morganti has secured a position as construction foreman for Clarence R. Sturges who has purchased the Johnson farm, Dr. Higgins farm and the Barhite place in Bennetts Farms district. Three dams are being constructed. An artificial pond will be located on the former Johnson place.”

Pequot later sold its holdings. Christensen continued to live here until 1949 when he returned to his native Denmark, where he died in 1954. In their later years here, Christensen and his wife operated a restaurant on the east side of Main Street, north of Bailey Avenue. (The Christensens paid a rent of \$1 a day to landlord S. S. Denton. Denton collected daily when he arrived for his morning cup of coffee.)

Willie Winthrop

William Lawrence Winthrop (1895-1971), known locally as “Willie,” acquired the property in 1932 and for a while called the development Fox Hill Lakes. However, it was known as the “Ridgefield Lakes” at least by 1940 when that name appears on a postcard mailed that year.

According to his obituary in *The Press*, Winthrop “maintained a fairly consistent battle with the zoning and planning authorities over the years, maintaining their policies were keeping the little people out of Ridgefield and making it more difficult for the poor to find places.”

Yet, there was no zoning when the area began to be developed on lots of less than a tenth of an acre. That was probably enough land to satisfy the original intent of the Ridgefield Lakes – to provide summer camps for New York City residents. There were no sewers and the water system was designed for limited summer use (some water lines were above-ground).

As the economy changed and as suburban life became more popular, the summer camps were converted into year-round houses and winterized new houses were erected. Cottages that 40 years ago could be had for less than \$10,000 were commanding prices of more than \$400,000.

This, in turn, put a strain on the neighborhood. Many homes at the lakes suffered over the years from inadequate water supplies as too many houses were hooked up to private community water systems originally intended for summer use only. At one point residents there pressed for the town to take over the water systems, a move government officials avoided for economic reasons. However, over the years improvements have slowly been made to the systems, now owned by Aquarion.

Another problem connected with the dense development has been the eutrophication of the lakes, caused by the overabundance of nutrients that end up in the water from septic systems – some of which had been designed for only seasonal use. The nutrients feed the aquatic plants, causing them to grow in abundance in a process that would, if not checked, eventually clog up the lakes and convert them to swamps and, ultimately, pastures – which is what they were decades ago.

The roads

To serve the hundreds of home lots, Pequot and Winthrop installed dozens of narrow, dirt, private roads – many of them still private roads today. Though technically not obliged to do so, the town gives the private roads basic maintenance – plowing in winter and repairs in summer – so that emergency equipment can reach the houses. The town has avoided any major repairs or paving because the roads are private and most don’t come close to meeting Ridgefield’s highway standards for width.

Over the years many lakes residents have preferred their rustic roads while others, wanting more police protection, better access for fire trucks, and faster plowing, have asked the town to take over the roads and improve them. The

cost of major improvements would be sizable and the town had shied away from all but modest improvements.

In all but a few cases, the lakes roads were named for scenic qualities of the neighborhood. Those named for people were developed later by persons other than Winthrop. The roads include Clearview Drive and Terrace, Crescent Drive, Crest Road, Cross Hill Road, Greenridge Drive, High Cliff Terrace, Lake Road, Lakeside Drive, Lookout Drive and Road, Madeline Drive, Marie Lane, Midrocks Road, Rainbow Drive, Ridgeway Terrace, Rita Road, Rustic Drive and Road, Shady Lane, Sylvan Lane, Water's Edge Way, Woodland Way, and Woody Place.

In addition, land along such town-owned highways as Great Hill Road, Bennett's Farm Road, Limestone Road, Mountain Road (called Mountain Lake Road by Ridgefield Lakes Inc. on an old map), and Bates Farm Road were developed as part of the project. Several roads were laid out on maps but never built, such as Newlyn Road along the north shore of Rainbow Lake.

More roads might be built in the neighborhood as land may still exist for development. Now, however, instead of being zoned for 2,500 square foot summer cottage lots, as that area was in 1946 when zoning was established, lots must now be at least 20,000 square feet (about a half an acre).

Old brochure

An interesting brochure, published in the late 1940s or early 1950s, gives an idea of how the Ridgefield Lakes was marketed as a community.

"The Ridgefield Lakes...(has) all the scenic grandeur of the Berkshires, the peace and quiet that is typical of old New England," the brochure cover says. Inside, it observes: "Ridgefield Lakes comprise more than 600 acres of rolling countryside and is considered one of the beauty spots of New England. The chain of lakes were created by nature and are not artificial (a statement that is incorrect in both syntax and fact). Thus, they are spring-fed by crystal clear waters.

"Only 46 miles from New York, it affords the opportunity for a year-round home at amazing low costs. It is close to the shopping center of the lovely old colonial town of Ridgefield and but a few minutes from the city of Danbury.... If one is seeking an ideal summer retreat or a winter home as well, they could not do better than to choose this glorious location."

Captions under pictures continue to tout the idyllic-life theme: "The lakes' enchantment is not alone their natural beauty, but the many picturesque lodges and homes... Be among those who will own a 'castle' in which to live an enchanting life...just one of the many beautiful home sites you might choose for a lodge. The sloping banks to the lakes assure you of a commanding view at all times. Peace and tranquility are yours for very little money.

"The Ridgefield Lakes offer a veritable paradise for relaxing and to enjoy the endless number of recreation facilities. How wonderful to leave the hub-bub of city life, the heat, and fatiguing noises. Yours is the choice – a refreshing swim in the lake or merely lazing in a deck chair to revel in the scenic beauties that surround."

The brochure points out that there is "fishing right at your door – trout, pickerel, and lake bass are plentiful," and that golf, tennis, and hunting may be enjoyed nearby. There are also "fine roads, electricity, unsurpassed schools, library, movies, store delivery, mail delivery."

A paradise, right? And, in the biggest typeface of the brochure, you learn that “lodges and homes can be erected on the plot of your choice under our budgetary plan and paid for at the rate of \$30 per month and up.”

RIDGEFIELD MANOR ESTATES

Ridgefield Manor Estates, a neighborhood with an unusual history, is a subdivision of a portion of the former Lewis estate on West Lane. A map showing 46 one-acre lots on 66 acres was filed in 1955 by developers, and included three roads – Manor Road, Fairfield Court and Lewis Drive – plus lots bordering West Lane, Golf Lane, and Shadow Lane. In recent years, portions of Ward Acres farm, bordering “the manor” on the north, have also been subdivided, adding more homes to the neighborhood.

A “manor” — from the Old French word for a dwelling — has come to mean in English a mansion, a country residence or the central building on an estate. All three definitions were appropriate for this neighborhood.

The development sits at the center of what was once one of Ridgefield’s finest estates, Upagenstit (also spelled Upagansit or Upagainstit – it was reportedly a play on “up against it”). The estate was begun around the turn of the 20th Century by Henry B. Anderson, who soon moved to West Mountain and sold the place to Frederic E. and Mary Lewis in 1907. The Lewises began making vast changes to the place, replacing Anderson’s house with a 40-room, castle-like mansion and adding more land and many more buildings to what was eventually a 100-acre estate. In 1934, The New York Times reported that the Lewises had spent nearly \$2 million (some \$54 million in 2018 money) on the improvements at Upagenstit (many of these are detailed in the profile of the Lewises, posted on the Old Ridgefield group).

The wealthy New York businessman was never active in the community, but his younger son, Wadsworth R. Lewis, was a school board member active in local civic and charitable groups. He established a trust in his will that has donated millions of thousands of dollars in scholarships to Ridgefield students and gifts to civic and charitable organizations in and about town since the early 1950s.

F.E. Lewis also owned many houses for his caretakers, gardeners and other staff, said to number up to 100 people — including his own physician. His land on West Lane, Olmstead Lane, and Silver Spring Road is said to have amounted to several hundred acres.

Lewis died around 1925 and in 1934, the house was purchased from Mary Russell Lewis, his widow, by Ely Culbertson, the then famous bridge player and author. Culbertson quickly gained a local reputation as a character, declaring once that “all bridge players are a little nutty – I have yet to meet one who is not, and I think I’m the nuttiest.” As if to prove his point, when summoned to Superior Court in Bridgeport in 1937 in a foreclosure case, Culbertson spent much of his time playing pinochle in the sheriff’s office with court officials. He soon declared that the pinochle deck was marked and amazed a judge, deputy sheriff, and court clerk by proving it.

The estate then became Gray Court Junior College, a school for women. The school opened in September 1941 with about 100 students and 15 faculty members. The greenhouses were used for classrooms and the glass walls were praised in a college brochure for having the “obvious” advantages “to sight and health.” One section of greenhouses was called “Crystal Hall.”

The mansion was called Lewis Hall, and served as the main dormitory, the library, dining room, and offices for the administration. Gray Court taught liberal arts, but also had courses in becoming kindergarten or nursery school teachers, secretaries, and journalists – about the only professions women readily entered then. The tuition the first year was \$875 and included room and board.

In reporting the razing of the glass-roofed natatorium in 1970, The Ridgefield Press observed that the swimming pool had not been used for 30 years when “the damsels of Gray Court Junior College romped within its well-secluded walls.”

By 1945 Gray Court had closed and defaulted on a mortgage. Culbertson was again the owner, but he again had financial problems. In May that year, Samuel Weiss and Jack Albert of New York City acquired the property from Culbertson by foreclosure.

The place soon became the Ridgefield Lodge and Health Resort, aimed at elderly visitors. It was a source of much controversy. First, the Zoning Commission got after the operators, alleging that they were running an illegal home for the aged, rather than a resort or hotel. Then, when the operation was called the Ridgefield Country Club, the New York state insurance commissioner maintained that the corporation that owned the place was using it as a secret Communist Party headquarters for underground “indoctrination” and “propaganda.” He went to court in 1954 to take the resort out of the hands of the Jewish People’s Fraternal Order of the International Workers Order Inc., an insurance society. A year later, the order sold the property to the subdividers. Ridgefield Manor Estates, headed by Harold F. Benel, quickly tore down the main house, which was considered a “white elephant.” (In the 1950s, West Lane neighborhood children used to play in one of the large old Upagenstit barns where, one boy reported years later, a large poster of Lenin was discovered.)

Ridgefield Manor Estates still retains some of the charm of Upagenstit: fine and unusual specimen trees and shrubs from around the world, and handsome stone walls and gates. For many years the roads also had yellow tile gutters, but these — much to the dismay of many Manor residents — were removed when the town repaved the roads in the early 2000s.

RIDGEFIELD NEW ROAD

Ridgefield New Road was a briefly used name for the new stretch of Branchville Road between the two ends of Old Branchville Road. This section of highway was built in about 1852 to replace what is now Old Branchville Road, which was too hilly and swampy for the heavier traffic to and from the center and the new station at Branchville.

“Ridgefield New Road,” which appears in an 1854 deed, meant simply the new road to Ridgefield. It was also called “New Road.” To the people of Branchville, it was also “Ridgefield Road,” as can be seen below.

RIDGEFIELD-REDDING HIGHWAY

Ridgefield-Redding Highway is another name for Florida Hill Road, a highway that dates back to the early 1700s and was for many years a main route between Ridgefield and Redding. However, the name does not appear in the land records until the 20th Century. I first saw it in a 1978 deed.

RIDGEFIELD ROAD I

In Wilton, Route 33 leading from the center of that town to the Ridgefield town line is called Ridgefield Road, just as the two highways from Ridgefield village to the Wilton line are called Wilton Road East and Wilton Road West.

Occasionally, however, the name "Ridgefield Road" was used to refer to Wilton Road West in Ridgefield, particularly along its lower end near Wilton. Hence, we find in the Ridgefield land records references like that in a 1770 deed from Ebenezer Nash of Norwalk to Oliver Whitlock of Norwalk for 40 acres "by Ridgefield Road." Most such references were probably made by people who lived in Wilton and knew the road as Ridgefield Road. Both Ebenezer and Oliver were probably Wiltonians – in 1770, Wilton was part of Norwalk.

RIDGEFIELD ROAD II

In an 1850 deed in which Sherman Beers sells land to the new Danbury and Norwalk Rail Road, he mentions that one piece bordered "the Ridgefield Road." That was the highway to Ridgefield – what we call Branchville Road today.

RIDGEFIELD STATION

Ridgefield Station was the original name of Branchville Station and, for a while, was a name of the whole southeastern corner of town. Ironically, the name, discarded more than a century ago, was coveted a few years back by town officials who wanted to revive it.

When the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad was established in 1852, a station was set up at what we today call Branchville. It was the only place in Ridgefield traversed by the tracks and, though far from the village, the only station in Ridgefield. Thus, it was "Ridgefield Station."

However, in 1870, trains began running on a branch line had been laid up to Ridgefield village, where there was a new station. Consequently, the station on the main line became known as Branchville – the place where the branch began – and station at the village terminus was called Ridgefield.

The exact date of the change is documented. A railroad poster announcing the new branch service said "passenger trains will commence running on the Ridgefield Branch Railroad on Saturday, June 18th, 1870, at 7:05 p.m. from Ridgefield Station. Daily trains will leave Ridgefield Village for Ridgefield Station at 6:40 a.m., 12:10 p.m. and 4:25 p.m. Returning will leave Ridgefield Station for Ridgefield Village at 9:50 a.m., 2:46 p.m., and 7:05 p.m. Freight will be received for transportation over the Branch Road after June 30th, 1870, and after that date the station on the main road heretofore known as 'Ridgefield' or 'Ridgefield Station' will be called 'Branchville' and the station at Ridgefield Village will be called 'Ridgefield.' All freight must be marked and way-billed accordingly. John W. Bacon, superintendent."

The name "Ridgefield Station" first appears in the land records in an 1857 deed which mentions the "New Road toward Ridgefield Station." Earlier, the station had been briefly known as Beers Station, for the man who sold the land to the railroad and the agent who ran the station.

Beers Atlas (no relation) in 1867 calls the whole district "Ridgefield Station," noting that it was a school district and also a post office location.

In 1870, we find one deed mentioning “Ridgefield Station” and another “Branchville Station.” Thereafter, Ridgefield Station disappeared as a geographical term.

In 1955 and 1956, however, First Selectman Harry E. Hull carried on considerable correspondence with the New Haven Railroad, asking that Branchville Station be changed to Ridgefield Station. Passenger service to Ridgefield had ceased 30 years earlier and he argued that train riders unfamiliar with the area wouldn’t know that Branchville, the only passenger station in town, is part of Ridgefield. He felt that the station should reflect the name of the town it’s in, not the neighborhood, when there’s only one station in the town.

The railroad eventually denied the request, saying that it would cause confusion with Ridgefield Station – a name then still used for the freight terminal in the village. It would also be costly to change many timetables, the railroad president maintained.

Freight service ceased in 1964 and today, the reconstructed Ridgefield Station building in the village is a showroom at the Ridgefield Supply Company. Thus, the railroad president’s argument against the name change has disappeared. Also, there is no longer a branch from Branchville. Perhaps someone will renew the effort to have Branchville Station again be called Ridgefield Station.

When freight service on the Ridgefield branch was discontinued in January 1964, Ridgefield Supply was pretty much the only customer. The line was probably always a money loser. L. Peter Cornwall of Wilton, author of “In the Shore Line’s Shadow: The Six Lives of the Danbury & Norwalk Railroad,” notes that the four-mile branch line took a year to build because of its steepness, and cost about \$250,000 – as much as the entire Danbury to Norwalk line had cost only 19 years earlier! It also served a community of only 1,900 people, not much of a source or destination passengers and freight. However, railroad vice-president LeGrande Lockwood, who lived in what’s now the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum in Norwalk, built the line in part to discourage competition. At least two other companies had plans to run lines to Ridgefield – one even installed track bed – but neither came to fruition after the Ridgefield branch was built.

RIDGEFIELD STREET

Ridgefield Street was a 19th Century name for Main Street. It was so called by the Rev. Daniel Teller in his 1878 history of the town.

Calling the main road in a village by the village’s name plus the word “street” was apparently common practice in the last century. Ridgebury Road in the center of Ridgebury was often called “Ridgebury Street.”

Main Street has also been called “the Town Street” and “the Village Street,” as well as “King’s Highway,” all of which are covered elsewhere.

RIDGEWAY TERRACE

Ridgeway Terrace is a private, dead-end road at the Ridgefield Lakes off Bennett’s Farm Road, a little north and opposite Bate’s Farm Road. There is a ridge there.

RIDGEWOOD ROAD

Ridgewood Road is the main road through Florida Hill Estates, a 1964 subdivision by Harry Richmond and Bill Connors, who also did the nearby Meadow Woods development.

The road runs from Florida Hill Road to Harvey Road. The name described the terrain and what grew on it.

RIPPOWAM ROAD

How did Rippowam, an ancient Indian name for Stamford, become associated with an old mountain road in Ridgefield?

The area around Stamford was called Rippowam from the river that forms a double harbor on the sound. Rippowam was also the name of the tribe of Indians that controlled this territory. Stamford settlers called their new community “Rippowam” for only two years – from the settlement in 1640 until 1642 when the town was officially named for a place in Lincolnshire, England.

The early boundaries of Stamford extended north into the town of Pound Ridge, land now in New York State, and to the border of Lewisboro, the town in which Lake Rippowam now lies.

The lake had earlier been known as North Pond, not too colorful, and was still so called by some oldtimers in the 1980s. Around the turn of the 20th Century, someone – possibly a wealthy owner of land on the pond’s shore – decided that Rippowam would be a better name; certainly it had more color and, unlike many Indian names, was easy to pronounce.

Why that name? Perhaps it was reminiscent of the old boundary that made Stamford a next-door neighbor of Lewisboro in the early 1700s. Perhaps someone just liked the name. Or maybe it was selected by someone who knew the name’s translation: “rocky cliff.” The north shore of the lake has a spectacular rocky cliff that rises more than 400 feet above the water. Halfway up the steep incline is “Lookout Rock,” the climb to which was considered a test of mettle for many generations of Lewisboro youths.

The north shore of Lake Rippowam was owned by Thomas H. Mead whose home was on West Mountain in Ridgefield. Mead named his turn-of-the-century estate “Rippowam.” And from the estate name, the road past it picked up the name.

Since he owned the north shore and had a boathouse there, Mead may have named the lake. According to an old map glued into the land records in 1903, Mead was calling his place “Rippowam” by then and the lake was also so called.

He and his wife, Anna, put together the 486-acre estate in the early 1890s, selling in 1903 to Jonathan Bulkley of New York City, whose family still owns “Rippowam” in 2018, though some of the estate was subdivided in the late 20th Century.

Rippowam Road in the 18th and early 19th Centuries was, with Oreneca Road, part of the old West Mountain Road that led from Ridgefield into northern Lewisboro, then called Lower Salem. The road may have been part of an old Indian trail that ran from Mamanasco Lake to Cross Pond on the Lewisboro/Pound Ridge border — making the name Rippowam all the more appropriate.

RISING RIDGE ROAD

Rising Ridge Road at Twin Ridge (q.v.) runs from Indian Cave Road to Beechwood Lane. It became a town road in 1968 and was named for the geography of the land it traverses.

RITA ROAD

Rita Road at the Ridgefield Lakes is a dead-end, private road developed in the 1950s. It was named for Rita Romano, who with her husband owned several lots there.

RITCH DRIVE

Harold A. Ritch, whose family had owned and farmed the land thereabouts, developed Ritch Drive, which runs from Haviland Road to Danbury Road. Most of the 1954 subdivision was built on corn and potato fields.

The Ritch name was an old one in Ridgefield. A Thomas Ritch was living along North Salem Road near the New York State line as early as 1811.

Harold Ritch's land had been part of the large Haviland family farm, started in 1801 and operated by that family until 1920 when Reed Haviland sold the homestead and about 100 acres to Charles and Hulda Ritch, parents of Harold. (Harold used his mother's name for Hulda Lane, which runs off Ritch Drive.)

Born in 1904, Harold Adelmar Ritch graduated from Ridgefield High School and spent most of his life here, working on local estates as a gardener. He later lived in Brookfield and died in 1981.

RIVER ROAD

River Road was the original name for what we now call Tanton Hill Road. The name was changed by the Board of Selectmen in 1957 to recognize Harvey D. Tanton, a former first selectman who lived on the road. In fact, Tanton, then a selectman, seconded Paul Morganti's motion that the road be renamed in his own honor.

River Road was so called because it runs along the Ridgefield Brook or Norwalk River. The stream is known by either name along this stretch.

RIVERSIDE DRIVE

Riverside Drive runs from Druid Lane to Fire Hill Road at Stonehenge Estates and was so called by developer Jerry Tuccio because it runs along the Norwalk River. It became a town road in 1964.

RIVER VIEW DRIVE

Riverview Drive is shown on some town maps as running off Limestone Road Extension. It was probably an early name for today's Charter Oak Lane that was changed because of possible confusion with Riverside Drive. It, too, has a view of the Norwalk River.

ROBERTS LANE

Roberts Lane is a short, dead-end road off Danbury Road, running alongside and beyond the Girolametti Court shopping area and the Mobil station.

The road was named for Joseph Roberts (*nee* Giosue Roberti), who lived there at some point and who built the first houses there around 1920.

A native of Italy who was born in 1897, Roberts lived here many years. He served in the U.S. Army during World War I, was a founder of the Italian American Mutual Aid Society (“the Italian Club”), and was a well-known general contractor. He died in 1985.

Roberts Lane was until October 1980 a wholly private road. The development of Girolametti Court in what was once the Ridge Bowl bowling alley and its parking lot – included improvements in drainage to Roberts Lane, enough improvements to encourage the town to obtain a right-of-way over the road and to maintain it. However, the roadway belongs to Eppoliti Realty.

ROBERTS POND

Roberts Pond, off Saw Mill Hill Road, was also named for Joseph Roberts, who created it around 1930.

The privately owned pond is held by a wood and stone dam that, despite some concern that it would burst in big storms over the years, has held up for more than 60 years. It held in the 1955 flood while a bridge just below it over the Titicus River on Saw Mill Hill Road was washed away.

In the 1940s and 50, Roberts Pond was used in summer as a swimming hole by the Ridgefield Boys’ Club. In winter, skating parties were often held there.

MOUNT ROBINSON

Mount Robinson was a name for a hill in the New Patent-Ridgebury territory in what’s now western Danbury. The name was mentioned in 1742 and 1746 deeds and in estate inventories.

One description places Mount Robinson near “the Hemlock Hole,” another New Patent locality. Edwin Liljigren, a Ridgebury historian, believes Hemlock Hole was north of New Patent Lot 18 in the “Fourth 20 Acre Division” by the Proprietors in 1741. This would place the mountain just north of Jo’s Hills which in turn is north of Mill Plain in Danbury.

The name never appears in Ridgefield records after 1746 and its origin is unknown.

ROB’S HOLLOW

Rob’s Hollow is a 1963 subdivision of around 25 acres that ran from Ridgebury Road, opposite the Ridgefield High School property, to Sherwood Road. Six house lots were created and the Conservation Commission purchased about 12 acres of swamp as part of the Titicus River watershed protection program. This refuge runs along the northern side of Sherwood Road near Ledges Road.

Rob’s Hollow was named for the son of James Hackert who, with Lewis J. Finch, subdivided the property. The son’s full name is James Robinson Hackert, and he was called Rob to distinguish him from his father. He was nine years old at the time and later became a magazine advertising salesman, living in Southbury.

ROCHAMBEAU AVENUE

Rochambeau Avenue, which runs between Copps Hill Road and Washington Avenue at Peatt Park, was named for the Revolutionary War celebrity who once – probably twice – passed through Ridgefield.

Compte Jean Baptiste Donatien Vimeur Rochambeau was born in France in 1725 and entered the army at the age of 16. He was promoted to lieutenant general in 1780 and led a contingent of 6,000 men to America, disembarking at Rhode Island in July 1780. The next year, after consulting with General Washington, Compte Rochambeau led his men across Connecticut in order to join Washington in an attack on British forces in New York City. He arrived in Ridgefield July 1 and his 4,800 men camped at two sites: off the north side of George Washington Highway near Ridgebury Road, and off the west side of Ridgebury Road nearly opposite Old Stagecoach Road.

Rochambeau himself, along with his officers, was said to have spent the night at a tavern in Ridgebury, near the Congregational Church. Since July 1 was his 56th birthday, it was likely that some sort of celebration took place at the tavern.

Silvio Bedini, in his *Ridgefield in Review*, tells the following story of the troop movement into Ridgebury on July 1:

“At the homestead of John Norris, just within the Ridgefield boundary, the officers with Rochambeau stopped for a brief rest and for water. That same morning, according to a local story, a child had been born in the household. Rochambeau requested the parents to name the child de Lauzun after his cavalry officer. Whether the story is to be given credence cannot be determined, but it is a matter of record that succeeding generations of the Norris family utilized the Lauzun name, and it was used also in collateral branches of the family.”

Duc de Lauzun had led another group of French troops, which had been encamped in Lebanon, on a more southerly route across Connecticut, camping that night along North Salem Road, about where Circle Drive is today. From this high ridge his troops could easily exchange signals with those of Rochambeau farther north in Ridgebury.

Rochambeau and his men left July 2, joined General Washington, and eventually wound up at Yorktown, where the Compte received the surrender of the British army on Oct. 19. He was presented with two captured cannon.

After the surrender at Yorktown, Rochambeau's troops marched back through Connecticut in 1782. Since they camped in “Salem” (probably North Salem) and in Danbury, it is quite likely that he and his men passed through Ridgebury at that time – no doubt to the cheers of Ridgefielders.

In 1976, Congress established the Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Highway to commemorate the march to Yorktown. In Ridgefield, the route consists of George Washington Highway to Ridgebury Road to Mopus Bridge Road to the New York state line. A sign noting and explaining the designation was erected along Ridgebury Road near Old Stagecoach Road.

Back in France, Rochambeau was made a marshal in 1791, narrowly escaped the guillotine in the Reign of Terror, and in 1804, received from Bonaparte the cross of grand officer in the Legion of Honor. He died in 1807.

Rochambeau Avenue is within the 1928 Peatt Park (q.v.) subdivision of William T. Peatt Sr. Two subdivision maps filed that year do not list names for the roads, but Rochambeau, Washington, and Lafayette probably came into use as soon as the subdivision began to be developed.

A 1949 survey of a lot along the road labels it “Rochambeau Road.”

ROCK LOT

While this history has made no attempt to cover the hundreds of different names used to label old-time farm lots, the Rock Lot is worth notice. Probably a fairly common term among farmers to refer to land never cleared of its stone — or a place where stones were dumped, Rock Lot in this case was 10 acres in the Florida School District, probably off the south side of Florida Hill Road a little west of Florida Road — adjoining an old “saw mill pond,” according to one deed.

The lot was owned until 1862 by Ebenezer Hawley, descendant of the Hawley clan that lived in the neighborhood from the early 1700s and which may have owned the lot that long; the Hawleys probably named it. Ebenezer sold to Lewis Knapp who in turn sold to Peter Johnson.

The name points out a significant characteristic of Ridgefield’s terrain and one which has been used for at least six old and new place names: Rock Road, Rockcrest Drive, Rock Spring, Rock Spring Road (Lane), Rocky Spring, and Rocky Neck.

The name brings to mind remarks made by two native sons, both penned upon return to the town after absences of many years.

Samuel G. Goodrich, the author who used the name Peter Parley, wrote in an 1855 letter to his brother: “The town, you know, was originally blessed, or cursed, as the case may be, by a most abundant crop of stones. To clear the land of these was the Herculean task of the early settlers.

“For many generations, they usurped the soil, obstructed the plough, dulled the scythe, and now, after ages of labor, they are formed into sturdy walls, neatly laid, giving to the entire landscape an aspect not only of comfort, but refinement. In our day these were rudely piled with frequent breaches — the tempting openings for vagrant sheep, and loose, yearling cattle.

“No better evidence can be afforded of a general process and improvement than that most of these have been relaid with something of the art and nicety of masonwork. The Mat Olmsteads and Azor Smiths of the past half century, who laid stone wall for Granther Baldwin and General King at a dollar a rod, would be amazed to see that the succeeding generation has thrown their works aside in disgust and replaced them by constructions having somewhat of the solidity and exactitude of fortifications.”

In his speech at the town’s Bicentennial exercise in 1908, Cyrus Northrop, then president of the University of Minnesota, said: “I have been 24 years in Minneapolis; I have seen great changes, great growth, in every respect; I have had a delightful time there; it is a delightful place; I love it and love to live there, but I am always glad to see my native town; I am always glad to feel that it is as clean and delightful and as noble in character as it ever was.

“I am glad to feel that what God made so beautiful, these rocks, such as you can ride from Minneapolis to Branchville (on a train) without seeing, and as you start from Branchville to Ridgefield, you get the first vision of the hard, black rocks partially covered with vines and leaves; these rocks that God made so beautiful and are so beautiful all over the town, the same things that landscape architects like to put into their landscapes in an artificial way to make things beautiful; these are all here even when wealth and art had not touched them.”

The Rock Lot may have been visible from the railroad track between Branchville and the village and may have helped inspire Dr. Northrop to his remarks. Of course, those rocks were more visible to Dr. Northrop than they are to us because early in this century, Ridgefield's landscape was agricultural, almost void of trees. Today, tens of thousands of trees and the thousands of acres of undergrowth hide most of the rocks once so visible.

Ridgefield owes its wealth of rocks to a glacier which, some 25,000 years ago, eased its way down over Connecticut and whose southern end was a little south of Ridgefield. Geologists used to say that a glacier is at once a plow, a file, and a sled. As a plow, it churns up and moves pieces of bedrock; as a file, it rasps away the solid rock in its path; as a sled, it carries off pieces it has broken away and plowed up, plus whatever rock has fallen from the sides of hills and mountains that may rise above the glacier.

This collected rock and other material is called "drift," and the rocks deposited on the land by melting glaciers is called "till." The most rocky part of a glacier is its front edge, which both plowed up and picked up the rock. Thus, the southernmost edge of a glacier is where, when it melts, much rock is deposited.

A spectacular example of rock left by a melting glacier is the "Bolder Stone," a huge granite rock which sits on five smaller limestone rocks, just off Route 116 in North Salem, N.Y. (on land that was once part of Ridgefield). Historian George Rockwell estimated the boulder weighs more than 60 tons. A modern geologist has estimated 178 tons. Because it is pink granite, a type of rock not found hereabouts, the boulder almost certainly came from somewhere to the north – Rockwell suspected New Hampshire or Canada. Hudson Valley geologist Steven Schimmrich suggests the Hudson Highlands – and was deposited by the glacier.

There are those who believe, however, that the formation is man-made, possibly by Viking visitors many centuries ago or by native American Indians. In either case, it's an eye-stopper.

ROCK COURT

Rock Court appears on 1952 maps of the Eight Lakes (*q.v.*) subdivision as a short road off the north side of Rock Road. It is a private way.

ROCK ROAD

Rock Road is part of the Eight Lakes development of the early 1950s, but its basis is an old highway. On some old maps, it runs from Mamanasco Road to Old Sib Road and beyond.

When Eight Lakes was laid out, the developers planned to use "Rock Road" as the name for what is now Caudatowa Drive (*q.v.*), which begins on the opposite side of Old Sib from the planned Rock Road connection. Apparently, when it was decided not to connect Rock Road to Old Sib, "Caudatowa" was chosen instead.

Rock Road, so-called for the rock outcroppings in the neighborhood, dates from the 19th – maybe the 18th – Century, and appears on Beers 1867 map of the town and on the Clark 1856 map of Fairfield County. In fact, a highway following exactly or very closely the present route of Rock Road, Caudatowa Drive, and Blue Ridge Road is shown connecting modern Mamanasco Road to modern Barrack Hill Road.

This old, steep, direct route from upper West Mountain to Mamasasco Lake may have been part of an old Indian trail. It evidently fell out of use by the 20th Century, probably because it was too much steeper than alternate, though longer routes. That, however, did not bother the developers of Eight lakes, who revived the path as three roads.

ROCKCREST DRIVE

Rockcrest Drive at the Ridgefield Knolls runs from Knollwood Drive to Bob Hill Road. According to Edgar P. Bickford, who surveyed the Knolls for subdivision in the late 1950s, the road was named for the rock outcroppings thereabouts.

ROCK SPRING

Two mid-19th Century deeds mention Rock Spring, a neighborhood locality in the Florida District.

In 1847, Amelia Gilbert sold Russel B. Keeler five acres “adjoining the Rock Spring lot.” Nine years later, in 1856, Jesse K. Keeler sold Russel Keeler 45 acres, “the Rock Spring land so called.”

From these two deeds it appears that the Rock Spring was off Florida Hill Road, somewhere in the vicinity of Cooper Hill Road.

ROCK SPRING LANE

Rock Spring Lane is a short, dead-end road off the east side of Limekiln Road, below Haviland Road. It was developed and named by Earl S. Miller, who filed a 16-lot subdivision of one-acre parcels on 22 acres in 1957. The name presumably refers to a rock spring in the area.

ROCKWELL ROAD

Rockwell Road is a very old highway that runs from Main Street to Branchville Road. It predates by more than a century the western end of Branchville Road (*q.v.*), and used to be the main route from the village to the southeastern part of town. In fact, it could be considered the original western end of Branchville Road.

Its replacement by the modern western end of Branchville Road in the late 1820s or early 1830s probably came as a great relief to people who had to traverse the steep hills leading down to the street just west of Perry Lane. A bridge over this stream was probably one of the earliest built in Ridgefield and one that had to be periodically repaired. For example, the Town Meeting in 1811 voted to compensate Joshua King for “timber, planks and labor” used in repairing the bridge in the road leading east from “Dr. Perry’s dwelling house.”

Rockwell Road has had several names, including DePeyster Street and Cushman Lane, both recalling people who lived on the corner of Main Street and Rockwell Road. Early in the century, it was commonly called “Lover’s Lane” because that’s where the town’s sweethearts went to “spoon.”

The road was named for the Rockwell family, two of whose members probably were responsible for the naming in the late 1920s or early 1930s. They were George L. Rockwell, historian and postmaster, who probably pressed his cousin, First Selectman Winthrop Rockwell, to make the designation. According to some sources, the name originally applied only to the section from Perry Lane to Branchville Road; the western segment of the road was still called

Cushman Lane for a while before the Rockwell name took over for the whole length of the road.

While neither George nor Winthrop Rockwell lived on or near Rockwell Road, a family member says that at least one old Rockwell clan once lived there. Whether or not there was a close family association with the road, George Rockwell probably wanted his family remembered through a place name. Perhaps confusion over the name of this road prompted him to suggest it as a good candidate for Rockwell Road.

Ironically, it is George himself who has assured the family's name being remembered through his "History of Ridgefield," the largest and most extensive history of the town. Published in 1927 and reprinted in 1979, 'Rockwell's History' contains more than 600 pages of information, some of it based on articles he had written for The Ridgefield Press over the years and all based on more than 35 years of interviewing oldtimers, inspecting old papers, and sifting through town hall records.

George Lounsbury Rockwell, a descendant of Jonathan Rockwell, one of the first proprietors of Ridgefield, was born in New Haven in 1869 and came to Farmingville as a boy to live with an uncle and grandmother. He attended local schools and later joined his uncle's firm, Lounsbury, Matthewson and Company, shoe manufacturers, where he worked for 22 years.

Rockwell was a state legislator, held town offices, was active in the Republican Party, and ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 1938. He served as deputy U.S. Consul at Montreal in 1911 and was postmaster of Ridgefield for two terms (1912-16 and 1924-35). He was a nephew of two Connecticut governors, George and Phineas Lounsbury, both of Ridgefield.

Rockwell died in 1947 at the age of 78.

Winthrop Edward Rockwell, who also died in 1947, served as first selectman of the town for 21 years, longer than anyone in Ridgefield's history. He had earlier been an assistant town clerk and Republican registrar of voters. According to a New York Times obituary, "illnesses in early life forced him to abandon studies at Yale and at Johns Hopkins University."

Jonathan Rockwell and his brother Thomas, sons of John who were born in the 1660s in Stamford, were among the town's earliest settlers. Jonathan was one of the first proprietors of 1708 while Thomas came in July 1711. Seven Ridgefield Rockwells fought in the Revolution. Members of this family still live in Ridgefield today.

ROCKY NECK, SPRING

Rocky Neck and Rocky Spring were apparently related localities on West Mountain.

In 1728, the proprietors transferred 10 acres to Timothy Keeler "lying northwest of the spring called and known by ye name of Rocky Spring." A year later, the proprietors granted Joseph Lees 12 acres "below Rocky Spring" and Joseph Keeler, 12 acres "on Rocky Neck."

Neither deed located the land and 1728 was the last mention of Rocky Spring. However, a 1733 grant from the proprietors to Joseph Keeler described the 28 acres as "on ye west and east sides of his land at Rocky Neck," and bounded on the "west by ye Oblong." The Oblong was the colony line with New York.

A 1751 deed mentions “Rockey Neck” and in 1770, the selectmen laid out a highway “at Rocky Neck,” running from the New York line northeasterly, and north of Gamaliel Northrup’s saw mill. Other records indicate this mill was on West Mountain somewhere around Oscaleta Road.

A 1773 deed mentions 57 acres “lying on the south side of the highway from Salem to Rocky Neck and...in the line that divides the governments.” Salem was South Salem, and the road was either today’s Pumping Station Road or the old West Mountain Road – Oscaleta Road. And thereabouts must have been the location of Rocky Neck.

A neck is a narrow projection or connection of land, and the term is usually used for land projecting into or through water. However, just as Ridgefield had “islands” in the 18th Century, it had necks – probably high land that jutted into a swamp. In this case the swamp was most likely Pumping Station Swamp, traversed by Pumping Station Road and off the west side of Oscaleta Road. The neck was probably one of the several projections of land into that swamp.

Rocky Neck is not an unusual name and it’s found in many Connecticut communities. One of the most popular of our state parks, Rocky Neck, is situated on Long Island Sound in East Lyme.

The last mention of Rocky Neck in our land records was an 1805 deed.

ROLLING HILLS ESTATES, ROAD

Rolling Hills Road is a short, dead-end road off Nursery Road and was part of Rolling Hills Estates, a subdivision of 25 one-acre lots on 35 acres off Still Road.

Lewis J. Finch, a Ridgefield builder and real estate broker who subdivided the property in 1964, said he named the place for the “gently rolling hills” thereabouts. Mr. Finch has often used the characteristic of elevation in subdivision titles: Ridgefield Hills, Chestnut Hills, Colonial Heights, and Franklin Heights, for examples.

Rolling Hills Estates also includes Mill View Terrace.

ROLLING RIDGE ROAD

Rolling Ridge Road is a dead-end road off Old Stagecoach Road and is part of the Ridgefield Knolls subdivision, developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s by Robert Kaufman.

According to Edgar P. Bickford, the surveyor of the project, the road was named for the terrain.

Rolling Hills Road and Rolling Ridge Road are more examples of road names that cause problems – sometimes serious – because of their similarity. They are easily confused, a fact that can be deadly if an ambulance is mistakenly sent to Rolling Hills Road, nearly five miles away from Rolling Ridge Road.

ROSCOE ROAD

Roscoe Road is a previous name of today’s Pin Pack Road, an old highway dating from before 1850.

The name reflected a family that lived many years in that vicinity and perhaps specifically to the family of Harry Roscoe, who lived there early in the 20th Century.

It’s an old family name in Ridgefield and one with several variations. A “Jane Rusco” lived in town by 1783, according to the land records. An “Allan

Rasco” lived in that part of town in 1850 and the name Rasco appeared in 1870s deeds.

An entertaining incident involving a member of the Rasco family was reported by The Press in August 1903. Young Willie Rascoe was sitting outside the Titicus Store on North Salem and Mapleshade Roads as two young ladies pulled up in a buggy to let their horses drink from a trough. Something went amiss as the horses pulled away and the buggy almost turned over. But Willie, “ever prompt especially when the distressed parties are young and pretty,” rescued the girls. “The boy hero” then shyly hid in the store till the commotion was over without ever appearing to get any thanks.

It is not clear when the road began being called Roscoe, nor is it clear why it was changed to Pin Pack Road, reportedly to reflect the fact that a peddler – who carried his wares in a pin pack – lived along the road.

A 1952 deed involving the Le Grand estate uses “Roscoe Road,” but another deed for the same land in 1954 says “Pin Pack Road.”

ROSS LANE

One of the least known roads in Ridgefield is Ross Lane, a little, private, dead-end lane off Griffin Hill Road (which in turn runs off Fire Hill Road) in the extreme eastern part of town on the Redding line.

Virginia Mulligan subdivided that area into tiny lots in the 1920s. In 1925, Frederick W. Ross bought six of the lots (for a total of \$374). His ownership is probably the source of the name.

ROUND HILL

Many years ago Round Hill was a well-known locality in the southwestern part of town. Today, it’s a barely known name.

Round Hill appears as early as 1726 when the proprietors gave Lt. Samuel Saintjohn two acres “on or near ye Southwest Ridge Road by ye Round Hill so called...”

In 1739, Saintjohn sold an acre to John Joyce, describing it as “lying near ye Round Hill, so called, southeasterly of ye road leading to ye Southwest Ridges.”

Two years later, Nathan Saintjohn took out a mortgage with the colony government on seven acres “near a place called ye Round Hill,” bounded on the west “by ye Oblong line so called.” He could get a government loan because he planned to use the land for something badly needed by the colony; he promised to produce “hemp, duck, or canvass.” Quite possibly, he would be growing a close relative of what we today call marijuana – or perhaps *Cannabis sativa* itself.

These and other deeds suggest that Round Hill is the hill now occupied chiefly by the Silver Spring Country Club, situated between lower West Lane (Southwest Ridges Road) and Silver Spring Road, and atop which stands the country club’s clubhouse. Or it might be the hill in today’s Lewisboro, on and just across the NY line along West Lane.

The name continues to appear in deeds until 1799.

ROUND LAKE ROAD

Round Lake Road runs from Barrack Hill Road to near the shore of Round Pond where it dead ends. It was developed in the 1950s.

The road was named for Round Pond by someone who apparently felt that “lake” sounds better than pond and perhaps that lake would sell houses better than pond. Or perhaps the name was more consistent with the name of the subdivision: Eight Lakes Estates.

ROUND MOUNTAIN

Ridgefield has had two – perhaps three – Round Mountains, but only one remains in town.

The name appears in many 18th Century deeds for land in the New Patent. The “mountain,” about 1,025 feet above sea level and equal to Ridgefield’s highest hills, is situated in western Danbury, north of Bogg’s Pond and about a mile north of I-84, and west of Middle River Road.

The term was in use as early as the 1730s. In 1786, Ebenezer Craw paid 35 pounds to Thomas Kellogg for 38 acres “southwest of Round Mountain together with the house standing thereon, reserving only the privilege of raising and keeping a pond of water on the premises for the purpose of carrying on a saw mill for the space of 30 years.”

According to a 1798 deed, there was an “Upper Round Mountain” near Corner Pond at the extreme northwest corner of today’s Danbury.

Both of these localities were in territory acquired by Ridgefield in the early 18th Century, but which became part of Danbury in 1846.

Nonetheless, we still have a Round Mountain in town. According to the U.S. Geological Survey maps published since 1938, the site of Scotland School and the Ridgefield Recreation Center is called Round Mountain. The name, applying to this 620-foot-high hill, is not found in 18th or 19th Century deeds, but does appear on an 1893 map.

This name is also found on maps in the 1930s in the “Dolph & Stewart Atlas of Fairfield County, Connecticut.”

ROUND POND

Round Pond is one of the few natural bodies of water in Ridgefield and, at 32 acres, is the second largest. At 778 feet above sea level, it is also the highest. But that’s not what makes it unusual.

The pond was so-called at least by 1721 when it was mentioned in the settlers’ third purchase from the Indians. Its early uses included being a source of stored water for at least one saw mill, and as a place to fish.

Apparently, however, by 1817, the pond was being fished out. In the Ridgefield’s first recorded effort at conservation, the Town Meeting that spring voted “that no person or persons shall draw any sein or seins, use or employ any hook, pot, or other implement by which fish are or may be caught or taken, in the Round Pond, so called...for the term of two years from and after the 1st day of April, AD 1817, under penalty of \$10 for every fish so taken or caught.” A year later, the fishing ban was extended indefinitely.

Early in this century, the pond was one of several used as a source of ice for the community’s ice boxes. An ice house existed on its shore as late as 1927.

It was about 1900 when the pure water of this spring-fed pond became a reservoir for the Ridgefield Water Supply Company. At that time virtually no houses stood in its watershed. Today, there are some, most of them built in the Eight Lakes subdivision.

In the 1990s, Aquarion, which bought Ridgefield Water Supply Company, stopped using the pond as a reservoir because it would be too expensive to build a purification plant that new federal regulations required. Instead, Aquarion piped water to town from the Saugatuck, Aspetuck and Hemlock Reservoirs. (The Saugatuck is fed with waters from the Limestone and Bennett's Farm sections of Ridgefield.)

In October 2004, Round Pond became state property, part of the "Centennial Watershed State Forest" that includes 15,000 acres the state acquired from Aquarion, largely in other counties.

Round Pond is so called, of course because it is rather round in shape. It is a typical new England place name, using a terrain characteristic as its inspiration.

That roundness comes from the geologic formation that created it — a kind of "fluvioglacial landform," as glaciologists would put it: Round Pond fills a "kettle."

Kettles were created when a glacier receded, leaving occasional large isolated masses of buried ice. As the ice gradually melted and the ground above it slowly sank, a bowl-like depression formed. On West Mountain, a spring or springs and a relatively small watershed has filled the bowl with water to create Round Pond.

At the turn of the century, someone tried to take the Round out of the Pond, renaming it "Lake Oreneca," apparently feeling "Round" lacked class. Fortunately, the effort didn't succeed and Ridgefielders stuck to the age-old name.

There has also been no luck for those who would call it "Round Lake."

Deeds in 1750 and 1807 mention "Round Pond Brook," evidently the outlet stream that flows southwesterly across the New York state line and into Lakes Rippowam and Oscaleta. From there the water travels westward and into the New York City water supply at Cross River Reservoir.

Thus, for many years, a single pond served water needs of two communities: one a huge metropolis and the other a comparatively tiny country suburb.

ROWLAND LANE

Rowland Lane, a short, dead-end road off East Ridge, was named for Joseph Rowland, who lived there and who developed the houses along the road. He began building in that neighborhood around 1940. The lane became a town road in 1951.

Joseph Samuel Rowland, who died in 1962, was a contractor who during the first half of this century, built many houses in town. "He was able to put up a house much cheaper than others," said the late Leo F. Carroll, a former first selectman.

He was a native of Weston where he met his wife, Alice, who was a school teacher. They married and moved here in 1913. (The old Rowland homestead in Weston was later owned by Eva LaGallienne, the actress.)

Better known, perhaps, than Joseph was his wife, Alice V. MacSherry Rowland, who served in the state House of Representatives from 1931 to 1935 and in the Senate from 1943 to 1951. She was Ridgefield's first female legislator in the General Assembly and was also the state of Connecticut's first woman deputy sheriff.

As a legislator she promoted the development of Sherwood Island State Park, larger state aid grants for schools, and the construction of state-owned technical schools.

In 1943, Gov. Raymond E. Baldwin appointed her to a six-year term on the state Board of Education. She was also a vice president of the Connecticut PTA.

Mrs. Rowland was active in many political and civic organizations and once ran for secretary of the state at a Republican convention. She died in 1971 at the age of 75.

ROYALL OAK RIDGE

Royall Oak Ridge is a fascinating name that appears in one deed and on one early map.

The deed, from the very early 1700s, was from the proprietors and said: "Granted to Ebenezer Smith...on account of yet Five Acre Division, lying in yet Southwest Ridges, ye 12th Lott, lying on ye lower end of ye Royall Oak Ridge..."

The map, drawn sometime in the 1700s, shows the above-mentioned Five Acre Division, a subdivision of lots on common land that were distributed to the proprietors or founders of the town. Royall Oak, in big bold letters, appears right alongside Ebenezer Smith's lot.

Most of the Southwest Ridges is probably in what is now Lewisboro, N.Y. – Ridgefield lost this territory to New York in the 1731 "Oblong" exchange in which Connecticut got Greenwich. The Southwest Ridges included land along Route 123 and Elmwood Road in Lewisboro, south of West Lane, and west of Silver Spring Road in Ridgefield. It is quite possible that Royall Oak Ridge is now in New York State.

But where did the name come from? We have found no record of a species of oak being known years ago as royal oak. More likely the name had to do with the trees on this ridge being set aside by British officials for government use, such as for planks or masts on naval ships. Thus, the trees belonged to the king and were often identified by a "king's mark" cut into the bark. However, aside from the appearance of this name, there is no local record of such reserved trees being located here.

The name is unusual. Among the 25,000 localities listed in Hughes and Allen's "Connecticut Place Names," not one has a "royal" in it.

RUSTIC DRIVE, ROAD

Rustic Drive and Road are part of the Ridgefield Lakes community. Rustic Road runs from Bennett's Farm Road northerly along the eastern side of the north finger of Fox Hill Lake to a dead end. Rustic Drive goes from Rustic Road to Madeline Drive. The name reflects the character of the territory.

S

SACHEM HILL

Sachem Hill is the 1968 subdivision that turned the former St. Vincent de Paul novitiate, also called the Sunset Hall estate, into 26 new house lots. Although some 110 acres were involved, all the three-acre lots were served by accessways and existing roads – Old West Mountain, Round Lake, and Walnut Hill Roads – and no new ones were created.

The town got a sizable land donation bordering Round Pond (*q.v.*), then a Ridgefield Water Supply Company reservoir. Developer Robert A. DeMar also gave the town the Little League ball field, called Sachem Hill, which had been used by the novices for exercise.

DeMar concocted the name, which had no real basis in Ridgefield history. A sachem was an American Indian leader or chief. Old West Mountain Road is believed to be part of an old Indian trail, and Indians probably fished in Round Pond, but the area is not known to have any special native significance.

The Vincentians, an order founded in France in the 1600s, had bought the former Sunset Hall estate that had been built about 1912 by James Stokes, a U.S. ambassador. Subsequent owners included Dr. L. D. Weiss, brother of the magician Harry Houdini, and Mr. and Mrs. Ruloff E. Cutten, an EF Hutton executive. In 1945 Mrs. Cutten tried to sell the place to the United Nations as its new headquarters. In early January 1946, a caravan of 11 cars full of international officials, escorted by the state police, stopped by the house to check it out. However, a bigger town won the competition to house the UN.

Samuel Rubel (1881-1949), a Russian immigrant who became an ice, coal and beer baron in Brooklyn, N.Y., owned the place next, and died there.

In 1951, IBM wanted the estate for a country club or research center, but could never get the zoning it needed to do that.

The Vincentians came next. They trained novices, on their way to being missionary priests around the world. These students underwent six years of training, equivalent of four years of high school and two of college, and still had six years of philosophy and theology ahead of them after leaving here. The order announced in August 1967 that the novitiate would move to Northampton, Pa., where there was a seminary.

The house was subsequently owned and restored by psychiatrists James and Lauma Katis, and was then long the home of film and TV actor and Democratic political leader, Robert Vaughn.

Early in 2006, the 18,000-square foot house and 6.9 acres were put up for auction by Grand Estates Auction, who said the house included six bedroom suites, 11 baths, a ballroom, a swimming pool, and a tennis court. The highest bid was \$7.5 million, prompting the then-owners Deb and Steve Segal, who had moved to Charleston, S.C., to reject the offer as too low. They had earlier had it on the market for \$11 million. By way of comparison, later that year, an empty building lot off High Ridge sold for \$1.5 million and a one-acre lot on Rockwell Road transferred for \$1 million.

The house is now owned by television personality Dick Cavett and his wife, Martha Rogers, who bought the place in 2016.

SADDLE RIDGE ROAD

Saddle Ridge Road is a short, private accessway that shows up on some maps as running off Regan Road to a dead end. It was apparently created by Joan, Carrel and Grace Conley in 1964 when it first shows up in the land records.

ST. GEORGE'S SPRING

St. George's Spring, reported the Rev. Adelmarr Bryon of Shady, N.Y., is off the north side of Barrack Hill Road in the valley of what is now Levy Park.

Around the turn of the century, his father, Dr. B. A. Bryon, a physician, used to bottle and market this spring's water, which he called St. George's Water – perhaps because it made one feel dragon-slaying strong. Dr. Bryon, as in Bryon Avenue – a neighborhood he developed – built a springhouse over the water source, which came to be known by the name of his product.

ST. JOHNS ROAD

St. Johns Road is an old highway that runs from Wilton Road West southerly to Silver Spring Road. It probably dates from the 18th Century and may have originally been a farm path to skirt the east side of Silver Spring Swamp (then called the New Pound Bogs). As such it would have served as an access to not only the backs of the lots of Wilton Road farms, but also to the swamp, an important source of wildfowl and wild flora, such as cranberries.

The road was named for the St. John family that lived along it. At first, it was probably known as “the road to the St. Johns,” but it was simpler to say just St. Johns Road.

Incidentally, the “s” at the end of St. Johns is not possessive. The St. John clan probably never owned the road and certainly doesn't today; it is a plural, indicating more than one St. John lived along it. It is St. Johns Road, just as the road to Ridgebury is Ridgebury Road, not Ridgebury's Road.

In 1856, a “C. St. John” had a large farm on the east side of St. Johns Road, running to the west side of Wilton Road West and probably also including much of the land on the east side of the road. By 1867, the farm was owned by J.N. St. John. In the 20th Century the St. John farm became Hillscroft Farm, owned for a while by Dr. Royal C. Van Etten, a prominent New York City physician. Much of this land on the east side of the road north of Donnelly Drive was subdivided in the 1970s as Table Rock Estates.

Just when the St. Johns came to the neighborhood has not been ascertained, but they were probably there in the 1700s. They were certainly there by 1815 when Samuel St. John of Wilton bought land “near Flat Rock” and bounded by property of several people who lived in the St. Johns Road area.

Although it no longer appears on voter lists or in telephone books, St. John is an old Ridgefield name and its members were among the first settlers of Ridgefield. The proprietors included Captain Samuel, Matthias, and Matthew “Saintjohn.”

The St. Johns came to this land from London in the early 1600s, settling first in Dorchester, Mass., and then in Windsor, Wethersfield, and Norwalk, Conn. It was a big family in Norwalk, where most of our early settlers came

from and where St. Johns were living by 1640. Norwalk records list the name variously as “Sension,” “Sention,” “Senchion,” or “Saintjohn” – giving, incidentally, an excellent indication of how it was pronounced in the 17th and 18th Centuries.

One historian of Norwalk believes that the St. Johns of Norwalk were related to the British Attorney-General St. John, who married a daughter of Oliver Cromwell and followed his fortunes during his reign.

SALEM VIEW DRIVE

Salem View Drive runs off the east side lower Spring Valley Road, serving a 23-acre subdivision approved in 1990, called Highview Farm.

Developer Colonial Homes Inc. of New Canaan selected the name to reflect the fact that the property looks across the Spring Valley to North Salem, N.Y.

Back in the 18th Century, the towns of North Salem and Lewisboro were one community, called Salem. The word, Salem, ultimately stems from the Hebrew for “peace,” so the name might be said to have a double meaning.

Salem was first used in this country as the name for the place where the Pilgrims settled. The American Indians had called the place Naumkeag, meaning “comfort-haven.” The Pilgrims believed one of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel had left the Indian name behind. “This suggestion of a Hebrew origine may have led to the adopting in 1629 of a Hebrew name of commendatory quality, taken to mean ‘peace,’ though also a shortening of Jerusalem,” wrote George R. Stewart in his *American Place Names*. “The fame of the original town and the commendatory qualities from a religious point of view have resulted in about 35 towns so named.”

Perhaps the road’s most famous resident was actor Robert Vaughn who lived there for nearly two decades after selling Sunset Hall on West Mountain.

SAMARA PLACE

Oaks have their acorns – and Acorn Place. Maples bear samaras, and have a road of their own in Ridgefield.

Samara Place is a dead-end road off West Lane, just before the New York State line, developed by Jack Abrams in 1997. According to George Hanlon, who built houses there, Mr. Abrams picked the name for the maples on his 26-acre property. Mr. Abrams, a shipbuilder, named the subdivision itself Topgal-lant (*q.v.*).

Samaras are winged seedpods. Probably the most common hereabouts are the twin-winged seeds that maples produce. In 2005, The Ridgefield Press ran a short essay by this writer, entitled “Wondrous Whirligigs,” marveling at these devices:

“We may call them whirligigs. Botanists know them as samaras. Whatever the name, the whirling fruits of the maple are another wonder of nature, so common at this time of year that we may overlook how cleverly made they are.

“Their aim is simple: To carry a fairly heavy seed a good distance from the parent. After all, what good would it do to plant your offspring right next to your spreading, shady self where they would lack the sun and space to survive very long? The samaras wait for a good breeze, let go and can twirl through the air long enough to land far from ‘mom.’

“Pick one up and examine its design. Each is finely formed in a way that makes it spin and hang in the air instead of plummeting to the ground. That a

tree could develop such an aerodynamic technique for dispatching its seeds is yet another miracle of evolution. Joyce Kilmer may have marveled at trees, but even their tiny offspring are amazing.”

SANFORDS POND

Sanfords’ Pond is situated in the southwestern corner of Danbury, just north of Interstate 84 and very near the New York state line. This territory belonged to Ridgefield from the 1740s until 1846.

The name appears on the current U.S. Geological Survey maps, although it has had many names over the years, including Andrews Pond and Whiting’s Pond.

The current official name stemmed from ancient adjoining landowners. In 1824, while the territory was in Ridgefield, the estate of the late David Meeker sold Daniel Sanford of Redding land “in the Hollow at Ridgebury.” A year later, Daniel Sanford sold David Sanford a half interest in 30 acres and buildings in Ridgebury, bounded on the north by a pond and river.

Thus, two Sanfords were the source of the pond name, which explains the “s” spelling which is apparently not a corruption of a possessive “s.” However, the name could probably also be spelled Sanfords’ Pond.

SANFORD STATION

Sanford Station was a mid-19th Century railroad stop on the extreme western edge of Redding at the Ridgefield line. Consequently, the neighborhood – including some territory in Ridgefield – became known as Sanford Station or just plain Sanford.

The 1934 Ridgefield assessors’ map says that Simpaug Turnpike, which runs from Route 7 in Ridgefield up to and past this locality, was once called Sanford Station Road.

Sanford Station, which appears as Sanfords Station on the Beers 1867 map, was probably so called because many members of the Sanford family lived in that neck of the Redding woods. Beers shows at least three Sanford houses nearby.

A Sanford in Redding was like a Kelly in Dublin. The Sanfords may have been the biggest clan in the long history of Redding, and some still live in the town. They stem from an early American family. Thomas and Dorothy Sanford of Gloucester, England, arrived in this land by 1634, settling near Boston, but soon moving to Milford, Conn., where Thomas died in 1681. His eldest son, Ezekiel, was living by 1665 in Fairfield, parent town of Redding. His son, Ezekiel Jr., had many children, three of whom – Lemuel, Samuel and Ephraim – had settled in Redding by 1734.

Over the years, Sanfords held every office imaginable in town. The first selectman from 1962 to 1967 was J. Bartlett Sanford, who was succeeded by Jesse Sanford, literally Bart’s “16th cousin, once removed,” who was in office until 1977.

As a station name, Sanford was a loser. According to Herbert Bronson and his aunt, the late Emma Goeppler, old-time residents of that area, the title was changed to Topstone Station around 1910 after years of the station’s being confused with Stamford. Mail, freight and even people often got off at the wrong stop.

"Imagine riding a train and expecting to get off in Stamford and winding up in the wild country," said Jesse Sanford in a 1980 interview.

SARAH BISHOP ROAD

Sarah Bishop Road at the Chestnut Hills subdivision in Ridgebury runs off Parley Road to a dead end. The name, Sarah Bishop, is also applied to an adjoining 39 acres of town-owned open space that includes a section of the never-finished rail line between Ridgebury and Westchester County.

The road and its refuge were named for Sarah Bishop, the hermitess, who lived nowhere near Chestnut Hills. Lewis J. Finch, developer of the 1959 subdivision, said he selected the road name because, like Parley Road, it recognized an interesting character from Ridgefield's past.

Sarah Bishop made her home in a tiny cave in the side of West Mountain in Lewisboro, N.Y., just across the Ridgefield line westward of Oreneca Road and Sturges Park. She arrived during the Revolution. No one knows why, but several legends try to explain her appearance. One said she was in love with a sea captain who deserted her. Another said that shortly before her wedding day, British troops invaded her Long Island home and a soldier raped her. Full of shame, she ran away to this cave from which, on a clear day, she could see Long Island and the place where she spent her girlhood days.

Sarah Bishop subsisted on gifts of food, on wild plants, and on a small garden she kept near her cave, which was little more than a hollow in some rocks. A reporter who visited her in 1804 said a few peach trees, some hills of beans, cucumbers and potatoes grew in a nearby clearing. There were also said to be many grape vines nearby.

She also got some necessities from kind-hearted people on West Mountain and in Ridgefield and South Salem, whose villages she periodically visited.

A religious woman, Sarah Bishop sometimes attended services at the First Congregational Church here or the Presbyterian Church in South Salem. At the home of Jared Hoyt in South Salem, she kept some fine dresses from her youth. She would come down from the mountain, dress at his house, attend church, and return to the house to change back into her "rags."

One of the few places she visited in Ridgefield village was the home of the Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich of the First Congregational Church. The house still stands on High Ridge at the head of Parley Lane. His son, S. G. Goodrich (whose pen name was Peter Parley), remembered as a boy seeing her. "This strange woman was no mere amateur recluse. The rock – bare and desolate – was actually her home, except that occasionally she strayed to the neighboring villages, seldom being absent more than one or two days at a time. She never begged, but received such articles as were given to her.

"She was of a highly religious turn of mind, and at long intervals came to our church and partook of the sacrament. She sometimes visited our family – the only one thus favored in town – and occasionally remained overnight. She never would eat with us at the table, nor engage in general conversation.

"Upon her early history she was invariably silent; indeed, she spoke of her affairs with great reluctance. She neither seemed to have sympathy for others, nor ask it in return. If there was any exception, it was only in respect to the religious exercises of the family; she listened intently to the reading of the Bible and joined with apparent devotion in the morning and evening prayer.

"I have very often seen this eccentric personage stealing into church, or moving along the street, or wending her way through land and footpath up to her mountain home. She always appeared desirous of escaping notice, and though her step was active, she had a gliding movement, which seemed to ally her to the spirit world."

Sarah Bishop died in 1810. According to George L. Rockwell, "the generally accepted story is that one stormy night, she left the house of one of the neighbors, who lived on the corner of the road leading up to the mountain. Wending her way up the steep mountainside to her cave, she fell, and too weak to continue her way, perished from the cold.

"She was found among the rocks a short distance from her cave. Joseph Knapp, who lived near the state line, has related (sometime before 1927) to his grandson, Eben Bouton, that he was one of those who discovered her lifeless body."

She was buried in an unmarked grave in North Salem.

In 1908, Dr. Maurice Enright, a physician who maintained a summer place here, wrote a novel, *The Ridgefield Tavern, A Romance of Sarah Bishop, Hermitess, During the American Revolution*. The novel cast Sarah Bishop as the daughter of the operator of the Keeler Tavern ("Ridgefield Tavern"), a photograph of which appears in the book. The account is, of course, fictional.

While it took until 1959 to get a place name recalling the hermitess, an old, albeit very local, name related to her. In 1869, James and Henrietta Thompson and others sold to their Mother, Charity Knapp, and sister, Dulia Knapp, several parcels, including "one situated wholly or in part in the state of New York, called 'Sarah Bishop's Lot.'"

The land records may also have recognized the existence of the cave, which was once within the boundaries of Ridgefield (before the Oblong was ceded to New York in 1731). In 1730, the proprietors subdivided the land of Tapporneck, an Indian who had sold his holdings to the Ridgefielders. In the division, Benjamin Benedict got 60 acres "west of ye cave." Quite possibly, it was the cave that Sarah Bishop was to find a half century later.

Much has been written about the hermitess in histories, newspapers and literature. Perhaps the most literate or, at least, entertaining work came from the pen of S.G. Goodrich, who as Peter Parley, published the following poem in a Hartford newspaper in 1823. Read it aloud on Halloween night.

*For many a year the mountain hag
Was a theme of village wonder,
For she made her home on the dizzy crag
where the eagle bore its plunder.
Up the beetling cliff she was seen at night
Like a ghost to glide away;
But she came again with the morning light
From the forest wild and gray.
Her face was wrinkled, and passionless seem'd,
As her bosom – all blasted and dead –
And her colorless eye like an icicle gleam'd,
Yet no sorrow or sympathy shed.
Her long snowy locks, as the winter drift,
On the wind were backward cast;
And her shrivel'd form glided by so swift,*

*You had said 'Twere a ghost that pass'd.
 Her house was a cave in a giddy rock
 That o'erhung a lonesome vale;
 And 'twas deeply scarr'd by the lightning's shock
 And swept by vengeful gale.
 As alone on the cliff she musingly sate –
 The fox at her fingers would snap;
 The crow would sit on her snow-white pate,
 And the rattlesnake coil in her lap.
 The night-hawk look'd down with a welcome eye
 As he stoop'd in his airy swing;
 And the haughty eagle hover'd so nigh
 As to fan her long locks with his wing.
 But when winter roll'd dark his sullen wave
 From the west with gusty shock,
 Old Sarah, deserted, crept cold to her cave
 And slept without bed in her rock.
 No fire illumined her dismal den,
 Yet a tatter'd Bible she read;
 For she saw in the dark with a wizard ken,
 And talk'd with the troubled dead.
 And often she mutter'd a foreign name,
 With curses too fearful to tell,
 And a tale of horror – of madness and shame –
 She told to the walls of her cell!*

SAUNDERS LANE

Saunders Lane is a dead-end road off Farmingville Road nearly opposite the Farmingville School, developed by and named for P. K. Saunders, a millionaire English inventor who was president of the Saunders Valve Company of America. He called the subdivision Quaker Ridge.

Phillip Keith Saunders was one of the more unusual characters in Ridgefield's past. Born around 1899, he served in World War One in the British navy and in the 1930s he worked as an engineer for a South African company manufacturing explosives for the Johannesburg and Kimberley diamond mines. While working in the mines, he invented a diaphragm valve for that eventually led his making a fortune. The Saunders valve is still used today in medical equipment.

During World War II he helped the Navy in Brooklyn installing anti-submarine devices on merchant vessels.

He was living on Main Street in 1949 he bought the Starr estate, whose large house is at the corner of Farmingville and Lounsbury Roads and some of whose land is now the Farmingville School site. Almost immediately, he began plans for the 14-lot Saunders Lane subdivision. The name of the road was in use by 1950 when houses were being built there. Oddly enough, one of the Saunders Lane house builders in the 1960s was William Saunders of Brookfield, no relation to P.K. Saunders Lane became a town road in 1961.

In 1960 Saunders wrote the critically acclaimed autobiography, published by Prentice-Hall, with the unusual title: "Dr. Panto Fogo: The Uninhibited

Memoirs of a Twentieth Century Adventurer - His Inventions and His Escapades on Four Continents and the High Seas.”

While he continued to travel widely and to establish a country club on the island of Jamaica, Saunders maintained a home on Saunders Lane until 1974 by which time he was living in Manteo, N.C. He died there in 1997 at the age of 98.

SAW MILL BROOK

Saw Mill Brook, mentioned only once in the 18th and 19th Century land records, is one of several “saw mill” names in Ridgefield and one of many in Connecticut and New England. All recall a common feature of an earlier life that has almost but not quite disappeared in the modern suburbs.

In 1775, the town records noted that a road was laid out through Joseph Jackson’s land, a little south of David Hayt’s house, “running on the east side of the Saw Mill Brook,” and on down to the Norwalk (Wilton) line, where it met a highway recently laid out by the Norwalk selectmen.

In return for the confiscated land, Jackson received 19 acres on the east side of “the river” and east of his farm. The road was probably what is now Route 7, more or less, and Saw Mill Brook was probably somewhere in today’s Branchville. It could have been a local name for the Norwalk River or for a little side spur off the river leading to a mill sluice. It could have referred to the Cooper Brook, which comes down from Florida District and meets the Norwalk River opposite the east end of Branchville Road. Cooper Brook had an old and widely known saw mill operation upstream, but it’s generally a west-to-east stream; it is hard to imagine land being described as on its east side.

First Industry

Quite possibly the first “industry” and first “factory” in Ridgefield was a sawmill. Certainly lumber was needed before almost anything else in the settlement of the new town and while big structural pieces like beams and posts could be hewn by hand and clapboards could be “riven” (*see under Sturdevant’s Clapboard Tree Ridge*), floorboards and wallboards and clapboards had to be sawn. Milling wood on or near the construction sites was a lot easier than hauling it long distances.

The earliest sawing arrangement here was probably a pit and a long pit saw, held on each end by a man or “sawyer.” One man would be in the pit and one standing over it, slicing up and down as the log was fed into the long, band-like blade. This was slow and hard work and it was probably not long before a mechanized version of this set-up was in operation, quite possibly at the south end of a pond that formerly existed at the intersection of Wilton Road East and Whipstick Road.

The earliest mechanical mill would have had a single blade moving up and down, powered by water flowing through a sluice and turning a wheel which, through gears and a piston-like arrangement, moved the saw. These “up-and-down saw mills,” as they were known, later improved their production several fold by using four or five blades together in a “gang,” slicing several planks instead of one.

Eventually, the faster, longer-lasting and more efficient circular saw blade replaced most of the up-and-down blades.

Mills of these types needed water for power and since Ridgefield was gifted with many streams, good sites were available for mills. Just upstream from

most mills was a pond, used to store water and provide an even, powerful flow of it.

Inspection of the land records between 1708 and 1880 indicates that at least 20 sawmills were operated here for varying lengths of time during those 170 years. Virtually every neighborhood had a mill at one time or another, although in later years, most of them had gotten farther from the center of town as the sources of wood became limited to remote sections of West Mountain and Ridgebury.

By the mid-1800s, there may have been some mills that made use of the new marvel, steam power. Possibly the first steam engine in town was in operation in 1834 in the Main Street furniture-making shop of Samuel Hawley and Rufus H. Pickett, but it was used to power lathes. Just when steam power arrived at sawmills here is unknown, but water power continued to be used into the early 20th Century.

In the late 1800s, “portable” saw mills, usually steam powered, became popular in New England. They could be set up right at the woodcutting site.

Today, several saw mills are still in the area – one in Wilton and one at the Ridgefield-Redding line on Route 7. They are powered by that new-fangled energy source – electricity.

SAW MILL HILL ROAD

Saw Mill Hill Road runs from North Salem Road at Titicus to Pin Pack Road and Mulberry Street. While it is an old highway with an old-fashioned name, neither Saw Mill Hill nor Saw Mill Hill Road predates 1880 as names in the land records, and they were probably 20th Century creations.

The road was named for a sawmill that was once operated, possibly by Will F. Hoyt, a carpenter, at a point near where the Titicus River crosses under Saw Mill Hill Road. Several mills, including a cider mill and a gristmill, were operated farther downstream near North Salem Road.

The road was laid out in 1772 when the proprietors took land from Epene-tus How(e) so the road ran on “ye west side of ye brook near Daniel Brown’s house and runs eastward across ye old stone dam that was built across sd. brook, and then sd. highway turns southeast about 16 rods, then east six rods to ye top of ye hill, then 24 rods a northeasterly course down ye hill to Tittecus so called at the bridge yt crosseth Tittecus River near sd. How’s land.”

It is one of the few old roads in town whose date of official creation is known – although it’s quite possible that the proprietors’ action was making official an informal path that had existed for a while.

SAW MILL POND

Saw Mill Pond was a common term, having been applied to almost any body of water that had been associated with a sawmill. Among the references to Saw Mill Ponds found in the land records are:

- Lewis Knapp to Peter Johnson, “the Rock Lot...in the 11th (Florida) School District,” bounded on the south by highway and “Saw Mill Pond” (1866). This was probably John’s Pond (*q.v.*) along Branchville Road.
- John Sherwood to Jabez Mix Gilbert, land on West Mountain, bounded westerly by “the Saw Mill Pond” (1839). This was probably Lower Pond (*q.v.*). In Lewis Stuart to Jabez Gilbert (1852), Gilbert gets use of “Upper Pond and the Saw Mill Pond.” The accompanying mortgage says he gets

the “privileges of drawing water from the Upper and Lower Ponds.” Lower Pond, now a third the size it was then, is situated along Saw Mill Hill Road below Robert’s Pond.

- Bradley H. Hull of Bridgeport to George Hull of Danbury, 17 acres bounded easterly by the Sugar Hollow Turnpike Road and the Saw Mill Pond (1862). This is probably the pond along Route 7, just north of Cain’s Hill Road and south of New Road. A Bradley Hull was operating a sawmill thereabouts by 1802.

SAW MILL RIVER

The Saw Mill River, really little more than a brook, flows out of a swamp west and south of Turner Road in the northwest corner of Ridgebury, then runs northward into Danbury along Saw Mill Road (*q.v.*) and into New York State and its reservoirs.

SAW MILL ROAD

Only a few feet of Saw Mill Road, which goes from Turner Road in Ridgebury to Routes 6, 302 and I-84 in Danbury, are in the Town of Ridgefield. The sawmill for which it was named was near Route 6, built sometime between 1767 and 1799 and operated by William Nickerson in 1801.

SAW MILL SWAMP

When Samuel J. Hoyt sold Ebenezer Hoyt four acres in 1824, he said it was “in the Saw Mill Swamp...subject to its usual pondage.” This stipulation indicates that the swamp was seasonally filled, possibly to support the old sawmill. This pond may have been John’s Pond, mentioned above.

SAXIFAX RIDGE

In 1728, the proprietors transferred to minister Thomas Hauley 11 acres “lying on ye north end of Saxifax or Sassifrage Ridge, so called...”

The grant was “on account of ye 3rd 10 Acre Division,” which was a subdivision among the proprietors of land purchased from Tapporneck, the Indian, on West Mountain (*see* Tapporneck Court). This territory is now mostly in New York state and undoubtedly so is the ridge.

What is “saxifax” or “sassifrage”? *Saxifrage* is a common wildflower that inhabits rocky places and grows in this area. However, saxifrage was of little or no value as a herb and was noted chiefly for its habit of growing out of cracks in rocks (saxifrage means “rock breaker,” though the plants don’t actually break the rocks). Thus, it was not a significant plant and the naming of a ridge after it seems unusual, especially since our early settlers rarely employed plant names – except those of trees – to identify localities.

More likely, the deed-writer was trying to spell *sassafras*, also common in our hilly woods, but which had considerable value years ago.

“Sassafras is a tree very closely associated with America, although few are now aware of its history,” wrote the late Eric Sloane in “*A Reverence for Wood*.” “As the early American wonder drug, it was our first money crop and object-in-trade of the first American cartel. In 1622, the Jamestown Colony was committed by the Crown to produce 30 tons of sassafras, with a penalty of 10 pounds of tobacco on each man who did not produce 100 pounds of it.”

How had this native tree become so popular in England so early in this nation's history? That is probably traceable to an event in the 1580s involving an unhappy group of colonists at Roanoke Island, N.C. Reports Sloane:

"An incident occurred in Roanoke that really captured the public imagination. It concerned a group of Virginians who had traveled far beyond the camp where their food was stored and were, therefore, reduced to eating their dogs, cooked in a soup of sassafras. When their dogs were all eaten, the Virginians lived on sassafras soup alone, which was reported to give them a strange new vitality.

"When Sir Francis Drake visited Roanoke in 1586 and brought some half-starved colonists back with him, he also brought back a load of sassafras, livened by the tale of 'the wondrous root, which kept the starving alive and in fair goode spirit.'"

The bark of the root of this medium-sized, deciduous tree became a popular tonic tea in England and trade reached its peak when rumors were spread that sassafras retarded the onset of old age.

The American Indians, of course, had discovered it long before the English, and had employed sassafras as a fever reducer. They also carved out trunks of the trees – which usually run about 80 feet high but can go to 125 feet – for dug-out canoes.

Colonists and Europeans used the bark to treat rheumatism, gout, arthritis, skin problems, and a host of other ailments. They made spoons and mugs from its wood, believing they would impart a fine taste to drinks. Bible boxes and cradle walls were fashioned from it in the hopes of keeping away evil spirits. Women of the 17th and 18th Centuries obtained a yellow dye from the tree's flowers.

The Pennsylvania Dutch used to stir their soap with a sassafras stick, probably in the hope that the product would smell more like sweet sassafras and less like rancid fat and lye. In more modern times, saffrole, an oil found in sassafras, was used in making root beer – until the Food and Drug Administration banned it as a carcinogen.

SCALZO FIELD

Scalzo Field, a Little League ball field on the east side of Prospect Ridge, north of the skating rink, is named for Robert P. Scalzo, who was active in working with Little League, Pop Warner football, and Townies basketball in the 1970s.

Bob Scalzo was born in, of all places, Ridgefield Park, N.J., in 1931 and was a veteran of the U.S. Army. He worked for IBM and moved to Ridgefield around 1968. He died April 16, 1976, only 45 years old. A year later, Little League named the new field for him.

In 2018, 42 years after Scalzo's death, the president of Little League is Steve Scalzo, one of Bob's three sons.

For many years, Pop Warner Football, now Ridgefield Youth Football, has given the Bob Scalzo Award to individuals who have made a significant contribution to the organization. Often the presentation has been made on Bob Scalzo Day in October.

Ridgefield High School annually awards a Robert Scalzo Scholarship.

SCHOOL HOUSE MEADOW

From 1840 until at least 1866, several references appeared in the land records to the “School House Meadow,” two acres at the northwest corner of Florida Hill and Florida Roads.

The meadow, now woodland, was near the old Florida Schoolhouse, the town’s only 19th Century brick schoolhouse, which stood a little west of this parcel.

School House Meadow is an example of some of the delightful place names of a bygone era, names that couldn’t be concocted today. Not only have most of the schoolhouses disappeared from our landscape, but so have the meadows – now either planted with houses or turned to forest.

SCHOOLHOUSE PLACE

Schoolhouse Place is a dead-end road off northern Ridgebury Road, serving Paul McNamara’s 1981 seven-lot subdivision of the former Lee B. Wood property. Wood was editor and president of The New York World-Telegram and Sun, which won four Pulitzer Prizes while he was an executive.

When he proposed the subdivision to the Planning and Zoning Commission, Attorney McNamara suggested that the road be called Wood’s Court, a double-meaning name that zoning officials thought would be too easily confused with roads like Woodland Way, Woodlawn Drive, Woodstone Road, and Woody Place.

This writer was asked for his thoughts and he reported that Circusman Aaron Turner used to own that property in the 19th Century and, some say, kept elephants and other wild animals on or near the tract. In fact, elephants are supposed to have been buried on or near the Wood property.

