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THE FARM IN THE FOREST:  
Historical ecology of the farm on the site of  
Yale Camp at Great Mountain Forest  
1795 – 1940



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## KEY FINDINGS

- Elisha Mansfield settled the farm in 1795. Yale family owned it from 1852 to 1866 then Chattleton and Mansfield until Childs bought it in 1936.
- Limited data from witness trees in deeds shows nine species suggesting a hemlock-hardwood forest with American chestnut.
- From 1852 until 1936 the farm was composed of two parcels in Canaan and Norfolk totaling ~300 acres. Prior to 1852 the property was two separate farms.
- The property boundary contains a number of original stone survey markers. One on the NW corner of Blackberry Hill has been in place since 1764. This is the oldest tangible feature of the farm.
- Deed records show repeated mortgage debts taken on by the Yale family in the 1850s and the Mansfield-Chattleton family in the 1870s to 1890s. It appears the farm struggled through much of the later 1800s until its decline after 1900. At that time, property is no longer listed in town records.
- Crop yields of oats, corn, and potatoes in the mid to late 1800s were generally lower than state averages.
- Federal agricultural schedules from the middle to late 1800s show farm products consisted of butter, cheese, and small-scale crops to support livestock and people.
- The farm contains more than one mile of stone wall, over 50 clearance cairns, 3 foundations, and two dams.
- From 1869–1894 the farm averaged 14 cows including work oxen. Other stock included one horse, a few sheep and pigs, and chickens.
- The 1840 census shows two “Free Colored” men (a teenager and man in his 50s) living with the Mansfield Family. No other farm in this area at any time in the 1800s had people of African decent living there.
- In the 1880s the farm included crop fields (10 ac.), hayfields (~30 ac.), pasture (~70 ac.), undetermined land (~30 ac.), and ~160 acres of woodland.
- Coppiced trees show cutting around 1850 and 1870; records show a large harvest of 1,300 cords in 1879.
- Census records from 1910 and onward suggest no one lived on the site as Ellen Chattleton died (1909), and husband Xavier lived in Norfolk with his grown children. The farm was used as a hunting camp.

## INTRODUCTION

Since its construction in 1940, The Yale Camp at Great Mountain Forest has hosted thousands of Yale FES students and thousands of students and guests from other institutions. Each year, a few hundred FES students and alum use the camp for research projects, alumni gatherings, classes, and as a welcoming site for first-year FES students during Mods.

The Yale Camp was a gift to the School of Forestry from Edward “Ted” Childs (MF 1932). Childs father, Starling, with his friend and partner Senator Fredrick Wolcott, in 1909 laid the foundation for what would become Great Mountain Forest with the purchase of a 430-acre farm near Tobey Pond. In time, Childs and Wolcott would expand their land holdings, develop management plans for fast growing second-growth, and implement ambitious game reintroductions for fowl, turkey, and deer. Their own inventive activity with waterfowl and deer occurred years before Aldo Leopold wrote his pioneering work on the subject in *Game Management* (1933), which earned him the distinction as “Father of Wildlife Management.”

The Yale School of Forestry during this period had its forest laboratory at Yale-Myers Forest in northeast Connecticut. Disruption occurred in 1938 when a powerful hurricane leveled most of Yale’s forest and left students with little timber to cruise. Being on the west side of the state and less

exposed to intense winds, Great Mountain Forest sustained little damage. Ted Childs offered the Forestry School 6 acres with a forest camp and access to what would become over 6,000 acres of second growth forest on Great Mountain.

Camp was built in 1940 and the first forestry class was on site in 1941. The dean of the forestry school and Childs wanted a site that was remote. The camp had a state of the art classroom, a living room with stone fireplace, dining hall, bunks, and kitchen. A stone dam behind the camp on Brown Brook held water for fire suppression. Later, in the 1950s, Childs gave Yale an additional acre on the west side of Chattleton Road for a director’s cabin.

Childs and Wolcott improved the road network of old charcoal cart paths, farm roads, and the Chattleton Road—a public road that reached from Canaan Mountain Road at the old Munson farm, to Meekertown in the southern portion of the forest. What would become the *Chattleton Road* was, for a time, the most settled and developed portion of Great Mountain Forest. A dozen or more farms and homesteads occurred along this stretch of mountain road, many of which were carved out of the forest before 1800.

Ted Childs gave nearly 8 acres of one of these old farms—one initially settled by Elisha Mansfield in 1795—to the Yale School of Forestry for its camp. Walking beyond Yale’s eight acres to GMF land around the camp one is immersed in the

legacy of a 19<sup>th</sup> century small mountain farm: stone walls traverse slopes in indiscernible patterns; smooth ground in young forests shows old crop fields; coppiced trees indicate cutting; and spreading old wolf trees leave a legacy of pasturing. Who did this work? How was the landscape that surrounds the camp today arranged as a 19<sup>th</sup> century farm?

## PURPOSE

This project is an addendum to the *Great Mountain Forest Field Book* (Gaige and Glogower) completed in 2015. The purpose of that project was to identify the places of interest, land use history, human history, unique natural features, and management history on the forest for use by educational groups. The effort resulted in dozens of sites of all types being made available to the FES community and beyond.

In retrospect, however, I believe we should have paid greater attention to the land immediately around camp; the abandoned farm that occurred on site has much to offer. Because so many groups using the camp don't venture far from it, I felt it is worthwhile to research the farm at Yale Camp on the ground and through historical documents. The goal of the current project is to document the history and historical ecology of the farm from its first surveys in 1755 up to its purchase by Ted Childs in 1936. It is my hope that this information will enhance the experiences of the FES and GMF communities and others who stay at Yale Camp.

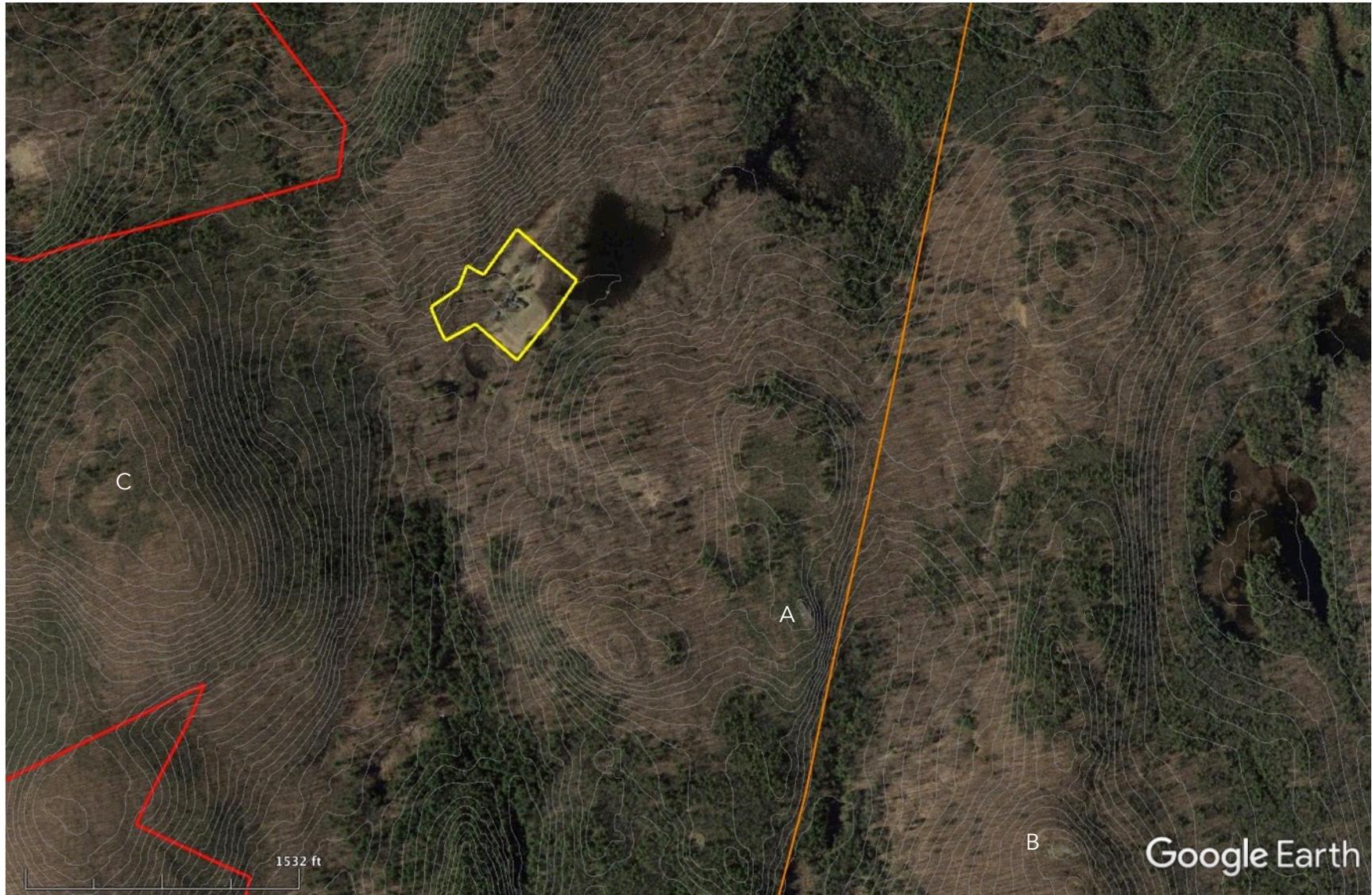
## APPROACH

In general, I used two sources to document the property's historical ecology. First, I traced written sources including original deeds (1755–1936), property tax records (1848–1918), Federal Non-Population Census Schedules (1850-1880), federal general census (1800–1900), the Great Mountain Forest history dissertation by Herbert Winer (1955), and archives provided by GMF. Second, I used information written on the land; the stone walls, trees, plants, and ground, that indicate how people interacted with the landscape for 140 years. This was a process of reading the landscape—about 300 acres of it, to work out what has happened on each acre.

(For background context on geology, glacial history, vegetation, and human history please refer to the *Great Mountain Forest: Field Book* (Gaige and Glogower, 2015); that information will not be covered in this document.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of people assisted with this project indirectly and directly. First, thanks to Mary Tyrrell and Yale FES for believing this project was worthwhile and that it would enhance our understanding of, and peoples' experience at, Camp. Thanks also to: Jody Bronson and Russell Russ, Great Mountain Forest staff; Star Childs, founding board member of Great Mountain Forest; Mary Palmer, Town Clerk for Canaan/Falls Village; and Linda Perkins, Town Clerk for Norfolk.



SOUTHWEST REGION OF GREAT MOUNTAIN FOREST showing the Yale Camp and its property boundary in **yellow** (~7.8 acres). **Red** line is GMF property boundary; **Orange** line is town line for Canaan/Falls Village (west) and Norfolk (east). Letters indicate: **A**–The Matterhorn; **B**–Blackberry Hill; **C**–Canaan benchmark hill.



ORIGINAL AGRICULTURAL STONE WALL behind bunk cabin at Yale Camp.

## FARM BOUNDARIES AND TRANSFER HISTORY

It's unclear to what extent the indigenous people used the higher uplands of what is now northwest Connecticut. Published archeological evidence suggests the use of uplands was more common in earlier periods (over 5,000 years ago) than in recent and historical times. By then, most groups were living in the valleys where they had access to a wider variety of resources. The best settlements had access to rich bottomland soils for agriculture, uplands for tree mast, wetlands for materials, and a river for transport and aquatic resources. Native peoples nonetheless managed the uplands to suit their particular ecology mainly through burning. The legacy of this activity may be found in the disturbance-dependent communities of oak (white oak primarily), hickory, and (formerly) American chestnut. Such communities occurred at GMF during presettlement times.

By the middle 1700s Europeans were venturing into the uplands on "Ye Great Mountain" to stake claims for settlement, speculation, and/or charcoal production. The farm that became Yale Camp was settled by the late 1700s in two pieces—one in Canaan and one in Norfolk.

By 1852 the farm that occurred on the site of Camp straddled the towns of Canaan and Norfolk; the town line divided the ~320 acre property. Yale Camp is on the Canaan (west) side.

In this section the property transfer history is described from deed records obtained at Canaan and Norfolk town halls. My purpose here was to see what information about the history of the land could be ascertained from the deeds. Landowner information would allow research into additional records. I was able to trace both properties back to the original claim in the 1750s or 1760s during the "Colony of Connecticut."

Below are three tables that detail the property transfers. The first includes the history of the Canaan portion of the farm. This is the main property, the larger acreage, the portion with greater and more interesting farm history, and the location of Camp. The second table is the Norfolk property, which appears to have been settled early, but only briefly. In 1852 Edward P. Hunt owned both properties and sold them as one farm, which it remained until Ted Childs bought it in 1936 and incorporated it into Great Mountain Forest.

Also following are a series of maps. The first shows the farm boundaries on contemporary (2018) imagery and historic (1934) imagery. A survey plat dated to 1858 conducted upon ownership by the Yale family is also included. The property lines for the farm as I show them results from a combination of 1) GPS locations of survey pins and boundary lines on the ground; 2) use of metes and bounds descriptions entered into a website called plotplatter (2018); and 3) the 1858 survey for Yale (family) farm found on file at the Norfolk Town Hall.

Canaan portion (Mansfield farm) property transactions prior to 1851.

