

HOW

# Childwold

GOT ITS NAME

By BEULAH DOROTHY - Piercefield

Addison Child, a stately Bostonian, at about the age of fifty-five, came to Potsdam in the early spring of 1878 and mailed a small handbill to all the postmasters in St. Lawrence County, giving notice that he owned a large tract of land near Massawepie Lake in St. Lawrence County, and that he would sell small portions of this tract to purchasers for farms at the low price of from one to three dollars per acre. He could be found in the future, he said, on the lands mentioned.

Many people thought that "the old man", as he was referred to, was insane to start such a wild scheme, since this tract of land was nearly all wilderness with scarcely any roads leading to it. The bills were sent to the various postmasters and he asked that they be conspicuously posted. This act was the birth of Childwold, located about two miles northwest of Massawepie Lake. Mr. Child, when asked what the name of his hamlet would be, replied, "'Child' for my name and 'wold', which means high rolling land", therefore Childwold was named.

In 1884, April 1, the first postoffice was established as Childwood and its name was changed to Childwold in 1884, April 22, at the request of Mr. Child, who was also the postmaster.

As soon as logs could be cut, Mr. Child built for himself a log house in the center of the new settlement. The house since has been remodeled and is occupied by the Bancroft family, whose father purchased it from Mr. Child's estate in 1899.

For the next ten years he kept busy looking after his tenants and the development of his hamlet. Among other things, he built a thunder-shower sawmill on the outlet of Jock Pond, to aid in building houses and coverings for the inhabitants who had read his posted handbills and migrated to Childwold. Most of these people came from the towns of Colton and Pierrepont and some from the state of Vermont.

Even though there were no modern or even good gravel roads leading into this little town, it flourished under the guiding hand of Mr. Child. The land was cleared and prosperous farms appeared. Then the problem arose of what to do with the excess farm produce. Mr. Child at once came up with the answer. In 1889 he erected a great hotel on the shores of beautiful Massawepie Lake. As his other projects had flourished and paid off, so did his big hotel, which accomodated more than 300 guests plus a dozen or more guest cottages on the lake shore. Many leading personalities visited this beautiful spot, including some of our own United States presidents and British royalty.

The resort eventually fell into decay and has been recently taken over and restored for use as a Boy Scout camp.

For nine years, Mr. Child lived to realize his dreams of a great hotel and a prosperous farming and lumbering community. Then in 1897 he died in his home in Childwold and his body was sent back to Boston, Mass., for burial. Although he was married and had one child, his wife never came to Childwold and it was assumed she died before he settled here.

So ends the story of a man, who in late life lived to see his dreams fulfilled; and now his memory lives on, in the inhabitants of Childwold village.