So, half in jest, “Pachyderm Place” was suggested.

Too ponderous, came the reply.

Maybe “Three Ring Circle”? someone else suggested.

Too cutesy.

A zoning official suggested Big Top Lane, but that sounded too much like a loaf of bread (Big Top was a popular bread brand in the mid-20th Century.)

Finally, Commissioner Daniel M. McKeon, a longtime Ridgeburian and student of its history, came to the rescue with Schoolhouse Place. McKeon said the new road would connect to Ridgebury Road near the site of the old North Ridgebury Schoolhouse, then represented only by the ruins of a foundation.

So Schoolhouse, it was. In 1985, the 690-foot-long road was accepted as a town road.

North Ridgebury was probably one of the last school districts to get a schoolhouse. Beers’ 1867 map shows no building there, although there were district lines, suggesting that for a long time, residents of this district had sent their children to a schoolhouse to the north in nearby Danbury (until 1846 part of Ridgefield).

In 1871, the estate of Aaron Turner, who had died by then, sold to “School District Number 15 of Ridgefield” an eight-by-10 rod (half acre) tract on the west side Ridgebury Road with the proviso that the school district make and keep forever “a tight stone fence five feet high” between the Turner land and the schoolhouse land.

It is not clear whether the fence was supposed to keep school children off the Turner land or Turner animals away from the school children. It was probably the latter so the Turner estate would not be liable for one of its farm animals' hurting a child. If ever the fence were not maintained, the land was to revert to the Turner estate or its heirs.

This deed probably represented the purchase of land for the schoolhouse, which was probably built shortly thereafter. The schoolhouse was used until early in this century.

Determining the true and clear owner of the now-fenceless parcel might take a passel of lawyers years to uncover.

SCODON DRIVE

Scodon Drive runs from George Washington Highway to Sophia Drive, taking the name from the development of which it is a part.

Scodon is a 1958 subdivision of 57 lots on the south side of George Washington Highway. The developers and namesakes were the Carleton A. Scofield and Joseph H. Donnelly. Scofield was a former president of the Ridgefield Bank while Donnelly was the first man to set up a full-time practice of law in the town, starting in 1931. His firm became Donnelly, McNamara, and Gustafson.

Judge Donnelly, a former judge of probate, was involved in several subdivisions, the last of which was along North Salem Road at the New York line includes O'Neill and Tapornick Courts. His name is already on two other road names: Donnelly Drive and Marcardon Avenue (Mar is Francis D. Martin and Car, Arthur J. Carnall).

Scodon was developed in two sections that include Scodon, Langstroth and Sophia Drives. A third section, called Scodon III and situated west of the original development, was subdivided in the early 1970s by Jerry Tuccio and developed largely by Carl Lecher. It includes Pheasant Lane and Evergreen Place.

Between Scodon and Scodon III lie about 30 acres of open space, now owned by the Conservation Commission, the result of Tuccio's subdividing Scodon III under the then-new "Planned Residential Development" regulations of the Planning and Zoning Commission, which allow smaller than usual lots if sizable tracts of open space are preserved.

In fact, Scodon III was the first commercial subdivision of any consequence to be approved under the PRD provisions. The town got land long known to be a habitat for wildfowl – especially the pheasant for which the nearby road is named.

An easement connects the Scodon III open space to the nearby western end of the town-owned Hemlock Hills refuge (former Lippolt land). Hemlock Hills in turn connects to the Pine Mountain refuge, which connects to Wooster Mountain State Park in Danbury. Thus, one can enter the Scodon III open space near the western end of George Washington Highway and hike through more than 500 acres of public lands for more than three miles over some wild terrain, ending on Route 7 in Danbury. Cross the highway and there's a few more miles of trails in Danbury and Bethel.

SCOTLAND

Scotland is a section of town whose names has little or nothing to do with the British Isles nation. Once also called Scotts Ridge, Scotland consists generally of the neighborhood around Lake Mamanasco and Pierrepont Pond.

The earliest reference to its present name occurred in an 1835 deed in which Phebe, Mary, Ann, and Laura Burt of New York City sold James Scott two acres “in Scotland District so called.”

The name Scotland may just have been coming into use by the 1830s. Another name, Scotts Ridge, was more widely used. From 1843 to 1864, at least six references to Scotts Ridge are found in the land records, but not one mentioning Scotland District. Indeed, Beers atlas in 1867 labels the school district as “Scotts Ridge.” However, in 1878, in his *History of Ridgefield*, the Rev. Daniel Teller called it Scotland District. Scotts Ridge was specifically the ridge traversed by North Salem Road between the northern end of Tackora Trail and Ridgebury Road, but a wider area picked up the name.

The Beers map defines the boundaries of Scotts Ridge District (also long called District Number One) as running along the east side of North Street from around today’s Mimosa, northward to Twixt Hills, then westward along the north side of Ledges Road and on to the New York State line. The south boundary, starting from the state line, ran southeasterly along the old Barrack Hill Road to Old West Mountain Road, then cut easterly across Tackora Trail and North Salem Road, a little north of their southern junction, and on over to North Street.

This map also shows four houses still owned or occupied by Scotts in the district: Hezekiah Scott and “Mrs. Scott” on Barlow Mountain Road, T. O. Scott in the little old pre-Revolutionary house still standing on the corner of North Salem and Barlow Mountain Roads, and a house a little north on North Salem Road, labeled as belonging to the estate of D. (David?) Scott.

Scotts came to Ridgefield in 1712 when David Scott I of Fairfield bought lot number 13 on Main Street at the south corner of Catoonah Street. It is believed that David came from Ireland, for in 1719, Mary Scott, his wife, described as coming from Londonderry, Ireland, was suing her husband in Fairfield County Court. (However, David’s family may ultimately have been from Scotland. As early as 1612, many Scots had begun migrating from Argyllshire, Scotland, to the Londonderry area to settle land recently made available by King James I. By the early 1700s, many of these Scots were tiring of Ireland, where religious and language differences were causing difficulties. Shiploads began heading for New England.)

Mary Scott was apparently upset not only at being abandoned in Ireland, but at David’s having a new wife, Elizabeth St. John, a daughter of original Ridgefield proprietor Samuel St. John. Silvio Bedini, the Ridgefield and Smithsonian Institution historian who uncovered the lawsuit involving Mary Scott, hints that David may have abandoned his wife to come to America, and that Mary and the children came after him. Mary eventually got some land from the suit and settled in Ridgefield – sans husband, who apparently lived in another part of town. Bedini suspected Mary was the first person named Scott to live in what was to become Scotland District.

Whether or not David lived with them, his children went on to found a large Ridgefield family that still has members living in town. It included four

men who fought in the Revolution, among them Captain James Scott and Ensign David Scott; many prominent Ridgefielders, including Judge Hiram K. Scott, who was town clerk 46 years (from 1852 to 1909 with a break from 1861 to 1872); and Hezekiah “Uncle Kiah” Scott, a distiller and miller for whom Kiah’s Brook is named.

The fact that Scotts settled so early – probably by the 1730s – in the eastern Mamasasco area and stayed there so long made them a “first family,” so to speak, and probably contributed to the Scotland name. But as early as 1750, land records were making reference to “Scots land” (with only one T). A 1751 deed of the proprietors to Job Smith describes 4 ½ acres “lying west of Scots land on ye Great Hill.” One can see how easily the transition from Scots or Scott’s land to Scotland could occur.

Among the various “Scotland” localities in Connecticut is the town of Scotland, in the eastern part of the state, but it appears that Ridgefield’s Scotland is the only one to take its name from a Scott family. The town of Scotland was named by one Isaac Magoon for his home country. (Scotland, incidentally, did not originally refer to the country north of England. Ireland was called Scotland or Scotia before 1000 AD. The name is variously said to mean “tattooed,” or “aborigines,” or “rulers.”) There are 13 towns called Scotland and eight Scotia in the United States, probably all named for the country.

Scotland District probably had a school at the time of the Revolution and certainly did by 1799, says Bedini. The earliest known schoolhouse stood at the northern intersection of North Salem Road and Tackora Trail.

Around 1815, a second schoolhouse in the district was established. According to legend, related by Bedini (a native of the Scotland District), this second school was built near the present Ridgefield High School by the Hunt and Howe families, who lived out toward the state line. They were reportedly dissatisfied with the member of the Scott family who taught at the other schoolhouse. This second school eventually became known as Number 13 and lasted until around 1850.

Scotland families had built a new schoolhouse around 1815 on North Salem Road, nearly opposite Farrar Lane. Perhaps the Howe and Hunt families felt this new location was too far away. Sometime after 1866, the school was moved to the site of the first schoolhouse (the original building became a woodshed for more than a century, and fell to pieces in the 1950s.)

After the town’s district schoolhouses were abandoned in 1939, Douglas Main, a former Scotland pupil, had the school moved south on North Salem Road to a point a little north of Tackora Trail. Situated on the west side of the road, it was converted into a house, long owned and occupied by members of the Main family.

The district name is kept alive today in the name of Scotland School, which opened in 1965.

SCOTLAND KNOLLS

Scotland Knolls is a mid-1950s subdivision of about 23 lots that is served by Hobby Drive and Circle Drive. The former is so called because the land was once Jackson Hobby’s farm.

Scotland Knolls was so called because it is situated on Scotts Ridge (*q.v.*) in the heart of the Scotland District.

SCOTT ROAD

Scott Road was an informal name that was applied to what is now called Silver Spring Park Lane and that never caught on. This neighborhood of small lots, once just about the least expensive homesites in town, was developed starting around 1926 by Daniel Scott.

Scotts had owned land in this neighborhood since the 18th Century. For example, William Scott 2nd of Norwalk (Wilton) bought land “at a place called New Pound Ridge” in 1794. New Pound Ridge (*q.v.*) was the old name for the ridge just to the west of nearby Silver Spring Road.

SCOTT RIDGE ROAD

Scott Ridge Road is *in* Scotts Ridge, but not *on* it. Although some people may see a road so called and naturally think it is on Scott Ridge, Scotts Ridge is actually quite a bit to the east.

The road, running from Blue Ridge Road westward to Barrack Hill Road at Eight lakes Estates, takes its name, albeit s-less, from the old Scotts Ridge school district (*see below*). On Beers 1867 atlas, the label “Scotts Ridge” for the school district was placed near what is now Eight Lakes on West Mountain and perhaps the developer of the early 1950s subdivision figured that the Eight Lakes land was once called Scotts Ridge or even Scott Ridge. Not so, either.

However, it is nice that the road name keeps alive an old place name. It’s too bad that it is misspelled.

SCOTTS BROOK

Scotts Brook flows out of the southwest part of town, just east of lower Silver Spring Road, running southward into Wilton, then westward and into Lewisboro, N.Y., joining the West Branch of the Silvermine River, just below Scotts Reservoir.

The brook does not take its name from the reservoir, but from the fact that Scotts had land along it. Scotts owned much of the land in the northwestern part of Wilton in the 19th Century.

SCOTTS RIDGE

Scotts Ridge, the “other” name for the old Scotland school district, was so named because so many members of the Scott family lived in the neighborhood.

The ridge itself runs along the east side of Lake Mamanasco and includes North Salem Road, Hobby and Circle Drives. This was formerly called Mamanasco Hill or Mamanasco Ridge.

The name Scotts Ridge first appears in 1843 when Clark Smith sold Lyman Reynolds land “at Scotts Ridge so called,” and was in common use through the 1850s when Scotland, an earlier but initially less popular name, began taking over. It sometimes appears as Scott Ridge.

An 1845 deed refers to “the District of Scotts Ridge” and an 1864 deed mentions “Scotts Ridge District.”

A 1908 atlas calls North Salem Road near Lake Mamanasco “Scott Ridge.” It is not clear whether the name is supposed to apply to the road or to the neighborhood.

When the town’s second middle school was about to open in 2002, this writer was asked about a name and recommended Scotts Ridge since it fol-

lowed the schools' tradition of naming buildings after geographical regions in town and it accurately resurrected an old name for the area.

SCOTTS RIDGE II

Judge Joseph H. Donnelly used "Scotts Ridge" as the name of his 1982 subdivision of 17 lots that includes O'Neill Place and Taporneck Court. The land is along the east side of North Salem Road at the New York State line, in the westernmost part of the Scotts Ridge or Scotland District.

SCRIPPS POND

For such a little pond, this one has had plenty of names. The small body of water on the north side of Old South Salem Road, near the South Salem Road intersection, was created in the early in the 20th Century, probably by Richard Keeler or a member of the Keeler family. It was later enhanced by Reginald M. Lewis, wealthy son of F. E. Lewis (whose huge, showy estate on West Lane is now the "Ridgefield Manor Estates" subdivision). Reginald Lewis had a farm he ran as a hobby, and the pond – aside from serving as a watering hole – was a popular source of ice in the days before refrigerators.

At that time, it was known as Hopper's Pond, for Richard Hopper, Reginald Lewis's estate superintendent, who lived in the house near the pond later owned for many years by Mr. and Mrs. Mrs. James M. Blackwell.

Robert Paine Scripps bought the farm in the 1930s. A partner with Roy Howard in the Scripps-Howard newspaper empire, Mr. Scripps died in 1938 aboard his yacht off California. During the 1930s and 1940s, the pond was known by his name.

The Blackwells called the pond Lacha Linne, Gaelic for "duck pond," but today even ducks would be hard-pressed to find enough water to land on. By the first decade of the 21st Century, the dying pond was mostly marsh.

SEAR HILL

Sear Hill is a variation of Seir Hill (*q.v.*), a locality once in Ridgefield and now in Danbury. The name first appears in 1767 as Seir. A 1799 deed spells it Sear.

Neither may be correct since Seir and Sear are both obsolete variations of the word, *sere*, which means "dry" or "withered." This may have been a reference to the condition or aspect of the hill.

However, it is more likely that Seir is a Biblical reference to a mountain that is now in southwestern Jordan, near Israel. A song that appears in Judges 5 says: "Lord, when thou didst go forth from Se'ir, when thou didst march from the region of Edom, the earth trembled and the heavens dropped water." According to one author, Seir and Mount Seir were often referred to in the Old Testament and frequently in an unfavorable light.

In his 1958 booklet "A Connecticut Town Names Its Roads," Stowell Rounds believed that the Seir Hill in Wilton was a Biblical reference. He notes its frequent misspellings – from Ceare Hill in 1715 to Sier Hill in 1953.

Whether the origin is *sere* or Seir, it appears from the name that the locality was not fondly looked upon, possibly because it was steep or rocky.

The hill was situated about a mile north of the village of Mill Plain and probably near the New York line. This territory belonged to Ridgefield from 1731 until 1846.

SECOND LANE

Second Lane is one in the series of First through 12th Lanes that run southwesterly off Mamanasco Road. It is, like most, a dead end and, like most, a private road, developed as part of the huge Eight Lakes (*q.v.*) subdivision of the old Port of Missing Men (*q.v.*) property.

SECOND PATENT

Second Patent, usually spelled “Pattent,” was another term for New Patent (*q.v.*) or Ridgebury (*q.v.*). This section of northern Ridgefield and western Danbury, for which the proprietors of Ridgefield acquired a patent in 1731, wasn’t purchased from the Indians until 1739.

The patent was the official permission of the Colony of Connecticut for Ridgefielders to take possession of the land as part of the town of Ridgefield. A patent had been issued to the proprietors for the original settlement of Ridgefield (the original framed document is in the town clerk’s vault). The one for Ridgebury being next, it was sometimes called the Second Patent and the land it covered sometimes took the same name. (The whereabouts of the original document is unknown.)

The name appears occasionally in very early deeds, the first being in 1733.

SECOND POND

There are several references in the mid- to late 1700s to a Second Pond. In a 1766 deed, Daniel Nettleton sold Thomas Frost two parcels “in Ridgebury Parish, eastward of ye Second Pond so called.” One of them, containing a rood of land, was “near ye above s(ai)d place, on ye north side of ye highway where ye school house now stands.”

Indications are that this pond was in what is now the Mill Plain (*q.v.*) section of western Danbury. Which pond it was is not clear, but the name is interesting. Was it the second pond downstream from some source? Was it the second pond upstream from a dam, mill or confluence? Was it the second pond to be created to store mill water? Was it the second pond discovered by someone? Probably no one will ever know. And, of course, few will care.

SECOND SOCIETY

Just as Ridgebury was once called the Second Patent, so it was also the Second Society in town.

As mentioned in earlier columns, a trip from Ridgebury to the village of Ridgefield in the 1700s was no easy task. To attend services or Town Meetings required lengthy journeys. Thus, soon after settlement of Ridgebury, mission Congregational and Episcopal churches were set up and served by traveling parsons.

But eventually, in the 1760s, the population of Ridgebury became large enough to support a full-time minister of a Congregational church. So the Ridgeburians petitioned the state and got permission to set up a second parish or “society” of their own – the first, of course, being centered in Ridgefield village around what is now called the First Congregational Church. (The old church still standing in Ridgebury could have accurately been called the Second Congregational Church, as it is in some towns with two congregations.)

The Second Society was a common term in the last third of the 18th Century and the first half of the 19th Century. “Ridgefield Second Society” also appears here and there in the early 19th Century records.

SEIR HILL

Seir is a variation of “sear” or “sere,” which either means “dry” or refers to a locality in Jordan often mentioned in the Bible in an unfavorable light. Seir Hill, appearing only in 1700s deeds, was a place north of Mill Plain in Danbury, territory that belonged to Ridgefield from 1731 to 1846. (*See also* Sear Hill.)

SERFILIPPI DRIVE

Road names are not often the subject of battles, especially roads that have only three or four houses on them. Serfilippi Drive, however, was an exception.

Extending between South Olmstead Lane and St. Johns Road, Serfilippi Drive was created in the 1950s by the father and son contractors, Alessandro and Mario “Mike” Serfilippi, who also chose the name. It was part of a development of land, including Cranberry Lane and South Olmstead Lane, that had belonged to the Serfilippi family since shortly after the turn of the 20th Century.

A native of Castelvecchio in the Province of Pesaro, Italy, Alessandro Serfilippi was born in 1882 and came to the United States in 1908, living for a while on Long Island and moving to Ridgefield in 1914. He worked as a mason on Col. Louis D. Conley’s Outpost Farm estate — riding a bike several miles over dirt roads to work in northern Ridgefield from his South Olmstead Lane home. He later worked for various contractors and among his more visible creations is the stone wall around the former King/Jackson estate at the north corner of Main Street and King Lane. He started his own construction business in 1946, retiring in 1968. He died two years later.

At one point members of the Serfilippi family owned five adjacent houses along South Olmstead Lane. At least one member of the family still lives there.

Serfilippi Drive became a town road in 1957.

In the late 1960s, William Cuddy, a member of one of only two families then living on Serfilippi Drive (the other being Mario Serfilippi), began asking the selectmen for a new name for the road. The selectmen said no.

Cuddy took up his case again in September 1978, writing the Board of Selectmen with a request that the name be changed, maintaining the road name was difficult both to spell and pronounce.

“It’s a good town name, Serfilippi,” said Selectman Raymond Fox.

It’s no more difficult than Mamasasco or Caudatowa, both historic Ridgefield names, observed this writer, who was covering the selectmen for The Ridgefield Press.

In jest, First Selectman Louis J. Fossi suggested that perhaps the road be changed — to please both its residents — to “Cuddyserf Drive.”

The selectmen once again dismissed the plea, saying there was “insufficient reason.”

Cuddy didn’t give up. He then claimed that the name was illegal in that it constituted a second name for the same road. His reasoning was that Serfilippi Drive, which was a through road, was only a continuation of Cranberry Lane, which was a dead-end road.

The selectmen thought the argument was silly. “I don’t know what grounds he has,” Fossi said at a December 1978 selectmen’s meeting. “Serfilippi Drive is no more a continuing road than King Lane is to Peaceable Street.”

“Or Farmingville Road is to Copp’s Hill Road,” said Selectman Lillian Moorhead, who added, “I like the historical significance” of Serfilippi Drive.

The selectmen again rejected his request, so Cuddy eventually got permission to place his mailbox on St. Johns Road, even though his house and driveway were on Serfilippi Drive, thus obtaining a St. Johns Road address without moving his house.

SETH LOW MOUNTAIN ROAD

Seth Low Mountain Road at Twixt Hills directly recalls a Ridgefielder and indirectly, a mayor of New York City.

The road is a dog-leg, connected at both ends to Twixt Hills Road on the south side of Ridgebury Mountain. The subdivision was developed starting in 1961 by Jerry Tuccio on land that had been Seth Low Pierrepont’s Twixthills estate.

Pierrepont, who died in 1956, was a nephew and namesake of Seth Low, his mother’s brother, who had been a New York mayor and a U.S. congressman. He had also been president of Columbia University, from which Mr. Pierrepont graduated in 1907. (It’s the second road in Ridgefield to bear the name of an Ivy League college president; Conant Road at Westmoreland was named for a Harvard president.)

Mr. Pierrepont, who worked for a while in the U.S. government and foreign service, spent most of his life in volunteer service to the town, county, state, and nation (*see* Pierrepont Drive).

The original plans for Twixt Hills labeled this road “Sky High Drive” or “Sky High Ridge,” but the Planning Commission changed the name in 1962.

SETTLERS LANE

Settlers Lane, which forms the “cross” of a “T” at the end of Wooster Heights Drive, is one of many roads whose names have changed. Developed as part of a 1963 subdivision, the road was originally called Or-Mar Drive (*q.v.*), for Orrin and Marion Beers, the subdividers.

People who lived there didn’t take kindly to the odd name and asked the town for a change. The Planning and Zoning Commission in 1971 selected Settlers Lane. It is one of those meaningless “colonialish” names that suburban New England towns seem bent on using. There is no known special connection between that land and early settlers – other than settlers owned it, just as they did the rest of the town.

SETTLERS ROCK

Many Connecticut towns started as parishes within other towns and, when the parishes grew large enough, they split off as new towns. Wilton, Redding, Bethel, Brookfield, New Fairfield, New Canaan, Darien, Weston, and Easton are a few area examples. Ridgefield was different, however; it started as a wilderness settlement.

In the late 1600s, Norwalk residents were investigating the possibility of acquiring the Indians lands above the northern limits (now the Wilton-Ridgefield line) of their town and southerly of recently settled town of Danbury. By

standards of those days, Norwalk had become “crowded.” Most of the town had been divided up for farm, pasture and wood lands, and the population of Norwalk, founded in 1653 as a plantation, was growing.

In 1697 a group of Norwalk people was appointed to walk the Indian territory and see if the land was good for farming and if the water supply was adequate for mills.

It is not clear what happened then, but in 1706, John Copp was appointed to “view” the land. Copp, who eventually laid out Main Street, was apparently satisfied that the territory was good, and in 1708 Norwalkers petitioned to create a new town.

Legend says that when it became time to move up from Norwalk into the new territory in the woods, five of the first proprietors spent their first night at “Settlers Rock,” situated along North Salem Road at the Ridgefield Cemetery, nearly opposite New Street. “The howling of wolves and the cry of the wild-cat filled them with terror, and one can imagine that daylight was greeted with much joy,” speculated historian George L. Rockwell.

Silvio Bedini, another Ridgefield historian, says “they built fires around the base of the great boulder to protect them against wild animals.”

There is no contemporary written record of all this, but Bedini also speculates that even before the arrival of the proprietors, the huge rock was well known to explorers and may have sheltered John Copp and others who ventured into the territory on surveying or perhaps hunting missions. The rock was near the center of the Indian lands that were purchased, and was large enough to have stood out as a landmark.

In 1958, during the town’s 250th anniversary celebration, a plaque was mounted on the rock, stating “On this rock the original settlers scouting party spent their first night.”

SEVENTH LANE

Seventh Lane is another in the First through Twelfth Lane series of mostly dead-end, mostly private roads off the west side of Mamasasco Road. They are part of the 1950s Eight Lakes development.

SEVENTY ACRES ROAD

Seventy Acres Road in Ridgefield was once a confusing misnomer. Seventy Acre Road in Redding was once a confusing mailing address for a famous author.

In the mid 20th Century, Seventy Acres Road was used for the Ridgefield portion of what is now called Old Redding Road. This highway runs off Route 7 a very short distance before entering Redding, just north of the Walpole Woodworkers sales center. It is an 18th Century extension of Florida Hill Road, a very old and winding highway between Ridgefield to Redding.

Only one or two houses in Ridgefield have Old Redding Road addresses.

In Redding, Old Redding Road connects to Mountain Road which to the south connects with Seventy Acre Road (singular “Acre”). Several maps in the last half of the 20th Century labeled the short length of Old Redding Road from Route 7 in Ridgefield into Redding as Seventy Acres (plural) Road. These included the official town zoning maps of 1946 and 1950, and the Town Directory maps of 1952 and 1960.

The names apparently refer to a large, old tract of woodland. Albert E. Moss, in "A Forest Survey of the Town of Redding, Conn.," done by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station in 1917, wrote that "the Seventy Acre Tract" was "on the ridge to the north of Georgetown and to the east of Branchville, extending north to a point near Topstone Station." Perhaps the Ridgefield maps in the 1940s and 50s reflected an old custom of calling this the road to Seventy Acre, just as Topstone Road farther north in Ridgefield is the road to the Topstone district of Redding.

In 1964, when Ridgefield erected a sign saying that this was Seventy Acres Road, Redding First Selectman Bart Sanford wrote Ridgefield First Selectman Leo F. Carroll, asking that the sign be changed to Old Redding Road. He cited confusion caused by the Ridgefield name – which did not match the Redding side of the road and had no connection with the longer and more populated Seventy Acre Road nearby. Mr. Carroll immediately ordered a new sign.

Adding to the nomenclature confusion is the fact that the Ridgefield Post Office in the 1940s and 50s — maybe later — provided mail service to Redding residents who lived on at least part of Seventy Acre Road. One consequence is that a famous American author is often listed in biographies as having lived in Ridgefield when in fact she lived in Redding, with a mailing address of "Seventy Acre Road, Ridgefield." Flannery O'Connor, a National Book Award winner, lived from 1949 to 1951 in a Redding house owned by her friends, Robert and Sally Fitzgerald; Robert was a well-known poet and translator of the Latin and Greek classics and became executor of her literary estate after she died in 1964.

SEWER BED ROAD

If ever there was a road in Ridgefield you would have as your address, it's Sewer Bed Road. The old and probably informal name applied to what we now call South Street, a cow path converted into a roadway sometime after the town installed the sewer beds off Danbury Road early in the 20th Century.

Contractor Paul Morganti, whose family built and owned the road for many years, said in 1975: "I didn't like the name – I lived right across the road" from it. So he had the name changed to South Street, probably while he was a selectman in the 1950s. At times, the scent, not the name, was reason to shun the area.

The beds were the end of the line for the town's sewer system, which both in date and in symbol represented the town's entering the modern era.

At the turn of the 20th Century, a group of 12 of the town's wealthy summer residents met at the Hotel Manhattan in New York and decided that the village needed a sewer system. Two and a half years later, in June 1902, the system, complete with treatment plant and beds, was ready; it would be paid for by a separate taxing entity long known as the "Village District." At around the same time, the village water system – built by a private company – was established.

"It was for the installation of the town sewer and water systems that the first Italian immigrants were brought to Ridgefield, sponsored by H. B. Anderson," notes Silvio Bedini in his history, "Ridgefield in Review." "When the water and sewer projects had been completed, Anderson employed the Italian laborers to build roads for the Port of Missing Men," a resort and retreat for the

wealthy on West Mountain. Some of those roads – such as Old Sib and upper Barrack Hill – are now town highways.

In the early 1970s, the old sewage treatment plant could not handle the growth in the village and the beds frequently overflowed, creating an unpleasant odor over the northern village. The plant was torn down, and a new, much larger one was built, only to be replaced by an even bigger one in the 1990s.

The old beds, which allowed solids in the chemically treated water to settle out before the “effluent” was discharged into the Norwalk River watershed, are no longer used, but are still there, just west of the trash transfer station, legally buried under fill. Much of the old sewer bed area was converted into a native plant wetland in the early 2000s as part of an agreement after the town got into trouble with the state for illegally filling a wetland to build Ligi’s Way.

SEYMOUR LANE

Seymour Lane, a dead-end, L-shaped road off upper South Olmstead Lane, is one of the few town highways that keep alive names of the original settling families of Ridgefield. Of the 18 surnames among the first proprietors, only St. John, Olmstead, Keeler, Rockwell, and Seymour are current place names. Settling families like the Smiths, Benedicts, Whitneys, Wilsons, Hoyts, Sturdevants, and Browns are forgotten in our geography.

Oddly enough, four of the roads that do recall settlers – St. John, Olmstead, Rockwell, and Seymour – are in the same neighborhood, and three are interconnected.

“Seymour” is quite appropriate. The road serves a subdivision by Rudolph Seymour and other members of his family, and the 10-lot development is on land that was for some two centuries in the Seymour family.

It is known that Matthew Seamore owned land in this neighborhood by 1760, perhaps long before. But in 1759, he bought two houses on Wilton Road West, then called “the way to Norwalk,” and the purchase may well have included backlands that are now the Seymour Lane house lots.

Rudolph Seymour’s brother, Robert, was living in one of those two houses in the 1950s. The house later burned to the ground, and a new one, owned by the Pambianchi family, was built on the site.

The Seymour name, incidentally, appeared in many forms in the early years. In the first deed (1708) between the settlers and the Indians, it was Seamor. In the town’s patent (1714), it was Seamore, which became the common spelling for several decades. It was not until 1765 that the first deed using “Seymour” appeared.

Seymours were long prominent in town, though they were not as numerous as the Keelers, Scotts, Smiths, and some other early clans. Matthew may have been one of the first non-natives to set foot in town, for he established one of two trading posts for the Indians. It sat on or about the site of a house on the west side of Main Street, four doors north of West Lane. Some say old portions of the old trading post were incorporated into this structure, which is a combination of at least two buildings.

Among more modern Seymours, William O. Seymour, who built his Victorian house on Parley Lane, was one of the most prominent Ridgefielders at the turn of the century. A Ridgefield native, he became a civil engineer who designed railroad bridges in the Midwest. He returned to town, became probate

judge, a state representative, and one of three members of the Connecticut Railroad Commission, predecessor of the Public Utilities Control Commission.

William O. Seymour was chairman for the town's bicentennial celebration in 1908. Fifty years later, his great grandson, Karl Seymour Nash, former editor and publisher of The Ridgefield Press, was chairman of the town's 250th anniversary celebration.

Today there are probably still descendants of Matthew Seamore in town, but none bears the surname.

Matthew and his family were large landowners in Ridgefield, particularly in the 18th Century. The neighborhood that includes Seymour Lane had long been considered Seymour country, but this was especially true in the 19th Century. Three or four houses along Wilton Road West, including the early homesteads, were occupied by Seymours in the mid-1800s. Land along South Olmstead Lane was part of their agricultural holdings, and in the middle of this, they established their family cemetery, which still exists on the east side of South Olmstead Lane. Most of its stones date from the middle 1800s.

Seymour Lane became a town road in 1959.

SHADBLOW HILL ROAD

Shadblow Hill Road, which also appears on many maps as Shadblow Lane, is a short, uphill, dead-end road off Florida Hill Road. The small subdivision was developed in the mid-1950s by Olavi Havnoja.

Shadblow is a somewhat uncommon term for the juneberry or shadbush plant (*Amelanchier Canadensis* and others), common shrubs or small trees that belong to the rose family and are native to our forest underbrush. They are so called because their attractive flowers bloom in the spring when the shad are running in the coastal streams.

Presumably, shadblows were found in these woods before they were subdivided.

Also called serviceberry, the plant produces fruit, not unlike blueberries, that have been used for jams, jellies and pies, but which are so popular with birds and other forest wildlife that they are hard to find in large enough quantities to make collecting them worthwhile.

SHADOW LAKE

Shadow Lake is a small body of water south of the eastern section of Shadow Lake Road and west of Briar Ridge Road in Ridgebury.

The pond was probably built and named by Harry B. Mallory, whose estate on the other side of Shadow Lake Road was acquired by Boehringer-Ingelheim and is now part of their North American headquarters. His home was used for some years as a guesthouse, but has since been removed. It featured many fire-resistant features, including doors between rooms that automatically slid shut if a fire was detected.

The pond does not show up on a 1912 map, suggesting that it was created later – perhaps on the site of a smaller pond or a swamp.

Shadow Lake was used by Mallory, a sportsman, for fishing and to encourage wildlife to live on his property. It was also called Mallory Pond.

In October 1996, to avoid the threat of a huge, multifamily development, the town paid Peter Friedman \$17.5 million for 252 acres between George Washington Highway and Shadow Lake Road, including land around Shadow

Lake. Most of the acreage was sold off as single-family lots in the Stoneridge Estates subdivision, but land around Shadow Lake was kept for open space and recreation. In 2005, the town approved building a Little League field there.

The property includes about 10 acres of undeveloped but hikable open space.

SHADOW LAKE ROAD

Shadow Lake Road took its name from the pond, but it's not clear when. The road itself is much older than the name, and was in existence by 1781 when it was shown on one of Berthier's maps, prepared for Rochambeau's troops, who encamped south of the road and east of Ridgebury Road.

Today, Shadow Lake Road is, comparatively, still a narrow country road, even though since the arrival of Boehringer-Ingelheim along its northeastern edge, some of the old-fashioned flavor has been cut away by the bulldozer's and road-scraper's blades.

SHADOW LANE

Shadow Lane is a narrow, dead-end road off the southern end of High Ridge. Running behind the High Ridge mansions, it originally served the backlands of these estates, often for delivery entrances. In recent years it has been considerably developed, and a number of estate outbuildings there have been turned into homes..

Early in this century, this was part of an old path that extended northward to Peaceable Street, paralleling High Ridge and serving the backlands and caretakers' cottages of the main-road mansions. The Peaceable Street end was sometimes called Herrick Lane because it passed by the Herricks' property. Some of that path has been abandoned today, and the rest is used as driveways.

Shadow Lane, a name in use by 1930, may refer to shadows created by trees in the evening or perhaps the shadow cast on the west side of High Ridge as the sun rises from the east.

SHADY LANE

Shady Lane runs between Mountain Road and Lakeside Drive at the Ridgefield Lakes. Like many other lakes names, it's descriptive of the landscape.

SHAPLEY STRETCH

Shapley Stretch is included in this history as an example of a place name that was well known and in common use among a small group of people – in this case, the police – and which, from the group, gained a limited circulation around town. The term referred to the straight strip of Route 35, Danbury Road, in front of today's Fox Hill condominiums (*see* Fox Hill Village). The police came up with this term because patrol cars frequently stopped speeders there. The name was used in radioing the car's location to headquarters.

The name came from the fact that the Fox Hill property in the 1960s was the site of The Shapley School, a private, co-educational prep school operated by Carl Shapley, son of the famous Harvard astronomer, Harlow Shapley. The school was small and not financially successful. It closed in 1968, not helped by the fact that police using undercover officers made a number of drug arrests at the school.

“Shapley Stretch” continued to be used, by the police at least, into the 1980s — long after the school had vanished.

Another example of this phenomenon is Carvel Curve (*q.v.*)

SHARP HILL

Hill is an old name for the curve on West Mountain Road near the intersection of Ramapoo Road and Peaceable Ridge Road. The term appears as early as 1833 when it was used in describing the southwest corner of the boundaries of the Titicus School District. This description is found in a contemporary book of minutes of meetings of the Titicus School Committee.

The term cropped up from time to time in the 1800s and was still in use well into this century. The improvement of the curve probably helped with the demise of the common use of the name. However, as noted below, there’s been a revival.

SHARP HILL LANE

Sharp Hill Lane is one of two dead-end roads at Carl Lecher’s 1980 subdivision, West Mountain Pines. The subdivision is on the north side of West Mountain Road on property that had belonged to the Minot family. Earlier, James M. Doubleday, a well-known personality in the community, owned it and before that, Joseph H. Conron (*see* Conron’s Pond).

The property is a little west of Sharp Hill and Mr. Lecher selected the name at this writer’s suggestion to keep alive the old name. The subdivision’s other road is Doubleday Lane.

The 625-foot-long Sharp Hill Lane became a town road in 1985.

MOUNT SHEPPISON

Mount Sheppison is mentioned in a single deed in 1746 and is shown on one map. Both its name origin and its exact location are unknown today.

The name appears on a very early map, copied in 1787 from a 1741 original by the proprietors’ clerk, Benjamin Smith. The map, bound into the land records, shows the plan of the Fourth 20 Acre Division — northern Ridgebury territory that ran up to New Fairfield and which the proprietors had gotten in compensation for the loss of land in The Oblong (*q.v.*).

The map shows lot 26 as a 100-acre grant to Joseph Crampton and as being “Mount Sheppison,” situated on the New York Colony line and not too far south of New Fairfield. This area now belongs to Danbury, which no longer uses the name.

SHERMAN COLONIAL

Sherman Colonial was the name of a 1960s proposed subdivision for what is today called Ridgebury Estates (*see* Beaver Brook Road).

SHERWOOD FARM

The Sherwood Farm was a successor to Knap’s Farm (*q.v.*), and was big enough in its heyday to be a local place, one that could have gone on to be a modern name such as Bennett’s Farm did.

Deeds in the mid-1800s mentioned “land at Sherwood Farm,” referring to territory around the intersection of Ridgebury, Regan and Old Stagecoach

Roads – much of which was for the second half of the 20th Century, the Arigideen Farm of the McKeon.

Sherwood Farm was probably named for Nathan Sherwood who had bought part of Moses Knap's farm in 1747. The name was in use more than a century later – as late as 1868.

There was another Sherwood Farm, which, like Knap's Farm, was laid out by grant directly from the Connecticut colony before Ridgefield even existed as a town. It was situated on the hillside that slopes to Mill Plain, territory that was once part of Ridgefield and is now part of Danbury.

One of the more interesting deeds in the Ridgefield land records involves Nathan Sherwood and his son. Filed in 1792, the "peppercorn deed" reads: "James Sherwood of Freehold in Baalstown District, in ye County of Saratoga, State of New York, do for the consideration of the love, duty and respect I have for and do bear unto my honored father, Nathan Sherwood, and my mother, Lois Sherwood, of Ridgefield...as well as for divers other laudable considerations, in particular and especially for one pepper corn, all of which is to my full and complete satisfaction, do farm, lett and lease out unto my father and mother 20 acres..."

One might wonder whether James was exercising a sense of humor or a sense of sarcasm in his list of considerations but, in fact, a "peppercorn" is an old British legal metaphor for a very small payment and was sometimes used in old documents. (It could also be used to hide the true amount of the value of a property being transfers. In modern times, many deeds filed in the town clerk used a different technique, giving the selling price as "\$1 and other valuable considerations." The "other valuable considerations" could be \$999,999.)

SHERWOOD ROAD

Sherwood Road was probably named for descendants of Daniel Sherwood, the town's first miller, whose 1717 mill was nearby at the old outlet of Lake Mamanasco, at the end of Pond Road.

Silvio Bedini reports in his "Ridgefield in Review" that on Jan. 30, 1716, Daniel Sherwood signed a covenant "whereby he agreed with the proprietors to erect a grist mill in consideration of the 29th part of the purchased lands. The mill was specified to be situated at the outlet of Mamanasco Pond, and Sherwood agreed that on every Tuesday and Friday he would grind all sorts of grain for the proprietors into meal. His toll was to be 3 quarts of each bushel of Indian corn, 2 quarts of each bushel of wheat and 1 quart of each bushel of malt. The mill was erected at the designated site and maintained in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant by Sherwood and his successors until the 19th Century. Sherwood was assigned Lot No. 29, just north of the home lot of the blacksmith, Benjamin Burt."

Amos Sherwood owned 60 acres opposite the north end of Sherwood Road in the early 1900s and it is probable that he was the immediate origin of the road's name; the path could have been considered the "road to Sherwood's" and thus became "Sherwood Road." Miller Daniel Sherwood left four sons and Amos was probably descended from one of them.

There is reason to believe that Sherwood Road, hardly a major thoroughfare today, was the original south end of Ridgebury Road. The present south end, by the high school, was probably built in the first half of the 19th Century because Sherwood Road was seasonally too wet and swampy.

SHERWOOD'S RIDGE

In 1723, Thomas Hyatt sold Timothy Canfield 15 acres "lying eastward of Sherwood's Ridge, over ye Great Swamp, lying on a Ridge called Walnutt Ridge."

Sherwood's Ridge, mentioned only this one time, was probably the ridge traversed by Blackman Road. It may have been so-called because Daniel Sherwood, the first miller, was given land here – and elsewhere in town – in compensation for moving to Ridgefield to set up and operate the gristmill at Manasco. The land grants were part of his becoming the 29th proprietor in 1716.

In his will in 1749, Daniel Sherwood gave his son Isaac "my land behind the Grate Swamp adjoining Benjamin Stebbins and Thomas Hawley..." Isaac, however, was already living thereabouts in 1747, suggesting that his dad had given him other land earlier or that he was already living on the land his father had just given him.

SHIELDS LANE

Shields Lane, a dead-end road off Limestone Road, is one of three roads named for attorneys active in the real estate scene in the 1950s and 1960s. Part of the 23-lot "Limestone Acres" subdivision by Jerry Tuccio, town-approved in 1960, it was named for Reed F. Shields, who was at the time attorney for Mr. Tuccio.

Son of the Rev. Hugh Shields, longtime minister of the First Congregational Church here, Attorney Shields was a Ridgefield native who graduated from Ridgefield Boys School on North Salem Road in 1938, the last class at the private school before it closed. During World War II he served in the US Army Air Force as a sergeant in the Pacific Theater including Guam, Tinian, Saipan and Iwo Jima. He was awarded two Bronze Stars and the Medal of Merit.

After the war he graduated from Butler University and from New York University School of Law in 1950.

About the same year, Shields opened a practice in Ridgefield. Active in town government, he served as town attorney from 1951 to 1955, on the school board in the late 50s and early 60s. He edged out a fellow Ridgefield native for the job as Ridgefield's judge of probate — winning 1,295 to 1,168 over John E. Dowling, a Democrat and fellow war veteran. They were friends for years, and often played golf together.

Judge Shields served in the probate office from 1955 to 1975, then returned to private practice. He was active in scouting, Rotary Club and the Community Center.

Shields loved golf and was a longtime member and officer at Silver Spring Country Club. He was also vice chairman of the town's Golf Course Committee for three years during the time when it negotiated for purchase of property at Dhly Ridge, hired professionals and contracted to have what is now the town golf course built.

Later in life, he moved to Redding and then to South Carolina where he died in 2006 at the age of 85.

Clayton Place, in another Jerry Tuccio development, was named for his son, the late Clayton Shields.

Other attorneys with their names on roads include John Dowling of Dowling Drive and Joseph H. Donnelly of Donnelly Drive, Scodon Drive and Marcardon Avenue. Both were also former probate judges.

SHORT BRIDGE

Short Bridge is a locality mentioned in only two deeds and whose location is uncertain. The first appearance occurred in 1787 when the proprietors granted Thomas Hawley, son of the first minister of the Congregational Church, three roods “joining the east end of his lands lying at Short Bridge, so called.” A 1788 deed involving Benjamin and Nathan Smith mentions 18 acres “at Short Bridge.”

There are no hints as to where Short Bridge was situated, but it might have been in or about Great Swamp. The “bridge” may have been only a natural or man-made strip of dry land that allowed passage through a wetland and did not necessarily refer to a wooden or stone structure.

SHORT BROOK

The division of the estate of Samuel Smith in 1787 mentions “land lying at and near the Short Brook, ye west side of the Great Swamp.” This could be any number of little brooks leading to the Great Swamp, including the one that runs out of Casagmo (*see* Steep Brook). Many of them have been moved or eliminated due to the extensive development along Danbury Road north of the village.

SHORT HILLS

Short Hills is an old and abandoned place name, one of two to use “short” in ancient senses that it tends to lack today.

The earliest mention of the term is a 1747 Town Meeting at which was ‘laid out to Samuel Lobdell in equivalency for ye land taken for ye highway three acres of land lying on ye easterly side of ye Short Hills, so called, near Limestone Hill.”

Nearby was land of Ebenezer Lobdell who, also in 1747, sold one-eighth shares in three and a half acres at “ye Short Hills lying near Limestone...with all my right and title to one-eighth part of all ye mines and minerals lying on or within said tract.” This land, which bordered Samuel’s, was probably being set up for a joint venture at mining limestone, and may have been the tract later called Mine Hill (*q.v.*), situated around the intersection of Danbury, Haviland and Limestone Roads.

In 1753, Ebenezer got 10 more acres “north of Norren’s Boggs,” bounded north and east by “ye Mine Lott,” probably at Mine Hill.

The indications, therefore, are that Short Hills was the hilly territory around Haviland, Limekiln, Still, and Stonehenge Roads – possibly also Poplar Road and that neighborhood. But why “short” hills? Possibly because they weren’t tall. The *Oxford English Dictionary* devotes more than six full pages to meanings of the word “short,” but only very briefly mentions short as descriptive of a hill. In that case, the dictionary says the use was both rare and obsolete, and cites only one example - from Scotland in 1596.

Clearly, the term was in common use long afterward in this colony, for Short Hill or Hills as a place name occurs in at least six Connecticut towns, probably more. However, George Stewart in *American Place-Names* (1970)

says of Short: “As a descriptive for features, it is comparatively uncommon, shortness not being something easily seen.” Except, perhaps, in hills.

In Ridgefield, the last appearance of the term was on the 200th anniversary of the OED’s citation –1796.

As we will see under Short Woods (*q.v.*), “short” can mean low-grade. In this case it may have described the quality of the soil.

SHORT LANE

Short Lane, running between Rolling Ridge Road and Partridge Drive at the 1958 Ridgefield Knolls subdivision, was so-called because it is – you guessed it, short, having but three houses on it.

SHORT WOODS

Short Woods is an old name, applying perhaps to two different locations in the northern part of town.

The more commonly mentioned location began appearing in the land records in 1755 when John Wildman sold Daniel Wildman land at the New Patent “at ye Short Woods.” In 1761, Thomas Starr Jr. sold David Benedict his house and farm, plus 35 acres “in ye Short Woods, east from Bear Mountain.” All four persons mentioned in those deeds were Danburians.

In 1781, the Rev. Samuel Camp, the wealthy minister of the Ridgebury Congregational Church, acquired 81 acres “on the Spruce Mountain and Short Woods.” Later deeds mention Short Woods as being bounded on the east by Danbury and near Buttonwood Swamp, which is north of Fox Hill near Route 7.

All this points to Short Woods’ being a large area north of Bennett’s Farm Road and the Ridgefield Lakes, west of Route 7, and east of Pine Mountain Road, probably including most of the northeast corner of town – that is, generally north of the Bennett’s Pond state park land. This is territory that is still woods and now mostly town-owned open space.

However, an 1806 deed mentions eight acres “in Ridgefield Short Woods,” bounded on the west by “Bogus Road, a highway so called.” Other deeds indicate that this “Ridgefield Short Woods” was at Bogus, which is south of George Washington Highway – somewhat distant from the other, older Short Woods to the east. However, it’s possible that everything east of Bogus Road to the Danbury line (at Wooster Mountain State Park) was considered part of Short Woods.

The “Ridgefield” Short Woods tends to suggest that there was a nearby Danbury Short Woods, possibly adjacent to Ridgefield’s. (There was also a Short Woods in New Fairfield, a town bordered by Ridgefield during this period.)

Why Short Woods? Perhaps the trees weren’t tall. Maybe, however, the name reflected the quality of the trees; short sometimes meant low-grade, and this was rocky, rough terrain. Whatever the meaning, the name was in use at least until 1844.

SILVER BIRCH LANE

Silver Birch Lane is a short, dead-end road off New Street, developed by Cleveland Bassett around 1952. The Bassett family lived in this neighborhood for much of the 20th Century.

Calling it “Silver Birch” gave the road a more “colorful” name than the true name of the tree, white birch. (It also thereby probably avoided confusion with the *two* other roads in town that were to be named for the white birch.)

The white birch is probably the most easy-to-recognize native tree because its bark is mostly white – unusual in trees – and it stands out in woods and fields. It is one of the birch species from which the Indians peeled bark to manufacture canoes and wigwam covers as well as boots, cups and boxes. The leaves were used for tea.

The lumber is not too valuable, its use in the past being limited pretty much to making wooden bowls and utensils. However, white birch finds some use as a pulpwood.

SILVER BROOK ROAD

Silver Brook Road, a dead-end road off White Birch Road, was developed by the late Bartholomew T. Salerno, a local real estate man and entrepreneur, between 1964 and 1967.

Mr. Salerno, later the founder of WREF radio in Ridgefield, named the road because there is “a very rapid brook going through there,” he said in a 1982 interview. He borrowed the “silver” from other nearby roads. It’s a bit confusing, however, with no fewer than five different “silver” roads in the same neighborhood (*see next*).

SILVER HILL ROAD

One of them is Silver Hill Road, which runs from Wilton Road East across Wilton Road West to St. John’s Road. It undoubtedly got its name because it led up a hill (from the two Wilton roads) to the Silver Spring neighborhood.

Silver Hill Road is an old highway, dating from the 1700s – probably before 1750, since this area was settled very early.

SILVER MINE, THE

For decades there have been neighborhood legends of a lost silver mine in Farmingville. The stories are apparently more than legend. Silver may once have been mined there.

Evidence of this first shows up in a deed drawn in 1790 when Daniel, Elija, and Seth Lee, plus other heirs of William Lee, sold Stephen Field of Dutchess County, N.Y., one fifth right “in and unto the mine or mines of gold, silver, copper, or other metals that are or may be discovered or found on or in the land that joins the homestead and dwelling house where our father, William Lee, lately dwelt, on ye east side of the road.” For five pounds, Field received permission “to enter...to break ground...to dig, blast, raise up, and carry away and convert...” those minerals that were mined.

Field seems to have suspected the Farmingville earth bore something of value – more valuable than limestone, the only other mineral mined thereabouts to any extent in the 18th Century. He may have been a speculator who offered his services at opening up and operating mines for that 20% fee. The five pounds, not much considering the money that could have been made, was probably just a good faith offering to seal the deal.

Perhaps Field wanted just one mineral, but the Lees, suspicious of this New Yorker, added on other metals of value to cover all bases. Maybe it was a standard format for an agreement of that type. But it’s unlikely that any gold or

copper was found. Silver, however, has occurred in Wilton and Norwalk, in quantities worth mining.

The late Robert A. Lee, who was a member of this same Lee clan and who was a landowner in Farmingville for three quarters of a century, said his family had long talked of the silver mine that was there. "My great grandfather, Edwin Lee, helped fill in that (mine) when a boy," Robert Lee said in 1976. "I've tried to find it. It isn't where I was told it was."

Mines were filled in mostly to prevent anyone from falling in or getting lost or buried in them. Some people may have filled in old mines so the whereabouts could be hidden in case at some future date, when the working it might become profitable, a mine could be reopened without risk of thievery.

Robert Lee said he suspected that the old silver mine is north of the western side of the Little League field at Aldrich Park. The late Stanley Walker, another Farmingville old timer, searched those woods along the west side of New Road, using even a metal detector in an attempt to locate buried mining equipment, and found nothing.

Mindat, an international database of mines sponsored by the Hudson Institute of Mineralogy, reports that the mine may not have produced any silver, although a Yale study did indicate the presence of silver in rock samples. Instead, the mine may have been a "prospect which exploited a small lead-zinc mineralization hosted in a vein of quartz. Workings consisted of three pits."

John L. Hiller, who wrote "Connecticut Mines and Minerals" in 1971, said "The mine is behind Farmingville Park on New Road. The park is the Little League ball field. A path leads off the parking space into the woods directly north of the field. Follow this path about one quarter of a mile through the two stone walls until you get near the edge of the drop-off. The mine is on a ridge with the three prospect holes being close by the edge of the slope.

"The prospects are small, twenty feet wide vertical shafts sunken into the hilltop, with the rock dumped along side. There are three shafts which have been filled to the point of being completely safe."

However, on April 4, 2012, an investigator from Mindat was unable to locate the mine, "despite the great visibility and terrain and features matching Hiller's description. The shafts and dumps may have been 'reclaimed.'"

As a place name, Silver Mine or Silvermine in Ridgefield was very limited, unlike the Silvermine in Norwalk and New Canaan. However, Lost Mine Place (*q.v.*), a subdivision off New Road, was named for the old, elusive silver mine.

SILVER SPRING

Silver Spring is one of the more colorful of the old Ridgefield names that have survived, and one of the most frequently used. Aside from place names using Ridgefield, those employing Silver Spring or its variants like Silver Hill and Silver Brook are among the most common.

That may be because, unlike such old names as Toilsome, Peespunk, Nisopack, or Asoquatah, Silver Spring sounds nice. In fact, it's nice enough that a modern subdivider, with a friend on Madison Avenue, could have devised it.

However, Silver Spring is old, one of the oldest surviving place names. Its earliest appearance in the town records is a December 1722 entry, referring to "ye Silver Spring" while describing a highway being laid out (quite probably Silver Spring Road).

Over the years citations are common in land records. Land “at Silver Spring” was often mentioned, referring not necessarily to the spring itself but to the neighborhood. However, the swamp associated with the spring was bigger and more noticeable, and in the early years, most references to the neighborhood used “New Pound Boggs” as a locator. Eventually, that name died out – it’s not very pretty – and Silver Spring took over to represent the southwestern section of town.

Oddly enough, unlike most long-lasting and widely used Ridgefield neighborhood place names, Silver Spring was never associated with a schoolhouse, as were others like Florida, Scotland, Farmingville, Limestone, or Flat Rock. Silver Spring children went either to the West Lane or Flat Rock schoolhouses. However, it’s a sign of the name’s popularity and attractiveness that it survived so long and strongly without that “official” help.

Certainly, the spring itself is no massive landmark. It is situated on a quarter acre of wooded, town-owned land along the east side of Silver Spring Road, about 2,000 feet north of St. Johns Road. The spring emerges from the ground in several spots, mostly covered with boulders — apparently put there as protection. There is a small, sandy bottomed pool where Ridgefielders for more than two centuries had stopped to water themselves, their horses, or livestock. Even in 21st Century, people visit the spring to collect in bottles some of the fresh, clear water for use at home, a practice that may not be the wisest because of all the runoff from the neighborhood and the nearby golf course that may make the waters somewhat less than pure.

Most remarkable

The Rev. S. G. Goodrich wrote in 1800 that Silver Spring was “most remarkable... The water is very cold and heavy. It discharges about one-fourth water sufficient to carry a grist mill and is not materially affected by freshet (i.e., flood) or drought.”

It is the crystal-like clarity that probably led to the naming of the spring. As oldtimer John Mullen (1898-1985) said in a 1975 interview, “You look down and watch the water coming up. It looks like silver.”

Indeed, most Silver Springs around the country – most notably in Maryland, Florida and Nevada – have been named for the appearance of the water and not for the metal itself, which may or may not be found nearby. At least 14 states have places called Silver Spring or Silver Springs.

The spring has not always led a quiet, peaceful existence. In 1954 and 1955, the most recent controversy occurred.

“Should the town’s famed Silver Spring be cleaned up and modernized or should it be left as the early settlers fixed it up when they discovered its bubbling water more than 200 years ago?” began a front-page story in the Dec. 22, 1954 Ridgefield Press.

First Selectman Harry E. Hull had proposed the face-lift “in the interest of greater utility... Several times a year the selectmen have the town crew clean out the muck and leaves around the spring and this year, Mr. Hull had them put in a tile so the water would run off and the spring would stay cleaner. This is the part of the improvement plan which stirred the objection of neighbors.” The neighbors eventually won out and the spring remained untouched.

It wasn’t the first controversy over the Silver Spring. Back in 1931, the Flat Rock Corporation, which was then building the Silver Spring Country Club on the west side of Silver Spring Road, asked the town for permission to draw

from the spring “in perpetuity” for drinking water. The Town Meeting rejected the idea after strenuous opposition from the public.

Later, two Silver Spring neighbors, both of whose cattle drank from the spring, became involved in an old-style feud over its use, leading on one occasion to police intervention and eventually a lawsuit.

“Its water,” the 1954 Press said, “is reputed to have medicinal qualities. It is a fact that its waters are clear and cold.”

Although many people mistakenly call the road and especially the country club along it “Silver Springs,” Ridgefield’s name is not like the place in Florida or Maryland, and is singular. However, the mistake is not a new one. An 1858 deed also speaks of Silver Springs.

Several years ago someone — not the town government — placed a park bench next to the spring so visitors can sit and watch the silvery waters burble up.

SILVER SPRING BROOK

The Silver Spring Brook is a small stream that flows out of a dammed pond on the north side of St. Johns Road, a short distance east of its intersection with Silver Spring Road. The pond is at the south end of the Silver Spring Swamp.

The water flows south into Wilton where it joins the east branch of the Silvermine River, a coincidental confluence of two unrelated “silver” names.

Silver Spring Brook is so called because it comes out of the Silver Spring Swamp, one of whose water sources is the Silver Spring.

SILVER SPRING LANE

Silver Spring Lane runs from St. Johns Road near the beginning of the Silver Spring Brook south to Silver Spring Road, and was so called because it’s in the Silver Spring neighborhood.

The northern part of this road, plus Silver Spring Park Lane, were once called Scott Road (*q.v.*), for Daniel Scott, the developer. However, the selectmen in October 1958 voted to change the names to Silver Spring Lane and Silver Spring Park Lane, acting at the request of residents who apparently didn’t like the Scott name and didn’t mind the confusion of having two more Silver Spring names in the neighborhood.

One of the most famous residents of Silver Spring Lane was comedienne Imogene Coca, who lived near the curve at the south end in the 1950s.

SILVER SPRING PARK LANE

Silver Spring Park Lane, yet another road with Silver Spring as its name, is at Silver Spring Park, one of the town’s earliest small-lot subdivisions outside the village.

Daniel Scott started development around 1926, and it has always been a place where one could buy a house at a price more modest than the average price in town.

SILVER SPRING RIDGE

Silver Spring Ridge is the ridge on the west side of Silver Spring Road, now chiefly occupied by the Silver Spring Country Club.

The name is an old one, first appearing in 1789 when Daniel Smith 2nd sold Daniel Smith 4th 17 acres “of the northwest corner of my farm lying on Silver

Spring Ridge.” The name was in use into this century, appearing on a 1907 property survey on file in the town clerk’s office.

The Belcher Hyde atlas, published in 1908, shows a road labeled Silver Spring Ridge running north-south across what is now the golf course, west of and parallel to Silver Spring Road.

SILVER SPRING ROAD

Silver Spring Road, an ancient town highway, runs two miles from West Lane south to Wilton. So called because it passes the Silver Spring (*q.v.*), the road was laid out probably in December 1722 when the selectmen mentioned establishing a road near “ye Silver Spring.”

In the 18th and 19th Centuries, Silver Spring Road was one of several routes used to connect Ridgefield with Norwalk, Ridgefield’s parent community. The route runs south through Wilton, where it is also called Silver Spring Road, and then into the Vista section of Lewisboro, N.Y., where it loses its pavement. Continuing back in Connecticut, it’s called Bald Hill Road for a while in New Canaan, but soon connects with Valley Road, which brings the route down to the Silvermine section of Norwalk, and on toward the center of that city.

In Ridgefield, the path has changed little over its nearly three centuries, gaining only pavement. The road was long an unusual one in Ridgefield because the land along much of it had had virtually escaped modern subdivisions, and for much of the 20th Century had maintained a good deal of the flavor of the past. Until the 1990s, few modern houses dotted its sides and beautiful open fields existed — it was one of the few roads in Ridgefield where one could view ancient fields lined with stonewalls, much the way they looked two centuries ago.

The road maintained its charm partly because the Silver Spring Country Club has preserved a long stretch of land, once fields that are returning to forest, along its west side, and some nicely restored 18th and early 19th Century houses still stand along it.

In the 1990s, Silver Spring Road was named one of the town’s few official “scenic highways.”

SILVER SPRING SWAMP

Silver Spring Swamp is the wetland in the valley between Silver Spring Road on the west and St. Johns Road and the Olmstead Lanes on the east.

Nearly a mile long, the swamp ends at the south with a small pond, sometimes called Silver Spring Pond, and dam. This dam, over the years, has been a source of some neighborhood disputes because its height is said to affect the level of the water table over a wide area. In the past some people have maintained that the dam spillway was too high, causing the water table to surface on their property. However, the dam has remained and has helped create one of the more scenic and wildlife-rich spots in Ridgefield.

The swamp, first known as New Pound Bogs, was once the source of — among other things — cranberries. Because of the dam, it is much wetter today than a century ago, but probably not much wetter than it was 250 years ago; old deeds indicate that when the settlers arrived, beavers had dammed up the swamp. In fact, deeds through much of the 18th Century mention “ye Beaver Damm” in this neighborhood as if it were a well-known Ridgefield locality then.

Needless to say, the swamp gets its name from the spring, which is one of its water sources. And while several small streams also feed the swamp, its watershed is actually rather small for a swamp of its size, suggesting that the spring – and perhaps others – provide a good deal of water. Certainly, the Silver Spring at least a steady supplier.

Silver Spring Swamp is one of the town's most interesting wetland wildlife habitats, perhaps second only to the Great Swamp, from which it differs in having more open water. Thus, it attracts many types of waterfowl as well as other kinds of birds including hawks. Wild turkeys are plentiful in the area. Many mammals visit its shores and hummocks, including coyotes, red and gray fox, deer, raccoons, and many smaller critters. Black bears sometimes visit. Ferns and wildflowers also abound, and there has been one rare species of orchid found in its watershed, though recent development destroyed one major colony.

For these reasons, the town's Conservation Commission has over the years expressed interest in the swamp's preservation. Wetland regulations prevent its being filled, but the commission is still concerned about the development along its edges and with hunting of its wildlife. What's more, the waters eventually feed the Norwalk reservoir system.

Portions of the swamp have been preserved by donations to the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield and to the Conservation Commission, but part of it remains in private ownership.

SILVERMINE BROOK

The Silvermine Brook, which feeds the East Branch of the Silvermine River, rises near the center of town off southern Main Street, possibly in a swamp and pond around the end of Hayes Lane.

The stream flows southerly, generally east of Wilton Road East, into Wilton where it joins the Silvermine River's east branch, which flows into New York State and then down into New Canaan. There, it passes the Silvermine Hill and flows into Norwalk, where its waters join the Norwalk River and head for the Sound.

Silvermine Hill and the Silvermine district of Wilton, Norwalk and New Canaan were all originally part of Norwalk. The area has been so-called since before 1700, undoubtedly because a mining operation took place there. No one has been able to pinpoint the mine's location with certainty.

The Silvermine River also has a West Branch, fed by streams from Ridgefield, Wilton and Lewisboro.

SIMPAUG TURNPIKE

Extending from Route 7 northward into Redding, Simpaug Turnpike is probably an old Indian trail that, to the south, followed the Norwalk River.

In May 1832, the Simpaug Turnpike Company of Ridgefield received the state's permission to build a turnpike across the remarkably flat route that starts in eastern Ridgefield, continues through western Redding to West Redding station and then, via Sidecut Road, to Route 53, Redding Road, which led on up to Bethel. This route was so flat that the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad used much of it 18 years later to run its tracks up to Danbury instead of through Sugar Hollow.

Little is known about the turnpike company or how long it lasted. Frederic J. Wood, in his 1919 book, *The Turnpikes of New England*, could find little in official record about the road. However, it was no doubt built to serve as a smooth, flat route for the stagecoaches that ran between Danbury and Norwalk, where riders could catch boats and later trains to New York.

Indian Place Names of New England, published in 1962 by the Museum of the American Indian in New York City, says that “sympaug” is possibly from an Indian word, *sumhutaug*, meaning beavers, mammals that were much admired by the Indians for their dam-building abilities and for their fur.

Sumhutaug is of Western Niantic or Paugusett origin; both were divisions of the Wappinger tribe, which inhabited the area from the Hudson River to New Haven. Ridgefield was popular with those Indians, possibly because it was the highest point between New Haven and the Hudson.

Simpaug appears in various forms as names of streams and ponds in Redding, Bethel, and Danbury – i.e., Syenpauge, Semi-Pog (brook in Danbury, 1795), Sympang (Bethel, 1830s). In Ridgefield, the name first appears in the land records in an 1851 deed, describing land in Redding as well as in Ridgefield. In the document, Harry Pickett sold Daniel Sanford land on “Humpaug Turnpike Road,” noting that the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad ran through it. An 1853 deed mentions “Simpog” Turnpike.

The fact that it was called a turnpike indicates that fees were charged to traverse it, probably from 1832 to around when the railroad arrived in 1850 and no doubt put it out of business — if it wasn’t already defunct (turnpikes had a hard time making any money).

In Redding, the road passes by the western shore of a pond called Umpawaug, believed to mean “bend of the road.” Perhaps this was the home of the beavers of simpaug. Note, however, that the 1851 deed said “Humpaug,” which seems a cross between Simpaug and Umpawaug. Could it be that one is a variant of the other?

Only the very southern end of Simpaug Turnpike — about a quarter of a mile — is in Ridgefield. It crosses into Redding a few hundred feet west of the old stone railroad trestle.

The road in Ridgefield was called Sanford Station Road early in the 20th Century because it led up to the old Sanford Station on the railroad, later called Topstone Station to avoid confusion with Stamford station.

SIXTH LANE

Sixth Lane is another in the First through 12th Lane series of little, private, dead end lanes off Mamasasco Road at the Eight Lakes development.

SKUNK LANE

Skunk Lane was another – and perhaps the original – name for North Street. It appears in only one deed, but apparently was widely known in the 19th Century.

In that single 1845 deed, Charles Smith 2nd sold Daniel S. Mead five acres near the house of Henry Smith 2nd, bounded on the east by “the Branch” (stream) and on the west by the “highway called Skunk Lane.”

Historian Silvio Bedini, in *Ridgefield in Review*, says North Street was called Skunk Lane because “many of the residents in that area ate skunk meat,

which was reported to be of good flavor when properly prepared. Skunks were commonly eaten during the pre-Revolutionary period.”

The explanation is colorful, perhaps even odorful, based apparently on legend. It is also possible that the name stemmed simply from the fact that many skunks lived up North Street way.

Or it could have come from some incident, involving a skunk, in the lost and distant past. For example, in New Hartford, there is a place called Skunk Hollow, purportedly because a man named Clark Rice, who lived there, once pulled “a black and white cat” by the tail from his children’s trundle bed, with unhappy results. As a result he became known as Skunk Rice and his place, Skunk Hollow.

Of our common native creatures, skunks are among the least popular with namers of roads. Of the 23 towns in Fairfield County, only one — Wilton — has a road named for the skunk. Skunk Lane was chosen for an old road in 1909 by C.N. Woods, a Norwalk surveyor who created a map of Wilton. The name was apparently based on an old locality, Skunk Hole, first mentioned in a 1711 deed.

Despite at least one attempt to change it, Skunk Lane as a name in Wilton survives today, but not in Ridgefield where folks apparently thought the name stank.

SKY TOP ROAD

Sky Top Road, which runs from Bennett’s Farm Road to the dead end of pavement, seems to have an overblown name, considering that it is one of the flattest and certainly not one of the loftiest roads in town. However, the paved road is the developed portion of an ancient dirt road that still goes up a steep hill into what is now the town-owned Hemlock Hills Refuge. Not the top of the sky, but fairly high nonetheless.

Actually, Sky Top Road is the southern end of the 18th Century highway called Bogus Road (*q.v.*), a name still used for its northern section. Over this road, British troops were supposed to have marched in 1777 after the burning of Danbury and before the April 27 Battle of Ridgefield.

Sky Top Road is the main road at Lakeland Hills, a mid-1950s subdivision developed by Harold S. Goldsmith (1904-1969). Mr. Goldsmith had once been the head of Popular Publications, which produced pulp magazines. He was reportedly responsible for talking Erle Stanley Gardner, an assistant district attorney, into giving up his job to write for the pulps. The result was the Perry Mason series of mystery novels, turned into a popular television series in the 1950s and 60s.

As Mr. Goldsmith planned things, Sky Top Road was to connect with Bogus Road through Otto H. Lippolt’s property, now the Hemlock Hills Refuge. Mr. Lippolt planned a large-scale, small-lot development there, but never got to more than installing some dirt roads and culverts. The town acquired Mr. Goldsmith’s land on the mountain as well as the property now used for Fitzgerald and Serfilippi baseball fields, and also bought Mr. Lippolt’s property, stopping development to the north and producing a large and wonderful tract of parkland.

Sky Top Road became a town road in July 1956.

SKYVIEW ESTATES

Skyview Estates is the name of the 1955 subdivision by Stam-Nor Holding Corporation of the neighborhood that includes Bayberry Hill Road (*q.v.*) off lower Branchville Road.

The name is, when you think about it, silly. One would be hard put to find a square foot of soil in Ridgefield where you could not view the sky, even though we do have a lot of trees blocking full view.

SLEEPY HOLLOW ROAD

Sleepy Hollow Road, which runs between Round Lake Road and Barrack Hill Road, is part of the 1950s Eight Lakes subdivision (*q.v.*).

The source of the name is not Ridgefield, but the Hudson River Valley, location of Washington Irving's *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, whose characters included Ichabod Crane and the Headless Horseman.

It is "cute," a common subdivision road name throughout the region and Northeast. For what it's worth, the road is on West Mountain and there are places on West Mountain where one can see the Hudson River Valley. Aside from that, the name has no significance.

Irving, incidentally, is buried in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Tarrytown.

SMITH ROAD

Smith Road is an earlier name for today's Still Road, which runs from Haviland Road to Route 7 past the Stonehenge Inn. This is an old highway, dating from the 1700s, and a portion was the original path of what is now Route 7.

Richard E. Venus, town historian and former postmaster, believes the Smith Road name came from the fact that William H. Smith had a farm there early in the 20th Century. William's son, Clint, was a postman in the 1920s and 1930s.

However, Smiths were prominent on this road long before the 20th Century. In 1780, Hezekiah Smith paid 260 pounds to buy Stephen and Phebe Hard's house, barn, and gristmill. The mill was situated on the north side of Still Road and, nowadays, also on the east side of Stonehenge Road. (Stonehenge Road and lower Still Road were part of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike – Route 7 – which had not been built by 1780.)

Hezekiah eventually sold out to Ezra Smith for \$1,137 in 1803. At the same time, David Perry and Ezekiel Wilson sold their small shares in the mill operation to Ezra.

Ezra apparently developed the mill site further, for by the time his widow, Nancy, sold out in 1840, there was a "clothiers shop" on the property.

The mill site passed into several hands and by 1845, William Smith 2nd and Azaria Smith were owners. They sold a third share that year to the Union Manufacturing Company of Norwalk, which eventually took over operation. At this point, the property included a fulling mill, which cleaned, felted and shrank raw woolen cloth, and a dye house, which colored the cloth.

Although the mills passed out of Smith hands, the family apparently lived in the neighborhood well into this century.

SMITH'S GREAT POND

Smith's Great Pond was another name for today's Great Pond, and was so called in the 1829 perambulation of the Ridgefield-Redding border, which runs through the northeast corner of the pond.

The name stems from the fact that various Smith millers – Ezra at this time owned water rights to the pond for their milling (*see* Smith Road). When Hezekiah Smith bought his mill near what is now Stonehenge Inn, he did so “with the privilege of the Great Pond that was obtained of Daniel Dean,” an early owner of the pond.

SMITH’S POND

Smith’s Pond was a shorter name for Smith’s Great Pond (*above*), appearing in at least two 19th Century deeds.

In 1835, David Burr of Redding sold Preserved Taylor of Redding three acres on the town line “by Smith’s Pond so called.” In 1854, Joseph W. Hubbell of Norwalk sold the Union Manufacturing Company, operator then of Smith’s mills, one-third “part of a pond called Smith’s Pond.”

SOPHIA DRIVE

Sophia Drive, which runs from Scodon Drive to Bogus Road at the Scodon subdivision in Ridgebury, was named for Sophia Langstroth, a former owner of the land.

She and her husband, Dr. Francis Ward Langstroth, a physician and dog breeder, bought a house and 79 acres on the south side of George Washington Highway in 1922 for \$5,000.

The Langstroths began selling their property around 1957 to Carleton A. Scofield who, with Judge Joseph H. Donnelly (thus *Scodon*), developed the subdivision.

About the same time, the couple moved to Florida where Dr. Langstroth died in 1962 and where Sophia remarried and was known as Sophia E. Kearney until her death in the late 1970s in St. Petersburg.

SOUNDVIEW ROAD

Soundview Road is a name that surprises some Ridgefielders who do not think of themselves as living near the sea. Although we are almost 15 miles from the shore, the name is accurate.

Soundview Road first appears as a dirt road with no houses on it on a 1936 map of the town. It may have been an old farm path and it may also have had something to do with the old Fairgrounds where the Ridgefield Fair and Cattle Show took place between 1858 and 1881. The Fairgrounds fronted on Wilton Road West along the top of the ridge, opposite Olmstead Lane, and ran back to include the Soundview neighborhood.

In 1777 when the area was farmland, this neighborhood served as a campsite for the British troops after their April 27 skirmishes with colonials along North Salem Road and Main Street. Probably the chief reason the British chose this site was that it overlooked Long Island Sound where British ships awaited the troops. Fires from here signaled the ships that the soldiers would arrive in Norwalk the next day.

From the days of the Revolution well into the 20th Century, Ridgefield was a farming community. Consequently, there were not nearly as many trees around as there are today, and the view from here of Long Island Sound was probably sweeping. Today, glimpses of the water – and of Long Island itself on a clear day – can still be seen, especially when the leaves are off the trees.

Dr. Newtown M. Schaffer, a renowned orthopedic surgeon, owned much of the Soundview Road area early in the 20th Century and called his estate “Beacon Hill” to recall the British encampment.

Peter Lorenzini (1916-2004 — *see Loren Lane*) later owned Beacon Hill and, much smaller than it was in its heyday, the house still stands on a lot between Soundview Road and Wilton Road West. (The house once had six chimneys, but today has only one.)

Lorenzini named and developed the road in the 1950s and 1960s. The name became official by vote of the selectmen Dec. 18, 1958.

In 2004-05, Richard Lorenzini, Peter’s son, built a house at 320 Wilton Road West, on a lot that once housed the pump house for the Beacon Hill estate. The antique steam-operated pump sat in a small, round, stone building until early 2004, when the Sloane-Stanley Museum in Kent removed it for its steam engine collection. Peter Lorenzini could not bring himself to raze the beautifully built stone pump house, which was retained and sits in front of the new house.

The road was in the 1950s called Media Lane (*q.v.*) at its northern end – possibly because it was halfway between Wilton Roads East and West; media is from the Latin for “middle”).

SOUTH LONG POND

A 1797 map of Lewisboro, N.Y., then called Salem, uses the name South Long Pond for today’s Lake Osaleta.

Lakes Osaleta, Waccabuc and Rippowam (*q.v.*) were in the early 1700s called Long Pond and considered one body of water. As the water area became smaller – probably through natural erosion and the erosion that results from converting forest to farmland – three distinct ponds formed.

At first, these were called Long Pond (now Waccabuc), North Long Pond (Rippowam) and South Long Pond. Eventually, the last two were shortened and called just North Pond and South Pond. By the late Victorian era, when everything seemed to need an ornate name, adjacent landowners chose the titles used today. But some old-timers still used North and South Pond well into the late 20th Century.

Before 1731, most of Long Pond was within Ridgefield. Even after the Oblong was set off to New York in that year, a little bit of the pond was in Ridgefield. Today, the swamp at the east end of Rippowam and Osaleta, within Ridgefield, is a vestige of the old and longer Long Pond.

SOUTH MIDDLE DISTRICT

South Middle District is an unusual name, appearing in a single deed that may have been short-lived because it did not fall into the usual system for naming town school districts.

In 1864, Floyd K. Hunt sold Halcyon G. Bailey five acres of woodland in Ridgebury, “in the school district known as South Middle District.” The tract was bounded on the north by a highway, easterly by Elias Palmer, and southerly and westerly by Smith Keeler.

All of those people lived along either side of Ridgebury Road near the top of the hill, between Ned’s Mountain Road and St. Elizabeth Seton Church. Thus, the land was probably close by, perhaps on the south side of Ned’s Mountain Road.

This, in the 1860s, was School District Number 14, also called South Ridgebury District. However, Beers Atlas of 1867 gives no name to the district, calling it only Number 14. In all but four of the 14 Ridgefield districts shown on the map, names are given (Farmingville, West Lane, Flat Rock, etc.).

It may have been that earlier, one district existed to serve all of Ridgebury and was called simply the Ridgebury District. But when Ridgebury was split into two districts, 14 and 15, some disagreement or confusion may have arisen over what to call the new districts.

But why “South Middle District”? Perhaps the Scotland District, just below Number 14, had become known to some Ridgeburians as the south district because the upper parts of it were within the old Ridgebury boundaries, used for the purpose of dividing off the two ecclesiastical societies (Congregational churches) in town. Thus, Number 14 was in the “middle” of two districts in Ridgebury, but south of the north one.

What is unusual about this name is that Ridgefielders had long used old neighborhood names, such as Titicus, West Mountain and Farmingville, for their school districts. In other towns, “position” names were sometimes used – Danbury, for example, had North Centre District, South Centre District and even a Middle North Centre District – but Ridgefield had almost completely shied away from such lackluster names. It did have a plan, old “Center District” though.

SOUTH OLMSTEAD LANE

South Olmstead Lane is an old highway that runs from Olmstead Lane south to St. Johns Road. It existed before 1856 when it appeared on a county map. As a farm path, it was probably established in the 18th Century to skirt the east side of the Silver Spring Swamp or New Pound Bogs.

In the 19th Century, the road chiefly served as an access to the back pastures of the Seymour farms, whose houses were on Wilton Road West. The Seymour Cemetery still stands along South Olmstead Lane, holding the remains of Seymours, Smiths and Olmsteads who lived in the neighborhood and were often interrelated. The roadside cemetery used to be surrounded by fields and more recently by woods and the remains of an old neighborhood dump. Today, subdivision lots have been developed around it, and the cemetery is, in effect, part of the front yard of 44 South Olmstead Lane.

A little after the turn of the 20th Century, a small community of Italian immigrants established itself on South Olmstead Lane, and some of the families still live there. Serfilippi Drive, which runs off lower South Olmstead Lane, recalls one such family, still living on the road.

South Olmstead Lane is so called because it runs southerly off Olmstead Lane, which was named after the Olmstead family who had several houses along it in the 19th Century. It probably would have been reasonable to call South Olmstead Lane just “Olmstead Lane,” and to have a different name for the leg of Olmstead between Wilton Road West and South Olmstead. In fact, many old-timers simply call South Olmstead Lane “Olmstead Lane” today.