Deed book and page	Date signed	Price	Seller	Buyer	Acres	Notes
2: 103-4	11 May 1755	Claim	Open land	John Hart	810	Multiple parcels in claim; property is in 270 acre parcel
2: 113	11 March 1756	10 lbs.	John Hart	Selah Hart	Acreage unclear	
2: 175	4 Nov. 1761	82 lbs. 10s	Selah Hart	Daniel and Joshua Lathrop	246 in two parcels	Parcels are 133 and 113 acres "on town line"
5: 324	23 Feb 1793	54 lbs. 1s	Joshua Lathrop	Dudley Hammond	246 in two parcels	
5: 166	3 July 1795	300 lbs.	Dudley Hammond	Elisha and Joseph Mansfield	~200 in two parcels	Mentions road running through property; begins Mansfield tenure
14: 448-451	24 Jan. 1846	\$100	Heirs of Elisha Mansfield (Rebecca Mansfield, Rebecca Phelps, et al.)	Elisha D. Mansfield	200	Elisha D. is the elder's son.
16: 368	19 May 1851	\$1,072.45	Elisha D. Mansfield	Edward P. Hunt	172	Mentions 'dwelling house' and 'highway running through'

## Norfolk portion (Tracy Lot) property transactions prior to 1851.

Deed book and page	Date signed	Price	Seller	Buyer	Acres	Notes
(Not found)	1762	claim	Common land	Capitan Daniel Lawrence	unknown	Reference to this claim came from subsequent deeds
2: 28-9	14 Nov. 1767	21 lbs.	Jedidiah Richards and Samual Pettibone	Theophilus Mixx	120	On town line; no record showing transfer from Lawrence to these sellers
2: 335-6	4 Dec. 1771	28 lbs.	Theophilus Mixx	John Tracy and Samuel Pettibone	120	Notes SE corner as 'heap of stones on large rock on the NW corner of Blackberry Hill
3: 204	25 Aug. 1779	60 lbs.	John Tracy	Faber Bacon	85	Deed reads "170 acres...half of which I sell..."
9: 538	3 Aug. 1810	"Valuable sum received"	David Thomlinson	Noah Benedict	90	Was part of estate with 3 properties this being the no. 2 property
10: 67	23 March 1814	\$900	Noah Benedict	Edward Burrell	90	Referred to as "Tracy Farm" suggesting John Tracy may have settled during his tenure.
14: 210	29 July 1842	\$500	Edward Burrell	Edward P. Hunt	90	Notes east line Elisha Mansfield and Meekertown
14: 250	5 Sept. 1843	\$600	Edward P. Hunt	Stephen Rosseter	90	Rosetter buys on debt; see next
14: 251	5 Sept. 1843	\$600	Stephen Rosseter	Edward P. Hunt	90	Mortgage to Hunt payable by Rosetter \$100 on April 1 for 6 years ending 1849. Seems Rosetter failed to pay and Hunt retained property.

**Combined Canaan and Norfolk portions (Yale/Chattleton farm) beginning in 1852.** The two properties were combined by Edward P. Hunt in that year and sold as one farm. These deeds are archived in Canaan Town Hall except those listed with \* on deed book are at Norfolk.

Deed book and page	Date signed	Price	Seller	Buyer	Acres	Notes
16: 397	5 March 1852	\$1,000	Edward P. Hunt	John Yale	320	Debt to Hunt
16: 388	8 March 1852	\$1,000	John Yale	Edward P. Hunt	320	Mortgage to Hunt \$200 every April 1 for 5 years. Property described between Dorman and Potter. Dwelling house.
17*: 46	5 March 1854	\$1,800	John Yale	Edward P. Hunt	320	Appears to be additional debt taken on by Yale.
19: 89	22 April 1854	\$500	John Yale	Laura and Albert Yale		Laura is mother of John and Albert. Father Charles died.
18: 148	4 May 1856	\$700	Laura and Albert Yale	George Harris	320	Mortgage debt
20: 331	12 May 1856	\$500 (release)	Edward P. Hunt	Albert and Laura Yale	320	Debt to Hunt is paid
20: 115	18 March 1861	\$500 (release)	Albert E. Yale (received)	Charles T. Yale (paid)	Not listed	All of the stock, farming utensils, and buildings
18: 568	26 March 1866	\$2,450	Charles Yale	Russell Mansfield, Larris Mansfield, Ellen Mansfield	320	Mansfield buyers are siblings; Includes all wood except one cord
Norfolk* 332	6 April 1866	\$100 (release)	George Harris	Charles Yale	320	Book number not recorded; Yale pays debt
21: 315	30 Oct. 1874	\$900 (loan)	Russell Mansfield, Xavier and Ellen Chattleton	Falls Village Savings Bank	320	Debt taken
22: 168	3 Jan. 1880	\$900 (release)	Falls Village Savings Bank	Russell Mansfield, Xavier and Ellen Chattleton	320	Debt paid

(Continued...)

Combined Canaan and Norfolk farm property transactions (continued).

Deed book and page	Date signed	Price	Seller	Buyer	Acres	Notes
Norfolk* 476	29 June 1896	\$1	Lewis Mansfield and Henry Mansfield (heirs to Russell, brother)	Ellen Chattleton	320	Deed book number not recorded. Ellen takes full ownership when Russell dies
Page 66	15 Dec. 1896	\$200 (debt)	Ellen and Xavier Chattleton	Julia Cherlet	Not listed	Loan to Chattleton
26*: 671	11 Oct. 1906	\$200 (release)	Julia Cherlet	Ellen and Xavier Chattleton	Not listed	Debt paid
30: 98-9	24 June 1936	\$1 and other valuable considerations	Estate of Ellen Chattleton	Edwin (Edward) Coffin Childs	293	122 Tracy Lot, 29 west side of road, 142 main farm,
28: 240	15 Aug. 1940	Less than \$100	Edward Childs	Yale University	6.7	For Camp
32: 459	19 April 1951	Less than \$100	Edward Childs	Yale University	1 more or less	North side of road for director's cabin
35: 246	20 Sept. 1957	Not listed	Estate of Ellen Chattleton	Edwin Coffin Childs	24	Julius Mansfield homestead left out of 1936 transfer

## **INTERPRETATION OF DEED HISTORY**

### **Canaan Property before 1852**

John Hart claimed the Canaan portion of the property, containing the farm core and site of Yale Camp, in 1755. Deed records show Hart made a number of claims in Canaan around this time. Hart's claim describes the property as being "On ye Great Mountain." It is assumed that the next transaction to Selah Hart is to a relative.

Still during British rule the property goes to Lathrop (brothers?) in 1761. It stays with them for 32 years making that one of the longest ownership tenures. It is unclear what, if anything, they did with the property. Charcoaling occurred in the area during this period so is possible trees were cut and perhaps the valley bottom cleared. I have not found any coppice resprouts dating to this time, however, some larger coppice oaks could have been cut first during this time and repeatedly for years following.

Hammond next owns the property for just a couple years before he sells to Elisha and Joseph Mansfield (brothers) at a considerable markup (54lbs to 300lbs). Elisha Mansfield built a cabin on the site of what is now Yale Camp. Mansfield expands the property with a number of smaller purchases (2 to 20 acres) over the following decades (not documented here). Joseph Mansfield's role in the property is unclear. The Mansfield family holds the property for 53 years making their

ownership period the longest before it being owned by Yale University and also Ted Childs and GMF.

Elisha Mansfield died in ~1845 and the property is sorted out among heirs in four pages of deeds. It appears Rebecca Mansfield is his wife with daughter Rebecca Phelps and her family also listed as heirs. Ultimately the property goes to Elisha D. Mansfield (son). He holds the property for only five years before selling to Edward P. Hunt for \$1,072. Elisha D. Mansfield remains in and around Meekertown.

### **Norfolk Property before 1852**

The southwest corner of Norfolk was the last part of the town claimed by proprietors. In 1762 Capitan Daniel Lawrence staked a number of claims in Norfolk including this area of Great Mountain. I did not find his original claim, but it was referenced in subsequent deeds. I was unable to track down the significance of his service to the British crown as Capitan.

The property quickly moves through several owners before ownership by John Tracy in 1771. Tracy notes in a deed he "farmed" the property, He sells in 1779 to Faber Bacon. It's unclear how the property transfers from Bacon to Thomlinson during the next 31 years, but Thomlinson sells in 1810 to Benedict. The property is thereafter known as the "Tracy Farm" or the "Tracy Lot" through all subsequent deeds.

Edward Burrell owns the property next and holds it for 28 years. It's unclear if he lived on the property, farmed it, etc. However, he also owns land to the east of the main farm in Canaan in 1858 according to the survey plat. He sells to Edward P. Hunt in 1842 at a loss (\$900 to \$500). Hunt sells to Rosetter on debt of \$600. It appears Rosetter was unable to make payment and Hunt holds the property.

Documented in the 1771 deed, and all subsequent deeds, is reference to a stone stack on the northwest summit of Blackberry Hill on a large slab of rock. This marker still exists.

### **Combined property 1852 – 1936**

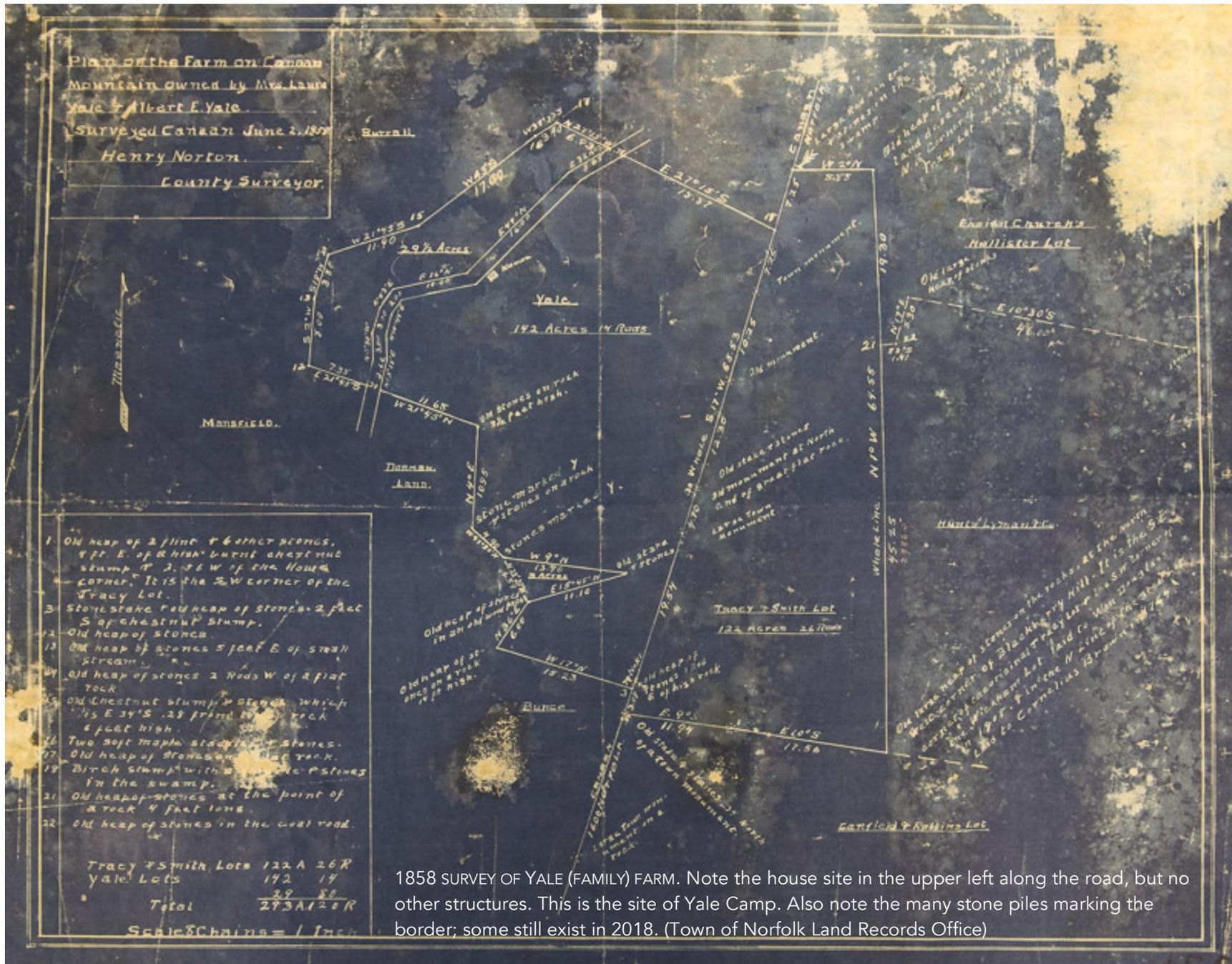
After Hunt acquires the Canaan portion from Elisha D. Mansfield in 1851 he owns both it and the Tracy Lot. He sells both properties (~300 acres) in 1852 as a single farm to John (son) and Laura (mother) Yale on debt. Charles Yale, father of John and Albert, is also noted in some deeds and records suggest he died in 1850. The Yale family ownership period is marked by a number of transactions mainly by mortgaging debt. John Yale eventually leaves the transactions (and census records); it is unclear if he dies or moves. Their second eldest son, Albert E. Yale assumes ownership with mother Laura. Despite being in constant debt the Yales nonetheless have the property surveyed in 1858. (Perhaps there was a land dispute.) That plat follows and is on file at the Norfolk Town Hall. This is the first known map of the farm and shows it as a combined 294 acres, the road running through the west side,

