



Martha Reben & Guide Fred Rice  
Photo 83.698, courtesy of the Adirondack  
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**From *The Healing Woods*, page 1:**

*It was a splendid morning in May when I met my new-found friend and guide, Mr. Fred Rice of Saranac Lake, to begin my journey into what was once known as the great wilderness.*

*“What had brought me to the boathouse dock this morning was an advertisement in the local paper which had read: “Wanted: To get in touch with some invalid who is not improving, and who would like to go into the woods for the summer.”*

*When Mr. Rice had put this notice in the paper he had been trying to find a sportsman among the invalids in the village; he had not thought of guiding a woman and certainly not a sick woman barely out of her teens. I was all that fate provide, however, and he decided in his forthright way that I would have to do.*

**Martha Rebentisch** came to Saranac Lake as a tuberculosis patient. Three and a half years later, in 1931, age 25 and severely debilitated by TB, she left Trudeau Sanatorium against medical advice. She placed herself in the care of guide Fred Rice to take her camping on Weller Pond, and she never looked back. The woods, waters, weather and wildlife became her world. For more than 20 years she kept journals which eventually became her three books. A fourth completed manuscript was lost at the time of her death.

Today, Martha’s lyrical, fascinating and accurate observations of her Adirondack world are as fresh as ever. Finances were always tight, but C. V. Whitney paid \$10,000 for the rights to make a film of *The Healing Woods*. The film was never completed, but with the money Martha was able to purchase a small rustic camp on the Saranac River near Bloomingdale.

All the places Martha and Fred camped in warm weather and lived in winter during their Adirondack sojourn are shown on the map on the reverse. The information in this brochure is by Betsy Tisdale of Potsdam, NY, who has researched Martha’s life and written a Master’s thesis analyzing her three books. The map was drawn by Nancy Bernstein.

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# Martha Reben

## *Adirondack Writer*



Martha’s first summer in the woods, 1931  
Photo courtesy of Betsy Tisdale

Author of  
*The Healing Woods*  
*The Way of the Wilderness*  
*A Sharing of Joy*

Born: April 30, 1906, New York City  
Died: January 7, 1964, Saranac Lake

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# The World of Martha Reben and Fred Rice