SOUTH POND

South Pond is a shortened form of South Long Pond (*q.v.*), an old name for Lake Oscaleta in nearby South Salem, N.Y., territory that was once part of Ridgefield.

SOUTHRIDGE COURT

Southridge Court serves a 1985 subdivision of 10 lots on 30 acres off the west side of Silver Spring Road on the Wilton-Ridgefield and New York-Ridgefield lines. The developer was Roger Petersen, and the name vaguely recalls an 18th Century name for this area, Southwest Ridges.

Some years ago, G. Evans Hubbard of Wilton, a historian of that town and founder of *The Wilton Bulletin* newspaper, planned a subdivision of this land and named the proposed road Evans Circle (*q.v.*).

SOUTH SALEM ROAD

South Salem Road is a portion of one of our earliest main highways whose dual nomenclature today causes no end of confusion to visitors and newcomers.

Back in the 1700s, the highway that went from Main Street westerly to the New York line – the present Route 35 – was called the Bedford Road (*q.v.*) because it headed toward Bedford, N.Y., the nearest sizable New York community. It was a logical name used in a logical way for the entire road.

Eventually – and it's not clear just when or why – the road got to be called by two names: West Lane from Main Street to the West Lane schoolhouse, and South Salem Road from the school to the state line. Logically, South Salem Road ought to begin at Main Street.

South Salem is the name of a “hamlet” within the New York town of Lewisboro. It was the first major settlement in Lewisboro and, in fact, before 1729, most of the South Salem area belonged to Ridgefield and had been settled by Ridgefielders.

At first, the area that is the towns of Lewisboro and North Salem was called just “Salem,” based on the Hebrew word for “peace.” It is a popular name, applied to more than 30 communities in the United States.

When it was decided that the mountainous terrain between the northern and southern halves of Salem made communication too difficult, the town was split into North or Upper Salem and Lower Salem, eventually called South Salem. However, in 1840, the people of Lower or South Salem decided to change the town's name to honor John Lewis, who gave much money to support the public schools there.

Oddly enough, while we have North Salem, Danbury, Redding and Wilton roads, we have no “Lewisboro Road.” Ridgefielders have tended to emphasize the hamlet of South Salem, a name that is probably better known than the town's name. (This is a lot like Brewster, N.Y. While Brewster is a tiny village of a few hundred acres within the large town of Southeast, the name is much better known than the town's name is.)

The New York State extension of South Salem Road was called the Hartford Post Road on a 1797 map of Lower Salem. The post riders and stages came from New York City and followed today's Route 35 to Haviland Road, where they cut over to Pickett's Ridge Road, then veered north through Starrs Plain and over Moses Mountain to Danbury. Northern Danbury Road and Route 7 through the Sugar Hollow did not exist in the 1700s.

It is not clear when South Salem Road acquired its name. However, a 1790 deed mentions “the road leading to Salem” and an 1834 deed says “the road leading to South Salem.” Belcher Hyde's atlas of 1908 uses the name South Salem Road, so it was well-established by then.

The western end of South Salem Road is new, dating from the 1930s. The original path is today called Old South Salem Road (*q.v.*)

SOUTH SHORE DRIVE

South Shore Drive – a shoreless road named for a paper pond – is part of the mid-1950s Lakeland Hills subdivision, done by Harold Goldsmith (1904-1969). Originally, it was two roads. From Bennett's Farm Road straight eastward to the end was called Sunset Drive while the rest of the road – southerly, then easterly – was South Shore Drive.

In 1972, the Board of Selectmen under First Selectman Joseph McLinden, agreed there was too much confusion between Sunset Drive and Sunset Lane, the latter a village road off Grove Street that had many more houses on it than did the drive. The board voted to eliminate Sunset Drive and to extend the application of the name South Shore Drive to it.

Some have wondered why it is called South Shore Drive when the south shore of Lake Windwing, part of the Lakeland Hills development, is quite a bit to the north. Developer Goldsmith, who created Lake Windwing, also planned a second pond, called Sunset Lake. Had it been built, South Shore Drive would have run right along the pond's shore — but, oddly enough, its *western* shore. Why the pond was not built is unclear; however, the town bought much of the Goldsmith property south of Lake Windwing (now ball fields and open space) and the lack of population for the lake shores may have made creating the pond impractical. South Shore Drive – at least the south part of it – became a town road in 1957.

SOUTH STREET

South Street is a short, house-less lane that leads from Danbury Road to the town's sewage treatment plant, trash transfer station, recycling center, highway department, and dog pound. It is probably the only road in town without a single, human residence on it — though a lot of dogs live along it.

Originally a “cow path” between fields leading to the town dump and sewer plant, South Street was improved by the Morganti family. Paul Morganti said in a 1975 interview that the road was once called Sewer Bed Road because it led to the sludge drying beds (or as former first Selectman Leo F. Carroll used to euphemistically call them, the “Exposure Gardens.”)

“I didn't like the name,” said Mr. Morganti, who had lived right across Danbury Road from the lane. So, back in the 1950s, when he was a selectman, he got the Board of Selectmen to change the name to South Street, presumably because it runs somewhat southerly off Danbury Road.

For many years South Street ended at the beds and the old town dump. Eventually, however, as the town developed more facilities there (a highway garage, dog, pound), South Street was connected to Old Quarry Road to provide two accesses.

South Street was once called Northrup Road, possibly because some Northrup family owned the fields there.

SOUTHWEST RIDGES

The Southwest Ridges is a name that has all but disappeared from Ridgefield's geography. Perhaps that is because the locality itself almost completely disappeared from Ridgefield.

When they first purchased land from the natives in 1708, the original proprietors acquired a sizable chunk that would today include much of Lewisboro, N.Y., north of the hamlet of Vista. At that time, this territory in the southwestern part of town bordered Norwalk to the south, and Stamford to the southwest, and extended to Lake Kitchawan, about a mile and three quarters west of the present Connecticut line.

This land consists of ridges – no big hills, just rolling and sometimes long ridges. It probably included the ridge on which Silver Spring Country Club now sits. Consequently, it quickly picked up the name Southwest Ridges, which was in use by 1717 and was mentioned often in the first three decades of the town's existence.

The first activity there was the subdivision of a portion of the ridges into five- and six-acre lots – 28 of them, representing one for each of the proprietors. This subdivision of “outer” lands was somewhat unusual because the parcels were so small and virtually all the same size. Usually, subdivisions of territory distant from the village consisted of lots of much large sizes and of varying size – from 20 to 100 acres – with smaller parcels representing the best land and larger ones the worst. Apparently, the land in this subdivision was all super.

That might place the subdivision on or about the ridge today traversed by Elmwood Road in Lewisboro. Or it could be the next ridge over, the one traversed by Route 123. Both have fine farmland, though no farms remain today.

The list of owners of this very early subdivision reads like a who's who of Ridgefield settlers: Thomas Hauley, the first minister; Mathew Seamore, who operated a trading post and went on to be a substantial landowner; Benjamin Burt, the town blacksmith; David Scott, founder of the still sizable Scott family; and Joseph, Jonathan and Timothy Keeler, whose descendants are still here; plus names like Saintjohn, Benedict, Olmsted, Smith, Rockwell, Hyatt (Hoyt), Northrop, Osburn, and Wilson that remained the chief families of Ridgefield for some two centuries. Few settled on these lots, used chiefly for planting, but no doubt some did establish homes here.

One reason for believing that the area of the subdivision is in New York now is the fact that the two names on a subdivision map in the land records – Long Ridge and Royall Oak Ridge – occurred in the Ridgefield land records only before the Oblong was divided off to New York Colony in 1731. Probably most of the Southwest Ridges was lost to Ridgefield when Connecticut colony exchanged the mile and three-quarters wide Oblong with New York for Greenwich and some other land rights. This created some bad feelings here and some confusion over titles. The bad feelings were probably assuaged by the colony's granting Ridgefield's proprietors the right to the huge Ridgebury territory that extended north through today's western Danbury to New Fairfield.

The titles from Connecticut probably just transferred to New York, for some Ridgefielders remained on their land and became the first residents of today's South Salem area of Lewisboro.

However, old deeds showed their concern. When Joseph Hobart sold Mathew Seamore five acres “on ye Southwest Ridges” in 1728, he stipulated that “it is also to be understood that if ye dividing line of ye Governments take ye same into York Government, that I defend it not unto him, or make it good, but only give him up all my right and interest in ye grant of said lands upon him.”

In 1739, Timothy Canfield, “living on ye Oblong near Ridgefield in ye county of West Chester and government of New York,” reported on the Ridgefield land records “having formerly purchased 6 acres of land of James Northrop of Ridgefield...which land lyes on ye Southwest Ridges so called... which tract of land was cutt off by ye Government line, whereby my title and property unto said land utterly passed and became void...” But he adds that he subsequently “received good satisfaction” for the lost land.

The Southwest Ridges undoubtedly consisted of more than just the territory covered in the subdivision. Indications are that the first ridge remained in Ridgefield and consists of the land around the Silver Spring Country Club, bounded on the west by Silver Spring Road and the northwest by West Lane. This was later called Silver Spring Ridge.

A 1732 deed mentions property on “ye Southwest Ridge Division, part of which was cutt off by ye Government line,” and another a year later refers to the “Southwest Ridge Road.” In 1734, Samuel Saintjohn sold his house “on ye road to ye Southwest Ridges” – probably lower West Lane of today.

The existence of this route to the Southwest Ridges was noted as early as 1717 when the proprietors sequestered an area described as “all ye land from ye head of ye New Pound Bogg Swamp, with a direct line to ye path as it embarks upon ye going up of ye foot of ye first Southwest Ridge.” This parcel of protected land ran from the top of Silver Spring Swamp, way behind the West Lane Market, over to the intersection of West Lane, Silver Spring Road, and South Salem Road.

While the road ceased being connected in name with the Southwest Ridges in the 1730s, the locality itself continued to be mentioned for many years. Perhaps because there was only one Ridgefield ridge left after the Oblong separation, a deed in 1755 spoke of “ye Southwest *Ridge* so called.” More than a century later, an 1863 deed for land on lower West Lane mentioned “the Southwest Ridge.” This is believed to be the last use of this name in Ridgefield records.

An 1840 map, found in the Probate Court records, for land at lower West Lane says the land it shows is “at Southwest Ridge.”

However, old habits are hard to break, and deeds filed in 1762, 1780, 1792, and 1795 continued to keep alive the old name of “Southwest Ridges.”

Today, the old name is hinted at in a new one, applied to a subdivision road at the very southwestern corner of town, off Silver Spring Road at the Wilton line: Southridge Court (*q.v.*).

SPECTACLE BROOK

Spectacle Brook is one of a group of old and colorful “Spectacle” names generated from a swamp in Wilton.

The brook itself rises in a swamp west of Nod Road, south of Whipstick Road and east of the Landegger estate off Wilton Road East. From there, the brook travels southerly, east of Spectacle Lane, down into Wilton, where it flows into the Spectacle Bogs and then winds up in the East Branch of the Comstock Brook. That, in turn, wanders down to the Norwalk River and into Long Island Sound.

A couple of theories have arisen over the origin of the name, Spectacle, which first appeared in 1711 in the Norwalk land records for territory in today’s

Wilton. Thomas Gregory was recorded then as owning land “in ye Spectacle Bogges, so called.”

David Herman Van Hoosear, in his *Annals of Wilton*, observes that one tradition was that the bogs “were originally bought – or sold – for a pair of spectacles. Against this legend is the fact that they were called Spectacle Bogges before the land had been sold.

More likely, said Mr. Van Hoosear, was another tradition. “They did slightly resemble spectacles, consisting as they did of an upper and lower swamp connected.”

George R. Stewart, historian of American place names, seemed to agree. In *Names Upon the Land*, he wrote, “like everyone else [New Englanders] often called places for how they looked. In those days, eyeglasses were new and uncommon, and men were quick to note that something had two large ends and a narrow strip between. Thus came Spectacle Island and Spectacle Pond.” And, presumably, Spectacle Bogs.

“Spectacle Brook” was first mentioned in a Feb. 28, 1732, Ridgefield Town Meeting description of a town road (long ago abandoned) that was being laid out, and the term is still used on U.S. Geological Survey maps of southern Ridgefield and northern Wilton. However, the term “Spectacle,” applied to a ridge, was appearing in Ridgefield deeds 15 years earlier than that (*see* Spectacle Brook Ridge).

Eventually, the territory around the brook and the lane became known as “Spectacle.” An 1848 deed mentions “Spectacle, a place so called.”

SPECTACLE BROOK RIDGE

A property map filed with the town clerk in 1947 mentions Spectacle Brook Ridge, locating it on the east side of lower Spectacle Lane, lying between the road and the Spectacle Brook. This is probably the same area mentioned in 1719 when the proprietors granted Joseph Benedict five acres of pasture and plowland “lying on ye Spectacle Ridge” – the earliest use of Spectacle in Ridgefield.

SPECTACLE LANE

Spectacle Lane is an old highway that runs from Wilton Road East, easterly a short distance, then southerly and parallel to Wilton Road East. For many years, it connected with roads in Wilton. Then the Ridgefield portion south of Gay Road became a barely used dirt road that, in Wilton, disappeared into woods.

Back in the mid-1950s, the first selectmen of Wilton and Ridgefield discussed the possibility of reopening a connection between the two towns via Spectacle Lane, then a gravel road, which would connect with Millstone Road in Wilton. It was observed that the route was an old highway, but much of the Wilton portion had become wooded over. (The road appears on an 1856 map of Fairfield County.)

However, Ridgefield First Selectman Harry E. Hull felt that the “town should not in general reopen long-unused highways until it became satisfied that the tax revenue from construction on these highways would cover the cost of improvements.”

In the years since, there were moves by developers to have the old road south of Gay Road reopened. In the early 1990s, a subdivision was developed

over parts of nearly 1,000 feet of Spectacle Lane south of Gay Road and the dirt road was paved. But because areas on the Wilton side had already been developed and residents there weren't interested in a through road in the neighborhood, the resurrected south end of Spectacle Lane was dead-ended with a cul-de-sac.

It's not certain just how old Spectacle Lane is, but in a 1744 deed to Daniel Chapman, an acre was described as being "at ye Flatt Rock, east of ye road and south of ye Specktable Road." Another contemporary deed mentions land "north of Specktable Road, east of ye Country Road" (generally, the Country Road was today's Wilton Road West).

The fact that land was "north" or "south" of the road indicates that it was situated up at the northern end of Spectacle Lane, where the highway runs east-west. Or it could indicate that the 18th Century "Specktable Road" was some other east-west road, long ago abandoned.

SPECTACLE RIDGE

See Spectacle Brook Ridge above.

SPECTACLE ROAD

The name, Spectacle Road, besides being applied to the old highway mentioned above, was also certainly once applied to Spectacle Lane. An 1851 survey done of the route of Wilton Road East mentions its connection with "Spectacle Road."

SPIRE VIEW ROAD

Spire View Road, a dead-end off Old Stagecoach Road, is part of the late-1950s Ridgefield Knolls subdivision of Robert Kaufman.

Mr. Kaufman named the road for the spire of the Ridgebury Congregational Church, situated two miles to the north-northwest. Although this writer tried to view the spire from the road years ago, he was not successful, largely due to trees in the way. Nevertheless, one longtime resident of the road confirmed in the late 1970s that he could see the spire from his property.

SPLIT LEVEL ROAD

Split Level Road, which runs between Soundview Road and Wilton Road East, seems to have a dual meaning.

On the surface, the name refers to the fact that part of the road runs along the fairly flat ridge near Soundview Road while the other part descends a rather steep hill (from around 750 feet above sea level to about 630 feet), thus being of two levels – flat and steep.

On the other hand, there were a lot of "split-level" houses built along the road.

According to Peter Lorenzini (1916-2004 — see *Loren Lane*.) who, with Norman Craig, subdivided the land in 1956, the name reflects the elevations. Called Sound View Acres, the subdivision was part of the development that included Soundview Road (*q.v.*)

SPRING MEADOW

Spring Meadow was an old name formerly applied to land at the south side of Great Pond, territory that now includes Martin Park.

The name, which appears in an 1841 deed, apparently refers to a spring of water in the meadow. Springs are not uncommon thereabouts; Great Pond (*q.v.*) is chiefly spring-fed.

Nor is “spring” an unusual name in any agricultural community. Many farms had a Spring Lot or a Spring Field – maybe even a Spring Meadow.

SPRING VALLEY ROAD

Spring Valley Road runs from lower Ridgebury Road, parallel to and west of Ridgebury Road, northward to Chestnut Hill Road. It is an old highway and predates 1856 when it shows up on the earliest complete map of the town. It might even be an earlier route for Ridgebury Road from Ledges to Chestnut Hill Roads.

The name is not as old as the road and has not been found in the land records from the 1700s through 1900. However, it was in use by 1929 when it appears on a map of private property along the road.

According to Paul Hampden, who had lived in the neighborhood since 1910, there are many springs on the hillside east of the road. And, of course, the road generally follows a valley.

Spring Valley Road was one of the last roads in town to be paved, but almost was among the earlier ones. In 1990, Ed Plaut, who lives on the ridge east of the road, offered this account of how the road was saved from paving in the 1930s:

“John Wheeler was a newspaper man who entered this vale of tears about a century ago. He is credited with having invented the as-told-to and introduced it during a World Series when he wrote such daily pieces as ‘How I’m Going to Pitch to Ty Cobb’ by Christy Matthewson and ‘How I’m Going to Hit Christy Matthewson’ by Ty Cobb, both as told to John.

“He was also a pioneer in the field of syndication and founded the Bell Syndicate and the North American Newspaper Alliance (NANA).

“John had a large estate on Spring Valley Road. One evening about 55 years ago, he came home from New York to find the WPA (Federal Works Progress Administration) crew paving the road. The horse people in the vicinity preferred to keep it a dirt road.

“John promptly phoned the White House and asked to speak to his friend, Harry Hopkins (head of the WPA and close friend of President Roosevelt). He explained the situation, told him that he had the foreman of the crew right there and he wanted Mr. Hopkins to tell the foreman to cut it out before any more damage was done. Hopkins did, the foreman did, and Spring Valley remained unpaved until it was vandalized with asphalt a few years ago.”

Wheeler Road, which runs off Spring Valley, is named for John Wheeler.

SPRUCE HILL ROAD

In an 1862 deed, Willis Bennett sold George Bouton three acres of woodland “at Bogus...said land lying directly south of Spruce Hill Road.”

Bogus is the area south of George Washington Highway, generally traversed by Bogus Road. It is possible Spruce Hill Road was today’s Ned’s Mountain Road.

As a native genus of trees, spruce is not among the 10 most common trees in Connecticut today. Black and Red Spruce trees are possible here and were probably among the natives growing here in the 17th and 18th Centuries.

However, today, any spruce species would be quite rare in Connecticut if it weren't for the importation of the decorative and fast-growing Norway Spruce that has become so common and widespread — and so tall — throughout Ridgefield and the Northeast. Norway Spruces can reach well over 100 feet in height and, of late, seem to be frequent victims of storms, often landing on utility lines.

Spruce wood was used for finishing in interiors of houses, but probably not many around here. Because it is pitchy, it was not a good firewood.

SPRUCE HILL(S)

An 1813 deed in the land records mentions “Spruce Hills” while deeds from 1781 and 1850 cite a “Spruce Hill.” Though both terms were reported to be in Ridgebury, they seem to have been different localities.

The Spruce Hills reference also mentions the land's being bounded by the “Spruce Hole Path so called.” As will be suggested below, the Spruce Hole was in a portion of Ridgebury that now belongs to Danbury.

Property owners mentioned in the 1850 deed suggest that Spruce Hill was east of Ridgebury Road and south of George Washington Highway, perhaps the same hill later called Crow Hill (*q.v.*).

SPRUCE HOLE

Several deeds between 1805 and 1834 mention Spruce Hole, a depression of land that apparently existed in the Mill Plain area of Danbury, once part of Ridgefield.

The 1805 deed from Elnathan Field to Abraham and Burr Fairchild describes the land as bounded on the north “by the path which comes out of the Spruce Hole so called.”

In 1813 the Fairchilds sold Smith Starr land at a place “commonly called Spruce Hills,” bounded westerly by “Spruce Hole Path so called.”

In 1834 two members of the Norris family exchanged land “at a place called Spruce Hole.”

The hole was probably somewhere along today's Route 6 or Route 84 between Mill Plain and the state line, possibly south of those highways.

SPRUCE MOUNTAIN

Spruce Mountain, a hill that reaches about 920 feet above sea level, is really a Danbury locality, but years ago, Ridgefielders may have considered some of its western “slope” to be in their town. (It is tough to define where one “mountain” ends and the next begins in the hilly terrain of northeastern Ridgefield.)

A 1748 proprietors deed to Nathan St. John and Timothy Benedict said the nine acres was “lying on ye Spruce Mountain” bounded on the “east by Danbury line.”

It is near the peak of Spruce Mountain, west of Route 7, that Danbury Airport has its large, rotating beacon.

SPRUCEWOOD LANE

Sprucewood Lane is a short, dead-end road off Pinecrest Drive. Richard Mayhew, the developer, said he named it because spruces were mixed in with pines at the top of the hill there.

STAGE ROAD

When Levi and Elias Godfrey sold Andrew Godfrey 25 acres back in 1867, they described the land as having “the Stage Road from Ridgefield Station to Ridgefield running through same, north of the dwelling.”

This is Branchville Road, the section that runs between the two ends of Old Branchville Road. It had been built 15 years earlier as a smoother, less steep route for the “stages” – both people- and freight-carrying, particularly the latter – that ran between the station at what was later called Branchville (*q.v.*) and the village.

This need for stages was obviated by the completion in 1870 of the branch rail line from Ridgefield Station (*q.v.*) up to the new station at Ridgefield village. That station is still standing and is a warehouse at Ridgefield Supply Company.

STAMFORD MILL RIVER

The Stamford Mill River is a name that has gone the way of the Great East Meadow Pond. Today, it is called simply Mill River, just as the once-wordy body of water is now Great Pond.

The river first appears in the Ridgefield records in 1716 when John Copp and Andrew Messenger “ran” the boundary line between Norwalk (now Wilton) and Ridgefield, surveying from Branchville eastward to “ye main branch of Stanford Mill River” where “by reason that ye dividing line between Stanford and Norwalk is not yet run up so high as ye wilderness, we thought meet to proceed no further...”

The spot where they gave up is in Lewisboro, above Vista, and east of Lake Kitchawan, territory that belonged to Ridgefield at the time. As this description notes, back in the early 1700s, Ridgefield’s southeastern corner bordered on Stamford.

The Copp-Messenger description suggests that there is more than one branch to the river, and Ridgefield today is the source of what was then called the “east branch” but is now simply Mill River.

The river, hardly more than a brook here, rises in the swamps around Peaceable Street, west of Westmoreland. It flows into the Mill River Pond, south of South Salem Road; for the past 35 or so years, the pond has been mostly empty due to a burst dam. The pond bed and vicinity were once a sizable swamp; a 1721 deed from the proprietors to James Northrup mentions the land’s “lying in a swamp where Bedford Path (Old South Salem Road) crosses Stamford Branch.”

From the pond the stream flows under Route 123 in Lewisboro, where at the turn of the 20th Century, there was a Mill River hamlet and a Mill River Hotel. The river continues along Mill River Road and into Pound Ridge where it is a chief source of the Mill River Reservoir. From there, the water flows south into Stamford and the Laurel Reservoir. The outlet of that body of water flows via the Rippowam River into the North Stamford Reservoir and, if it is still around after escaping the intakes for three public water systems, the Ridgefield water winds up in Long Island Sound.

Down in southern Stamford, where the river meets the Sound, there is a little parallel road called Mill River Street, indicating that before someone hung the Rippowam name on the river (recalling the Indians’ name for the territory),

it had been commonly known as Mill River. Indeed, Beers 1867 map of Stamford calls it “Mill River.”

The reason was simple: Many mills were along its length. There may have been a small mill, perhaps a sawmill, in Ridgefield near South Salem Road. There certainly was at least one mill, probably two or three, at the Mill River hamlet near the intersection of Route 123 and Mill River Road (Ridgefield territory before 1731); in 1726, the proprietors gave Moses Northrup “land lying on Stamford Branch, at ye saw mill,” which was probably situated there. In 1867, between the Ridgefield line and Long Island Sound, at least 10 mills operated along the river, including those producing flour, wool, wire and lumber.

It was the “Stamford” Mill River because it met the sea there and was known to the settlers at Stamford long before its source was. Such is also the case with the Norwalk and Saugatuck Rivers, which have sources in Ridgefield.

Early versions of the name were spelled Stanford. That spelling appeared in the General Court’s admission of the town of Stamford into the jurisdiction of Connecticut in 1662. Helen Earle Sellers, in *Connecticut Town Origins*, says “the name is commonly spelled Stanford, or Stanforde, in the early records, although the pronunciation has always been Stamford, like that of the city of churches in Lincolnshire, England, the one of the three English Stanfords for which it would seem to have been named.”

The last Stanford spelling here appears in 1721. That same year, a deed uses Stamford.

STAMFORD ROAD

When Timothy Keeler Jr. sold Jared and Abigail Northrup nine acres in 1796, he located it “on the road to Stamford.” That’s probably lower West Lane, which, before New Canaan was created from Norwalk and Stamford in 1801, would have led toward that town.

STAMPING PLACE

The Stamping Place is an unusual name that appears in only one deed, dated 1726, when the proprietors granted Samuel Saint John two acres “lying at or near ye Stamping Place, on ye Southwest Ridges.”

The Southwest Ridges was the area of pre-Oblong Ridgefield that consisted of land west of Silver Spring Road into New York, and included the ridges along Elmwood Road and Route 123 in Lewisboro. It is not clear where the Saint John parcel was because “common land” surrounded it, leaving no adjoining property owners or roads as clues.

“Stamping” here could mean either the pressing of apples for cider, or a threshing. However, most likely, it was a place where wild animals habitually hung out. According to George R. Stewart in his book, *Names on the Land*, “near the licks (brackish springs) the buffalo might even trample down all the growth. Such a place was called a stamping ground... Still an American may call his own particular haunts his stamping-ground.” In another book, *American Place Names*, Mr. Stewart explains it this way: “In the 18th Century the term ‘stamping ground’ was used for a place frequented by game, generally because of a salt lick, and marked by trampling.” (See also Buckspen Swamp.)

STANDISH DRIVE

Standish Drive, a circular road off Lounsbury Road, is part of Harry Richmond and Bill Connors' mid-1960s Meadow Woods subdivision. It became a town road in 1968. Most of its houses were built by Marty Curnan, a former New York city policeman.

The road was named for Miles Standish, the pioneer of Plymouth Colony, who had no known connection with Ridgefield or even Connecticut. Would he have liked Ridgefield?

STANDPIPE ROAD

Standpipe Road is the former name for Peaceable Ridge Road. The name was in use for many years until 1960 when a group of residents decided "standpipe" just did not sound right for them, and they petitioned the selectmen to have the name changed. The result is the confusing "Peaceable Ridge Road," easily mixed up with Peaceable Hill Road and Peaceable Street (*see* Peaceable Ridge Road).

The old namesake departed in style. The road was named for the tall, cast-iron water tank that had been erected off the road at the turn of the 20th Century to provide pressure for the lines of the old Ridgefield Water Supply Company. At 5:30 a.m. on Dec. 2, 1972, the pipe, which had been leaking badly, burst open, created a deafening roar and a brief flood in the area. Damage, however, was minor, and the loss of the tank did not affect the water company customers since some years earlier the water company had erected a newer standpipe next to it. Today, there is not one, but two standpipes, prompting the question: Had the old name remained, would it have been changed to Standpipes Road with the arrival of tank number two?

STARR'S PLAIN

Starr's Plain is a section of Danbury whose name has sometimes spilled over into Ridgefield. In general, Starr's Plain is the area east of Route 7 just north of the Danbury line, a rolling plain cut off from Danbury proper by Moses Mountain and Wooster Mountain, and connected to it by the Sugar Hollow. Old descriptions have it extending east to Long Ridge Road, just above West Redding, but the center of the district tended to be at its western end.

The name comes from some early member of the Starr family. Shortly after Danbury's settlement by eight families in 1684, Josiah Starr moved to the town from Long Island. According to an early Danbury historian, writing in 1801, "he had six sons, from whom many families of that name have descended."

Which one owned land or settle at Starr's Plain has not been determined – early Danbury records were burned by the British. However, someone was there by 1743, for in a Ridgefield deed from Alexander Resseguie to Benjamin Willson Jr., a parcel of land partly in Ridgefield and partly in Danbury was described as touching "Stars northwest corner." Not long after Starr's Ridge (*q.v.*) was appearing in Ridgefield records.

The first mention in Ridgefield was in 1780 for land "near" Starr's Plain. Six years later, a deed mentioned land "westward of Starrs Plain so called." In 1843, Sturges Sellick of Danbury sold David Dauchy of Danbury three acres "partly in said Danbury and partly in Ridgefield, at a place called Starrs Plain." And an 1856 deed for land in the two towns said it was "in Starrs Plain District so called."

It seems clear that at least a little of northeastern Ridgefield – up around the BMW dealership and generally north-northeast of Laurel Lane – was considered part of Starr's Plain.

The area was a formal school district by 1769 when an adjourned meeting of the First Society of Danbury met “to Devide the several Districts in the Society for Schools.”

Since this district was cut off by mountains and bordered west and south by other towns, its description was the briefest of the nine districts' descriptions: “That the Inhabitants living southerly of a Line drawn Heighth of Toms mountain and from thence to the Height of Spruse mountain near Capt. Taylors field be one district and called Starrs Plain or Long Ridge District.”

Long Ridge is a couple of miles east of Route 7, and was never the “developed” center of Starr's Plain. The west end had several mills – including a sawmill and an iron foundry – plus at least one hat factory. It had a school-house, probably a store, and certainly its own church and cemetery.

The church at Starr's Plain was established early in the 1800s. James M. Bailey in his *History of Danbury* explains its founding:

“Early in the present century, James Beatys lived a few rods beyond the base of Sugar Hollow Mountain, near the corner of the present Starr's Plain and Long Ridge Roads. One cold winter day Mr. Beatys was cutting wood in his door yard when Rev. James Coleman, known as ‘Uncle Jimmy,’ a Methodist preacher whose circuit extended from Ridgefield to the Canada line, passed by on horseback, on his homeward journey from Canada.

“According to the hospitable custom of the day, Mr. Beatys invited the traveler in to dinner, an invitation gratefully accepted. Finding that his guest was a minister, Mr. Beatys asked him to make an appointment to preach at his house, which he did two weeks later, giving the first Methodist sermon in Starr's Plain at a house of a very strong Episcopalian.

“The sermon made a deep impression, and was followed by another a little later, the result of which was a number of conversions, including the children of James Beatys, whose distress was great when he saw his children turn from the church of their father to Methodism.

“The outcome of these meetings was the organization of the first Methodist class in the town of Danbury...”

A Methodist Protestant church was eventually organized around 1830. “Services were held for a few years in the home of Rev. Mr. (Levi) Bronson until becoming impressed with the idea that a church building was needed, he took his axe one day, went into the woods, selected a tree, and felled it. Then kneeling beside it he prayed that the work he had begun might be completed, and it was, and stands as a memorial of those faithful workers of many years ago.”

That may have been the same building that stood until the late 20th Century when, long unused, it was torn down.

Today, central Starr's Plain – once well known for its fertile farmland as well as its mills – has neither industry nor farms, and is solely residential, except for a little strip at its western border along Route 7 where various stores and offices sprang up in the middle 20th Century. Those were torn down around 2000 to make way for a four-lane Route 7, a project begun in August 2005.

STARR'S RIDGE

Starr's Ridge is the elevation of land east of Route 7 and northerly and easterly of Great Pond, running southerly to Picketts Ridge Road and a little beyond.

The locality was first mentioned in 1753 when Obadiah Wood Jr. sold Amos Monrow two parcels "at a place known by ye name of Starrs Ridge." The house lot was described as bounded on the north by the line "between Fairfield and Ridgefield" and on the south by a highway, probably Pickett's Ridge Road (also called Great Pond Road).

Those familiar with the geography of the area might wonder how Fairfield – now Redding – could form a northern boundary with any land in Ridgefield. Back at this time, however, a jog of territory came out of Redding north of and probably including part or all of Great Pond, and extended westward to the vicinity of today's Route 7. The Ridgefield Ice Cream Shop would probably be in Redding today, had not the owners of this jog petitioned in 1786 to become transferred into Ridgefield, whose Town Meeting and churches were more convenient to attend.

The last mention of Starr's Ridge, whose northern third is in Starr's Plain District of Danbury, was in 1841.

STATION HILL

Station Hill was an old and once well-known village name, as demonstrated by the following item which appeared in the editorial columns of the Feb. 11, 1954 Ridgefield Press: "We referred to 'Station Hill' the other day while talking to a teenager. She said 'Where's that?' being totally unaware that Prospect Street or Library Hill used to be called by a name connected with its principal use.

"The last passenger trains came to Ridgefield in 1923, more than 39 years ago, and for many years now the old passenger station has been a lumber storage building. So we shouldn't have wondered why 'Station Hill' didn't register. How time flies!"

That station had been a fixture of the center of town from 1870, when the branch line was built from Branchville into the village. Between then and 1850, when the Danbury and Norwalk line was laid, passengers and freight had to go to "Ridgefield Station" at what is now Branchville.

The fact that the railway company was willing to build the branch line, which had to rise some 400 feet in elevation, indicated it thought Ridgefield would be a growing town worth the investment. While the track was used for freight into the early 1960s, the passenger service clearly was not a money-maker if it was abandoned in the Twenties when train travel was still popular.

The station still stands on Prospect Street, opposite Bailey Avenue, and has been recently extensively renovated as a showroom for the Ridgefield Supply Company.

STEBBINS CLOSE

Stebbins Close, a private road at Casagmo, was named for the Stebbins family who had lived on and farmed the Casagmo land for more than a century and a half.

In 1714, Benjamin Stebbins of Northampton, Mass., a member of an already well-established central Massachusetts family, came to Ridgefield, ap-

parently at the beckoning of the Rev. Thomas Hauley. Ridgefield's first minister had known the Stebbinses when he himself grew up in Northampton. Benjamin was a tanner, one who created leather; it was a trade that would be important in the new community of Ridgefield.

In 1721, the proprietors granted Mr. Stebbins a plot at the head of Main Street and six years later, he built a house there.

"In its day, the Stebbins house was one of the famous buildings for miles around," wrote historian George L. Rockwell. "The old house was scarred with cannon shot, and bullets themselves were plainly visible, embedded in its timbers."

That's because during the Battle of Ridgefield in April 1777, the house served as part of the local patriots' barricade of the British, who were on their way from Danbury to the sea at Westport. It also served as a hospital for the injured.

Samuel G. Goodrich, the famous 19th Century author under the pen name of "Peter Parley," was born in Ridgefield in 1793 and knew the Stebbins family well. On a visit here in 1855, he wrote: "Master Stebbins' house – from its elevated position at the head of the street, seeming like the guardian genius of the place – still stands, venerable alike from its dun complexion, its antique form, and its historical remembrances... It almost saw the birth of Ridgefield; it has probably looked down upon the building of every other edifice in the street. It has presided over the fight of 1777. Close by, (General Benedict) Arnold's horse was shot under him, and he, according to tradition, made a flying leap over a six-barred gate and escaped.

"The old house I found embowered in trees – some primeval elms, spreading their wide branches protectingly over the roof, stoop and foregrounds; others – sugar maples, upright symmetrical and deeply verdant, as is the wont of these beautiful children of the American forest. Other trees – apples, pears, peaches and plums, bending with fruit – occupied the orchard grounds back of the house.

"The garden at the left seemed a jubilee of tomatoes, beets, squashes, onions, cucumbers, beans, and pumpkins. A vine of the latter had invaded a peach tree, and a huge oval pumpkin, deeply ribbed, and now emerging from its bronze hue into golden yellow, swung aloft as if to proclaim the victory. By the porch was a thick clambering grapevine, presenting its purple bunches almost to your mouth, as you enter the door.

Master Stebbins

One of the best known of the clan was one of Goodrich's teachers, Samuel, who taught at the Center School on Main Street when Goodrich was a 10-year-old pupil.

"He was a man with a conciliating stoop in the shoulders, a long body, short legs, and a swaying walk. He was, at this period, some 50 years old, his hair being thin and silvery, and falling in well-combed rolls, over his coat-collar... Breeches and kneebuckles, blue-mixed stockings, and shoes with bright buckles, seemed as much a part of the man as his head and shoulders. On the whole, his appearance was that of a middleclass gentleman of the olden time, and he was in fact what he seemed.

"This seminary of learning for the rising aristocracy of Ridgefield was a wooden edifice, 30 by 20 feet, covered with brown clapboards, and except an entry, consisted of a single room. Around, and against the walls, ran a continu-

ous line of seats, fronted by a continuous writing-desk. Beneath were the depositories for books and writing materials...

"The larger scholars were ranged on the outer sides, at the desks; the smaller fry of a-b-c-darians were seated in the center. The master was enshrined on the east side of the room, contrary, be it remembered, to the law of the French savans, which places dominion invariably in the west. Regular as the sun, Master Stebbins was in his seat at nine o'clock, and the performances of the school began.

"According to the Catechism – which, by the way, we learned and recited on Saturday – the chief end of man was to glorify God and keep his commandments; according to the routine of this school, one would have thought it to be reading, writing and arithmetic, to which we might add spelling. From morning to night, in all weathers, through every season of the year, these exercises were carried on with the energy, patience, and perseverance of a manufactory.

"Master Stebbins respected his calling; his heart was in his work; and so, what he pretended to teach, he taught well. When I entered the school, I found that a huge stride had been achieved in the march of mind since I had left West Lane (schoolhouse). Webster's Spelling-book had taken the place of Dilworth, which was a great improvement. The drill in spelling was very thorough, and applied every day to the whole school. I imagine that the exercises might have been amusing to the stranger, especially as one scholar would sometimes go off in a voice as grum as that of a bull-frog, while another would follow in tones as fine and piping as a peet-weet. The blunders, too, were often ineffectually ludicrous; even we children would sometimes have tittered, had not such an enormity been certain to have brought out the birch."

Master Stebbins, who died in 1836, fought in the Revolution on the side of the patriots along with two of his brothers, Thomas and Joseph. A fourth brother, Josiah, chose to be a Tory, a fact that figured in the plot of "King or Congress," a play by Ridgefielder Norman Myrick performed during the town's celebration of the nation's Bicentennial in 1975 and 1976.

It also figured prominently in "The Battle of Ridgefield," a lengthy poem or "personal narrative," by Anton S. Anderson, also written on the occasion of the Bicentennial:

*I, Josiah Stebbins, son of Benjamin
Stebbins, cowerer in the attic,
was, in my own way, responsible for
the death of these men.
I would like to say that I went
to Trumbull, a small town much bereft
of men on my account and married
the widow of one or the other
but such is not the case. I, that
fine April morning, led the British
to Ridgefield, while my brothers,
Thomas, Joseph and Samuel, fought
with the rebels.*

*Did I fight for my King out of a sense
of loyalty or dislike for my kin?*

*Did I, only loyal son, heed the urging
of a semi-senile father and run to
Compo Beach to lead the British
to our town and make it famous
for future generations?
Some secret impulse drove me,
as it drove these other men
to commit my acts of treason or
loyalty and so speed death to
some.*

These were all children of the Stebbins house, a landmark that (as Rockwell put it, “alas!”) was torn down in 1892 to make way for George M. Olcott’s mansion, Casagmo. Where the house stood, the Olcotts planted an American beech and an ornamental maple. The house’s old hearthstone, bearing the date 1727, was placed beneath the entrance gateway and in the walls of the terrace of the gardens.

The bullet-marked front door of the house is now held by the Keeler Tavern Museum. How it got there is a story itself. George Olcott had stuck it in the cellar of the Casagmo mansion, where it sat for years.

After the death of Mary Olcott, his daughter, in 1962, Ridgefield native Robert A. Lee got to worrying about the future of the relic. He knew it was in the Casagmo cellar and he doubted that Miss Olcott’s heirs would care about it. So Lee technically stole it, showing up one day and loading it onto his car. He took it to his family’s 18th Century homestead in Farmingville. There the door remained for several years until Lee finally decided to give it to the Ridgefield Library and Historical Association.

Around 45 years ago, as it was moving its focus away from the historical side of its original mission, the library donated the door to the Keeler Tavern Museum.

STEBBINS’ CORNER

Stebbins’ Corner is a locality mentioned in a single 1738 deed from Benjamin Benedict Jr. to John Sturdevant.

Main Street used to veer eastward into Casagmo, in front of the old Stebbins house, and then northerly and northwesterly to the vicinity of Pound Street. Perhaps this was the “corner.” Or it may have been around the intersection of Danbury, Limestone and Haviland Roads, where the Stebbins family had farmland.

STEEP BROOK

Steep Brook is another ancient Ridgefield name that has disappeared. The brook it applies to has almost done the same.

In 1719, the proprietors granted Amos Whittamore three acres “west from Benj. Stebbins home lott on ye west of ye Steep Brook, bounded east by highway.” This would have been on the east side of today’s Casagmo, between Main and Grove Streets.

A 1722 deed from the proprietors to Matthew Saintjohn transferred three acres “lying where ye Steep Brook empties itself into ye Great Swamp...”

The two deeds make it easy to identify the brook as the one that rises between Main Street and East Ridge, flows northerly through the Boys’ Club

pond, by Ridgefield Supply, through Casagmo, where it supplied an old estate duck pond, and under Grove Street, whence it drops down to run by the sewer plant and to Great Swamp. For a good portion of its trip nowadays, the water flows underground in pipes.

In all, this short stream drops about 125 feet in elevation – from 700 feet above sea level around its source to 575 feet at Great Swamp. However, much of the drop, from 650 to 590 feet, occurs just after it goes under Grove Street, and this 60-foot fall in a short distance probably sparked the name.

Steep Brook may have been the site of the town's first mill. At the proprietors' meeting Dec. 23, 1714, the landowners voted that Joseph Keeler, Ebenezer Smith, Matthew Saintjohn, James Benedict "and their associates... shall have liberty to build or erect a saw mill at Steep Brook or any other stream where it shall not prejudice the privileges and public interests of ye town."

There are indications, however, that the earliest mill was built on the East Branch of the Silvermine River that flows out of the village – in the same latitude, but a mile or so to the south – and was situated just south of the intersection of Whipstick Road and Wilton Road East. Perhaps Steep Brook could not supply enough year-round water to power a mill.

According to oldtimers, the Steep Brook used to be more sizable than it is today. Development around the village, which has changed drainage patterns, has probably shrunk the stream; various catch basins in the road funnel the rainwater in other directions.

Before the settlement of the town, the native Indians used to have a small village along its banks near The Elms Inn backland so it must have been a fairly steady supplier of water, though not enough to support a mill.

STILL ROAD

Still Road is an old highway that runs between Haviland Road and Stonehenge Road and which once continued much farther eastward.

The name usually mystifies Ridgefielders, who wonder about its origin. There are plenty of "still" names in Connecticut, but most are applied to water, such as the Still River in Danbury and Still Pond in Farmington.

It is said that most of these names reflect calmness. In the case of the Still River, the name reportedly has to do with the fact that the stream drops very little in elevation as it travels from its sources in Ridgebury and New York State eastward and then northerly through Danbury to meet the Housatonic River in New Milford.

Ridgefield's Still Road has another — some might say, intoxicating — origin. It has long been suspected that Still Road once had a still along it. A still, of course, is a device to distill alcoholic beverages.

The late Harold Ritch, a native of town who grew up in that area, recalled in 1975 that a fellow named O'Brien used to go around in the 1920s, picking up apples, with which he made applejack. He lived on Still Road and it was rumored that he had a still.

Perhaps. But there's a more likely origin, the evidence for which appears in an 1873 deed. In that transfer between Hull Keeler and Philip B. Keeler of 7½ acres in the Still Road neighborhood, Hull Keeler reserved "the water privilege on said land for the use of my distillery." According to Silvio Bedini, this distillery produced cider brandy. (The fact that the distillery needed water suggests

that maybe some of those Still Rivers and Ponds were more alcoholic than placid in origin.)

Some might wonder what purpose Still Road serves since Haviland Road is available to take one to Route 7, the old Sugar Hollow Turnpike. I believe Still Road was the original eastern end of Haviland Road and the western end of Pickett's Ridge Road (Great Pond Road). In the 1700s, this east-west route was part of the main highway to Danbury, carrying mail and stage traffic before the road through the Sugar Hollow was built around 1800. It is likely that the original route was across Haviland till it met Still, then followed Still across modern Route 7 (which was not built until the 1830s) and up Fire Hill, crossing into Redding and meeting Pickett's Ridge via Fire Hill Road. The straighter and a little less hilly eastern Haviland and western Pickett's Ridge route was built later to replace this old route.

When the turnpike was built, it incorporated a portion of the old Still Road. That portion is today the southern leg of Stonehenge Road (*q.v.*). All of Stonehenge Road was originally part of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike; the present straighter path of Route 7 up the hill to the traffic light at Haviland and Pickett's Ridge was cut through, probably the 1930s, to make auto travel easier (but far less scenic).

Thus, Still Road was at first its own highway, then probably faded out when the Haviland Road extension was built, was revived as a portion of the turnpike, and is now just a tiny remnant of the half-mile long road it once was.

Oddly enough, the portion of Still Road now called Stonehenge is named for an establishment, Stonehenge Inn, that was for decades known for serving some of the finest distilled beverages in town.

STONE RIDGE ESTATES

Stone Ridge Estates is a rare example of the Town of Ridgefield's going into the subdivision business. Not since the Proprietors — the town's original settlers — divided Main Street into house lots in 1708 has such a big development been undertaken by the local government.

The 185-acre subdivision in 1997 created 59 building lots of one to two acres in a rectangle north of George Washington Highway and east of Ridgebury Road.

Originally farmland, much of the property was acquired in the 1960s by the New England Institute for Medical Research (*see* Golf Lane), then situated on Grove Street, in the overly optimistic hopes of building a research center there. Over the years, the land was eyed for corporate offices. Around 1990, New York developer Peter Friedman acquired the property — and other parcels — and offered several plans for development. None was acceptable to the Ridgefield's Planning and Zoning Commission, so his final proposal was to build a huge, multifamily housing complex, served by sewer and water lines from Danbury, and including affordable housing units. By so doing, he stood a good chance under the state's affordable housing laws of bypassing zoning and getting approval.

In all, Friedman and some other cooperating landowners had 252 acres, including a big parcel around Shadow Lake (*q.v.*). To avoid a long and possibly costly lawsuit over zoning — and the threat of the big multifamily housing project in the middle of "rural" Ridgebury, voters in October 1996 agreed to pay Friedman and the others \$17.5 million for the 252 acres.

The town then took 185 acres and created The Stone Ridge Estates subdivision; 92 acres was left as open space. The land with the approved plan was sold to Pinnacle Ridgefield Developers LLC for \$11.7 million, recouping two thirds of the purchase price. In the end the town wound up with about 160 acres of open space, effectively costing about \$6 million — about \$37,500 an acre. Considering that ten years later, building lots in Ridgebury could fetch \$300,000 or more, and down in the village were going for \$1 million for an acre, that's not a bad deal.

Stone Ridge Estates includes Fisher Lane, Stonewall Lane, Old Trolley Road, Crosby Court, and Encampment Place. A portion of Old Trolley Road (*q.v.*) — built on the bed of an old Danbury-Ridgebury trolley line that was supposed to continue on into Westchester — existed before the development, but the other roads were new. There are also lots bordering George Washington Highway.

STONECREST MOUNTAIN

Stonecrest Mountain is the ridge on the east side of North Street, where the Stonecrest mansion once stood. Running about 650 feet above sea level, it was originally called Cops Mountain (*q.v.*)

STONECREST ROAD

Stonecrest Road off North Street was once the driveway to the Stonecrest mansion, one of the most magnificent of Ridgefield's "summer homes" built by wealthy New Yorkers at the turn of the 20th Century.

Alan Stoddard Apgar assembled the land and erected the mansion around 1900 as his summer place. Apgar concocted the name, probably based on the rocky outcroppings along the ridge. The Press in 1902 noted that the estate included an almost unheard-of two acres of lawn, as well as both electricity and gas.

A real estate sales brochure from the late 1940s describes the 230-acre estate as including a mansion with 28 rooms and nine baths, and a farm of 160 acres of "fertile, tillable land" and 15 buildings. "The spacious mansion is on a hilltop overlooking the extensive farm buildings and farm lands below. From the entrance gates there is a driveway of about three-quarters of a mile shaded by 150 maple trees, which line its sides. Several acres on the hill-top are landscaped with background of dense woods." The mansion had hot and cold running water in all of the 17 bedrooms. The 1940s price? \$75,000, equivalent to about \$775,000 in 2018!

Not long after Apgar built Stonecrest, the estate was acquired by Dr. John Watson Cox, a Mississippi native who became a physician but soon gave up medicine to pursue "politics and travel," The Press once said.

Reports over the years called him a former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, but his obituary said only he was "formerly treasurer of the National Democratic Club." But it also noted that on April 19, 1907, "Dr. Cox had the late Williams Jennings Bryan as his guest in Ridgefield. Through his efforts the people of Ridgefield had the opportunity to meet this distinguished man. A public reception was held in Ridgefield Town Hall, which was thronged with people to hear Mr. Bryan. Upon the conclusion of the address, the people availed themselves of the chance to shake hands with Dr. Cox's prominent and popular guest."

Bryan, of course, was the golden-tongued orator and congressman, the only Democrat to run three times for president and lose all three. He later became Woodrow Wilson's secretary of state and the lawyer who opposed Clarence Darrow in the Scopes trial. Bryan twice visited Stonecrest.

For a man who had brought William Jennings Bryan to town, the first local notice of the death of Dr. Cox was not all that flattering. "Body discovered in bath at the Savoy Hotel, London," said the headline in the Aug. 30, 1928 Press. Marion Cox, his widow, who was an author of several novels and a regular contributor to magazines, continued to own the place until around 1940 when she sold the estate to Ridgefield dairy farmer Irving Conklin. She moved back to town in 1942, living on Main Street, and in 1943 married Capt. James Fay Logan and returned to Ridgefield for a while. Her papers are in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University.

The estate was acquired in the late 1949s by Joseph Young, Charles Elliott, and Francis Brown, who subdivided much of the property as Stonecrest Estates, which includes Stonecrest Road, Dowling Drive and Ridgecrest Drive. Like so many of Ridgefield's huge "summer cottages," the Stonecrest mansion was difficult to maintain. In 1949, the three subdividers decided to raze the house to sell off its parts for building materials. One day while they were using a third floor fireplace to burn unsalvageable wood, the mansion caught fire through a defective flue, and burned to the ground.

STONEHENGE ESTATES

Stonehenge Estates is a name applied to Fire Hill Acres (*q.v.*), the Jerry Tuccio subdivision situated across Route 7 from Stonehenge Road and its inn (*below*).

STONEHENGE ROAD

Stonehenge Road is an old section of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike, later Route 7, which was bypassed sometime after 1936 by the State Highway Department in order to straighten the road. The old road picked up its new name from the Stonehenge Inn. The inn in turn was named after the stone structure in England. Inn founder Victor Gilbert saw and admired Stonehenge when he was stationed with the U.S. Army on Salisbury Plain during World War II and dreamed at the time of starting an inn back in the States.

Mr. Gilbert established Stonehenge Inn in a house that was built in 1823 and had housed families who operated grist, saw and cider mills on the Norwalk River, which flows through the property. In the 1920s, Lydia (Mrs. E.P.) Holmes lived in the house and operated "The Nook," an antiques business, describing it as being on "Norwalk and Danbury Road at Holmes Corner."

Victor Gilbert acquired the house and 65 acres in 1946. He was not only a celebrated innkeeper – he called himself a "skinker" – but also a noted collector of antique clocks, which he displayed at Stonehenge. On the second floor of the town hall, near the selectmen's office, is a large, old grandfather-style clock he gave the town when he retired in 1963 and moved to the Virgin Islands.

Under Gilbert, Stonehenge became well known, especially to the antiques buffs who journeyed up and down Route 7 to visit the highway's many shops. The inn was also a stopping place of many celebrities, including Elizabeth Taylor (and then husband Michael Todd), Judy Garland, many Rockefellers, and

Mrs. Thomas Edison. Perhaps the most exotic guest was Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia.

During the 1960s, the inn became even more famous for its food under the renowned Swiss chef, Albert Stockli (1918-1972), who bought the restaurant in 1965 after having worked many years at New York's famous Four Seasons.

In June 1988, fire destroyed the original main building of the inn. The restaurant was rebuilt by David Davis and Douglas Seville. While it was long one of the most respected restaurants in Connecticut, Stonehenge closed restaurant operations in 2017. The site has become a school for golfers.

Stonehenge in England was said to have been built by the Druids (whence Druid Lane nearby and the "Druid Bar" inside Gilbert's inn). However, archaeologists now believe that Stonehenge was erected 1,000 years before the arrival of the Druids on the British Isles.

In April 2007, a flood along the Norwalk River burst the dam at **Stonehenge Pond**, a two-acre body of water on the Stonehenge Inn property, fed by the Norwalk River. The dam was replaced a year or so later.

STONEWALL LANE

Stonewall Lane is a short, dead-end road off Old Trolley Road, part of the Stone Ridge Estates (*q.v.*) subdivision in Ridgebury.

Few first-hand records describe the hard life of our settlers. Most who could write didn't have the time or inclination to leave us diaries. They did leave us signs of their labors, however, not the least of which are the countless miles of stone fences winding across our countryside.

People today sometimes wonder why stonewalls were built in the middle of the woods. The answer, of course, is that they weren't. Today's woods were yesterday's fields.

Long ago, trees were cleared from the land and the droppings of the glaciers were piled into rock walls to enclose fields and pastures. Except for the rockiest, steepest places, where woodlot trees were kept to supply fireplaces and sawmills, the town's terrain was almost as open to the sun as an Iowa cornfield.

At the turn of the 20th Century, many much more formal stone walls were added to the landscape as the owners of estates sought to decorate — and define — their borders.

In the 1990s and the 2000s, inexpensive workers from Central and South America helped spark a stone wall-building frenzy in town. Many walls were added, and some old thrown walls were removed. The new walls were little like the thrown walls of our forefathers, and most new ones were squared off and held together with cement.

There were even reports of stones being stolen to supply masons. (In May 2018, Ridgefield Police responded to a report of workers stealing rocks from walls at Bennett's Pond State Park.)

STONY BROOK

Stony Brook is apparently an early name for the Titicus River as it flows along the vicinity of Saw Mill Hill Road. It was first mentioned in an 1800 mortgage deed for land near the house of Epenetus Howe, which still stands on the northerly corner of Saw Mill Hill and North Salem Roads.

The mortgage holders, prominent citizens Philip Burr Bradley and Joshua King, loaned money to the Gilbert family for a hide-tanning operation, which included “the privilege of building a dam on the stream called Stoney Brook, a little south of the...piece of land on which (is) a tan yard. “ Here they were to produce leather for shoes, clothing and other items.

Later, John M. Smith acquired the tan yards and deeds to him in 1820 and 1836 refer to Stony Brook.

STONY HILL ROAD, TERRACE

Stony Hill Road is a dead-end road off Branchville Road, connecting along its northerly “scorpion’s tail” to Cooper Road. Easterly off Stony Hill Road runs Stony Hill Terrace, a short dead-ender.

The names, referring to the abundance of rock in the area, are often misspelled “Stoney.” In fact, the official map of the 1962 subdivision by Caye Construction Inc., incorrectly spells the word.

STRAWBERRY RIDGE ROAD

Strawberry Ridge Road, a dead-end road off the west side of lower Nod Hill Road, is part of the 1960s Twin Ridge subdivision of Giles and Barry Montgomery, although it’s not directly connected by road to the major portion of Twin Ridge. The road became town-owned in 1970.

The name was probably chosen because of the presence in the area of the common strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*), a tasty native plant found in open places.

STURDEVANT’S CLAPBOARD TREE RIDGE

When Stephen Olmsted sold his brother John 12 acres in 1751, he described it as being at “Sturdevants Clap board-tree Ridge,” certainly one of the longer names ever used for Ridgefield’s geography.

Indications are that the ridge was in eastern Farmingville, probably around the Farmingville School and/or east and south of it. The area was probably a popular place for finding oaks suitable for the clapboards to sheathe the town’s first houses.

The Sturdevant was John, whose name was also spelled Stirdevant and who was one of the first 25 proprietors of the town and the only one of Dutch ancestry. He undoubtedly held most of the land on the ridge from early divisions of proprietors’ holdings.

The “clapboard tree” is probably the oak; a 1781 deed for land elsewhere in town mentions a “clapboard oak tree” as a boundary marker. A clapboard oak is probably a good, straight one, of the best diameter suitable for making clapboards.

This process was described by J. Frederick Kelly in *The Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut* (1924): “Clapboards were ‘riven’ or split from short oak logs, usually from four to six feet in length, by means of a special tool called a froe. This tool was very much like a knife, with a heavy broad blade about 15 inches long, except that the handle, which was of wood, was offset and turned up at the right angles to the blade.

“In making clapboards, a log was stood on end and split in half with this tool. Each half was again split into halves, and then into quarters, eighths, and so on, until a number of thin pieces had been produced.

“Owing to the radial plan of splitting, each piece was wedge-shaped in section; that is, one edge of the clapboards came to a thin or ‘feather’ edge while the other, or butt side, was from three-eighths to a half inch in thickness.

“Such clapboards of riven oak were, almost without exception, nailed directly to the studs, and the ends, which necessarily met upon a vertical stud, were beveled and lapped in order to make the joint more nearly weatherproof...

“In width the early oak clapboards varied considerably, different specimens measuring from 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ to 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The commonest width appears to have been about five inches, and the ‘weather’ or exposed surface, about four inches, so that the lap was about an inch. Wider specimens were, of course, laid with greater exposure to the weather.”

(This writer’s house, which dates from the 18th Century, still has very wide clapboards — as much as eight inches of ‘weather surface’ — on its north face.)

The word “clapboard” comes from a German word, *Klappholt* (clapwood), which originally referred to oak barrel staves. A “clap” or “*Klappe*” is a flap. Thus, a clapboard is really a flapboard.

STURDEVANT’S RIDGE

It’s not surprising that a name as long as Sturdevant’s Clapboard Tree Ridge would not be popular. In fact, the Rev. Thomas Hauley’s heirs got a lot in 1745 in the Sixth 20 Acre Division, described as being “south of Stirdevants Ridge,” and Daniel Sherwood, in his will dated 1749, mentioned “Sturdevant Ridge.”

Hugh Cain, who founded a fulling mill down on the Norwalk River along Topstone Road, bought 13 acres “near the eastern side of said Ridgefield at Sturdevant’s Ridge” in 1783. This may have been at the top of what we now call “Cain’s Hill.”

Sturdevant’s Ridge was last mentioned in 1801; perhaps Cain’s Hill (*q.v.*) had begun to take over by then.

SUGAR HOLLOW TURNPIKE, THE

The Sugar Hollow Turnpike in Ridgefield was a toll road that apparently extended from Wilton north to the Danbury line, mostly along what is now Route 7. The southern part of its route in Ridgefield may have been on the path of the Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike and the northern end, on the path of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike.

Surprisingly little is known about the operations, even the routes, of the turnpikes of two centuries ago. Even experts on them admit they know little.

Turnpikes began to appear in this country in the 1790s as the need for better roads to connect towns and states became evident. We had broken ties with England and needed to manufacture more and more items that had once been imported. What’s more, the industrial age was just dawning, and the nation sorely needed routes for both raw materials and people to travel in reasonable comfort.

Though there were some government-sponsored turnpikes, private companies built and operated most of them. Connecticut, along with Virginia, was a pioneering state in turnpike construction and among the earliest toll roads in Connecticut was the Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike, incorporated in 1795.

The southern end of this road was in central Norwalk, at the Post Road. The northern end was in today's Bethel, which, back in 1795, was a parish of Danbury. The turnpike is believed to have generally followed the path of today's Route 7 from Norwalk, through Wilton Parish to Georgetown, then passed through today's Branchville section of Ridgefield on what is now called West Branchville Road, and on north via today's Route 7 to Simpaug Turnpike, which carried it through Redding to Route 53 and on the Bethel section of Danbury. The pike was 18 miles long and apparently had only one tollgate!

However, indications are that by the early 1800s, the company was in financial trouble and was not properly maintaining the road.

In May 1829, the General Assembly passed a resolution incorporating the Sugar Hollow Turnpike Road Company, which apparently took over some of the Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike, and added a new stretch of highway. An official description of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike had it "commencing near the dwelling house late of Azor Belden, deceased, in Wilton, in said county, on the Norwalk and Danbury Road, or at some point between said dwelling house and Georgetown bridge in said Reading [Redding], inclusive; thence running northerly or northwesterly through the Mountain gap, or by some proper route, to intersect the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike Road near the dwelling house of Thomas Sherwood, in said Ridgefield, on said turnpike road through Sugar Hollow, so called, across the outlet of Mill Plain Pond, by Elias Birchard's store in said Ridgefield, to the line of the State of New York south of Isaac Wixton's dwelling house."

The wording suggests that the new Sugar Hollow Turnpike was using portions of not only the Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike, but also the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike.

The section between today's intersection of Route 7 and Simpaug Turnpike (originally the Danbury and Norwalk road) and the intersection of Routes 7 and 35 was new roadway, providing an important link between two older, struggling and possibly defunct roads.

This combination of roads provided better access to Long Island Sound's transportation possibilities for western Danbury and beyond; in Danbury the Sugar Hollow Turnpike continued far beyond the Danbury and Ridgefield road, running across today's Danbury Airport northwesterly via Kenosia Avenue through Mill Plain, over Joe's Hill Road and to the New York State border.

The Sugar Hollow itself is the narrow valley between Wooster Mountain and Moses Mountain, probably so called because early settlers tapped the maples for syrup and especially sugar. Route 7 from I-84 through the valley to the Ridgefield line is today called Sugar Hollow Road. However, the turnpike was probably called Sugar Hollow, not because it ran through the hollow, but because it ran to it — just as Danbury Road is the road to Danbury and North Salem Road is the road to North Salem.

The incorporators of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike — David Banks, Sturges Selleck, William St. John, and Monson Hoyt — received permission to build the road, and the power to virtually condemn land needed for its route. (However, the state had to first approve that route; consequently, land could not be recklessly confiscated.)

While the company got permission in 1829, it is not clear when the road was actually built. An 1832 deed mentions the turnpike as existing in Mill Plain

and an 1835 deed speaks of the Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike Road. It is therefore possible that the northern leg was built first.

The Sugar Hollow Turnpike Company apparently ran into some difficulties with the operators of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike. In 1835, the General Assembly passed a resolution, naming a committee to look into the “laying out of a road through Sugar Hollow so as not to interfere with the road of the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike Company except by crossing the same...”

The committee apparently found no new route, for there is no evidence that a second turnpike was ever run through the valley – it was tough enough to find room for one, what with the narrowness of the gap and the sizable areas of swamp. Moreover, building two toll roads a couple miles long and only a few feet apart would be rather wasteful as well as expensive. Thus, the two companies apparently ironed out their difficulties, or Sugar Hollow took over Danbury and Ridgefield.

Turnpikes used gates to assure that travelers stopped to pay their tolls. Some were literally pikes – long wooden bars – that turned on a stile. The precise locations of the tollgates for the Sugar Hollow Turnpike are not known. According to historian Edward Liljegren, a tollhouse for the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike stood just about on the Danbury-Ridgefield line, on the west side of the road. In 2005, the site was bulldozed for the widening of Route 7.

The tolls charged for travel on the turnpike are known, for they were set by the General Assembly in the 1829 resolution:

On each four-wheel pleasure carriage drawn by two horses, & on each stage	25 cents
On each two wheel pleasure carriage, drawn by one horse	12.5 cents
On each additional horse in a pleasure carriage, and on each person and horse	4 cents
On each sled, sleigh, car or wagon, drawn by one horse, ox or mule, or one yoke of oxen	6.3 cents
On each additional horse, ox or mule	2.5 cents
On horses, cattle, mules, each	1 cent
On sheep and swine, each	5 mills

In just their face value, those tolls seem low. But when you consider the relative value of money then, traveling by pleasure vehicle on a turnpike was rather expensive (12.5 cents then was equal to about \$3 today).

There were exceptions. The resolution also said that “persons travelling to and from public worship, funerals, society, town, or elector’s meetings; all officers and soldiers going to or returning from military duty by order of law; all persons travelling to or from grist-mills, or in their ordinary farming business, shall not be liable to pay toll at said gate or gates, but shall be exempted therefrom.”

The first Ridgefield mention of a “Sugar Hollow” occurs in a 1796 deed when Samuel and Phebe Dibble of Danbury sold Elijah Benedict of Danbury land in Ridgefield “at the Boggs so called...one piece known by the Sugar Hollow Mountain.” This “piece,” however, may not be at the same Sugar Hollow, for the description suggests that this locality may have been in what is now western Danbury, near Middle River District, or Boggs Pond.

Sugar Hollow Turnpike continued to be used as a name through much of the 19th Century, eventually being replaced by the informal Danbury and Norwalk Road and then by Ethan Allen Highway or Route 7. When the company stopped charging tolls has not been determined, but in his book, *The Turnpikes of New England* (1919), Frederic J. Wood reports, “The Danbury and Ridgefield’s charter was repealed in 1860 and, since the two roads were so interwoven, it seems probable that the Sugar Hollow became free at the same time, although no act to that effect has been found.” (Wood, incidentally, misunderstood the description of the path of the road and incorrectly believed that the Sugar Hollow Turnpike came through Ridgefield center via today’s Route 33 and 35.)

Clearly, the arrival of the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad killed the toll roads. Built in 1850, the railroad followed much of the same route and was able to transport freight and passengers much more quickly, efficiently, comfortably and probably cheaply than the toll road. Freight wagons had, after all, been among the most regular and most profitable customers of the turnpike, and loss of their business spelled doom for the turnpikes.

Another hollow

A curious deed was recorded in 1875 when John H. Smith of North Salem, N.Y., sold Patrick Lynch of Ridgefield land “near the ‘Sugar Hollow’ cart path.” This land was near the New York State line “Where the state line crosses the Ponded Swamp Road so called.”

According to our research, the only Ponded Swamp in Ridgefield was on Titicus or West Mountain, off Barrack Hill or Old Sib Roads. There could have been another up north of Mill Plain, where the old turnpike met the New York State line; however, this is unlikely. Moreover, Smiths had been big landowners in the Barrack Hill Road-Ponded Swamp area for many years.

What was this “Sugar Hollow Cart Path,” so far from the Sugar Hollow Turnpike and seemingly off in the middle of nowhere? Probably just a local name for a path through yet another Sugar Hollow, where people went to tap maples in late winter for their sweet treats.

SUGAR LOAF MOUNTAIN ROAD

Sugar Loaf Mountain Road runs between Regan Road and Old Stagecoach Road at Robert Kaufman’s Ridgefield Knolls, a subdivision from the late 1950s.

According to Edgar P. Bickford, surveyor on the project, the name was found on an old map of the area. It was probably originally applied to the 970-foot-high, rounded hill to the east of the Knolls, better known as Barlow Mountain (*q.v.*) within the state-owned Pierrepont Park.

George L. Rockwell mentions the name in his history, published in 1927, but the name has not been found on the Ridgefield land records through 1880. Thus, possibly of fairly modern origin, the name may have even been coined by Seth Low Pierrepont, who owned the mountaintop (*see Pierrepont Pond*), or by some farmer from whom he bought land early in the century.

No better explanation of this name, common in the United States, can be found than in George R. Stewart’s *Names upon the Land*:

“Sugar was (in early colonial times)...no common food, and even in England men sweetened mostly with honey. The sugar that men knew came in the form of a large cake, sticking up to a high rounded point at the end.

“So, within two years after Roger Williams had come to Providence, men had named a Sugar Loaf Hill not far off. From the first hill the name spread until it was so common that men could even say ‘a sugar-loaf,’ meaning merely that kind of hill.

“As the years passed, sugar grew cheap and its form changed; it came to the table in bowls, and no longer stood in the middle, like a jutting-up mountain above a plain.

“But still men said Sugar-Loaf Hill, though they did not know why, and though the only sugar-loaf they had ever seen came in small cubes. Thus the name may outlast the thing.”

In *Home Life in Colonial Times*, Alice Morse Earle tells more about loaf sugar: “It was purchased ever in great loaves or cones which averaged in weight about nine to 10 pounds apiece. One cone would last thrifty folk for a year.

“This pure clear sugar-cone always came wrapped in a deep blue-purple paper, of such unusual and beautiful tint and so color-laden that in country homes it was saved and soaked, to supply a dye for a small amount of the finest wool, which was used when spun and dyed for some special choice purpose.

“The cutting of this cone of sugar into lumps of equal sizes and regular shape was distinctly the work of the mistress and daughters of the house. It was too exact and too dainty a piece of work to be intrusted to clumsy and wasteful servants. Various simply shaped sugar-shears or sugar-cutters were used...”

SUMMIT LANE

Summit Lane, running between Bob Hill Road and Rockcrest Drive, is part of the Ridgfield Knolls, the late 1950s development of Robert (the Bob of Bob Hill) Kaufman. The road is so called because of its elevation; at its highest point, the road is 860 feet above sea level, nearly the highest location at the subdivision.

SUNSET LAKE

Sunset Lake is a body of water that exists only on paper – specifically, on the official town map of 1960 and on mid-1950s subdivision maps for Harold Goldsmith’s Lakeland Hills subdivision (*q.v.*) off Bennett’s Farm Road.

Mr. Goldsmith had created Lake Windwing and had planned the second pond to serve houses at Sunset Road and South Shore Drive. The second lake, however, was never completed. Nonetheless, because the lake was planned at the time the town map was being drawn up, Sunset Lake appeared thereon.

SUNSET LANE

Sunset Lane, part of an old road, runs off Grove Street to Prospect Street Extension.

Because it paralleled very closely the old train line that ran into Ridgfield from 1870 until 1964, the road had long been called Railroad Avenue – probably from around 1923 when the west end of the road was subdivided by Mrs. Mary Walker. However, apparently not enthralled with the name, 13 residents petitioned the Board of Selectmen in April 1957 to have it changed to something they considered nicer. Their petition was approved in January 1958, thus setting up confusion with Sunset Road (*below*).

For many years in this century, Sunset Lane was a dead-end road. It was connected to Prospect Street when the Quail Ridge condominiums were built in the 1980s.

In recent years the population of Sunset Lane has grown tremendously, with the addition of many condominiums along its eastern end.

SUNSET DRIVE, ROAD

Sunset Road (or Drive — both names have been used) was the name of a road that runs off Bennett's Farm Road opposite Ridgebury School to the entrance of the Little League fields, and to South Shore Drive. An official town map shows it as Sunset Drive while other documents use Sunset Road.

In 1972, the selectmen extended the coverage of the name South Shore Drive to include Sunset Road, thus eliminating the confusion that was occurring with Sunset Lane. Sunset Road was older than Sunset Lane, and would seem to have had "seniority." However, many fewer people lived on the road than on the lane, so this change caused less inconvenience.

Sunset, incidentally, is not one of the more creative — or meaningful — names for a road (outside of city streets amid skyscrapers, what road anywhere doesn't have sunsets?). Nonetheless, a survey a few years ago of Fairfield County towns found that Sunset names were among the most plentiful: 21 of 23 towns has a Sunset Lane, Avenue, Road, Street, etc. Probably by now, the two stragglers have picked up theirs, too.

The road, which has also been called Sunset Lane on some maps, was accepted as a town highway under the name, Sunset Road, in 1957.

SYCAMORE LANE

Sycamore Lane is a dead-end road off West Lane near the Peter Parley Schoolhouse. It is part of a subdivision called Sunset Acres, filed in 1967 by Charles H. Daudt, who lived in Windover, the large house on the property. However, Morgan X. Helie developed most of the houses in the 1970s.

The road did not meet planning and zoning standards at the time of subdivision approval, and town officials stipulated that the road would always remain private. Nonetheless, in 1974, residents asked to have Sycamore Lane made a town road. The request was denied, but planning and zoning subsequently changed its road standards to allow less-wide "tertiary roads." And after a 1976 petition, the road was accepted by Town Meeting in 1977.

Sycamore Lane is named for the trees on the property. The sycamore is considered one of the largest tree species in the eastern United States, reaching as high as 175 feet and 600 years of age (the tulip tree is occasionally taller). American Indians dug canoes from sycamore trunks — one is reported to have been 65 feet long and to have weighed 4.5 tons. The wood is hard and has been used for furniture, barrels, boxes, and even chopping blocks.

Windover, the estate subdivided for this road, once belonged to John Ames Mitchell, a novelist and editor who in 1883 founded the original *Life* magazine. This popular publication lasted more than 40 years. He and the magazine sponsored the Fresh Air Camp in Branchville on what is now the site of Branchville School, bringing New York children to the country in the early years of the 20th Century.

Mitchell, who died in 1918, also donated the stone watering-trough, which now stands in the intersection of West and Olmstead Lanes, not far from his

house. An interesting feature of this trough, which originally stood near the middle of the intersection of Main and Catoonah Streets, is a small opening in the bottom, designed to allow passing dogs to have a drink. With the day of both the horse and the roaming dog gone by, the trough is now used as a flower planter.

In the 1990s, the Windover carriage barn was purchased and restored by Abe Puchall, a Mitchell aficionado who operates The Herald Square Hotel on 31st Street in New York City – a building that housed the Mitchell's Life magazine at the turn of the 20th Century. A few years later, Puchall acquired Windover itself, and restored the house.

SYLVAN DRIVE

Sylvan Drive, a short thoroughfare, runs between Lakeside Drive and Woodland Way at the Ridgefield Lakes.

The name appears on some maps as “drive” and others as “road”; the official town map of 1958 lists it as “road.”

Planning and zoning regulations call for using “drive” for “local residential streets” that are not dead-end. “Road” is for a “major or collector street or a local street in a business zone.” Thus, drive is probably the better version.

Sylvan means “wooded” or “abounding in trees,” and comes from the Latin, *sylva*, meaning forest.

T

TABLE ROCK ESTATES

Table Rock Estates is a 1974 subdivision of 10 lots by Marcelino Lavin, a Wilton developer. The 34 acres are on the east side of St. John's Road.

The "table rock" refers to a portion of the widespread outcropping of ledge for which the "Flat Rock" (*q.v.*) district was named in the 18th and 19th Centuries, and which has various surfacings on the property and in the neighborhood. According to a local tradition, American Indians used certain flat rocks on or about this property to grind their corn or grain.

It was a table rock because it was flat like the surface of a table.

The name appears elsewhere in the state; at least two towns – New Hartford and Fairfield – have localities named Table Rock.

The development is served by private drives and thus the name of Table Rock appears only on subdivision maps and property deeds. There is no pre-1900 appearance of the name on the land records and the developer is said to have made it up to reflect the local legend that the Indians used flat rocks here.

TACKORA ROAD

Tackora Road, according to a 1907 property map, was another name for Old West Mountain Road. If the map was correct, the road was probably so called because it was part of an old Indian trail – see below.

TACKORA TRAIL

Tackora Trail, an old highway, may be part of an Indian trail. Traveling across higher and drier land than the present Route 116 that it parallels, Tackora Trail is actually a straighter route than North Salem Road, and thus may have been built as a bypass to swamplier sections of North Salem Road. It existed by 1856 when it appears on a map, but clearly did not predate North Salem Road as a major route because there are virtually no antique houses along it while the parallel section of North Salem Road has several old houses and remains of old houses, some dating from the early 1700s.

Tackora Trail may be, in part at least, a section of an old Indian path that the settlers for some reason opted to bypass when they laid out the road *from* town to the mill at Lake Mamasasco. Much of North Salem Road is believed to have been based on an old Indian trail.

Whatever the road's origins, its name is fairly modem – not appearing in any pre-1890 deeds. Nonetheless, it was an excellent choice to commemorate one of the American Indians who sold much of what is today Ridgefield to the settlers. On the first deed of sale, in 1708, he appears as one of nine signers, the first of whom was Catoonah, "sachem of Ramapoo Indians." He was listed as Naranoka, which is one of the many versions of his name.

In the second purchase in 1715, the settlers bought a chunk of land up by the Ridgefield High School and westerly into what is now New York. On this deed, the only signer was "Tackora alias Oreneca, Indian, one of the native

proprietors of these tracks of unpurchased lands.” In the third purchase in 1721, he was “Tackore, otherwise called Norreneca indian.”

And from the record, that’s all we really know about Tackora, except that he had a house somewhere in the territory of the third purchase – along the upper Titicus River. For here, says the deed, the river ran to “Tackore Old House.” However, Tackora must have been a powerful Indian to have been involved in the sale of so much of the original land. Silvio Bedini says he, too, was a sachem, but of the Titicus Village, instead of the Ramapoo Village, in the Tankiteke sachemdom of the Wappinger tribe, part of the Algonquin linguistic family.

According to tradition, there was a well-established Indian trail in the west central part of town. It began at Mud Pond in Pound Ridge, went through South Salem and, reports George L. Rockwell, ran “over West Mountain, passing through what is today called Oreneca Trail. This trail led up the back road ... to Round Pond, and thence over the mountain to Lake Mamanasco.” It is quite possible that the northern section of Tackora Trail was part of this path to Mamanasco, for it once connected to Old West Mountain Road and it runs very near the southern end of the lake.

Note that Oreneca Road still bears one of his other names and that at least one mapmaker had labeled Old West Mountain Road with his name – both plus Tackora Trail perhaps indicative of the traditional belief in the route as an Indian trail.

It has not been determined exactly when this road began being called Tackora Trail, but it was early in this century. Nonetheless, a 1908 map erroneously labels it Scotts Ridge Road, and other early 20th Century sources call it Lakeview Road or Lane.

Today, the most prominent “resident” of Tackora Trail is the Society of St. Pius X whose St. Ignatius Retreat House, Padre Pio Academy, and Christ the King Church are situated at the north end. Earlier, the retreat house had been owned by the Jesuits, who called it Manresa, and in the 1940s and 50s, was the Mamanasco Lake Lodge, a resort operated by the Hilsenrad family. Before that, it was owned in the 1930s by mobster George Scalise.

The house was built early in the century by Courtlandt Palmer Dixon and his wife Louise Polhemus Dixon. Mrs. Dixon was a niece of Maria Theodora van Wyck Schenck, who with her husband Henry de Bevoise Schenck, built the neighboring mansion, Nydeggen. The two buildings are very similar in design, almost twins.