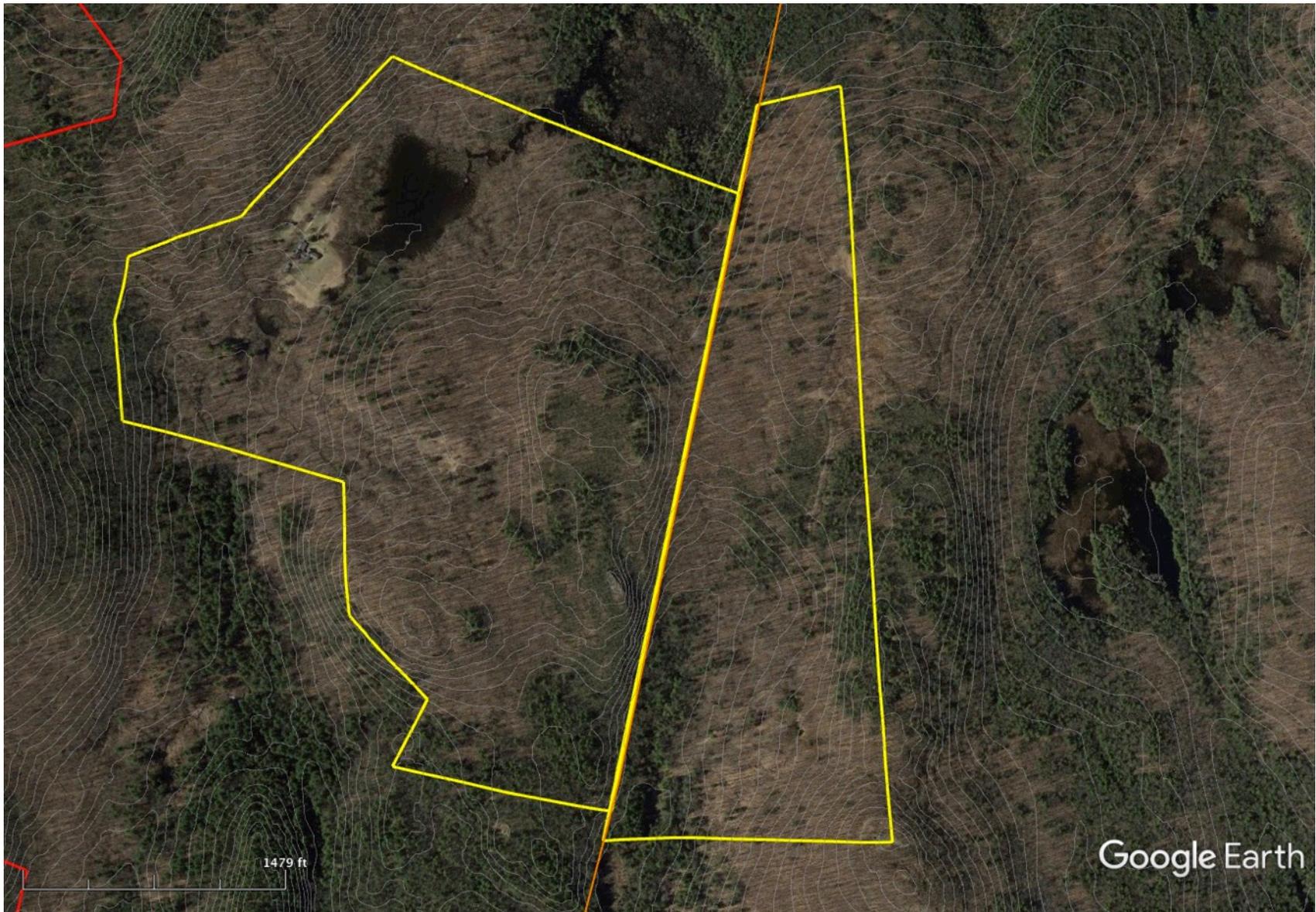
and a number of survey markers on the bounds that are still present in 2018.

The Yale's ownership period ends in 1866 when Charles Yale (unsure of relation) sells the farm for \$2,450 to several Mansfield siblings including Russell and Ellen. The property is noted as 320 acres, however, the survey shows 294 acres contiguous. An additional 24 acres occurs in a plot farther south in Meekertown leaving a couple acres unaccounted for.

Within 8 years after buying, the Mansfield clan, with Xavier Chattleton, an immigrant from France who marries Ellen Mansfield, takes a loan on the property from the Falls Village Savings Bank for \$900. They pay it back in 1880. (The 1880 farm census shows they cut 1300 cords of wood in 1879 for \$1,064 presumably to pay this debt.) Russell Mansfield dies in 1896 and his brothers release the property to Ellen. She takes on a small debt. Ellen and Xavier have 13 children. Ellen Chattleton dies in 1909 and the property remains in her estate for 27 years. Her children dispersed; however, Grover Chattleton remains local after a stint in the city.

In 1936 Ted Childs purchased the farm from the Chattleton children (heirs to Ellen). Soon after, Ted gives 6.7 acres—the site of the farmhouse and the main fields—to Yale University in 1940 after the Hurricane of '38 levels Yale Meyers Forest. In 1951 Childs gives Yale another acre to build the director's cabin on the west side of the road.





THE MANSFIELD/YALE/CHATTLETON FARM in Great Mountain Forest on 2018 imagery. Acreage totals ~300 and is divided between Canaan and Norfolk. I delineated this property boundary using three sources: 1) by entering the metes and bounds from deeds into platplotter.appspot.com; 2) using the 1858 survey plat; and 3) locating original survey markers on the ground (stone piles). The three sources do not align perfectly; this boundary shown is an average of the three sources.



THE MANSFIELD/YALE/CHATTLETON FARM on 1934 aerial imagery. Property boundary is described on the previous map. The fields around the farmhouse are still maintained in 1934. However, some old fields to the south and east of the farmhouse (now Yale Camp) are in an early successional state (old field pine, etc.). The eastern portions of the farm, including the Tracy Lot, are forest. Also note the lack of ponds (no beavers). The farm in the southwest at this time owned by Castagna, but originally settled by Dorman around 1800.

## WITNESS TREES

The deeds dating back to the middle 1700s contain a number of references to the landscape around the farm. Most of these references are witness trees used in the metes and bounds descriptions.

Here I've included the trees listed in the metes and bounds from the Norfolk and Canaan deeds for the property. I've listed only the first reference to any one tree. For example, the Tracy Lot deed for over 100 years begins "Starting at a large black oak..." This black oak is included only once in the table even though it is listed in multiple deeds.

Though the sample size is small, and perhaps suffers from some degree of surveyor bias, we nonetheless have a snapshot of forest composition. The forest was mixed hemlock and hardwood with (at least) the nine species listed here. All are extant in 2018, however, American chestnut occurs only as decaying wood, and small spouts. Moreover, hemlock is threatened by the woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*).

Just as the forest is today a mosaic of community types delineated based on topography, substrate, and disturbance, so it was 200 years ago.

LIST OF TREE SPECIES USED IN METES AND BOUNDS for the Mansfield/Yale/Chattleton farm in Norfolk and Canaan. This list is provided to provide a general sense of forest composition during settlement times.

Year	Reference in Deed	Presumed Species
1767	Black oak	<i>Quercus rubra</i> or <i>Q. velutina</i>
	Chestnut	<i>Castanea dentata</i>
1779	Blackberry Hill	<i>Rubus</i> sp.
1814	Red ash	<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>
1755	Black oak	<i>Q. rubra</i> or <i>Q. velutina</i>
	Hemlock	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>
	Beech tree	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>
	Hard maple	<i>Acer saccharum</i>
	Beach (sic)	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>
1756	Black birch	<i>Betula lenta</i>
	Beech	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>
	Hemlock	<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>
1795	Hemlock	<i>T. canadensis</i>
	Birch	<i>Betula</i> sp.
	Maple	<i>Acer</i> sp.
	Chestnut	<i>Castanea dentata</i>
	White oak	<i>Q. alba</i>
1851	Soft maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>
1936	Birch stumps	<i>Betula</i> sp.
	Soft maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>
	Old chestnut stumps	(Largely extirpated by this time)

Elisha & Joseph Mansfield  
To all People to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting.  
NOW YE, That I Dudley Hammond of the Town of Canaan in the County  
of Litchfield & State of Connecticut  
from Dudley Hammond

For the Consideration of Three Hundred Pounds Lawful Money

Received to my  
full Satisfaction of Elisha Mansfield and Joseph Mansfield Jun<sup>r</sup> of the Town of Litchfield in  
County of Litchfield in D<sup>t</sup> State

Do give, grant, bargain, sell and confirm unto the said Elisha

Mansfield & Joseph Mansfield Jun<sup>r</sup> the whole of the farm on which I now live in Canaan Estimated at about Two hundred  
acres & consists of the several Parcels of Land hereafter described all joining together & are situate in the Southeastly  
part of Canaan on the Great Mountain; the first parcel is the land I purchased of Joshua Lathrop & is the south part of a  
large Tract of land laid out to John Hart the first bounds is a heap of stones in the Dividing line between the Towns of Canaan  
& Norfolk thence Running West 7<sup>o</sup> N. 114 Rods to a hemlock tree & stones, thence South 17<sup>o</sup> W. 137 Rods to a heap of stones, thence E 37<sup>o</sup> S. 114  
Rods to a Birch Tree in D<sup>t</sup> Town line & from thence to the first bound. Estimated 114 acres. The second parcel lies south of & joining to  
the first & begins at a birch tree last mentioned & runs westerly in the south line of the first parcel 37 Rods to a corner called  
Maple Stake from thence southerly about 146 Rods to a birch tree which is the first bound mentioned in the Original Survey of  
this parcel, then E. 20<sup>o</sup> S. 100 Rods to a large Blackoak Tree & stones, thence S. 20<sup>o</sup> E. 70 Rods to a Maple Tree, thence E. 20<sup>o</sup> S. 21 Rods  
to a birch tree in D<sup>t</sup> Town line & from thence to the bounds first mentioned said to contain 5 3/4 Acres being the lands I purchased  
of John Hart. The third parcel lies West of the second parcel & south of the first parcel; the first bound is a large  
chestnut tree at or near the S. W. corner of the second parcel & from thence running westerly on the line of the first parcel  
37 Rods to a chestnut stump & stones thence S. 46<sup>o</sup> W. 100 Rods to a heap of stones between a Hemlock & Birch on a small hill  
on the North side of a run of Water, thence South 9<sup>o</sup> W. 37 Rods to a small Whiteoak & stones, thence E. 17<sup>o</sup> 20<sup>o</sup> S. 10 Rods  
to a birch tree the S. W. corner of the second parcel & from thence straight to the place began at. said to contain 2 1/2 acres  
& 60 Rods. Excepting allowance for a three Rod Road Lengthways through this parcel & is the same I purchased of the  
Heirs of John Hart and of John Watson

To have and to hold the above granted and bargained Premises, with the Appurtenances  
thereof, unto them the said Elisha & Joseph Mansfield their

Heirs and Assigns for ever, to ~~them~~ and their own proper Use and Be-  
hoof. And also, I the said Dudley Hammond

DEED FROM DUDLEY  
HAMMOND TO ELISHA AND  
JOSEPH MANSFIELD IN 1795  
(Canaan: Book 5 page  
166). The Mansfields were  
brothers and it was Elisha  
who ended up settling the  
site that is now Yale  
Camp. He also built much  
of the "Chattleton Road"  
that leads to camp.  
Joseph's grandson,  
Russell, and  
granddaughter Ellen  
(Chattleton) lived on the  
farm from 1866 until their  
deaths in 1896 and 1909  
respectively. Note the  
many references to trees  
on the property in the  
metes and bounds  
description.

## POPULATION CENSUS RECORDS

In the community of Meekertown, and Great Mountain more broadly, the same surnames appear repeatedly (e.g. Dean, Mansfield, Munson, Root, Yale, etc.). While it is tempting to construct a family tree to illustrate the relations among families, that effort is beyond the scope of this project.

Nonetheless, the federal census records taken each decade provide a snapshot of who was in the neighborhood. Census records show the number of people, ages, gender, race, and in some cases profession, living at the farmhouse previously occurring at Yale Camp. Records for neighboring properties occur on the same schedule. Many of the people listed were likely born in, and also died in, the house that stood on the site of Camp. The census records provide some information about the labor available on the farm at different times. The data collected grew more detailed over time; the 1800 census requested little information while the 1900 census contains considerable detail. However, with regard to farm operations, the non-population agricultural schedules gathered from 1850 to 1880 provide highly detailed information. That record is covered in a subsequent section.

I've listed all the census records found from 1800 to 1900 for the farm that occurred on the site of Yale Camp. An assumption is made that the property deed records matches the family found on the census record. A few census years are

unclear and are noted. The census forms list "free whites," "free blacks," and "slaves" (in early years). With the exception of 1840, all people listed on these census forms are white; no slaves are ever listed for the property or for any neighboring properties on the census forms.

Each census form is interesting from the standpoint that it offers a snapshot of the neighborhood of what is now Chattleton Road, and also Meekertown, and Great Mountain in general. The census recorder walked the road collecting information. Some decades they walked north to south, and others they walked south to north. In the first half of the 1800s the home of Christopher Potter and Chauncey Dorman served as reference properties (for me) to the north and south respectively.

