

**7. Ten-acre Birch Island**, on Upper St. Regis Lake, was the site of the summer camp of the Anson Phelps Stokes family; built in 1876, it was the first of what would become a small colony of summer camps of the wealthy and powerful, who had been drawn to the area by Paul Smith's Hotel, on Lower St. Regis Lake.



*Photo by Marc Wanner*

Stokes was a multimillionaire who had nine children; one of the Stokes daughters became a baroness, and Countess Alicia Spaulding Paolozzi spent many summers there during her youth.

**8. Camp Wild Air** was established in the early 1880's by Ella Spencer Reid, niece of Whitelaw Reid, the publisher and editor in chief of the New York Tribune. Ella went to the Adirondacks for her health. She initially lived in a single tent and in 1882 she constructed a cabin, creating the first permanent camp on Upper St. Regis Lake on land purchased from hotelier Paul Smith. Ella was said to have designed the first cabin.

The main lodge of unpeeled cedar logs, called the Livingston Room was designed by McKim, Mead and White, and is the only known example of a rustic design from that firm.



*Photo by Dave Cilley*

**9. Camp Katia** on Upper St Regis Lake was built between 1890 to 1894 by George H. Earle, Jr., from Philadelphia, the father of Pennsylvania Governor George H. Earle III. There are presently fifteen buildings, built of wood and stone between 1894 and 1911, connected by a wooden boardwalk; buildings include a main cabin, a writing house, a dining room and separate living room, and seven individual sleeping cabins.



*Photo by Dave Cilley*

**10. Camp Topridge** is an Adirondack Great Camp built over many years by several owners, especially after 1920 by Marjorie Merriweather Post, founder of General Foods and the daughter of C. W. Post.

The site was first purchased by Alvin M. Lothrop in 1897; he died in 1912, and Mrs. Post bought the property in 1920. She began extensive renovations to the camp soon after, especially involving the Main Lodge and the Boathouse. Several additional cabins were added to the camp and the property was expanded to 207 acres by the addition of one acre in 1924, 85 acres in 1938, and 118 acres in 1957. Building continued throughout the 1920s under the direction of local builder Ben Muncil. Of particular interest was the Russian cottage which was imported in its entirety and rebuilt here by Russian architects.



*Photo by Dave Cilley*

# Upper St. Regis Lake Great Camps



*Photo by R. Cilley*

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# Great Camps on Upper St. Regis Lake

Many thanks to Historic Saranac Lake for photos & information

**1. Paul Smith's Hotel** was founded in 1859 by Apollos (Paul) Smith as one of the first Wilderness Resorts in the Adirondacks. In its day it was the most fashionable of the many great Adirondack hotels, patronized by American presidents Grover Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt and Calvin Coolidge, celebrities like P.T. Barnum, and the power elite of the latter half of the 19th century, such as E. H. Harriman and Whitelaw Reid. Paul Smith died in 1912, but the hotel continued under his son, Phelps, until it burned down in 1930.



*Paul Smith's Hotel, 1901-1910  
Photo by Library of Congress*

For years the hotel was kept intentionally primitive, offering neither bellboys nor indoor bathrooms. It started as a seventeen room inn, though by the start of the 20th century it would grow to 255 rooms with a boathouse with quarters for sixty guides, stables, casino, bowling alley, and a wire to the New York Stock Exchange. It also had woodworking, blacksmith, and electrical shops, a sawmill and a store. Stagecoaches delivered guests to the hotel until 1912, when a short electric railroad connected it to the nearest main line.

**2. Camp Cobblestone** was built on Spitfire Lake between 1900-1915 by George H. Earle, Jr., the father of Pennsylvania Governor George H. Earle III; Earle also built Camp Katia. The camp comprises an octagonal living cabin, a dining and kitchen cabin, a boathouse and tower, a round bedroom cabin built over the water, and two guest cabins, built of cobblestones collected from the shores of the St. Regis River.



There were originally several large wooden cabins of four to six bedrooms each, on a ridge near the forest that were partially destroyed in a 1966 fire.

**3. Rabbit Island:** In the summer of 1886, Dr. E. L. Trudeau devised a simple experiment which demonstrated the beneficial effects of climate, fresh air and ample food on the course of tuberculosis in infected animals by infecting a number of healthy rabbits with the tubercle bacillus. He confined half of the rabbits in an area with minimum food, sunshine, exercise and fresh air. The other half he

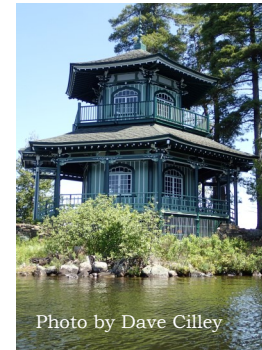


*Photo by Dave Cilley*

allowed to roam wild with plenty of food & water on a little island (now called Rabbit Island) on Spitfire Lake. The rabbits that were allowed to run wild in open air recovered fully from the

tuberculosis, while the others died. The experiment supplied important proof that healthy environmental conditions improve one's ability to fight TB infection.

**4. Camp Regis** was built for William Hall Penfield on Upper St. Regis Lake starting in 1885. In the 1930s the camp was bought and operated a dance and performing arts center on the site. **Camp Regis-Applejack**, a Quaker summer camp for children, opened in 1946 by Earl and Pauline Humes is actually two camps at one site: Camp Regis is for boys and girls ages 6 through 12, and Camp Applejack is for boys and girls ages 13 through 16.

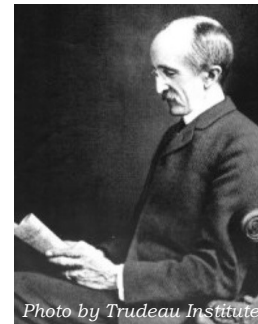


*Photo by Dave Cilley*

**5. Pine Tree Point** was an Adirondack Great Camp on Upper St. Regis Lake that was built in 1890 for H. McKown & Florence V. Twombly. It was sold in 1903 to Frederick Vanderbilt. Florence & Fred were siblings. Vanderbilt was inspired by the view of Whiteface Mountain comparing it to Mt Fuji. Vanderbilt hired

Japanese artisans from the Pan-American Exposition of 1901, held in Buffalo to construct Japanese-style buildings, remodel existing buildings, including a pagoda with an elaborate spiral staircase, and a Japanese cottage. Servants were required to wear Japanese clothing while waiting on guests; some of the servants were mortified.

**6. Trudeau Camp** is located on Upper St. Regis Lake near Pine Tree Point. Dr. Edward Trudeau (1848-1915) was diagnosed with tuberculosis in 1873. Following conventional thinking of the times, he went to live in the Adirondacks, initially at Paul Smith's Hotel, spending as much time as possible in the open; he subsequently regained his health. He established the Adirondack Cottage Sanitarium in Saranac Lake, the first successful facility for the treatment of tuberculosis in the country. He also founded the first laboratory in the nation dedicated to the study of the disease. **The Saranac Laboratory is now open as a museum in downtown Saranac Lake.** He was the



*Photo by Trudeau Institute*

founder of the St. Regis Yacht Club. He was an avid hunter and woodsmen. He traveled year round to homes and hotels treating ailments within a forty mile radius for people, cows, horses and dogs. He was known as the "Beloved Physician."