Nydeggen, much less visible today than its twin, is located at the end of Christopher Road, which runs off Tackora Trail and was once one of the estate’s driveways.

Both buildings overlook Lake Mamanasco.

TACORES BOGGS

A 1753 deed mentions land “lying west of Tacores Boggs,” probably wetlands along the upper Titicus, named for the fact that Tackora once lived there - or at least because he once owned the boggs.

TALLY-HO ROAD

Tally-Ho Road is a dead-end road off the north side of Haviland Road, and serves Glen Acres, a 32-lot subdivision of 35.4 acres by James Franks. The land had been the Elizabeth Glendinning farm.

Tally-ho is a phrase uttered by horsebacked hunters when a fox is sighted. Probably stemming from a French phrase for the same situation, the term came into English use around the turn of the 19th Century in England. While fox hunting has been practiced in Ridgebury for many years, tally-ho's connection with this property is unclear. Someone evidently liked horses, or disliked foxes.

For more about the houses built on Tally-Ho Road, *see* Glen Acres.

TAMARACK, MOUNT

Mount Tamarack is the name for a hill in New Patent, and occasionally pops up in the Ridgefield land records. It is in territory once part of Ridgefield and now in western Danbury.

Like Mounts Robinson and Sheppison, mentioned earlier, this one appears in deeds connected with the division of New Patent land in the 1740s. A 1745 deed describes it as very near the New York colony line and other deeds place it south of Jo's Hills. Thus, it is probably just south of today's 1-84 near the state line.

A 1769 deed mentions "Tammerack Swamp," probably a nearby locality.

The tamarack or American larch is a conifer that reaches 40 to 80 feet in height and was once important chiefly for making fences and, later, railroad ties and utility poles. Tamaracks are among the few conifers that drop their needles each fall.

TANGLEWOOD COURT

Tanglewood Court is a short, dead-end road off the west side of Wilton Road West. The road serves a nine-lot, one-acre subdivision of 10.3 acres, plans for which were approved in 1967.

"The bushes and the woods were a tangle," said Paul J. Morganti, who with his brothers John, Joseph and Robert, subdivided the property and named the road.

For anyone who has gone hiking through a new forest that not too many years earlier was a field, the name tanglewood is nicely descriptive. Since the trees are not yet tall and dense, many varieties of shrubs live on the woodland floor along with the young trees.

In fact, one of the hazards for hikers is a variety of viburnum (*V. alnifolium*), found in low woods. It is such a good tripper that it's sometimes called tangle-legs or tangle-foot. And it's not difficult to understand why Tanglewood Forest in Kent is so called.

Tanglewood Court became a town road in 1969.

TANNERY HILL ROAD

Tannery Hill Road is a short road, ending in a circle, off the west side of North Street nearly opposite Mimosa. It serves a small development known as Tannery Hill, that was subdivided in 1960 by James Hackert's Arnor Corporation, and consists of 11 lots cut from about 12 acres. Tannery Hill Road became a town road in 1962.

The name stems from the belief that an old house on the road was once associated with the tanning business. According to one account in 1968 when the house was severely damaged by fire, the place had been built some 150 years earlier by Jabez Mix Gilbert, operator of the large Titicus tanning yards, and was called the last remaining building connected with the tannery operations.

Maps from 1856 and 1867 show no buildings in this vicinity (old maps usually listed all major dwellings in town and their owners), so if it had been built by then, it may have been rather inconspicuous.

It is possible that the tannery recalled in the road's name was actually operated on or about the property by Lewis Smith. Silvio Bedini, writing in *Ridgefield in Review*, learned that Smith had a tannery on North Street at one time, and old maps show at least two Smith houses along North Street in this neighborhood.

Tanning is the process of converting hide to leather, and Ridgefield once turned out large quantities of leather, particularly for Western markets. The process involved removing the flesh and hair from the hides that had been brought to the tannery by farmers from Ridgefield and surrounding towns. The hides were then soaked for two months in oak bark "liquor" to "tan" them, after which they were split, dried and finished.

In the 1800s, when someone spoke of "The Tannery," they almost always were referring to Gilbert's operation at the southwest corner of North Salem Road and Saw Mill Hill Road. Although there were several tanning works around town – and many farmers did the whole process at home as something to keep them busy in the winter – the largest operation was at Titicus.

While some sources report this operation as being founded by Jabez "Uncle Mix" Gilbert, it had been previously established – or at least previously operated – by Philip Burr Bradley and Joshua King, two well-known veterans of the American Revolution. When Epenetus How bought a small parcel in Titicus in 1799, the deed notes "King and Bradleys Tan Yard" bordered the property on the west.

In 1806, Mr. Gilbert acquired the operation, which then included a bark house and tan vats, and it was being called "J.M. Gilbert's Tan Works" in 1849. Soon after that, Gilbert died and David H. Valden (whose elegant Victorian house on North Salem Road is now owned by the Eppoliti family) acquired the operation in 1856, by which time it included an "office, or store, currying shop, beam house, bark mill, bark shed, vats, tannery pond..."

Big factories and bigger mills, plus greater sources of hides from Western markets, probably led to the demise of Ridgefield's relatively modest tanning business. Danbury once had many tanneries to support its huge hatting industry, and there was at least one tannery operating in Bethel until the 1960s or so.

TANNERY POND

Tannery Pond was a small pond to hold water for the Gilbert or Valden tan yards, and was situated on the Titicus River, south of Saw Mill Hill Road and a little west of North Salem Road. It is cited in several deeds from the 1830s to the 1860s.

TANTON HILL ROAD

Tanton Hill Road, both ends of which connect to Danbury Road, is the earliest example of commemorating a first selectman by means of a road name.

The road, developed in the 1950s, was originally called River Road, a not-too-colorful moniker that somewhat exaggerated the status of the brook that flows off the west side of the road. The stream is technically the upper reaches of the Norwalk River, but it's rather small here and, in this area, has also been called the Ridgefield Brook.

In 1956, the neighborhood petitioned the Board of Selectmen to change the road's rather plain-Jane name. On Jan. 5, 1957, the question came before the board, one of whose members was Harvey D. Tanton, then a soon-to-retire selectman. Selectman Paul J. Morganti moved that the road be changed to Tanton Hill Road to recognize the retiring member's service. Harvey Tanton himself seconded the motion, and so the name was changed. Despite the seeming immodesty of the vote, the name is a suitable one, for Tanton had in fact lived on the road for many years and had operated a nursery there.

A native of Prince Edward Island off Nova Scotia, Tanton was born in 1901 and grew up in his homeland before going off to study landscaping in Cleveland, Ohio. He came to Ridgefield in 1935 to be a foreman for the huge Outpost Nurseries, the firm that owned most of the land along Danbury Road from the village north to the Danbury town line, and which owned and developed what is now the Tanton Hill Road neighborhood. Tanton later became superintendent of Outpost, but in 1944 left to start his own general landscaping business.

A Republican, Tanton was elected first selectman in 1951, beating his neighbor, Harry E. Hull, one of the rare Democratic first selectmen, who had been in office since 1947. However, Hull had the last laugh, coming back in 1953 and 1955 to defeat Tanton, earning his third and fourth terms as first selectman. However, Tanton gained enough votes to retain a seat on the Board of Selectmen, retiring in 1957.

Tanton wasn't the only manager of Outpost to become a first selectman here; J. Mortimer Woodcock, who held the office from 1967 to 1971, had run the nurseries and later bought out what was left of Outpost, renaming it Woodcock Nurseries. Woodcock and Hull, incidentally, are the only other modern-day first selectmen to have roads named after them.

Tanton was also a member of the Parks Commission, predecessor of the Parks and Recreation Commission, and of the Masons, Rotary Club, and Horticultural Society. He died in 1960, aged 59, after a long illness.

Tanton Hill Road, sometimes erroneously spelled Taunton Hill Road, was subdivided by Outpost, lot-by-lot starting around 1955.

TAPORNECK COURT

Taporneck Court runs off the easterly side of North Salem Road near the New York State line, part of the 1982 Scott Ridge subdivision by the Gavin Company.

The name comes from an Indian who once owned this land, or land south of here – and was used at the recommendation of this writer to preserve the name of this American Indian, who was an important figure in the early history of the town.

TAPORNECK DIVISION

The Taporneck Division was an early subdivision of land that had been purchased in 1727 and 1729 from several Indians. On both deeds the first signer was Taporneck.

The 1727 deed begins, “We, Taporneck & Moses, Indians belonging to Wepack or long pond so called & Richard and Samm Indians belonging to am-mawogg do for and in consideration of eighteen pounds in money or goods equivalent, two guns, eighteen shillings in hand...”

This deed was for land now in New York State beginning at a point 20 miles 305 rods from Cortlandt Point on the Hudson River, a line agreed upon by a New York-Connecticut commission as the boundary between the colonies. Only four years later, this line was revised to the present boundary, and Ridgefielders lost much land, including most of what is purchased from Taporneck.

Although they were not mentioned at the beginning of the deed, Indians named Wett Hams and Ammon also signed this deed.

The 1729 sale for “a valuable reward” was for a sizable chunk of what is now Lewisboro and southeastern North Salem. Much was apparently on West Mountain. The deed was signed by Taporneck, Moses, Sam, Ammon, Wett Hams, Pawquenongi, and Crow.

Little is known of Taporneck, although his signature’s being first indicates he was a native of some stature. Catoonah and Tackora, both sachems, were also first on deeds with more than one signature. Taporneck also signed the very first deed to the settlers, in 1708.

We do know that Taporneck lived at Wepack, which the settlers very kindly translated as Long Pond, now the area of northeastern Lewisboro where Lakes Rippowam, Oscaleta, and Waccabuc are. It was an area that had been a popular fishing and hunting village for the natives.

From the time of the subdivision shortly after the purchase to as late as 1815, land in this area and on western West Mountain in Ridgefield was known as Taporneck Division or Tapornick’s Division. Like other purchases from the Indians, it had been quickly divided among the proprietors (the first settlers and major landholders – the stockholders of the town, as it were). Many parcels were then sold off to new settlers.

The word Taporneck appears in several forms in the land records, including Tapornick, Tappornik, Topornick, Tawpornick, and Tapporneck. George L. Rockwell, in his *History of Ridgefield*, misread the early settlers’ handwriting in transcribing deeds, and called him Japorneck.

TAYLOR’S CORNERS

Taylor’s Corners is an old name for the vicinity of the intersection of Still, Stonehenge and Haviland Roads, an area once well inhabited by members of the Taylor family.

Taylors had land thereabouts by the 1780s when deeds show Preserved Taylor owning property at East Meadows, a name for this area and land to the north. Preserved Taylor may not have lived here, for the records of the Congregational Church at Redding showed that in 1766, Preserved Taylor, son of Preserved Taylor, was baptized there. The father or the son may have moved into Ridgefield by the 1810s, however, for a Preserved Taylor is listed among 13

contributors to Ridgefield's purchase of a cannon or "field piece" for use in the War of 1812.

By 1856, when Clark's map of Fairfield County was published, four major buildings owned by Taylors were recorded in this area, including a house and mill by "D. Taylor," across the road from today's Stonehenge Inn, and houses by "B. Taylor" and "Mrs. Taylor" on Picketts Ridge Road, just east of Route 7.

A busy period

"D. Taylor" was probably Davis Taylor who came from Redding; in 1859, Edwin Taylor is recorded as having quit to Davis Taylor any claim he had – probably by holding a mortgage – to various land and buildings, including "the store...at Limestone." The store, probably the same that later held the Limestone post office for some years, was situated along the east side of today's Stonehenge Road, north of Still Road. Stonehenge Road in 1859 was part of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike, which later became Route 7.

Joseph Taylor later ran a flour mill just south of the store and across from today's inn. Davis Taylor probably owned it before him, and perhaps other Taylors after him. It was an old mill, dating from the 1700s.

As a name, Taylor's Corners was probably popular chiefly in the last half of the 19th Century. As Taylors disappeared from the area, so did the name.

Whence the Taylors appeared cannot be determined without some more research. However, it's a good guess the family, including Preserved, was descended from Danbury Taylors who, in turn, were descendants of Thomas Taylor, one of the eight original proprietors or settlers of Danbury. He, in turn, came from Norwalk, but had been born in Windsor. His father was John Taylor, who had come from Warwickshire, England, in 1639.

We go back to John Taylor only because it allows us to retell one of the strangest tales in early Connecticut history.

Phantom Ship

Back in the 1640s, the New Haven Colony was having difficulty competing with colonies to the south in trade with England. So landowners pooled their money and had a 150-ton ship built in Rhode Island. The ship was loaded with goods for England, and sailed in January 1647, despite difficulty in getting through the ice in New Haven harbor.

For some reason, John Taylor wanted to make a trip to England and sailed aboard this vessel, which was to become known as the "Phantom Ship."

Nothing was ever heard from the vessel after it left New Haven, and it probably sank in a winter storm. But the following June, after a severe thunderstorm, many residents of New Haven were witness to an eerie apparition.

According to the Rev. James Pierpont, a contemporary, "about an hour before sunset, a ship of like dimensions with the aforesaid, with her canvass and colours abroad (though the wind northerly), appeared in the air coming up from our harbour's mouth, which lyes southward from the town, seemingly with her sails filled under a fresh gale, holding her course north, and continuing under observation sailing against the wind for the space of half an hour.

"Many were drawn to behold this great work of God; yea, the very children cried out: 'There's a brave ship!'

"At length, crowding up as far as there is usually water sufficient for such a vessel, and so near some of the spectators as that they imagined a man might hurl a stone on board her, her main-top seemed to be blown off, but left hanging in the shrouds; then her mizzen-top; then all her masting seemed blown

away by the board; quickly after the hulk, brought unto a careen, she overset, and so vanished into a smoaky cloud, which in some time dissipated, leaving, as every where else, a clear air.

“The admiring spectators could distinguish the several colours of each part, the principal rigging, and such proportions as caused not only the generality of persons to say, ‘This was the mould of their ship, and this was her tragick end; but Mr. Davenport (a minister who had blessed the ship’s departure in January) also in publick declared to the effect: ‘That God had condescended for the quieting of their afflicted spirits, this extraordinary account of his sovereign disposal of those for whom so many fervent prayers were made continually.’”

The Rev. Cotton Mather had heard of this story, and had written to Mr. Pierpont who was a well-respected minister and a founder of Yale College. Mr. Pierpont’s response by letter, excerpted above, subsequently appeared in Mather’s *Magnalia Christia Americana*, an ecclesiastical history of New England, published in 1702.

TEA HOUSE LANE

Tea House Lane is a tertiary road serving several of the six lots in a 1998 subdivision off North Salem Road. Cecelia Ruggles divided the 18.8 acres of her homestead, and part of the road was the original driveway to her house

The name recalls the Port of Missing Men’s restaurant that stood atop nearby West or Titicus Mountain (*see below*). The subdivided land, once part of Francis D. Martin’s Far-Vu Farm, used to be cow pastures (*see Martin Park*).

TEA HOUSE ROAD

Tea House Road was a name used early in the 20th Century for what is now Old Sib Road. It is an interesting example of how an informal nickname can become formal enough to appear in deeds.

The name recalls the “Tea House,” an unofficial local name for the Port of Missing Men resort-restaurant that stood on Hunt Road, the extension of Old Sib Road in New York state, on Titicus Mountain. Henry B. Anderson, who had amassed more than 1,700 acres in Ridgefield and North Salem to accompany the place, established the resort around 1908.

Though called the “Tea House” or “Anderson’s Tea House” by the locals, the beverages served there were usually considerably stronger than tea – until Prohibition, at least. The name, in fact, may have been sort of a local joke.

Tea House Road was in use by about 1920 when it appeared on a postcard that showed “Lake, Tea House Road, Ridgefield, Conn.” Deeds written as late as 1953 used the term, which in an expanded form occasionally appeared as “Anderson’s Tea House Road.”

The name stemmed from the fact that the road was the main route from Connecticut to the resort.

The road – a stone-based highway built around 1908 by Italian immigrants – and its history are more fully discussed under Old Sib Road and Port Road (*q.v.*).

TENTH LANE

Tenth Lane is another short, dead-end road off Mamanasco Road, part of the Eight Lakes subdivision, developed on the old Port of Missing Men property (*see above*).

THIRD LANE

As above.

THOUSAND ACRE SWAMP

Winnie the Pooh had a 100 Acre Wood. Ridgefielders had the Thousand Acre Swamp, although its named size is probably as fictitious as the Pooh Bear.

Thousand Acre Swamp is an early and long-ago-abandoned name for Great Swamp (*q.v.*), the huge wetland in the east central part of town. The name appears as early as 1714 when Benjamin Willson sold Minister Thomas Hauley land “lying in and commonly known as by ye name of ye Great or Thousand Acre Swamp.” The name remained in use at least until 1758 when it last appears in a deed.

Clearly, the first settlers were impressed by the size of Great Swamp. If it were, in fact, 1,000 acres, the swamp would have represented one-twentieth of the original town, for the first and major purchase from the Indians amounted to some 20,000 acres.

Undoubtedly, Great Swamp was bigger then than it is today, when its major portion is bounded roughly by Ivy Hill Road on the south and southeast, Blackman Road on the east, Lee Road on the north, and Danbury Road, the town highway/recycling/trash transfer complex, and Prospect Ridge on the west.

While fingers of the swamp extend north of Lee Road to Haviland Road behind Fox Hill Village as well as along the Norwalk River west of Danbury Road, some land that was originally swamp was either drained or filled, reducing its size.

However, a close inspection of topographic maps indicates that the settlers either miscalculated the size of the swamp or used poetic licenses in naming it, for Great Swamp couldn’t have been more than 600 or 700 acres at most in 1708. Today, after years of filling and other environmental changes, there are about 300 acres south of Farmingville Road and perhaps 150 to the north.

Such a name was probably not unusual – for instance, there is a Thousand Acre Pond in Colchester – and served to express not precision but scope of size.

According to historian George L. Rockwell, the swamp was also called simply the Thousand Acres.

THUNDER HILL LANE

A short dead-end road off the northerly side of Barrack Hill Road, Thunder Hill Lane serves a subdivision of around 10 acres into five lots, developed about 1957 by Quinto Cassavechia and Mario Marcheggiani.

“We were tossing around names, trying to figure one out,” said former Town Clerk Dora Cassavechia, widow of Quinto. “Lo and behold, we go up there and find a sign saying ‘Thunder Hill Lane.’”

The Cassavechias had no idea where the sign came from. “We never did find out who did it,” Mrs. Cassavechia said. “But we went along with it. We thought it was quite appropriate.”

The name may recall a storm that someone associated with the property, which is fairly high up on West or Titicus Mountain. It was not based on any old formal place name.

Thunder Hill Lane became a town road in 1966. In May, three years later, Mr. Cassavechia was working at clearing some land on Thunder Hill Lane when a truck hit a tree limb, which fell and struck him on the head, killing him. He was 48 years old. A Ridgefield native and veteran of the Battle of Anzio Beachhead in World War II, he had been a longtime and well-known contractor here. His wife, Dora, who died in 2003, had spent more than 40 years in town government. She was town clerk from 1979 to 1996.

The sign on the road has long said just “Thunder Hill,” with no “Lane.” State Rep. John Frey reported in 2018: “My aunt and uncle built the house at the top of the street. My understanding is that their friends were having difficulty in finding the street, not being from the area, without a street sign. My father worked for the Greenwich Police Department as a mechanic. He had the sign made which is why for many years it didn’t match the other Ridgefield street signs. It was white lettering on green background just like the Greenwich signs at the time.”

TIMMY CHRISTOPHER LANE

Timmy Christopher Lane is a private driveway off Grand View Drive. Although it’s not on any official map, the name appeared in some old town hall highway records because of a 1964 request by Thomas Christopher, who named the driveway after his boy – perhaps to help give it the stature of a real road. Mr. Christopher wanted the town to plow his driveway and apparently presented such a convincing argument that eventually First Selectman Leo F. Carroll agreed that the town would plow the driveway only “following heavy snowfall.”

The town, which plows some private roads for the sake of the safety of their residents, avoids driveways, however, and Timmy Christopher Lane hasn’t seen a town highway department truck in many years.

TITICUS

Titicus, an abbreviated form of an ancient Indian word, has been in use since the town’s founding. While it was more common and extensively used in the 18th and 19th Centuries, the name remains alive to this day in applying to a river, a short road, a hill, and a neighborhood.

Titicus stems from a word that various sources spelled in various ways. The van Cortlandt Manor in Westchester County, N.Y., was said to have extended in 1699 from the Hudson River east to Connecticut and northerly to “the river Mutighticus.” Other 17th Century sources made it Mughtiticoos, Mutighticoos, or Mutighticoss.

Thus, the origin of this word may have been in New York since it was known and used there before, possibly long before, Ridgefield was settled.

The meaning is equally subject to speculation. George L. Rockwell noted that tradition said the “Mutighticoos River was at one time called Buffalo Creek. Van der Donck, a historian of Yonkers, writing in 1656, says: ‘Buffalos are also tolerably plenty: these animals mostly keep toward the southwest.’” From this, Rockwell suggests that Mutighticoss meant buffalo.

While the connection to buffalo is colorful, John C. Huden, in his *Indian Place Names of New England*, translates both Mutighticoss and Titicus as Mahican for “place without trees.”

Needless to say, Mutighticoss in its sundry forms is a mouthful; it is then no surprise that the English settlers, unaccustomed to the native tongue, tended to shorten the word.

The first step was to simplify the spelling. In 1709, the proprietors ordered a “survey of ye New Pound Boggs and Metiticus,” an easier-to-handle form of the earlier word. A 1716 deed mentions “Matiticus Hill” and deeds well into the middle of the century continued to use the word, i.e., Metittecus (1750) and Metitecus (1766), both referring to the river.

However, some settlers were also quick to adopt a shorter version. In a single deed in 1717, the Rev. Thomas Hauley, town clerk, refers to property near “Titicus Mountain” and land along “Metiticus River.”

By the Revolution, Metiticus had disappeared, but even a name as simple as Titicus had its variations until the end of the 19th Century. Tyticus was sometimes used in the late 1700s. Titichus was common in the 1860s. Beers Atlas used Titticus in 1867.

Whatever its origin, meaning, and form, Titicus was first associated by the settlers with the river and then with the territory around it – Titicus Swamp, Titicus Hill, Titicus Mountain, Titicus Plain, Titicus Road, etc.

Eventually, the area around the intersection of North Salem, Saw Mill Hill, and Mapleshade Roads became known as Titicus or sometimes “Titicus Crossroads.” However, it was not until well into the 19th Century that saying something was “at Titicus” became common. The first reference to the “District of Titicus” didn’t appear until 1839.

It may be that the Titicus District took on the name of the river because the river generally rose or became prominent in this area. Since there are no references in the 18th Century to indicate that this place was called Titicus, it seems unlikely that the river took its name from the place. Mughtiticoos, the original locality, was probably in New York somewhere, and the name just worked its way up the river.

From early times there was a mill at Titicus – the river running down along Saw Mill Hill Road was ideal for turning mill wheels, and several ponds were built over the years in the area to store water for these mills. It was probably this industry that helped to create a population center at this point.

Eventually, Titicus became a small village. It supported its own school by 1761 and by the mid-19th Century had a store, post office, cider mill, saw mill, flour mill, tannery, sash and blind factory, and blacksmith – not to mention the town’s biggest cemetery. In 1871, the Ridgefield and New York Railroad was issuing stock to build a train line was proposed to run from New York City to a Titicus station and eventually on to Danbury. Such a developed hamlet so close to the central village is unusual; had that train line been laid, as it almost was, Titicus today might be a booming little commercial center instead of the sleepy crossroads it has become. While the railroad went so far as to build a track bed along part of its distance, including one visible off Golf Lane, it was never completed. Competition from the Danbury and Norwalk Railroad, which built a branch line to Ridgefield in 1870, was probably too much.

Perhaps the schoolhouse and its district helped to create and keep the identity of Titicus. The district, then called Number Two, was defined as early as 1784. As District Number Four in 1867, Titicus took young scholars from an area that included: Danbury Road from Main Street north to and including the area of Fox Hill condominiums; North Street up to Stonecrest area; North

Salem Road to the southerly intersection of Tackora Trail; Barrack Hill Road to Old West Mountain Road; and western Ramapoo Road to West Mountain Road.

Fortunately, the most recent of the Titicus schoolhouses, at the corner of North Salem Road and New Street, is still standing and being put to good use as the American Legion Hall. It was last used as a school in 1939. Several of the old mills and a tannery building, the old Titicus Store, and other structures from the heyday of Titicus Crossroads, still stand, but most are now used as houses.

No discussion of Titicus would be complete without the story of Duncan Smith's challenge. One time several *Ridgefield Press* staffers were talking about words that had no rhymes – like orange. Someone mentioned Titicus, and Smith, a former columnist with *The Chicago Daily News*, took up the challenge. He offered the following in his Press column, "A Birdseye View":

*I live upon the Titicus,
a river rough and raging,
where fishes to a city cuss,
will come for a simple paging.
I used to read Leviticus,
or some such ancient volume,
before I saw the Titicus
or started on this column.
And now, my dears, you might agree
it really takes a witty cuss,
a crossword puzzler (that's me)
to rhyme with Titicus.
(It really should have said 'that's I'
to show for words I have nice sense,
but for such slips, I alibi
with my poetic license.)*

TITICUS BROOK

Titicus Brook is an old form of Titicus River. A version of the name occurs as early as 1716 when a deed mentions the Metiticus Brook. "River" was in common use by the 1750s.

TITICUS CORNERS

This name has been applied to the four-corner intersection of North Salem, Mapleshade and Saw Mill Hill Roads. It was mentioned by Silvio Bedini in 1959.

TITICUS COURT

Titicus Court is a short, dead-end road off the west side of North Street, overlooking the Titicus River valley. The subdivision by Richard Lorenzini consists of four lots from 8.8 acres, and was approved in 1978.

Until the creation of this roadway, there was no "Titicus" road name in town, one reason for selecting it. However, as will be seen, there was once a Titicus Road.

TITICUS HILL

In most cases references to Titicus Hill meant the hill along the west side of North Salem Road, north of Saw Mill Hill Road, probably to the area of Bar-rack Hill Road.

The term, an old one not much used now, was employed as early as 1716 when the proprietors “laid out unto David Scott. . .29 acres of land lying on ye lower end of Matitucus Hill, so called, bounded as followeth: east by ye highway yt leads to Mamanasquag Mill (i.e., North Salem Road), north by highway, west and south by a common land.”

A 1752 deed from Jonathan Olmsted to Daniel Benedict covered 11 acres at the “south end of Titticus Hill,” with the house, barn, and gristmill. This was probably the first of the many mills at Titicus. In 1771, Benedict sold the property to Epenetus How. The saltbox-style house in these deeds still stands at the northwest corner of North Salem Road and Saw Mill Hill Road.

There is evidence that Titicus Hill also referred to territory on the village side of Titicus Crossroads. In 1792, Nathan Dauchy sold Jeremiah Smith eight acres “near to and adjoining the burying ground on Titicus Hill.”

TITICUS MOUNTAIN

Titicus Mountain is the elevation of land along the westerly side of North Salem Road (Route 116) – and hence the westerly side of the Titicus River – generally from Lake Mamanasco area into New York. Just where Titicus Mountain ends and West Mountain (*q.v.*) begins is unclear and was, doubtless, never defined.

The name first appears in a 1721 deed from the Indians to the proprietors. In it, the tract is described as “beginning upon ye north side of the Brook at the South End of Titicus or Tomspring mountain (so called) at a great Tree marked in the Old purchase line.” This beginning point was somewhere out by the state line near the Titicus River.

Titicus Mountain reaches 952 feet above sea level at a town park along Hunt Lane, the New York extension of Old Sib Road, in North Salem. The U.S. Geological Survey labels this peak as Titicus Mountain. However, parts of the same mountain in the upper Eight Lakes area of Ridgefield are higher than that, coming close to 1,000 feet.

In New York State, Titicus Mountain has also been called Hunt Mountain for the Hunt family that farmed its slopes. Tomspring Mountain is discussed in an entry of its own.

TITICUS PLAIN

Titicus Plain is a wide, rather dry flatland in the otherwise narrow or swampy Titicus River valley, and extends from approximately Wooster Street north to Barlow Mountain Road. The term is fairly modern, first appearing in 1829. It was common by the 1840s, but tended to fall out of use by the late 1800s.

TITICUS RIDGE

Titicus Ridge is the name of Richard Lorenzini’s 1978 subdivision of 8.8 acres off North Street, served today by Titicus Court (*q.v.*).

TITICUS RIVER

The town's second longest and second largest river, the Titicus originates somewhere in a group of creeks on the eastern slope of West Mountain, gains size and speed as it flows down along Saw Mill Hill Road, and wends its way northwesterly into New York State, emptying into the Titicus Reservoir. The reservoir is part of the New York City drinking water supply system, said to be the largest such system in the world, and the Titicus River is one of the very few feeders of that system that originate in Connecticut. After a dam on the Titicus Reservoir, the river continues a half mile, ending in the Muscote Reservoir.

The Titicus Reservoir, created in 1893, holds 7.2 billion gallons of water.

Because the reservoir supplies drinking water to New York City, the Titicus River has maintained an importance that the Norwalk River, the town's biggest waterway (which empties into Long Island Sound), does not have. Thus, it might be said that the Titicus is the town's most important stream.

It has long been important, but for different reasons. The American Indians probably made use of the western sections of the river as a route for their canoes, for there are several mentions in very early deeds of a "Canoe Gutter" and a "Canoe Brook" connecting Lake Mamasasco with the river. Like the Norwalk, it has always been a source of fish — chiefly trout. And, of course, both game and livestock found at its banks an ever-present flow of cool water, important to the many farmers in the river valley.

However, another chief use of the river was to power mills. At least a half dozen mills and factories along Saw Mill Hill Road at Titicus made use of the river's water. Farther along, there were a couple of mills, saw, cider and grist, near the intersection of Sherwood and Ledges Roads.

The Titicus River, along with Lake Mamasasco, is probably what remains of a long lake, created when the last glacier melted some 25,000 years ago. When the settlers arrived, this was probably somewhat more evident than today in the many acres of remnant swamps that lined the river then.

Indications are that much of this swampland was drained or filled and that, at one point, even the course of the river was changed, apparently to drain wetland. Deeds in 1837 and 1841 speak of "the new ditch of the Titic(h)us River." This new channel was probably in Scotland District, near Barlow Mountain Road.

TODDS ROAD

Todds Road, which runs from Regan Road to Sugar Loaf Mountain Road, is part of the Ridgefield Knolls (*q.v.*), a 1958 subdivision by Robert Kaufman. The road was named for the Todd brothers, bachelor farmers whose land made up much of what is now the Knolls.

The Todd name first came to Ridgefield in 1857 when Thomas B. Warring sold Charles Todd of Lewisboro, N.Y., 165 acres and buildings on Barlow Mountain. In 1868, Todd bought another 51 acres nearby.

The farmhouse for this spread was along an old highway, an extension of Barlow Mountain Road that ran over Barlow Mountain to Bennett's Farm Road. Today this road is a hiking path through Pierrepont State Park and a walk along it will reveal remnants of the original Todd farm, now only several stone foundations in the middle of forest. Not too many years ago, many old pieces of

iron, including strap hinges, horse shoes, and barrel hoops, could be excavated here; some of these may have been made by John Barlow, a blacksmith and earlier owner of the farm.

Besides two daughters, Charles and his wife, Mary Knapp Todd, had two sons, Charles Knapp Todd, born in 1855, and Rufus Todd, 1859. Mary died in 1861 and according to the Todd Family genealogy, "during...Mrs. Todd's last sickness, she had her younger sister [Eliza Jane] come to take care of her and it was her dying request that Mr. Todd should immediately marry this sister after her decease, that she (her sister) might bring up the children. Accordingly, the marriage took place the next month after her decease." That marriage resulted in a daughter, Mary Ann, born the next year who, like her brothers, never married. "She keeps house for her two half brothers at the old place in Ridgefield," the family history reported. Charles Todd died in 1870; Eliza Jane in 1910.

In September 1891, Charles and Rufus bought another farm, northwesterly of and possibly adjoining the original farm, and their farm became widely known as the Todd Brothers Farm.

The main house still stands right on the hairpin curve of Bennett's Farm Road, southerly of the Ridgebury School, while the barn diagonally across the street has been converted to a house.

"It was Mr. Todd's great pleasure and pride to recall that they had built and renewed all the buildings and kept the farm in excellent state of cultivation," said the 1938 Press obituary of Charles Knapp Todd, whose brother had died some years earlier. An editorial in the same issue said the brothers "operated a dairy farm in Ridgebury District in the best traditions of New England dairying. The name, Todd Brothers, came to be widely known and greatly respected among people in this part of the state who made a living from the cultivation of the soil."

And on a nostalgic note, observing the turn of the town was already taking place in the 1930s, the editorial writer said: "Charles K. Todd's death this week brings sadness to his friends and a sense of loss to many who realize that farming has been gradually passing out of the Ridgefield economic scene in the past few decades."

Almost all of the farms like the Todd brothers' have gone to subdivisions, but some, like their parents', have been protected and are now parkland. Pierrepont Park is one of the town's best and — at 312 acres — biggest preserves.

TOILSOME

Toilsome qualifies as one of the more unusual names of Ridgefield's by-gone days. It also was probably one of the more accurate names describing a locality in town.

The term was in use as early as 1722 when Samuell Saintjohn sold Theophilus Mead of Norwalk two acres "lying on ye west side of ye Mill path, between ye saw mill and Toilsome Path." The "Mill Path" was probably North Salem Road (the road to the mill at Lake Mamanasco). Toilsome Path may have been Barrack Hill Road (*q.v.*) or some long-ago abandoned road in that vicinity.

Soon thereafter, and for more than a century and a half, deeds would describe land as being "at Toilsome," just as one today might say "in Farmingville" or "in Ridgebury." From the deed descriptions, it appears that Toil-

some was on the west side of North Salem Road between Saw Mill Hill Road and Barrack Hill Road.

Anyone familiar with this territory will quickly realize how apt the name was. Steep and rocky, the land would have been toilsome just to traverse, let alone clear of stone and use for farming. Yet the latter could have been what prompted the name. Having farmland close to town was considered advantageous and thus land at such a prime location could not be "wasted" on forest, despite how rough it was. Clearing it was a backbreaking chore.

Another possible origin would assume that the "path" and its name came first and that Toilsome later began to be used for the steep lands the Toilsome Path traversed. In Fairfield, according to George C. Waldo's *The Standard's History of Bridgeport and Vicinity* (1917), Toilsome Hill got its name from the fact that the early settlers laid a winding road to reach its summit, making the ascent longer than was really necessary.

The name is not widespread in Connecticut, and seems to be peculiar to the southwestern part of the state, having been recorded in Wilton, Norwalk, Stamford, and Woodbury, as well as Fairfield/Bridgeport. George R. Stewart, in his usually comprehensive *American Place Names*, does not list it among the 12,000 entries.

Like so many early names, this one was spelled more than one way, including Toylsome (1730), Toilsom (1737), Toylsom (1744), Toilesome (1780), and Tilesome (1850). The last variation is also the 20th Century spelling of a Wilton locality, a hill that was originally called Toilsome.

In Ridgefield, the use of the term died out in the 1850s.

TOILSOME BROOK

A Toilsome Brook also appears in early deeds, including one dated 1756. Its location has not been ascertained, but certain must have been in the Toilsome neighborhood.

TOM'S SPRING MOUNTAIN, ROAD

Another colorful and ancient name, Tomspring or Tom's Spring lasted nearly two centuries but has, alas, disappeared from the town's geography.

The term was employed as early as 1721 when the proprietors used it in the deed for the third purchase of land from the Indians. The deed, mentioning a tree as a boundary point, said it stood "at the south end of Titicus or Tomspring Mountain (so called)."

From the description, it is clear that Tomspring Mountain runs along the western side of North Salem Road. But where was "Tom's Spring," and who was "Tom"?

Smithsonian historian Silvio A. Bedini, who grew up in the Tom's Spring neighborhood, says that "Indian Tom was one of the last aborigines to live in town." A bow, believed to have been made by him, was found in the area between North Salem Road and Tackora Trail, he reported.

Tom, then, could have been alive in 1721 when the land was sold out from under him. He probably remained for some years if he was to become one of the last Indians to live in town. He was not one of more than one dozen Indians who signed deeds to the proprietors; only "Norreneke Indian" signed the 1721 deed.

Just which of several springs on Titicus Mountain or West Mountain was Tom's Spring is not known, but the fact that it was so long called Tom's Spring suggests that whoever Tom was, he had made quite an impression on people. Perhaps he had retained some sort of informal, unwritten possession of the spring and had made his home there even after the settlers took title to the land.

By 1741, deeds were using such locational phrases as "land at Tom's Spring." A 1745 deed speaks of land "on ye west side of ye highway that leads up to Thom's Spring," and a 1775 deed mentions land "near Thom Spring."

The 1745 deed is interesting in mentioning a road. A transaction in 1788 describes land "lying at the parting of the roads south of Tom's Spring," and this may be today's southern intersection of Tackora Trail and North Salem Road. And an 1834 sale mentions 11 acres "on the west side of Tom Spring Road." There is good reason to suspect that this Tom Spring Road was Tackora Trail, at least as far as Old Sib Road and perhaps including part of it.

Deeds well into the 1870s continued to mention Toms Spring or Tom's Spring, which, by then, was usually two words. Many Ridgefielders early in the 20th Century, particularly those who grew up in the Titicus or Scotland Districts, knew the name. It's too bad it has not been retained in some road name in the neighborhood.

TONY'S CAVE

Tony's Cave is a locality near Twin Ridge. George Rockwell's history reports that "in Whipstick District, east of the Nod Road on the present farm of Mortimer C. Keeler, is Tony's Cave. Tony was an Indian who, strange as it may seem, hid in this cave to escape service in the Revolutionary War."

Smithsonian scholar Silvio Bedini in his history, "Ridgefield in Review," said it was east of Mortimer Keeler's farm on Nod Road. Mortimer Keeler lived on the east side of Nod Road, south of the Whipstick Road intersection near today's entrance to Twin Ridge.

In 2008, Ridgefielder Chris McQuilkin of Nod Road went hunting for Tony's Cave.

"After much field research with my budding explorers in tow, we managed to locate the cave," he said. "Fascinating to see ancient scorch marks on the walls suggesting an inhabitant predating all that we know." He also wondered whether bears might use the cave for hibernation, noting that in January 2008, "we spotted large paw prints in the snow at the cave's entrance."

Giles and Barry Montgomery, the father and son team that subdivided Twin Ridge in the early 1960's, built and named Indian Cave Road. It became a town road in 1968.

TOPCREST LANE

Topcrest Lane at the 1958 Ridgefield Knolls subdivision is a dead-end road off Bob Hill Road. The name describes the terrain, which runs to some 830 feet above sea level.

TOPGALLANT

Topgallant is the name of a 1997 subdivision of 26.3 acres off West Lane, near the New York line, into seven lots. The name was selected by the property owner, A.J. "Jack" Abrams, a shipbuilder. The subdivision is served by Samara Place.

TOPSTONE DRIVE

Topstone Drive was the original name for what is now Knollwood Drive, and was so called because the road, part of the Ridgefield Knolls, was developed by the Topstone Holding Company.

One of the firm's principals was Robert Kaufman, who lived near Topstone Mountain in Redding (*see below*). Kaufman used "Topstone" in connection with other businesses, including his private water company serving the Knolls and his famous Halloween mask factory in Danbury, called Topstone Rubber. Topstone masks and related spooky items were popular in the 1950s and 60s across the country and even in overseas.

The name was changed to avoid confusion with Topstone Road (*below*).

TOPSTONE ROAD

Topstone Road is a name that Ridgefield has borrowed from its neighbor to the east – logically so, for Topstone Road runs from Ridgefield to the Topstone section of Redding.

The road is ancient, part of an 18th Century highway that connected Ridgefield and Redding centers, and which included Cain's Hill and Farmingville Roads in Ridgefield. What we now call Topstone Road runs from Route 7 (which was built long after this old highway was in place) into Redding and to the junction of Simpaug Turnpike, a place called Topstone Station, and then continues on to Umpawaug Road in Redding.

The old Topstone Station took its name from the nearby Topstone Mountain (elevation 710), which is so called because of the large rock at the summit. Poet Carl Sandburg – whose brother-in-law, the photographer Edward Steichen, lived at the foot of this hill – once wrote a poem about this rock.

Topstone Station was originally called Sanford Station (*q.v.*) after the Redding family who lived thereabouts. However, the name was changed early in this century after years of confusion with "Stamford." Both freight and passengers aiming for Stamford would too often wind up in Sanford, or vice versa.

TOWN FARM

Long before anyone had coined the word "workfare," Ridgefield was practicing it. The Town Farm was the chief system of welfare in the community for more than 70 years, and it wasn't all that long ago when the operation was finally abandoned.

In the early days of Ridgefield, caring for the poor was not a monumental problem. Life then centered on the family, and families saw to it that the less fortunate among their numbers were cared for. There was, of course, the rare instance where an elderly or disabled person had no family or friends at all. In such cases the town appropriated whatever money was necessary for the basic necessities.

Official records tell little about care of the poor in the town's first two centuries. Often, the Annual Town Meeting simply passed a motion that, as it was phrased in 1868, "the Select Men use their best discretion in regard to the care of the poor." This meant that the selectmen found someone – a family or a boarding house owner, for instance – to provide room and board for the person.

Keeping the poor

However, by the mid-19th Century, more families began to split up as the younger among them sought the new frontiers of the West. After the Civil War,

the number of poor people apparently began to increase to the point where the 1872 Annual Town Meeting voted that "the Select Men be ... instructed to inquire into and examine the plans of other towns in this vicinity for the keeping of the town poor – also to ascertain the probable expense of buying or leasing a small farm for a residence for the town poor."

In early 1873, the Town Meeting voted that "the keeping of the town poor of Ridgefield be let out to the lowest responsible bidder, by the Select Men, for the term of three-years, provided the expense shall not exceed the sum of \$1,500 per year..."

The town poor, incidentally, were people who the town fathers agreed were valid residents of the community and not those who came looking for a hand-out. The town was so strict about residency in the 18th and early 19th Centuries that if it found itself forced by circumstances to care for someone who hailed from another town, the selectmen might go so far as to sue the other town to recover costs of that care.

By the late 19th Century, "transient paupers" (as well as "criminals") were kept in "a lock-up" ordered built "in the basement of the Town House" in 1877. The Town House was an old name for the town hall – in this case, a wooden one that preceded the existing brick building on the same site.

Bidding out the care of the poor apparently became rather expensive. Or perhaps the town fathers decided they could handle the task more cheaply themselves.

Buying a farm

In 1882, a committee was appointed to check out farms in town that were for sale. The committee recommended that the town go ahead and acquire one. However, the motion to buy a farm "for a house for the town poor," was tabled, and the committee, consisting of Edward H. Smith, Lewis H. Bailey, and Ebenezer W. Keeler, was asked to see how other towns ran their poor farms.

After visiting farms in New Milford and Danbury, the committee reported back to the 1882 Annual Town Meeting, which voted to instruct the selectmen to lease a suitable farm for a year at a rent not to exceed \$200 and "to make all necessary arrangements for the keeping of the town poor on said farm."

Bad news greeted a special town meeting in April 1883, however. The selectmen couldn't find a farm that cheap. So, the meeting voted to buy "the Reed Farm in Scotland District" for up to \$4,500. Lewis A. Reed had, in fact, wanted \$5,000 for the place, but he soon took the lower price and the town had itself a farm, including a house, two barns, 50 acres of arable land, and 11 acres on a nearby "mountain," probably a source of firewood.

A Scott place

Mr. Reed, incidentally, had bought the place in 1865 from Hiram K. Scott, one of the town's leading citizens – a town clerk for more than 45 years as well as a postmaster and shopkeeper. Mr. Scott had been born there.

The house is still standing along North Salem Road at the corner of Circle Drive. According to Silvio Bedini, it was built in the late 1700s by the Scott family, from whom that neighborhood – Scott's Ridge – and the school district – Scotland – took their names.

The town sold off a portion of the farm in 1886 to Jackson Hobby, a farmer for whom Hobby Drive was named and whose land was subdivided into the Circle Drive neighborhood (called Scotland Knolls).

The Town Farm gave the poor a place to live and a job to do. While townspeople may once have hoped that it would be self-supporting, it probably never was. The 1900 Annual Town Meeting appropriated \$1,000 for running the farm, an amount that rose to \$1,200 by 1902.

In 1934, the Town Farm cost \$2,787 to operate. The biggest expense was the salary of Mrs. Fred Young, the matron. The next most costly expenses were feed (\$547 to the J.E. Ryan Company) and coal (\$249 to the Ridgefield Supply Company).

The farm sold produce worth \$791 and also traded \$101 worth of produce for merchandise and \$63 worth for labor.

Crops and livestock

According to an inventory of the farm, the six "inmates" in 1934 raised oats, hay, onions, mangels (a large beet fed to cows), turnips, carrots, com, cabbage and potatoes.

The farm had \$450 worth of horses, \$125 worth of chickens, \$175 in pigs, and \$580 in cattle.

The inventory also included a potato digger, farm wagon, mowing machine, hiller, cultivators, harrows, and other farm implements. That inventory, including \$237 in canned goods, was estimated to be worth \$3,333. The farm itself was the town's third most valuable property, behind only the East Ridge School and the town hall, and was said to be worth \$20,000, a sizable sum in 1934.

Town Farm rules

Living there was no "fun and games" proposition, especially after the Town Meeting in October 1900 adopted a set of rules for the Town Farm:

- Every person applying for admission to the Town Farm must present an order from the Select Men.
- Inmates at all times will be subject to the Orders of the Superintendent and shall perform such labor or service as he may direct.
- All inmates must be in their rooms by nine o'clock p.m. and must be ready for breakfast in the morning at such time as the Matron may designate.
- Inmates will not be allowed in any room but their own room without permission from the Superintendent or Matron.
- No inmate will be allowed to be absent from the Alms House or to leave the Town Farm without the consent of the Superintendent or Matron, and any inmate leaving without such consent will not be re-admitted except by order of the Board of Select Men.
- No person or inmate will be permitted to bring any intoxicating liquors on the premises and no person or inmate will be allowed on the premises while intoxicated. No profane or indecent languages will be permitted.
- All packages for inmates shall be inspected by the Superintendent or Matron before delivery.
- The Superintendent shall see that the above Rules are strictly enforced.

Counting potatoes

The selectmen took an active interest in the operations of the Town Farm. The late Harry E. Hull, selectman and first selectman in the 1940s and 1950s,

recalled annual visits to the facility. "When I was on the board with (First Selectman) Win Rockwell, we used to go there every year and catalogue the apples and potatoes" and other produce, Hull said.

Mrs. Young continued to operate the Town Farm into the 1940s, but the number of inmates declined. Finally, the town meeting in October 1945 voted to sell the Town Farm and use the money to help pay for purchase of the Lounsbury estate. George Underhill paid \$17,000 for the placeto and then lived there for many years.

Today the old "Alms House" is a four-bedroom, three-bath residence that sold in 2014 for \$1 million.

TOWN HOUSE and HALL

Town House is the name that was long applied to what we now call the town hall, a building that once had a lot more uses than it has today.

When the town was first founded, there was little need for offices; part-time volunteers who worked out of their houses provided all the functions of government. However, a place for official meetings – especially Town Meetings – was needed from the start and, for the first three decades, the village church on the Green was used for that purpose as well as for religious services.

In 1743, the town built its first town house, a structure to "house" the town operations, though it's doubtful that there was yet need for offices, other than for perhaps records storage. This 26-by-18 foot building also stood on the Green. In 2005, it would have been on the west side of Main Street, about on the front lawn of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick J. Crehan's house (the first house south of the Methodist church). This building was also used as a schoolhouse.

In 1786, the town contributed to the cost of erecting the Independent School House on the east side of Main Street on what is now the Community Center section of Veterans Park. For its contribution, the town got an agreement that it could hold meetings in the new schoolhouse.

The center of government continued its march northward when, in 1836, the town bought the first floor of the Masonic Hall, which stood where today's Masonic Hall is, just south of the town hall. The first floor had been a store and later *The Ridgefield Press*; in 2018, the Coldwell Banker real estate agency is there.

After several years of debating the issue at Town Meetings, Ridgefielders agreed to erect a town house on the "Town Lot," just north of the Masonic Hall, in 1876. The 40-by-65-foot building, costing \$5,976.55, consisted of two stories – a 12-foot-high first floor used for town offices and records, and a 16-foot-high second floor, "fitted up for a public hall," as contemporary historian Daniel W. Teller put it.

Teller, a minister, continued with a touch of humor uncharacteristic of most community histories of the era: "There is also a basement, which has been converted into a 'lock-up,' for the entertainment of such travellers as seem, by their frequent visits, to appreciate the beauties of the town, but are, nevertheless, sadly lacking in funds necessary to procure the best accommodations."

In other words, the town jail was downstairs.

The Great Fire of 1895 destroyed the town house (but not before its precious records had been rescued), as well as the old Masonic Hall. A small building was temporarily put up in back of the town house for records and an office. The present town hall was erected, with the help of some wealthy summer peo-

ple from New York, the next year. It was made of brick instead of wood, making a catastrophic fire less likely.

As a hall, the current building served not only as a government center, but also as a community center. Among the activities that took place in the town house or hall over the years were church services, school plays, movies, temperance lectures, minstrel shows, basketball games, wrestling, dances, flower shows, concerts, and, of course, voting. The two offices in the front – in 2018 the town clerk's office and the information office – were at the turn of the 20th Century offices of the town's two banks, Ridgefield Savings and First National.

The building's increasing use as a "hall" around the turn of the century led to the change in what the townspeople called the building. (In Redding, the center of government is still called the town house; it has no "hall" to speak of.)

Around the turn of the 20th Century, the cellar also housed for a while the town's fire department, complete with horse-drawn engine. The old arched doorway for the fire department can still be seen, filled in with brick, on the Bailey Avenue side of the building.

Later, the cellar became the police department, serving that purpose from the 1940s until 1976 when the department moved to the former state police barracks on East Ridge. The old police offices are now town offices and meeting rooms. The old stage, on which many plays were performed over the years, is still there, but holds up office workers instead of actors and actresses.

Around 1940, an eagle was added over the front door of the Town Hall, and in XXXX, an elevator shaft was added to make the second floor handicapped accessible. There was also a decision in the 1970s to get rid of the ivy that was covering the sides because it was damaging the bricks.

Those were the last changes to the outside of the building until the current project to replace the long-gone "widow's walk" on the roof, undertaken by a group of volunteers with community donations.

TOWN RIDGE

Very early records refer to the ridge along which Main Street runs as "ye Town Ridge." Perhaps the earliest reference is a 1710 map drawn by John Copp, surveyor of the town as well as the town's record-keeper, who noted five lots "on ye south end of ye Town Ridge."

A 1712 deed, in which the proprietors transferred village Lot 13 to Joseph Crampton, described the land as being "on the Southeast part of ye Town Ridge."

It's probable that the early settlers applied the name to the ridge as far south as Wilton Road West at Soundview Road and as far north as the vicinity of the Ridgefield Cemetery.

Many people don't realize it, but parts of the Town Ridge are among the higher sections in town – higher than most of developed Ridgebury, for instance. The elevation of Main Street at the fountain is about 800 feet above sea level, and a bit west of that, near the inns on West Lane, it's 810 feet above sea level – only 20 feet or so lower than the highest point of Ridgebury Road, which has the appearance of being much loftier.

Near the center of town, the Town Ridge elevation is about 750 feet while up near Casagmo, it drops to around 700.

The Town Ridge is a bit lower than High Ridge to the west, which was a sign of how well planned the positioning of the village was when the settlers

laid it out in 1708. High Ridge, which reaches 860 feet above sea level, helps block the cold blasts of the northwesterly winds in winter.

TOWN SPRING

The Town Spring was a locality apparently well known to villagers of the 18th and 19th Centuries.

In 1894 the Annual Town Meeting voted that “the Select Men are instructed to ascertain what rights the town and its inhabitants have to the Town Spring, so-called, at the south end of the village, on land which has been always understood to be common land.”

Whatever the selectmen determined, it did not show up in the records of subsequent Town Meetings. However, at about the same time, the Town Meeting was also voting on the widening of Creamery Lane and an old highway that’s probably what is known now as Soundview Road. It is therefore possible that the Town Spring was situated in that neighborhood.

However, Beers’ 1867 Atlas shows a “spring” on the property of an old Congregational Church parsonage, which is in 2018 between the Plum and Crehan houses, #149 and 181, just south of today’s Jesse Lee Methodist Church. The property was not part of the old village green to the north, but it was close to it. There were indications in mid-19th Century records that water from this spring was piped to several houses in the neighborhood.

Beers’ 1867 map of the village shows another spring on the north side of Rockwell Road, perhaps 200 or so feet from Main Street.

One can surmise that the Town Spring, wherever it stood, was a source of water over the two preceding centuries, particularly at times when home wells were low or dry. Such community water sources were common in villages almost from the beginning of civilization, although usually in the form of wells.

It is also possible that the spring served as a watering hole for passing horses. In the days before the automobile, strategically placed troughs with plentiful supplies of water were common around town. One stands in the island formed by the intersection of West and Olmstead Lanes, though when it was a functioning watering trough, it was situated in the middle of Main Street at Catoonah Street.

TOWN STREET

Town Street is another, occasionally used, old name for Main Street. Usually, it was expressed, “The Town Street.”

TRAIL’S END LANE

Trail’s End Lane, shown incorrectly on some maps as Trail’s End Road, is a 500-foot, dead-end road off Eleven Levels Road. Part of Jerry Tuccio’s Eleven Levels development, the lane was accepted as a town road in December 1978.

The name may have referred to some old logging trail on the property, or may have simply been deemed attractive by the developer.

TREPEL LANE

Trepel Lane is an informal name given to a driveway at 179 Danbury Road, nearly opposite Old Pierce Road.

Jack and Mary Trepel, who bought five acres and a house at the end of the drive in 1953, applied the name to what was apparently an old highway.

Mr. Trepel headed Trepel Florists, a chain founded by his father in 1888. An amateur magician, he had been in charge of recruiting magicians for the American Theater Wing during World War II and, with Mrs. Trepel, gave magic shows in this country and abroad during the war. He once headed the Society of American Magicians.

Jack Trepel died in 1965 and Mary Trepel, in 1973. The property was sold in 1974, but a sign bearing the Trepel Lane name remained in place for years afterward.

The Trepels' daughter, Irene Trepel Kampen (1922-1998), was a well-known writer of humorous novels and lived in Ridgefield for many years. Kampen, who'd been a newspaper reporter, and her husband Owen, moved to Ridgefield in 1954 and almost immediately, their 11-year marriage fell apart. Forced to support herself, she was soon exhausted commuting to work at her father's New York City flower shop, and began writing fiction. The result was the light-hearted *Life Without George*, published by Doubleday in 1961, which became the inspiration for The Lucy Show, a TV comedy about a divorced woman starring Lucile Ball, who had recently divorced Desi Arnaz.

Kampen went on to write 10 humorous novels, often based on her own experiences, with such titles as *Here Comes the Bride*, *There Goes the Mother*; *Fear Without Childbirth*; *Due to a Lack of Interest, Tomorrow Has Been Cancelled*; and *Nobody Calls at This Hour Just to Say Hello*.

She lived on Stonecrest Road, Lookout Drive, and finally Rockwell Road, was active in the Women's Town Club and the Ridgefield Woman's Club, was a frequent luncheon speaker, and wrote pieces for The Press, including a column under the pseudonym, H. Loomis Fenstermacher.

She moved to California in 1988 and died 10 years later at the age of 75 (a profile of her is posted on Old Ridgefield).

TRUESDALE, MOUNT

Back in 1728, a few years before Ridgefield lost a big chunk of its western lands to New York colony, William Truesdale and Solomon Tuttle petitioned the proprietors for permission to be owners of Ridgefield land. The petition was granted in December.

Apparently, the two men, considered by some Lewisboro historians to be the first settlers of what is now that town, had gotten a New York patent or some sort of title to land next to and including their Ridgefield tract. They were apparently there long enough so that Truesdale had a mountain named after him, for in 1729, the proprietors deeded Norwalk Samuel Smith 17 acres northeasterly of "Mount Truesdale."

In 1730, the proprietors transferred to Truesdale himself 45 acres south of "Bedford Rhode," now partly Route 35.

Soon after this time, Truesdale's name disappears from record books, both here and in Lewisboro (then called Salem). The *History of the Town of Lewisboro* reports that "tradition has Truesdale killed by Indians," though Indians in these parts were not otherwise reported to have ever killed any early settlers.

Ridgefield records contain only that one reference to Mount Truesdale, a name that no longer is in use in Lewisboro and which probably referred to the hill, reaching about 650 feet above sea level, that is just to the west of Lake Truesdale and easterly of the hamlet of South Salem.

However, to keep this early settler's name alive, developers of the man-made Lake Truesdale in Lewisboro made use of it when they created what has been called an "elegant 1930s colony" by damming up a stream on an old Keeler farm in the late 1920s. Originally chiefly a summer retreat, Lake Truesdale has – like the Ridgefield Lakes – become a year-round community of some 600 acres, all New York state territory that was once in Ridgefield.

TUB(B) SWAMP

Tub or Tubb Swamp is one of the more unusual names of early Ridgefield geography. But the locality is probably now in Lewisboro.

The name first appeared in 1721 when the proprietors deeded Henry Dwight and Matthew Seamore "5 acres lying at ye Tubb Swamp in ye Southwest Ridges." A 1723 deed mentions 11 acres "lying below ye Tub Swamp," and a 1729 transfer by David Osburn describes 15 acres "off of my land lying in ye Southwest Ridges at a place called ye Tubb Swamp."

In 1731, Connecticut ceded much of what is now Lewisboro to New York as part of the Oblong deal. After that, the only reference to Tub Swamp appears in 1734 when a deed for seven acres describes it as "lying on ye east side of ye Tub Swamp Ridge," and bounded on the west by "the Government line." This helps place the location as just across the state line, probably south of West Lane and west of Silver Spring Country Club.

The name probably refers to the shape of the swamp – roundish, like an old tub. It is not a common term, and among the 20,000 or so names listed in the book, *Connecticut Place Names*, not one employs the word "tub."

TURKEY ISLAND

Turkey Island is another ancient name that has vanished from our geography.

The "turkey" may have recalled the wild bird that undoubtedly was common here in the early 1700s. Or it could have referred to Jacob Turkey, an American Indian who signed two of the deeds to the first settlers and who may have lived on this land.

Whichever, the name is one of the first recorded in town, having been used as early as 1712, when a town record says "granted by said proprietors unto...Thomas Smith ... the several foll(ow)ing parcels of land, lay'd out to him on account of ye grant of 20 acres of upland; viz., 20 acres of land on Turkey Island, bounded on all sides by common land."

Later deeds, nearly a dozen in all through 1806, mentioned Turkey Island, sometimes spelling it Turkey or Tirky. Many give clues to its location, including the fact that it was on the east side of the Titicus River.

The very name –Turkey *Island* – is a clue, for it indicates the locality was probably a dry, elevated region surrounded by swamp and stream. The term "island" was frequently used in the 18th Century for swamp-surrounded high land.

This information, plus names of property owners on and near the island, suggests that Turkey Island was applied to what we today call Round Mountain. Generally speaking this is the area around the Scotland-Barlow Mountain School site, but may also have run southeasterly to include northern North Street, Pinecrest Drive, and Sprucewood Lane.

Because this bird has not been held in high esteem by our modern civilization – “turkey” is often used as slang for a stupid person or something that’s a failure – not too many “turkey” road names exist in Fairfield County. Developers will jump for names like Cardinal Court, Partridge Drive, or Pheasant Lane, but try turkey or crow or even a vulture on one of them and you’d think someone had mentioned 20% mortgage rates.

The writer once suggested to the Planning and Zoning Commission that it name the road serving a new subdivision of the former Kaiser farm on Barry Avenue some variation of Turkey Hill, Turkey Ridge, or Turkey Meadow to recall the fact that the Kaisers’ property was the last poultry farm to operate in Ridgefield — and the place where countless people for many years got their Thanksgiving turkeys. Commissioners cringed; they did not take kindly to turkeys. Kiln Hill Lane was chosen instead.

Nonetheless, thanks to Robert Tuccio, Ridgefield’s geography soon got a gobbler: Wild Turkey Court at Eleven Levels, a mile or so up the road from the Kaiser farm.

TURN OF THE RIVER

Turn of the River, a very early name that does not appear to have survived into the 19th Century, refers to a section in the northeastern part of town along Danbury, Limestone and Great Hill Roads.

The term was employed as early as 1717 when deeds mention “ye turn of ye River,” or “on ye Turn of ye Norwalk River.” A 1746 deed, using both forms of the definite article, speaks of land at “the Turn of ye River, so called, under Copps Mountain,” and references continue to appear until 1799.

There can be little question as to how the name came about. Off the west side of Limestone Road, just above Shields Lane, the Norwalk River veers eastward, having been north-flowing for nearly two miles from its source in the Great Swamp. It continues easterly to the back of the Ponds Edge medical building (formerly Perkin Elmer/Benrus Center), a bit south of Little Pond on Route 7. It then begins the southerly flow that continues to Long Island Sound at Norwalk.

This sharp, 180-degree turn is not common in streams of this or larger size, and thus it’s not surprising that Turn of the River became a commonplace name in the 18th Century. Why it disappeared must be left to speculation, but the fact that it consisted of four words may explain why the old New Englanders – not noted for their verbosity – abandoned the term.

Such was not exactly the case in Stamford where, to this day, there is a well-known section of the town called Turn of River. However, those economical Stamfordians used only three words.

TURNER ROAD

Since before the turn of the 20th Century, Turner Road or Street has been named for the circus and hotel owner, Aaron Turner, one of the more interesting characters in 19th Century Ridgefield and Danbury.

Turner Road, originally and more correctly known as Turner Street, is a very old road whose exact extent has been subject to some disagreement.

By a November 1959 vote, the Board of Selectmen agreed “to name the roadway from North Salem Road through Ridgebury, past Shadow Lake Road and connecting with Old Ridgebury Road at the Danbury town line as Ridge-

bury Road (it had been in part called ‘George Washington Highway’), Saw Mill Road to meet and join Ridgebury Road, and Turner Road to meet and join Saw Mill Road.” In other words, Turner Road was to be the short strip of highway from Saw Mill Road – right where it veers north and crosses into Danbury – westerly to the New York State Line.

However, Daniel M. McKeon, longtime Ridgeburian and a historian of that district, maintained over the years that Turner Road should begin at Ridgebury Road, at the fork just north of Shadow Lake Road. Saw Mill Road, primarily a north-south road in Danbury, should enter into Ridgefield only a few feet, connecting with Turner Road. McKeon seems to have gotten his way as the town fathers and most maps now use the term Turner Road or Street for what the selectmen had voted to be Saw Mill Road.

The Turner Hill subdivision, built in the early 1990s off the south side of Turner Road, has roads named for some of the circus families that lived in Ridgefield and nearby New York, including Hunt, Howes, and, of course, Barnum. And one road recalls Dan McKeon, who fought to keep Turner Road at its full former length.

Born in Ridgefield in 1790, Turner was apparently either a bastard or had been orphaned at an early age. When he was nine years old, he went to live with a court-appointed guardian, Dorcas Osborn, whose house was at the corner of Saw Mill and Turner Roads (but which no longer stands). Much of this farm was at the southern limit of the huge hunk of northern Ridgebury that was ceded to Danbury in 1846.

Turner inherited the farm and much land in Ridgebury – both the present Ridgefield and Danbury sections. But farming was not to be his calling. By the time he was 30, Turner was associated with the circus world, possibly as a part owner of a troupe that had sprung up from one of the circus families that lived in nearby New York State. By this time, 1820, his seven-year-old son, Napoleon, was a trick rider in a New York City circus.

Eight years later, Turner the elder had a traveling circus of his own. In 1836, he hired a young fellow named Phineas T. Barnum as his ticket seller, secretary, treasurer, and eventually, partner.

During the winter, Turner's circus stayed at his Ridgebury farm, which included land along the west side of Ridgebury and Turner Roads. Many circus animals were reportedly housed in farms in the neighborhood. It is said that at least one elephant is buried somewhere in the old fields that were along the western side of northern Ridgebury Road.

“Turner's circus was one of the most important and popular in the country,” said Ridgefield historian Silvio Bedini, who adds that both sons Timothy and Napoleon were “skilled riders.” His daughter married George Bailey of Somers, N.Y., who later managed the circus and remained in the business after Turner bowed out. Barnum, of course, went on to found his own circus which survived until recently as the Ringling Bros. Barnum and Bailey Circus.

Aaron Turner eventually retired to the quieter life of operating a hotel, called Turner House, which was in Danbury facing the Main Street green just above the old courthouse. He died in 1854 and his historic hotel, more recently a Knights of Columbus Home, was torn down in the early 1960s to make way for – incredibly – a used car lot. Today, the property is the site of a Walgreen's pharmacy.

In his autobiography, P.T. Barnum tells a lively tale about a joke Aaron Turner once pulled on him while he was traveling with Turner's circus in Maryland. Here is his account:

While in Annapolis, Md., Turner played a trick upon me which I shall never forget. We arrived there late on a Saturday evening. We had been doing a highly profitable business, which made me feel pretty rich, and I went out that night and bought me a fine suit of black clothes. We were all strangers in that town, never having been there before.

On Sunday morning, feeling proud of my sable suit, I dressed myself, and started to stroll about the town. I passed through the bar-room of the hotel. About 20 persons were there, among whom was Turner, who had by that time made their acquaintance.

After I passed out, Turner, pointing in the direction which I had taken, remarked to the company, "I think it's very singular you permit that rascal to march your streets in open day. It wouldn't be allowed in Rhode Island, and I supposed that is the reason the black-coated scoundrel has come down this way."

"Why, who is he" ejaculated half a dozen at once.

"Don't you know? Why, that is the Rev. E.K. Avery, the murderer of Miss Cornell!" answered Turner.

(The then recent murder of Miss Cornell in Rhode Island, her discovery in a stackyard, and the trial of Rev. Ephraim K. Avery for the deed, created unparalleled excitement. Leading Methodists defended the accused, but in vain. The general sentiment of the whole country condemned him, and though acquitted by the law, he sunk into disgrace and obscurity.)

"Is it possible!" they exclaimed, started for the door, eager to get a look at me, and several swearing vengeance against the hypocritical priest.

Turner, having thus put the ball in motion, quietly took a seat, while every person in the bar-room started in pursuit of me.

I had turned a corner of the street, and was very innocently, though rather pompously, strutting down the side-walk, when I was overtaken by a dozen or more persons, whose number increased every moment. I observed as they passed me, that each person looked back and stared at me with apparent wonder. I believe I must have been uncommonly proud of that suit of clothes, for I was vain enough to believe that my new suit was what attracted such special attention.

I however soon awoke from the happy illusion. The mob passed me five or ten rods, and waited till I can up to them. As I passed, I heard several observations like the following: "The lecherous old hypocrite." "The sanctified murderer." "The black-coated villain." "Let's tar and feather him." "Lynch the scoundrel." Etc. etc.

I passed along totally unconscious that these remarks could possibly have any reference to me. The denouement, however, soon came. The mob, which now numbered at least 100, overtook me as I passed another corner, and one fellow seized me by the collar, while five or six others approached bearing a rail between them.

"Come," says the man who collared me, "old chap, you can't walk any farther; we know who you are, and we always make gentlemen ride in these parts, you may just prepare to straddle that rail!"

My surprise may well be imagined. "Good heavens!" I exclaimed, as they all pressed around me, "gentlemen, what have I done?"

"Oh, we know you," exclaimed half a dozen voices; "you needn't roll your sanctimonious eyes; that game don't take in this country. Come, straddle the rail, and remember the stackyard!"

I grew more and more bewildered; it seemed like a dream; I could not imagine what possible office I was to suffer for, and I continued to exclaim, "Gentlemen, what have I done? Don't kill me, gentlemen, but tell me what I have done."

"Come, make him straddle the rail; we'll show him how to hang poor factory girls," shouted some chap from the crowd.

The man who had me by the collar then remarked, "Come, Mr. Avery, it's no use, you see we know you, and we'll give you a touch of lynch law, and start you for home again."

"My name is not Avery, gentlemen; you are mistaken in your man," I exclaimed.

"Come, come, none of your gammon; straddle the rail, Ephraim," said the man who had me by the collar.

The rail was brought to such a level as to allow me to be "straddled" on it without difficulty, and I was about to be placed according to orders, as the truth flashed upon me.

"Gentlemen," I exclaimed, "I am not Avery; I despise that villain as much as you can; but my name is Barnum; I belong to the circus which arrived here last night, and I am sure Old Turner, my partner, has hoaxed you with this ridiculous story."

"If he has, we'll lynch him," said one of the mob.

"Well, he has, I'll assure you," I replied, "so just walk to the hotel with me, and I'll convince you of the fact."

This arrangement they reluctantly assented to, keeping, however, a close hand upon me. As we walked up the main street on which the new State House is situated, the mob received a reinforcement of some 50 or 60, and I was marched like a malefactor up to the hotel.

Old Turner stood on the piazza ready to burst with laughter. I appealed to him for heaven's sake to explain this matter, that I might be liberated.

He continued to laugh, but finally told them "he believed there was some mistake about it. The fact is," said he, "my friend Barnum has a new suit of black clothes on, and it makes him look so much like a priest, I concluded it must be Avery."

The mob saw the joke. Some apologized to me for the rough manner in which I had been handled (for they had torn my coat half off my back, and rolled me in the dirt considerably) while others swore that Old Turner deserved the fate intended for me; but the majority of the people roared with laughter, declared it was a good joke, and advised me to look sharp, and pay my partner off for it.

I was exceedingly vexed, and when the mob had dispersed, I asked Old Turner what on earth could induce him to play such an outrageously mean trick upon me.

"My dear Barnum," said he, "it was all for our good. Remember, all we need to insure success is notoriety. You will see that this will be noised all

about town as a trick played by one of the circus managers upon the other, and our pavilion will be crammed tomorrow night."

It turned out as he conjectured. The joke was in every person's mouth. We soon became acquainted with the whole town, and had immense audiences during our stay.

This, however, did not induce me to forgive Old Turner, for I knew full well that self-interest was an after consideration in this case, the joke being prompted solely by a desire to see some fun, no matter at whose expense.

TURNPIKE ROAD

Turnpike Road was a shortened form of the formal name for either of the two main turnpikes that operated in Ridgefield during the first half of the 19th Century.

The earliest use of the term occurs in 1803 when a deed from Jonathan Whitlock to Benjamin Foster describes nine acres as being bounded on one side "by the Turnpike Road."

In that case the reference was to the Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike, built a couple of years earlier, that ran from the intersection of Haviland and Limestone Roads north through the Sugar Hollow to the south end of the present Danbury Airport, where it met the northern half of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike Road.

In other words, this turnpike was the northern end of Route 35 and the section of Route 7 from Route 35 north to and including Old Sugar Hollow Road in Danbury. That's why Route 7 from the light north to the Danbury line is still called "Danbury Road" today.

At the intersection of Routes 35 and 7, the Danbury turnpike met the southern half of the Sugar Hollow Turnpike, which went down into Wilton and Norwalk, following the path of present day Route 7 most of the way. This road, begun in the 1830s, was also known in the shortened form of Turnpike Road, a name that was in use among oldtimers even early in the 20th Century, long after the pikes were taken down.

Another road that may have been called Turnpike Road was Simpaug Turnpike, the southern end of which began in Ridgefield but soon entered Redding. This road is still called Simpaug Turnpike today.

All of these roads have been discussed in more detail under their formal names.

TURTLE POND

Turtle Pond is a small, man-made body of water off the west side of Old Sib Road. One of the "Eight Lakes" of the subdivision of that name, it was created around 1908 for Henry B. Anderson's Port of Missing Men resort.

Julius Tulipani (1890-1983), who was a selectman here and a longtime president of the Italian-American Mutual Aid Society, worked on the project, felling trees and building the dam. The pond was probably built over an old swamp, which may have been known as the Ivy Swamp in the 18th Century. In that case the stream that flows out of the pond and down to Lake Mamasasco was called the Ivy Swamp Brook.

The name of the pond is not unusual and could, of course, apply to any pond in Ridgefield, for turtles are a common reptile, perhaps second only to snakes. It's not hard to find painted turtles sunning themselves on logs and

rocks along any shoreline. According to herpetologist Nelson Gelfman, other turtles that can be found in town include the bog or Muhlenberg's turtle, the box turtle, musk turtle, snapping turtle, spotted turtle, and wood turtle.

The pond is erroneously called "Hidden Lake" by some, perhaps because some developer chose to name a nearby lane Hidden Lake Court.

On the west side of Turtle Pond is 22 acres of open space, a gift to the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield from the late Louise Peck, thus guaranteeing preservation of much of the natural background for this pretty little pond where countless youngsters over the past seven decades enjoyed fishing for sunnies and hunting for frogs and, of course, turtles.

TWELFTH LANE

Twelfth Lane is the final in the series of 12 small roads off the west side of Mamasco Road. It is distinguished from the others in two qualities: It is a town road rather than a private drive, and it is a through road, not dead-end, connecting as it does with Old Sib Road.

It is also one of the steepest roads in town, running from 650 feet above sea level down to about 590 feet over a distance of about 300 feet.

Twelfth Lane is, like the other numbered lanes at the lake, part of the early 1950s Eight Lakes subdivision. It may be the only road in town with a name that contains four consonants in a row.

TWIN MAPLES

"Twin Maples" was a state-owned rest stop on Wilton Road West. For many years, it included a couple of picnic tables, possibly a grill, and a trash can, aimed at offering tourists a place to stop and eat. Back in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, these roadside rest areas were common throughout the state. Another existed on Route 7, across from the Days Inn.

The rest area had used as its driveway a portion of the old Wilton Road West. The section had been part of the highway until sometime in the 1920's when the State Highway Department straightened the curve somewhat by rerouting the main road to the west.

Around 1980, the state gave up on Twin Maples as a rest area because it was rarely used for other than depositing trash. State crews dug up and removed the old pavement. Today, there is only a small pull-off area there. The original "twin maples" are probably long gone, but lots of young maples line the edge of the property, whose highlight today is a rather unfriendly sign saying "State Property, No Trespassing." (Doesn't that seem odd? Aren't we the state? Wasn't this a park?)

The old Flat Rock Schoolhouse stood at the eastern edge of this state-owned area. The site is now overgrown with trees – appropriately, they are mostly maples.

TWIN RIDGE

Twin Ridge is a subdivision, originally consisting of 68 lots, developed chiefly between 1960 and 1968 by Giles and Barry Montgomery.

Once farmland that had for some two centuries belonged to the Keeler family, the development has been long considered a showplace, with many attractive colonial-style houses erected by independent builders, but only after plans had been approved by the Montgomery family.

The name, descriptive of the terrain, was created for the subdivision and is not old.

Roads in the subdivision are similarly descriptive of terrain or flora on it: Beechwood Lane, Indian Cave Road, Little Ridge Road, Rising Ridge Road, Strawberry Ridge Road, and, of course, Twin Ridge Road. The last, forming the main entrance, runs from Nod Road by the intersection with Indian Cave to a dead end.

TWIXT HILLS

Twixt Hills, usually spelled with two words, is the subdivision that was developed by Jerry Tuccio on land that was an estate called Twixthills, usually spelled as one word.

In 1913, Seth Low Pierrepont, a diplomat and nephew of Seth Low, a mayor of New York City and president of Columbia University, built the estate house, still standing off Barlow Mountain and Old Barlow Mountain Roads. Pierrepont is discussed in more detail in a Who Was Who profile posted [here](#).)

When he came here, Pierrepont amassed for Twixthills some 800 acres of farm and wood land. About 312 acres are now Pierrepont State Park and 184 acres were sold in 1961 to Tuccio by the estate of Pierrepont's widow, Nathalie Elisabeth Chauncey Pierrepont, for \$145,000. The same year, Tuccio began the 93-lot subdivision bearing the estate name, which refers to the setting of the house, between Barlow Mountain and Ridgebury Mountain, two "hills."

Within Twixt Hills are Seth Low Mountain Road, Pierrepont Drive, Clayton Place, Lookout Point, part of Barlow Mountain Road, and, of course, Twixt Hills Road, the latter running from Knollwood Drive and Old Barlow Mountain Road to Seth Low Mountain Road.

TWOPENCE ROAD

Twopence Road at the 1958 Chestnut Hills Estates subdivision runs from Chestnut Hill Road to Parley Road.

Lewis J. Finch, the developer, said he picked the name simply because he liked its sound. "Sometimes it's not easy" to find road names, he said. "You strive for something that sounds nice." The sound, incidentally, should follow the British pronunciation, "tuppence," Finch said in a 1975 interview. Few people do that today.

The road became a town highway in 1964.

U

UMPAWAUG

Although Umpawaug Pond is entirely within the town of Redding, its western shore is less than 200 feet from the eastern border of Ridgefield, and the name has made its way into Ridgefield's records.

In fact, the town line turns from northerly to northwesterly near the pond and consequently, in the 1708 deed between the natives and the Ridgefield settlers for the first purchase of land, the boundary line was described as running "upwardes unto Upewauge pond to a White Oak Tree, standing by the Northwest Corner of said Pond, the said tree being marked and stones lay'd about it, and is the North East Corner..." of the town.

Obviously, this old tree-based marker would not last forever, and it was undoubtedly later replaced. However, in the 1970s, in the last perambulation of the town ever conducted, Theodore Meier was unable to find the famous "Umpawaug Pond Corner" marker.

This monument, he wrote, "may have been lost due to construction of a driveway at the location. A long, thin stone on the side of the road southeast of the driveway was considered a natural stone and the perambulators (he and his son, Bruce Meier) do not believe it is the monument."

At any rate, Umpawaug became a neighborhood, a section of the town, for a portion of the 18th and early 19th Centuries. In 1722, the proprietors deeded land "lying at Umpawogg" to Daniel Olmsted. Ensign Olmstead in 1733 got 35 more acres "lying at the north side of his land at Umpawogg."

In 1748, Richard Olmstead received 20 acres "south of Umpewalk Hill," no doubt the Ridgefield hill just west of the pond and south of Fire Hill.

A 1752 deed spoke of Umpewogg; another in 1786 mentioned Umpowag Pond, and it was not until an 1834 deed for land on the border that we find the modern spelling of Umpawaug.

What does the word, clearly from the native tongue, mean? There are several theories. Jonathan Trumbull, a Connecticut historian of the 19th Century, figured the name had something to do with Umpamock, an Indian who was involved in the sale of land north of Stratford in 1673.