Each decade is listed here with a summary of the property's census schedule as well as a brief interpretation.

### 1800

Elisha Mansfield is listed as Head (of family) with 1 male and 2 females under 10 years (his children). Himself and one female 26-44 years (presumed wife Rebecca). His brother, Joseph, with whom he purchased the property that is Yale Camp is listed on the next line with 2 males and 1 female under 10 years, and wife 26-44 years. It's unclear if they lived in the same house or if Joseph has a separate house close by.

### 1810

(Census not found)

### 1820

Elisha Mansfield listed as Head. Also: 1 male 10-15; 2 males 16-25; 1 male 45 and up; 1 female 10-15; 1 female 16-25; 1 female 45 and up. Elisha and Rebecca have 5 children. (Joseph Mansfield no longer listed in proximal lines; assumed he moved away.)

### 1830

Elisha Mansfield. Also: 1 male 20-30; 1 male 60-70; 1 female 20-30; 1 female 60-70. (Joseph Mansfield resides four households to the north.)

### 1840

Elisha Mansfield. Also: 1 male 5-9; 3 males 20-29; 1 male 30-39; 1 female under 5; 2 females 20-29; 1 female 30-39; 1 female 70-79; 1 Free Colored Male 10-23; 1 Free Colored Male 55-99. 12 people total. Elisha Mansfield died in 1840 and by age does not appear to be counted in this census, though he is listed (but his wife is aged 70s). More notable are the two "Free Colored Males" living with them. These are the only non-whites I found on any census in any decade for this portion of census district 33 in Canaan, Conn.

### 1850

The elder Mansfield died in 1840s and deed records show Elisha D. takes ownership from heirs including mother

(Rebecca) in the 1840s. Mansfield sells in 1851, but dwells elsewhere in Meekertown. The 1850 census record suggests Elisha D. and family no longer lived on the property. Records suggest the property was inhabited by the Yale family, or perhaps Julius Mansfield and family as both families are listed residing in between Potter and Dorman—families that bound said farm on the north and south respectively. Elisha D. Mansfield and family are listed in this area, but the location of the house, while nearby, is unclear. Moreover, confusion is added as census records show the Yale family owns property valued at \$2,000 (the value of a farm) however, they didn't take ownership of the Mansfield farm until 1852 according to deed records. Julius Mansfield is shown as owning property valued at \$250, or roughly the value of a house. Therefore as it is somewhat unclear which family lives on site of Camp all three families are listed below. It is likely both houses were on the farm; houses were moved with families in those days.

**Elisha D. Mansfield** (age 43) Farmer  
Rebecca Mansfield (81)  
Phineas Mansfield (53) Millwright  
Caroline Yale (39)  
William Mansfield (15) Student  
Sarah Mansfield (13)  
Peter Mansfield (10)

**Julius Mansfield** (55) Farmer  
Lucinda Mansfield (45)

Russell Mansfield (20) Laborer  
Henry Mansfield (16) Laborer  
George Mansfield (16) Laborer  
Ellen Mansfield (6)  
Lewis Mansfield (12)

**Charles Yale** (50) farmer  
Laura Yale (51)  
John Yale (20) Farmer  
Albert Yale (18) Farmer  
Lucy E. Yale (16)  
Charles Yale Jr. (13)  
Cecelia (Selinda) A. Yale (11)  
Henry Daily (24) Laborer

## 1860

The elder Charles Yale passed in 1850 and his sons are listed at the top of the census form. Eldest son John is not listed. Yales own the farm.

Albert E. Yale (27) Farmer  
Charles Yale (24)  
Laura Yale (64)  
Selinda Yale (20)  
Mary Yale (24)  
Ida Yale (2)

## 1870

Ownership in 1870 according to the deeds is by Russell, Ellen, and Larris (also spelled Leuris/Lewis) Mansfield—all siblings. However, the 1870 census record shows Ellen and Xavier Chattleton living with son George (1) and not owning the property they lived in at the time. Julius Mansfield (her father) is listed with \$2,400 in real property. This is likely the farm, owned by the three adult children, but inhabited by their parents, and a number of others including the Hines Family for which a relation to the Mansfields cannot be determined. It is interesting to note the number of colliers on the Canaan district 33 census schedule of 1870.

Julius Mansfield (77) Farmer  
Lucinda Mansfield (67) Keeping House  
Russell Mansfield (40) Farm labor  
Leuris Mansfield (32) Farm labor  
Lucy Mansfield (24) At home  
Antonette Mansfield (3)  
Joseph Hines (55) Collier  
Emily Hines (55) keeping house  
Joseph Hines (19) Collier  
Mary Hines (20) At home  
Nathan Hines (8)  
Adeline Hines (6)

## 1880

The Chattleton house comes together with Russell Mansfield (Ellen's brother) listed as head of family. Ellen (and Xavier Chattleton) ultimately will have 13 children. Russell never married.

Russell Mansfield (50) Farmer  
Xavier Chattleton (40) Farmer  
Ellen Chattleton (36) Keeping house  
George (10) At school  
Predeuck (7) At school  
Mary (6) At house  
John (5) At house  
Albert (2) At house  
Willie (1) At house  
Alice (7 mos.) At house

## 1890

(Record not found)

## 1900

Russell has died (1896) and some Chattleton children have moved away.

Xavier Chattleton (60) Farmer  
Ellen Chattleton (56)  
Samuel (20) Farm labor  
Irving (18)  
Grover (17)  
Mattie (14)

## 1910 and beyond

Ellen Chattleton died in 1909. In 1910 Xavier Chattleton apparently lives alone at the farmhouse in Canaan. Later that year he moves in with his sister in Norfolk. In 1920 Xavier Chattleton (76) lives with son Samuel (39) and daughter Alice Anstett (41) and her family in Norfolk. It seems in 1920 no one lives in the farmhouse on Chattleton Road. Most of the children have dispersed. As photos show, the house is used as a hunting camp.

## **PROPERTY TAX RECORDS (1848-1919)**

Most New England towns instituted a property tax on personal and real property to fund government services by the early 1800s. Real property including homes, barns, and improved acres were taxed, as were livestock and luxury property such as carriages and clocks. The town of Canaan retains their Grand List of all property tax transactions from 1848 to 1919. I examined these records to see what sort of property the farm held, if there were trends over time, and how the tax records dovetailed with census and deed records and field evidence. The records begin at 1848—the waning years of Elisha Mansfield’s tenure. But a clearer picture of the Yale and Chattleton families emerges.

It is important to bear in mind that these are tax records and are self-reported. We can assume these reflect an accurate and honest assessment of the farm property, but like all tax data, they are subject to underreporting and evasion and thus an imperfect picture of the times. The town recording methods also appear imperfect.

A few points of interpretation are worth noting. As mentioned, Elisha Mansfield settled the property in 1795 and remained until his death in the 1840s. Thus we don’t have any data on this period—the first 50 or more years of the farm.

It seems all the transition periods, immediately before and after property transfer, there is a lapse in reporting. This occurs in late 1840s–50s during the transition from Mansfield to Yale, then again in the middle 1860s from Yale to Mansfield/Chattleton, and again in the waning days of Chattleton after 1900. I searched all relevant surnames during these periods a pause of listed property occurs during these transition years.

The acreage fluctuates year to year with some steady periods. Taxation is based on improved acres, which explains some inconsistency. The farm acreage of 320 acres did not change after 1851 (according to deeds) and the 150 acres listed in 1880 agrees with the acres listed as “improved” in the 1880 federal farm census records. Self-reporting of improved acres also allowed an opportunity to underreport; taxation provided an incentive to do so.

When the Yale family took ownership in 1852 (they might have lived there as renters or owners for a few years prior) there was a marked increase in cattle. While Mansfield had ~5 cows, Yale increased that to 15 to 20 animals during their tenure. There is also inconsistency in the family member listed (head) in the Grand List between Albert and Charles Yale. Census records show Laura Yale, their mother, present during their ~15 year ownership. Her husband, the boys’ father, Charles, died in 1850 and is buried in the Lower City cemetery. Their number of cows decreases substantially in the

mid-1860s just before they sell to Mansfield/Chattleton. This fact, combined with the repeated mortgages they had on the property suggests they had a hard go at making the property economically sustainable.

In 1866, according to deeds, the siblings Russell, Larris (Lewis), and Ellen Mansfield buy the property. Ellen marries Xavier Chattleton. They may have met through a neighbor who had a *Chattleton* listed as a servant. Xavier was originally from France and was the only immigrant to reside on the property through the 1800s. (Christopher Potter, the next farm north, was from Ireland. In general there were few immigrants in the neighborhood after 1800 according to birthplace listings on census records). In time, Russell and Ellen own the property and Xavier is, at times, listed with Russell in the tax list. They seem to alternate ownership, or divide assets evenly and pay their respective taxes.

At 1870 Xavier owns a mill, probably on site today below camp at the bridge of the Sam Yankee Trail. He otherwise is listed as having 4 acres. It's unclear what the situation was and an explanation for the records is fleeting. The mill and the horse are always listed with Xavier. At times he is listed in the Grand List, but with no associated property.

Nonetheless, once they get up and running the Mansfield-Chattleton farm owns 15 to 20 cows. A couple of these are work oxen, and the rest mostly dairy cattle. Improved acreage

stabilizes at ~150 acres which agrees to the number of improved (and unimproved forest) on the 1880 agricultural census schedule (next section).

By the 1880s their improved acreage reaches 175 acres and the value of their 90-year old house drops to \$100. Russell Mansfield dies in 1896 and Ellen becomes sole owner. After that time it appears the farm loses production as no animals are listed. Soon after no property is listed.

Ellen Chattleton, who mothered 13 children at the farm, dies in 1909 and the property remains in her estate on the tax list for 10 years. Ellen Mansfield Estate is entered each year, with no property. Ultimately the estate isn't settled until 1936 when Ted Childs buys out her heirs (8 living children). No property is registered and the listing in the Grand List is "Non-residential" suggesting no one was living there. The 1910 census record suggests Xavier Chattleton is living alone, though it is unclear if this is on the farm or elsewhere. In 1920 he is living with his daughter's family in Norfolk.

These tax records appear to confirm the information provided by the deeds and census records. Taken alone, the tax records show a farm in the second half of the 1800s with generally 150 acres of improved land and 10–20 cows.

PROPERTY TAX RECORDS from the Town of Canaan/Falls Village Grand List 1848 to 1919 for the Mansfield/Yale/Chattleton Farm. Page 1 of 4.

Year	Name on Record	House Value	Acres	Land Value	No. Horses	No. Cattle	Other / Notes
1848	Elisha Mansfield	\$500	145	\$1,500	4	5	1 clock (luxury item)
1849	Elisha Mansfield	\$500	145	(Not listed)	1	5	
1850	Elisha Mansfield	\$700	150	(Not listed)	1	6	\$30 worth of sheep and swine
1851	Elisha D. Mansfield	\$700	300	\$1,600	2	5	\$300 mill; \$6,965 in bank
1852 – 1853 No listing; transition Mansfield to Yale							
1854	Albert Yale	\$200	250	\$1,800	10 (\$275)	20 (\$400)	Carriage
1855	Albert Yale	\$200	250	\$1,800	6 (\$150)	20 (\$400)	Clock
1856	Albert E. Yale	\$400	160	\$1,300	2 (\$200)	23 (\$515)	
1857	Albert E. Yale	\$400	180	\$1,300	~5	~15	Livestock based on value
1858	Albert E. Yale	\$400	180	\$1,300	~3	~15	
1859	Albert E. Yale	\$400	180	\$1,300	~3	~15	
1860	Albert E. Yale	\$400	180	\$1,300	~3	~15	
1861	Albert E. Yale	\$400	180	\$1,300	~3	~15	
1862	Albert E. Yale	\$400	180	\$1,300	~3	~15	Listing is crossed out in book
1863	Charles Yale	\$400	122	\$1,000	2	20	
1864	Charles Yale	\$400	122	\$1,000			No animals listed
1865	Albert E. Yale	None listed		None listed	1	3	Unclear why no real estate
1866	Albert E. Yale	None listed		None listed	1	8 ½	Half cow is calf
1867	Albert E. Yale	None listed		None listed	1	11	Yale sells to Mansfield
1868	No record						
1869	Russell & Lewis Mansfield	\$200	150	\$1,500		19	
1870	Xavier Chattleton	\$100	25	\$250		3	Mill \$100; Could be a portion of next property

(Continued....)

Property tax records from the Town of Canaan/Falls Village Grand List 1848 to 1919 for the Mansfield/Yale/Chattleton Farm. Page 2 of 4.

Year	Name on Record	House Value	Acres	Land Value	No. Horses	No. Cattle	Other / Notes
1870	Russell & Lewis Mansfield	\$200	150	Not listed	None listed	19	
1871	Xavier Chattleton	\$100	4	\$100		2	Mill \$50
1872	Xavier Chattleton	\$100	4	100		2	Mill \$50
1872	Russell & Lewis Mansfield	\$200	150	\$1,500	1	16	Carriage \$50
1873	Xavier Chattleton	\$100	4	\$100		1	Mill \$50
1873	Russell Mansfield	\$200	150	\$1,500		6	
1874	Xavier Chattleton	\$100	154	\$1,500		12	
1874	Russell Mansfield						Listed with no property
1875	Xavier Chattleton Ellen Mansfield	\$100	150	\$1,500		17 (\$235)	
1876	Chattleton and Mansfield	\$100	150	\$1,500	1	18	
1877	Xavier Chattleton						Listed with no property
1877	Russell Mansfield and Chattleton	\$100	200	\$1,800	1	17	
1878	Mansfield and Chattleton	\$100	148	\$1,400	1	17	
1879	Mansfield and Chattleton	\$100	148	\$1,400		20 (\$255)	
1880	Mansfield and Chattleton	\$100	148	\$1,400	1	17	
1881	Mansfield and Chattleton	\$100	148	\$1,400	1	13	
1882	Xavier Chattleton				1		Only 1 horse is listed (Continued.....)

