

## Tom Marshall's Weekly News, October 22, 2018

**Fall Foliage Trip, 1986 (Part 1 of 2):** Several tour companies ran fall foliage tours of northern New England at the height of the annual show of brilliant color, and with many motorists also viewing the foliage, the best hotels and lodging places were reserved from one year to the next. Being aware of this, Ruth and I wanted to witness this annual spectacle in 1986, so we made reservations at several of our special places on the latest date they could give us before the onslaught of foliage tourists. Since northern New England is probably two or three weeks ahead of Delaware, we left home during the last days of September in my new '85 GMC Suburban.

I always liked to explore new places and sites I had heard about but had never seen. We began our trip by crossing the Verrazano Narrows Bridge over New York Harbor from Staten Island to Brooklyn Heights on Long Island. The fog was so dense on top of the bridge that we saw nothing, so we had to assume the Statue of Liberty and Lower Manhattan were still there. Moving eastward on Long Island, we visited the plush summer resort of Southampton with its 5th Avenue shops and lavish summer homes. I had heard of Montauk, the eastern terminus of the Long Island Railroad, and the railroad hotel above the station that was presumed to be on Montauk Point. We found the former hotel that overlooked the railroad yards, but it was several miles from the Point. Nonetheless, we did visit the Point where a few men were surf-fishing and spent the night at Sag Harbor, probably 20 miles away.

The next day was Sunday, and we headed for the ferry that ran from Orient Point, Long Island, to New London, Connecticut. On a damp morning, we passed a homemade sign tacked to a tree saying, "Friends Meeting." We turned around and proceeded down a long dirt lane through the trees until we came upon a shack. We were welcomed by attendees at the Quaker Meeting in the unheated shack, and we doubled their attendance.

Taking the ferry, we came into New London alongside the old New Haven Railroad passenger station that I had remembered well from my rail trips home from Providence in 1943. Proceeding northward into Massachusetts, we had hoped to stay at Longfellow's Wayside Inn, about 20 miles west of Boston. We had dinner there, but it was a very busy place and not nearly so nice as I had remembered from previous years. We had to stay in a new motel a few miles away.

The next day, we headed for Boston's North Shore, visited Gloucester, and stayed at the Ralph Waldo Emerson Inn in Rockport, Massachusetts. The old hotel was not well patronized (and not very good), and we were given a room supposedly occupied by Emerson during his annual visits in the mid-nineteenth century. Driving around the nearby cape to the north the next morning, we headed up the coast to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to look at the Wentworth-by-the-Sea, a famous resort hotel from the 19th century, long owned and operated by James Smith. Mr. Smith had liked having the antique cars stop at the Wentworth, and had hosted at least three progressive Glidden Tour revivals (1947, 1954, 1980), which I had attended. At the last one in 1980, Mr. Smith, then in his 80s, told us he was closing the hotel. It was boarded up when we looked it over in 1986.

Briefly, we stopped at Old Orchard Beach, one of the few stretches of sand beach in Maine, which for many years had been known as a "honky-tonk" resort. We passed by Portland and stopped at L.L. Bean headquarters at Freeport, where Ruth did some shopping and I bought roadmaps. That night, we stayed at fog-bound Boothbay Harbor and had a delicious lobster dinner at our water-front hotel. (To be continued next week.)