Connecticut Place Names by Hughes and Allen suggests it may stem from the word Umpog, used as the name of a creek in Danbury, Bethel and Redding. This word, they say, may mean "conquered, to whom tribute is brought," perhaps stemming from an Indian chief named Paug who was involved in the 1660 sale of land in Stamford.

Finally, there is "beyond the bend," John C. Huden's translation in *Indian Place Names of New England*. For Umpog, he gives that translation, as well as "a fishing place."

Indeed, one of the biggest ponds in old Redding, Umpawaug was undoubtedly a popular fishing spot for both Indians and the early settlers. In fact, the Redding town records noted in 1817 that Daniel Sanford and Aaron Burr were appointed a committee to procure "the fish called pike" to stock Umpawaug Pond.

From the pond's outlet, the water flows northerly, meeting the Saugatuck River, which winds up in the Saugatuck Reservoir, a source of drinking water for the city of Bridgeport and many other southern Fairfield County towns, including Ridgefield.

UPPER POND

Upper Pond is an old mill pond barely noticed today by most Ridgefielders. That's because it's situated a couple hundred feet west of Pin Pack Road, not easily visible from any highway.

A source of water for the Titicus River, Upper Pond was created, probably in the early 1800s, as a place to store water for mills along Saw Mill Hill Road at Titicus. It was the more upstream of two ponds, the other having been called Lower Pond, and is nearly a half mile from the mill or mills it served.

The first mention of Upper Pond occurred in 1812 when Epentus How(e) and Jeremiah Smith sold Jabez Mix Gilbert of Ridgefield and James Hoyt of South Salem "our grist or corn mill, together with the mill house," land near Gilbert's tan works, a pond, a dam, and "also a tract of land called Upper Pond, lying near the West Mountain."

Howe had been a miller at Titicus for many years and was probably responsible for building the dam that created Upper Pond. His house still stands on the northerly corner of North Salem and Saw Mill Hill roads.

Some subsequent deeds refer to the pond as Gilbert's Upper Pond.

Today, Upper Pond is often called Marjoy Pond, after the 1970s subdivision of nearby land. The pond and much land around it was donated as town open space at the time.

Lower Pond, incidentally, is now but a small body of water along Saw Mill Hill Road, though it was once somewhat bigger.

V

VALLEY BROOK ACRES

Valley Brook Acres is a three-lot subdivision of 7.3 acres on the north corner of Nod Road and Davis Lane, created in 1977 by Roger Carpenter and William Valus.

VETERANS PARK

Veterans Park, 17.2 acres in the center of town, is the heart of Grovelawn, the former estate of Governor Phineas Chapman Lounsbury, and has belonged to the town since the year World War II ended. It was named to honor veterans of that war and all the wars in which Ridgefielders fought.

Gov. Lounsbury (1844-1925) was the state's chief executive from 1887 to 1888. In the early 1880s, he acquired the land on Main Street and lived in a house that, in the 1890s, he moved to Governor Street to make way for his new home. The original house eventually became offices just west of the Boys and Girls Club, but was torn down in 2014 to make way for the Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association headquarters. The governor built what is now the Community Center or the Lounsbury House, modeling it after the Connecticut Building at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Charles B. Northrop, well known for the quality of his work, built the place.

In 1945, the town paid \$56,000 for the property, purchased from the son of Mrs. William H. Griffith, niece of the governor. The tract included all of the land bounded by Main, Market and Governor Streets, and East Ridge Road — except for the parcel at the corner of Main and Governor Streets. At the same time, the town also acquired the land now leased to the Boys and Girls Club.

To help pay for the purchase, voters agreed to sell the old Town Farm or “poorhouse” on North Salem Road.

The land and buildings, including two other houses and a barn, were dedicated to war veterans — it's officially known as Veterans Memorial Park — and the house was supposed to become a community center right away. However, lack of money prevented this from happening until 1953 when a group of private citizens banded together to form the Veterans Memorial Community Association, leasing the building from the town for \$1 a year and agreeing to maintain it. The organization has gone through rocky times on several occasions, but its efforts continues to be successful.

In the late 1990s, the association took to calling its building “The Lounsbury House,” apparently feeling the name has a better ring to it than “Community Center.”

The front of the park property was once the site of the Independent School House, built in 1786 and for many years the village schoolhouse, just as Veterans Park School is today the “village” school. The town's first “modern” flat-roofed school was built in 1953-54 after a long hassle over costs. At one point around 1950, the town was actually considering converting a World War II coal bin into an elementary school classroom to hold the growing number of pupils.

In the 1800s, the park area was used for community fairs. Governor Lounsbury had horses grazing where the athletic fields are today, and there was an orchard and a pond there, too.

Although it was a “veterans park” from 1945, it was not until 1964 that a monument to veterans was erected. By then there had been another war, so the monument commemorated the service of both World War II and the Korean War veterans. (Veterans of earlier wars are remembered on the monument on Main Street at the head of Branchville Road.) For years, the monument and the front porch of Grovelawn serve as the center for the town’s annual Memorial Day ceremonies. In 2003-04, a garden was built between the monument and the center’s front entrance.

Two curious features of Veterans Park are a rock and a bell. The story goes that the rock, situated on Grovelawn’s front lawn, a little south of the building, looked so much like a dog (or some other creature) that Governor Lounsbury had it left in place, and it’s still there today.

The bell, mounted over concrete on the front lawn, belonged to the governor, a gift from a Union Army colonel and friend. The bell, cast in 1845 in Ohio, had been taken by Confederate troops to be melted down for use in making cannons. According to historian Silvio A. Bedini, when the bell and other scrap metal were captured by Col. Alexander Warner, commander of a Connecticut unit, it bore the painted inscription: “This bell is to be melted into a cannon – may it kill a thousand Yankees!”

The colonel eventually acquired the bell and later gave it to Gov. Lounsbury, who had it mounted in his yard. It was rung for the signing of the armistice at the end of World War I, and again in September 1945 at the end of fighting in World War II.

VICTOR DRIVE

Victor Drive is a dead-end road off Ramapoo Road, built starting in 1957 by Victor Williams, who named it after himself. Part of the old Conklin dairy farm, the development consisted of 15 lots subdivided by Perry Scott, who did several other subdivisions around town in the 1950s.

VILLAGE, THE

The village today is an informal name applied to the center of town, the area roughly consisting of Main Street, High Ridge, East Ridge, and the cross-roads around them. “Village,” however, was once a formal term that referred to a government district within the town.

The word village comes from the French for a small town or a farm. Indeed, many early European villages originated from large farms, serving as a commercial center for the people who worked on or served the farm or villa. And Ridgefield, of course, was settled as a farming community, making the word quite fitting. (Names like Farmingville make use of this French root, too; in Farmingville’s case, the name might be literally translated as “farming farm,” though its coiners no doubt meant a farming “community.”)

The term “village” does not appear in town records until well into the 19th Century. Possibly the first recorded use is an 1845 deed for land in “the village of Ridgefield.”

It was not until the turn of the 20th Century that the term began to take on a formal meaning. At that time the center of Ridgefield was changing. Many

wealthy New Yorkers had been moving to town, either building large “summer places” or converting existing old houses to larger, more ornate “mansions.”

These places, while in the country, needed some of the amenities of the city and, at the beginning of this century, sewer and water lines were installed in the center of town, and gas lights, later electric ones, lit some of the village streets.

Since villagers were getting some services — sewers, hydrants, street lights — that those in outlying districts didn’t, the town in 1902 established the Borough of Ridgefield, with a warden and eight burgesses to oversee it. People living in the borough paid an extra property tax to cover the utilities that only they enjoyed. Eventually, the borough even had its own “night watchman,” a constable to keep an eye on things.

Not all of the special village services were provided by the borough, however. In 1899, the Village Improvement Society was established by 14 prominent residents, and helped create and improve sidewalks, add street lights and signs, plant trees and flowers. For many years, the society also hired a street cleaner to serve as a sort of outdoor janitor along Main Street.

The borough came to be controlled chiefly by a small group of villagers, including former state comptroller Harvey P. Bissell, who ran the drug store, Father R.E. Shortell, pastor of St. Mary’s, and Dr. R.W. Lowe, a physician here for more than a half century.

Apparently the powers in the Town of Ridgefield government didn’t like having this autonomous little government within the community, and in 1921 the borough was abolished and a new Village of Ridgefield was established through a special act of the state Legislature and a vote at the Town Meeting.

The chief changes that came with the Village District were that the first selectman and the Board of Finance took over control of the center district administration. In addition, the Board of Finance, which had been an elective agency, became appointed (it has since returned to its elected roots).

The annual budget for the Village District still had to be approved by the voters at an annual meeting, just as the Annual Town Meeting approved the townwide budget and a borough meeting had handled that district’s finances.

The boundaries of the Village District were supposed to coincide with the sewer lines since operation of the sewer system was the most expensive service the village budget supported. Over the years, Village District boundaries were expanded outward to encompass new neighborhoods served by sewers, but eventually new sewer hook-ups were being made outside the district without expansion of the boundaries. In addition, hydrants were being installed outside the village, with no special extra cost to those served by them, and streetlights were becoming commonplace throughout the town. Moreover, the police force was established in 1955 and became a formal and townwide service.

So, in the early 1970s, especially after development began on Fox Hill Village, the condominium project on Danbury Road that had sewers but was outside the district, villagers began getting tired of paying for services others were getting for “free.” In July 1974, village voters approved — by a narrow margin — the abandonment of the Village District.

The next night, the Town Meeting voted to absorb the Village District and its assets and to establish a Sewer Authority, which set fees for use of the sewer lines. In other words, only those who used the sewers would pay for them.

Abandonment of the Village District and creation of a Sewer Authority did not sit well with David L. Paul, the developer of Casagmo and Fox Hill, whose

multifamily projects suddenly had to pay a considerably larger share of the sewer operating costs. Attorney Paul sued the town, but was unsuccessful in overturning the plan. (Paul later headed Florida's biggest savings and loan, a Miami bank that went belly-up in the mid-1980s after losing millions of dollars. He wound up in prison.)

"While the death of the Village District came somewhat quietly and in response to needs felt by the town as a whole," The Ridgefield Press Centenary Issue observed in 1975, "it spelled the end of a colorful part of Ridgefield's past – a day when the 'up-town' politics of the district were conducted quietly in the back of Bissell's drugstore, and the outlanders had only the Town Meeting, not the Village Meeting, as a forum for their views."

VIRGINIA COURT

Virginia Court is a name that came from an off-hand remark, made mostly in jest, some 40 years ago.

The road at the 1958 Ridgefield Knolls subdivision is a dead-end, running off the east side of Old Stagecoach Road, just south of Bennett's Farm Road. It became a town road in 1968.

Edgar P. Bickford was surveyor on the project, working for Robert "Bob" Kaufman's Topstone Development Corp. According to Mr. Bickford in a 1975 interview, Virginia George, assistant secretary of Topstone, joked one day during development of the sizable subdivision, "Why can't I have a road named after me?"

Mr. Bickford replied, "We're going to get Bob's name in there, we might as well have yours."

Therefore, today we have both Bob Hill Road and Virginia Court, though there is no name at the Knolls to recall Mr. Bickford, apparently a modest man.

W

LAKE WACCABUC

Lake Waccabuc, now in northern Lewisboro, was once partly in Ridgefield, and was lost to New York Colony in 1731 as Connecticut ceded the so-called Oblong along its western border.

Formed along with Lakes Rippowam and Oscaleta some 20,000 years ago as one long body of water, Waccabuc was called by the Indians Wepack or Wepuc, and by the early white settlers Long Pond. It is said that Long Pond is a rough translation of Wepack.

The name Waccabuc didn't appear on the scene till 1860 when Martin R. Mead built the Waccabuc House hotel on the lake. The origin of his "Waccabuc" is uncertain, but some think it might be a version of wequa-paug, which itself is a longer version of Wepack.

The hotel burned down in 1896, but the name stuck. Over years, the lake area became a community and it was a popular spot for summer homes. A post office was established for Waccabuc in the 1870s and still exists. There's also a golf club and a sizable conservation preserve there.

The History of Lewisboro (1981) reports that one of the better-known legends associated with the lake is the Waccabuc elephant. "According to the story, an elephant died on or near Mead Street during the early to mid-1800s (when this area was a winter quarters for several circuses), was dragged out onto the frozen lake, weighted with chains and scrap iron, and left to sink in the lake when the ice melted." A 1960 search of the bottom by skin divers failed to find any conclusive evidence that the story was true.

WALLIS' HOGHOLE

When Ebenezer, Daniel and Job Smith sold 11 acres in 1746 to Gideon Smith, they described it as "lying...under Asproom near Wallis' Hoghole, so called."

Wallis was no doubt James Wallis (or Wallace), whose family settled on the colony line, mostly in North Salem. The hoghole, however, was probably somewhere near what's now the Ridgefield High School property.

Hoghole is probably a variation of "hoghollow," a term used in a 1749 deed referring to "Smith's Hogholler," quite possibly the same location. That word, in turn, is probably a variation of "hogwallow."

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a hogwallow is "a hollow or ditch in which pigs wallow." Especially in the United States, it can also be "a natural depression having this appearance." Most likely, Wallis' Hoghole was a place where James Wallis kept his pigs – presumably, for the sake of sensitive noses, far from his house.

WALNUT GROVE, AND ROAD

Walnut Grove is a 1960s subdivision of 35 house lots, served, appropriately enough, by Walnut Grove Road.

The name is not something dreamed up by a developer looking for an attractive title; it was the name of the longstanding farm that operated on the property, and may have traced its origin back to the early 18th Century.

In the 1700s, there was a locality in Farmingville known as Walnut Tree Ridge; this may have been the ridge to the east of Walnut Grove. In any event, it is clear that walnuts were growing in this vicinity from an early period. In a 1970s interview, Francis D. Martin recalled “a great grove of walnut trees” at the farm, though the late Karl S. Nash, who once lived there as a child, remembered them as hickories.

David L. Jones, a Wilton native who settled in Farmingville in the 1890s after spending time in Colorado where he had a copper mine, named Walnut Grove Farm. Jones operated a dairy from this farm and grew crops at his Fairview Farm along Lee Road.

After his death in 1917, the farm remained in the family for several years, but in 1921 was acquired by Carl A.F. Stolle, who ran it until around 1950 when Alex C. Johnston bought it. Three years later, it was sold again, and eventually wound up in the hands of William Peatt Jr., whose West Lane Company subdivided 48 of the 96 acres in 1964. Nicholas R. DiNapoli Sr. put up most of the houses.

The Walnut Grove farmhouse, built around 1850 and remodeled in 1950, and the barn, now a house, still stand on the south side of Farmingville Road, just beyond Walnut Grove Road. The farm’s pond, now mostly swamp, was called Jones’ Pond and is preserved as part of three acres of open space along Farmingville Road.

Walnut Grove Road, which runs in a circle through the subdivision, became a town road in 1969.

WALNUT HILL ROAD

Walnut Hill Road runs from Old West Mountain Road to Round Lake Road at the Eight Lakes subdivision on West Mountain. It became a town road in 1957.

The road was named for the tree, perhaps because some were found in this neck of the woods when the development took place in the mid-1950’s. Now rather rare and highly prized, the black walnut is so valued for its wood, used in veneers and fine furniture, that wild trees have actually been known to have been felled and stolen.

In ages past, not only the wood but the bark was valuable, the latter for tanning. The nut was used both for a food and for a yellowish-brown dye that was made from its outer husk.

WALNUT (TREE) RIDGE

Walnut Ridge or Walnut Tree Ridge is an elevation of land in Farmingville, apparently in the vicinity of the Farmingville School, perhaps including the top of Cain’s Hill.

The name appears as early as 1718 when the proprietors deeded four acres to “Milford Samuel Smith... on ye Walnut Ridge west of ye East River.” The East River was a name for the Norwalk River, situated as it is in the eastern extreme of the town.

In 1722, the proprietors granted Thomas Hyatt 15 acres at “ye Walnutt Tree Ridge.” Hyatt in 1723 sold the same land to Timothy Canfield, describing the

tract as “lying eastward of Sherwood’s Ridge, over ye Great Swamp, lying on a ridge called Walnut Ridge.”

The name in either variation continued to appear in deeds for more than a half century, the last being a 1774 transfer which speaks of “Walnut Ridge,” combining the two words. The name may have fallen out of use with the emergence of Cain’s Hill, if it included that territory, but may also have been the inspiration for Walnut Grove, the name of the old farm that is now a subdivision in Farmingville. Or, of course, he trees, no doubt now long-gone, could have inspired both names.

WASHINGTON AVENUE

Washington Avenue, at Peatt Park, runs between Lafayette and Rochambeau Avenues, a fitting arrangement since the names of all three gentlemen are connected with an incident in Ridgefield history.

As noted in more detail in the entry on George Washington Highway (*q.v.*), the first president paid up to three visits to Ridgefield, but only one is documented. That occurred on Sept. 19, 1780, when the General and the Marquis de Lafayette were on their way to Hartford to meet the Comte de Rochambeau (who later came here – *see* Rochambeau Avenue). They stayed the night in Ridgebury, near the intersection of Ridgebury Road and George Washington Highway (*q.v.*).

Though that was far to the north of the village of Ridgefield and Peatt Park, Washington may have once visited the Main Street home of Colonel Philip Burr Bradley, who lived where Ballard Park is now. There is no record of the visit, only tradition.

Though Washington probably had no connection with the neighborhood, the late William Peatt Sr. nonetheless felt the name was a fitting remembrance when he created the subdivision way back in 1928.

Incidentally, a recent survey of streets across the nation found that Washington is the most popular street name employing the name of a person. The all-around most popular name is Main Street.

WASHINGTON PARK ESTATES

Washington Park Estates is a subdivision of 78 one-acre parcels along Branchville and Old Washington Roads, including the new roads of Lincoln Lane, Jefferson Drive and Adams Road. The subdivider was Bertram H. Ison, who moved here around 1950 from Long Island, where he had sold motorcycles.

Work on the subdivision was started some years before the final plan was filed in 1961. According to *The Ridgefield Press* in October 1952, Ison and his mother, Minnie, were then planning a 100-acre subdivision with 1,300-square-foot houses that would sell for “under \$20,000.”

The name of the subdivision came from the road (*see below*).

WASHINGTON ROAD

Washington Road is a variation of Old Washington Road, an old roadway that once ran from Branchville Road to Ivy Hill Road. The road now serves only home lots at the Washington Park Estates (*above*), a neighborhood that got its name from the road.

As noted in the entry on Old Washington Road, the name may not have recalled the first president, at least not directly. There are reports that it was actually named for George Washington Gilbert, a turn of the 20th Century hermit, who lived along Ivy Hill Road not far from its old intersection with Old Washington Road (see Hermit Lane).

WATABA LAKE

Wataba Lake is another name for what is more commonly called Rainbow Lake, one of the “Ridgefield Lakes.”

According to John C. Huden in *“Indian Place Names of New England,”* *wataba* is a Mahican word for “roots,” not just any roots but “the kind of roots used for cord and for thread in sewing canoes.”

However, it turns out that Wataba is not of early Ridgefield origin or even Indian origin. In January 2021, Hollywood screenwriter Chuck Rapoport (1937-), who spent much of his youth at Rainbow Lake, reported: “My parents built a home in 1952 on Bennett’s Farms Road, corner of Limestone and Lakeside Drive. Growing up I explored miles of woodlands from Pine Mountain to Bennett’s Ponds. In 1954 I gave a new name to what was called Rainbow Lake, the artificial lake.... I made up the name Wataba Lake. It sounded so Native American. I posted a large sign on the entry posts to Lakeside Drive. That’s all I did. Years later I discovered the US Government survey maps used that name as well as other local maps.”

Whichever name, Wataba Lake has an active community of residents, two of whom — Roger Grannis and Kevin McCarthy — have been sponsoring for some years an annual Wataba Lake Festival to benefit the Ridgefield Lakes Association. The festival includes music, crafts, food, and more, and is open to the public.

WATER’S EDGE WAY

Water’s Edge Way is a private Road at the Ridgefield Lakes, running along the northwestern shore of Fox Hill Lake. It connects Greenridge Drive with Bennett’s Farm Road.

WATERFALL ROAD

Waterfall Road is a short lane, running between Bear Mountain and Old Mill Roads at Otto H. Lippolt’s 1959 Hemlock Hills subdivision in Ridgebury.

The name apparently refers to the fall at the end of Old Mill Pond, presumably over a dam built for the old mill.

WEBSTER ROAD

Webster Road at Westmoreland (*q.v.*) runs between Remington and Holmes Roads, all developed in the mid-1960s by Jerry Tuccio on plans drawn by the Lincoln Development Corporation of Massachusetts.

The road was probably named for Daniel Webster (1782-1852), the noted statesman. Webster was a congressman, senator, secretary of state, and 1848 presidential candidate whose speaking abilities and understanding of law were legends in his own time. Said one 19th Century author, “His great speech in reply to Hayne, delivered in the Senate Jan. 26 and 27, 1830, on Foote’s resolution, has been declared, next to the Constitution, the most correct and complete exposition of the true powers and functions of the federal government.”

Why name a Ridgefield road for a man who had no direct connection with Ridgefield? All we can figure is that Webster spent part of his life in Massachusetts, the home state of the Lincoln Development Corporation, which had a fondness for names of famous old Americans in naming Westmoreland Roads: Marshall, Hamilton, Holmes, and Conant (a Harvard president).

WENBOS LANE

Those who live along Bayberry Hill Road should probably be thankful that their address is neither Wenbos Lane nor Boswen Drive, both of which were originally used for the development.

According to the map of the subdivision, Wenbos Lane was the portion from Branchville Road to the circle. The circle itself was known as Boswen Drive. Both names still appear on some deeds for houses in this subdivision.

“Wen” and “Bos” were, not surprisingly, the developers, Norwalkers Raymond D. Wennik and George Bossert. They seemed fond of such names, calling their corporation the Stam-Nor Holding Company.

Also not surprisingly, residents of the road petitioned in 1959 to have the names changed and, after several possibilities were mulled over, the Board of Selectmen chose Bayberry Hill.

WEPACK

Wepack was an Indian name for the territory at Long Pond, mostly now in Lewisboro, but which would have included some land still remaining in Ridgefield where West Mountain Road crosses into New York state.

The name appears in the settlers’ fourth purchase of land from the Indians. In the 1727 deed, “we Taporneck & Moses, Indians belonging to Wepack or long pond so Called, & Richard and Samm Indians, belonging to ammauogg,” sold territory, most of which went to New York Colony in the 1731 transfer of the Oblong (*q.v.*).

The deed nicely points out that Wepack is Long Pond or at least, at Long Pond. Long Pond is an area now consisting of three ponds: Lakes Osaleta, Rippowam and Waccabuc. Back at the time of the settlement of this territory, the three bodies of water were probably considered one long pond – hence the common name, Long Pond, used into the mid-19th Century. Swamps connected with these mostly New York bodies of water extend into Ridgefield.

The meaning of Wepack is not certain, but there have been educated guesses. Some students of the Algonquian tongue maintain the word is a variation of *wequapaug*, meaning “at the end of the pond.” John C. Huden, in *Indian Place Names of New England*, guesses that it was a variation of the word, *Wepaug*, which is also a locality in Tolland County, Conn. *Pog* or *pok* was an Indian sound meaning water, usually shallow water.

Another possible translation is “narrow waterway.”

Wepack also appears in some New York records as Wepuc. (*See also under Waccabuc.*)

Incidentally, Ammauogg, where Richard and Samm lived, was probably Amawalk, a locality that includes a mountain in Somers, N.Y., west of this location.

WEST BRANCHVILLE ROAD

Perhaps the prize, were there one, for the most bizarrely named road in Ridgefield could go to West Branchville Road, a small piece of ancient highway that runs on the far side of the railroad tracks from Branchville's Peaceable Street north to a dead end by a storage business. The name is ridiculous because, no matter how you look at it, there is no reason for this highway to be labeled *West* Branchville Road.

Just pick up a town map. The road almost parallels the Redding town line in the very southeast corner of Ridgefield. There is probably no road in Ridgefield that is as far to the *east* as West Branchville Road is. It is in the easternmost part of Branchville, and it is east of Branchville Road. It runs north and south, so it can't be said to lead anyone westward (as it can be said of West Lane). It is east of the town's only train station, and east of the tracks. Walk a few feet east of the road and you're in western Redding.

Who dreamed up the name and why it has managed to survive, no one seems to know. Since the late 1960s, the name appears on various maps, in highway lists, street directories, and even on signs. It is an official mailing address.

It should have been banned from print.

There is another, earlier name for the road and one that was used by a few mapmakers, such as Mail-A-Map, as late as 2005. "Old Main Highway" is much more suitable because the road is actually a small segment of the old turnpike that ran from Norwalk to Danbury in the 19th Century.

Much of the turnpike's path is now Route 7, but early in the 20th Century, when the state was improving Route 7, it moved the main highway to the west side of the tracks and the west side of the Norwalk River, a flatter and straighter route than the turnpike builders had used. It also did away with the bother of the highway's twice crossing the railroad tracks in a short distance.

The road left behind from this straightening is West Branchville Road, nee Old Main Highway.

A postcard from the 1920s labels a scene on this road as "Main Street, Branchville, Conn." It was true that the road was Branchville's main street back then, but it is no longer the case. And even if it were called Old Main Street today, it would only cause confusion with the Main Street that's in the village four miles west of Branchville — and West Branchville Road.

WEST CEDAR MOUNTAIN(S)

West Cedar Mountain is a name mentioned rarely in Ridgefield records. The first occurrence was in the 1709 grant from the General Assembly, allowing the town of Ridgefield to be created and using "West Cedar Mountain" as a boundary.

The name was still in use, though possibly only by reference to that ancient record, in 1828 during the perambulation (boundary walking) of the Ridgefield-Redding town line. In their report, the perambulators noted a boundary marker as existing in Abijah Nash's lot "on the West Cedar Mountains on the rear of the Long Lots so called."

The locality is the ridge more commonly known as Cedar Mountain, the north-south "mountain" that runs between Route 7 and Florida Road.

Why “West” in view of what was said about West Branchville Road (*q.v.*)? Perhaps the ridge on the east side of Route 7, across the valley from the West Cedar Mountain, was known as the East Cedar Mountain (or simply East Mountain, a name that appears also in the perambulation) by Ridgefielders, even though it was mostly in Redding. Or perhaps Cedar Mountain was named by people in Fairfield (later Redding), who looked upon its eastern slope as being in the west part of their town, part of the Fairfield “Long Lots” mentioned in the perambulation.

WEST FIELD

The Northrup family, which owned considerable land in the West Lane (Bedford Road) area in the 18th Century, sold several parcels at the “West Field” in 1763. The locality was probably on the western slope of High Ridge, in the vicinity of Manor Road or Golf Lane.

The name was mentioned as early as the 1750s and continued to appear in deeds well into the 1770s.

While it was probably more a family name than a well-known Ridgefield locality, West Field is interesting in that, in another place in New England, it became the name of a whole city: Westfield, near Springfield, Mass.

WEST LANE (I)

West Lane, one of our oldest highways, runs from Main Street at the fountain into New York State where it is known by the same name.

Although a road may have existed before then, West Lane near the village was probably laid out in 1722 and the eastern portion was probably first called Bedford Road (*q.v.*). Bedford Road was the present Route 35 – West Lane from Main Street to the little red schoolhouse, and then South Salem Road to the state line, part of a major Boston-to-New York stage route. Bedford was the next town of any consequence to the west of Ridgefield, and the present South Salem Road continued to be called Bedford Road as late as 1902, when that name appears on a property map on file in the town clerk’s office.

From the 1770’s

The term “West Lane” did not come into recorded use until the 1770’s, and the first deed mentioning the name was filed in 1775 when John Northrup sold Josiah Hine “one certain tract or piece of land lying in sd. Ridgefield, joyning to the West Lane so called.” Thereafter, the name begins appearing with increasing frequency.

It sometimes confuses people that a road that the state labels Route 35 and that seems as one highway in fact bears two names, and that West Lane wanders off at the schoolhouse, heading southwest without a state highway number. Actually, from the schoolhouse to the state line, this winding road is still a state highway — what is known as a “secret route” — though the number is kept from public view because the road does not lead to a state highway in Lewisboro, N.Y. This segment of road, however, is officially State Route 835.

West Lane started out as a route to the southwestern corner of the town, a territory then known as the Southwest Ridges, fertile and rolling hills that were valued farmland. Much of the Southwest Ridges, however, was lost to New York Colony when Connecticut exchanged the Oblong for Greenwich and other concessions in 1731. Much of the land along New York Route 123 and Elmwood Road, which run along the Southwest Ridges, were in Ridgefield then.

Although the name sounds a little silly in Lewisboro, that town has retained the ancient name of West Lane, despite the fact that the road is in the easternmost part of that town.

Were the Southwest Ridges to have remained in Ridgefield, lower West Lane may have come to be known as “the Southwest Ridges Road” – there were occasional references to such a name. For a while, especially in the early part of this century, the western leg of West Lane was also called “New Canaan Road” because it has always been the main route from Ridgefield to that town, via New York State.

There was also once a movement, albeit very limited, to have the name of the entire road changed. Edgar C. Bross (1864-1935), editor of *The Ridgefield Press* from 1886 to 1889, once wrote an editorial in which he suggested changing the street’s name to honor William W. Whiting, the fourth editor of *The Press* (1882-84). Despite Bross’s apparent admiration for Whiting, his idea met with little success, not too surprisingly.

The name West Lane also lent itself to the school district, centered on the schoolhouse that still stands within the intersection of West Lane, South Salem Road, and Silver Spring Road. The district, also known as Number Seven, was called “West Lane School District” as early as 1862. At that time, it included all of West Lane, South Salem Road, northern Silver Spring Road, much of Peaceable Street and most of Peaceable Hill, the Westmoreland area, Olmstead Lane, and southern High Ridge.

One of the most noted residents of West Lane – a native of the street, in fact – was Samuel G. Goodrich, who was born in 1793 in a house that no longer stands near the corner of West and Golf Lanes, and who received his first schooling at the West Lane schoolhouse.

Goodrich, known around the world as Peter Parley, wrote or edited more than 100 books under that name. In his *Recollections of A Lifetime*, his autobiography published in 1856, Goodrich gives us a first-hand glimpse of what it was like to go to school in Ridgefield around the year 1800:

Six-year-old scholar

“About three-fourths of a mile from my father’s house, on the winding road to Lower Salem (South Salem or Lewisboro) which I have already mentioned, and which bore the name of West Lane, was the school-house where I took my first lessons, and received the foundations of my very slender education. I have since been sometimes asked where I graduated: My reply has always been, ‘at West Lane.’ Generally speaking, this has ended the inquiry, whether because my interlocutors have confounded this venerable institution with ‘Lane Seminary,’ or have not thought it worthwhile to risk an exposure of their ignorance as to the college in which I was educated, I am unable to say.

“The site of the school-house was a triangular piece of land, measuring perhaps a rood in extent, and lying, according to the custom of those days, at the meeting of four roads. The ground hereabouts – as everywhere else in Ridgefield – was exceedingly stony, and in making the pathway the stones had been thrown out right and left, and there remained in heaps on either side, from generation to generation. All around was bleak and desolate. Loose, squat stone walls, with innumerable breaches, inclosed the adjacent fields.

“A few tufts of elder, with here and there a patch of briars and pokeweed, flourished in the gravelly soil. Not a tree, however, remained, save an aged chestnut, at the western angle of the space. This, certainly, had not been spared

for shade or ornament, but probably because it would have cost too much labor to cut it down, for it was of ample girth. At all events it was the oasis in our desert during summer; and in autumn, as the burrs disclosed its fruit, it resembled a besieged city. The boys, like so many catapults [slingshots], hurled at it stones and sticks, until every nut had capitulated...

"The school-house itself consisted of rough, unpainted clapboards, upon a wooden frame. It was plastered within, and contained two apartments – a little entry taken out of a corner for a wardrobe, and the school-room proper. The chimney was of stone, and pointed with mortar, which, by the way, had been dug into a honeycomb by uneasy and enterprising penknives. The fireplace was six feet wide and four feet deep. The flue was so ample and so perpendicular, that the rain, sleet, and snow fell direct to the hearth.

"In winter, the battle for life with green fizzling fuel, which was brought in sled lengths and cut up by the scholars, was a stern one. Not unfrequently, the wood, gushing with sap as it was, chanced to be out, and as there was no living without fire, the thermometer being 10 or 20 degrees below zero, the school was dismissed, whereat all the scholars rejoiced aloud, not having the fear of the schoolmaster before their eyes.

"It was the custom at this place, to have a woman's school in the summer months, and this was attended only by young children. It was, in fact, what we now call a primary or infant school. In winter, a man was employed as teacher, and then the girls and boys of the neighborhood, up to the age of 18, or even 20, were among the pupils. It was not uncommon, at this season, to have 40 scholars crowded into this little building.

"I was about six years old when I first went to school. My teacher was Aunt Delight, that is, Delight Benedict, a maiden lady of 50, short and bent, of sallow complexion and solemn aspect.

"I remember the first day with perfect distinctness. I went alone – for I was familiar with the road, it being that which passed by our old house. I carried a little basket, with bread and butter within, for my dinner, the same being covered over with a white cloth. When I had proceeded about half way, I lifted the cover, and debated whether I would not eat my dinner then. I believe it was a sense of duty only that prevented my doing so, for in those happy days, I always had a keen appetite. Bread and butter were then infinitely superior to pate de foie gras now; but still, thanks to my training, I had also a conscience. As my mother had given me the food for dinner, I did not think it right to convert it into lunch, even though I was strongly tempted.

"I think we had 17 scholars – boys and girls – mostly of my own age... The school being organized, we were all seated upon benches, made of what were called slabs – that is, boards having the exterior or rounded part of the log on one side: As they were useless for other purposes, these were converted into school-benches, the rounded part down. They had each four supports, consisting of straddling wooden legs, set into auger-holes. Our own legs swayed in the air, for they were too short to touch the floor. Oh, what an awe fell over me, when we were all seated and silence reigned around!

A lesson learned

The children were called up, one by one, to Aunt Delight, who sat on a low chair, and required each, as a preliminary, to make his manners, consisting of a small sudden nod or jerk of the head. She then placed the spelling-book – which was Dilworth's – before the pupil, and with a buckhanded penknife

pointed, one by one, to the letters of the alphabet, saying, "What's that?" If the child knew his letters, the "what's that?" very soon ran on thus:

"What's that?"

"A."

"Stha-a-t?"

"B."

"Sna-a-a-t?"

"C."

"Sna-a-a-t?"

"D."

"Sna-a-a-t?"

"E." &c.

"I looked upon these operations with intense curiosity and no small respect, until my own turn came. I went up to the school-mistress with some emotion, and when she said, rather spitefully, as I thought, 'Make your obeisance!' my little intellects all fled away, and I did nothing. Having waited a second, gazing at me with indignation, she laid her hand on the top of my head, and gave it a jerk which made my teeth clash.

"I believe I bit my tongue a little; at all events, my sense of dignity was offended, and when she pointed to A, and asked what it was, it swam before me dim and hazy, and as big as a full moon. She repeated the question, but I was doggedly silent. Again, a third time, she said, 'What's that?' I replied: 'Why don't you tell what it is? I didn't come here to learn you your letters!'

"I have not the slightest remembrance of this, for my brains were all a-woolgathering; but as Aunt Delight affirmed it to be a fact, and it passed into a tradition, I put it in. I may have told this story some years ago in one of my books, imputing it to a fictitious hero, yet this is its true origin, according to my recollection.

Visit to the parents

"What immediately followed I do not clearly remember, but one result is distinctly traced in my memory. In the evening of this eventful day, the school-mistress paid my parents a visit, and recounted to their astonished ears this, my awful contempt of authority.

"My father, after hearing the story, got up and went away; but my mother, who was a careful disciplinarian, told me not to do so again! I always had a suspicion that both of them smiled on one side of their faces, even while they seemed to sympathize with the old petticoat and pen-knife pedagogue, on the other; still I do not affirm it, for I am bound to say, of both my parents, that I never knew them, even in trifles, to say one thing while they meant another.

"I believe I achieved the alphabet that summer, but my after progress, for a long time, I do not remember. Two years later I went to the winter-school at the same place, kept by Lewis Olmstead, a man who had a call for plowing, mowing, carting manure, &c., in summer, and for teaching school in the winter, with a talent for music at all seasons, wherefore he became chorister upon occasion, when peradventure, Deacon Hawley could not officiate (at the Congregational Church).

"He was a celebrity in ciphering, and Squire Seymour declared that he was the greatest 'arithmeticker' in Fairfield County. All I remember of his person is his hand, which seemed to me as big as Goliath's, judging by the claps of thunder it made in my ears on one or two occasions.

“The next step of my progress which is marked in my memory, is the spelling of words of two syllables. I did not go very regularly to school, but by the time I was 10 years old I had learned to write, and had made a little progress in arithmetic. There was not a grammar, a geography, or a history of any kind in the school. Reading, writing, and arithmetic were the only things taught, and these very indifferently – not wholly from the stupidity of the teacher, but because he had 40 scholars and the standards of the age required no more than he performed. I did as well as the other scholars, certainly no better...”

Young Samuel Goodrich’s not-so-pleasant experiences at the West Lane schoolhouse may have inspired him to produce his dozens of school books, considered the first that tried to make the material interesting to children. He has been called the father of the modern textbook.

The West Lane schoolhouse continued to be used until 1915.

WEST LANE (II)

For many years, Ridgebury had its own West Lane, a road that accomplished a task almost identical to the Ridgefield center’s West Lane. Like the latter, the West Lane in Ridgebury led people from the center or village westward into New York (or from New York to Ridgebury).

Unlike the winding village road, Ridgebury’s West Lane was almost “straight as an arrow,” running westward from Ridgebury Road opposite George Washington Highway till it hit the state line. For much of the 20th Century, this road was little used, but then in the late 1960’s, developers designed a subdivision for its eastern end. Rather than have people run into confusion with the more “established” West Lane, the Planning and Zoning Commission in 1969 opted for a new title, Canterbury Lane.

“West Lane” appears as early as 1799 when John Perry sold William Forrester three acres in Ridgebury “Parish adjoining the West Lane so called.” An 1800 reference speaks of land “adjoining the West Lane near the Meeting House.”

The term continued to appear through the mid-19th Century and was still being used on some records into the 20th Century.

WEST MOUNTAIN

West Mountain, probably the best-known “mountain” in Ridgefield, is the ridge along the western side of town that runs southwesterly from around Lake Mamanasco at the north well into Lewisboro, N.Y., on the south. At its highest point, in a remote area south of Sleepy Hollow Road just east of the state line, the elevation reaches just about 1,000 feet above sea level, not quite the 1,010 to 1,040 feet variously claimed for Pine Mountain in eastern Ridgebury.

The American Indians called the place *asoquatah*, a word of uncertain meaning but perhaps translatable as “pine tree sap place,” the sap being used as a glue or sealer by the natives. *Asoquatah* is the name that appears in the first deed from the Indians in 1708. By 1722, documents were using “West Mountain,” a name whose origin is self-evident.

Some, however, might argue the use of the term “mountain” to refer to a place that’s only a thousand feet up at its summit. The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines mountain as “a natural elevation of the earth’s surface, having considerable mass, generally steep sides, and a height greater than that of a

hill.” So how high is a hill then? The same dictionary says a hill is “a well-defined naturally elevated area of land smaller than a mountain.” Thanks a lot.

The earliest uses for West Mountain appeared to be as woodlots and for lumber, supplying firewood for the farms at the lower elevations and lumber for construction. Soon, however, as the choice lower lands were all spoken for and turned to field, newcomers moved to the mountain, clearing its surface of what must have been massive trees and plentiful rocks.

Millers on the mountain

Millers had also eyed the mountain and Round Pond, whose spring-fed waters provided a good source of power along the outlet stream for mills to saw the lumber taken from those virgin forests. However, as early as 1773, the proprietors had granted to “Joshua Pardy... ye privilege of using the water of the Round Pond (for carrying his grist mill).” A 1786 deed speaks of the land “by Pardee’s” on West Mountain and in 1797, the proprietors granted Joshua “Par-du” land where “his grist mill stands,” while “reserving the privilege to the owners of the sawmill standing near said grist mill.” One Israel Pardee was operating a sawmill there sometime before 1818. Thus, there was some early industrial activity atop the mountain and the fact that a grist (grain) mill could successfully be operated there indicated either that the neighborhood was becoming fairly developed or that people in western Ridgefield and probably northern Lewisboro, lacking a good stream for a grist mill in more accessible neighborhoods, felt the trek up the mountain was worth the trouble.

Around the turn of the 20th Century, the mountain became a place second only to High Ridge and West Lane, for mansions for wealthy New Yorkers seeking retreats in the country. The John Lynch estate (now Ridgefield Academy), Sunset Hall (home of TV personality Dick Cavett), Jonathan Bulkley’s “Rippowam,” and Philip D. Wagoner’s stone “palace” — once owned by book collector Harrison Horblit — and the Arnold bakery family’s Eleven Levels, are five magnificent examples — all still standing.

School district

From at least the first half of the 19th Century, the mountain had its own school, which was also one of the last district schools to close its doors; that happened in 1928.

The schoolhouse still stands, used as a residence on the old Innisfree estate, the former home of Dr. Patrick and Vera Neligan. It sits along a portion of an old sharp curve — sometimes today called Tower Road — that was part of West Mountain Road until it was bypassed when improvements to the highway were made by the state some years ago (*see* West Mountain Road).

In the 1860s, the West Mountain School District, long known as District Number Five, included West Mountain Road west of Peaceable Ridge, Oscaleta Road, Old West Mountain Road, Rippowam Road, Pumping Station Road, and Oreneca Road. There must have been some mighty cold hikes up there for the young mountain-dwelling scholars in the winters of the 19th and early 20th Centuries.

In 1970, there was a hotly debated plan to erect a new West Mountain School, which would have been the town’s seventh elementary school, on town-owned land along Oscaleta Road. Voters rejected the plan, both because of objections to developing conservation land and because of predictions that school enrollments would decline, making a new school unnecessary. The vot-

ers made a wise choice, since the town eventually closed two elementary schools when enrollments did, in fact, drop.

Pigeon hunting

To the 19th Century author Samuel Goodrich (“Peter Parley”), who grew up on West Lane and High Ridge at the turn of the 19th Century, West Mountain was a special place for an activity we would frown upon today – the mass hunting of passenger pigeons, a species trapped and blasted into extinction by Americans in the 1800s. In his *Recollections of A Lifetime*, Goodrich gives us a fascinating picture of the hunt and a beautiful picture of the mountain:

“I can recollect no sports of my youth which equaled in excitement our pigeon hunts, generally taking place in September and October. We usually started on horseback before daylight, and made rapid progress to some stubble-field on West Mountain.

“The ride in the keen, fresh air, especially as the dawn began to break, was delightful. The gradual encroachment of day upon night filled my mind with sublime images; the waking up of a world from sleep, the joyousness of birds and beasts in the return of morning, and my own sympathy in this cheerful and grateful homage of the heart to God, the Giver of good – all contributed to render these adventures most impressive upon my young heart.

Sights and sounds

“My memory is still full of the sights and sounds of those glorious mornings: The silvery whistle of the wings of migrating flocks of plover – invisible in the gray mists of dawn; the faint murmur of the distant mountain torrents; the sonorous gong of the long-trailing flocks of wild geese, seeming to come from the unseen depths of the skies – these were among the suggestive sounds that stole through the dim twilight. As morning advanced, the scene was inconceivably beautiful – the mountain sides, clothed in autumnal green and purple and gold, rendered more glowing by the sunrise – with the valleys covered with mists and spreading out like lakes of silver, while on every side, the ear was saluted by the mocking screams of the red-headed woodpecker, the cawing of congresses of crows, clamorous as if talking to Buncombe; and finally, the rushing sound of the pigeons, pouring like a tide over the tops of the trees.

“By this time, of course, our nets were ready, and our flyers and stool birds on the alert. What moments of ecstasy were these, and especially when the head of the flock – some red-breasted old father or grandfather – caught sight of our pigeons, and turning at the call, drew the whole train down into our net-bed. I have often seen a hundred or two hundred of these splendid birds come upon us, with a noise absolutely deafening, and sweeping the air with a sudden gust, like the breath of a thundercloud. Sometimes our brush-hut, where we lay concealed, was covered all over with pigeons, and we dared not move a finger, as their red, piercing eyes were upon us. When at last, with a sudden pull of the rope, the net was sprung, and we went out to secure our booty – often fifty and sometimes even a hundred birds – I felt the fullness of triumph, which words are wholly inadequate to express!”

It is sad to think that such techniques helped to wipe out a whole species of bird. Nonetheless, Goodrich’s description of the early morning on West Mountain was magnificent, and one that – in the day when the noise of the automobile pervades the air, day and night – would be almost impossible to experience today.

WEST MOUNTAIN ESTATES

West Mountain Estates is another name for Jerry Tuccio's Eleven Level's subdivision (*q.v.*), first proposed in 1960, not approved by the town will nearly a decade later, and still being developed in the late 1980s.

WEST MOUNTAIN PINES

West Mountain Pines is a 23-lot subdivision of 55 acres of the former Conron, later Doubleday, later Graham, later Minot property on the northeasterly side of West Mountain Road, just westward of Ramapoo Road. The 1980 subdivision by Carl Lecher was named for the trees, planted by former owner James S. Doubleday, and includes two roads, Doubleday Lane and Sharp Hill Lane.

WEST MOUNTAIN ROAD

West Mountain Road, the road up West Mountain, is the state highway that is the continuation of Barry Avenue, running from the intersection of Ramapoo Road westward to New York State.

The original 18th Century path over the mountain began with Gilbert Street in the village and continued over Ramapoo Road, then up the mountain on the current West Mountain Road, across Oscaleta, Oreneca and Rippowam Roads, to get to Old Oscaleta Road and the state line.

It is possible that Oscaleta Road was the original path of the highway. However, since that road is generally flatter, it is more likely that Oscaleta Road was built (sometime before 1850) as a bypass to the steep West Mountain Road. With the advent of the automobile, for which hills were not quite the obstacle they were for beasts of burden, the state opted to use the West Mountain Road path for its official highway. Note that the old route took one all the way up Oreneca and down Rippowam Roads to get to the state line. Sometime between 1856 and 1867, a shortcut was built, bypassing those two roads.

Around 1932, when the state fixed up West Mountain Road, a straighter link from Oreneca Road to the state line was created. At the same time other small improvements were made, such as straightening out the double curve at Sharp Hill (near Ramapoo Road) and eliminating the curve at the old schoolhouse (Google Maps calls this leftover piece of highway "Tower Road.").

The term "West Mountain Road" is fairly modern. It does not appear in any deed through 1888, and is first noticed early in the 20th Century.

Although long labeled Route 102, West Mountain Road, as well as Barry Avenue and Catoonah Street, had their state route number signs removed in the 1970s and it became what is known as a "secret route." The reason? A new state highway department policy discouraged the promotion of state roads that lead into other states, but do not connect with state roads once they cross the line. West Mountain Road connects with Lewisboro's Main Street, a town road.

Though the route has no number signs, the 3.62 miles of West Mountain Road, Barry Avenue, a couple hundred feet of High Ridge, and Catoonah Street are officially known as Route 822, and are still maintained by the state.

WEST PINE MOUNTAIN ROAD

West Pine Mountain Road is shown on a couple of maps of the Hemlock Hills subdivision, a huge development on paper, only a small portion of which was ever built.

All that ever existed of West Pine Mountain Road were portions of a dirt road, north of and parallel to North Shore Drive. The road was never completely built by Otto H. Lippolt as part of his plan to subdivide what is now the Hemlock Hills Refuge.

According to a map filed by Lippolt in 1959, West Pine Mountain Road would run from Skytop Road or Bogus Road easterly, joining with a southerly extension of Bear Mountain Road and finally connecting with Pine Mountain Road. All this area was then and is still wooded wilderness, part of the town's largest chunk of open space, amounting to more than 600 acres. The town bought the undeveloped portion of Hemlock Hills, some 275 acres of it, in 1967.

The road was called West Pine Mountain Road presumably because it ran westerly from Pine Mountain Road.

WEST RATTLE HOLE

West Rattle Hole, one of the more colorful of the early Ridgefield names, was a locality near the colony line. As best as can be estimated, it was west of Peaceable Street, north of the former Pinchbeck's Nurseries.

The name was first recorded in 1717 when the proprietors granted Benjamin Willson "10 acres and a rood, lying east of ye West Rattle Hole." In 1721, the same Willson was given one and one-half acres of meadow and pasture "lying southeast of ye West Rattleholes" and three acres of swamp "lying northeast of ye West Rattle Hole under ye West Mountain."

The proprietors in 1731 deeded Jonathan Rockwell's heirs three acres "lying by a swamp below West Rattle Snake Swamp, north of Bedford Rhode." The Bedford Road was today's Old South Salem and South Salem roads.

Deeds in 1753 and 1761 mentioned land near "West Rattle Rocks."

All these localities, plus "the Rattle Holes" and "Rattle Snake Swamp" discussed earlier, were probably related and close to one another. And they were probably well populated with serpents.

WEST RIDGE

West Ridge is another name for High Ridge, at least as the ridge runs from Peaceable Street and Catoonah Street.

Writing in a 1910 edition of *The Press*, the secretary of the Village Improvement Society described a possible new school site "on the east side of West Ridge, between Peaceable and Catoonah Streets."

The late Francis D. Martin also recalled this name. When he was a child, he said, it was the only name used for High Ridge. (High Ridge is, of course, the older name, dating from 1710.)

West Ridge was so called because it was west of the town street, just as East Ridge is east of it.

WEST RIDGEFIELD

Ever hear of West Ridgefield? Thanks to some Branchville residents and the cooperation of the railroad, there was for a while one on paper and on a signboard, at least.

Lois Hall Herrick of High Ridge, who died in 1983, told in reminiscences published in *The Press* in 1978 of how her late husband, Gerard, used to commute from New York City early in the 20th Century. He would reach the station

in Branchville and take the connecting train that at that time ran up the branch line into Ridgefield's village (the old station is at the Ridgefield Supply Company lot).

One day, he handed the conductor on the main line a ticket stamped "Ridgefield," meaning the village. But the conductor looked at the ticket and told Herrick to change trains at Ridgefield.

"You live in West Ridgefield," he said.

Mrs. Herrick continued: "My husband, knowing quite well where he lived, decided that the conductor had been drinking and did not propose to argue with him, so he went on reading his newspaper.

" 'You heard me,' continued the ticket taker, 'a change at Ridgefield.' 'Yes, yes,' said Herrick.

"Getting off as usual at Branchville Station, he was amazed to see that the sign had been removed and that indeed in its place there was one reading, 'Ridgefield,'" Mrs. Herrick said.

"However, the shuttle was waiting and the passengers, after stopping at Florida (station), arrived in what had been known since 1708 as Ridgefield. The sign on the station had also been taken down and in its place was one announcing that this was now 'West Ridgefield.'

"It seems that some enterprising people in Branchville had brought this about, thinking that it would be an advantage for that community to be known as Ridgefield. It was about five days before some equally enterprising people in Ridgefield exploded this dream."

The old timetable omitting Branchville and listing it as Ridgefield and also calling the present Ridgefield "West Ridgefield" hung in Mrs. Herrick's hall for many years.

According to the late Charles Emmons, who grew up in Branchville, one of the prime movers for changing the station name from Branchville to Ridgefield, and adding West Ridgefield, was Howard S. Candee (*see* Candee's Pond).

WEST RIVER

West River was a stream that, though it had its name early, quickly lost it.

A pre-1720 deed from the proprietors to Nathan Saintjohn describes three and a half acres "lying at ye West River, under ye West Mountain." The west side of town has no sizable river other than the Titicus. Since the Titicus had always been known by version of that name, some other stream had to be the West River and the only candidate "under West Mountain" is the upper reaches of the Stamford Mill River.

In Stamford, which was then the next town to the southwest, the name "Mill River" was probably already well established, and perhaps when Ridgefielders discovered that their West River was really part of the beginnings of Stamford's Mill River, the latter quickly supplanted the former. The name, Stamford Mill River (*q.v.*), began being used as early as 1716.

WEST TEER

West Teer was a term used to describe a set of proprietors' lots that, according to Ridgebury historian Ed Liljegen, ran from Ridgebury Road westward to the New York Colony line.

The term was in use in the first half of the 18th Century, last appearing in a 1759 deed.

A tier is one of a series of rows of something, usually one above another. The West Teer was probably one of the sets of lots subdivided by the proprietors when they gained title to the huge northern Ridgebury tract that extended all the way to New Fairfield (*see* Ridgebury).

WESTMORELAND

Westmoreland, one of the town's biggest subdivisions, is a portion of an old estate that was once offered to, and declined by, the town.

Westmoreland was the name that George Doubleday gave to his huge homestead that stretched over more than 250 acres, and was presumably so-called because it was moorlike and west of the village. In England, the shire called Westmorland (minus the "e") means literally "land or district of men living west of the moors." However, in this case, the so-called "moors" were west of where the people were living, for the Doubleday house was at the eastern end of the property – it's now the Temple Shir Shalom, formerly Shearith Israel – and the village was farther eastward still.

A moor may be defined as a broad tract of open land, often high but poorly drained, with patches of heath and peat bogs. When it was on the market in the early 1960's, the tract of former farmers' fields was certainly broad, open and high, though most of it was well drained and there were no peat bogs or heath of note.

George Doubleday, who came here in 1911, first lived in a house on West Lane. In 1915, in the name of his wife, Alice, he bought the 100-acre estate of Francis M. Bacon on Peaceable Street. Over the years, they more than doubled the property's size, and by 1965 there were 246 acres.

Doubleday, who was born in 1866, joined the Ingersoll Sergeant Drill Company in New York in 1894 and soon became its treasurer. When Ingersoll merged with the Rand Drill Company in 1905, he became a vice president. He took over as president in 1913, and was elected chairman of the board of Ingersoll-Rand in 1936, holding the position till 1955, the year of his death.

In 1939, the House Ways and Means Committee made public a list of the highest salaried men in the nation, and among them was George Doubleday who in 1938, had received the then tidy sum of \$78,000 as board chairman of Ingersoll-Rand.

Doubleday Lane, a road off West Mountain Road, bears his name, but recalls not him but his son, James, who had once lived on the West Mountain property.

In the early 1960's, the Doubleday family offered the town the Westmoreland property, some of which could have been used for a school site or even a multi-school campus. However, after much debate, the town rejected the land acquisition as expensive and unnecessary.

Subsequently, in 1964, 237 acres were sold for about \$590,000 to the Lincoln Development Company, a Cambridge, Mass., firm that received subdivision approval in 1966 for 150 lots. However, the firm ran into financial troubles, and sold the property to Jerry Tuccio, who developed it.

Alice Doubleday died in 1919 and George Doubleday's second wife, Mary, died in 1968. The second Mrs. Doubleday had been considerably more active in the community than her husband. She was a founder of the Ridgefield Boys' Club, long serving on its board and at one time was its president. She had been chairman of the Ladies Committee of the New England Institute for Medical

Research here, and a member of the Village Improvement Committee of the Ridgefield Garden Club.

WESTMORELAND ROAD

Westmoreland Road, which became a town road in 1969, is the shortest of seven roads at the Westmoreland subdivision (*above*), and serves as a main entrance, running from Peaceable Street into the development and connecting with the circular Holmes Road. The rest of the names were taken from famous Americans of the 18th through early 20th Centuries – Webster, Marshall, Hamilton, Holmes, Remington (the Ridgefield artist who lived nearby), and Conant (a Harvard president). [RN]

WETT SWAMP

Wett Swamp is a once-mentioned place name whose locality today is unknown. The only reference to it in the land records occurred in 1739 when Ebenezer Lobdell sold Abraham Bennitt two acres “lying at ye Wett Swamp,” bounded on the east and west by Samuel Lobdell’s land, and west and south by highway or common land.

Based on the property owners, the swampland was probably in or near the Limestone District, perhaps even beneath one of today’s Ridgefield Lakes.

WHEELER ROAD

Wheeler Road is a small old road running between Mopus Bridge Road and Spring Valley Road. A dirt path until the 1970s, it probably was originally a farm path, serving as access to fields; it does not appear on Beers’ atlas of 1867, though it does show up on Whitlock’s atlas in 1912.

Wheeler Road is one of the few modern examples of an old-fashioned system for naming roads. It was first called Lee Lane because the Lee family lived along it. It is now called Wheeler Road because Wheelers lived along it. That’s why we have St. Johns Road, Olmstead Lane, or Haviland Road – because that’s where, years ago when the roads acquired their names, the St. Johns, Olmsteads, or Havilands lived.

In this case, the road was named for Mr. and Mrs. John N. Wheeler, who bought a home at the corner of Spring Valley and Wheeler Roads in 1936. By then, John Neville Wheeler had gained an international reputation as a newspaperman and a friend of some of the best known American writers of the first third of the 20th Century.

A native of Yonkers, N.Y., he began his career in 1908, the year he graduated from Columbia. His first job was for The New York Herald, and, as an obituary writer for The Ridgefield Press observed, “he never quit newspapering, permanently, until his death.”

He founded several press syndicates, most noted of which was the North American Newspaper Alliance, which he started in 1922 and which competed with chain newspapers in covering major stories around the world. He sold NANA in 1951. It shut down in 1980.

As head of several syndicates, Wheeler hired and assigned many of the leading writing talents of the 1910s, 20s and 30s. Among them were Ring Lardner, Grantland Rice, Joseph Alsop, Dorothy Thompson, Pauline Frederick, Sheilah Graham, and F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Among the books in his library was a copy of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, inscribed "To Jack Wheeler, who gave me the chance to go to that war." Ernest Hemingway, whom Wheeler had hired as a correspondent to cover the Spanish Civil War, signed it.

On a grander scale than little Wheeler Road, Cape Wheeler in Antarctica was named for John Wheeler because he had promoted a 1947 expedition that explored that region, called Palmer Land, which is south of the tip of South America.

Wheeler told the story of his life in an autobiography, "I've Got News for You," which was published by E.P. Dutton in 1961.

John Wheeler is buried at the Ridgefield Cemetery beneath a simple stone that gives his name, dates, and then the one word, "Newspaperman." (For more on John Wheeler, *see under* Spring Valley Road.)

His wife, Tee, who died in the 1985, was well known to many old-time Ridgefielders.

WHEER COCK

Wheer Cock, certainly one of the more unusual names in Ridgefield's geography, is also one of the least-used, appearing only in one deed.

The reference occurs in the very first deed, the 1708 transfer of lands from the Indians to the first settlers. Each corner of the town is described with an Indian name, and the southeastern corner – the present-day Branchville – was called Wheer Cock.

No translation has been handed down. However, it's possible that the words are the early Ridgefielders' way of transliterating the sounds approximately "wawr-ock."

Ock, -ack, -auke, -uck, and -aug were among the ways of expressing American Indian sounds that were locatives, meaning "place of" or "at the place" as well as "country" or "region." The sound, "wawr," meant "good" or "favorable." Thus, it could have meant just "a nice place."

However, in translating some similar words from western Connecticut place names, John C. Huden in *Indian Place Names of New England*, finds more to the meaning. "Werewaug," which he identifies as being somewhere in Fairfield County, is translated "a good fishing place." In addition, "werawaug," the name of a mountain and a meadow in New Milford, is also translated "good fishing place."

Connecticut Place Names by Hughes and Allen notes that a map on Indian camps in western Connecticut, drawn in 1913 by a scholar on American Indians, mentions a "werawaug" and describes it as a Tankiteke village near Danbury. Tankiteke was the name of the sachemdom of the Wappinger tribe that inhabited this area. In Ridgefield were the Ramapoo and Titicus villages in the Tankiteke sachemdom. Tankiteke, incidentally, is believed to mean "forest dwellers."

At any rate, it seems reasonable that Wheer Cock could have been the settlers' way of writing down the Indians' word for "good fishing place." Branchville is at the confluence of the Norwalk River and the Cooper Brook and, in the spring at least, is still popular with fishermen seeking the trout, which, nowadays, are provided not by Mother Nature but by the state fish and game service.

WHIPSTICK

Whipstick is another of Ridgefield's old, colorful, and entertaining names of unclear origin.

George L. Rockwell, in his History of Ridgefield, maintained, "Whipstick District received its name from the whipping-post in Colonial days. The whipping-post was on the (south) corner of Main Street and Branchville Road."

The story is quaint, but seems far-fetched. For one thing, no corner of Branchville Road, which is of 19th Century origin, existed when the whipping post stood on Main Street, so there was nothing really to associate the post with a section of town centered some distance away. For another thing, Whipstick as a name was in use within four years of the town's founding, before Ridgefield even had a minister, and it's unlikely there were enough sins – or people – to warrant having a whipping post so early on.

More likely is the theory of former first selectman Leo F. Carroll (1900-1985). Ridgefield's settlement occurred in the days of animal-centered transportation and farm power, and whipsicks were necessary tools for prodding beasts, be they horses or oxen. Carroll believed that early Ridgefielders went down Whipstick way to cut their sticks, perhaps because the kind of sapling best suited to this purpose grew in that area, possibly in swamp. (A 1735 deed mentions land "on the east side of Whipstick Ridge Swamp," probably east of Nod Road, south of Whipstick Road.)

The name is one of the oldest in town, so the characteristic of providing whipsicks must have been noticed early and been noteworthy to the settlers. The first reference to the name occurred in 1712 when the proprietors granted Samuel Keeler "21 acres on ye upper end of a ridge called Whipstick Ridge." It is interesting that these 21 acres probably remained in the Keeler family well into the 20th Century for Keelers were the predominant landowners of upper Whipstick for two centuries.

It is possible, too, that the name came north from Wilton. That town, originally the northern part of Norwalk, was settled before Ridgefield and has a Whipstick Road of its own, connected to the lower end of Nod Road. Perhaps that's where the sticks were, before 1712, though Wilton historian David Herman Van Hoosear fails to mention Whipstick in his 1940 volume on *Wilton Localities*. Wiltonian Stowell Rounds, in *A Connecticut Town Names Its Roads*, notes the existence of a Whipstick district in Ridgefield, says Wilton's Whipstick Road was named by 1909, but adds, "the derivation of the old name is not known to the author."

"Whipstick" was used in the 18th Century to apply to Whipstick Ridge, which runs along the east side of Nod Road from the Branchville Road area down to the Wilton line. Soon after the turn of the 19th Century, the ridge was lending its name to the neighborhood, and deeds referring to land as simply "at Whipstick" began appearing.

Young scholars from the "Whipstick District," so called from as early as 1841, attended school at the corner of Whipstick and Nod Roads. An 1865 deed refers to the "Whip-Stick School District." (The deed's author perhaps used the dash to emphasize "whip" in a belief that the school was a prime employer of the stick to prod not animals, but children into obedience. No doubt sticks from the district were so used by at least some masters and mistresses of the Whip-

stick Schoolhouse. Think of what it would be like for a 19th Century youngster attending a school named for a feared tool of corporal punishment!)

In 1867 the district, called Number 8, included Nod Road, Whipstick Road, Rockwell Road, Perry Lane, East Ridge, Prospect Ridge, Grove Street, Branchville Road to beyond Old Branchville Road's western end, western Ivy Hill Road, northern Wilton Road East, and the east side of Main Street from West Lane south.

The schoolhouse originally stood near the south corner of the intersection. The last schoolhouse, which closed around 1915, was built on the north side. It stood on the northern corner, but few would have recognized it. Covered with stucco, the school had become a wing of a house. Here, the noted American precisionist painter, Charles Sheeler (1883-1965), lived and worked from 1932 to 1942. The house was torn down in 2000 to make way for a much larger house.

WHIPSTICK ROAD

Our Whipstick Road today runs east from Wilton Road East to Nod Road. However, originally, townspeople considered upper Wilton Road East, from Main Street, to be part of Whipstick Road. This is so indicated in an 1851 survey when the term "Whipstick Road" first appears in Ridgefield records and as recently as 1936 when a highway map of the town labeled upper Wilton Road East as Whipstick Road.

Thus, the name follows the system used in naming other roads for districts of the town: it is the road to Whipstick, just as Farmingville Road is the road to Farmingville and Ridgebury Road, to Ridgebury. (The Whipstick Road in Wilton, leading to Ridgefield's Whipstick Ridge and District, could also be said to follow that old naming system.)

WHIPSTICK LOUGH

Whipstick Lough is a three-lot subdivision of 8.7 acres, obtained in 1978 by Attorney Paul S. McNamara. The lots lie along the north side of Whipstick Road.

A "lough" is, in the tongue of the Irish, a lake, bay, or inlet. Alas, there's no water nearby. But in Middle English, "lough" means "south." Whipstick is in the southern part of town, although the subdivision is on the north side of Whipstick Road. Oh, well, the name appears only on the subdivision map, not on a road sign, so few will worry about the meaning.

WHITE BIRCH ROAD

White Birch Road runs from Silver Hill Road southerly, then westerly, connecting with Silver Spring Lane at Silver Spring Park.

The road serves a one-acre-lot subdivision started in 1952 by John M. McCormick. The development, done over some years, also involved Silver Spring Lane. The name White Birch Road was in use by 1954.

The American white birch (*Betula papyrifera*) is perhaps the most beautiful of our smaller native trees, and often is a subject for artists. It's also the famed source of birch bark, used by various American Indian cultures as a skin for canoes and wigwams. This durable bark has also been used for boxes, cups, shoes, and even snow goggles. The wood is not considered important in modern

industry. Though the lumber has been used to make small housewares, it is more often used for pulp.

The white bird favors colder climates. It used to be fairly common in these parts but because of increasingly warmer winters in our area, the species has been declining in numbers and is now almost a rare tree.

WHITE BIRCHES ROAD

White Birches Road is a short dead-end off Wilridge Road in Branchville. The road begins in Ridgefield, but within a couple hundred feet enters Wilton.

The road is part of a post-World War II subdivision by Joseph L. Dioguardi who, on a 1950 map, was calling this road White Birch Road. By 1958 it was White Birches. When it was switched is unclear, but it may have been done to avoid confusion with the later White Birch Road.

It doesn't help much, and the two roads remain excellent examples of how to confuse the heck out of policemen and firemen, responding to an emergency, as well as deliverymen. "Did he say 'White Birch' or 'White Birches'?" could be an oft-asked question, one that could be a life-or-death question if it's being asked by an ambulance driver.

Clearly, one of the names should be eliminated. Although White Birches apparently can lay claim to first use, far fewer people live along it than White Birch. Thus, it would be easier to eliminate White Birches.

One warning, though: Don't just drop the "White." Ridgefield has already got a Birch Lane and a Birch Court doing their own confusing.

WHITE OAK ISLAND, POINT

Ancient names and among the very few to be recorded on an 18th Century map here, White Oak Island and White Oak Point were probably applied to the same location.

When he drew his "Mapp of ye Great Swamp" in 1717, Town Clerk and Minister Thomas Hauley labeled one spot as "white oak point" and, as if to make sure everyone understood what he was talking about, actually drew four little pictures of trees under the name.

The map is not very accurate and somewhat difficult to interpret. However, it appears that White Oak Point was situated in the northwestern corner of what was then defined as Great Swamp. Thus the point was probably in the vicinity of today's intersection of Farmingville and Danbury Roads.

One of the lots bordering the point on the map belonged to Richard Olmsted. The deed for this lot, part of the subdivision of the swamp among all the proprietors or first settlers, describes the nine acres as "lying near ye point of ye White Oak Island." Actually, it lay just to the south of the point, but it is interesting that the deed speaks of there being an "island." As a term, island was common in early Ridgefield deeds and often referred not to land in the middle of a lake or pond, but high-and-dry land in the midst of a swamp. Apparently in this case, the island wasn't much bigger than the point, for references to the point are more common, and mentions of the island are usually connected to the point.

A 1752 deed speaks of "White Oak Point in ye Great Swamp" while a 1753 deed covers both bases, mentioning land "nearby ye White Oak Point or Island." The last appearance of the term, a White Oak Point, occurred in a 1786 deed. Either the oaks or the island must have been gone by then.

It is also interesting that the Olmsted deed mentions a highway on the north side of the parcel. This may have been an early version of today's Farmingville Road.

White oak is both a group of oaks and a single species of oak, the latter marked by its whitish bark. These hardwood trees were exceedingly important to the first settlers, serving as the framework for their homes and for most other jobs requiring a strong and durable wood.

WHITE OAK RIDGE

A single deed in 1730 mentions White Oak Ridge, a locality probably in today's New York State (but then part of Connecticut Colony), perhaps on the northeastern slope of Titicus Mountain in North Salem.

WHITING'S POND

Whiting's Pond is an old name for what is now called Sanford's Pond, situated in Danbury on the north side of the old Route 6 near the New York State line. This was territory that belonged to Ridgefield between 1739 and 1846.

The earliest mention of the name occurred in 1786 when Joseph Field gave his grandson Joseph 90 acres "in New Patent" bounded on the north "by a certain pond called Whiting's Pond" and westerly by the New York line. A 1799 deed mentions "Whitin's Pond" while deeds in 1815 and 1835 use the correct "Whiting's."

The name apparently recalls someone who owned or lived near the pond before 1786. It has also been known as Andrew's Pond, according to Beers Atlas of 1867.

WHITLOCK LANE

Whitlock Lane is a short dead-end road off the north side of Bennett's Farm Road, west of Mountain Road. It was created in a 1979 subdivision of 22.7 acres into six lots and 13 acres of open space. The subdivider was the late Marcelino E. Lavin of Wilton.

The name recalls the Whitlock family, which formerly owned much of the land in that neighborhood.

Though not among the first settlers, the Whitlocks were one of the early families to establish themselves in Ridgefield, particularly in southern Ridgebury, and members of the family still live here. The clan also spread into southern Danbury.

The first Whitlock to come here was probably John, who had lived in "Greenfield," probably Fairfield, and bought 20 acres at a place called "East Ridge" near "Dutchman's Swamp" soon after the town's founding. This is in the neighborhood of the present Ridgefield Lakes, possibly around Fox Hill Lake. The first Whitlock born here was probably Daniel, son of David and Margaret Whitlock, in 1720.

At least three Whitlocks from Ridgefield served in the Revolution, one was in the War of 1812, and two in the Civil War. Those two were Joseph and Nephi Whitlock, probably brothers, who enlisted together July 25, 1862, and were wounded together July 1, 1863, in the Battle of Gettysburg. Joseph died 15 days later of those wounds, while Nephi survived and served until 1865. Nephi Whitlock lived until 1912. His father was John Whitlock, a native of Danbury –

probably the Ridgebury section, and his mother was Sallie Sellick Whitlock, a Ridgefield native who died in 1907 at the age of 97.

(Some years ago, a descendant of Nephi Whitlock reported to this writer that the sword and certain other Civil War effects of this soldier were still in Ridgefield and in possession of the family. Unfortunately, the name of the descendant has been misplaced.)

Another noted member of the family was Henry Whitlock, a stage driver here when he was but 12 years old and one-time driver for Barnum and Bailey's circus who was reported to be able to handle a circus wagon pulled by 16 pairs of horses. His son, Morris B. Whitlock, operated a long-standing livery stable on Catoonah Street opposite today's firehouse.

WHORTLEBERRY HILL

A 1733 deed from Thomas Hyatt to John Sturdevant describes two acres on the east side of Great Swamp "where ye brook running at ye north end of ye Whortleberry Hill empties into ye Great Swamp."

The location, mentioned only in that one deed, may be the hill that stands near the fork of Ivy Hill and Florida Hill Roads, rising from some 580 feet above sea level at Great Swamp to some 670 feet at its peak. There is a small stream on this hill's north side, running into the swamp, perhaps the same brook mentioned in the old deed. The hill may be the same that was later called Ivy Hill (*q.v.*), a shorter name than whortleberry and one that stuck.

Redding, Danbury, and a couple of other towns in Connecticut are on record as having localities named for the whortleberry, but what is this oddly titled fruit?

The whortleberry is actually a European plant, but the tall huckleberry or blue tangle or tangleberry (*Gaylussachia frondosa*) was called in early times the "blue whortleberry," perhaps because of its resemblance to the European species that the settlers or their parents knew from the old country. This huckleberry was indigenous to moist woods and would have been at home in the forests near the Great Swamp. It bears blue berries.

Thus, Whortleberry Hill would probably be more properly called Huckleberry Hill or Tangleberry Hill. But who's going to argue with something short, sweet, and established, like Ivy Hill?

WIGGIN-ROBERTS LANE

Wiggin-Roberts Lane is a private accessway serving four houses off eastern Peaceable Street. Built probably to serve the outbuildings of turn-of-the-century mansions in the area, the accessway is of uncertain ownership today, according to one of its users.

The lane was named informally for Albert H. Wiggin, president of the Bank of Manhattan, and Steele Roberts, both of whom were landowners thereabouts early in the 20th Century.

A minister's son who headed Chase National bank, Wiggin was once listed among America's richest people. Later, however, he was labeled a scoundrel after it was revealed that, during the period of the Crash of 1929, he had manipulated Chase stock to his own advantage, but not the shareholders'. In so doing he used loans from his own bank, put his earnings in a Canadian holding company to avoid taxes, and made millions that the bank itself did not discover until a U.S. Senate investigation several years later.

WILD CAT LOT

The Wild Cat Lot is a once-mentioned locality, noted here because it's unusual and colorful.

In 1761, Thomas Wilson sold his son, Daniel, seven acres "called the Wild Cat Lott" in New Patent (Ridgebury). The lot was probably on or about Ned's Mountain.

Just what kind of "wild cat" is recalled in this name is not certain, but probably several types lived here in the 18th Century. Writing in the year 1800, the Rev. Samuel G. Goodrich observed, "there were formerly deer, bears, wolves, panthers, and wild-cats in our woods, and beavers in our ponds, but they are now extinct."

Well, deer and beavers are certainly in great evidence today, and there have been many reports of bobcats – possibly the wild cat referred to. Bobcats, the most common North American wild cat, exist well with man and its range includes the entire Northeast. Because they are shy, nocturnal and very fast, they are rarely spotted, however.

Mountain lions, much larger than the bobcat, are believed to have inhabited the area, but were long ago driven out or hunted to extinction.

Around 1970, however, one lived in the Florida District, but it was the pet of a resident. Late one night, the big cat got loose and headed eastward, running across Route 7. A motorist who saw it dash in front of his car was so shocked he drove straight to the police station five miles away and began his report: "I know you're going to think I'm drunk, but I just saw a lion run across Route 7."

The cat was later captured and kept under better tether.

Then in 2011, reports were coming in all over Fairfield County — including Ridgefield — that a mountain lion was being seen. Many wildlife officials discounted the sightings as people seeing bobcats, but in July, a car struck and killed a genuine mountain lion on the Merritt Parkway in Milford. Scientists were able to determine that the animal had trekked more than 1,500 miles from South Dakota, only to die on a Connecticut highway.

WILLOW COURT, ROAD

Willow Court is a dead-end road off the west side of Poplar Road, the result of a six-lot subdivision by Armando Salvestrini.

Salvestrini was involved in the original 1956 subdivision, called Ridgefield Gardens and including Poplar and Linden Roads, and Birch Lane. In that development, a street called Willow Road was planned to run from Poplar Road to Linden. For some reason, it was never built, but in 1978, Mr. Salvestrini sought and received a new subdivision from the Planning and Zoning Commission for this undeveloped portion of Ridgefield Gardens.

The name was changed to "Willow Court" because it was a dead-end. To be a "road" under town naming standards, it must carry through traffic. The Board of Selectmen accepted it as a town highway in 1980.

Like others in the area, the name of the road recalls a species of ornamental trees grown by the huge Outpost Nurseries, which owned most of the land in the triangle between Danbury Road, Route 7, and Farmingville Road from 1920 to the early 1950's.

Of the more than 50 species of willows in eastern North America, some 20 could be found here, though probably only two – the venerable and imported

weeping willow, and the popular pussy willow – are readily recognized by most people. The trees, once used for basket making, fuel, charcoal, and posts, are now chiefly decorative or “weed” trees, whose leaves, fruit, twigs and buds are eaten by many forest birds and animals.

WILRIDGE ROAD

Wilridge Road runs from Route 7 in Branchville section of Ridgefield into the Georgetown section of Wilton, where it connects with Sunset Road.

The two-town status of the road gives it its two-town name.

The road dates from around 1950 and is a part of the collection of small-lot, post-war subdivisions done by Joseph L. Dioguardi on the west side of Route 7 in Branchville.

WILTON ROAD EAST

Wilton Road East, sometimes called just Wilton Road, is an old highway whose origins might cause one to wonder about the frugality of our early Yankee settlers.

The name today applies to the road that runs from the southern end of Main Street south till it meets Wilton Road West a little north of the Wilton line. Until fairly recent years, however, what was considered to be Wilton Road had its northern terminus at Whipstick Road (*q.v.*), the rest of the highway north of there being considered part of Whipstick Road.

The south end of Wilton Road East – around the little community of houses at Silver Hill Road – was originally part of Wilton Road West. That main road had veered easterly from its present route, down a hill, and came out onto the existing path of Wilton Road East a bit north of Silver Hill Road, and then continued on into Wilton. The newer route for the southern end of Wilton Road West was installed sometime after 1867.

Mystery

Wilton Road East and West present a bit of a mystery. Why would the normally thrifty pioneers of Ridgefield engage in the luxury of creating two parallel roads, beginning more or less at the same place and ending more or less at the same place? Which was the first road and why was a second one built?

It seems clear that Wilton Road West was the first road, chiefly because some of the houses along it date from a very early period. The house owned in 2005 by Jamie Ogle Shafer, for example, was built around 1730. On the other hand, no houses along the old portion of Wilton Road East are nearly that old.

Why have the alternative route then? Probably at least some of the path of Wilton Road East existed from early times as a “farm road” that provided neighborhood access to fields east of the main highway. Eventually, however, the “farm path” could have taken on a status of a full highway because it provided a more gradual, less steep route to the village of Ridgefield from parts south than did Wilton Road West, a road that had long stirred debate because of its hills. Anyone who rides a bicycle will easily see the difference in cycling the two roads from the Wilton line to Main Street; Wilton Road East is much easier. A horse or an ox would notice the same thing.

Wilton Road East was certainly well established by the 1850s, for the selectmen in 1851 conducted a survey of “a public road... commencing on the north side of the old highway near Potash Brook so called, running thence north” to “the Whipstick Road, so called, easterly of the dwelling house of

Josiah Northrop.” This was the main section of Wilton Road East, from above Silver Hill to Whipstick.

Whitlock’s map of 1912 labels the road “Wilton Road” as does a 1931 map and a 1936 atlas. Old-timers also recalled its being commonly called that while Wilton Road West, despite being the main road to Wilton, was better known as Flat Rock Road (*q.v.*) years ago.