Property tax records from the Town of Canaan/Falls Village Grand List 1848 to 1919 for the Mansfield/Yale/Chattleton Farm. Page 3 of 4.

Year	Name on Record	House Value	Acres	Land Value	No. Horses	No. Cattle	Other / Notes
1882	Russell Mansfield	\$100	150	\$1,400		18	
1883	Xavier Chattleton						No property listed
1883	Russell Mansfield	\$100	150	\$1,000		14	
1884	Xavier Chattleton						No property listed
1884	Russell Mansfield	\$100	150	\$1,000		14	
1885	Xavier Chattleton						No property listed
1885	Russell Mansfield	\$100	150	\$1,000		9	
1886	Russell Mansfield						No property listed
1886	Chattleton and Mansfield	\$100	175	\$1,150		17	\$34 of sheep and poultry
1887	Xavier Chattleton						No property listed
1887	Russell Mansfield and Chattleton	\$100	175	\$1,150	1	16	\$28 sheep, swine, poultry
1888	Russell Mansfield	½ house \$50	67.5	\$575		6	\$21 sheep, swine, poultry
1888	Xavier Chattleton	½ house \$50	67.5	\$575	1	6	\$21 sheep, swine, poultry
1889	Mansfield and Chattleton	\$100	175	\$1,150	1	11	\$60 sheep, swine, poultry
1890	Mansfield and Chattleton	\$50	175	\$1,150		11	\$110 sheep, swine, poultry
1891	Mansfield and Chattleton	\$50	150	\$1,000		11	\$52 sheep, swine, poultry
1892	Mansfield and Chattleton	\$50	170	\$1,120		12	\$60 sheep, swine, poultry
1893	Xavier Chattleton				1		Only one horse is listed

(Continued...)

Property tax records from the Town of Canaan/Falls Village Grand List 1848 to 1919 for the Mansfield/Yale/Chattleton Farm. Page 4 of 4.

Year	Name on Record	House Value	Acres	Land Value	No. Horses	No. Cattle	Other / Notes
1894	Mansfield and Chattleton	\$50	170	\$1,120		9 (\$124)	\$102 sheep, swine, poultry
1895	Mansfield and Chattleton		107	\$300		4 ½ (\$70)	\$35 sheep, swine, poultry
1896	Xavier Chattleton Mrs.						No property listed
1897	Xavier Chattleton						No property listed
1898	Xavier Chattleton						No property listed
1899	Xavier Chattleton						No property listed
1900	No listing						
1901	No listing						
1902	Xavier Chattleton						No property listed
1903	No listing						
1904	Xavier Chattleton						No property listed
1905	Xavier Chattleton						No property listed
1906	Samuel Chattleton						No property listed
1907	Grover Chattleton						No property listed
1908	Grover Chattleton						No property listed
1909	Grover Chattleton						No property listed
1910	Ellen Chattleton estate	\$500	200	\$600			Listed as non-resident
1911-1912	Ellen Chattleton estate	\$600	200	\$500			
1913-1919	Ellen Chattleton estate	\$600	200	\$1,000			1914 lists two barns valued at \$200



LARGE, OPEN GROWN WHITE OAK on a high point southwest of camp. The tree has shaded cattle, fed bears, and served as a perch for people hunting deer. Age is estimated at 225 years—around the time Elisha Mansfield settled the farm.

## NON-POPULATION (AGRICULTURE) CENSUS SCHEDULE

From 1850 to 1880 the federal government conducted a series of non-population censuses notably for manufacturing and agriculture. These records, agricultural in the case of the Mansfield/Yale/Chattleton farm, provide a much more detailed look at the state of a property. Included, for example, are numbers of animals and implements, acres of crops, yields on crops, timber, maple syrup, honey and more. Essentially everything produced on the farm for the year is indexed. Farms with income under \$100 (1850) or \$500 (1870) annually were not required to participate.

I obtained agricultural census records of the farm for 1850, 1870, and 1880. The 1850 record is listed under Elisha Mansfield. The elder Mansfield died 10 years earlier and in 1848 Elisha D. acquired the farm. Names of neighbors on the page suggest it may not be the correct property, however, acreage (50 improved, 300 unimproved) does. Census records show Julius Mansfield and Charles Yale residing between the Potter and Dorman farms in 1850, and not Elisha Mansfield, which raises additional doubt for the 1850 schedule. I was unable to track down the 1860 schedule, which would have occurred during Laura and Albert Yale's tenure. Perhaps they didn't earn enough to file.

The 1870 census is listed under Julius Mansfield. Julius was father of Ellen and Russell (siblings who owned the farm) and

he is listed as head of family on the 1870 population census. Moreover, the farm is listed as having 150 acres each improved and unimproved, which corresponds to the acreage in the town tax records for 1870. Thus I'm confident that this is the correct property.

In 1880, the final year the federal government conducted an agricultural census, the property is listed under Russell Mansfield. Russell owned the property with his sister Ellen (Chattleton) at that time and the acreage is confirming.

OF THE PERSON WHO CONDUCTS THIS FARM.	ACRES OF LAND.							
	TENURE.			IMPROVED.		UNIMPROVED.		
	Owner.	Rents for fixed money rental.	Rents for share of products.	Tilled, including fallow and grass in rotation, (whether pasture or meadow.)	Permanent meadows, pastures, orchards, vineyards.	Woodland and forest.	Other unimproved, including "odd fields" not growing wood.	
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	
Mansfield Russell	1			35	110	140	85	
Oscar Lewis	1			100	10	75		
Waltham Henry E	1			114	80	76		
Page Julius W	1			20	50	4		
Butler Jonathan	1			25	100	200		
Robie William H	1			30	15	15		
Robert Lyman Son Co	1			60	60	10	50	
Lysman Louis A	1			20	30	15	10	
Howe Almon Estate	1			150	150	200		
NEAT CATTLE AND THEIR PRODUCTS.						W.M.A.		
ON HAND JUNE 1, 1880.		MOVEMENT, 1879.		Total		Total		

CLIP FROM 1880 CENSUS SCHEDULE. Note Russell Mansfield on the first line with acreages of farm listed at right. 1880 was the most detailed census schedule.

COMBINED RECORDS FROM FEDERAL NON-POPULATION AGRICULTURAL CENSUS SCHEDULES for Mansfield/Yale/Chatteleton farm. Columns without values were displayed without values on the schedules. Some years recorded different data than other years (e.g. acres for planted crops in 1880); where data was not requested on the schedules for some years find NR (not requested) on the table. Blank entries should assume zero.

	Improved acres	Unimproved acres	Value of tools	Horses	Milk cows	Work cows (oxen)	Other cows	Sheep	Swine	Poultry	Value of livestock
1850 <sup>a</sup>	50	300	\$100	2	4	2			5		\$365
1870	150	150	\$75		9	6	5	6	4		\$1,195
1880	75	140 + 85 <sup>1</sup>	\$40	1	6	2	12		2	5	\$730

Table continued:

	Value all production	Corn bushels <sup>2</sup>	Oats bushels <sup>2</sup>	Potatoes bushels <sup>2</sup>	Butter lbs.	Cheese lbs.	Hay tons <sup>3</sup>	Honey lbs.	Maple sugar	Wood cut cords	Wood value
1850	NR	50	50	100	300	350	20	150	0	NR	NR
1870	\$950	50	50	50	800		40		0	NR	NR
1880 <sup>4</sup>	\$600	20 (1 ac.)	75 (3 ac.)	60 (1.25 ac)	500		20 ac.		0	1,300	\$1,025

<sup>a</sup> This listing of Elisha Mansfield in 1850 may not be the Yale Camp farm as the census population record, the agricultural schedule, the property tax records, and the deed records do not align. Some records suggest this property listed is correct, and others suggest not.

<sup>1</sup> In 1880 Unimproved acres were divided into woodland/forest and "old-field"; 85 acres was included as old-field.

<sup>2</sup> In 1880 crop records were recorded in bushels and acres.

<sup>3</sup> Hay yields around 1900 in Conn. averaged 1.1 tons per acre.

<sup>4</sup> Additional information collected in 1880 includes: \$30 of hired labor for 6 weeks; \$10 in fencing repairs; 4 calves (cow) dropped; 3 cows sold living; 20 dozen eggs produced.

## INTERPRETATION OF AGRICULTURAL CENSUS

### IMPROVED AND UNIMPROVED ACREAGE

The amount of improved and unimproved acreage fluctuates but generally agrees with deeds and local tax records. Elisha D. Mansfield, who owned the property in 1850 and is listed on the 1850 census (on account of his father, Elisha, having died in 1840), also owned a tract of adjacent mountain land to the southwest of the farm. This may account for the additional acreage listed especially considering the farm did not own the Tracy Lot in Norfolk yet. He lists 50 improved acres, which would include most of the lower land around the farmhouse, the hay and crop fields, etc. In 1870 the land is divided evenly at 150 improved and unimproved acres. This agrees with information in local tax records. The improved land is primarily on the west (Canaan) side and the forest occurs on the Tracy Lot and Matterhorn area. In 1880, 75 acres is listed as improved, with 140 as woodland or forest. The forest acreage is essentially unchanged from the 150 acres of unimproved land in previous years. An additional 85 acres is listed as old-field suggesting some decline as pastures succeed into woods. Also in 1880 other categories list 20 acres of mown grassland (hay field) and 5.25 acres of cropland as part of the improved acres. A listing for pasture is not given, but should total 40–50 acres.

### HORSES

The farm held few horses over time according to the census and local tax records. Only one or two horses are reported, each year and in some years zero. Perhaps the rugged nature of the landscape demanded more robust work oxen (which are reported). Local tax records indicate Xavier Chattleton owned the horse(s).

### COWS

In the second half of the 1800s tax and census records suggest the farm was primarily a dairy operation producing butter. Tax records show approximately 5 cows during Elisha Mansfield ownership, then 15–25 cows during Yale ownership. During Mansfield-Chattleton ownership from 1869 to 1895 the number of cattle ranged from 1 to 20 with an average of 12 in any given year. Tax records do not differentiate between milk cows and oxen. The census record offers comparatively limited data but does differentiate milk cows and oxen from other cows. Other cows likely include calves, non-working bulls, etc. With an average of 12 cows based on tax records, it is likely that 2–4 of those were oxen.

### SHEEP

Only 6 sheep were reported in 1870 with no sheep reported in other years. The property tax records list “Swine, sheep, and poultry” collectively in the late 1800s with a collective dollar value but it is unclear what the proportions were.

Nonetheless, it appears sheep did not comprise a significant portion of the farm economy after 1850. The height of sheep production in New England occurred in the 1840s following the Merino craze that began after the Napoleonic Wars. Perhaps a farm census from the 1820s to 1840s shortly after the Merino introduction to Connecticut in 1806 would show greater stocks.

#### SWINE

Hogs could be let loose in the forest to feed on acorns and other mast. The records show a decrease in swine over time, however, the local tax records show a general increase in “swine, sheep, and poultry” in the late 1800s.

#### CORN

In 1850 and 1870 the farm produced 50 bushels of corn and in 1880 it produced 20 bushels on 1 acre. The Connecticut statewide average for corn from 1866–1875 was 34 bushels per acre (Parker and Klien, 1966). The US average in the second half of the 1800s was 26 bushels per acre (Nielsen, 2017). The farm was producing lower than average yields for corn in 1880. In the earlier decades they were likely producing corn on 2–3 acres to reach 50 bushels. Most corn was likely fed to livestock.

#### OATS

In 1850 and 1870 the farm produced 50 bushels of oats and in 1880 they produced 75 bushels on 3 acres. This is 25 bushels

per acre, which compares closely to 29 bushels per acre for the 1866–1875 average in Connecticut (Parker and Klien, 1966). The US average from 1866 to 1880 was ~26.5 bushels (FRED, 2018). Oats were fed as grain to livestock. In earlier decades they might have produced oats on perhaps 2 acres.

#### POTATOES

In 1850 the farm produced 100 bushels of potatoes and 50 bushels in 1870. In 1880 the farm produced 60 bushels on 1.25 acres or 48 bushels per acre. In the second half of 1800s the US averaged ~85 bushels per acre (FRED, 2018).

Connecticut data was not available. Based only on one year of data (1880) the farm produced far below average yields.

While potatoes are fed to livestock, it is assumed most of the harvest was for people. At 50 lbs. per bushel, in 1880 the farm produced 3000 lbs. of potatoes. At 1 lb. per person per day, this crop could sustain 8 people for a year (with meat, dairy, vegetables, etc. making up the remainder of the diet).

#### BUTTER AND CHEESE

In 1850 the Mansfield farm produced 300 lbs. of butter and 350 lbs. of cheese. In 1870, 800 lbs. of butter was produced and in 1880 their cows produced 500 pounds. A pound of butter requires approximately 21 lbs. of milk, and a pound of cheese requires roughly 10 lbs. of milk. Thus in 1850 the farm produced butter and cheese from 9,800 lbs. of milk, from 4 cows, or 2,450 lbs. of milk per cow. In 1870, the 800 lbs. of butter produced required 16,800 lbs. of milk or 1,867 lbs. per

cow. And in 1880 the 500 lbs. of butter from 6 cows resulted in 1,750 lbs. of milk per cow. Of course these numbers are rough, as milk for consumption, waste, etc. has not been calculated. A modern cow on a modern farm can produce 21,000 lbs. of milk each year. However, an 1800s farm cow would have been smaller, less heavily fed, and milked by hand reducing milk yields to ~5 liters per day (Russell, 1976) in the warm season. This amounts to a rough potential 11 pounds per cow per day in the warm season, or perhaps 3,000 lbs. per year. This corresponds well to the milk required above for dairy products (~2000 lbs.) and home consumption.

#### HAY

Hay was essential for the survival of livestock through the winter. The longer and harder the winter, the more hay (or other stored forage such as grain or leaf fodder) was needed. As Great Mountain is in "Connecticut's Icebox" the farm would need more hay than comparable farms in lower valleys. Hay was cut and raked by hand in early years with generally two cuttings per year. Considering the gradual decline in the farm's value of implements (tools) it seems unlikely they had a mechanical hay rake or cutter in the early years. More likely is it was cut and raked by hand. Connecticut state yields in 1900 were 1.1 tons per acre. In 1850 the farm produced 20 tons, in 1870 it produced 40 tons, and in 1880 it grew hay on 20 acres which would yield ~22 tons. It took ~1-acre of hay plus grain to winter a cow (Volo and Volo, 2002), thus the amount of hay reported aligns closely with the number of cows on the farm.

#### MAPLE AND HONEY

It is striking that according to the census schedule no maple syrup was produced. In fact, no farm among several pages of census schedules from Canaan, Conn. district 33 (Great Mountain area) showed maple production. It may have been a qualifying question requiring a minimum production amount, or a certain amount sold, to report. Sugar maple trees dating to the late 1800s can be found on the farm in 2018. It seems unlikely—considering the presence of maple trees and abundant wood to evaporate they sap—that people were not producing maple syrup. Nonetheless, in 1850 the farm produced 150 lbs. of honey—the equivalent of two or three hives at modern yields (probably four or five hives then). This amounts to 0.4 lbs. per day for household use.

#### WOOD

In 1879 the Mansfield-Chatteleton farm cut 1,300 cords of wood. Relative to what other farms in the neighborhood were cutting, this 1300 cord cut was significant. Most farms cut 10–20 cords (likely for personal use), or perhaps up to 200 (presumably for commercial use). At \$1,025 paid, the 1,300 cords amounts to \$0.79 per cord (about \$20/cord in 2018 dollars). In 1880 Russell Mansfield and Ellen and Xavier Chatteleton paid a debt (see deeds section) of \$900 to the Falls Village Savings Bank. They mortgaged the farm in 1874. The 1,300 cords of wood appears to have covered that debt.

## FIELD INVENTORY

The field inventory focuses on identifying and recording features of historical relevance in order to create a picture of how the farm landscape was arranged and used. I noted lithic features such as stone walls, clearance cairns, and heaps, characteristics of the ground to identify agricultural lands, and indicator trees such as abandoned pasture trees, coppiced trees and more to identify what land use practices occurred on the property.

This inventory was not systematic. During the initial phase of the inventory I did not have defined property boundaries and instead was looking for general landscape patterns. My perambulation covered 21 miles mainly on, but also off, the farm property. Except for portions of the Norfolk side of the farm (Tracy Lot), I saw nearly every acre.

Sections below are listed in broad features of historical ecology: Lithics (foundations, walls, cairns and heaps); Ground (areas of smooth, undulating, or rocky ground); and Trees and Vegetation (abandoned pasture trees, coppice trees, old growth maidens, rich site indicators, etc.). Each also has a map showing generalized locations of features (not exhaustive). These are combined into a holistic map of the farm in the Landscape Synthesis that follows.



CLEARANCE CAIRN AND COPPICED TREE along a hayfield edge in the southwest portion of the farm.

## LITHIC FEATURES

Because of the overwhelming influence of glacial activity on the hard bedrock of Great Mountain, stones and rock are common on the landscape. Settlement necessitated the use of stone as a material, and also the removal of stone as a burden. We find both features on the farm property. A general description and map for each follows.

### Stone walls

Stone walls were created as fields were cleared for row crops and hayfields and to build fences. Typically, crop field walls can be determined by the presence of small fist-sized stones. These small stones resulted from annual freeze-thaw cycles pushing subsurface stones to the surface. Fences were built to keep livestock *out* of crop and hay fields. Animals generally had free range of the forest and pastures. Fallen trees, stumps, etc. served as material for building fences; there was no shortage of wood at farms on Great Mountain. However, stones were also abundant, needed to be cleared, and were built into fences where sufficient quantities occurred.

The farm contains 5,325 linear feet (1,623m) of wall in 16 segments. One segment occurs on the Norfolk portion at the Tracy Lot, while all others occur in Canaan. The median wall length is 242 feet (74m) with a range of 49 feet (15m) to 794 feet (242m). In most areas the walls are low and little more than a linear stone dump. However, walls in the upper fields

to southeast of camp and down Chattleton Road to the west of camp stand as proper fence walls.

### Foundations

The farm contains three old foundations not counting the foundation for the original farmhouse that is now the site of camp. Two foundations for outbuildings occur off Chattleton Road. One of these is approximately 10x16 feet and built into a bedrock cliff on one side. (I have seen similar construction for outbuildings in Europe.) The other is small and the rectangular shape suggests a foundation, though it may be just a heap of stones in a rectangular outline.

The Tracy Lot contains a cellar hole with stone foundation. Cellars were built as part of a house to provide food storage. This section of the farm was settled before 1800 as the John Tracy Farm. However, the lack of an apparent central fireplace suggests it was built after 1830 when wood stoves and metal stove pipe eliminated the need for a stone chimney. The foundation is approximately 16x20 feet.

### Clearance Cairns and Stone Heaps

Approximately 50 stone piles were found on the farm's ~300 acres. Considering stone piles can only be found at close range and my relatively coarse sampling effort, I expect a full count might total 75 piles. Stone piles generally result in two ways. Some piles are boundary markers and are often referred to in deed descriptions as "heap of stones." Such piles occur

on the peripheries of the property. One stone pile on the NW corner of Blackberry Hill has been in place since 1764. Other original stone heaps also occur. See the survey plat on p. 16.

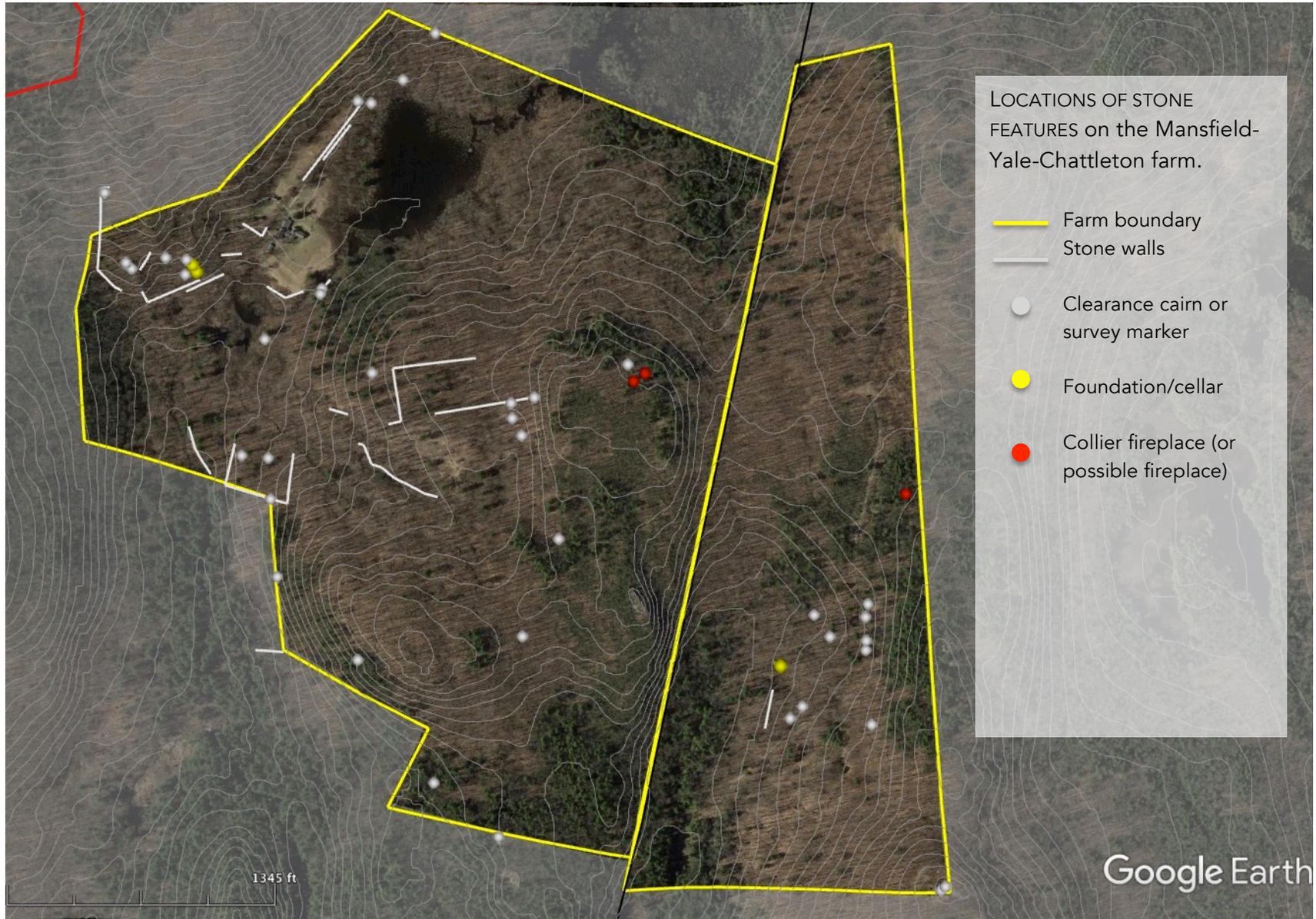
The majority of the farm's stone piles are clearance cairns. Clearing stones from hayfields and pastures created these small stone heaps. Because loose stones on the ground prevent grass growth and damage scythes, the stones were removed and typically piled up on a nearby slab of bedrock, a large unmovable boulder, or at the base of a tree. Later they may be moved during winter for use in a wall or other location. Clearance cairns are not nearly as common as walls in New England, however, they are common in northern Europe. The farm's most impressive clearance cairns occur along the east side of the Number 4 trail in the Tracy Lot in Norfolk. It appears these stones were cleared for pasture or hay along the base of the cliffy slope above them. Rarely would people transport stones far uphill, thus it is unlikely that they came from the west side of the road. Other clearance cairns occur among the old hayfields near walls.

### Collier Fireplace

Colliers making charcoal for the iron industry constructed small huts with a stone fireplace as shelter during the weeks they monitored their charcoal piles. One of these is confirmed from the eastern edge of the farm, and two are suspected near the Matterhorn.



BARN FOUNDATION uses the bedrock ledge on the right and stacked stones on left and far end (yellow lines).



## **GROUND**

### **Agriculture**

The microtopography of the ground indicates past land use in several ways. In its raw, forested form, land will be lumpy with mounds and pits formed by the roots of falling trees.

Typically, when a tree falls over the roots exhume soil and stones from beneath the tree, leaving a pit. Over time, as the tree decomposes, the sediment trapped in the roots falls to form a mound. Such features indicate old growth forest, or at least an area that has always been forested (but perhaps timbered) and never cleared for agriculture.

On ground with grazing animals the pits and mounds will be tamped down making a less topographic surface. The longer a site was grazed, the more hooves have tamped down the soil, and the subtler the pits and mounds become.

Land that has been put into crops or hay is cleared and plowed thus removing all traces of pits and mounds. The land will be smooth as a grassy lawn. Once the area is abandoned from agriculture, young trees will grow but smooth ground will indicate former cropland.