According to historian George L. Rockwell, the portion of present-day Wilton Road East between Creamery Lane and Main Street was cut through an old cemetery there around 1850. If that’s the case, Creamery Lane may have been the original western end of Whipstick Road.

“Wilton” means “town among the willows” or “willow-town,” though it’s also possible that the name could have stemmed from the Old English adjective, *wilde*, meaning “wild, uncultivated, desolate.” The Norwalk residents who began settling the area in 1701 and created Wilton parish in 1726, probably took the name from Wilton in Somerset Shire, one of four Wiltons in England, say histories of the town. Wilton did not become an official town until 1802 and thus, highways leading to it might properly have been called Norwalk Road until then.

WILTON ROAD WEST

Wilton Road West is a relatively new name for an old highway that, over the years, has had several different – and perhaps better – names.

The road was probably officially laid out by order of Town Meetings in 1723 and 1724 as a highway to Norwalk. Wilton was then a section of Norwalk, so the Ridgefield town line was also the Norwalk line.

As the main road to Norwalk from the village, it was probably the single most important highway in town since it connected the new settlement of Ridgefield with the well-established town of Norwalk, whence came most of Ridgefield’s first settlers.

Actually, because a link between the two towns was so essential, a trail had probably been established by 1715, maybe earlier. However, it took the Town Meeting action to make the route official, and that action was important so that people whose land was “taken” for the path of the new highway could get compensation, in the form of other land, from the town.

In fact, a highway to Ridgefield had been discussed by Norwalk residents as early as 1713 when “the town by a major vote made choice of Capt. Joseph Platt, Capt. John Raymond, and Ensign James Stewart, for their committee, to make a settlement of a highway or road to Ridgefield, if they and the committee of Ridgefield can agree; and both fully empower said committee to make restitution to such persons that sd. highway may take land from within the limits of Norwalk township.”

Whenever the road was established, it was long a headache for the town. At various times over the years, meetings took place about changing its route to make it less hilly and perhaps to make it avoid springs, which turned it into a morass of mud.

Several times over the centuries, particularly in the 19th and early 20th Centuries, major studies of the route of the road in the vicinity of Potash Hill (south of Woodchuck Lane) were undertaken. Years ago the highway veered off to the east, just below the old Flat Rock Schoolhouse and went over Potash Hill to

Wilton Road East. Even earlier, in the 1700's, there was an old road that also veered to the east, only farther south, and connected to Wilton Road East.

The town and eventually the state corrected these problems by straightening the road and creating a new strip of highway that connects with the old highway at the old Hilltop Service Station. This may have been done in 1922 when the state paved Wilton Road West. However, vestiges of the old cross-over roads still existed into the early 2000s, and along one, the hiker could find samples of the "potash" of Potash Hill (*q.v.*).

Another section of the old highway is more visible, for it still had pavement on it until the 1990. This strip of road on the east side of Wilton Road West, a little below Woodchuck Lane, was abandoned by the state some years ago when it attempted to straighten out a curve. Along it can still be seen the dry laid stone foundation of the old Flat Rock Schoolhouse. Also visible is much of the surface of the "Flat Rock" for which the district was named. (Incidentally, Flat Rock Drive was never in Flat Rock District and has, in effect, stolen the name and taken it away from its "homeland.")

For a long while, the state maintained this strip of abandoned highway as a roadside rest stop, but apparently tired of the cost and effort of maintaining it. The state even had a fancy sign that bore the irrelevant name, "Twin Maples," that had no doubt been invented by some state official who had no inkling of the age-old names for the area.

Still another example of the change in the highway's route can be seen on the west side of the road, opposite Creamery Lane. The bed of the original highway can be see just a few feet west of the existing road. Why the route was moved so little is unclear, but it probably occurred at the time the road was paved.

Over the years the road has had many names. Perhaps its earliest was "Ye Country Road," a term frequently used in early Connecticut for highways that traveled through "the country" to connect two towns. At the time it was probably also widely known as "the road to Norwalk," or "Norwalk Road," though we have found only one example of Norwalk Road, a 1737 entry in the town record book.

Maps in 1912 and 1936 labeled the highway "Flat Rock Road," certainly a suitable title for a road that ran down across the huge Flat Rock and through the middle of the old Flat Rock School District. Too bad the name wasn't maintained.

The highway has also been called Ridgefield Road (as its extension into Wilton is known) and the Town Street (at least its upper reaches). And, of course, it has long also been known as Connecticut Route 33. But not always: In the 1920s, it was Route 304.

WINDWING, LAKE

Lake Windwing is a small, man-made body of water off Bennett's Farm Road, opposite the Ridgebury School. It can be reached from either North Shore Drive or South Shore Drive.

The pond was created in the 1950's by Harold Goldsmith, the pulp magazine publisher and developer of Lakeland Hills, the subdivision that borders the westerly and northerly sides of the lake. It could be considered the uppermost of the Ridgefield Lakes, because its waters flow into those of the lakes to the east.

Efforts to learn something of the origin of the name have failed. To be sure, it is not based in any Ridgefield history, for no word like it is found in the town or land records up to the turn of the century. Perhaps Mr. Goldsmith picked up the name in some other state, or simply made it up from scratch because he liked its sound. (Former First Selectman J. Mortimer Woodcock apparently didn't think much of it; he invariably called it "Wingding.")

According to Annette Zelson, who was a longtime resident of the neighborhood, Windwing has also been called "Goldsmith's Pond."

Much of the perimeter of the pond is owned by the town of Ridgefield, which acquired it in the late 1960's, and land to the south has been developed into the Serfilippi and Fitzgerald Little League fields. Because of its proximity to the lake, this town-owned land has often been called the "Windwing property."

Included in the acquisition of this land was a barn, which in 1968 the town decided to convert into a storage garage for highway equipment. Neighbors didn't like that much and complained to the Planning and Zoning Commission, which agreed that a garage didn't belong in a residential zone. It issued a "cease and desist" order, including a threat of "fine or imprisonment or both" for non-compliance, to First Selectman Woodcock.

Upon learning of the commission's decision to issue the order, Woodcock declared: "They know where I am – let them serve me!"

The first selectman ignored the order, pointing out that town property was exempt from zoning regulations (at that time). Eventually, however, the town stopped using the barn as more room became available at the highway garage in the center of town.

Over the years there has been talk of putting in a beach at Lake Windwing, but the pond is generally considered to be too shallow and its water turnover too slow to make it good for swimming. However, it has been a popular spot for fishermen and ice skaters.

Jon Elkow, a former school board chairman, reports that Lake Windwing once had a beach and was also informally called "Bob's Lake," for Bob Kaufman, who owned the land the town now has on the southerly and easterly shores, and who maintained a swimming beach there for a while.

"We swam and fished in the lake up until the early '70s, even though the beach had begun to deteriorate without Bob's annual fixing-up," Elkow said. "I can remember bringing our new canoe down in the summer of '73 to practice the 'what do we do if it tips over' drill.

"That same summer was the end of my swimming in the lake when I caught – snagged, really – a snapping turtle that was bigger than any dinner plate in our house."

Perhaps not surprising in the age of "social media," even Lake Wingwing has its own Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Lake-Windwing/150616968283012>

WINDY RIDGE LANE

Windy Ridge Lane is a short, dead-end road off St. Johns Road, a part of a 1962 subdivision by Robert Olmstead. The road was named for the former Olmstead farm, whose house is right on the sharp curve of St. Johns Road south of Windy Ridge Lane, owned for many years by the Kukulka family. The farm's name, in turn, came from the tendency for the wind to whip through the

area, especially in storms. Betsy Shape, who owned the farm in the 1920's and early 1930's, first used the name.

"It was windy as hell," said Richard E. Venus, the former postmaster and the town historian for many year, who once lived on St. Johns Road below Windy Ridge.

Venus noted that the wind, combined with heavy snow in a 1947 storm, created drifts that were 11 to 12 feet deep across St. Johns Road at Windy Ridge.

Bob, John and Frank Symon put in the lane and built many of the houses at Windy Ridge.

WINTERGREEN

Wintergreen was a tiny locality in the early 19th Century, somewhere in the Scotland District, perhaps near the modern-day Scotland School.

The name first appears in an 1835 deed in which Hull Gilbert sold Sarah Ann Roberts land "called Wintergreen or common land." Nine years later, the owner, by then married to Lewis J. Seymour of Wilton, sold the acre "called Wintergreen" to James Scott.

The name is interesting in that it apparently applied only to a small parcel, yet was not the "Wintergreen Lot," "Wintergreen Meadow," or "Wintergreen Wood" as would have been typical for such a piece of land.

WINTERGREEN HILL

Wintergreen Hill was evidently a larger locality than the former, and was first mentioned in an 1831 deed in which Hiram L. Seymour sold Joel T. Pike one-half of his land "at Wintergreen Hill so called."

Indications are that Wintergreen Hill was in southern Ridgefield, perhaps on the Wilton line in the vicinity of Silver Spring Road or Wilton Road West. Unfortunately, the name did not establish itself in deeds and apparently in common use, for it was mentioned only twice, both times in deeds drawn in 1831.

Wintergreen is a wildflower, appropriately named for the fact that its leaves remain green through the winter. The aromatic plant, common to woods and shady places, has tasty red berries, often still around in mid-winter.

After the Boston Tea Party, Americans frequently employed wintergreen as a tea substitute. The oil of wintergreen, obtained by steaming or steeping the plants, contains methyl salicylate, which is similar to aspirin, and consequently people years ago used the tea for headaches, rheumatism, as well as for sore throats and upset stomachs.

WOLFPITS, THE

The Wolfpits and associated names bring back a hint of life in pioneering time that we often forget. Unfortunately, the name has all but disappeared from our geography — as has the wolf from our region.

On Dec. 26, 1744, the selectmen laid out the east end of Branchville Road (much of it now the Old Branchville Road), describing it thusly: "Beginning at Fairfield (now Redding) line at ye south end of ye Cedar Mountain, at ye northeast comer of Abraham Bennit's land, and so running westward between ye Bennetts land and Matthew Seamore's till it comes to ye west side of ye land

at ye Wolfpitts and from thence westward 8 rodds wide till it comes to ye Pom-pion Ridge,” and thence into town.

That wasn’t the first mention of the Wolfpits, but it’s one that helps give a good clue as to where they were situated. Pompion or Pumpkin Ridge is at the “top” of Branchville Road, where today the western end of Old Branchville Road joins Branchville Road. In addition, the highway description speaks of the “west side” of the land at “ye Wolfpitts,” suggesting that the generally east-west Old Branchville Road might have taken a turn to the north so it could pass the west side of the land. That, in fact, happens west of Nod Hill Road and east of Bruschi Lane, and from that first sharp turn northward, the road tends to head northwesterly till it meets today’s Branchville Road.

Thus, it seems likely that somewhere in the woods off Old Branchville Road and Bruschi Lane, perhaps into Twin Ridge, is the old site of the Wolfpits, probably long ago filled in by man or nature.

But what were these pits? Back in the early 1700’s, Ridgefield was wild, “mountainous” territory whose animal population included bears, mountain lions, rattlesnakes and wolves. None of these were appreciated by the colonists, either because of their own safety, or for the safety of their livestock. Farm animals were the most likely victims of attack from large carnivorous mammals.

Apparently wolves were much more common than either wild cats or bears, and to get rid of them, the colonists dug deep pits, covered them with a loose mat of twigs and leaves, and baited them with carrion. When an unsuspecting wolf or two or three happened along for a snack, down they went into the pit where they could be shot or starved to death.

Getting rid of wolves was serious business. The Norwalk Town Meeting voted on Sept. 16, 1659, “that it shall be lawful for any person or persons to make any wolfe pitt or pitts in convenient places, and what wolves shall be taken and killed by sayed persons, they shall be allowed for every wolfe 10 shillings by the Towne.”

Evidently, the reward was getting too few takers, for in 1667, the Norwalk voters jacked up the amount to 20 shillings. Proof, the Town Meeting said, was showing the “head or eares” of the animal.

Alice Morse Earle, in her *Home Life in Colonial Days*, reports that the bloody heads of slain wolves were often nailed to the outside wall of meeting houses – why, it is not clear.

The Ridgefield wolfpits were around long before Branchville Road was laid out, and may even have been here before the town was. The first mention occurs in a 1721 deed from the proprietors to Richard Olmsted for a parcel “lying in ye lower end of that swamp called and known by ye name of ye Wolfpitt Swamp,” bounded westerly by a highway.

In 1753 the proprietors gave Alexander Resseguie 11 acres “lying on ye east side of his land near ye Wolfpitts by Norwalk (now Wilton) line,” suggesting that the pits may have been well south of Old Branchville Road in what is now Twin Ridge. Indeed, a 1792 deed for 10 acres from James Rockwell to Anthony Beers says the parcel was “easterly of sd. Rockwell’s house and next to ye Wolf Pitts,” and bounded on the south by the Norwalk line. Beers, incidentally, lived on lower Nod Hill Road near the Wilton line, and Resseguie, it is believed, lived on lower Nod Road. Beers sold the parcel in 1797, which is the last mention of the Wolfpits in the land records.

Since the wolfpits were at the south end of town, near the old Norwalk line, it's quite possible that settlers of Norwalk, particularly in Wilton Parish, crossed into the wilder Indian territory to dig their wolfpits. Thus, the pits could very well have predated the town of Ridgefield. Norwalk was settled in 1640, Ridgefield in 1708.

Around 1980, a land developer (who soon after left town owing hundreds of thousands of dollars) asked for a suggestion for the name of a new subdivision road in the Old Branchville area, and was offered Wolfpits Road. He quickly rejected the idea, feeling it didn't fit in with the fine and fancy colonial houses he was erecting. In fact, it was a far more colonial and meaningful name than most in town, and is one found on roads in Norwalk, Bethel and Wilton – with some pretty fine and fancy houses on them.

WOLF PIT RIDGE

In 1789, Henry Whitlock sold Thaddeus Whitlock about six acres “near where Widow Mary Wood now lives at Wolf Pit Ridge, a place so called.”

According to Ed Liljegren, who was a historian of Ridgebury, Wolf Pit Ridge was probably in the vicinity of Pleasant View Estates, on the west side of Ridgebury Road. The name suggests that Ridgeburians, like Branchvillians, had their wolfpits.

WOLF POND LANE

Wolf Pond Lane was suggested as the name for the little road in a 1982 subdivision by Nancy Purdy of land off Pine Mountain Road. However, the name was subsequently changed to Ives Court (*q.v.*) to honor composer Charles Ives, whose family owned a cottage on Pine Mountain. Wolf Pond Lane was proposed because of the Wolf Pond Run in the neighborhood (*see below*).

WOLF POND RUN

Wolf Pond Run is reported to be a very old name for the stream that runs northerly along the west side of Pine Mountain Road. The pond itself is no longer much of a body of water, probably remaining only in the form of a swamp in the town-owned Hemlock Hills Refuge.

The name has not been found in the land records. Silvio Bedini, in his *Ridgefield in Review* (1958), recounts the story of the British, on their way from the burning of Danbury, having difficulty when they approached Ridgebury. “The British discovered too late that the bridge over Wolf Pond Run had been removed by the Americans and their cannon became enmired in the stream. Finally, a temporary bridge of rails was constructed. The incident gave birth to the stream's new name, which was thenceforth known as Miry Brook.”

As we have reported earlier, Miry Brook was known as Miry (or Miery) Brook long before the Revolution. In addition, that name probably applied to the stream to which Wolf Pond Run joins, about 150 feet south of the intersection of Pine Mountain Road and Miry Brook Road in Danbury.

WONONKPAKOONK

Wononkpafoonk, a little-known name, was one of the Indian words used to label the four corners of the town when the settlers bought Ridgefield from the natives in 1708.

The deed gives a fairly detailed description of the original boundaries as running from the Norwalk (now Wilton) line down in Branchville, up to near Umpauwaug Pond, turning northwesterly up to Little Pond, then generally west northwest to Mamasasco, then southerly to the Norwalk line somewhere in modern-day Lewisboro.

The deed continues: “The Four Corners of said tract of land being called by the following Indian names: South East Corner ‘Wheer Cock’ North East Corner ‘Wononkpakoonk’; North West Corner ‘Mamasasquag’; South West Corner ‘Narahawmis.’”

Thus, Wononkpakoonk was up in the area around Umpauwaug Pond, Fire Hill, Great Pond, and Little Pond, but was probably applied mostly to the area north of Topstone Road and just west of Umpauwaug Pond (which lies in Redding).

According to *Connecticut Place Names* by Hughes and Allen, many words like Wononkpakoonk appear in various forms in New England. John C. Huden in *Indian Place Names of New England* translates some similar words, such as Wonuncopauk and Wonunkapukook as “rocky point where the lake bends.” He also translates the word Wonokpakook as Mahican for “an open space.” It could also be a variant of Wonunkapaukook, which Trumbull translates as “land at the bend or turning of the pond.”

The fact that Umpauwaug Pond is so close to a turn in the town line suggests that either of the two pond-related names could be correct, especially since there is a “turn” or “bend” on the west shore of Umpauwaug Pond very near the turning point in the Ridgefield line.

WOODCHUCK

Woodchuck is a colorful old name for the area that’s now called Farmingville.

The name first appeared on the land records in 1832 when Charlotte Monroe of Wilton sold Phineas Chapman three roods “at a place called Wood Chuck.” Another deed, dated 1835, spoke of land “in Woodchuck District so-called,” that was clearly in Farmingville.

Apparently, there was some debate back in the 1830s about what to call that neck of the woods – or fields, as the case probably was. For in 1839, the first appearance of “Farmingville” was recorded, and no more Woodchucks appeared after that.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, woodchuck comes from the Cree Indian word, *wuchak*, descended from an early Algonquian word, *wecye-ka*, meaning “fisher.” Nonetheless, the beast itself, a variety of marmot also known as the groundhog, is a vegetarian who doesn’t touch fish.

For a mammal so common, it’s surprising that Ridgefield’s Woodchuck is the only locality so named in Connecticut, according to *Connecticut Place Names*. There are a couple of Woodchuck Hills upstate, however. And, of course, roads.

Ironically, the earliest recorded use of the word, says the *Oxford English Dictionary*, was as a place name. An old Massachusetts document, dated 1689, speaks of “a parcell of meadow commonly called Woodchuck Meadow.”

WOODCHUCK LANE

Woodchuck Lane is the road serving the 19-lot Ridgefield Hills, developed off Wilton Road West. The 1961 subdivision was done by Lewis J. Finch and John F. Coyle. According to Mr. Finch, who selected the name, a road of the same name in Wilton had “always attracted my attention.”

Besides, he added, all farms have many woodchucks in their fields, and this subdivision was built in an old field.

WOODCOCK LANE

Woodcock Lane is a short, dead-end road off Barry Avenue, serving a 1974 subdivision by Marcelino Lavin of Wilton.

At least part of the road made use of an old highway called Keeler Lane that ran from Barry Avenue over to Peaceable Hill Road. Keeler Lane was described in 1974 as a “very narrow, unimproved pathway.”

The road is named not for the bird, but for the former first selectman and well-known Ridgefielder.

Joseph Mortimer Woodcock, a native of upstate New York, came to Ridgefield in 1933 as a salesman for the huge Outpost Nurseries that owned most of northeastern Ridgefield along Danbury Road and upper Route 7 and which at the time employed some 200 people. He had graduated from the Forestry School at Syracuse University, had been a forester in Vermont for the Civilian Conservation Corps, and had worked briefly for another nursery.

Woodcock became general manager in 1939 and bought the business in 1945, renaming it Woodcock Nurseries. The company specialized in large-scale projects, such as estates and park plantings, and did such work as landscaping for the 1964 New York World’s Fair.

Always active in the community, Woodcock belonged to many organizations including the Republican Town Committee, which he chaired in the 1950s, and served on the Board of Finance, and the Parks Commission. In 1967 he was elected first selectman, retiring four years later.

While in office, Woodcock convinced the state to lease the town of Ridgefield more than 100 acres of flood-control woodland and lake – most of which is in Wilton – for what’s now known as the Woodcock Nature Center.

“Woody” Woodcock died in 1992 at the age of 88.

WOODLAND HILL COURT

Woodland Hill Court was the original name proposed for what is now Downesbury Court, a subdivision by Roger Carpenter and William Valus. The name was abandoned because of probable confusion with the name below, and because of the availability of the better one that was used.

WOODLAND WAY

Woodland Way, which runs parallel to Bennett’s Farm Road to which it connects at each end, is one of the many private roads at the Ridgefield Lakes, developed originally in the 1930s as a place for summer cottages.

The name is one of a group that make use of the word “wood” in combination with other words or letters to reflect what is viewed as one of the chief beauties of Ridgefield — its many trees. They include Woodlawn, Woodstone, Woody, Kingswood, Knollwood, Ridgewood, and Sprucewood (but not Sherwood, Woodchuck, Dogwood, Woodcock, or even Wood’s Gulf — below).

Though it might at first seem surprising, in view of all the development that has taken place in the last half of the 20th Century, there are many, many more trees in town today than were here 100 or 200 years ago. For most of its settled history, Ridgefield was an agrarian community and consequently most of the land was treeless, used for fields and pastures. Trees were pretty much restricted to rocky, steep land, or woodlots, around the yard, or as property markers at the corners of fields. It is only since the disappearance of the farms that trees have come back, growing like weeds in the fields of the past.

Today, just over 3,000 acres of Ridgefield are considered “forest,” large enough acreages of trees to be significant. Most are publicly owned, but some are still private land.

WOODLAWN DRIVE

Woodlawn Drive is a short, dead-end road off the north side of upper Branchville Road, developed around 1960 by the late Joseph P. Coffey Sr.

The name makes use of the words that describe two of the most important things homeowners look for in a lot. The road became a town highway in 1963. In 1985, an additional 430 feet was added.

WOOD’S GULF

Though it’s some 15 miles from the sea and has only small bodies of water, Ridgefield had a number of islands, including one still recalled in Island Hill Avenue. But a gulf, too?

As early as 1731, deeds were appearing in the Ridgefield Land Records mentioning a place called “Wood’s Gulf.” One of the best references for us in pinpointing its location was a 1743 description of land within which common land would not be divided. The line ran from land below Whipstick Ridge to “Wood Gulf below Flatt Rock, continuing westerly to ye outlet on ye New Pound Boggs...”

This description, plus ones that appeared in other deeds, make it clear that the “gulf” is the valley at the intersection of Silver Hill Road with the two Wilton Roads, particularly Wilton Road West. Indeed, an old meaning of the word “gulf” is a deep hollow or chasm, a description that may be a little exaggerated in the case of this gulf or valley.

Was it loaded with trees? Perhaps, but that was not the origin of the name. Titus Wood, one of the early farmers in the town, had land there by 1731 and it’s pretty certain that’s where the name, usually found in the possessive “Wood’s Gulf” form, came from.

The name last appeared in the land records in 1792.

Use of gulf as an inland geographical term is rare today, but was not uncommon across Connecticut in the 17th and 18th Centuries. Hughes and Allen’s “Connecticut Place Names” records a half dozen places called simply The Gulf. Wood’s Gulf, however, is believed to be the only use of the term in Ridgefield records.

WOODSTONE ROAD

Woodstone Road is an aptly named little lane off Danbury Road. Running east from the highway north of Fox Hill condominiums, it goes through a stone wall and into a wood.

The road was developed by William Mannion from a 1953 subdivision of 6.6 acres into five lots.

WOODY PLACE

Woody Place, a private road at the Ridgefield Lakes, runs off the west side of Mountain Road to a dead-end at Rainbow Lake. Presumably, its namer liked the trees.

WOOSTER HEIGHTS

Wooster Heights is a 1963 subdivision of 21 one-acre lots from 25 acres, created by Orrin and Marion Beers. The development off the west side of North Salem Road is served by Wooster Heights Drive (*below*) and Settlers Lane (*q.v.*).

WOOSTER HEIGHTS DRIVE

Wooster Heights Drive runs between North Salem Road and Settlers Lane, both roads serving the 1963 Wooster Heights subdivision of Orrin and Marion Beers

Wooster Heights Drive overlooks the spot along North Salem Road where General David Wooster was shot during one of the skirmishes of the Battle of Ridgefield on April 27, 1777.

General Wooster, head of the Connecticut militia, hurried from New Haven to fight the British troops that were attacking Danbury, but by the time he arrived in this area, the British were heading back via Ridgefield to their ships on the Sound. With several hundred men, he surprised a British encampment near the intersection of North Salem and Barlow Mountain Roads, disorganizing the Redcoats and inflicting heavy losses.

Wooster and his men withdrew with prisoners, but soon attacked again, this time as the British moved quickly down North Salem Road toward town. In heavy fighting near the present intersection of Wooster Heights Drive, the General turned toward his men and reportedly shouted: "Come on, my boys, never mind such random shots."

A moment later, a not-so-random bullet struck him in the back. According to legend, the shot was fired by an American loyalist, standing some 300 yards away with a gun of unusual length and accuracy.

General Wooster was taken to Danbury. He suffered great pain and died on May 2 in a house that is now part of the Scott-Fanton Museum on Main Street. He was buried in the old cemetery on Wooster Street across from St. Peter's School, but his remains were later moved to the Danbury cemetery that now bears his name.

A native of Stratford, David Wooster was born in 1710 and graduated from Yale in 1738. As a young lieutenant, he had fought the Spanish in 1739. The following year, while a captain of a vessel in the Coast Guard, he married the daughter of the president of Yale. He later fought as a colonel in the French and Indian War.

When the Continental Army was formed, Wooster was made one of eight brigadier generals, and fought in Canada in 1776. He was soon named the first major general of the Militia in Connecticut. His sword and sash are at Yale today.

WOOSTER STREET

Wooster Street is an old highway running between North Street and North Salem Road, connecting with the latter nearly opposite the spot where General Wooster was felled.

The road, a handy shortcut over the Titicus River between the two, old, north-south highways, may have been there in Revolutionary times. It existed by 1856 when it is shown on Clark's map. Early in the 20th Century, the road was commonly called Cross Street.

Y

YANKEE HILL ROAD

Yankee Hill Road is a short roadway between Peaceable Hill Road and Minuteman Road, and is part of the Colonial Heights subdivision developed in the mid- to late-1960s.

Lewis J. Finch and Paul J. Morganti were the developers of the town's first three-acre-lot subdivision, and selected names with colonial flavor for it and its roads.

Whether they were fans of the Bronx Bombers is not known.

Yankee Hill Road became a town road in 1968.

YELLOW HILL

In 1765, James and Martha Scott sold Uriah Marvine a 13-acre parcel "called the Yellow Hill." Another piece of the same transaction was "east of Spectacle Road," so odds are, the Yellow Hill was probably also in that vicinity, east of Spectacle Lane and west of Nod Road.

Yellow Hill, probably a neighborhood name, perhaps reflected the color of the brush in certain seasons or maybe in certain lights, or the tint of the soil.

YORK STATE LINE

An 1860 description of the boundaries of the South School District in Ridgebury refers to the "York State Line." It could have been an informal name for the New York State line, or it could be that the writer forgot to stick in the "new."

YOUNG POND

A map from early in this century refers to the pond off the west side of Limestone Road, just north of Shields Lane, as Young Pond. Today, it's called Taylor's Pond.

The pond has been around for at least 130 years and probably 250 years, so it's hardly "young." Thus, the name no doubt had its origin in some former owner named Young.

Z

ZACK'S RIDGE

Zack's Ridge is another of those 18th Century Ridgefield names that, unfortunately, fell out of use. One day, perhaps, it will be resurrected in a road name.

"Zack" was a nickname for Isaac, in this case, Dr. Isaac Hall of Fairfield. Zack Hall managed to obtain from the government of the colony of Connecticut a grant of 150 acres in what was to become Ridgefield but at the time was simply Indian territory north of Norwalk, according to research done by Ed Liljegren, a former Ridgeburian

Liljegren said the Colonial Assembly gave the land to Dr. Hall in May 1697. The tract was "to be taken up where it may not prejudice any former grant to any town or particular person." Although Ridgefielders 11 years later paid the local Indians for the land they were to occupy, the Assembly apparently felt an American Indian was no "particular person" and simply gave Hall the 150 acres in what's now Ridgebury. Such as the way American governments were to treat the natives for two more centuries.

Liljegren said the grant of Isaac Hall was a coffin-shaped parcel along the southwest side of Old Stagecoach Road (which did not exist then), and included much of what is today the Double H Farm, until recently the McKeons' Arigideen Farm.

Other accounts say only that Dr. Hall's grant was north of Fairfield, which included what's now Redding. Liljegren was somehow able to pinpoint the grant more to the west.

Dr. Hall had requested 250 acres for his service as a surgeon during an unnamed war or campaign. Little is known of the fellow. *A Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England* (1860) says he was a surgeon who was "perhaps born in England, for he took the oath of fidelity at New Haven 7 April 1657." Some sources say he was born in Kent, England. He died in Fairfield in 1714, leaving a widow, Lydia, and at least two children.

Apparently Isaac and his brother Samuel, also of Fairfield, were involved in some long-standing dispute. An October 1691 Connecticut court record states: "Whereas there hath been a long continued controversy between Isaac Hall and Samuel Hall, that hath made much trouble and controversy between them, managed in several of our courts, it is now by this Court recommended to our Honoured Governor, Major Gold, and Mr. John Burr, to take the pains to command both Isaac and Samuel Hall to appear before them, and to use their best endeavors to settle them in a good and peaceable way."

In a speech before the State Medical Society in 1853, Dr. Rufus Blakeman, a prominent Connecticut physician, described the early history of the profession in the colony, and mentioned Zack. "Isaac Hall was also a physician of Fairfield, who died in 1714," Dr. Blakeman said. "But regarding his reputation, nothing special is to be obtained. In his nuncupative will on the probate record, he is styled Dr. Isaac Hall, but his inventory exhibits but a meagre amount of his professional remains ... Sylvester Judd Esq. of Northampton, who is most conversant with the early records of Fairfield County, states regarding him 'he

was a physician and especially a chirurgeon. He was employed by the government in some warlike expedition, and my impression is, that he was somewhat distinguished." ("Chirurgeon" is an archaic form of "surgeon.")

The name "Zack's Ridge" shows up occasionally in old deeds, including one in 1747 when Moses Knap of Redding sold Nathan Sherwood, Josiah Foster and Timothy Foster "100 acres of land, lying in said Ridgefield, on Zack's Ridge so-called, and is part of an 150 acres originally granted to Dr. Isaac Hull of Stratfield." (Stratfield was a parish, partly in Fairfield and partly in Stratford, that later became Bridgeport. Hall and Hull were often interchanged in old documents.)

How the Knap or Knapp family got the land from Dr. Hall is not known, though Redding at the time was part of Fairfield, and Hall is known to have owned land near Moses Knap's place in the Lonetown section of Redding. Knap was apparently working the land, for by 1750 deeds were calling the area "Knap's Farm" (*q.v.*) instead of Zack's Ridge.

SOURCES

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Ancona, Nano
 Bacchiochi, Joseph
 Barlow, Aaron A.
 Bedini, Silvio A.
 Beers, Yardley
 Belote, Tom
 Brown, Cornelia Todd
 Carey, Richard Owen
 Carroll, Leo F.
 Cassavechia, Dora
 Coles, Charles
 Colgate, Pamela
 Cox, Elise Conley
 Crofut, Beverly
 Czyn, Anthony
 Davis, Harold O.
 Donnelly, Joseph H.
 Dowling, John E.
 Durant, Margaret Solley
 Elkow, Jon M.
 Emmons, Charles
 Finch, Lewis J.
 Gearhart, Edith
 Gelfman, Nelson A.
 Gilbert, Aaron V.
 Grace, Mike
 Gunther, Max
 Hanlon, George
 Hull, Elizabeth

Hull, Harry E.
 Hunt, Malcolm
 Hurzeler, Marie
 Hurzeler, Ruth M.
 Iles, Harold
 Inglese, Oswald
 Lawrence, Rick
 Lecher, Carl
 Liljegren, Edwin
 Martin, Francis D.
 McKeon, Daniel M.
 McNamara, Paul
 Montanari, Fred P.
 Mullen, John
 Nash, Elizabeth Grace
 Nash, Karl S.
 Russell, Mrs. Charles
 Serfilippi, Barbara
 Serfilippi, Frank
 Shields, Reed
 Tobin, James
 Tobin, Stephen
 Torcellini, Geno
 Venus, Richard E.
 Walker, Robert J.
 Walker, Stanley
 Wettingfeld, Catherine
 Wohlforth, Mildred
 Woodcock, J. Mortimer
 Zelson, Annette

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INDEX

This index cites people, places and subjects that are contained within the more than 1,200 Ridgefield names entries in this history. Names in ALL CAPITALS are names for which there are articles. This index has been scanned from type-script, and may contain scanning errors. The author appreciates corrections. The author is also indebted to the compiler, whose name he does not know.

A

AARON'S COURT

Abbe, Dr. Robert – Remington Road

ABBOTT AVENUE

Abbott, (family) – New Pattent

Abbott, David – Abbott's Mill Road;
McDonald's Mill Pond; Mill Road

Abbott, James – Nod

Abbott, George I. – Abbott Avenue

Abbott, Jonathan – Mamanasco Hill;
Mill Brook

Abbott, Lemuel, Jr. – Jambs, The

ABBOTT'S MILL ROAD – Couch's
Station; McDonald's Mill
Pond; Mill Road

Abrams, A.J. – Samara Place; Topgal-
lant

ACORN PLACE

ACRE LANE

Adams, John – Adams Road

ADAMS ROAD

Airline Circle – Mimosa

Aldrich, Lawrence – Aldrich Park

Aldrich, Winifred – Aldrich Park

Aldrich Museum of Contemporary
Art – Aldrich Park; King Lane

ALDRICH PARK

Allan's Men's Store – Big Shop Lane

Allee, Drive William H. – Peck Hill

Allen, Col. Ethan – Ethan Allen
Highway

Allen, Drive Henry W. – Franklin
Heights

Allen, Morse S. – Nesopack

Alligator Acres – Stonecrest Road

Almgren, Rolf – Arrowhead Place

Altnacraig Nursing Home – High
Ridge

Amatuzzi family – Ballard Park

Amawalk – Ammawogg

American Legion Hall – Gilbert
Street

Ambler (family) – Miry Brook

AMMAWOGG

Ammon (Indian) – Tapornick Divi-
sion; Long Pond I

Ancona (family) – Park Lane

Anderson, Anton S. – Ridgebury
Road; Stebbins Close

Anderson, Ebba – Pickett's Ridge
Road

Anderson, Henry B. – Anderson Tea
House Road; Barrack Hill
Road; Eight Lakes; Lewis
Drive; Old Sib Road; Oreneca,
Lake; Port Road; Ridgefield
Manor Estates; Sewer Bed
Road; Tea House Road; Turtle
Pond

ANDERSON MOUNTAIN

ANDERSON TEA HOUSE ROAD

Anderson's Tea House – Eight Lakes;
Tea House Road

Andre, Major John – King Lane;
Lafayette Avenue; Olmstead
Lane

Andrews, Dorcas – Middle Pond

Andrew's Pond – Sanfords Pond;
Whiting's Pond

Andrews, Sperry – Beers Station

Andros, Edmond – Charter Oak Court

Anthony Cassedy Associates – Out-
post Pond

Aokeels – Great Pond; Little Pond

AOKEETS – Great Pond

Apgar, Allan Stoddard – Stonecrest
Road; North Street

Apple Lane – Fox Hill Village

Apporneck – Cave, The

Apricot Lane – Fox Hill Village

Aquarion – Bennett's Pond(s)

Arigadeen Farm – Harrison Court;
Hussar's Camp Place; Knap's
Farm; McKeon Place; Sher-
wood Farm

ARMAND PLACE, ROAD

Armand, Col. Charles – Barrack Hill Road; Hussar's Camp Place
 Arnold, General Benedict – Arnold's Way; George Washington Highway; King Lane; Stebbins Close
 Arnold, Elizabeth – Eleven Levels Road
 Arnold, Jennie – Olcott Way
 Arnold, Paul – Eleven Levels Road
 ARNOLD'S WAY
 Arnor Corporation – Tannery Hill Road
 ARROWHEAD PLACE
 Ascot Associates – Ascot Way
 ASCOT WAY
 Ashbee, Charles F. – Ashbee Lane; Kingswood Lane
 ASHBEE LANE – Kingswood Lane
 Asketh, Jordon – Cranberry Meadow
 ASOQUATAH – Narahawmis; West Mountain
 Aspen – Aspen Mill Road
 ASPEN LEDGES ROAD
 ASPEN MILL ROAD Asproom – Asproom Mountain
 Asproom Boggs – Asproom Mountain
 ASPROOM BRIDGE Asproom Ledges – Aspen Ledges Road; Great Ledges
 ASPROOM LOAF, LOFT, ALOFT
 ASPROOM MOUNTAIN – Aspen Ledges Road; Barlow Mountain; Hogholler, Smith's; Mountain, The
 Asproom Peek – Asproom Mountain
 Asproom Plain – Asproom Mountain
 Asproomqua – Asproom Mountain
 ASPRUMQUAK MOUNTAIN
 Auer, Mr. and Mrs. John P. – Candee's Pond
 Austin, Jacob – Lee Road

B

Bacchiochi, A. and Sons – Naraneka, Lake;
 Bacchiochi, Achille — Pump Lane
 Bacchiochi, Joseph – Flat Rock Road; Pump Lane
 BACCHUS'S HOLLOW
 Backus, John – Bacchus's Hollow
 Backus, Ruth – Bacchus's Hollow
 Bacon, Francis M. – Westmoreland
 BAILEY AVENUE – Hawley Street

Bailey, E.N. – Bailey's New Road, Farmingville Road
 Bailey, Eldridge – Eight Lakes
 Bailey, Hachaliah – Howes Court; Turner Road
 Bailey, Halcyon Gilbert – Crow Hill; South Middle District
 Bailey Inn – Catoonah Street
 Bailey, Lewis H. – Bailey Avenue; Orchard Street; Town Farm
 BAILEY'S NEW ROAD – Farmingville Road
 Baker, Amos – Ridge, The
 Bakes, George – Great Pond
 Baldaserini (family) – Outpost Pond
 Balducci's Market – Donnelly Drive
 Baldwin, Caleb – Crank, The
 Baldwin, Granther – Rock Lot
 Baldwin, John – Beaver Brook
 Baldwin, Robert H. – Clayton Place; Conant Road
 Ballard, Elizabeth B. – Ballard Park
 Ballard Greenhouse – Ballard Park
 BALLARD PARK
 BANK'S HILL PLACE – Lounsbury Ridge
 Banks, Daniel — Factory Pond
 Banks, David – Cain's Hill and Road; Factory Pond; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Banks, Hugh S. – Parley Lane
 Banks, Thaddeus, Jr. – Cain's Hill and Road
 Banks Mill – Farmingville
 Barberry, Benjamin – Cider Mill Lot; Great Swamp II; Huckleberry Hill
 BARE MOUNTAIN
 Barhite Farm – Ridgefield Lakes
 Barhite, William – Ridgebury Mountain
 Barker, Fred – Fox Hill
 Barlow, John – Barlow Mountain; Barlow Mountain Road
 BARLOW MOUNTAIN – Asproom Loaf, Loft, Aloft; Asproom Mountain; North Mountain, Pierrepont State Park
 Barlow Mountain Hill Road – Barlow Mountain
 Barlow Mountain Road – Barlow Mountain; Old Barlow Mountain Road
 Barlow Mountain School — Pierrepont Drive; Round Mountain

Barnum, Abel – Asproom Loaf, Loft, Aloft
 Barnum, Andrew – Limestone
 Barnum, Joshua – Miry Brook
 Barnum, Phineas T. – Asproom Loaf, Loft, Aloft; Barnum Place; Turner Road
 BARNUM PLACE – Turner, Aaron
 BARRACK HEIGHTS – Continental Drive
 “Barrack” Hill – Fort Hill
 Barrack Hill – Old West Mountain Road
 BARRACK HILL ROAD – Armand Place; Conron’s Pond; Red Brook; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 BARRACK HILLS
 Barrett, H.A. – Old Creamery Highway
 BARROW MOUNTAIN
 BARRY AVENUE – Bypass Road. New Road IV; New West Lane
 Barry, R. C. – Barry Avenue
 Barton, John G. – Jambs, The
 Bassett, Cleveland – Silver Birch Lane
 Bassett, Mr. and Mrs. Preston – Parley Lane
 Bassett, Preston – Sarah Bishop Road
 Bates (family) – Mopus Bridge (Road)
 BATES FARM ROAD – Farms
 Bates, Fred S. – Bates Farm Road
 Bates, Hanford – Little Pond
 Bates, Henry L. – Ridgebury Road II
 Bates, John – New Road II
 Bates, Lelah – Mopus Bridge (Road)
 Bates, Taylor – Taylor’s Pond
 Battle of Ridgefield – Arnold’s Way; Barlow Mountain; Boulder Hill Road; Cain’s Hill and Road; Casagmo; Fairgrounds, The; Fountain, Cass Gilbert; Harrison Court; Hessian Drive; Olcott Way; Old Barlow Mountain Road; Old Burying Ground; Olmstead Lane; Perry Lane; Sky Top Road; Stebbins Close; Wooster Heights Drive
 Baxter, Frank – Old Sib Road
 BAYBERRY HILL ROAD – Wenbos Lane
 Baylis, Alexander – Langstroth Drive
 “Beacon Hill” – Soundview Road
 Beantown – Danbury Road
 BEAR ISLAND

BEAR MOUNTAIN – Lippolt Pond
 Bear Mountain Brook – Bear Mountain
 BEAR MOUNTAIN ROAD
 BEAR SWAMP – Cradle Rock
 BEAR’S DEN – North Street
 Beatys, James – Starr’s Plain
 BEAVER BROOK – Flat Rock; Hop Meadow Branch
 BEAVER BROOK ROAD — Bennett, Widow Lucy
 BEAVER BROOK ROAD
 BEAVER DAM – New Pound Boggs
 BECK LANE
 Bedford Path – Stamford Mill River
 BEDFORD ROAD – South Salem Road
 Bedient’s (Store) – King Lane
 Bedini, Silvio A. – Armand Place; Fort Hill; Howes Court; Turner Court
 Bedini family – Kendra Court
 BEECHWOOD
 BEECHWOOD LANE
 Beers, Anthony – Beers Station; Wolfpits,
 Beers, Henry I. – Corman Avenue
 Beers, Lewis – Beers Station
 Beers, Louis Gilbert – Beers Station
 Beers, Marion – Or-Mar Drive; Wooster Heights Drive
 Beers, Orrin – Or-Mar Drive; Wooster Heights Drive
 Beers, Sherman – Beers Station; Ridgefield Road II
 Beers, William Woolsey – Beers Station
 Beers, Yardley – Beers Station
 Beers Cemetery – Beers Station; Nod Hill
 BEERS PLACE
 BEERS STATION – Branchville
 BELDEN FIELD’S CORNER
 Belden, Azor – Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Bell District School – Belltown
 Bellagamba Floor Covering – Joe’s Corner
 BELLTOWN
 BELVEDERE COURT
 Benedict (family) – Cripple Bush Wood; Great Pasture; Miller’s Ridge; New Patent
 Benedict, Aunt Delight – West Lane; Southwest Ridges

Benedict, Benjamin – Canada Land;
Sarah Bishop Road
Benedict, Benjamin, Jr. – Stebbins'
Corner
Benedict, Dan – Ridgebury
Benedict, Daniel — Jambs, The;
Titicus Hill
Benedict, David – Short Woods
Benedict, Elijah – Sugar Hollow
Turnpike
Benedict, Ezra Pearce – Boggs Pond
Benedict, George – Cripple Bush
Wood
Benedict, James – Flat Rock; High
Ridge; Miller's Ridge; Peach
Pond; Steep Brook
Benedict, Joseph – Country Road;
Spectacle Brook Ridge
Benedict, Capt. Matthew – Brimstone
Swamp; Miller's Ridge; Old
Burying Ground
Benedict, Theophilus – Chestruin;
Fox Hills
Benedict, Timothy — Hemlock Hole;
Spruce Mountain
Benedict, William A. – Old Creamery
Highway
BENEDICT'S MOUNTAIN
BENEDICT'S POND – Boggs Pond
Bennett – See also Bennit, Bennitt
Bennett, Daniel – Island River
Bennett, Ephraim – Bennett's Long
Pond; Buckspen Swamp;
Dutchman Swamp
Bennett, Gershom – Bennett's Long
Pond
Bennett, James – Bennett's Farm
Road; Bennett's Long Pond;
Dutchman Swamp
Bennett, Widow Lucy – New Road II
Bennett, Samuel — Bennett's Farm
Bennett, Willis – Spruce Hill Rd
BENNETT'S FARM — Asproom
Loaf, Loft, Aloft; Dutchman
Swamp, Farms
Bennett's Farm District – Oreneca
Road; Ridgefield Lakes
BENNETT'S FARM ROAD – Ben-
nett's Ponds; Buttonwood
Swamp; Limestone; Mountain
Road; Ridgefield Road II
BENNETT'S LONG POND
Bennett's Pond State Park – Bennett's
Ponds; Buckspen Road; Dev-
il's Run Road; Buttonwood
Swamp

BENNETT'S POND(S) – Bucks Pen
Meadow; Buckspen Road;
Buckspen Swamp; Long Pond
II
BENNETT'S POND STATE PARK –
Buckspen Road; Buttonwood
Swamp
BENNETT'S SAW MILL POND
Bennit – See also Bennett
Bennit, Abraham – Bennett's Farm;
Branchville Road; Great Hill
Road; Old Branchville Road;
Wolfpits, The
Bennit, Daniel – Great Hill Road
Bennit, Gershom – Asproom Loaf,
Loft, Aloft
Bennit, Stephen – Pisgah
Bennits Farm – Bennett's Farm
Bennits Pond – Bennett's Ponds
Bennitt, Abraham – Wett Swamp
Bennitt, Gersham – Long Pond II
Bennitt, James – Long Pond II
Bennits Farm – Bennett's Farm
Benrus – Farmingville
Benson (family) – Benson Road;
Betty's Corner
Benson, Frank – Benson Road
BENSON ROAD
Bernitts Path – Bennett's Farm
Berthier, Alexander – Hussar's Camp
Place
BEST DIVISION or MEADOW
Best Division – Best Division or
Meadow
Best Meadow Division – Best Divi-
sion or Meadow
Betts, Aaron – Poor House Lane
Betty (Indian) – Betty's Corner; New
Pattent; Ridgebury
BETTY GRANT – Ridgebury
Betty, James – Buttonwood Swamp
BETTY'S CORNER
Bickford, Edgar P. – Fox Drive;
Highview Drive; Knollwood
Drive; Partridge Drive; Ridge-
field Knolls; Rockcrest Drive;
Rolling Ridge Road; Senoka
Drive; Sugar Loaf Mountain
Road; Virginia Court
Biddle, Christine – Biddle Hill
Biddle, Edna – Biddle Hill
Biddle, Edward R. – Biddle Hill
Biddle, H. Wilmerding – Biddle Hill
Biddle, Harriett – Biddle Hill
Biddle Farm – Biddle Hill

BIDDLE HILL – Biddle Lane; East
 Pumpkin Ridge; Nutmeg
 Ridge; Pompion Ridge; Pump-
 kin Ridge
 BIDDLE LANE – Nutmeg Ridge
 Big Jim Farm – Kiln Hill Lane
 Big Shop – Big Shop Lane; Catoonah
 Street; Fountain, The
 BIG SHOP LANE
 BIG SWAMP
 Biglow, Lucius Horatio – Ballard
 Park; Martin Park
 Biow, Milton – Mimosa
 BIRCH COURT
 BIRCH LANE – Dogwood Drive
 BIRCH POND – Foster's Pond
 BIRCH ROAD
 Birchard, Elias – Sugar Hollow Turn-
 pike
 Bishop, Sarah – Cave, The; Sarah
 Bishop Road
 Bissell, Harvey P. – Village, The
 Bissell's Drug Store – Thousand Acre
 Swamp
 BLACK FRANK'S CORNER
 BLACK MAN'S CORNER
 "Black Pond Mall" (Stores) – Saw
 Mill Pond
 Blackberry Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Blackman, (family) – Blackman Road
 Blackman, David – Bennett's Ponds
 Blackman, Eva M. – Hunter Heights
 Blackman, John – Blackman Road;
 Hunter Heights
 Blackman, Philetta – Florida
 BLACKMAN ROAD
 BLACKSMITH'S RIDGE – Burt's
 Lane
 Blacksmith Ridge Bridge – Black-
 smith's Ridge
 BLACKSMITH RIDGE ROAD
 Blackwell, Mr. and Mrs. James M. –
 Lacha Linne; Scripp's Pond
 Blaine, James G. – Governor Street;
 Lounsbury Road
 Blaine, James G., Jr. – Governor
 Street
 Bloomer (family) – Bloomer Road
 Bloomer, Edith – Bloomer Road
 Bloomer, Frank J. – Bloomer Road
 Bloomer, Thomas S. – Bloomer Road
 BLOOMER ROAD
 BLUE RIDGE ROAD
 Blueberry Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Blum, Richard L. – Mimosa

Board of Education (headquarters) –
 Halpin Lane
 Board of Finance – Beaver Brook
 Road; Dowling Drive
 BOB CREST DRIVE
 BOB HILL ROAD
 BOBBY'S COURT
 BOB'S LAKE – Windwing, Lake
 BOG MEADOW
 BOGGS, The – Boggs Pond; Sugar
 Hollow Turnpike
 BOGGS MOUNTAIN
 BOGGS POND – Sugar Hollow
 Turnpike
 BOGUS – Hemlock Hills; Ned's
 Mountain Road
 Bogus Farm – Bogus
 Bogus Mountain – Bogus
 BOGUS ROAD – Bogus; Hemlock
 Hills; Sky Top Road; Spruce
 Hill Road
 Boehringer-Ingelheim – Shadow
 Lake; Shadow Lake Road
 Bolander, Catherine – Kendra Court
 Bollas, Bertha – Harvey Road
 Bolling's Liquor Store – Harding
 Drive
 Bontecou, Sara – Resseguie's Lane
 Boron, Suzanna – Dlhly Ridge
 Borough of Ridgefield – Village, The
 Bossert, George – Bayberry Hill
 Road; Wenbos Lane
 Boston Common – Copp's Corner
 Boston Post Road – Bedford Road
 BOSWEN DRIVE – Bayberry Hill
 Road
 BOULDER HILL ROAD, LANE
 Bouton, Eben – Sarah Bishop Road
 Bouton, George – Spruce Hill Road
 Bouton, Hiram – Limestone
 Bowling alleys – Introduction
 Boys' Club – Veterans Park
 Bradley, A. – Bennett's Farm illus.
 Bradley, Abigail – Negro Rock
 Bradley, Daniel – Mine Lott
 Bradley, Col. Philip Burr – Ballard
 Park; George Washington
 Highway; Stony Brook; Tan-
 nery Hill Road; Washington
 Avenue
 Bradley, Stephen – Mine Lott
 Bradley, Sturges – Bradley's Mill
 Pond
 BRADLEY'S MILL POND
 BRANCH, THE

BRANCHVILLE – Beers Station,
 Florida; New Road III
 Branchville Cemetery – Brook Lane;
 Railroad Avenue I
 Branchville District – Branchville
 Road
 Branchville Fresh Air Camp – Martin
 Park
 BRANCHVILLE HILL – Branchville
 Hill Road
 BRANCHVILLE HILL ROAD
 BRANCHVILLE ROAD – Bloomer
 Road; Brook Lane; Cooper
 Road; Copp's Corner, Cush-
 man Lane; Hawley Place;
 Ridgefield Road II; Stage
 Road
 Branchville School – Branchville,
 Sycamore Lane
 Branchville Schoolhouse –
 Branchville, Old Branchville
 Road
 Branchville Station – Ridgefield
 Station; Stage Road; West
 Ridgefield
 Brewster, Dr. Blandina – Brewster's
 Pond
 Brewster, Carroll – Brewster's Pond
 BREWSTER'S POND
 BRIAR RIDGE ROAD
 BRIDLE TRAIL
 BRIGGS MOUNTAIN
 Briggs, Zebedee – Corner Pond
 Brimstone – Brimstone Swamp
 BRIMSTONE SWAMP – Comstock
 Brook
 BROAD HILL
 Bronson, Clark – Poor House Lane
 Bronson, Herbert – Stamford Station
 Bronson, Levi – Starr's Plain
 BROOK LANE
 Brook Farm – O'Neill Court
 BROOK'S BRIDGE
 Brookside Development Corporation
 – Brookside Road
 BROOKSIDE PINES
 BROOKSIDE ROAD
 Brookview Estates – Penny Brook
 Bross, Edgar C. – West Lane
 Brown, Daniel – Saw Mill Hill Road
 Brown, Francis – Stonecrest Road
 Brown, James – Cranberry Meadow;
 Mine Lott
 BRUSCHI LANE
 Bruschi, Luigi – Bruschi Lane
 Brush, Abner – Fountain, The

Brush, Eliphalet – Bogus
 Brush, Platt – Fountain, The; Potash
 Hill
 Brushie Ridge – Brushy Lane
 BRUSHY RIDGE
 Bryan, William Jennings – North
 Street, Stonecrest Road
 BRYON AVENUE – Fairview Av-
 enue
 Bryon, Rev. Adelmar – St. George's
 Spring
 Bryon, Dr. Benn Adelmar – Bryon
 Avenue; Cross Pond; Fairview
 Avenue; Kitchawan, Lake; St.
 George's Spring
 Bryon Park – Bryon Avenue;
 Fairview Avenue; Greenfield
 Street; St. George's Spring
 Brynner, Yul – Chekhov Road
 Buck Hill – Buckspen Swamp; Dan-
 bury Road
 BUCK HILL ROAD
 Bucks Pen Meadow – Buckspen
 Swamp
 BUCKS POND
 BUCKSPEN LANE – Corbin Lane
 BUCKSPEN ROAD
 BUCKSPEN SWAMP – Dutchman
 Swamp
 BUELL STREET
 BUFFALO CREEK – Titicus
 Buffalo Creek Acres – Hessian Drive;
 Buffalo Creek
 Bulfo, Bruno – Bucks Pond
 Bulfo, Joy – Bucks Pond
 Bulkley, Jonathan – Rippowam Road;
 West Mountain
 BUNG TOWN
 Burchard's Store – Mill Plain
 Burr (family) – Hamilton Road
 Burr, Aaron – Hamilton Road;
 Umpawaug Road
 Burr, Drive David – George Washing-
 ton Highway
 Burr, Ebenezer – Blackman Road
 Burr, Nathan – Farmingville
 Burr, Peter – Abbott's Mill Road;
 Bradley's Mill Pond; Couch's
 Station; Florida Hill Road;
 McDonald's Mill Pond;
 Miller's Pond
 Burritt, Elizabeth – Farmersville
 Burritt, Henry L. W. – Farmersville
 Burt (family) – Ivy Swamp Brook;
 King Lot(t)s; Pond Road
 Burt, Ann – Scotland

Burt, Benjamin – Birch Road; Blacksmith's Ridge; Burt's Lane; Burt's Pond; Great Pond; King Lot(t)s; Norwalk River; Southwest Ridges; Taylor's Pond
 Burt, Charlotte – Pond Road
 Burt, Christopher – Burt's Pond
 Burt, Daniel – Burt's Pond
 Burt, David – Burt's Pond; King Lot(t)s
 Burt, Joshua – Burt's Pond
 Burt, Laura – Scotland
 Burt, Mary – Scotland
 Burt, Phebe – Scotland
 BURT ROAD – Old West Mountain Road
 Burt, Seaborn – Burt's Lane; Burt's Pond; Mamasasco Lake, Pond
 Burt, Smith – Asproom Loaf, Loft, Aloft
 Burt, Susanna – Burt's Pond
 Burt, Theophilus – Burt's Pond
 BURT'S LANE – Catoonah Street
 BURT'S MILL POND
 BURT'S POND – Great East Meadow Pond; Lower Pond; Foster's Pond
 BURYING GROUND
 Buttery, Philetta – Florida
 BUTTONWOOD SWAMP
 BYPASS ROAD I
 BYPASS ROAD II Ligi's Way
 Byron, Mr. and Mrs. Edward – Oak Tree Lane

 C
 Cables, Daniel – Mill Road
 Cables' Mill – Mill Road
 Cadellero, Dominick – Circle Drive
 Cambridge, Godfrey – Buck Hill Road
 Cain, Ann – Cain's Hill and Road
 Cain, Hugh – Cain's Hill and Road; Cross Highway; Factory Pond; Fulling Mill Lane; Sturdevant's Ridge
 Cain's Fulling Mill – Cross Highway
 Cain's Hill – Cain's Hill and Road; Fulling Mill Lane
 CAIN'S HILL and ROAD – Cross Highway
 Cain's or Banks' Mill — Farmingville
 Caldwell, Sarah Burt – Burt's Pond

Cambridge, Godfrey – Buck Hill Road
 Camp Adventure – Great Pond
 Camp Catoonah – Bear Swamp; High Ridge; Oreneca Road
 CAMP LAND
 Camp, Hannah – Ches(t)nut Ridge II
 Camp, Herbert V., Jr. – Craigmoor Road;
 Camp, Lucretia – Ches(t)nut Ridge II
 Camp, Mary – Ches(t)nut Ridge II
 Camp, Philander – Ches(t)nut Ridge II
 Camp, Rev. Samuel – Camp Land; Ches(t)nut Ridge II; Copps Old Line; Ridgebury; Short Woods
 Campbell (home) – Kent Lane
 Canada, John – Canada Land
 CANADA LAND
 Candee, Elizabeth M. – Candee's Pond
 Candee, Howard S. – Candee's Pond; West Ridgefield
 CANDEE'S POND
 CANDLEWOOD HILL
 CANDLEWOOD LEDGES
 CANDOTO – High Ridge
 Canfield, Rufus – Limestone; New West Lane
 Canfield, Russell – Limekiln Hill
 Canfield, Timothy – Canfield's Mill River; Millstone Brook; Millstone Rocks; Oblong, The; Sherwood's Ridge; Southwest Ridges; Walnut Ridge
 Canfield, Zedediah – Millstone Rocks
 CANFIELD'S MILL RIVER
 Cannonball House – Fountain, Cass Gilbert
 CANOE BROOK, GUTTER
 CANTERBURY LANE
 CARDINAL COURT – Peaceable Ridge Manor
 Carey, Richard Owen – Bridle Trail; Hawthorne Hill Road
 Carini, Mary T. – Ketcham Road
 Carmel, N.Y. – Crosby Court
 Carnev, Lawrence – Lee Road
 CARPENTER CLOSE
 Carpenter, Roger – Valley Brook Acres; Woodland Hill Court
 Carroll, Leo F. – Bates Farm Road; Carroll's Folly; Cold Spring Lane II; George Washington Highway; Hawley Court;

- Hemlock Hills; Media Lane;
Old Redding Road; Regan
Road; Rowland Lane; South
Street; Timmy Christopher
Lane; Whipstick
- CARROLL'S FOLLY
Carnall, Arthur J. – Marcardon Av-
enue
- Carpenter, Roger – Downesbury
Court.
- Cartier, Pierre – High Valley Road
- CARVEL CORNER, CURVE
- CASAGMO – Foote's Hill; Olcott
Way; Quincy Close; Short
Brook; Stebbins Close;
Casagmo Apartments; Lawson
Lane
- Casa-More (store) – Southwest
Ridges
- CASA-TORCH LANE
- Cass Gilbert Fountain – See Fountain,
Cass Gilbert
- Cassavechia (family) – Outpost Pond
- Cassavechia, Dora – Thunder Hill
Lane
- Cassavechia, John – Casa-Torch Lane
- Cassavechia, Quinto – Thunder Hill
Lane
- CASEY LANE
- Casey, Thomas W. – Casey Lane
- Casey, William – Casey Lane
- Catholic Church – Hussar's Camp
Place; McKeon Place; see also
St. Mary's Church, St. Eliza-
beth Seton Church
- Catona – see Catoonah
- Catoonah (Indian) – Catoonah Street;
Oreneca Road; Ramapoo
Road; Tackora Trail; Tapornick
Division
- Catoonah Building Association –
Catoonah Street
- Catoonah Hall Association – Catoon-
ah Street
- CATOONAH STREET – Burt's Lane
- CATTLE PEN LANE
- CAUDATOWA – Candoto
- CAUDATOWA DRIVE
- Caudatowa Garden Club – Ballard
Park
- CAVALRY PLACE
- CAVE, THE
- Caye Construction Inc. – Stony Hill
Road, Terrace
- CEDAR LANE
- Cedar Mining Co. – Ridgebury
Mountain
- CEDAR MOUNTAIN(S)
- CEDAR MOUNTAIN ROAD –
North and South Road; Florida
Road
- Center School – Stebbins Close; West
Mountain
- Chamber of Commerce – Governor
Street
- Chancellor Park – Great Pond
- Chaplin, Charles – O'Neill Court
- Chapman, Benjamin – Burt's Pond;
Mamanasco Lake, Pond
- Chapman, Daniel – Spectacle Lane
- Chapman, John – Canoe Brook, Gut-
ter
- Chapman, Rev. John H. – Remington
Road
- Chapman, Phineas – Limestone;
Woodchuck
- Charter Oak – Charter Oak Court
- CHARTER OAK COURT
- Charter Oak Lane – Riverview Drive
- Chayes, Alice – Grand View Drive
- Chayes, Herbert – Grand View Drive
- Chayes Dental Laboratories – Grand
View Drive
- Chekhov, Anton – Chekhov Road
- Chekhov, Michael – Chekhov Road
- CHEKHOV ROAD
- Chekhov Theater Studio – Chekhov
Road
- CHELSEA PLACE
- Cherman, Isaac – Mine Lott
- CHERRY LANE – Dogwood Drive .
- CHESTNUT HILL ROAD – Ned's
Mountain Road
- Chestnut Hills – Finch Drive; Parley
Road
- CHESTNUT HILLS ESTATES –
Twopence Road
- Chestnut Ridge – Ches(t)nut Ridge I
- CHES(T)NUT RIDGE I
- CHES(T)NUT RIDGE II
- CHESTRUIN
- CHICKENS ROCK – Great Pond
- Chickens Warrups – Chickens Rock;
Great Pond; Old Redding Road
- Childlow, David – Mountain Road
- CHIPMUNK LANE
- Christensen, Andrew C. P. – Ridge-
field Lakes
- CHRISTOPHER ROAD
- Christopher, Thomas – Timmy
Christopher Lane

Cider, apple – Cider Mill Lot
 CIDER MILL LOT
 Cioffoletti, Kendra – Kendra Court
 Cioffoletti, Robert – Kendra Court
 CIRCLE DRIVE
 Circle F Ranch – High Valley
 Circuses – Aaron's Court; Barnum Place; Howes Court; Hunter Court; Turner Hill; Turner Road
 CITY DISTRICT
 Clapboard Tree Ridge – Kingswood Lane
 CLAYHOLES, THE
 CLAYTON PLACE
 CLEARVIEW DRIVE, TERRACE
 Clemens, Samuel Langhorne – Cooper Hill Road, High Valley Road
 Close – Keeler Close
 COAL MINE, the
 Cobbler's Knoll – Cobbler's Lane
 COBBLER'S LANE – Bedford Road
 Coffey, Joseph P., Sr. – Woodlawn Drive
 COLD SPRING and LANE
 COLD SPRING LANE II
 Cold Spring Meadow – Cold Spring and Lane
 Coldwell Banker – Craigmoor Road
 Cole, Ichabod – Miller's Ridge
 Coleman, Rev. James – Starr's Plain
 Coley, Daniel – Cider Mill Lot
 Colgate, Pamela – Betty's Corner
 COLLS POINT
 COLONIAL GREEN
 COLONIAL HEIGHTS – Finch Drive; Minuteman Road; Red Oak Lane; Revere Drive; Yankee Hill Road
 COLONIAL LANE
 COLONY LINE
 COLTS POINT
 Community Center – Governor Street; Griffith Lane; Lounsbury Road; North Street; Veterans Park
 Community Gardens – Halpin Lane
 COMSTOCK BROOK
 COMSTOCK COURT
 Comstock, Samuel – Comstock Brook
 Comstock Knoll – Comstock Brook
 Comstock Ridge – Comstock Brook
 Conant, James Bryant – Conant Road
 CONANT ROAD
 Congregate housing – Halpin Lane
 Congregation of Notre Dame (Novitiate) – Great Hill
 Congregational Church – see First Congregational Church or Ridgebury Congregational Church
 CONKLIN COURT
 Conklin, Ethel O. – Conklin Court
 Conklin Farm – Overlook Drive; Ramapoo Hill Road; Victor Drive
 Conklin, Irving B., Sr. – Conklin Court; Farm Hill Road; Ridgecrest Drive; Stonecrest Road
 Conklin, Irving, Jr. – Farm Hill Road
 Conklin, James – McDonald's Mill Pond
 Conklin Dairy – Conklin Court
 Conklin Motors – Conklin Court
 Conley, Carrel – Saddle Ridge Road
 Conley, Grace – Saddle Ridge Road
 Conley, Joan – Saddle Ridge Road
 Conley, Col. Louis D. – Bennett's Ponds; Bridle Trail; Buck Hill Road; Bucks Pen Meadow; Cherry Lane; Copper Beech Lane; Cornen Avenue; Devil's Run Road; Dogwood Drive; Fox Hill; Fox Hill Village; Haviland Road; Jagger Lane; Maplewood Road; Norrans Ridge Road; Nursery Road; Old Pierce Road; Oreneca Road; Outpost Pond
 Conley, Richard – Bridle Trail; Buck Hill Road; Copper Beech Lane; Dogwood Drive; Glen Road; Hawthorne Hill Road
 Connecticut Historical Society – Colts Point; Kingswood Lane; Kish's Brook
 Connecticut Land Co. – Buck Hill Road; Bridle Trail; Cherry Lane; Copper Beech Lane; Glen Road; Dogwood Drive; Hawthorne Hill Road
 Connecticut Light and Power Co. – Branchville
 Connecticut Militia of Continental Army – Wooster Heights Drive
 Connecticut Railroad Commission – Seymour Lane
 Connecticut Salvage Committee – Pierrepont Drive

Connecticut Tercentenary – Pierrepont Drive
 Connor, Isabel – Griffin Hill
 Connors, William – Florida Hill Estates; Fulling Mill Lane; Meadow Woods; Revere Place; Ridgewood Road; Standish Drive
 Conron (property) – West Mountain Pines
 Conron, Joseph H. – Doubleday Lane; Conron's Pond; Sharp Hill Lane; West Mountain Pines
 CONRON'S POND
 Conservation Commission – Florida; Hemlock Hills; Rob's Hollow; Scodon Drive
 CONTINENTAL DRIVE
 COOK CLOSE
 Cook, Walter H. – Cattle Pen Lane
 Cooke, Joseph P. – King Lot(t)s
 Cooper, James Fennimore – Crosby Court
 COOPER BROOK – Brook Lane; Saw Mill Brook
 COOPER HILL and ROAD
 COOPER ROAD – Cooper Brook; Edmond Town
 Cooper Station – Cooper Hill Road
 Copp, David – Copp's Corner
 Copp, John – Asproom Mountain; Ches(t)nut Ridge I; Copp's Corner; Ridgefield; Settlers Rock; Stamford Mill River;
 Copp, Louise – Copp's Corner
 Copp, William – Copp's Corner
 COPPER BEECH LANE – Dogwood Drive
 COPP'S CORNER – Branchville
 COPPS HILL – Copp's Corner
 Copps Hill Common – Copp's Mountain
 Copps Hill Plaza – Copps Hill; Grassy Island; Martin Park
 Copps Hill Road – Copps Mountain; Four Corners; Great Swamp; Martin Park
 Copp's Farm – Copp's Corner
 Copps Island – Copp's Corner
 COPP'S MOUNTAIN – Asproom Mountain; Barlow Mountain; Burt's Lane; Copps Hill; Copse Mountain; East Mountain I; Grassy Ridge; Kopp's Mountain; Quarry Road

COPPS OLD LINE
 Copse Mountain – Copps Mountain
 CORBIN DRIVE – Buckspen Lane
 Corbin, Robert – Corbin Drive
 CORES BOGGS – Kores Boggs
 CORN GRASS MEADOW
 Cornen, Peter P. – Comen Avenue
 CORNEN AVENUE
 CORNEN'S BROOK
 CORNER POND
 CORNERSTONE COURT – Knolls, The
 COTTAGE STREET
 Cottonwood Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Couch and Sanford Iron Foundry – Florida Hill Road
 Couch, John – Bradley's Mill Pond
 Couch, Sarah – Bradley's Mill Pond; Couch's Station
 Couch, Samuel – Chickens Rock
 Couch, Thomas – Bradley's Mill Pond; Couch's Station
 Couch, Thomas N. – Couch's Station; Miller's Pond
 COUCH'S STATION
 COUNTRY CLUB ROAD
 Country Corners – Joe's Corner
 COUNTRY ROAD, The – Flat Rock Road; Norwalk Road
 Cox, Elise Conley – Devil's Run Road; Jagger Lane
 Cox, John W. – North Street; Stonecrest Road
 Coyle, John F. – Poconock Trail; Ridgefield Hills; Woodchuck Lane
 CRADLE ROCK
 Craft, Walter H. – North District
 Craig, Norman – Grand View Drive; Split Level Road
 Craig, Helen – Martin Park
 CRAIGMOOR
 CRAIGMOOR POND – Perch Pond
 CRAIGMOOR ROAD – Perch Pond
 Craigmoor Road North – Craigmoor
 Craigmoor Road South – Craigmoor
 Craigmoores – Craigmoor
 Crampton, Joseph – Asproom Mountain; Miller's Ridge.; Sheppison, Mount; Town Ridge
 CRANBERRY LANE
 CRANBERRY MEADOW
 Crane Farm – Farms
 Crane, Joseph – Jo's Hills
 CRANK, The – Knap's Farm
 Craw, Ammon – Crow Hill

Craw, Reuben – Crow Hill
 Craw, Ebenezer – Round Mountain
 Crows (family) – Cross Pond
 CREAMERY LANE – Old Creamery
 Highway; Town Spring
 Crehan, Patrick J. – Fountain, The
 CRESCENT DRIVE
 CREST ROAD
 CRIPPLE BUSH WOOD
 Crofut, Beverly S. – Black Frank's
 Corner; McLaury's Hill; Parlor
 Rock
 Crosby, Enoch – Crosby Court
 CROSBY COURT – Stone Ridge
 Estates
 Cross (family) – Cross Pond
 CROSS HIGHWAY
 CROSS HILL ROAD
 CROSS POND – Kitchawan, Lake;
 Peppeneegek
 Cross River – Cross Pond; Peppe-
 neegek
 Cross River Pond – Cross Pond;
 Narahawmis
 CROSS STREET
 Crow (Indian) – Long Pond 1; Tapor-
 nick Division
 Crow, Edward – Crow Hill
 CROW HILL
 Crow, John – Crow Hill
 "Crystal Hall" – Ridgefield Manor
 Estates
 Cuddy, William – Serfilippi Drive
 Culbertson, Ely – Ridgefield Manor
 Estates
 Curnan, Marty – Standish Drive
 CUSHMAN LANE – Rockwell Road
 Cushman, William F. – Cushman
 Lane
 Cutten, Ruloff E. – Sachem Hill
 CVS – Bryon Avenue
 Cypress Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Czyr, Mrs. A. J. – Martin Park illus.
 Czyr, Anthony – Belvedere Court;
 Peaceable Hill Road
 Czyr Construction Co. – Colonial
 Green

D

Dairy farming – Conklin Court
 Daisy Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Dan (Surname) – Otter Pond
 Danbury – Bog Meadow; Boggs, the;
 Boggs Mountain; Crank, The;
 Crosby Court

Danbury and Harlem Electric Road –
 Old Trolley Road
 Danbury and Norwalk R.R. – Beers
 Station; Branchville;
 Branchville Road; Old
 Branchville Road; Ridgefield
 Road II; Ridgefield Station;
 Station Hill; Sugar Hollow
 Turnpike; Titicus
 DANBURY AND NORWALK
 TURNPIKE
 DANBURY AND RIDGEFIELD
 TURNPIKE – Old Danbury
 Road; Lockwood's Corners;
 Maplewood Road; Post Road;
 Ridgefield and Danbury Turn-
 pike; Sugar Hollow Turnpike;
 Turnpike Road
 Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike
 Company, The – Sugar Hollow
 Turnpike
 Danbury Cart Path – Norwalk Road
 DANBURY CORNERS – Joe's Cor-
 ner
 DANBURY HILL
 Danbury-Norwalk Road – Old Nor-
 walk Road
 DANBURY OLD CART PATH
 DANBURY ROAD, PATH – Charter
 Oak Court; Grassy Island;
 Great Island; Norrans Ridge
 Road; Ritch Drive; Sugar
 Hollow Turnpike
 Dann, Drive Jordan – Starr's Ridge.
 Dashiell, C. R. – Candee's Pond
 Dauchy (family) – Frog's Point;
 Great Meadow; Island Hill and
 Avenue
 Dauchy, David – Starr's Plain
 Dauchy, Jacob – Grove Street; Lock-
 wood's Corners; Mine Land
 Dauchy, Nathan – Forge Pond; Iron
 Works I; Titicus Hill
 Daudt, Charles H. – Sycamore Lane
 Dauer, Rosamond – Olmstead Lane
 Davis, Clinton – Davis Lane
 Davis, Harold O. – Davis Lane; Cot-
 tage Street;
 Davis, Hiram – Orchard Street
 DAVIS LANE
 DAWN LANE
 Dean, Daniel – Great East Meadow
 Pond; Great Pond; Smith's
 Great Pond
 Dean Farm – Farms
 Deane, Lewis – Chickens Rock

DEER HILL
 DEER HILL DRIVE
 DEER PIT, The
 Deer Run Road – Deer Hill Drive
 DEER TRACK HILL ROAD
 DeForest, Joseph – Burt's Pond
 de Kalb, Baron – Lafayette Avenue
 Delight, Aunt – See Benedict, (Aunt)
 Delight
 DeMar, Robert A. – Sachem Hill
 Denton Block – Martin Park
 DePeyster (family) – Perry Lane
 DePeyster, Augusta – DePeyster
 Street
 DePeyster, Cornelia – DePeyster
 Street
 DePeyster, Elizabeth – DePeyster
 Street
 DEPEYSTER STREET – Hawley
 Street; Rockwell Road; Cush-
 man Lane
 Depot Hill – Prospect Street
 DEPOT HILL STREET
 DEPOT ROAD
 Depot Road Bridge – Depot Road
 Desmond (property) – Powdermaker
 Drive
 DEVENS LANE
 DEVIL'S RUN ROAD
 Dibble, Phebe – Sugar Hollow Turn-
 pike
 Dibble, Samuel – Sugar Hollow
 Turnpike
 Dick, Edwina Eustis – Eustis Lane;
 Noroneke, Lake
 Dielman, Frederick
 Digitech – Martin Park
 DILLMAN COURT
 Dillman, Michael – Dillman Court
 DiNapoli Development Co. – Hawley
 Court
 DiNapoli, Nicholas R., Sr. and Jr. –
 Midrocks Road; Walnut Grove
 and Road
 Dioguardi, Angelo and Annanthy
 Benignio – Mallory Hill Road
 Dioguardi, Joseph L. – Mallory Hill
 Road; Oak Tree Lane; Old
 Town Road; White Birches
 Road; Wilridge Road
 Dissenting Society in Ridgebury –
 Ridgebury
 District Nursing Association – Lewis
 Drive
 Ditch Meadow – Great Ditch
 Dlhly, Joseph – Dlhly Ridge

DLHY COURT
 DLHY RIDGE
 Dlhly, Suzanna – Dlhly Ridge
 Dodge and Olcott – Olcott Way
 DOGWOOD DRIVE
 Dole, James – King Lane
 Donaldson, Josephine – Murdock –
 Murdock's Corners
 Dogberry Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Doll, Henri – Gay's Hill
 DONNELLY DRIVE – Scodon Drive
 Donnelly, Joseph H. – Donnelly
 Drive; Farm Hill Road; Gov-
 ernor Street; Judges Lane;
 Langstroth Drive; Marcardon
 Avenue; Nutmeg Court;
 O'Neill Court; Overlook
 Drive; Ramapoo Hill Road;
 Ridgefield Lakes; Scodon
 Drive; Sophia Drive
 Donnelly Shopping Center – Donnel-
 ly Drive
 Doolittle, Ichabod – Long Meadow
 Double H Farm – Hussar's Camp
 Place
 Doubleday (Property) – West Moun-
 tain Pines
 Doubleday, Alice – Westmoreland
 Doubleday, George – Westmoreland
 Doubleday, James M. – Doubleday
 Lane; Sharp Hill Lane; West-
 moreland; West Mountain
 Pines
 DOUBLEDAY LANE – West Moun-
 tain Pines; Westmoreland
 Doubleday, Mary – Westmoreland
 DOUGLAS LANE
 DOWLING DRIVE – Conklin Court;
 Elliott Drive
 Dowling, John Edward – Dowling
 Drive; Media Lane
 DOWNESBURY COURT – Wood-
 land Hill Court
 Downesbury Manor (Estate) – Dow-
 nesbury Court; High Valley
 Road
 DRUID LANE
 DUMP ROAD – Old Quarry Road
 Dunlap, James – Ridge Road I
 Durant, Mrs. George M. (Margaret) –
 Craigmoor
 DUTCHMAN SWAMP
 Dutton, E. P. – Dutton Lane, Publish-
 er's Row
 DUTTON LANE
 Dwight, Henry – Tub Swamp

E

East Branch – Spectacle Brook
 East Branch of Silvermine River – Beaver Brook
 EAST FARM LANE
 East Fire Hill Road – Fire Hill Road
 EAST MEADOW
 East Meadow River – East River
 EAST MOUNTAIN I
 EAST MOUNTAIN II
 EAST PUMPKIN RIDGE
 EAST RIDGE and ROAD – Dutton Lane; High Ridge; Middle Ridge; Prospect Ridge; Ridge, The
 East Ridge Avenue – East Ridge
 EAST RIVER – Limestone River
 EAST WOODS
 Edelman (family) – Bucks Pond
 Edelman, Arthur – Stonecrest Road
 Edelweiss Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Edmond, Burr – North and South Road
 Edmond, Cyrus – Pound Street
 Edmond, Daniel – The Fallow
 Edmond, Frederick S. – North and South Road
 Edmond, Robert C. – Florida
 EDMOND TOWN
 Edmond, William – Florida
 Edmond, Willis – Edmond Town
 Egan, Margaret – Perch Pond
 EIGHT LAKES
 Eight Lakes Community Association – Mamanasco Lake, Pond
 Eight Lakes Estates – Ridgefield Lakes
 EIGHTH LANE
 Eisenhower, Dwight D.
 Elderberry Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Elephants – Howes Court; Hunt Court; Turner Hill
 Eleven Levels – Fraser's Pond; Highland Acres; West Mountain Estates
 ELEVEN LEVELS and ROAD
 ELEVENTH LANE
 Elkow, Jon – Bob's Lake; Windwing, Lake
 Elliott, Charles – Dowling Drive; Elliott Drive; Stonecrest Road
 ELLIOTT DRIVE – Dowling Drive
 Ellsworth, Oliver – Marshall Road
 ELM BRANCH

Elmwood Road – Southwest Ridges
 Emmons, Charles – West Ridgefield
 Encampment Place – Stone Ridge Estates
 Engelbert, Henri – Mead Ridge
 Englund, Myrtle L. – Memory Lane
 Enright, Maurice – Sarah Bishop Road
 Episcopal Church of Ridgebury – Old Church Road
 Eppoliti, Edgardo – Tannery Hill Road
 EQUIVALENCY LINE, THE – Oblong, The
 Ernst, Albert – Abbott's Mill Road
 Erwin, Mark – Kingswood Lane
 Esser, Ferdinand – Pierrepont Drive; Twixt Hills
 ETHAN ALLEN HIGHWAY – Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Etheridge, Earl DeWitt – Deer Hill Drive; Mill River Hollow
 Eureka V LLC – Bennett's Pond State Park
 EUSTIS LANE – Noroneke, Lake
 Eustis, John R. – Noroneke, Lake
 EVANS CIRCLE – Southridge Court
 EVERGREEN PLACE – Scodon Drive
 "Exposure Gardens" – South Street

F

FACTORY POND
 Fairchild, Abraham – Spruce Hole
 Fairchild, Burr – Spruce Hole
 FAIRFIELD COURT
 FAIRGROUNDS, The
 FAIRVIEW AVENUE
 Fairview Farm – Walnut Grove and Road
 Fairview Street – Fairview Avenue
 FALLOW, The
 FARM HILL ROAD – Conklin Court
 Farmer Gay – Gay's Hill
 FARMERS MILLS
 FARMERSVILLE
 FARMINGVILLE – Woodchuck
 Farmingville Park – Aldrich Park
 FARMINGVILLE ROAD – Cooper Road; Cross Highway; Quaker Ridge; White Oak Island, Point
 Farmingville School – Sturdevants
 Clapboard Tree Ridge; Walnut (Tree) Ridge

Farmingville School District – Farmingville
FARMS
 Farrar, Geraldine – Farrar Lane; High Pasture Court; Old Sib Road
 Farrar, Henrietta – Farrar Lane
FARRAR LANE – High Pasture Court
 Farrar, Sidney Douglas – Farrar Lane; High Pasture Court; Old Sib Road
 “Farrar’s Thirty Acres” – Farrar Lane; High Pasture Court
 Farview Farm – Martin Road; Tea House Lane
 Fawcett, Robert – Beers Place
 Ferndale Farm – Gay’s Hill
FIELD CREST DRIVE
 Field, Elnathan – Spruce Hole
 Field, Joseph – Whiting’s Pond
 Field, Stephen – Silvermine, The
 Fifth Connecticut Line – Ballard Park
FIFTH LANE
 Fifth School District (1784) – Farmingville
FILLMORE LANE – Haviland Road
 Fillmore, Leslie D. – Fillmore Lane
 Finch, Alice – Harding Drive
 Finch, Barry – Aaron’s Court; Blacksmith’s Ridge Road; Harding Drive; Ketcham Road
 Finch, Harold E. – Harding Drive
 Finch, Lewis J. – Aaron’s Court; Blacksmith Ridge Road; Chestnut Hills Estates; Finch Drive; Franklin Heights; Harding Drive; Hunter Heights; Limestone; Mill View Terrace; Minuteman Road; Nursery Road; Parley Road; Pocconock Trail; Ridgefield Hills; Rob’s Hollow; Rolling Hills Estates, Road; Sarah Bishop Road; Twopence Road; Woodchuck Lane; Yankee Hill Road
FINCH DRIVE
 Finch Realty Company – Kingswood Lane
 Finch Road – Chestnut Hill Road; Mopus Brook; Mopus Ridge
 Finch, William R. – Chestnut Hill Road
 Finkelstein, Anne B. – Ketcham Road
 Finny, Edith M. – Barry Avenue
 Fire of 1895 – Anderson Tea House Road

FIRE HILL
FIRE HILL ACRES
FIRE HILL ROAD
 First Congregational Church – Canterbury Lane; Copp’s Corner; Creamery Lane; Hauley Place; Hawley Court; High Ridge; King Lane; Meeting House Yard Old Creamery Highway; Old Society; Parley Lane; Sarah Bishop Road; Second Society; Shields Lane; Short Bridge; West Lane
 First Congregational Church Parsonage – Town Spring
 First Ecclesiastical Society – see First Congregational Church
FIRST LANE
 First National Bank and Trust Company of Ridgefield – Lounsbury Road
 First National Bank of Ridgefield – Olcott Way
 First School District – Flat Rock
 First School Society of Danbury – Cripple Bush Wood
 First Society – Old Society; Ridgebury
 Fisher, Charles – Fisher Lane
FISHER LANE – Stone Ridge Estates
 Fishkill – Fishkill Road
FISHKILL ROAD
 Fitch, Jonathan – Fitch’s Farm
 Fitch, Col. Thomas, V – Fitch’s Farm
 Fitch, Thomas, IV – Fitch’s Farm
FITCH’S FARM
 Fitzgerald Little League Field – Sunset Road
 Five Acre Division – Royall Oak Ridge
 Five Stars Land Development – Millers Lane
FLAGGY BOGGS
FLAT ROCK
 Flat Rock Brook – Flat Rock
 Flat Rock Corporation – Flat Rock Drive; Silver Spring
 Flat Rock District – Flat Rock; Flat Rock Road; Wilton Road West
 Flat Rock School – Twin Maples
FLAT ROCK DRIVE
 Flat Rock Ridge – Flat Rock
FLAT ROCK ROAD – Norwalk Road

Flat Rock School District – Belltown;
 Flat Rock
 Flat Rock Schoolhouse – Flat Rock;
 Wilton Road West
 Flat Rock Woods – Flat Rock
 Flatt Rock – Beaver Brook
 Flatt Rock Hill – Flat Rock
 Flatt Rock Ridge – Country Road
 FLORIDA (District) – Branchville
 Road; Pound Street
 FLORIDA HILL
 FLORIDA HILL ESTATES – Fulling
 Mill Lane; Ridgewood Road
 FLORIDA HILL ROAD – Cooper
 Road; Hermit Lane; Ridgefield
 Redding Highway
 FLORIDA ROAD – Branchville
 Road; Cedar Mountain Road;
 Cedar Mountain(s); Edmond
 Town; Mill Road; North and
 South Road
 Florida Schoolhouse – Florida;
 School House Meadow
 Florida Station – West Ridgefield
 FLY BROOK
 Folliot, Bartlet – Folliot's Ridge
 FOLLIOTT'S RIDGE
 Foote, Eli – Foote's Hill
 FOOTE'S HILL
 Foote, Mary Edmond – Foote's Hill
 Forbes, Griswold – Remington Road
 FORE HILLS
 FOREST DRIVE
 Forest Lane – Fox Hill Village
 FORGE POND – Perch Pond; Pond
 Swamp
 Forrester, William – West Lane II
 Fort Crailo – Fitch's Farm
 FORT HILL – North Salem Road
 Fossi, Louis J. – Serfilippi Drive
 Foster (family) – Pond Road
 Foster, Benjamin – Turnpike Road
 Foster, Francis – Pond Road;
 Foster, Jonah, Jr. – Foster's Pond;
 Mamasasco Ridge; North
 Mountain; Pond Road
 Foster, Captain Jonah, Sr. – Foster's
 Pond, Pond Road
 Foster, Josiah – Knap's Farm; Zack's
 Ridge
 Foster, Timothy – Knap's Farm; New
 Purchase; Zack's Ridge
 Foster's Mill Pond – Foster's Pond
 FOSTER'S POND
 Founders Hall – Cranberry Meadow
 FOUNTAIN, The

FOUNTAIN, Cass Gilbert
 FOUR CORNERS – Copp's Corner
 FOURTH LANE
 Fourth Purchase (Taporneck Pur-
 chase) – Cross Pond
 Fourth School District – Flat Rock
 FOX DRIVE
 FOX FLAT
 FOX HILL – Briar Ridge Road;
 Buckspen Swamp; Fox Hills;
 Oreneca Road; Outpost Pond
 Fox Hill Drive – Fox Hill Village;
 Grassy Island; Great Island
 Fox Hill Inn – Fox Hill; Outpost
 Farm
 FOX HILL LAKE – Bennett's Ponds;
 Pickerel Pond; Lakes Number
 Two, Four
 FOX HILL VILLAGE – Oreneca
 Road; Outpost Pond; The
 Village
 FOX HILLS – Briar Ridge Road
 Fox, Raymond – Serfilippi Drive
 Francis D. Martin Park – see Martin
 Park
 Franklin, Margaret – Franklin Heights
 Franklin, Professor Fabian – Franklin
 Heights
 FRANKLIN HEIGHTS
 FRANK'S CORNERS
 Franks, Christopher – Christopher
 Road
 Franks, James B. – Buffalo Creek;
 Christopher Road; Glen Acres;
 Hessian Drive; Lisa Lane;
 Mamasasco Lake Park; Moon-
 gate Trail
 Franks, Lisa – Christopher Road
 Fraser, Arthur C. – Eleven Levels
 Road; Fraser's Pond
 Fraser, Rose McLane – Eleven Levels
 Road
 FRASER'S POND
 FREEHOLDER'S CORNER – Bear
 Mountain; Copp's Old Line
 Freeman, Martin – New Pond
 Fresh Air Camp, Life's – Sycamore
 Lane
 Friedman, Peter – Shadow Lake;
 Stone Ridge Estates
 Frog Hollow – Fox Hill Village
 FROG'S POINT
 Frost, Thomas – Second Pond
 FULLING MILL LANE
 FURNACE POND
 Futterman, Michael – Kiln Hill Lane

G

Gaeta, Albert – Corbin Drive
 Gaeta, Dominic – Mine Hill
 Gap, The – Big Shop Lane
 Garden Cities Development Company – Kiln Hill Lane
 Garden School – Bailey Avenue
 Gasoline Alley – Grassy Island
 Gates, Samuel – Long Swamp; Ridgebury
 Gay, Ulysses S. Grant – Gay Road
 Gay Farm – Gay Road
 GAY ROAD
 GAY'S HILL
 Gearhart, Mrs. David D. (Edith Bloomer) – Bloomer Road
 Gelfman, Nelson – Kingswood Lane; Turtle Pond
 George, Virginia – Virginia Court
 GEORGE WASHINGTON HIGHWAY – Ches(t)nut Ridge II; Langstroth Drive; Ridgebury Road I; Scodon Drive; Stone Ridge Estates;
 Gerli (family) – Bruschi Lane
 Gibney, Joseph J. – Outpost Pond
 Gilbert, Abner – Long Stone
 Gilbert Family – Beers Station; New Road I; Stony Brook
 Gilbert, Aaron Bishop – Gilbert Street; New Pond
 Gilbert, Aaron Victor – Gilbert Street
 Gilbert, Abner – Candlewood Ledges; Gilbert Street; Old Society
 Gilbert, Amelia – Rock Spring
 Gilbert, Cass – Fountain, Cass Gilbert
 Gilbert, Elias – Old Saw Mill Pond
 Gilbert, Elisha – East Mountain II
 Gilbert, Eliza – Old Washington Road
 Gilbert, Eliza Ann – Fire Hill
 Gilbert, George Washington – Downesbury Lane; Hermit Lane; High Valley Road; Old Washington Road; Washington Road
 Gilbert, "Gin" – Gilbert Street
 Gilbert, Harry – Gilbert Street; Fire Hill
 Gilbert, Harvey – Gilbert Street
 Gilbert, Hull – Wintergreen
 Gilbert, Jabez Mix – Gilbert Street; Gilbert's Upper Pond; Lower Mill Pond; Old Saw Mill Pond; Saw Mill Pond; Tannery Hill

Road, Tannery Pond, Upper Pond
 Gilbert, James – Gilbert Street
 Gilbert, Jeremiah – Old Washington Road
 Gilbert, Joel – Limekiln Hill; Red Brook
 Gilbert, Josiah – Gilbert Street
 Gilbert, Lewis – Lower Pond
 Gilbert, Samuel – Gilbert Street
 Gilbert, Smith – Gilbert Street
 Gilbert, Victor – Stonehenge Road
 Gilbert, William Henry – New Pond; Gilbert Street
 Gilbert and Bennett Company – Beers Station; Great Pond; Norwalk River
 Gilbert Block – Martin Park
 Gilbert Grist and Cider Mills – Gilbert Street
 Gilbert Mill – Cider Mill Lot; Gilbert Street
 GILBERT STREET – Hawley Street
 Gilbert Tan Yards/Works – Tannery Pond; Upper Pond
 Gilbert's cider mill – Cider Mill Lot
 GILBERT'S UPPER POND – Upper Pond
 Gillum, Harold (Pinky) – Colonial Lane
 Girl Scout Camp – see Camp Catoonah; Sturges Park
 Girl Scout Camp Catoonah – see Camp Catoonah; Sturges Park
 Girolmetti, Ann Casagrande – West Mountain
 Girolmetti Court – Introduction; Roberts Lane
 GLEN ACRES
 GLEN BROOK COURT
 GLEN ROAD
 Glenburgh Mills and Chemical Works – Perry Lane
 Glendinning, Elizabeth – Glen Acres
 Glover, Elias N. – Cain's Hill and Road
 Glover, John S. – Cain's Hill and Road
 Godfrey, Andrew – Stage Road
 Godfrey, Benjamin – New Road III
 Godfrey, Doris (Mrs. Francis D. Martin) – Martin Park
 Godfrey, Elias – Stage Road
 Godfrey, Levi – Stage Road
 Godfrey, Wakeman – Lounsbury Road

Goeppler, Emma – Fire Hill; New Road I; Sanford Station
 Gold, Ebenezer – Hauley's Ridge
 Golden, Harry – Peaceable Ridge Road
 Goldsmith, Harold – Douglas Lane; Lakeland Hills; Mountain Ravine Road; North Shore Drive; Ridgefield Knolls; Sixth Lane; Sky Top Road; South Shore Drive; Sunset Lake; Windwing, Lake
 Goldsmith's Pond – Windwing, Lake
 GOLF LANE – Titicus
 Goodrich, Charles – Bedford Road; High Ridge
 Goodrich, Rev. Samuel G. – Bedford Road; Fox Drive; High Ridge; Parley Lane; Sarah Bishop Road
 Goodrich, Samuel G. Jr. – Ethan Allen Highway; High Ridge; Main Street; Parley Lane; Parley Road; Rock Lot; Sarah Bishop Road; Stebbins Close; West Mountain
 Goodwill Baptist Church – Creamery Lane; Old Creamery Highway
 Goodwill Community Church – see Goodwill Baptist Church
 Gorham, Russel – Cripple Bush Wood
 Gould – see Gold
 Governor Fitch's Farm – Farms
 GOVERNOR STREET – Dutton Lane; Fairgrounds; Hawley Street
 Graeloe – Ballard Park
 Graham (property) – West Mountain Pines
 Graham, Christina – Craigmoor
 Graham, Lawrence I. – Outpost Pond
 Grand Army of the Republic Post (GAR) – Pickett's Ridge Road
 GRANDVIEW DRIVE
 Grant, Elizabeth Swords – Memory Lane
 Grant-Swords (Estate) – Country Club Road
 Grape Lane – Fox Hill Village
 GRASSY ISLAND – Island, The; Great Island
 GRASSY RIDGE
 GRASSY SWAMP – Grassy Island
 Gray Court Junior College – Ridgefield Manor Estates;
 Gray, Stephen – Deer Hill
 GREAT DITCH
 GREAT EAST MEADOW POND – East River; Norwalk Mill River
 Great Fire of 1895 – Town Houses
 GREAT HILL
 Great Hill Lakes, Inc. – Limestone Terrace
 GREAT HILL ROAD – Buckspeen Swamp; Limestone Road
 GREAT ISLAND
 GREAT LEDGES
 GREAT MEADOW
 GREAT PASTURE
 GREAT POND – East River; Great East Meadow Pond; Nesopack; Norwalk Mill River; Smith's Great Pond; Wononkpakoonk
 Great Pond Club – Great Pond Road
 Great Pond Holding Corporation – Martin Park
 GREAT POND MOUNTAIN
 GREAT POND ROAD
 GREAT ROCKS
 GREAT ROCKS PLACE
 GREAT SPRING
 GREAT SWAMP – Colls Point; Hunter Heights; Norranorwas Sprang; Norwalk River; Thousand Acre Swamp
 GREAT SWAMP II
 Green Doors – Harding Drive
 GREEN LANE
 Green, Mr. and Mrs. Ward W. – Cobler's Lane
 Greenbriar Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Greenhouse, the – Ballard Park
 GREENFIELD STREET
 GREENRIDGE DRIVE
 Gregory, Thomas – Spectacle Brook
 Greims (family) – Bruschi Lane
 Grey, Joseph – Pound Street
 Griffin, Eli – Maplewood Road
 Griffin, Isabel R. – Griffin Hill
 GRIFFIN HILL
 Griffins – Griffin Hill
 GRIFFITH LANE
 Griffith, Mr. and Mrs. William H. – Griffith Lane; Veterans Park
 Grimes, Herbert Spencer – Noroneke, Lake; Old Branchville Road
 GROVE RIDGE
 GROVE STREET
 Grove, The – Grove Street

Grovelawn – Governor Street;
Lounsbury Road; North Street;
Veterans Park
Grumman, Caleb – Foote's Hill
Grumman, George B. – Railroad
Avenue I
Grunig, George, Jr. – Cherry Lane
GUN HILL FARMS – Old Musket
Lane; Powderhorn Drive
Gunther, Max – Beechwood Lane

H

Hackert, James R. – Farrar Lane;
High Pasture Court; Rob's
Hollow; Tannery Hill Road
Hagemeyer, Mr. and Mrs. Frank E. –
Hagemeyer's Pond
HAGEMEYER'S POND
Hall (or Hull), Dr. Isaac (Zack) –
Knap's Farm; New Pattend;
Ridgebury; Zack's Ridge
Hall, Josiah – Old Society
Hall, Lydia – Zack's Ridge
Hallock, George – Mill Plain
Halpin, James – Halpin Lane
HALPIN LANE
Hamilton, Alexander – George Wash-
ington Highway; Lafayette
Avenue; Hamilton Road
HAMILTON ROAD
Hamlin, Hannibal – Big Shop Lane;
Lincoln Lane
Hampden, Paul – Mopus Bridge;
Spring Valley Road
Hanco Inc. – Forest Drive
Hanlon, George – Arrowhead Place,
Palmer Court, Samara Place
HARAHAWMIS – Narahawmis
Hard, Phebe – Smith Road
Hard, Stephen – Smith Road
Harding, Alice – Harding Drive
HARDING DRIVE
Harkaway Farm – Hussar's Camp
Place
Harrington, John H. – Lee Road
HARRISON COURT
Hartford Post Road – Bedford Road
Harvard University – Harrison Court
HARVEY ROAD
Hauley – *see also* Hawley
Hauley, Ebenezer – Hauley's Ridge
Hauley, Elisha – Hauley's Ridge
Hauley, Gould – Hauley's Ridge
Hauley, Hezekiah – Hauley's Ridge
Hauley, Joseph – Hauley's Ridge

Hauley House – Ballard Park
HAULEY PLACE
Hauley, Talcott – Hauley's Ridge
Hauley, Rev. Thomas – Colls Point;
Copp's Corner; Flat Rock;
Hauley Place; Hauley's Ridge;
Hawley Street; Hunter
Heights; Old Society; Saxifax
Ridge; Stebbins Close; Sturde-
vant's Ridge; Thousand Acre
Swamp; Titicus; White Oak
Island, Point
Hauley, Thomas (son of the Rev.) –
Hauley's Ridge
HAULEY'S RIDGE
Haviland (family) – Lockwood's
Corners
Haviland, Benjamin – Haviland Road
Haviland Farm – Hulda Lane; Mill
Road; Ritch Drive
Haviland, Jacob – Haviland Road
Haviland, Jacob, Jr. – Haviland Road
Haviland, Reed – Haviland Road;
Mine Lott; Ore Bed; Ritch
Drive
HAVILAND ROAD – Birch Court;
Cooper Road; Four Corners;
Mine Hill; Ritch Drive
Havunoja, Kustaa – Hickory
Lane
Havunoja, Olavi – Shadblow Hill
Road
Hawley – *See also* Hauley
HAWLEY COURT
Hawley (family) – Blackman Road;
Branchville Road; Hawley
Street; Hunter Heights (*See
also* Hauley)
Hawley, Ebenezer – High Valley
Road; Rock Lot
Hawley, Ebenezer 2nd – Bradley's
Mill Road
Hawley, Elisha – New Lane
Hawley, Hezekiah – High Valley
Road
Hawley, S. L. – Hawley Street
Hawley, Samuel – Saw Mill Brook
HAWLEY STREET – Branchville
Road
Hawley, Thomas – Short Bridge
Hawley, William – Fountain, The
Hawley – *See also* Hauley
Hawkins, William – Pine Hill
HAWTHORNE CIRCLE
HAWTHORNE HILL ROAD

Hawthorne, Nathaniel – Hawthorne Hill Road
 Hayes, Clifford W. – Hayes Lane
 HAYES LANE
 Hayes, William H. – Eight Lakes
 Hays, Allen – Holloway Lot
 Hays, Thomas – Cain's Hill and Road
 Hayt – *See also* Haight, Hoyt
 Hayt (family) – New Pattent
 Hayt, Benjamin – John's Pond
 Hayt, David – Saw Mill Brook
 Hayward – Crow Hill
 HEAD OF THE BOGGS
 HEART BRAND ESTATES – Richardson Drive
 Hecock, Benjamin – Great Hill
 Heireth, Imogene – Canada Land
 HEIRS LANE, HIGHWAY, WAY
 Helie, Morgan X. – Sycamore Lane
 Heller, Ruth Benson – Benson Road
 Helmuth Cottages – Mamanasco Road
 HEMLOCK HILLS – Ives Court; Lippolt Pond; Mountain Park; Old Mill Pond; Old Mill Road; Scodon Drive; Waterfall Road
 Hemlock Hills Refuge – Bennett's Pond State Park; Mountain Ravine Road; Sky Top Road; Scodon Drive; West Pine Mountain Road
 HEMLOCK HOLE
 Henrici, Inc. – Madeline Drive
 Henrici's Surveying – Ridgefield Knolls
 Herald Tribune Fresh Air Fund – Martin Park
 HERITAGE LANE
 HERMIT LANE – Old Washington Road
 Hermit of Ridgefield – Hermit Lane; Old Washington Road
 Herrick, Gerard – West Ridgefield
 HERRICK LANE– Shadow Lane
 HESSIAN DRIVE – Buffalo Creek
 Heyman, Joseph – Kingswood Lane
 Hibbart, Joseph W. – Hurlbutt's Pond; Hibbart Place; New Pond
 HIBBART PLACE
 Hibbart's Market – Hibbart Place
 Hicklin, Wayne – Cold Spring Lane II
 "The Hickories" – Brewster's Pond; Lounsbury Road
 HICKORY DRIVE
 HICKORY LANE

HIDDEN LAKE – Eight Lakes; Turtle Pond
 HIDDEN LAKE COURT
 Higgins House – Ridgefield Lakes
 HIGH MEADOWS ROAD
 HIGH PASTURE COURT
 High Pastures – Farrar Lane; High Pastures Court
 High Pastures Court – Farrar Lane
 HIGH RIDGE – Bryon Avenue; Candoto; Caudatowa; Dowling Drive; Peaceable Street
 High Ridge Avenue – High Ridge Road
 HIGH RIDGE ROAD – High Ridge
 High Ridge Street – High Ridge Road
 High Road – High Ridge Road
 High School, Old – Pierrepont Drive
 High Valley – Cooper Hill Road
 HIGH VALLEY ROAD
 HIGHCLIFF TERRACE
 HIGHLAND ACRES – Eleven Levels Road
 HIGHVIEW DRIVE
 HIGHVIEW ROAD
 Hicok, Benjamin – Cradle Rock
 Hill Road – Danbury Road; Haviland Road
 Hillaire – Doubleday Lane
 HILLCREST COURT
 HILLSDALE AVENUE
 Hillsdale Street – Hillsdale Avenue
 Hilltop Court – Fox Hill Village
 Hine, Josiah – West Lane
 Hines, Isaac – Cain's Hill and Road
 Hobart, Joseph – High Ridge; Ob-long, The; Southwest Ridges
 HOBBY DRIVE – Town Farm
 Hobby, Jackson – Hobby Drive; Scotland Knolls; Town Farm
 Hogan, William – Mimosa
 HOGHOLLER, SMITH'S
 Holden – Oscaleta Road
 HOLLOW, THE
 Holloway, George – Holloway Lot
 HOLLOWAY LOT
 Holly, Darius – Frog's Point
 Holly, Elnathan – Cold Spring and Lane
 Hollyberry Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Holmes (family) – Holmes Road
 Holmes, Abraham – Cushman Lane
 Holmes, Irving – Holmes Road
 Holmes, John F. – Old Creamery Highway
 Holmes, Orville – Holmes Road

HOLMES ROAD

Holt, Charles – Publisher's Row

Holy Ghost Fathers – Halpin Lane;
High Valley Road

Holy Ghost Novitiate – Flat Rock;
Halpin Lane

HONEY HOLLOW

HONEY WOODS

Honeysuckle Lane – Fox Hill Village

Hop Meadow – Hop Meadow Branch

HOP MEADOW BRANCH

Hopkins, Solomon – Crosby Court

Hopp Ground, The – Catoonah Street

Hopper, Richard – Hopper's Pond;
Scripp's Pond

HOPPER'S POND – Lacha Linne

Horblit, Harrison – Harrison Court;
Oreneca Road; West Mountain

Horblit, Jean – Harrison Court

Hornibrook, William R. – Acorn
Place; Hauley Place

"Horse Pond" – Horse Pound and
Swamp

HORSE POUND AND SWAMP

Houdini, Harry – Sachem Hill

Howard, Roy – Scripp's Pond

Howard Young Medical Center –
Candee's Pond

How(e) Epenetus – How's Limekiln;
Saw Mill Hill Road; Stony
Brook; Tannery Hill Road;
Titicus Hill; Upper Pond

HOW'S LIMEKILN

Howe (family) – Scotland

HOWES COURT

Howes, Nathan – Howes Court

Hoyt (family) – New Pattent; South-
west Ridges

Hoyt, Benjamin – Cooper Brook;
John's Pond

Hoyt, David K. – Peaceable Street

Hoyt, Ebenezer – New Road III; Saw
Mill Swamp

Hoyt, Mrs. Ebenezer – Beers Station

Hoyt, James – Upper Pond

Hoyt, Jared – Sarah Bishop Road

Hoyt, Monson – Sugar Hollow Turn-
pike

Hoyt, Samuel J. – Saw Mill Swamp

Hoyt, Will F. – Saw Mill Hill Road

Hoyt's Saw Mill – Cooper Brook

Hubbard, Joseph T. – Farrar Lane

Hubbard, G. Evans – Evans Circle;
Southridge Court

Hubbard, Ronald – Middlebrook
Lane

Hubbell Farm – High Pasture Court

Hubbell, Joseph W. – Smith's Pond

HUCKLEBERRY HILL

HUCKLEBERRY LANE

Huffer, John W. – Cobbler's Lane

Hughes, Arthur H. – Nesopack

HULDA LANE – Haviland Road

Hull – *see also* Hall

Hull, Bradley – Fire Hill

Hull, Bradley H. – Saw Mill Pond

Hull, Ezekiel – Cross Highway

Hull, George – Saw Mill Pond

Hull, Harry E. – Farmingville Road;

Hull Place; Media Lane;
Ridgefield Station; Silver
Spring; Spectacle Lane; Tanton
Hill Road; Town Farm

HULL PLACE

Hull, Silas – Cain's Hill and Road

Hull's Hill – Miry Brook

Hunt (family) – Hunt Court; Hunt
Mountain; Scotland

Hunt, David – Old Stagecoach Road

Hunt, Floyd K. – South Middle Dis-
trict

HUNT COURT – Turner Hill

HUNT MOUNTAIN – Titicus Moun- tain

Hunter (family) – Hunter Heights

Hunter, F. Heyward – Hunter Heights

HUNTER HEIGHTS – Finch Drive

Hunter Heights Cemetery – Hunter
Heights

HUNTER LANE, LANE WEST

Hunter, Martha – Hunter Heights

Hunter, Russell – Hunter Heights

HUNTING RIDGE

Hurlbutt, David – Coal Mine; Foun-
tain, The; Hurlbutt Lane; Hurl-
butt's Pond; Market Street

Hurlbutt, Julia – Market Street

Hurlbutt, Julia Maria – Fountain, The

HURLBUTT LANE – Market Street

Hurlbutt, Sereno – Market Street

Hurlbutt, Sereno Stuart – Market
Street

Hurlbutt's Market – Hurlbutt's Pond

HURLBUTT'S POND

Hurzeler, Ruth M. – Joe's Corner

HUSSAR'S CAMP PLACE

Hustis, Marion – East Ridge; Middle
Ridge

Hustis, Walter – East Ridge; Middle
Ridge

Hyatt (family) – Southwest Ridges

Hyatt, Abijah – Foster's Pond

Hyatt, Thomas – Burt's Pond; Foster's Pond; Long Swamp; Mamanasco Ridge; Sherwood's Ridge; Walnut Ridge; Whortleberry Hill

I

IBM – Bennett's Pond; Devil's Run Road; Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike; Fox Hill; Outpost Pond; Pine Mountain; Sachem Hill

Iles, Harold – Belden Field's Corner; Maplewood Road; Ridgefield Lakes

Independent School House – Town Houses; Veterans Park

INDIAN CAVE ROAD – Tony's Cave

Indian Reservation – Chickens Rock
Indians, American – Black Frank's Corner; Chickens Rock; Clay-holes; Mamanasco; Tony's Cave

Ingersoll, Anne – King Lane

Ingersoll, Rev. Jonathan – Copp's Corner; King Lane; Limekiln; Limekiln Hill

Ingersoll, Jonathan, Jr. – King Lane

Inglese, Oswald – Charter Oak Court

IRON WORKS I

IRON WORKS II

Isaacs, Samuel – Mine Lott

Iser, Gustave W. – Poplar Road; Ridgefield Gardens

ISLAND, The – Great Island

ISLAND BRIDGE – Fox Hill Village; Grassy Island; Great Island

ISLAND HILL and AVENUE – Danbury Hill; Grassy Ridge

ISLAND MEADOW

Island Path – Fox Hill Village

ISLAND RIVER

Ison, Bertram H. – Adams Road; Jefferson Drive; Lincoln Lane; Old Washington Road; Washington Park Estates

Ison, Minnie – Washington Park Estates

Ives, Charles – Ives Court; Pine Mountain; Wolf Pond Run;

IVES COURT – Wolf Pond Run

IVY HILL

IVY HILL ROAD

Ivy Ridge Corporation – Kiln Hill Lane

Ivy Swamp – Turtle Pond

IVY SWAMP BROOK – Punch Brook; Turtle Pond

J

Jack (Negro Slave) – Copp's Corner

Jackson, Daniel – Platt's Mill Pond

Jackson, Ephraim – Old Redding Road; Platt's Mill Pond

Jackson, Mrs. Fielding V. – King Lane

Jackson, Joseph – Saw Mill Brook

Jackson, Richard A. – King Lane

Jackson, Stephen – Bradley's Mill Pond

Jagger, Joe – Jagger Lane

JAGGER LANE

Jagger Road – Jagger Lane

JAGUAR LANE

JAMBS, TIE

JAPORNICK'S DIVISION

Jay, John – Crosby Court

Jay Island – Jug Island

Jaycees – Old Branchville Road

Jaykus, Michael – Poconock Trail
JEFFERSON DRIVE

JEFFRO DRIVE

JERRY'S COURT – David Lane

JESPERSON DRIVE – Jeffro Drive

Jespersion, Otto H. – Jeffro Drive

Jesse Lee Memorial United Methodist Church – Copp's Corner; Martin Park; Old Meeting House Tract

Jessup, C. Margaret Starr – Huckleberry Lane

Jessup, Mrs. John B. – Old Church Road

Jewish People's Fraternal Order of the International Workers Order Inc. – Ridgefield Manor Estates

Jimmy Joe – Joe's Corner

Jo's Hill – Fore Hills

JO'S HILLS

JOE'S CORNER

Joe's Hill Road – Sugar Hollow Turnpike; Jo's Hills

Joe's Store – Joe's Corner

Jog Island – Jug Island

John, Norman – John's Pond

JOHN'S POND – Bayberry Hill Road; Cooper Brook; Cooper

Hill Road; Saw Mill Pond;
Saw Mill Swamp
Johnson, A. – Bennett's Farm illus.
Johnson, Barbara Lee – Lee Road
Johnson Farm – Ridgefield Lakes
Johnson, Hezekiah – King Lane
JOHNSON HILL
Johnson, Peter – Rock Lot; Saw Mill
Pond
Johnston, Alex C. – Walnut Grove
and Road
Jones, Benjamin – Jones' Ridge
Jones, David L. – Jones' Pond; Wal-
nut Grove and Road
Jones, Ebenezer – Jones' Ridge
Jones, Hilton – Olmstead Lane
JONES' POND – Walnut Grove and
Road
JONES' RIDGE
Jones, Stephen – New Road III
"Jos. Crane's Hills" – Jo's Hills
Joseph, James – Joe's Corner
Joseph, M. C. – Joe's Corner illus.
Joseph, Mustapha C. – Joe's Corner
Joy Island – Jug Island
Joyce, John – Round Hill
JUDGES LANE
JUG ISLAND
June, Betsy – Mopus Bridge (Road)
June, Lewis – Mopus Bridge (Road)
Juneberry Lane – Fox Hill Village
Juniper Lane – Fox Hill Village

K

Kaiser, George – Kiln Hill Lane
Kaiser, Rose – Kiln Hill Lane
Kallos, Helen Keeler – Whipstick
Kampen, Irene Trepel – Trepel Lane
Kane, Robert J. – Cattle Pen Lane
Kargle, George – Buck Hill Road
Karley, Joseph – Old Redding Road
Kathys's Court – Quail Drive
Katis, James and Lauma – Sachem
Hill
Katonah – see Catoonah
Katz, David – Beaver Brook Road
Katz, John – Beers Place
Katz, Perry – Buck Hill Road; Dog-
wood Drive; Flat Rock Drive
Kaufman, Robert – Aspen Ledges
Road; Bob Hill Road; Bob's
Lake; Knollwood Road; Old
Stagecoach Road; Ridgefield
Knolls; Rolling Ridge Road;
Senoka Drive; Spire View

Road; Sugar Loaf Mountain
Road; Summit Lane; Todds
Road; Topstone Drive; Virginia
Court; Windwing, Lake
Kearney, Sophia L. – Langstroth
Drive; Sophia Drive
Keeler (family) – Great Pasture; New
Pattent; Parlor Rock; Seymour
Lane; Twin Ridge Keeler
(Homestead) – Pelham Lane
Keeler, A. C. – Creamery Lane; Old
Creamery Highway
Keeler, Adonerham – Fore Hills
Keeler, Albert – Limestone
Keeler, Anna – Keeler's Ridge
Keeler, Anne – Resseguie's Lane
Keeler, Benjamin – Keeler Drive;
Resseguie's Lane
Keeler, Ebenezer W. – Biddle Hill;
Creamery Lane; Old Creamery
Highway; Town Farm
Keeler, Mrs. Ebenezer – Market
Street
Keeler, Elijah – Canoe Brook, Gutter;
Forge Pond; Great Hill Road;
Iron Works I
Keeler, Esther – Resseguie's Lane
Keeler Farm – Farms; Mead Ridge;
Truesdale, Mount
Keeler, Harvey H. – High Valley
Road
Keeler, Henry W. – Lee Road
Keeler, Hull – Still Road
Keeler, Isaac – Forge Pond; Bung
Town; Iron Works I; Perch
Pond
Keeler, Jacob – Canoe Brook, Gutter
Keeler, Jeremiah – Keeler's Ridge
Keeler, Jesse K. – Rock Spring
Keeler, Jonah – Deer Pit; Keeler
Drive; Long Swamp
Keeler, Jonathan – Southwest Ridges
Keeler, Joseph – Bennett's Farm;
Burt's Lane; Great Hill Road;
Great Island; Keeler Drive;
Limestone; Mamanasco Lake,
Pond; Miller's Ridge; Prospect
Street; Rocky Neck, Spring;
Southwest Ridges; Steep
Brook
Keeler, Mathew – Brimstone Swamp
Keeler, Matthew – Keeler's Ridge
Keeler, Mortimer C. – Tony's Cave
Keeler, Nehemiah – Bogus; Fore
Hills
Keeler, Nehemiah, Jr. – Fore Hills

Keeler, Nehemiah Lyman – Keeler Drive; Wild Cat Lot
 Keeler, Peter – Great Pond
 Keeler, Philip B. – Still Road
 Keeler, R. W. – Old Creamery Highway
 Keeler, Raymond – Old Washington Road
 Keeler, Robert – Old Washington Road
 Keeler, Russel B. – Catoonah Street; Rock Spring
 Keeler, Sally – Peaceable Street
 Keeler, Samuel – George Washington Highway; Keeler Drive; Norwalk Road; Whipstick
 Keeler, Sarah – Keeler Drive
 Keeler, Silas – Limekiln Road
 Keeler, Smith – South Middle District
 Keeler, Timothy – Branchville Road; Danbury Road; Flaggy Boggs; Keeler Drive; Miller's Ridge; Resseguie's Lane; Rocky Neck, Spring; Southwest Ridges; West Meadow
 Keeler, Timothy, Jr. – Forge Pond; Iron Works I; Stamford Road
 Keeler, Walter – Keeler's Ridge
 Keeler, William – Keeler's Ridge
 KEELER CLOSE
 KEELER DRIVE
 KEELER LANE – Woodcock Lane
 Keeler Tavern – Fountain, Cass Gilbert; McKeon Place; Olmstead Lane; Sarah Bishop Road; Stebbins Close
 Keeler's Mill – Bung Town
 KEELER'S RIDGE
 Kelley, Jill – Florida
 Kellogg (family) – Kellogg Street
 Kellogg, Hiram J. – Kellogg Street
 Kellogg, Thomas – Round Mountain
 KELLOGG STREET
 Kelsey – Big Shop Lane
 KENDRA COURT
 Kennedy (family) – Canada Land
 Kennedy, James F. – Fort Hill
 Kenosia, Lake – Mill Plain
 Kenosia Avenue – Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Kenosia Hotel – Mill Plain
 Kenosia Trotting Park – Mill Plain
 Kent Apartment House – Kent Lane
 Kent, Milton R. – Kent Lane
 KENT LANE
 Ketcham, Howard – Ketcham Road

KETCHAM ROAD
 KIAH'S BROOK LANE – Kish's Brook
 Kiah's Brook Refuge – Kiah's Brook Lane
 Kiernan, Dr. John J. – Pinecrest Drive
 KILN HILL LANE – Limekiln Hill
 King (family) – King's Ridge
 King and Bradley's Tan Yard – Tannery Hill Road
 King, Anna – King Lane
 King, Henrietta – King Lane
 King, Irene – King Lane
 King, J. Howard – High Ridge; King Lane; King's Ridge; Peaceable Street
 King, Joshua – King Lane; King Lot(t)s; Lafayette Avenue; Rock Lot; Rockwell Road; Stony Brook; Tannery Hill Road
 King, Joshua I. – Hurlbutt's Pond
 King, Joshua(e) Ingersoll – King Lane
 King, Mary – King Lane
 King, Rufus H. – King Lane
 King, Rufus H., Jr. – King Lane
 King, Sophia – King Lane
 King, Tom – King Lane
 King, Winona – King Lane
 King and Dole Store – King Lane
 KING LANE – Hawley Street; Peaceable Street
 KING LOT(T)S
 King Neptune Restaurant – Long Stone
 "King or Congress" (play) – Stebbins Close
 KING'S GRANT PARK
 KING'S HIGHWAY
 KING'S RIDGE – High Ridge
 KING'S WAY
 KINGSWOOD PLACE
 Kirsch, Raymond L., Jr. – Raymond's Court
 Kish's Brook Lane – Kish's Brook
 KITCHAWAN, LAKE – Bryon Avenue, Cross Pond; Narahawmis
 Kitchawan Road – Harahawmis; Narahawmis
 Kitchawong Indians – Cross Pond; Kitchawan, Lake
 Kiwi Corner – Fox Hill Village
 Klippel, Mrs. Warren – Copp's Corner

Knap, Moses – Knap's Farm; Sherwood Farm; Zack's Ridge
 Knap's Farm – McKeon Place
 Knapp, Charity – Sarah Bishop Road
 Knapp, Dulia – Sarah Bishop Road
 Knapp, Joseph – Sarah Bishop Road
 Knapp, Lewis – Rock Lot; Saw Mill Pond
 Knapp, Malchus – King Lane
 Knapp, William – Knap's Farm
 Knapp's Farm – Farms; Knap's Farm; New Pattent; Ridgebury
 Knoche (family) – Knoche Road; Pelham Lane
 Knoche, John – Knoche Road; Pelham Lane
 Knoche, Joseph – Knoche Road; Pelham Lane
 Knoche, Joseph, Jr. – Pelham Lane
 KNOCHE ROAD – Pelham Lane
 Knoche's Corner – Knoche Road
 KNOLLS – Knollwood Drive
 Knolls, The – Cornerstone Court; Rockcrest Drive
 KNOLLWOOD DRIVE – Topstone Drive
 Knollwood Road – Limestone
 Knox, Edward M. – Cooper Hill Road; Downesbury Court; Hermit Lane; High Valley Road; Old Washington Road
 Kopp – see Copp
 Kopp's Corner – Copp's Corner
 KOPPS MOUNTAIN
 Kores – Kores Boggs
 KORES BOGS – Cores Bogs
 Kraus, Robert – Whipstick
 Kumquat Lane – Fox Hill Village

L

Laakkonen, Sinikka – Senoka Drive
 LACHA LINNE – Hopper's Pond; Scripp's Pond
 "Lacy Green" – Hunter Heights
 Lafayette, George Washington – Lafayette Avenue
 Lafayette, Marquis de – George Washington Highway; Lafayette Avenue; Washington Avenue
 LAFAYETTE AVENUE
 LAKE NUMBER FOUR
 LAKE NUMBER ONE – Rainbow Lake
 LAKE NUMBER THREE

LAKE NUMBER TWO
 LAKE ROAD – Ridgefield Lakes
 LAKELAND HILLS – Mountain Ravine Road; North Shore Drive; Sky Top Road
 LAKESIDE DRIVE – Lake Number Three; Sylvan Drive
 LAKEVIEW DRIVE
 LAKEVIEW ROAD – Bayberry Hill Road
 Lamoreux, Robert – Buckspen Swamp
 Lamoreux, Sally – Buckspen Swamp
 Lance Constructions – Cornerstone Court
 Land Conservancy of Ridgefield – King Lane
 Landegger Estate – Spectacle Brook
 Lane Seminary – West Lane
 Langstroff – see Langstroth
 Langstroth, Francis Ward – Langstroth Drive; Sophia Drive
 Langstroth, Sophia – Langstroth Drive; Sophia Drive
 LANGSTROTH DRIVE – Scodon Drive
 LANTERN DRIVE
 Lantern Hills – Lantern Drive
 LAUREL HILL ROAD
 LAUREL LANE – Dogwood Drive
 Laurel Ridge – Great Pond
 Laurelwood – Fitch's Farm; Great Pond
 Lauzun, Duc de – Rochambeau Avenue
 Lavin, Marcelino – Gay's Hill; Table Rock Estates; Whitlock Lane; Woodcock Lane
 Lawrence, John – Fishkill Road; Holloway Lot
 Lawrence, Richard H. – Oscaleta Road
 LAWSON LANE
 Lawson, John – Lawson Lane
 Lawson, Robert – Lawson Lane
 Lawton, Henry F. – Cain's Hill and Road
 Lazun, Duc – McKeon Place
 Leary, Larry – Arnold's Way
 Leary, Terry – Copp's Corner illus.
 Lecher, Carl – Beers Place; Double-day Lane; Evergreen Place; Hull Place; Judges Lane; Lounsbury Ridge; Sharp Hill Lane; West Mountain Pines

Ledge Road – Ledges Road
 LEDGES ROAD
 Lee (family) – East Farm Lane;
 Jones' Pond; Lee Road; Lime
 Kiln Corner; New Road
 Lee (Sisters) – Lee Lane
 Lee, Aaron W. – Lee Road; Pickett's
 Ridge Road; Pound Street
 Lee, Barbara – Lee Road
 Lee, Benjamin – Bear's Den
 Lee, Chapman – Lee Road
 Lee, Daniel- Bear's Den; Great Ditch;
 Lee Road; Silvermine, The
 Lee, Edwin – Lee Road; Pine Hill;
 Silvermine, The
 Lee, Edwin A. – Gilbert Street; New
 Road I
 Lee, Elija – Silvermine, The
 Lee, Fred C. – Lee Road; New Street
 Lee, John – Lee Road
 LEE LANE
 LEE ROAD
 Lee, Robert Aaron – Farmingville
 Road; Grassy Island; Great
 Swamp; Hunting Ridge; Jones'
 Pond; Lee Road; North Street;
 Pickett's Ridge Road; Silver-
 mine, The
 Lee, Seth – Silvermine, The
 Lee, William – Lee Road; Limestone;
 Silvermine, The
 Lees – *see also* Lee
 Lees, Joseph – Lee Road; Rocky
 Neck, Spring
 Lees, William, I – Lee Road
 Leffert, Herman J. – Beaver Brook
 Road; Old Farm Road; Pasture
 Lane
 LeGrand Estate – Roscoe Road
 LeGrand, Jean C. – Grand View
 Drive
 LeGrand, Nina – Grand View Drive
 Leighton (family) – Dlhj Ridge
 Lemon Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Levy, Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin –
 Grand View Drive
 Levy Park – Grand View Drive
 LEWIS DRIVE – Manor Road
 Lewis Estate – Ridgefield Manor
 Estates
 Lewis, Frederic Elliott – Anderson
 Tea House Road; Lewis Drive;
 Hopper's Pond; Manor Road;
 Scripp's Pond
 Lewis Hall – Ridgefield Manor Es-
 tates
 Lewis, Isaac – Fountain, The; Parley
 Lane
 Lewis, John – Lewisboro
 Lewis, Mary Russell – Ridgefield
 Manor Estates
 Lewis, Reginald M. – Hopper's Pond;
 Lacha Linne; Lewis Drive;
 Mead Ridge; Scripp's Pond
 Lewis, Wadsworth R. – Lewis Drive;
 Ridgefield Manor Estates
 LEWISBORO – Bedford Road;
 Harahawmis; North Salem
 Road
 Life Magazine – Sycamore Lane
 LIBRARY HILL – Prospect Street
 Light, John – Mountain Road
 Ligi, Richard — Ligi's Way
 LIGI'S WAY Bypass Road II
 Liljegren, Edwin D. – Bogus; Crank,
 The; Crosby Court; Danbury
 and Ridgefield Turnpike;
 Knap's Farm; Ridgebury;
 Robinson, Mountain; Sugar
 Hollow Turnpike; Wolf Pit
 Ridge; Zack's Ridge
 Lime Lane – Fox Hill Village
 LIMEKILN
 LIMEKILN CORNER
 LIMEKILN HILL – Limestone
 LIMEKILN ROAD – Danbury Road
 LIMESTONE ACRES
 Limestone District – Birch Road;
 Limestone
 Limestone Farm – FARMS
 LIMESTONE, LIMESTONE HILL
 Limestone Refuge – Buckspen
 Swamp
 LIMESTONE RIVER
 LIMESTONE ROAD
 LIMESTONE ROAD EXTENSION
 Limestone School – Belden Field's
 Corner; Limestone
 Limestone Schoolhouse – Bennett's
 Farm
 LIMESTONE TERRACE
 Lincoln Development Corporation –
 Comstock Brook; Holmes
 Road; Lincoln Road; Webster
 Road; Westmoreland
 LINCOLN LANE
 LINCOLN ROAD – Holmes Road
 Lindeberg, Birgit – Arrowhead Place
 LINDEN ROAD – Dogwood Drive
 Lions Club – Ashbee Lane; Martin
 Park

Lippolt, Otto H. – Bear Mountain Road; Bogus; Hemlock Hills; Hickory Drive; Lippolt Pond; Mountain Ravine Road; Old Mill Pond; Old Trolley Road; Pine Mountain; Scodon Drive; Sky Top Road; West Pine Mountain Road
 LIPPOLT POND – Old Mill Pond
 LISA LANE – Christopher Road
 Little League – Sachem Hill; Shadow Lake
 LITTLE POND – Aokeets; Great East Meadow Pond
 Little Red Schoolhouse – Bedford Road
 LITTLE RIDGE ROAD
 LOAF HILL
 Lobdell (family) – Mill View Terrace
 Lobdell, Caleb – Limekiln Hill
 Lobdell, Darius – Great Hill
 Lobdell, Ebenezer – Bennett's Farm; Deer Hill; Great Hill Road; Limestone; Lockwood's Corners; Mine Hill; Mine Lott; Short Hills; Wett Swamp
 Lobdell, John – Candlewood Hill; Great Hill; Mine Lott
 Lobdell, Joshua – Freeholder's Corner; Limekiln Hill
 Lobdell, Samuel – Great East Meadow Road; Great Pond; Short Hills; Wett Swamp
 Lockwood, Charles S. – Lockwood's Corners
 Lockwood, Peter – Lockwood's Corners
 LOCKWOOD'S CORNERS
 LONG BOGS
 LONG BRIDGE
 LONG MEADOW
 Long Pond – Bennett's Long Pond; South Long Pond; Wepack
 LONG POND I – Ammawogg
 LONG POND II
 LONG POND MOUNTAIN
 LONG RIDGE
 LONG STONE
 LONG SWAMP
 LONGVIEW DRIVE – Fire Hill Acres
 LOOKOUT DRIVE, ROAD
 LOOKOUT POINT
 Lookout Point at Pierrepont Pond – Lookout Point
 Lookout Rock – Rippowam Road

Loral Place – Remington Road
 LOREN LANE
 Lorenzini, Peter – Grand View Drive; Loren Lane; Split Level Road
 Lorenzini, Richard – Soundview Road; Titicus Court; Titicus Ridge
 LOST MINE PLACE – Hunting Ridge
 Lost Silvermine – Silvermine, The
 LOTS (Names of)
 Loughlin, James – Old Sib Road
 Lounsbury (family) – Lounsbury Lane; Jones' Pond; Old Meeting House Tract
 LOUNSBURY RIDGE – Bank's Hill Place
 Lounsbury, Dawn – Dawn Lane
 Lounsbury, Delia – Governor Street
 Lounsbury, Everett – Dawn Lane; Griffith Lane
 Lounsbury, Everett, Jr. – Ashbee Lane; Heart Brand Estates; Richardson Drive
 Lounsbury, George Edward – Brewster's Pond; Governor Street; Lounsbury Road; Rockwell Road
 LOUNSBURY LANE
 Lounsbury, Matthewson and Company – Lounsbury Road; Rockwell Road
 Lounsbury, Nathan – Farmingville; Governor Street; Lounsbury Road
 Lounsbury, Phineas Chapman – East Ridge; Governor Street; Griffith Lane; Lounsbury Road; Martin Park; North Street; Rockwell Road; Stonecrest Road; Veterans Park
 LOUNSBURY ROAD – Farmingville
 LOVERS LANE – Cushman Lane
 Low, Seth – Pierrepont Drive; Seth Low Mountain Road
 Lowe, Dr. R. W. – Beers Station; Remington Road; The Village
 LOWER MILL POND
 LOWER POND – New Pond; Saw Mill Pond; Upper Pond
 Lower Salem – North Salem Road; West Lane; *see also* Lewisboro
 Luquer family – Kiah's Brook Lane
 Lynch, John – West Mountain

Lynch, Patrick – Sugar Hollow Turnpike

M

MADELINE DRIVE – Marie Lane

Maggio, John – Cardinal Court;
Peaceable Ridge Manor

Main (family) – Scotland

Main, Douglas – Scotland

Main Road, The – North Salem Road

MAIN STREET – Aldrich Park;
Arnold's Way; Asproom
Mountain; High Ridge; New
Street; Norwalk Road; Ridge-
field Street; Stebbins Close;
Stebbins' Corner; Washington
Avenue

Main, Zalmon S. – Catoonah Street

Major, A. Edward – Nutmeg Ridge

Maki, William – Laurel Hill Road

Mallory, Harry B. – Mallory Lane;
Shadow Lake

MALLORY HILL ROAD

Mallory, Nathan – Mallory Hill Road

MALLORY POND – Shadow Lake

MAMANASCO – Lake Mamanassee

Mamanasco Grist Mill – Bung Town

MAMANASCO HILL – Mamanasco
Ridge

Mamanasco, Lake – Burt's Pond;
Burt's Mill Pond; Eight Lakes;
Fort Hill; Foster's Pond; Ma-
manasco Road; North Salem
Road; Old Sib Road; Old West
Mountain Road; Pond Road;
Tackora Trail; Wataba Lake

MAMANASCO LAKE PARK

MAMANASCO LAKE, POND

Mamanasco Mill – Mamanasco Lake,
Pond; Mamanasco Mountain;
North Salem Road

Mamanasco Mill Pond – Foster's
Pond; Mamanasco Lake, Pond

MAMANASCO MOUNTAIN

Mamanasco Pond – Foster's Pond;
Mill Pond; Read's Mill Pond

MAMANASCO RIDGE

MAMANASCO ROAD

MAMANASSEE, LAKE

Mannion, William – Benson Road;
Woodstone Road

Manor Estates – Scripps Pond

MANOR ROAD

MAPLE AVENUE – High Ridge
Road

MAPLE GROVE

Maples (trees) – Maple Avenue;
Samara Way

Mapleshade Cemetery – Craigmoor;
Mapleshade Road

MAPLESHADE ROAD

Maplewood – Maplewood Road

Maplewood Inn – Maplewood Road

MAPLEWOOD ROAD – Bennett's
Farm Road

Marcadon Avenue – *See* Marcardon
Avenue

MARCARDON AVENUE – Donnel-
ly Drive; Scodon Drive

Marchaggiani, Mario – Thunder Hill
Lane

Marechausee Corps. – Barrack Hill
Road

MARIE LANE

Marine Corps League – Halpin Lane

Marinelli (family) – Outpost Pond

MARKET STREET

Marshall, John – Marshall Road

MARSHALL ROAD

Marthaler (property) – Hunter
Heights

Martin Block – Martin Park

MARTIN'S CORNER (Curve)

Martin's Curve – *see* Martin's Corner

Martin, Franceska – Martin Park

Martin, Francis D. – Chekhov Road;
Continental Drive; Golf Lane;
Great Pond; High Ridge;
Holmes Road; Hurlbutt's
Pond; Jackson Court; King
Lane; Marcardon Avenue;
Martin Park; Martin's Corner;
New Pond; New Street; Old
Quarry Road; Old Sib Road;
Playground Road; Shields
Lane; Tea House Lane; Thou-
sand Acre Swamp; Walnut
Grove and Road

Martin, J. S. Louis – Martin Park

MARTIN PARK – Great Pond; Havi-
land Road

Martin, Philip – Abbott Avenue; Big
Shop Lane

Marvine, Uriah – Yellow Hill

Mather, Rev. Cotton – Copp's Corner;
Taylor's Corner

Mather, Increase – Copp's Corner

MARY LANE

Mary's Lane – Mary Lane

Masonic Hall – Town Houses

Matiticus Hill – Titicus Hill

Mayhew, Richard – Pinecrest Drive;
 Sprucewood Lane
 McCarthy, John J. – Media Lane
 McCormick, John M. – White Birch
 Road
 McDonald, Daniel – McDonald's
 Mill Pond; Platt's Mill Pond;
 Cross Highway
 McDonald's Grist Mill – McDonald's
 Mill Pond
 MCDONALD'S MILL POND –
 Miller's Pond
 McGlynn, Thomas J. – Ivy Hill
 McHard, Elizabeth – King Lane
 McHard, Henry King – King Lane
 McHard, William – King Lane
 McKenna, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur –
 New Pound Bog
 McKeon, Daniel M. – Betty's Corner;
 Buckspen Swamp; Kingswood
 Lane; McKeon Place; McKeon
 Pond; Old Ridgebury Road;
 Old Stagecoach Road; School-
 house Place; Senoka Drive;
 Turner Road; Zack's Place
 McKeon, Louise – McKeon Pond
 McKeon family – Harrison Court
 MCKEON PLACE
 MCKEON POND
 McKeons' Arigadeen Farm – Sher-
 wood Farm
 McKeon's Pond – Mopus Brook
 McLaury, Ellis B. – McLaury's Hill
 McLaury, Mr. and Mrs. John E. –
 McLaury's Hill
 McLaury, Mary – McLaury's Hill
 McLAURY'S HILL
 McLinden, Joseph J. – Big Shop
 Lane; Pelham Lane; South
 Shore Drive
 McManus, James – Mary Lane
 McManus, Joseph – Mary Lane
 McManus, Mary – Mary Lane
 McManus, Peter A. – Mary Lane
 McNamara, Paul – Donnelly Drive;
 Governor Street; Judges Lane;
 Schoolhouse Place; Scodon
 Drive; Whipstick Lough
 Mead, Anna – Rippowam Road
 Mead, Daniel S. – Skunk Lane
 Mead, Hannah Bennett – Bennett's
 Farm
 Mead, Israel – Buckspen Swamp;
 Mead Ridge
 Mead, Jared – Limekiln Hill; Old
 Meeting House Tract
 Mead, Jeremiah – Mead Ridge
 Mead, Martin R. – Waccabuc, Lake
 MEAD RIDGE
 Mead Ridge Drive – Mead Ridge
 Mead Ridge Lane – Mead Ridge
 Mead Ridge Road – Mead Ridge
 Mead, Dr. Robert
 Mead, T. H. (estate) – Oscaleta Road
 Mead, Theodore H. – Rippowam
 Road
 Mead, Theophilus – Mead Ridge;
 Toilsome
 Meadow Lane – Fox Hill Village
 MEADOW WOODS – Florida Hill
 Estates; Fulling Mill Lane;
 Revere Place; Standish Drive
 Medallic Art Company – Betty's
 Corner
 MEDIA LANE – Soundview Road
 Media Manor – Media Lane
 Meeker, David – Hollow, The;
 Ridgebury Hollow; Sanfords'
 Pond
 "Meeting-house" – Old Society
 MEETING HOUSE YARD
 Meier, Theodore M. and Bruce –
 Cornerstone Court; Knoche
 Road; Pelham Lane;
 Umpawaug Road
 Melon Lane – Fox Hill Village
 MEMORY LANE
 Menichin, Ensign – Hessian Drive
 Merchant's Exchange National Bank
 – Lounsbury Road
 Merriam, Philip M. – Midrocks Road
 Messenger, Andrew – Stamford Mill
 River
 Methodist Church – *see* Jesse Lee
 Memorial United Methodist
 Church
 METITICUS (et. al.) – New Pound
 Boggs; *see also* Titicus
 Metiticus Brook – Titicus Brook
 Metiticus Swamp – Titicus Swamp
 Meyers, John M. – High Meadows
 Road
 Meyers, Louise – High Meadows
 Road
 MIDDLE POND
 MIDDLE RIDGE
 Middle Ridge Avenue – East Ridge
 Middle Ridge Road – East Ridge
 Middle River District – Sugar Hollow
 Turnpike
 Middlebrook, Jonathan
 MIDDLEBROOK LANE

Middlebrook, Samuel – Middlebrook Lane
 Middlebrook, Somers – Middlebrook Lane
 Middlebrook, William – Middlebrook Lane
 MIDROCKS ROAD
 MILL BROOK
 MILL BROOK SWAMP
 MILL PATH – Toilsome
 MILL PLAIN – Ridgebury; Seir Hill; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Mill Plain District – Old Ridgebury Road
 Mill Plain Pond – Mill Plain; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Mill Plain River – Mill Plain
 MILL POND
 Mill River – Canfield's Mill River; Mill River Hollow; Norwalk Mill River; Starriford Mill River
 MILL RIVER HOLLOW – Deer Hill Drive
 MILL ROAD – McDonald's Mill Pond; Pond Road
 MILL VIEW TERRACE
 Miller, Clyde Kennedy – High Valley Road
 Miller, Earl S. – Rock Spring Lane
 Miller, Nathaniel- Abbott's Mill Road; Florida Hill Road; Miller's Pond; Moongate Trail
 MILLER'S POND – Abbott's Mill Road; Bradley's Mill Pond; McDonald's Mill Pond
 MILLER'S RIDGE – Brimstone Swamp
 MILLERS LANE
 Mills, Ogden – Anderson Tea House Road
 MILLSTONE BROOK – Millstone Rocks
 MILLSTONE COURT
 MILLSTONE ROCKS
 Millstone Road – Spectacle Lane
 MIMOSA – North Street; Quarry Road; Tannery Hill Road
 Mimosa Circle – Mimosa
 Mimosa Court – Mimosa
 Mimosa Place – Mimosa
 MINE HILL – Limestone; Mine Land; Short Hills
 MINE LAND
 MINE WTT
 Minot (family) – Sharp Hill Lane
 Minot (property) – West Mountain Pines
 MINUTEMAN ROAD
 Mitchell, John Ames – Bedford Road; Sycamore Lane
 MIRY BROOK
 MIXVILLE
 Mohawk, Sam – Chickens Rock
 Mohawks – Fort Hill
 Mokens – Mopus
 Mokquaroose (Indian) – New Pattent; Ridgebury
 Monk, Charles – MineLott
 Monk, James – Mine Lott
 Monroe, Charlotte – Woodchuck
 Monrow, Amos – Starr's Ridge
 MONT-LAC
 Montanari, Fred P. – Holmes Road
 Montgomery, Barry – Beechwood Lane; High Valley Road; Indian Cave Road; Little Ridge Road; North Valley Road; Strawberry Ridge Road; Twin Ridge
 Montgomery, Giles – Beechwood Lane; High Valley Road; Indian Cave Road; Little Ridge Road; North Valley Road; Strawberry Ridge Road; Twin Ridge
 Moongate (House) – Abbott's Mill Road; Florida Hill Road; McDonald's Mill Pond; Miller's Pond; Moongate Trail
 Moongate Lane – Moongate Trail
 MOONGATE TRAIL
 Moorhead, Lillian – Serfilippi Drive
 Mopo (Indian) – Mopus Ridge
 Mopo's Bog or Boggs – Great Ditch; Mopus Swamp
 Mopoos Brook – Mopus Brook
 Mopoos Ridge – Mopus Ridge
 Mopoo's Swamp – Mopus Swamp
 MOPUS
 Mopus Boggs – Mopus Swamp
 Mopus Bridge – Mopus Bridge (Road); Mopus Brook
 MOPUS BRIDGE (ROAD)
 MOPUS BROOK – Great Ditch; Mopus
 MOPUS RIDGE
 Mopus Road – Mopus Bridge (Road)
 MOPUS SWAMP
 Morehouse, James – Fishkill Road
 Morehouse, Lemuel – Mill Brook Swamp; Old Society

Morganti Building – Burt's Lane
 Morganti Inc. – Park Lane
 Morganti, John – Nod West Drive;
 Old Stagecoach Road; Tan-
 glewood Court
 Morganti, Joseph – Tanglewood
 Court
 Morganti, Paul J. – Adams Road;
 Bailey Avenue; Minuteman
 Road; Nod West Drive; River
 Roads; Sewer Bed Road;
 South Street; Tanglewood
 Court; Tanton Hill Road; Yan-
 kee Hill Road
 Morganti, Robert – Nod West Drive;
 Tanglewood Court
 Morin, Michel and Mario – East
 Farm Lane
 Moses (Indian) – Ammawogg; Long
 Pond I; Tapomick Division;
 Wepack
 Moses Mountain – Danbury Road;
 Danbury Old Cart Path; Great
 Pond Road; Haviland Road;
 Starr's Plain; Sugar Hollow
 Turnpike
 Moses, Sam – Mopus
 Mosos, Old – Mopus
 Mosos, Tom – Mopus
 Mosos, Young – Mopus
 MOUNT TAMARACK
 MOUNTAIN, THE
 MOUNTAIN LAKE
 Mountain Lake Road – Ridgefield
 Lakes
 MOUNTAIN PARK
 MOUNTAIN RAVINE ROAD
 MOUNTAIN ROAD – Mountain
 Park; Ridgefield Lakes
 MOUNTAINVIEW AVENUE
 MOUNTAIN VIEW PARK – Hills-
 dale Avenue
 MOUNTAIN TOP ROAD
 Mud Pond – Old West Mountain
 Road; Tackora Trail
 MULBERRY STREET
 Mullen, John – Ivy Hill; Old Sib
 Road; Silver Spring
 Mulligan, Edward T. – Griffin Hill
 Mulligan, Virginia D. L. H. – Griffin
 Hill; Ross Lane
 MUNDLE
 Munson, Isaac – Burt's Pond
 MURDOCK'S CORNERS
 Murphy, Nathan – Limekiln
 Murren, John J. – Cattle Pen Lane

Mutigticoos River – Buffalo Creek;
 Titicus
 Mutual Land Management and De-
 velopment Inc. – Canterbury
 Lane
 MYRA BROOK
 Myrick, Norman – Hull Place; Steb-
 bins Close

N

NARAHAWMIS
 NARANKEA, LAKE
 Naranoka – Tackora Trail
 Narragansett (Indian Tribe) –
 Peespunk; Pehquennakonck,
 Lake
 Nash, Abijah – West Cedar
 Mountain(s)
 Nash, Abraham – Beaver Brook
 Nash, Charles S. – King Lane
 Nash, Ebenezer – Beaver Brook; Flat
 Rock
 Nash, Jared – King Lane; New Pond
 Nash, John D. – New Pond
 Nash, Mrs. John D. – Gilbert Street
 Nash, Karl S. – Four Corners; Great
 Rocks; High Ridge Road;
 Jones' Pond; Maple Avenue;
 New Pond; Pine Hill; Potash
 Hill; Settlers Rock; Seymour
 Lane; Walnut Grove and
 Road
 Nash, Marion H. – Gilbert Street;
 New Pond
 Native Americans – *see* Indians,
 American
 Nawranawoos – Norrans Ridge
 Necter Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Ned – Ned's Mountain Road
 Ned's Lane – Ned's Mountain Road
 Ned's Mountain – Bogus; Ned's
 Mountain Road
 NED'S MOUNTAIN ROAD
 NEGRO ROCKS
 Neligan, Dr. Patrick – West Mountain
 Nelson, Thomas – Todds Road
 NESOPACK – Great Pond
 Nettle Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Nettleton, Daniel – Second Pond
 NEW BRIDGE – Norrans Ridge
 NEW CANAAN ROAD
 New England Institute – Golf Lane;
 Hickory Drive; Martin Park;
 Stone Ridge Estates
 New Florida Cemetery – Hermit Lane

NEW LANE – Hawley Street
 NEW LOTS
 NEW PATTENT – Miry Brook;
 North Patent; Second Patent;
 Short Woods; Tamarack,
 Mount; Whiting's Pond
 New Patent Road – Ridgebury Road
 I; New Patent
 NEW POND – New Street
 New Pound – New Pound Boggs;
 New Pound Ridge
 New Pound Bogg Swamp –
 Northrups Island
 NEW POUND BOGGS – Beaver
 Dam; Cranberry Lane; New
 Pound Ridge
 New Pound Boggs Swamp – New
 Pound Boggs
 NEW POUND RIDGE – Beaver
 Dam; New Pound Boggs
 NEW PURCHASE, NEW PUR-
 CHASE SWAMP – Titicus
 Swamp
 New Road – Cain's Hill and Road;
 Limestone Road
 NEW ROAD I
 NEW ROAD n
 NEW ROAD ill
 NEW ROAD IV – New West Lane
 NEW STREET
 NEW WEST LANE – Barry Avenue
 New York and New Haven R.R. –
 Old Stagecoach Road
 New York State Line – York State
 Line
 Newmont Exploration Company –
 Briar Ridge Road
 Newton, Stanley – Oscaleta Road
 Nicholson, Meredith – Eight Lakes;
 Port Road
 Nickerson, Ezra – Pound Mountain
 Nickerson, William – Saw Mill Road
 NINTH LANE
 NOD – Nod Road
 NOD HILL – Beers Place; Nod Road
 NOD HILL ROAD – Beers Station;
 Branchville Hill Road; Cold
 Spring Lane II; Nod Road;
 Pelham Lane; Strawberry
 Ridge Road
 Nod Hills, The – Nod Hill
 NOD ROAD – Aldrich Park; Com-
 stock Brook; Maple Grove;
 Nod West Drive; Pelham Lane
 NOD WEST DRIVE

Nogelo, Sinikka Laakkonen – Senoka
 Drive
 NOORICUS RIDGE
 Norman, Mrs. John – John's Pond
 NORONEKE, LAKE
 Norranorwa's Ridge – Orange Ridge
 NORRANORWAS SPRANG
 Norrannorwas Spring (Sprang) –
 Great Swamp illus.
 NORRANS RIDGE – Norricus
 Ridge; Orange Ridge; Oreneca
 Road
 NORRANS RIDGE DRIVE –
 Beechwood
 Norreneca – Tackora Trail; *see also*
 Oreneca
 "Norreneke Indian" – Tom's Spring
 Norren's Boggs – Short Hills
 Norrens Ridge – Fox Hill Village
 Norrins Ridge Road – Danbury Road
 Norris (family) – Spruce Hole
 Norris, James – Great Meadow
 Norris, John – Rochambeau Avenue
 NORTH AND SOUTH ROAD
 NORTH DISTRICT
 NORTH LONG POND – South Long
 Pond
 North Main Street – Danbury Road
 NORTH MOUNTAIN
 NORTH PATTENT – Chestruin
 North Pond – Rippowam Road; South
 Long Pond
 North Ridgebury – Schoolhouse
 Place
 North Ridgebury District (School) –
 North District
 North Ridgebury School – Ridgebury
 North Ridgebury Schoolhouse –
 Schoolhouse Place
 North Salem – North Salem Road
 NORTH SALEM ROAD – Arnold's
 Way; Tackora Trail; Titicus
 Road
 NORTH SHORE DRIVE – West Pine
 Mountain Road
 NORTH STREET – East Mountain I;
 Skunk Lane
 NORTH VALLEY ROAD
 Northeast Utilities – Branchville
 Northrop (family) – Southwest
 Ridges
 Northrop, Arthur W. – Gay's Hill
 Northrop, Charles B. – Veterans Park
 Northrop, Cyrus – Rock Lot
 Northrop, James – Southwest Ridges
 Northrop, Josiah – Wilton Road East

Northrop, Matthew, Jr. – Great Swamp II
 Northrop – see also Northrup
 Northrup – see also Northrop
 Northrup (family) – Great Meadow; South Street; West Field
 Northrup, Abigail – Stamford Road
 Northrup, Benjamin – Old Ram Pen; Ram Pasture
 Northrup, C. – Cobbler's Lane
 Northrup, David – Rattle Holes
 Northrup, Gamaliel – Hauley's Ridge; Rocky Neck, Spring
 Northrup, J. – Cobbler's Lane
 Northrup, James – Cobbler's Lane; Long Pond I; Oblong, The; Stamford Mill River
 Northrup, Jared – Stamford Road
 Northrup, John – West Lane
 Northrup, Joseph – Northrup's Island
 Northrup, Moses – Canfield's Mill River; Copp's Corner; Stamford Mill River
 NORTHRUP ROAD – South Street
 NORTHRUP'S ISLAND
 Norwalk and Danbury Rail Road. – Beers Station
 NORWALK AND DANBURY TURNPIKE – Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike
 NORWALK RIVER – Cain's Hill and Road; Comen's Brook; East Meadow; East River; Lime-stone River; Ridgefield Brook; Thousand Acre Swamp; Titicus River Norwalk River Flood Control Project – Great Swamp; Miller's Pond
 NORWALK ROAD – Old Norwalk Road
 NORWALK MILL RIVER
 NORWAY'S RIDGE
 Notre Dame Sisters' Province – West Mountain
 NURSERY ROAD – Dogwood Drive
 NUTMEG COURT – Conklin Court
 NUTMEG RIDGE – Biddle Lane; Ridgefield Hilltop Acres
 Nutmeg State – Nutmeg Court
 "Nutmeggers" – Nutmeg Court

O

OAK TREE LANE

OBLONG, THE – Cross Pond; Kitchawan, Lake; Long Ridge; New Patent; New
 Purchase; Peach Pond; Peespunk; Sheppison, Mount; Stamping Place
 O'Brien – Still Road
 Odd Fellows Lodge – Cornen Avenue
 Ojibway (Language) – Wataba Lake
 Olcott (family) – Quincy Close
 Olcott, Charles Mann – Olcott Way
 Olcott, George Mann – Casagmo; Olcott Way; Stebbins Close
 Olcott, Maria Cornell Underhill – Olcott Way
 Olcott, Mary L. (Mrs.) – Farrar Lane; High Pasture Court
 Olcott, Mary Louisa Beatrice (Miss) – Casagmo; Lawson Lane; Olcott Way
 OLCOTT WAY
 Old Bet – Howes Court
 OLD BARLOW MOUNTAIN ROAD – Barlow Mountain
 Old Boston Post Road – Danbury Road; Post Road
 OLD BRANCHVILLE ROAD – Biddle Hill; Branchville Hill; Branchville Road; Cooper Road; Eustis Lane; Nod Hill Road
 OLD BURYING GROUND
 OLD CHURCH ROAD
 OLD CREAMERY HIGHWAY
 OLD DANBURY ROAD
 OLD FARM ROAD
 Old Gay Road – Gay Road
 Old Hundred – Aldrich Park
 OLD HILL
 Old Hill Lot – Old Hill
 OLD HORSE POUND
 Old Hundred – King Lane
 Old Kopp Lane – Copps Old Line
 OLD MAIN HIGHWAY – Depot Road
 Old Main Road – Old Norwalk Road
 OLD MEETING HOUSE TRACT
 OLD MILL POND
 OLD MILL ROAD – Waterfall Road
 OLD MUSKET LANE
 OLD NORWALK ROAD – Old Main Highway
 OLD OSCALETA ROAD – Oreneca Road
 OLD PIERCE ROAD

OLD QUARRY ROAD – Dump Road
 OLD RAM PEN
 OLD REDDING ROAD – Seventy Acres Road
 OLD RIDGEBURY ROAD
 Old Road – Great Hill Road
 OLD SAWMILL POND
 OLD SIB ROAD – Anderson Tea House Road; Tea House Road
 OLD SOCIETY
 Old South Salem Road – Bedford Road
 OLD STAGECOACH ROAD – Bennett's Farm Road
 OLD STILL ROAD
 OLD TOWN ROAD – Pelham Lane
 OLD TROLLEY ROAD – Hickory Drive; Stone Ridge Estates
 OLD WAGON ROAD
 OLD WASHINGTON ROAD – Adams Road; George Washington Highway; Washington Park Estates; Washington Road
 OLD WEST LANE – Canterbury Lane
 OLD WEST MOUNTAIN ROAD – Tackora Road; Tackora Trail; Walnut Hill Road
 OLD WEST ROAD
 Olive Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Olmstead (and Resseguie) – Resseguie's Lane
 Olmstead (family) – Olmstead Lane
 Olmstead, Daniel – Seymour Lane; Umpawaug Road
 Olmstead, David – Olmstead Lane
 Olmstead, David W. – Bedford Road
 Olmstead, James Harvey – Olmstead Lane
 Olmstead, John – Long Pond Mountain
 Olmstead, Stephen – Long Pond Mountain
 Olmstead Hill Road – Nod Road; Pelham Lane
 OLMSTEAD LANE – Fairgrounds, The
 Olmstead, Lewis – West Lane
 Olmstead, Matthew (Mat) – Olmstead Lane; Rock Lot
 Olmstead, Richard – Norrans Ridge; Norwalk River; Umpawaug Road
 Olmstead, Robert – Windy Ridge Lane
 Olmstead, Samuel III – Brushy Ridge
 Olmstead, Stephen – Olmstead Lane
 Olmstead – *see also* Olmsted, Olmstedd
 Olmsted (family) – Southwest Ridges
 Olmsted, Ambrose – Colls Point
 Olmsted, Daniel – Hop Meadow Branch; Peespunk
 Olmsted, David – Colls Point
 Olmsted, John – Sturdevant's Clapboard Tree Ridge
 Olmsted, Jonathan – Titicus Hill
 Olmsted, Richard – Mill View Terrace; Pompion Ridge; White Oak Island, Point; Wolfpits, The
 Olmsted, Samuel – Hop Meadow Branch
 Olmsted, Stephen – Sturdevant's Clapboard Tree Ridge
 Olmsted – *see also* Olmstead, Olmstedd
 Olmstedd, Daniel – Olmstead Lane
 Olmstedd, John – Olmstead Lane
 Olmstedd, Richard – Olmstead Lane
 Olmstedd, Richard, Jr. – Olmstead Lane
 Olmstedd – *see also* Olmstead, Olmsted
 O'Neill, Eugene – McLaury's Hill, O'Neill Court
 O'Neill, Oona – O'Neill Court
 O'NEILL COURT – Hunt Court
 Orange Lane – Fox Hill Village
 ORANGE RIDGE – Norrans Ridge
 Orange Ridge Road – Danbury Road
 ORCHARD LANE – Cranberry Lane; East Ridge
 ORCHARD STREET
 ORE BED – Ore Yard
 ORE YARD
 Oreneca (Sachem) – Noroneke, Lake; Norrans Ridge; Oreneca Road; Punch Brook; Tackora Trail
 Oreneca (house) – Harrison Court
 ORENECA, LAKE
 ORENECA ROAD – Fox Hill Village; High Ridge; Tackora Trail
 Oreneca Trail – Tackora Trail
 Oreneca Village – Fox Hill Village
 OR-MAR DRIVE – Settlers Lane
 Orrico, Fred – Mountain Park
 Osborn (family) – New Pattent; Southwest Ridges