The Yale Camp farm contains a full spectrum of ground microtopography. Nearest to the farm nucleus (the house site) the ground is completely smooth on several valley bottom acres. Additional smooth ground occurs on the near slopes to

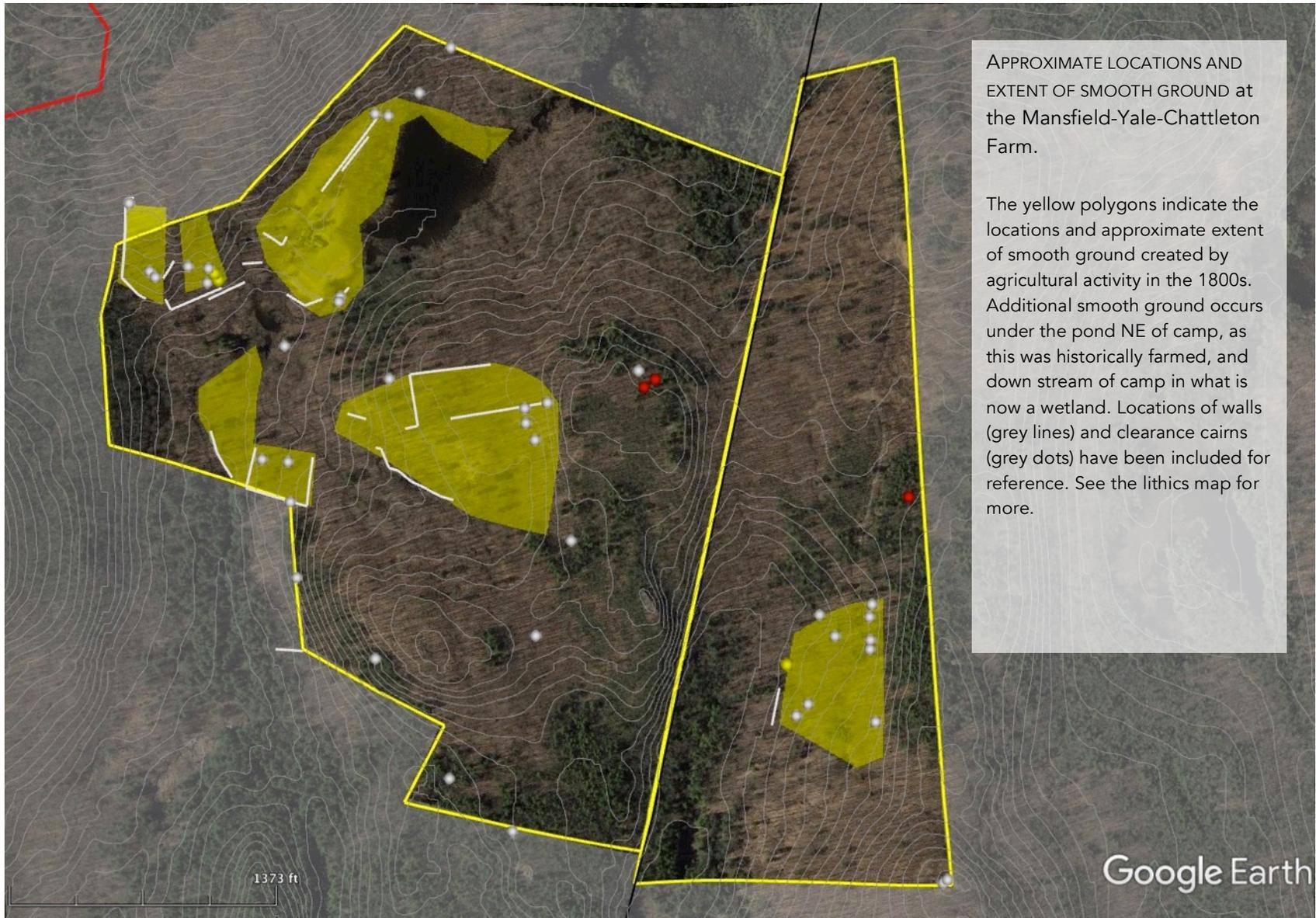
the west, south, and east of the farm house site. These sites were hayfields or pasture.

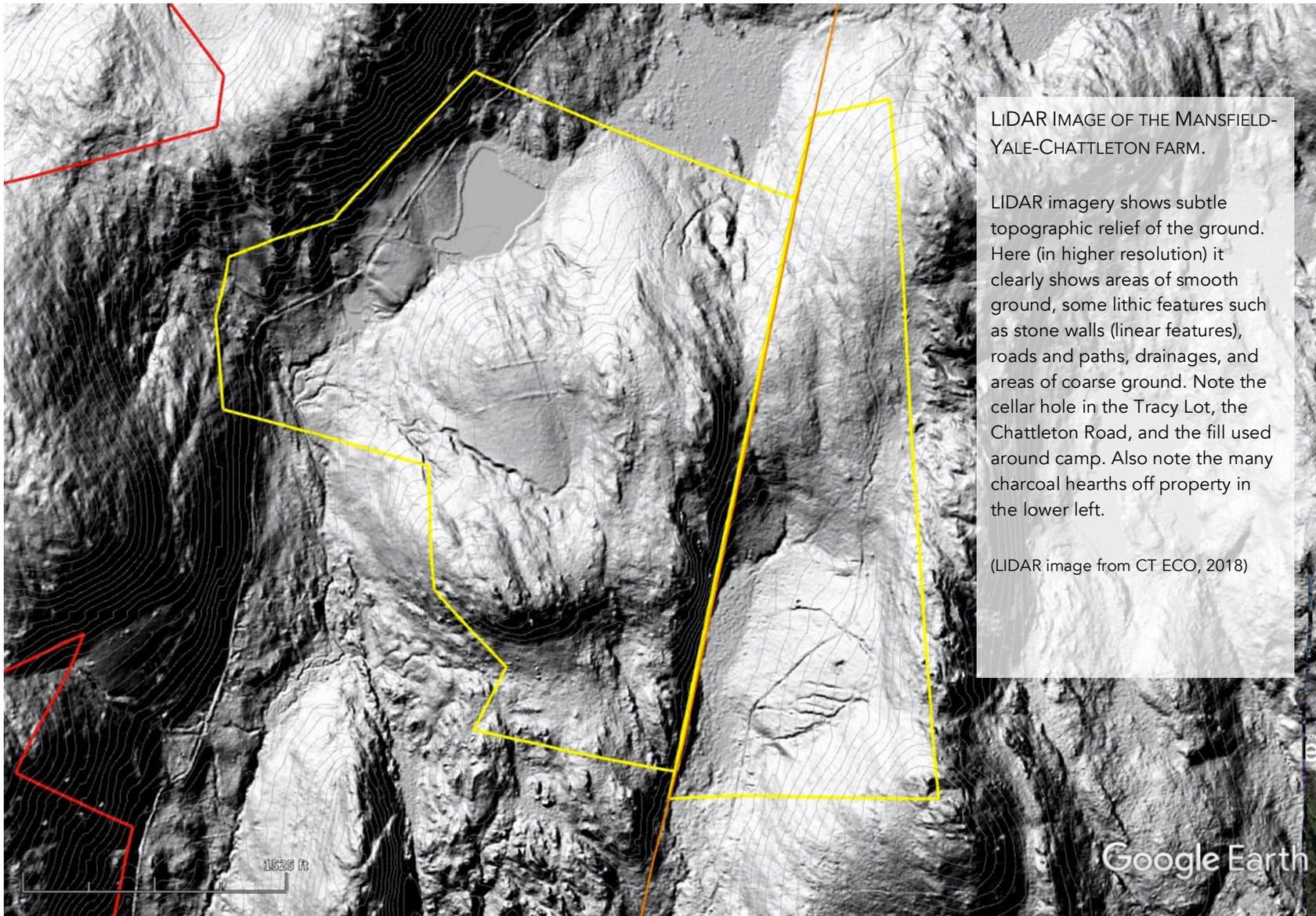
Coarse textured ground occurs in the outer reaches. The hemlock dominated grove in the west, and the lands over the east side of the Matterhorn ridge are also textured and thus have never been plowed. On the Tracy Lot in Norfolk, a small area around the cellar hole and the Number 4 road is smooth.

It also appears the land immediately around camp was filled (see LIDAR image below). South on Chattleton Road is a small borrow pit that may have been the source. This activity likely occurred when camp was build in 1940.

### **Charcoal hearths**

Thousands of flat, round, charcoal hearths (also called a meiler) dot northwest Connecticut with hundreds occurring in Great Mountain Forest. The farm contained 150 acres of forest in the late 1800s—enough to absorb a couple dozen hearths. However, much of the non-agricultural forest occurred on steep rocky slopes and lower hemlock forest reducing the productivity for coppice oak stands ideal for charcoal. Nonetheless, one charcoal hearth is known (east edge of Tracy Lot in Norfolk) and 2 are suspected near Matterhorn).





LIDAR IMAGE OF THE MANSFIELD-YALE-CHATTLETON FARM.

LIDAR imagery shows subtle topographic relief of the ground. Here (in higher resolution) it clearly shows areas of smooth ground, some lithic features such as stone walls (linear features), roads and paths, drainages, and areas of coarse ground. Note the cellar hole in the Tracy Lot, the Chattleton Road, and the fill used around camp. Also note the many charcoal hearths off property in the lower left.

(LIDAR image from CT ECO, 2018)

## TREES AND VEGETATION

### Old Growth

Trees provide indicators of land use in several ways. The presence of old growth trees over 250 years indicates land that was never cleared. Trees between 150 and 200 years can also indicate land that has always been forest because most cleared land was abandoned later than this; other evidence would need to support always forest or cleared. No old growth trees were identified from the farm, however, several hemlock and white oak trees believed to be over 250 years occur on the forest slopes to the east.

### Pasture Trees

The shapes and species of trees also indicate land use. For example, large wide spreading trees indicate former pasture or open areas, while stands of straight tall trees competing with each other indicate a site that has been forested or trees that emerged together as forest. Dozens of pasture trees occur on the site, however, they are concentrated in certain areas and are absent from areas that have always been forested. Some trees are old enough to have been mature shade trees when cows were present, while others sprouted up in the open pasture and are today large wide-spreading dominants. Such trees are only 125 years old, while the oldest pasture tree—a white oak—is estimated at 250 years old. See map below for locations.

### Coppiced Trees

Trees with multiple trunks—typically two, but sometimes three or more—are coppiced trees. Such trees were cut at one time (or multiple times) and resprouted from the stump. Trees can be coppiced multiple times and each additional time the stems grow farther apart at their base. Coppicing was a common practice in the charcoal activity that dominated Great Mountain in the 1800s. These trees can be cored with an increment borer to determine the date of last cutting. Red oak is the most common coppiced tree on the farm and GMF more broadly. Dozens of coppiced trees—mainly red oaks—occur on the farm in the forest and along old field edges. The oldest is the Director's Grove located near the director's cabin. Cores from trees in this stand indicate they were last cut 165 years ago, or approximately 1850.

### Chestnut

American chestnut sprouts are occasionally found on the farm, but more commonly in other areas of Great Mountain Forest. The farm contains a handful of fallen chestnut logs.

### Rich site indicators

In addition to trees, other plants can provide clues to site history and the reasons people organized the land as they did. Several herbaceous plants are indicative of richer soils and mesic sites. On the farm, Dolls eyes (*Actaea pachypoda*), and blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum* sp.) were found in isolated

areas of old pasture and uncultivated hayfield edges (along stone walls and under mature trees). These species were never found in the farm's woodlot and forest. Patches of maidenhair fern (*Adiantum pedatum*) occur in some old pastures. The plant is also indicative of rich mesic soils and is not found in sites that have always been forest.

Similarly, the tree species found in old pastures also suggest elevated fertility. Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), hop-hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), and muschlewood (*Carpinus caroliniana*) occur in two of the three primary old pasture areas. Those, along with hawthorn (*Cretagus* sp.) are listed as requiring high nutrient levels and moderate moisture levels by Brand (1985). Two hawthorns were found in old pastures.

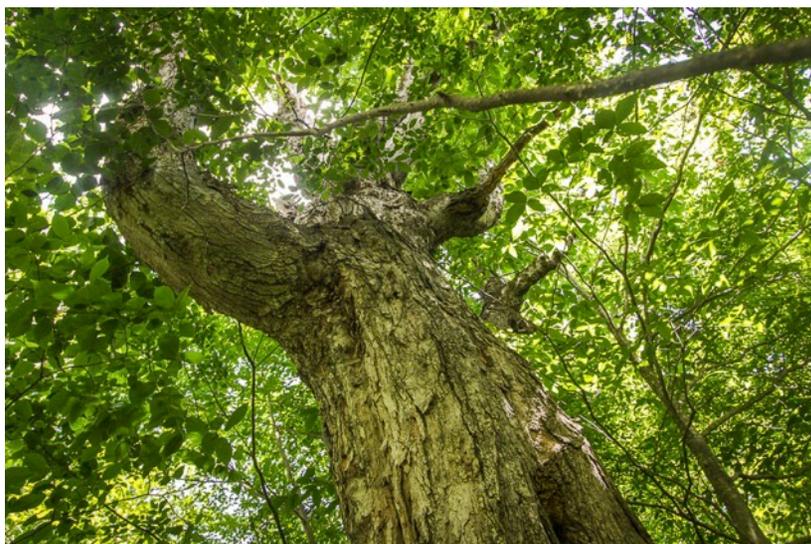
The distribution of these rich site plant indicators suggests the pastures were created on the richer soils. While disturbance history and topographic differences exist between the old pasture sites and the always-forest areas, the absence of these species from forest sites raises questions regarding the degree to which presettlement soils factored into decision making for pasture acreage. The forest areas, dominated by red oak, mountain laurel, and hemlock communities, suggest poorer soils in those areas. That may have been the ultimate reason they remained forested.

### **Exotic Plants**

Exotic plants indicate land disturbance and often grazing. The primary exotic species on the farm (and elsewhere in Great Mountain Forest) is Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*); it occurs in dense patches in old agricultural areas. Other exotics occur scattered among abandoned pasturelands including multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), and oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*). Exotics are rarely found in areas that have always been forested. McDonald et al. (2008) found higher incidents of exotic plants in Massachusetts's forests on abandoned agricultural land and on rich sites. Lundgren et al. (2004) also found past land use as the strongest indicator of exotic plant infestation.

### **Vegetation Map**

These vegetation indicators are shown on the map below.