Osborn, David – Norwalk River;
Taylor's Pond; Tub Swamp
Osborn, Dorcas – Turner Road
Osborn, Richard – Brushy Ridge;
Grassy Island; Great Rocks
Osborn – *see also* Osborne, Osburn
Osborne, Joseph – Flat Rock
Osborne, Richard – Flat Rock
Osborne – *see also* Osborn, Osburn
Osburn (family) – Southwest Ridges
Osburn, David – Burt's Lane
Osburn, John – Brimstone Swamp
Osburn – *see also* Osborn, Osborne
Osburn's Land – Norwalk Road
Osburn's Lott – Branchville Road
"Oscaleta" (estate) – Oscaleta Road
Oscaleta, Lake – Eight Lakes; Great
Hill; Long Pond I; North Long
Pond; South Long
Pond; South Pond
OSCALETA ROAD – Old Oscaleta
Road
Oskison, Hildegarde Hawthorne –
Hawthorne Hill Road
OTTER POND
Outpost Court – Fox Hill Village
Outpost Farm – Bennett's Ponds; Fox
Hill; Maplewood Road; Pick-
erel Pond
Outpost Farms and Nurseries – Out-
post Pond
Outpost Inn – Cornen Avenue; Fox
Hill Village; Outpost Pond
Outpost Nurseries – Cornen Avenue;
Fox Hill; Hawthorne Circle;
Outpost Pond; Tanton Hill
Road; Woodcock Lane
OUTPOST POND
Outpost Village – Fox Hill Village
OVERLOOK DRIVE – Conklin
Court
Owens, Lois – Noroneke, Lake

P

Paddock, Dr. A. Y. – Hessian Drive
"Pahguioque" – Danbury Road
Palmer, Elias – South Middle District
Pambianchi, Armando (Matty) –
Seymour Lane
Pambianchi, Leo – Conklin Court
Pardee, Israel – West Mountain
Pardy, Joshua – West Mountain
Park Commission – Richardson Park
Parker, Albert – Hunter Heights

Parker, Jeannette Fox – Hunter
Heights
Parkers – Hunter Lane; Lane West
Parks and Recreation Department –
Great Pond; Martin Park
PARK LANE
Parking Authority – Bailey Avenue
Parkview Estates – Acre Lane
PARLEY LANE – Bedford Road;
High Ridge; High Ridge Road
Parley, Peter – *see* Goodrich, Samuel
G., Jr.
PARLEY ROAD – Chestnut Hills
Estates
PARLOR ROCK
PARTING BROOK
Parting Brook Estates – Field Crest
Drive; Parting Brook
Partisan Legion – Barrack Hill Road
PARTRIDGE DRIVE
PASTURE LANE
Pattent – Second Patent
Paugusset (Indian tribe) – Cauda-
towa; Peespunk; Simpaug
Turnpike
Paul, Alice – John's Pond
Paul, David L. – Casagmo; Cornen
Avenue; Fox Hill Village;
Lawson Lane; Olcott Way;
Oreneca Road; Outpost Pond;
Quincy Close; Village, The
Palmer, John K. – Palmer Court
PALMER COURT
Pawquenongi (Indian) – Long Pond I;
Tapornick Division
Peaceable Cottage – King Lane
Peaceable Farms Nursery – Horse
Pound
PEACEABLE HILL ROAD – Stand-
pipe Road
Peaceable Ridge Manor – Cardinal
Court
PEACEABLE RIDGE ROAD –
Standpipe Road
PEACEABLE STREET – King Lane;
Limekiln Hill; Standpipe Road
Peach Lake – Peach Pond; Pehquen-
nakonck, Lake
PEACH POND
Pearce, Caleb – Canada Land
Pearce, Israel – Canada Land
Peatt (family) – Peatt Park
Peatt, Alice J. Buell (Mrs. W. T.) –
Buell Street; Peatt Park
PEATT PARK – Buell Street; George
Washington Highway; La-

fayette Avenue; Washington Avenue
 Peatt, William, Jr. – Aspen Mill Road; Kiah's Brook Lane; Peatt Park; Walnut Grove and Road
 Peatt, William T., Sr. – Buell Street; Lafayette Avenue; Mamasasco Road; Mimosas; Old Quarry Road; Peatt Park; Rochambeau Avenue; Washington Avenue
 Peck (family)
 Peck, Abijah – Iron Works II
 Peck brothers – Bennett's Ponds
 Peck, Eliakim – Iron Works II
 Peck, Fred – Peck Hill
 PECK HILL
 Peck House – Danbury Road
 Peck, Louise – Turtle Pond
 Peck's Hill – Peck Hill
 PEESPUNK
 Pehquennakonck – Peach Pond
 PEHQUENNAKONCK, LAKE
 Peil, Eleanor C. – Mead Ridge
 Pelham, Amy – Pelham Lane
 Pelham, John R. – Knoche Road; Pelham Lane
 PELHAM LANE – Knoche Road
 PENNY BROOK
 PENT HIGHWAY
 PEPPENEEGEK, LAKE – Cross Pond
 Pequot Real Estate Development Company – Ridgefield Lakes
 Pequot Realty Co. – Fox Hill Lake
 Perambulation – Bear Mountain; Cornerstone Court; Copp's Corner; Copp's Old Line; Freeholders Corner
 PERCH POND
 Perry, Dr. David – Old Church Road; Perry Lane; Rockwell Road
 Perry, David – Smith Road
 Perry homestead – DePeyster Street
 Perry, John – Great Meadow; West Lane II
 Perry, Dr. John G. – Oreneca, Lake
 PERRY LANE
 Perry, Dr. Nehemiah, Jr. – Perry Lane
 Perry, Nehemiah, Sr. – Perry Lane
 Perry, Russell B. – Catoonah Street
 Perry, Dr. Samuel – Perry Lane
 Perry, Samuel, Jr. – Perry Lane
 Persimmon Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Peter Parley – *see* Goodrich, Samuel G., Jr.
 Petersen, Roger – Southridge Court
 Petri (estate) – Bruschi Lane
 Petroni, Romeo G. – Media Lane
 PHEASANT LANE
 Phelps, Henry P. – King Lane
 Phelps, Mary Jagger – Copp's Corner
 Phelps, Rev. Samuel M. – High Ridge Road; Parley Lane
 PICKEREL POND
 Pickett, Ebenezer – Pound Mountain
 Pickett, Edwin D. – Lee Road; Pickett's Ridge Road
 Pickett, Harry – Simpaug Turnpike
 Pickett, John – Pickett's Ridge Road
 Pickett, Nathan – Pickett's Ridge Road
 Pickett, Rufus H. – Saw Mill Brook
 Pickett, Sarah – Pound Mountain
 Pickett's Ridge – Great Pond Road; Pickett's Ridge Road
 PICKETT'S RIDGE ROAD – Great Pond Road; Starr's Ridge; Taylor's Corner
 Pierce, Charles – Old Pierce Road
 PIERREPONT DRIVE
 Pierrepont, James – Taylor's Corner
 Pierrepont, Mrs. John Jay – Foote's Hill
 PIERREPONT LAKE – Naraneka, Lake; Pierrepont State Park
 Pierrepont, Nathalie Elisabeth Chauncey – Twixt Hills
 Pierrepont Park Path – Barlow Mountain
 Pierrepont Pond – Clayton Place; Lake Naraneka
 Pierrepont, Seth Low – Hobby Drive; Noroneke, Lake; Pierrepont Drive; Pierrepont Lake;
 Pierrepont State Park; Seth Low Mountain Road; Sugar Loaf Mountain Road; Twixt Hills
 PIERREPONT STATE PARK – Asproom Loaf, Loft, Aloft; Noroneke, Lake; Todds Road; Twixt Hills
 Pike, Joel T. – Wintergreen Hill
 PILGRIM HILL ROAD
 Pin Pack Estates – Pocconock Trail
 PIN PACK ROAD – Mulberry Street; Roscoe Road
 Pinchbeck, John – Pinchbeck Pond
 Pinchbeck, Joseph G. – Pinchbeck Pond
 Pinchbeck, Joseph, Jr. – Pinchbeck Pond

Pinchbeck Nursery – Horse Pound
 and Swamp; Pinchbeck Pond
PINCHBECK POND
 Pinchbeck, William – Pinchbeck
 Pond
PINE LAKE ROAD
PINE MOUNTAIN – Pisgah
 Pine Mountain Refuge – Bennett's
 Pond State Park; Ives Court;
 Mountain Park; Scodon Drive
PINE MOUNTAIN ROAD
 Pinecrest – Pinecrest Drive
PINECREST DRIVE
 Pink House – Keeler Drive
 Pinnacle Ridgefield Developers –
 Stone Ridge Estates
PISGAH
 Plane crash – Hunt Mountain
 Planned Residential Development –
 Charter Oak Court; Pheasant
 Lane; Scodon Drive
 Planning and Zoning Commission –
 Beaver Brook Road; Bypass
 Road II; Corbin Drive; McK-
 eon Place; Raymond's Court
 Platt, David – Fire Hill
 Platt, Elizabeth – Fire Hill
 Platt, Obadiah – Platt's Mill Pond
 Platt's Mill – Florida
PLATT'S MILL POND
 Plattsville – Branchville
 Plaut, Ed – Spring Valley Road
PLAYGROUND ROAD
 Pleasant View Estates – Powdermak-
 er Drive
 Plum House – Town Spring
 Plum Path – Fox Hill Village
 Pocconock Indians – Pocconock Trail
POCCONOCK TRAIL
 Poctocon (Indian) – North Street
 Police – Donnelly Drive; Palmer
 Court
POMPION RIDGE – Biddle Lane;
 Cooper Road; East Pumpkin
 Ridge; Old Branchville Road
POND MOUNTAIN
POND ROAD – Read's Mill Pond
POND SWAMP
PONDED SWAMP
 Poned Swamp Road – Sugar Hollow
 Turnpike
 Ponus (Chief) – Catoonah Street
POOR HOUSE LANE
 Poor Ole Cliff's – Hayes Lane
POPLAR ROAD – Dogwood Drive;
 Hawthorne Circle
 Pork Hollow Farm – Old Stagecoach
 Road
 Port of Missing Men – Anderson Tea
 House Road; Eight Lakes; Old
 Sib Road; Pine Lake Road;
 Sewer Bed Road; Tea House
 Lane; Tea House Road; Turtle
 Pond
 Port of Missing Men Road – Port
 Road
PORT ROAD – Old Sib Road
 Portman, Richard – Island River
POST ROAD – Danbury Road; Pond
 Road
 Potash Brook – Potash Hill; Wilton
 Road East
POTASH HILL
 Potash Hill Road – Potash Hill
POUND MOUNTAIN
POUND RIDGE
POUND STREET – New Street;
 Stebbins' Corner
POWDERHORN DRIVE
 Powdermaker, Allan – Powdermaker
 Drive
POWDERMAKER DRIVE
 Powdermaker, Florence – Powden-
 naker Drive
 Powdermaker, Hortense – Powden-
 naker Drive
 Price, Edmund – Boggs Pond
 Probate Court – Donnelly Drive;
 Dowling Drive
 Promoter's Club – Martin Park
 Prospect Avenue – Prospect Street
PROSPECT HILL
PROSPECT RIDGE – High Valley
 Road
 Prospect Ridge Road – East Ridge
PROSPECT STREET – Depot Hill
 Street, Station Hill
PUBLISHERS ROW – High Ridge
 Pulling (Pullen), Abraham – Asproom
 Loaf, Loft, Aloft
PUMP LANE
PUMPING STATION ROAD – Old
 West Road
PUMPING STATION SWAMP
 Pumping Station Valley – Pumping
 Station Swamp
PUMPKIN RIDGE – Biddle Lane;
 Old Branchville Road; Pompi-
 on Ridge
PUNCH BROOK
 Purdy, Nancy – Wolf Pond Run; Ives
 Court

Q

QUAIL DRIVE
QUAKER RIDGE
Quarry Corner – Fox Hill Village
QUARRY ROAD
Quince Lane – Fox Hill Village
QUINCY CLOSE
Quincy, Edmund – Quincy Close

R

Rail trail – Branchville
RAILROAD AVENUE – Branchville
Road; Hawley Street
RAILROAD AVENUE II
RAINBOW DRIVE
RAINBOW LAKE – Ridgefield
Lakes; Wataba Lake; Lake
Number One
RAM PASTURE
Ram Pen – Ram Pasture
Ramapo Village – Ramapoo Road
RAMAPOO HILL ROAD
Ramapoo Hills – Overlook Drive;
Ramapoo Hill Road
Ramapoo Indians – Catoonah Street;
Norrans Ridge; Oreneca Road;
Ramapoo Road; Tackora Trail;
Wheeler Cock
RAMAPOO ROAD
Ramapoo Village – Tackora Trail
Randolph, Mrs. Bulkley – Rippowam
Road
Rapoport, Chuck — Wataba.
Raspberry Lane – Fox Hill Village
RATTLE HOLES – Rattle Snake
Swamp
RATTLE SNAKE SWAMP – Pump-
ing Station Swamp
Raymond, John – Ridgefield
RAYMOND'S COURT
Read, Elias – Read's Mill Pond
Read, George R. – Old Stagecoach
Road
Read, Hannah – Read's Mill Pond
Read, John – Chickens Rock; Old
Redding Road
Read – see also Reed
Read's Farm, John – Knap's Farm
READ'S MILL POND
RED BROOK
Red Cross – Lewis Drive; Martin
Park
RED HILL

Red Lion Restaurant – Outpost Pond
Red Oak Corporation – Peaceable
Hill Road
RED OAK LANE
Redding – Cain's Hill Road; Corner-
stone Court
Redding Road – Old Redding Road
Redwood Lane – Fox Hill Village
Reed, Elias – Burt's Pond; Forge
Pond; Iron Works I; Read's
Mill Pond
Reed Farm – Town Farm
Reed, Lewis A. – Town Farm
Reed – *see also* Read
REED SWAMP
Reed's Mill Pond – Mamanasco
Lake, Pond
Regan (family) – Regan Road
REGAN ROAD – New Patten
Regency at Ridgefield – Great Pond
Reid, Macklin – Kingswood Lane
Remington, Frederic – Barry Avenue;
Remington Road
Remington, Pierre – Remington Road
REMINGTON ROAD – Barry Av-
enue; Holmes Road
Resseguie, Abijah – Fountain, The;
Resseguie's Lane
Resseguie, Abraham – Resseguie's
Lane
Resseguie, Alex – Long Pond II
Resseguie, Alexander – Bennett's
Farm; Mamanasco Hill; Mill
Brook; Resseguie's Lane;
Starr's Plain; Titicus Swamp;
Wolf Pits, The
Resseguie and Olmstead – Resse-
guie's Lane
Resseguie, Anna Keeler – Resseguie's
Lane
Resseguie, Isaac – Resseguie's Lane
Resseguie, James – Brimstone
Swamp
Resseguie, Timothy – Resseguie's
Lane
Resseguie's Hotel – Resseguie's Lane
RESSEGUIE'S LANE – Knoche
Road; Pelham Lane
Resseguie's Saw Mill – Farmingville
Rest areas – Twin Maples
REVERE DRIVE – Minuteman Road
REVERE PLACE
Revolutionary War – Arnold's Way;
Crosby Court
Reynolds, Lyman – Scotland; Scotts
Ridge

Ricardo, Anthony – Ascot Way
 Richard (Indian) – Ammawogg;
 Tapomick Division; Wepack
 Richard E. Venus Municipal Building
 – Dutton Lane
 Richardson, Anne S. – Richardson
 Park
 RICHARDSON DRIVE
 RICHARDSON PARK – Mamasasco
 Mountain
 Richardson, Robert E. – Richardson
 Drive
 Richmond, Harry – Florida Hill Es-
 tates; Fulling Mill Lane; Glen
 Brook Court; Meadow Woods;
 Revere Place; Ridgewood
 Road; Standish Drive
 RIDGE, THE
 Ridge Avenue – Ridge Road II
 RIDGE ROAD I
 RIDGE ROAD II
 RIDGEBURY – Betty's Corner;
 Crank, The; Crosby Court;
 Knap's Farm; New Patten
 Ridgely Acres – Old Trolley Road
 Ridgely Congregational Church –
 Branch, The; Foster's Pond;
 George Washington Highway;
 Hickory Drive; Lafayette Av-
 enue; Ridgely; Second
 Society; Short Woods;
 Spire View Road
 RIDGEBURY ESTATES – Beaver
 Brook Road; Old Farm Road;
 Pasture Lane; Sherman Colo-
 nial
 Ridgely Firehouse – Regan Road
 RIDGEBURY HOLLOW – Hollow,
 The
 RIDGEBURY MOUNTAIN – Asp-
 room Mountain; Barlow
 Mountain; Bob Hill Road;
 Mountain, The; North Moun-
 tain; Ridgely Knolls
 Ridgely Parish – Ridgely
 Ridgely Road – Old Ridgely
 Road; Stone Ridge Estates
 RIDGEBURY ROAD I
 RIDGEBURY ROAD II
 Ridgely School – Lakeland Hills;
 Sunset Lane
 Ridgely School District(s) –
 Ridgely; Ridgely Moun-
 tain
 RIDGECREST DRIVE
 RIDGEFIELD

Ridgefield Agricultural Society –
 Fairgrounds, The
 RIDGEFIELD AND DANBURY
 TURNPIKE
 Ridgefield and New York Railroad
 Co. – Colonial Green; Cornen
 Avenue; Peaceable Street;
 Titicus
 Ridgefield Bank – Cornen Avenue;
 Cornen's Brook; Farrar Lane;
 Lee Road; Scodon Drive
 Ridgefield Board of Education –
 Buell Street
 Ridgefield Boys Club – Ballard Park;
 Westmoreland
 Ridgefield Branch Railroad – Bailey
 Avenue
 RIDGEFIELD BROOK – Brookside
 Road; Cornen's Brook; River
 Road.; *see also* Norwalk River
 Ridgefield Cemetery – Old Meeting
 House Tract
 Ridgefield Creamery – Old Creamery
 Highway
 Ridgefield Crossings – Fitch's Farm;
 Great Pond
 Ridgefield Depot – New Road III
 Ridgefield Electric Company – An-
 derson Tea House Road
 Ridgefield Fair and Cattle Show –
 Fairgrounds, The; Soundview
 Road
 Ridgefield Fairgrounds – Soundview
 Road
 Ridgefield Family Y – Martin Park
 Ridgefield Garden Club – Ballard
 Park
 RIDGEFIELD GARDENS – Poplar
 Road
 Ridgefield Golf Club – Golf Lane
 Ridgefield Golf Course – Dlhly Court;
 Mopus Brook
 Ridgefield High School – Chekhov
 Road; Mamasasco Mountain;
 North Salem Road; Richardson
 Park; Ridgely; Tackora Trail
 RIDGEFIELD HILLS
 RIDGEFIELD HILLTOP ACRES –
 Nutmeg Ridge
 Ridgefield Hilltop Acres Corporation
 – Ridgefield Hilltop Acres
 Ridgefield Historical Society –
 Belvedere Court; Harrison
 Court
 Ridgefield Hotel – Fountain, The

RIDGEFIELD KNOLLS – Knolls, the; Knollwood Drive; North Mountain; Partridge Drive; Quail Drive; Rockcrest Drive; Spire View Road; Todds Road; Virginia Court
 RIDGEFIELD LAKES – Bennett's Pond; Farms; Highcliff Terrace; Highview Road; Lakes Number 1-4; Limestone; Manasco Road; Peach Pond; Rainbow Drive; Rainbow Lake; Ridgeway Terrace; Rita Road; Rustic Drive, Road; Wataba Lake; Water's Edge Way
 Ridgfield Lakes, Inc. – Marie Lane
 Ridgfield Land Conservancy – Turtle Pond
 Ridgfield Library – Biddle Hill; Gilbert Street; Library Hill; New Pond; Olcott Way; Pierrepont Drive
 Ridgfield Lodge and Health Resort – Ridgfield Manor Estates
 RIDGEFIELD MANOR ESTATES – Hopper's Pond
 RIDGEFIELD NEW ROAD
 Ridgfield News Store – Harding Drive
 Ridgfield Open Space Association – Bennett's Pond State Park
 Ridgfield Orchestra – Jeffro Drive
 Ridgfield Playhouse – Chekhov Road
 Ridgfield Police Station – Martin Park
 Ridgfield Preservation Trust – Station Hill
 Ridgfield Press – Bailey Avenue; Governor Street; Lounsbury Road; West Lane
 Ridgfield R.R. Station – Stage Road
 Ridgfield Recreation Center – Cranberry Meadow
 RIDGEFIELD-REDDING HIGHWAY
 RIDGEFIELD ROAD I
 RIDGEFIELD ROAD II
 Ridgfield Savings Bank – *See* Ridgfield Bank.
 Ridgfield School – Chekhov Road; Martin Park; Shields Lane
 Ridgfield Short Woods – Bogus; Short Woods
 Ridgfield Skating Center – High Ridge
 RIDGEFIELD STATION – Beers Station; Branchville; Station Hill
 RIDGEFIELD STREET – Main Street
 Ridgfield Supply Company – Railroad Avenue II; Station Hill; Town Farm; West Ridgfield
 Ridgfield Symphonette – Jeffro Drive
 Ridgfield Theater Barn – Halpin Lane
 Ridgfield, town of (government) – Stone Ridge Estates
 Ridgfield Volunteer Fire Department – Abbott Avenue
 Ridgfield Water Supply Co. – Anderson Tea House Road; Peaceable Ridge Road; Pumping Station Swamp; Round Pond; Standpipe Road
 Ridgfield's Poor House – Poor House Lane
 RIDGEWAY TERRACE
 RIDGEWOOD ROAD
 "Rippowam" (estate) – West Mountain; Rippowam Road
 Rippowam, Lake – Eight Lakes; Great Hill; Long Pond I; North Long Pond; South Long Pond
 RIPPOWAM ROAD – Brushy Lane
 RISING RIDGE ROAD
 RITA ROAD
 Ritch, Charles – Haviland Road; Hulda Lane; Ritch Drive
 RITCH DRIVE – Haviland Road; Hulda Lane
 Ritch, Harold A. – Fillmore Lane; Hulda Lane; Ritch Drive; Still Road
 Ritch, Hulda – Hulda Lane; Ritch Drive
 Ritch, Thomas – Ritch Drive
 Ritchard, Cyril – Hayes Lane; Old Pierce Road
 River Road – Tanton Hill Road
 RIVER ROAD
 RIVERSIDE DRIVE
 RIVERVIEW DRIVE
 Riverview Road – Charter Oak Court
 Roache, Robert E. – Lantern Drive; Old Musket Lane; Powderhorn Drive

Roberts (Roberti), Joseph – Roberts Lane; Roberts Pond
 ROBERTS LANE
 ROBERTS POND – Bucks Pond
 Roberts, Rufus – Negro Rocks
 Roberts, Sarah Ann – Wintergreen
 Roberts, Steele – Wiggin-Roberts Lane
 ROBINSON, MOUNT
 ROB'S HOLLOW
 ROCHAMBEAU AVENUE – Peatt Park; Washington Avenue
 Rochambeau, Comte de – George Washington Highway; Hus-sar's Camp Place; McKeon Place; Pound Ridge; Rocham-beau Avenue; Washington Avenue; Shadow Lake Road
 ROCK COURT
 ROCK LOT, THE
 ROCK ROAD
 ROCK SPRING
 ROCK SPRING LANE
 ROCKCREST DRIVE
 Rocklein, Conrad – Hillsdale Avenue; Island Hill and Avenue; Moun-tain View Park
 Rockwell (family) – New Pattent; Rockwell Road; Southwest Ridges
 Rockwell, Abigail Hauley – Hauley's Ridge
 Rockwell, Abner – Great Ditch
 Rockwell, Abraham – Great Ditch
 Rockwell Candlestick Factory – Market Street
 Rockwell, Daniel – Bogus; Great Ditch
 Rockwell, David – Great Ditch
 Rockwell, Francis A. – Catoonah Street
 Rockwell, George Lounsbury – Main Street; Old Burying Ground; Rockwell Road
 Rockwell, J. W. – Old Creamery Highway
 Rockwell, James – Wolfpits, The
 Rockwell, John – Bogus; King's Highway
 Rockwell, John W. – Catoonah Street
 Rockwell, Jonathan – King's High-way; Rockwell Road; Rattle Snake Swamp; Seymour Lane; West Rattle Hole
 Rockwell, Mary Everest – Main Street
 Rockwell, Reuben, II – Ridge, The
 ROCKWELL ROAD – Branchville Road; Cushman Lane
 Rockwell, Thomas – Island Bridge
 Rockwell, Urania – Ridge, The
 Rockwell, Winthrop – Rockwell Road; Town Farm
 ROCKY NECK, SPRING
 Rodier, William B. – Jeffro Drive
 Rolling Hills – Finch Drive
 Rolling Meadow Estates – Beaver Brook Road
 ROLLING HILLS ESTATES, ROAD
 ROLLING RIDGE ROAD
 Roma Pizzeria – Ballard Park; Hills-dale Avenue; Martin Park;
 Romano, Rita – Rita Road
 Rondax Co. – Griffith Lane
 Rosa, Mr. and Mrs. Paul J. – Olm-stead Lane
 Roscoe (family) – Pin Pack Road
 Roscoe, Harry – Roscoe Road
 ROSCOE ROAD
 Ross, Frederick W. – Ross Lane
 Ross, Gustav – Ridgefield Knolls
 ROSS LANE
 Rossi, Frank – Ridgefield Hilltop Acres
 ROUND HILL
 ROUND LAKE ROAD – Cradle Rock; Walnut Hill Road
 Round Lake Ice Co. – Hibbart Place
 ROUND MOUNTAIN – Turkey Island
 ROUND POND – Anderson Tea House Road; Bennett's Pond; Cradle Rock; Eight Lakes; Harrison Court; High Ridge; New Road IV; Pumping Sta-tion Swamp; Sachem Hill; Tackora Trail
 Round Pond Brook – Round Pond
 Route 1 – Bedford Road; Danbury Road
 Route 3 – Danbury Road
 Route 7 – Cedar Mountain Road; Danbury and Norwalk Turn-pike; Ethan Allen Highway; Florida Road; Pelham Lane; Ridgefield and Danbury Turn-pike; Saw Mill Brook; Starr's Plain; Starr's Ridge; Sturde-vant's Ridge; Sugar Hollow Turnpike; Taylor's Corners; Wild Cat Lot; Willow Court Road; Wilridge Road

Route 33 – North Salem Road; Norwalk Road; Wilton Road West
 Route 35 – Bedford Road; Danbury Road; Martin Park; Peaceable Street; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Route 102 – Barry Avenue
 Route 116 – North Salem Road; Tackora Trail
 Route 123 – Stamping Place
 ROYALL OAK RIDGE
 Rowland, Alice V. Mac Sherry – Rowland Lane
 Rowland, Joseph Samuel – Rowland Lane
 ROWLAND LANE
 Rufus, Warren – Lee Road
 Ruggles, Cecelia – Tea House Lane
 Rundle Farm – Old Stagecoach Road
 Rusco, Allen – Roscoe Road
 Rusco Jane – Roscoe Road
 Russell, Mrs. Charles – Hop Meadow Branch
 RUSTIC DRIVE, ROAD
 Rux, Elsie – Hull Place
 Ryan, J. E., Co. – Town Farm

S

SACHEM HILL
 SADDLE RIDGE ROAD
 St. Elizabeth Seton Church – McKeeon Place
 ST. GEORGE'S SPRING
 St. George's Water – St. George's Spring
 St. John (family) – St. John's Road; Southwest Ridges
 St. John, Isaac – Nod
 St. John, J. N. – St. Johns Road
 St. John, Matthew – St. Johns Road
 St. John, Matthias – St. Johns Road; Seymour Lane
 St. John, Nathan – Rattle Snake Swamp; Spruce Mountain
 St. John, Samuel – St. Johns Road; Mamanasco Lake, Pond
 St. John, William – Fountain, The; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 St. John – *see also* Saintjohn
 ST. JOHNS ROAD – Cranberry Lane; Flat Rock Road; Norwalk Road
 St. Mary's R.C. Church – Catoonah Street
 St. Stephen's Episcopal Church – Biddle Hill; Cornen Avenue;

Lounsbury Road; Perry Lane; Pierrepont Drive; Resseguie's Lane
 St. Vincent de Paul novitiate – Sachem Hill
 Saintjohn – *see also* St. John
 Saintjohn Lott – North Mountain
 Saintjohn, Matthew (Homestead) – Lee Road
 Saintjohn, Matthew – Long Ridge; Miller's Ridge; Steep Brook
 Saintjohn, Nathan – Danbury Road; North Mountain; Round Hill; West River
 Saintjohn, Samuel – Cradle Rock; Cranberry Meadow; Burt's Lane; Deer Pit; Great Meadow; Mill Path; New Pound Boggs; Round Hill; Southwest Ridges; Stamping Place; Toilsome
 Salem – North Salem Road; South Salem Road
 Salerno, Bartholomew T. – Pilgrim Hill Road; Silver Brook Road
 Salvestrini, Armando – Birch Lane; Hawthorne Circle; Linden Road; Poplar Road; Ridgefield Gardens; Willow Court Road
 SAMARA PLACE – Topgallant
 Samuel, Lawrence M. – Old Stagecoach Road
 Samm (Indian) – Ammawogg; Long Pond I; Tapornick Division; Wepack
 Sandburg, Carl – Topstone Road
 Sanders, John F. (Jack) – Hauley Place; Olmstead Lane
 Sandlewood Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Sanford (family) – Sanford Station
 Sanford, Bart – Old Redding Road
 Sanford, Daniel – Hollow, The; Simpaug Turnpike; Sanfords' Pond; Umpauwaug Road
 Sanford, David – Sanfords' Pond
 Sanford, Ebenezer Burr – Couch's Station; Miller's Pond
 Sanford, Jesse – Sanford Station
 SANFORD STATION – Farmingville Road; Topstone Road
 Sanford Station Road – Simpaug Turnpike
 SANFORDS' POND – Whiting's Pond
 Sarah (Negro slave) – Copp's Corner
 SARAH BISHOP ROAD

Sarah Bishop's Lot – Sarah Bishop Road
 Saugatuck River – Umpawaug Road
 SAUNDERS LANE
 Saunders, P.K. – Saunders Lane
 Saunders Valve Company – Saunders Lane
 Saunders, William – Saunders Lane
 Sauson, Lewis – Old Meeting House Tract
 SAW MILL BROOK
 Saw Mill Hill – Roberts Pond
 SAW MILL HILL ROAD – Cider Mill Lot; Tannery Hill Road; Tannery Pond; Titicus River; Titicus Road
 SAW MILL POND – Lower Pond
 SAW MILL RIVER
 SAW MILL ROAD
 SAW MILL SWAMP
 SAXIFAX RIDGE
 Scala, Robert – Mopus Brook
 Schaffer, Dr. Newton M. – Sound-view Road
 Schlumberger-Doll Research Center – Gay's Hill; Old Quarry Road; Sunset Lane
 Schenck, Henry DeB. – High Valley Road
 School District #1 – Scotland
 School District #2 – Titicus
 School District #3 – Limestone, Limestone Hill
 School District #4 – Titicus
 School District #5 – West Mountain
 School District #7 – West Lane
 School District #8 – Whipstick
 School District #9 – Flat Rock
 School District #10 – Railroad Avenue I
 School District #11 – Florida
 School District #12 – Farmingville
 School District #13 – Scotland
 School District #14 – South Middle District
 School District #15 – Schoolhouse Place
 School District, Second Half – Florida
 School Districts (earliest) – see Fifth School District, First School District, Fourth School District, Second School District, Third School District
 SCHOOL HOUSE MEADOW
 SCHOOLHOUSE PLACE

Schools and Schoolhouses – *see* Bell; Branchville; Center; Farmingville; Flat Rock; Florida; High School (Old); Independent; Limestone; North Ridgebury; Ridgefield High School; Scotland; Scotts Ridge; Shapley; South Ridgebury; Titicus; Veterans Park; Vinton; West Lane; West Mountain.
 Schork, Eva M. – Hunter Heights
 Schoyer, Edna – Richardson Park
 Scodon – Donnelly Drive; Langstroth Drive; Scodon Drive
 SCODON DRIVE
 Scodon III – Evergreen Place; Pheasant Lane; Scodon Drive
 Scofield (family) – Lounsbury Road
 Scofield, Carleton A. – Donnelly Drive; Langstroth Drive; Scodon Drive; Sophia Drive
 Scofield, Delia Ann – Lounsbury Road
 SCOTLAND
 Scotland District – East Mountain I; Great Ditch; Kiah's Brook Lane; Scotland; South Middle District
 SCOTLAND KNOLLS – Hobby Drive
 Scotland School – Pierrepont Drive; Round Mountain; Scotland
 Scotland School District – Scotts Ridge; Town Farm
 Scotland Schoolhouse – Scotland
 Scots Land – Scotland
 Scott (family) – Scotts Brook; Scotts Ridge; Seymour Lane; Southwest Ridges; Town Farm
 Scott Block – Harding Drive
 Scott, D. – Scotland
 Scott, Daniel – Scott Road; Silver Spring Lane; Silver Spring Park Lane
 Scott, David – Abbott's Mill Road; Asproom Bridge; Blacksmith's Ridge; Foster's Pond; Long Pond I; Mamasasco Mountain; Southwest Ridges; Titicus Hill
 Scott, Ensign David – Scotland
 Scott, David, I – Scotland
 Scott-Fanton Museum – Canada Land; Wooster Heights Drive
 Scott, Gideon – Island Meadow
 Scott, Gould – Island Meadow

- Scott, Hezekiah – Aspen Mill Road; Kiah's Brook Lane; Scotland
- Scott, Hiram K. – Catoonah Street; Scotland; Town Farm
- Scott, James – Asproom Loaf, Loft, Aloft; Burt's Lane; Ivy Hill; Jug Island; Pondered Swamp; Scotland; Wintergreen; Yellow Hill
- Scott, Captain James – Scotland
- Scott, James, 2nd – Asproom Bridge; Kiah's Brook Lane
- Scott, Jere – Asproom Loaf, Loft, Aloft
- Scott, Lucretia – Kiah's Brook Lane
- Scott, Martha – Yellow Hill
- Scott, Mary – Scotland
- Scott, Perry – Buck Hill Road; Donnelly Drive; Glen Road; Victor Drive
- SCOTT RIDGE ROAD
- SCOTT ROAD
- Scott, Timothy O. – Asproom Loaf, Loft, Aloft; Scotland
- Scott, William, 2nd – Bear's Den; Scott Road
- SCOTTS BROOK
- Scott's Grist Mill – Mamasasco Mountain
- Scotts Reservoir – Scotts Brook
- SCOTTS RIDGE – Mamasasco Hill; Mamasasco Ridge; O'Neill Court; Pond Road; Town Farm
- Scotts Ridge Road – Tackora Trail
- Scott's Ridge School – Stebbins Close
- Scott's Ridge Schoolhouse – Stebbins Close
- Scribner, Edward – Flat Rock
- Scripps-Howard – Bedford Road
- SCRIPP'S POND – Hopper's Pond
- Scripps, Robert Paine – Bedford Road; Lacha Linne; Scripp's Pond
- Seamore – *see also* Seymour
- Seamore, Matthew – Branchville Road; Miller's Ridge; Oblong, The; Old Branchville Road; Seymour Lane; Southwest Ridges; Tub Swamp; Wolfpits, The
- SEAR HILL
- Searles Brothers – Gilbert Street
- Sears, Betsy – New West Lane
- Second Congregational Church – *see* Ridgebury Congregational Church
- Second Ecclesiastical Society – Foster's Pond
- SECOND LANE
- SECOND PATENT – North Patent
- SECOND POND
- Second School District – Farmingville; Titicus
- SECOND SOCIETY
- Segal, James and Deb – Sachem Hill
- SEIR HILL – Sear Hill
- Selleck (family) – Limestone; Otter Pond; Parlor Rock
- Selleck, B. Sturges – McLaury's Hill
- Selleck Farm – Outpost Pond; Ridgefield Lakes
- Selleck, Hanford – Maplewood Road
- Selleck, Sturges – Bennett's Farm Road; Black Man's Corner; Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike; Maplewood Road; Ridgefield and Danbury Turnpike; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
- Selleck – *see also* Sellick
- Selleck's Hill – McLaury's Hill
- Sellick, Benjamin – Iron Works II
- Sellick, Hanford – Buckspen Swamp; Frog's Point
- Sellick, Nathan – Buttonwood Swamp; Pond Mountain
- Sellick, Sturges – Starr's Plain
- Sendak, Maurice – Murdock's Corners
- SENOKA DRIVE
- SERFILIPPI DRIVE – South Olmstead Lane
- Serfilippi, Frank – Cranberry Lane
- Serfilippi, Mario – Serfilippi Drive
- Serfilippi, Michael – Serfilippi Drive
- Servadio (family) – Outpost Pond
- SETH LOW MOUNTAIN ROAD
- SETTLERS LANE – Or-Mar Drive; Wooster Heights
- SETTLERS ROCK
- SEVENTH LANE
- SEVENTY ACRES ROAD – Old Redding Road
- Seward, J. Wesley – Eight Lakes
- Sewer Authority – Village, The
- SEWER BED ROAD – South Street
- Seymour – *see also* Seamore
- Seymour (family) – South Olmstead Lane; Head of the Boggs

Seymour (farms) – South Olmstead Lane
 Seymour (home) – Parley Lane
 Seymour, Anna. – Gay Road
 Seymour Cemetery – South Olmstead Lane
 Seymour, Clifford D. – Soundview Road
 Seymour, Hiram L. – Flat Rock; Wintergreen Hill
 SEYMOUR LANE
 Seymour, Lewis J. – Wintergreen
 Seymour, Matthew – Pound Street; Seymour Lane
 Seymour, Robert – Seymour Lane
 Seymour, Rudolph – Seymour Lane
 Seymour, S. M. – Gay Road
 Seymour, Sarah – Head of the Boggs
 Seymour, Squire – West Lane
 Seymour, William O. – Parley Lane; Seymour Lane
 SH 14 (state highway) – Ridgebury Road I
 SH 143 (state highway) – North Salem Road
 SHADBLOW HILL ROAD
 SHADOW LAKE – Stone Ridge Estates
 SHADOW LAKE ROAD – Crosby Court
 SHADOW LANE – Herrick Lane
 Shafer, Allan – Flat Rock; Wilton Road East
 Shafer, Jamie – Flat Rock
 Shape, Betsy – Windy Ridge Lane
 Shapiro, Joseph M. – Eleven Levels Road
 Shapley, Carl – Shapley Stretch
 Shapley School – Cornen Avenue; Outpost Pond; Shapley Stretch
 SHAPLEY STRETCH
 SHARP HILL
 SHARP HILL LANE
 Sheehan, Dr. James E. – Franklin Heights
 Sheldon, Col. – King Lane
 Shelton, Dr. George G. – Conklin Court
 SHEPPISON, MOUNT
 SHERMAN COLONIAL – Beaver Brook Road
 Sherman Colonial Company – Sherman Colonial
 Sherwood, Amos – Sherwood Road
 Sherwood, Daniel- Bun's Lane; Hauley's Ridge; Candlewood

Hill; Mamanasco Hill; Mamanasco Lake, Pond; Pond Road; Read's Mill Pond; Sherwood Road; Sherwood's Ridge; Sturdevant's Ridge
 SHERWOOD FARM – Craigmoor; Knap's Farm
 Sherwood, John – Saw Mill Pond
 Sherwood, Nathan – Great Hill; Knap's Farm; Sherwood Farm; Zack's Ridge
 Sherwood, Nehemiah – Long Stone
 SHERWOOD ROAD – Titicus Swamp
 Sherwood, Thomas – Fitch's Farm; Foster's Pond; Long Stone; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Sherwood's Farm – Fitch's Farm
 SHERWOOD'S RIDGE – Walnut Ridge
 Shields, Clayton – Clayton Place
 Shields, the Rev. Hugh – Carroll's Folly; Dowling Drive; Shields Lane
 SHIELDS LANE
 Shields, Laura Curie Allee – Market Street
 Shields, Reed F. – Clayton Place; Judges Lane; Shields Lane
 Shockburgh, Dr. – Fitch's Farm
 Shoemaker's Highway – Bedford Road
 Sholes, D. Smith – Dowling Drive
 SHORT BRIDGE
 SHORT BROOK
 SHORT HILLS
 SHORT LANE
 SHORT WOODS – Camp Land
 Shortell, Rev. R. E. – Village, The
 Shoumatoff, Nicholas A. – Peppe-neegek
 Sib Road – Old Sib Road
 SILVER BIRCH LANE
 SILVER BROOK ROAD – Field Crest Drive
 SILVER HILL ROAD
 SILVER MINE, THE (follows Silver Hill Road)
 SILVER SPRING – Silver Hill Road
 SILVER SPRING BROOK
 Silver Spring Country Club – Flat Rock Drive; Pierrepont Drive; Pump Lane; Round Hill; Silver Spring; Silver Spring Ridge; Silver Spring Road; Southwest Ridges

SILVER SPRING LANE
 Silver Spring Park – Silver Spring
 Park Lane
 SILVER SPRING PARK LANE
 Silver Spring Pond – Silver Spring
 Swamp
 SILVER SPRING RIDGE – Ridge
 Road I; Southwest Ridges
 SILVER SPRING ROAD – Silver
 Spring Brook; Stamping Place
 SILVER SPRING SWAMP – Beaver
 Dam
 SILVERMINE BROOK
 Silvermine River – Beaver Brook;
 Flat Rock; Silver Spring Brook
 Silvermine River-East Branch – Sil-
 vermine Brook
 Silvermine River-West Branch –
 Silvermine Brook
 Simmons, Elizabeth H. – Cranberry
 Lane; Orchard Lane
 Simmons, Warren – Cranberry Lane;
 Orchard Lane
 Simon, Morris – Mimosa
 SIMPAUG TURNPIKE – Danbury
 Old Cart Path
 Sinikka – Senoka Drive
 Siwanoy (Indians) – Aokeets; Nor-
 walk River
 SIXTH LANE
 Sixth 20-Acre Division – Hauley's
 Ridge
 SKUNK LANE – North Street
 SKY TOP ROAD
 Sky Top Estates – Douglas Lane
 SLEEPY HOLLOW ROAD – Cradle
 Rock, Harrison Court
 Smillie George Henry – Stebbins'
 Corner (Bedini letter)
 Smith (family) – Great Pasture; Mill
 View Terrace; Seymour Lane;
 South Olmstead Lane; South-
 west Ridges; Sugar Hollow
 Turnpike
 Smith, Amos – Flaggy Boggs
 Smith, Azar – Rock Lot
 Smith, Azaria – Smith Road
 Smith, Azariah – Mine Land
 Smith, Benjamin – Bennett's Farm
 Road; Colls Point; Hauley's
 Ridge; Kopps Mountain; Mine
 Hill; Sheppison, Mountain;
 Short Bridge
 Smith, Big Jim – Kiln Hill Lane
 Smith, Charles, 2nd – Gilbert Street;
 Skunk Lane

Smith, Clark – Scotland; Scotts Ridge
 Smith, Clint – Smith Road
 Smith, Daniel- Hogholler, Smith's;
 Wallis' Hoghole
 Smith, Daniel, 2nd – Silver Spring
 Ridge
 Smith, Daniel, 4th – Silver Spring
 Ridge
 Smith, Duncan – Titicus
 Smith, Ebenezer – Brimstone
 Swamp; Fort Hill; Hogholler,
 Smith's; Long Pond I; Miller's
 Ridge; Norwalk Mill River;
 Prospect Street; Royall Oak
 Ridge; Steep Brook; Wallis'
 Hoghole
 Smith, Edward H. – Town Farm
 Smith, Elias – Cider Mill Lot; Huck-
 leberry Hill
 Smith, Elizabeth (Mrs. Jonah) – Ben-
 nett's Farm
 Smith, Eunice – Cider Mill Lot;
 Huckleberry Hill
 Smith, Ezra – Great Pond; Smith
 Road; Smith's Great Pond
 Smith, George – How's Limekiln
 Smith, Gideon – Brushy Lane; Great
 Ditch; Hogholler, Smith's;
 North Mountain; Wallis' Hog-
 hole
 Smith, Harvey, Esquire – Ridgebury
 Mountain
 Smith, Harvey K. – Flaggy Boggs
 Smith, Henry, 2nd – Skunk Lane
 Smith, Hezekiah – Great Pond; Smith
 Road; Smith's Great Pond
 Smith, Isaiah – North Mountain
 Smith, Jeremiah – Holloway Lot;
 Peck Hill; Titicus Hill; Upper
 Pond
 Smith, Jim – Murdock's Corners
 Smith, Job – Hogholler, Smith's;
 Scotland; Wallis' Hoghole
 Smith, John H. – Sugar Hollow Turn-
 pike
 Smith, John M. – Stony Brook
 Smith, Levi – Bear's Den
 Smith, Lewis – Tannery Hill Road
 Smith, Louis G. – Anderson Tea
 House Road
 Smith, Matthew – Old Society
 Smith, Nancy – Smith Road
 Smith, Nathan – Short Bridge
 Smith, Philip N. – Gilbert Street
 Smith, Phinias – Bear's Den
 SMITH ROAD

Smith, Samuei – Beaver Dam; New Bridge; Pompion Ridge; Short Brook
 Smith, Samuel (Milford) – East River; Peespunk; Walnut Ridge
 Smith, Samuel (Norwalk) – Bedford Road; East River; Flaggy Boggs; Truesdale, Mountain
 Smith, Stephen – Aspen Ledges Road; Great Ledges; Hauley's Ridge; How's Limekiln
 Smith, Thomas – Hogholler, Smith's; Pompion Ridge; Prospect Street; Turkey Island
 Smith, William, 2nd – Smith Road
 Smith, William H. – Smith Road
 SMITH'S GREAT POND
 Smith's Hogholler – Wallis' Hoghole
 Smith I s Lott – Branchville Road
 Smith's Mills – Smith's Pond
 SMITH'S POND
 Society of American Magicians – Trepel Lane
 Solley (family) – Perch Pond
 Solley, Dr. and Mrs. Fred P., Sr. – Craigmoor
 Solley, Frederick W. – Craigmoor
 Solley, Margaret – Craigmoor
 Solley, Robert F. – Craigmoor
 Somers, N.Y. -- Ammawogg
 SOPHIA DRIVE
 Sound View Acres – Split Level Road
 Soundview Farm – Soundview Road
 SOUNDVIEW ROAD – Flat Rock; Media Lane; Town Spring
 South Lake – Oscaleta Road
 SOUTH LONG POND – South Pond
 SOUTH MIDDLE DISTRICT
 SOUTH OLMSTEAD LANE – Cranberry Lane; New Pound Boggs; Old Quarry Road
 SOUTH POND
 South Ridgebury School District – Ridgebury; South Middle District; York State Line
 SOUTH SALEM ROAD – Bedford Road; Lacha Linne; Southwest Ridges
 South School District – York State Line
 SOUTH SHORE DRIVE
 SOUTH STREET – Miry Brook; Northrup Road; Old Quarry Road; Sewer Bed Road
 Southeast, N.Y. – Crosby Court
 SOUTHRIDGE COURT – Brushy Ridge, Southwest Ridges
 SOUTHWEST RIDGES – Canfield's Mill River; Long Ridge; Ob-long, The; Royall Oak Ridge; Southridge Road; Stamping Place
 Southwest Ridges Road – Southwest Ridges; West Lane
 Southworth, Kathy – Quail Drive
 SPECTACLE BROOK – Spectacle Brook Ridge
 SPECTACLE BROOK RIDGE – Gay's Hill
 Spectacle Island – Spectacle Brook
 SPECTACLE LANE – Great Rocks; Spectacle Road
 Spectacle Pond – Spectacle Brook
 SPECTACLE RIDGE
 SPECTACLE ROAD – Yellow Hill
 Sperry, Bert E. – Whitlock Lane illus.
 Sperry Garage – Fairgrounds, The
 Sperry's Livery Stable – Catoonah Street
 SPIRE VIEW ROAD
 SPLIT LEVEL ROAD
 SPRING MEADOW
 Spring Valley – Parlor Rock
 Spring Valley Corporation – Hawthorne Hill Road
 Spring Valley Farm – Wheeler Road
 SPRING V ALLEY ROAD – Bridle Trail
 SPRUCE HILL(S)
 SPRUCE HILL ROAD
 SPRUCE HOLE
 SPRUCE MOUNTAIN – Short Woods
 Spruce Ridge Farm – Crow Hill
 SPRUCEWOOD LANE
 Spy, The (novel) – Crosby Court
 Squash's (news store) – Bert's Lane; Harding Drive
 Squire, Samuel – Fitch's Farm
 STAGE ROAD
 Stamford – Rippowam Road
 STAMFORD MILL RIVER – Canfield's Mill River; Hopper's Pond; Mill River Hollow; Norwalk Mill River; Pinchbeck Pond; West River
 STAMFORD ROAD
 Starn-Nor Holding Company – Bayberry Hill Road; Wenbos Lane
 STAMPING PLACE
 STANDISH DRIVE

Standish, Miles – Standish Drive
 Stanford – see Stamford
 Stanford Branch – Canfield's Mill River
 STANDPIPE ROAD – Peaceable Ridge Road
 Starr (family) – Jones' Pond; Starr's Plain
 Starr, Ebenezer – Ridgebury Hollow
 Starr Estate – Farmingville; Saunders Lane
 Starr, Josiah – Starr's Plain
 Starr, Levi – Copps Old Line
 Starr, Louis Morris – Farmingville Road
 Starr, Micajah – Mill Plain
 Starr, Peter – Ridgebury Hollow
 Starr, Samuel – Mill Plain
 Starr, Smith – Spruce Hole
 Starr, Thomas, Jr. – Short Woods
 STARR'S PLAIN – Laurel Lane
 Starr's Plain District – Starrs Plain; Starr's Ridge
 Starr's Plain Road – Starr's Plain
 STARR'S RIDGE – Starr's Plain
 STATION HILL
 Stebbins (family) – Great Meadow; Stebbins Close; Stebbins' Corner
 Stebbins, Benjamin – Casagmo; Jug Island; Norwalk River; Olcott Way; Poned Swamp; Stebbins Close; Steep Brook
 STEBBINS CLOSE
 STEBBINS' CORNER
 Stebbins Homestead/House – Grove Street; Stebbins Close; Stebbins' Corner
 Stebbins, Joseph – Stebbins Close
 Stebbins, Josiah – Stebbins Close
 Stebbins, Nathan Gould – Peck Hill
 Stebbins, Nehemiah – Long Bridge
 Stebbins, Samuel – Bennett's Farm Road; Limestone; Pound Street; Stebbins Close
 Stebbins, Thomas – Stebbins Close
 STEEP BROOK
 Steichen, Edward – Topstone Road
 Stevens, Nathaniel – Mill Plain
 STILL RIVER – Titicus River
 STILL ROAD – Druid Lane; Old Still Road; Smith Road; Taylor's Corners
 Stirdevant, Jolin – Dutchman Swamp; Jug Island; Poned Swamp
 Stirdevant – see Sturdevant
 Stirdevant's Ridge – Sturdevant's Ridge
 Stokes, James – Sachem Hill
 Stoll, Edward – Glen Acres
 Stolle (family) – Hunter Heights
 Stolle, Carl A. F. – Walnut Grove and Road
 Stone Court – Fox Hill Village
 Stone Drive – Fox Hill Village; Norrans Ridge Road
 STONE RIDGE ESTATES – Beaver Brook Road; Crosby Court; Fisher Lane; Shadow Lake; Stonewall Lane
 Stone walls – Stonewall Lane
 "Stonecrest" (estate) – Conklin Court; North Street; Ridgecrest Drive; Stonecrest Road
 Stonecrest Farm – Bear's Den
 STONECREST MOUNTAIN – Asproom Mountain; East Mountain I
 STONECREST ROAD
 STONEHENGE ESTATES – Druid Lane; Fire Hill Acres
 Stonehenge Inn – Stonehenge Road; Taylor's Corners;
 Stonehenge Pond – Stonehenge Road
 STONEHENGE ROAD – Limestone; Taylor's Corners
 STONEWALL LANE – Stone Ridge Estates
 STONY BROOK
 STONY HILL ROAD, TERRACE
 Stratton, Dr. – Remington Rd,
 STRAWBERRY RIDGE ROAD
 Street, Timothy – Keeler Drive
 Stuart, Lewis – Lower Pond; Saw Mill Pond
 Sturdevant (family) – Great Pasture'
 Sturdevant, John – Bennett's Farm; Buckspen Swamp; Stebbins' Corner; Sturdevant's Clapboard Tree Ridge; Whonleberry Hill
 STURDEVANT'S CLAPBOARD TREE RIDGE – Cain's Hill and Road; Sturdevant's Ridge
 STURDEVANT'S RIDGE – Cain's Hill and Road
 Sturges, Clarence – Ridgefield Lake
 Sturges, David, Jr. – Buttonwood Swamp
 Sturges, Donald – Millstone Court
 Sturges, Elnathan, Jr. – Long Meadow

Sturges, Elnathan, Sr. – Long Meadow
 Sturges, James – Millstone Court
 Sturges, James, Jr. – Pond Mountain
 Sturges, John – Eustis Lane; Farm Hill Road; Harrison Court
 STURGES PARK – Bear Swamp; High Ridge
 Suburban Action Institute – Kiln Hill Lane
 Sugar Hollow – Danbury Road; Pickett's Ridge Road; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Sugar Hollow Cart Path – Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Sugar Hollow Mountain – Starr's Plain; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Sugar Hollow Racquet Club – Starr's Plain
 Sugar Hollow Road – Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 SUGAR HOLLOW TURNPIKE – Danbury and Norwalk Turnpike; Danbury and Ridgefield Turnpike; North and South Road; Old Main Highway; Ridgefield and Danbury Turnpike; Taylor's Corners
 Sugar Hollow Turnpike Road Company – Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 SUGAR LOAF MOUNTAIN ROAD – Asproom Loaf, Loft, Aloft
 Sugar Maple Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Sullivan (estate) – Country Club Road
 Summ (property) – Quarry Road
 SUMMIT LANE
 Sunset Drive – South Shore Drive
 Sunset Hall – West Mountain
 SUNSET LAKE
 SUNSET LANE – Station Hill
 SUNSET ROAD
 Sunshine Society – Harding Drive
 Swampfield – Danbury Road
 Sweaters Etc. – Harding Drive
 Swords (Estate) – Country Club Road
 Swords, Elizabeth – Memory Lane
 SYCAMORE LANE
 SYLVAN DRIVE
 Symone, Frank – Acre Lane; Windy Ridge Lane
 Symone, John – Acre Lane; Windy Ridge Lane
 Symone, Robert – Acre Lane; Windy Ridge Lane
 Szentkuti, Charles – Beechwood

T

TABLE ROCK ESTATES – Gay's Hill; St. Johns Road
 Tackora (Indian) – North Salem Road; Oreneca Road; Peespunk; Tackora Trail; Tcores Boggs; Tapornick Division
 Tackora (Indian) – see also Oreneca
 TACKORA ROAD
 TACKORA TRAIL – Copp's Corner; Mamanasco Road; North Salem Road; Tom's Spring
 Tackora's House – Peespunk
 "Tackore Old House" – Tackora Trail
 TACKORES BOGGS
 Talcott, Gov. Joseph – New Pattent; Ridgebury
 TALLY-HO ROAD
 TAMARACK, MOUNT
 Tamarack Swamp – Tamarack, Mount
 TANGLEWOOD COURT
 Taniwha – Anderson Tea House Road
 Tankiteka – Ramapoo Road; Tackora Trail; Wheer Cock
 "The Tannery" – Tannery Hill Road
 Tannery Hill – Tannery Hill Road
 TANNERY HILL ROAD
 TANNERY POND
 Tanton, Claire – Harvey Road
 Tanton, Harvey D. – Harvey Road; Hull Place; River Road; Tanton Hill Road;
 TANTON HILL ROAD – River Road
 Taporneck Purchase – Cross Pond
 Tap(p)orne(i)ck (Indian) – Amma-wogg; Long Pond I; Sarah Bishop Road; Saxifax Ridge; Tapornick Division; Wepack
 TAPORNICK DIVISION
 Tapornick's Division – Japornick's Division
 Taten, Miss Eva A. – Remington Road
 Taylor, (family) – Mill View Terrace; Taylor's Corners
 Taylor, B. – Taylors Corners
 Taylor-Benedict Farm – Knap's Farm
 Taylor, Capt. – Starr's Plain
 Taylor, Daniel, Jr. – Miry Brook
 Taylor, David – Little Pond
 Taylor, Davis – Taylor's Corners
 Taylor, Edwin – Taylor's Corners; Taylor's Pond

Taylor, Elizabeth – Candee's Pond
 Taylor, Francis – Candee's Pond
 Taylor, John – Ches(t)nut Ridge II;
 Taylor's Corners
 Taylor, Joseph – Taylor's Corners
 TAYLOR LANE – Devens Lane
 Taylor, Preserved – Taylor's Corners;
 Smith's Pond
 Taylor, Theophilus – Chestruin
 Taylor, Thomas – Taylor's Corners
 TAYLOR'S CORNERS – Mill View
 Terrace; Taylor's Pond
 TAYLOR'S POND
 Tea House – Anderson Tea House
 Road; Tea House Lane; Tea
 House Road
 TEA HOUSE LANE
 TEA HOUSE ROAD
 Teaberry Lane – Fox Hill Village
 Temple Shearith Israel – Westmore-
 land
 10 Acre Division – Saxifax Ridge
 TENTH LANE
 Termont Development Company –
 Cavalry Place
 THIRD LANE
 Third School District – Farmingville
 Thomas, Donald – Old Musket Lane;
 Thomas, Recompense – Freeholder's
 Corner; Middle Pond; Ridge-
 bury
 Thomas, William B. – Railroad Av-
 enue I
 Thoreau, Henry David – Copp's
 Corner
 Thoreau, John – Copp's Corner
 Thrall (family) – Otter Pond
 Thrall, Phebe – New Road II
 Thompson, Henrietta – Sarah Bishop
 Road
 Thompson, James – Sarah Bishop
 Road
 Thompson, Melish – Devens Lane;
 Taylor Lane
 THOUSAND ACRE SWAMP –
 Great Swamp
 THUNDER HILL LANE
 Thunder Lake – Cold Spring Lane II
 TIMMY CHRISTOPHER LANE
 TITICUS – Cider Mill Lot; Colonial
 Green; Tacones Boggs; Titicus
 Road
 Titicus Bridge – Gilbert Street
 TITICUS BROOK
 Titicus Cemetery – Old Burying
 Ground

TITICUS COURT – Titicus Ridge
 Titicus Crossroads – Titicus
 Titicus Flood – Gilbert Street
 Titicus Grist Mill – Millstone Rocks
 TITICUS HILL
 TITICUS MOUNTAIN – Anderson
 Tea House Road; Hunt Moun-
 tain; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 TITICUS PLAIN
 Titicus Reservoir – Titicus River
 TITICUS RIDGE
 TITICUS RIVER – Buffalo Creek;
 Cross Street; Fort Hill;
 Peespunk; Rob's Hollow;
 Tackora Trail; Tannery Hill
 Road; Tannery Pond; Titicus
 Brook; Upper Pond
 Titicus River Valley – Titicus Plain
 TITICUS ROAD
 Titicus School – Buell Street
 Titicus School Committee – Sharp
 Hill
 Titicus Schoolhouse – Gilbert Street;
 Titicus
 Titicus Store – Gilbert Street; Gilbert
 Street illus.
 Titicus Stream – Wataba Lake
 TITICUS SWAMP
 Titicus Tannery – New Pond; Tannery
 Hill Road
 Titicus Valley – Peespunk
 Titicus Village (Indian) – Naraneka,
 Lake; Ramapoo Road; Tackora
 Trail; Wheer Cock
 Titycus – *see* Titicus
 Tobin Farm – Silver Spring Road
 Todd Brothers Farm – Knollwood
 Drive
 Todd, C. – Bennett's Farm
 Todd, Charles, Sr. – Todds Road
 Todd, Charles Knapp – Todds Road
 Todd Farm – Todds Road; Douglas
 Lane
 Todd, Mary Knapp – Todds Road
 Todd, Rufus – Todds Road
 TODDS ROAD
 TOILSOME (Path, etc.) – Barrack
 Hill Road
 "Toilsome" – Holloway Lot; Folliott's
 Ridge
 Toilsome Brook – Toilsome
 Toilsome Path – Toilsome
 Toll Brothers – Great Pond.
 Tom (Indian) – Tom's Spring
 Tompkins, John – Copp's Corner
 Toms Mountain – Starr's Plain

TOM'S SPRING (Mountain, Road)
 Tomspring Mountain – Tom's Spring
 Tony (Indian) – Tony's Cave
 TONY'S CAVE – Indian Cave Road
 TOPCREST LANE
 TOPGALLANT – Samara Place
 Topstone Development Co. – Knoll-
 wood Drive; Ridgefield
 Knolls; Virginia Court
 TOPSTONE DRIVE
 Topstone Holding Co. – Topstone
 Drive
 TOPSTONE ROAD – Cross High-
 way; Farmingville Road; Stur-
 devant's Ridge;
 Wononpkagoonk
 Topstone Station – Sanford Station;
 Simpaug Turnpike; Topstone
 Road
 Torcellini, Donald – Casa- Torch
 Lane
 Torcellini, Gino – Casa-Torch Lane;
 Country Club Road
 TOWN FARM – Hobby Drive
 Town House – Town Farm
 TOWN HOUSES
 Town Lot – Town Houses
 TOWN RIDGE – East Ridge
 TOWN SPRING
 TOWN STREET – Fountain, The;
 Main Street; Norwalk Road
 Townsend, Gen. Franklin – King
 Lane
 TRAIL'S END LANE
 Trail's End Road – Trail's End Lane
 Trainor, Miss M. Frances – Perch
 Pond
 Trepel Florists – Trepel Lane
 TREPEL LANE
 Trobridge, Reuben – Canada Land
 Trobridge, Susan – Canada Land
 Truesdale, Lake – Truesdale, Mount
 TRUESDALE, MOUNT
 Truesdale, William – Canfield's Mill
 River; Truesdale, Mount
 Tryon's Troops – Hessian Drive
 TUB (B) SWAMP
 Tub Swamp Ridge – Tub Swamp
 Tuccio, Jerry – Beaver Brook Road;
 Bobby's Court; Boulder Hill
 Road; Casagmo; Clayton
 Place; Conant Road; Druid
 Lane; Eleven Levels Road;
 Evergreen Place; Fire Hill
 Acres; Green Lane; Highland
 Acres; Jerry's Court; Keeler
 Drive; Limestone Acres;
 Longview Drive; Lookout
 Point; Mimosa; Naraneka,
 Lake; Old Wagon Road; Pas-
 ture Lane; Pheasant Lane;
 Pierrepont Drive; Pierrepont
 State Park; Powdermaker
 Drive; Riverside Drive;
 Scodon Drive; Seth Low
 Mountain Road; Shields Lane;
 Sherman Colonial; Stonehenge
 Estates; Trails End Lane; Twixt
 Hills; Webster Road; West
 Mountain Estates; Westmore-
 land
 Tuccio, Robert – Bobby's Court, Kiln
 Hill Lane
 Tuite, John – Madeline Drive; Marie
 Lane
 Tuite, Madeline – Madeline Drive
 Tuite, Marie – Marie Lane
 Tulipani (family) – Outpost Road
 Tulipani, Julius – Old Sib Road;
 Outpost Pond; Turtle Pond
 TURKEY ISLAND – Island Meadow
 Turkey, Jacob – Betty's Corner, New
 Pattent; Ridgebury; Turkey
 Island; Ridgebury
 TURN OF THE RIVER – Great Hill
 Road
 Turner, Aaron – Aaron's Court; Bar-
 num Place; North District;
 Schoolhouse Place; Turner
 Road
 Turner Circus – Turner Road
 Turner Estate – North District;
 Schoolhouse Place
 TURNER HILL – Barnum Place;
 Howes Court; Hunt Court;
 McKeon Place
 Turner, Napoleon – Turner Road
 TURNER ROAD (Street) – McKeon
 Place; Old Ridgebury Road
 Turner, Timothy – Turner Road
 TURNPIKE ROAD – Danbury and
 Norwalk Turnpike
 TURTLE POND – Eight Lakes;
 Hidden Lake
 Tuttle, Solomon – Canfield's Mill
 River; Truesdale, Mount
 Twain, Mark – Cooper Hill Road
 TWELFTH LANE
 TWIN MAPLES – Flat Rock; Wilton
 Road West

TWIN RIDGE – Beechwood Lane;
High Valley Road; Strawberry
Ridge Road
Twin Ridge Homeowners' Associa-
tion – Pelham Lane
TWIXT HILLS – Clayton Place;
North Mountain; Pierrepont
Drive; Pierrepont Lake; Pier-
repont State Park
Twixthills (estate) – Pierrepont Drive
TROPENCE ROAD – Chestnut Hills
Estates

U

Ullman Devices Co. – Laurel Lane
UMPAWAUG
Umpawaug Pond – Great Pond; Cross
Highway
"Uncle Jimmy" – Starr's Plain
"Uncle Kiah" – Kiah's Brook Lane
Underhill, George – Town Farm
Union Manufacturing Co. – Smith's
Pond
Union Trust Co. – Olcott Way;
Lounsbury Road
United Cigar Store – Harding Drive
United Nations – Sachem Hill
"Upagaintit" (estate) – Ridgefield
Manor Estates
UPPER POND – Gilbert's Upper
Pond; New Pond; Old Saw
Mill Pond; Saw Mill Pond
Upper Road – Bedford Road
Upper Salem – North Salem Road

V

Vail, Ira – Maplewood Road
Valden, David H. – New Pond; Tan-
nery Hill Road; Tannery Pond
Valden, Harvey – Beers Station
Valden Tan Yards – Tannery Pond
Valentine, Dan – Chelsea Place
VALLEY BROOK ACRES
Valus, William – Downesbury Court;
Valley Brook Acres; Woodland
Hill Court
Van Etten, Dr. Royal C. – Flat Rock
Road
Vaughn, Robert – West Mountain
Venus, Marie Bishop – Regan Road
Venus, Richard E. – Cedar Lane;
Cranberry Lane; Dutton Lane;
Regan Road; Smith Road;

Tannery Hill Road; Windy
Ridge Lane
Veterans – Dowling Drive; Veterans
Park
Veterans Memorial Community As-
sociation – Veterans Park
VETERANS PARK
Veterans Park School- Dowling
Drive; Veterans Park
VICTOR DRIVE
VILLAGE, THE
Village District – Village, The
Village Green – Branchville Road
Village Improvement Society – Old
Burying Ground; Ridge Road
III
Village Street – Main Street
Vine Lane – Fox Hill Village
Vinton School – Martin Park
VIRGINIA COURT
Visiting Nurse Association – Dutton
Place
Vita Semplace Farm – Conron's Pond
Volunteers of America – Great Pond

W

WACCABUC, LAKE – Harahawmis;
Long Pond I; North Long
Pond; South Long Pond
Waccabuc House Hotel –Waccabuc,
Lake
Wade, William – Ascot Way
Wagner, Mrs. Irving Van – Bailey
Avenue
Wagoner, Philip D. – Harrison Court;
West Mountain
Waite, Arabella – Peck Hill
Wakeman, J. A. – Old Creamery
Highway
Walker, Jack – Thousand Acre
Swamp
Walker, Mary – Railroad Avenue II;
Sunset Lane
Walker, Robert – Creamery Lane
Wallace (family) – Peespunk
Wallace, James – Great Island
Wallace – *see also* Wallis
WALLIS' HOGHOLE – Hogholler,
Smith's
Wallis, James – Millstone Brook;
New Purchase; Peespunk;
Wallis' Hoghole
Wallis – *see also* Wallace
Walnut Grove – Walnut Ridge
WALNUT GROVE and ROAD

Walnut Grove Estates – Jones' Pond;
Walnut Grove and Road
Walnut Grove Farm – Walnut Grove
and Road
WALNUT HILL ROAD – Cradle
Rock
WALNUT (TREE) RIDGE – Walnut
Grove and Road
Walnut Ridge – Walnut (Tree) Ridge
Walnut Ridge – East River
Walsh, Gordon – Town Houses
Wappinger Confederacy – Pocconock
Trail
Wappinger Tribe – Ramapoo Road;
Simpaug Turnpike; Tackora
Trail; Wheel Cock
Ward Acres Farm – Golf Lane
Ward, Jack B. – Golf Lane
Warner, Col. Alexander – Veterans
Park
Warren (family) – Great Meadow
Warren, Michael – Haviland Road;
Mill Road
Warren, Sarah – Mine Lott; Ore Bed
Warring, Thomas B. – Todds Road
Warrups, Chicken – Chickens Rock
Warrups, Eunice – Chickens Rock
Warrups, Tom – Chickens Rock
WASHINGTON AVENUE
Washington Bicentennial – George
Washington Highway
Washington, George – George Wash-
ington Highway; Hamilton
Road; Lafayette Avenue; Mo-
pus Bridge (Road);
Rochambeau Avenue; Wash-
ington Avenue
WASHINGTON PARK ESTATES –
Adams Road; Jefferson Drive;
Old Washington Road;
Washington Road
WASHINGTON ROAD
Washington-Rochambeau National
Historic Highway – Rocham-
beau Avenue
Washington Street – George Washing-
ton Highway; Old Washington
Road
WATABA LAKE – Rainbow Lake;
Ridgefield Lakes; Lakes Num-
ber...
WATERFALL ROAD
WATER'S EDGE WAY
Waters, John – Farmingville
Waubeeka, Lake – Danbury Road
Webster, Daniel – Webster Road

WEBSTER ROAD
Weed, Josephine Davis – Davis Lane
Weir, J. Alden – Beers Station;
Knoche Road
Weir Farm National Historic Site –
Beers Place; Beers Station
Weiss, Dr. L.D. – Sachem Hill
Weitzel, Charles W., Sr. – Field Crest
Drive
Welsh, Vernon – Copp's Corner;
Hawley Street; Hauley's Ridge
WENBOS LANE – Bayberry Hill
Road
Wennik, Raymond D. – Bayberry Hill
Road; Wenbos Lane
WEPACK – Ammawogg
WESTBRANCHVILLE ROAD –
Depot Road; Old Main High-
way
WEST CEDAR MOUNTAIN(S) –
Cedar Mtn(s).
WEST FIELD
WEST LANE – Barry Avenue; Bed-
ford Road; Manor Road; New
Canaan Road; South Salem
Road
WEST LANE II
West Lane Company – Walnut Grove
and Road
West Lane School District – Bell-
town; West Lane
West Lane Schoolhouse – Silver
Spring; Stebbins Close; West
Lane
WEST MEADOW
WEST MOUNTAIN – Asoquatah;
Bedford Road; Brushy Lane;
Cradle Rock; High Ridge;
New Road IV; Old West
Mountain Road; Rattle Snake
Swamp; Sugar Hollow Turn-
pike; Tackora Trail; Walnut
Hill Road
WEST MOUNTAIN ESTATES –
Eleven Levels Road
WEST MOUNTAIN PINES
WEST MOUNTAIN ROAD – New
West Lane; Ramapoo Road;
Sharp Hill
West Mountain School – West Moun-
tain
WEST PINE MOUNTAIN ROAD
WEST RATTLE HOLE – Rattle
Snake Swamp
West Rattle Rocks – Rattle Snake
Swamp

West Rattle Swamp – Rattle Snake Swamp
 West Rattleholes – Rattle Snake Swamp
 WEST RIDGE – High Ridge
 WEST RIDGEFIELD
 WEST RIVER
 WEST TEER
 WESTMORELAND – Blacksmith's Ridge; Conant Road; George Washington Highway; Holmes Road; Webster Road
 Western Niantic Indians – Simpaug Turnpike
 Wett Hams (Indian) – Long Pond I; Tapornick Division
 WETT SWAMP
 Wettingfeld, Edith Douglas – Pompi-on Ridge
 Wheeler, John Neville – Spring Valley Road; Wheeler Road
 Wheeler, Mrs. John N. – Lee Lane; Wheeler Road
 WHEELER ROAD – Lee Lane; Mopus Bridge (Road)
 Wheeler, Timothy – Red Brook
 WHEER COCK – Branchville; New Road III
 Whipple, Reed – Arnold's Way
 Whitehead, Mrs. Laura – Maple Grove
 WHIPSTICK
 WHIPSTICK LOUGH
 Whipstick School District – Belltown; Whipstick
 WHITE BIRCH ROAD
 WHITE BIRCHES ROAD
 WHITE OAK ISLAND, POINT
 WHITE OAK RIDGE
 White, Stanford – Beers Station
 Whiting, William W. – West Lane
 WHITING'S POND
 Whitlock (family) – Otter Pond
 Whitlock, Henry – Whitlock Lane; Wolf Pit Ridge
 Whitlock, John – Bennett's Farm; Com Grass Meadow; Ridgebury; Whitlock Lane
 Whitlock, Jonathan – Asproom Loaf, Loft, Aloft; Turnpike Road
 Whitlock, Joseph – Whitlock Lane
 WHITLOCK LANE
 Whitlock Livery Stable – Whitlock Lane
 Whitlock, Morris B. – Whitlock Lane
 Whitlock, Nephi – Lee Road; Whitlock Lane
 Whitlock, Oliver – Beaver Brook; Flat Rock
 Whitlock, Sallie Sellick – Whitlock Lane
 Whitlock, Thaddeus – Wolf Pit Ridge
 Whitne, Henry – Mine Lott; Nonhrup's Island; Ore Yard
 Whitne – *see also* Whitney
 Whitney, Cathrine – Nonh District
 Whitney, Daniel – Burt's Pond
 Whitney, Henry – Knap's Farm; Norwalk Mill River; Ore Yard
 Whitney, Nathan – Burt's Lane; Mamanasco Lake, Pond
 Whitney, Thankful Burt – Burt's Pond
 Whitney – *see also* Whitne
 Whittamore, Amos – Steep Brook
 WHORTLEBERRY HILL
 Widman, Paul G. – Cobbler's Lane
 Wiggan, Albert H. – Wiggan-Roberts Lane
 WIGGIN-ROBERTS LANE
 WILD CAT LOT
 WILD TURKEY COURT
 Wilder (property) – Powder horn Drive
 Wilders, John F. – Blackman Road
 Wildman (family) – Miry Brook
 Wildman, Daniel – Short Woods
 Wildman, John – Short Woodf
 Wildridge Road – Old Town Road
 Williams, Roger – Peespunk
 Williams, Victor – Victor Drive
 WILLOW COURT, ROAD
 Willson, Benjamin – Cedar Mountain Road; Millstone Brook; West Rattle Hole
 Willson – *see also* Wilson
 WILRIDGE ROAD
 Wilson (family) – Southwest Ridges; *see also* Willson
 Wilson, Benjamin – Cranberry Meadow; Great Swamp; Long Pond II; Thousand Acre Swamp
 Wilson, Benjamin, Jr. – Starr's Plain
 Wilson, Daniel – Wild Cat Lot
 Wilson, Mrs. Chauncey – Scotland
 Wilson, Ernest O. – Farm Hill Road
 Wilson, Ezekiel – Smith Road
 Wilson, Thomas – Candlewood Ledges; Wild Cat Lot
 Wilson, William – Mundle

Wilton-Ridgefield Line – Parting Brook
 Wilton Road – Norwalk Road; Wilton Road East
 WILTON ROAD EAST – Spectacle Lane
 WILTON ROAD WEST – Fairgrounds; Flat Rock Road; Norwalk Road; Ridgefield Road I; Tanglewood Court; Twin Maples
 WINDWING, LAKE – Bob's Lake; North Shore Drive
 WINDY RIDGE LANE
 WINTERGREEN
 WINTERGREEN HILL
 Winthrop, William L. – Limestone Terrace; Madeline Drive
 Winton, Clifford A. – Cold Spring Lane II
 Wixton, Isaac – Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 WOLF PIT RIDGE
 Wolf Pond Brook – Bear Mountain
 WOLF POND RUN – Bear Mountain
 WOLFPITS, THE
 Wolfpitt Swamp – Wolfpits, The
 Women's Republican Club – Harding Drive
 WONONKPAKOONK
 Wood, Andrew – Pisgah
 Wood, Lee B. – Schoolhouse Place
 Wood, Mary – Wolf Pit Ridge
 Wood, Michael – Bacchus's Hollow
 Wood, Obadiah – Bacchus's Hollow
 Wood, Obadiah, Jr. – Starr's Ridge
 Wood, Titus – Wood's Gulf
 WOODCHUCK – Farmingville
 WOODCHUCK LANE
 Woodcock, Ann – Woodcock Lane
 Woodcock, J. Mortimer – Hull Place; Outpost Pond; Pelham Lane; Tanton Hill Road; Windwing, Lake; Woodcock Lane
 WOODCOCK LANE
 Woodcock Nature Center – Brimstone Swamp
 Woodcock Nurseries – Outpost Pond; Tanton Hill Road; Woodcock Lane
 Woodford, Dr. F. B. – Media Lane
 WOODLAND HILL COURT
 WOODLAND WAY
 WOODLAWN DRIVE
 WOOD'S GULF

Woods, Jonathan – Asproom Loaf, Loft, Aloft
 WOODSTONE ROAD
 WOODY PLACE
 Wooster, General David – Arnold's Way; Cain's Hill and Road; Wooster Heights Drive; Wooster Street
 Wooster Heights – Danbury Road; Wooster Heights – Or-Mar Drive
 WOOSTER HEIGHTS DRIVE
 Wooster Mountain – Starr's Plain; Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Wooster Mountain State Park – Scodon Drive
 WOOSTER STREET – Cross Street
 World War I – Anderson Tea House Road
 Wright, Jenny – Governor Street; Lounsbury Road

Y

Yale University – Cattle Pen Lane
 Yanity, Peter and Beth – Arnold's Way
 "Yankee Doodle Dandy" – Fitch's Farm
 YANKEE HILL ROAD
 YELLOW HILL
 Yellow Shutters Store – Sugar Hollow Turnpike
 Yervant, John – Fox Hill
 YORK STATE LINE
 Young, Mrs. Fred – Town Farm
 Young, Joseph – Stonecrest Road
 Young, Mahonri – Knoche Road.
 Young, S. Howard – Candee's Pond
 YOUNG POND
 Young's Feed Store – Catoonah Street; Fairgrounds, The; Whitlock Lane

Z

ZACK'S RIDGE – Knap's Farm; McKeon Place
 Zandri, G. M. – Big Shop Lane
 Zelson, Annette – Windwing, Lake
 Zoning; Zoning Commission – Corbin Drive; Donnelly Drive; *see also* Planning and Zoning Commission.