Old pasture grown sugar maple estimated at 150–200 years.



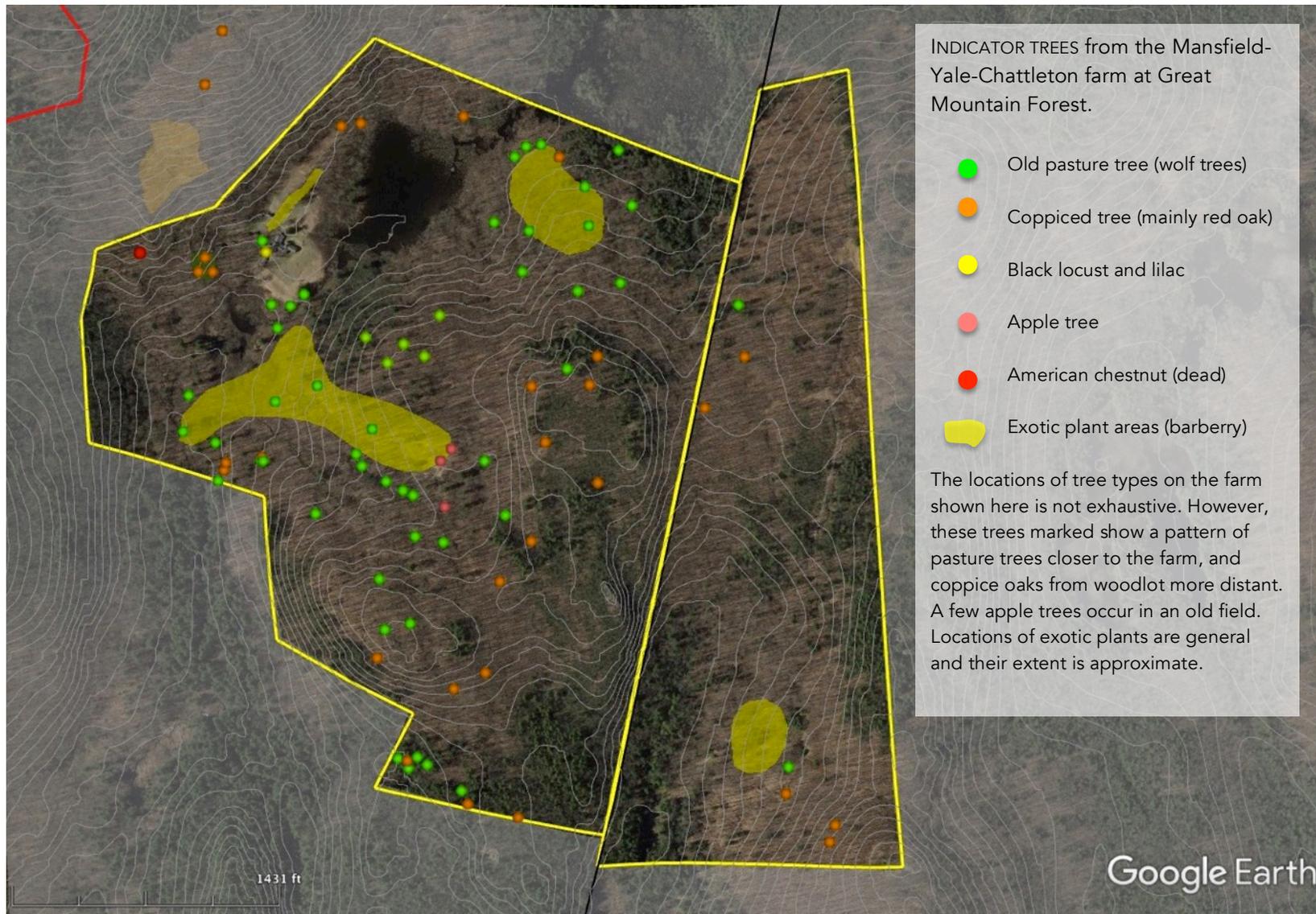
Coppiced red oak (*Quercus rubra*) in the Director's Grove of coppiced trees. Trees were cut and resprouted in the 1850s. It's remarkable they were not cut again over the next 60 years



Clearance cairn surrounded by Japanese barberry. Exotics are commonly found in old pastures and agricultural lands.



Maidenhair fern (*Adiantum pedatum*) grows in dense patches of the old pasture area where it competes with Japanese Barberry.



## OTHER FEATURES

I identified a few additional features in the field inventory including dams and ponds (or pond outlines), water infrastructure, and barbed wire fencing.

When camp was built in 1940 Ted Childs had a stone dam erected on Brown Brook behind camp for fire suppression. Though obscured by vegetation, the dam and its pond still exist.

A second dam is believed to have occurred at the bridge of the Sam Yankee trail. GMF staff indicates this was the site of a mill. Worked ground around the stream suggests a pond. This was possibly the mill Xavier Chattleton operated in the 1870s.

Obscured among vegetation across Chattleton Road from camp lies various water infrastructure. GMF staff indicates this was the original water system for camp. It is marked with a blue dot on the map. Fairbanks-Morse of Chicago manufactured the pump. The company began ca. 1885 and products were sold under a different name by 1958.

Finally, the farm contains a small amount of barbed wire fencing. More likely existed earlier and has since fallen and rotted, however, a few lengths occur mainly along property lines. Barbed wire was invented in 1874 and made available to most people in the 1880s.



STONE DAM BEHIND YALE CAMP build with the camp in 1940.



LOCATIONS OF WATER FEATURES and barbed wire at the Mansfield-Yale-Chattleton farm

Sections of barbed wire are shown in Orange; additional barbed wire may occur elsewhere.

Dams and ponds are shown with blue polygons. The abandoned water system is shown with a single blue dot.

## LANDSCAPE SYNTHESIS

The information gathered for this project from deeds recorded at town halls, US census forms, local property tax records, and federal agricultural census schedules combine with field evidence to produce a snapshot of how the farm developed over time. The field evidence for the locations of hayfields, crop fields, pasture, and woodlot directly and accurately support information from the written sources and visa versa. In this section I've detailed each era of farm tenure with regards to how the written and field evidence support each other to form a narrative of farm life at the Mansfield-Yale-Chattleton farm. I've created a map that illustrates how the farm was organized at its peak in the late 1800s. Each unit is described.

### **MANSFIELD ERA: 1795-1852**

Written and field evidence specific to the early Mansfield tenure is scarce. Census forms, property tax records from 1848-1850, and the 1850 federal agricultural census (for which there is a small chance it refers to a different nearby property) offer many interesting facts, but don't help us understand how the farm developed during this initial phase.

Elisha Mansfield settled the farm in 1795 from a mixed hemlock and hardwood forest. It's unclear from reviewed documents to what degree the area had, by 1795, already

been exploited by charcoal makers. According to Nickerson (undated) Joseph Mansfield (likely with brother Elisha) laid out the "Chattleton Road" in 1812. Prior to that a trail connected the area to Meekertown at least as early as 1802.<sup>1</sup>

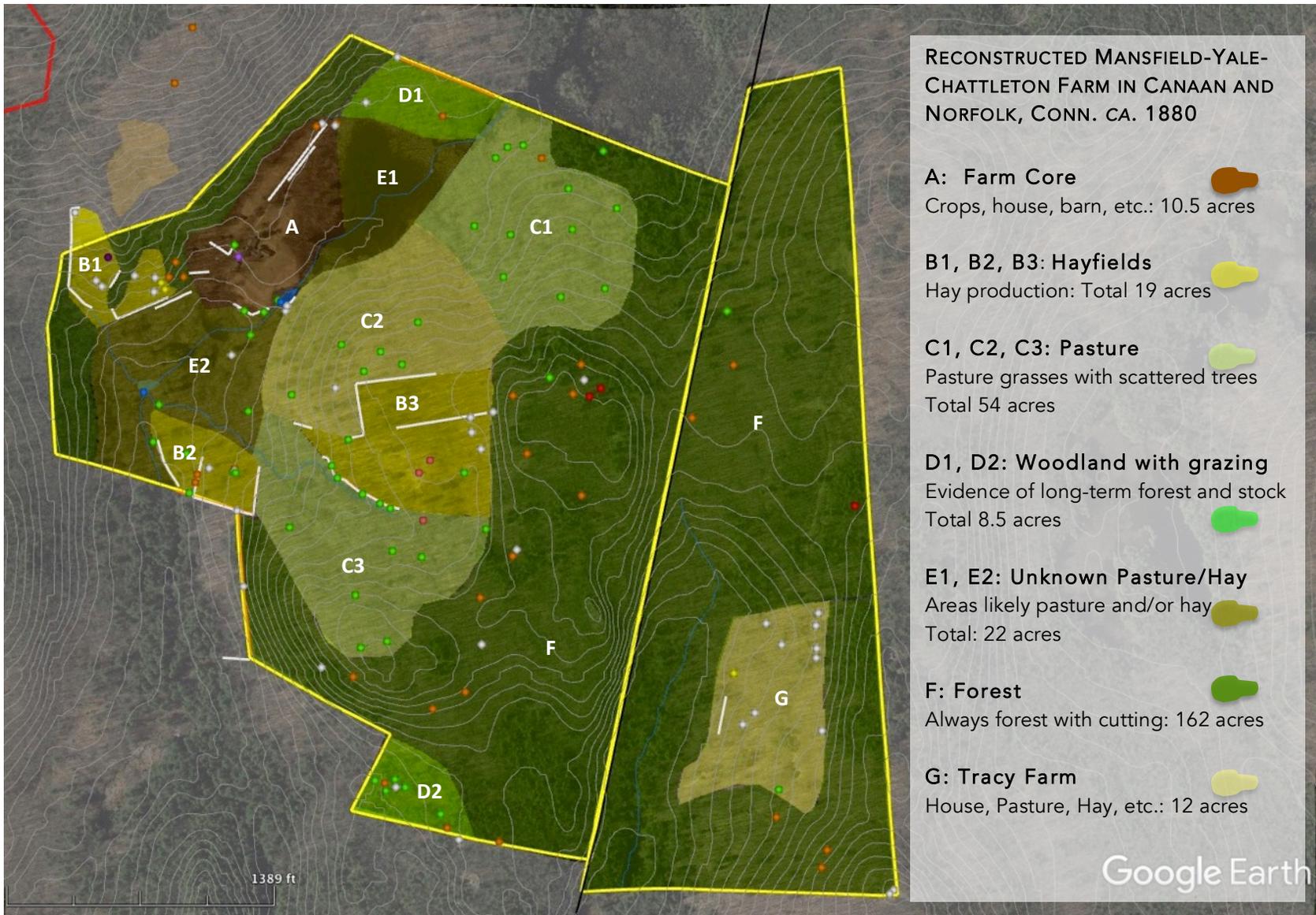
Mansfield built a cabin in 1795 and erected a sawmill in 1796 (Nickerson, undated). It's unclear where this mill was, but presumably close to his cabin—itsself built on the site of Yale Camp. The mill may, however, have been built in or near Meekertown (south of camp) where more robust streams offer more potential. In 1838 a cider mill was opened in Meekertown by Capitan Henry Gaines (Nickerson, undated). The Mansfield cabin was replaced with a house in 1812 (Nickerson, undated) (see photos section below for late period images of house).

Elisha Mansfield started the farm with ~200 acres on only the Canaan side, purchased with his brother Joseph. Over time he would add acres in small increments (2, 5, and 30 acres for example were found in deed books).

[Cont. on page 53]

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<sup>1</sup> The undated Nickerson report contains many useful bits of history, however, it also contains a number of errors. For example, he incorrectly notes the chain of ownership from Elisha Mansfield to Joseph Mansfield, to Charles Yale, to Xavier Chattleton with incorrect dates as I confirmed them from recorded deeds. Some owners are left out (Ellen and Russell Mansfield for example). His report is undated but was likely written in the in 1940s.



## **RECONSTRUCTED FARM: UNIT DESCRIPTIONS**

### **A: FARM CORE** (10.5 acres)

The farm core contains the only flat ground on the 300-acre farm. It would have held the house, barn(s), crop fields of oats, corn, and potatoes, paddocks, garden, road, etc. Most of the human activity on the farm happened in this area. Today, a few open grown sugar maples stand across the road from camp, and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation black locust trees stand on the south side of camp with lilac shrubs.

### **B1, B2, B3: HAYFIELDS** (19 acres)

The hayfields were identified by the presence of clearance cairns, stone walls, and/or barbed wire fencing (to keep animals out), and smooth ground. The more marginal nature of the land (exposed ledge, sloping, distant from farm core) suggests they were not prime lands used for row crops. The fields are 3.6 acres, 4.1, and 11.1 acres respectively and taken together total 19 acres. A few additional acres of hayfield likely occurred in E1 or E2.

### **C1, C2, C3: PASTURE** (54 acres)

The three pasture areas are delineated by present composition. The northern C1 pasture area is the mesic pasture woods. This area has high soil moisture and fertility evidenced by patches of maidenhair ferns, doll's eyes, hawthorn, ash, and sugar maple. The site is infested with barberry. Dozens of open grown trees remain from both the abandonment period and times predating that.

The C2 area is the dry oak pasture. This unit has a very sparse understory, thin rocky soils, and dominated by red oaks, red maple, and moss-covered ledge. A number of open grown red oaks here date to the late 1800s and early 1900s (confirmed through cores).

The C3 area has dense ferns, a weedy understory and a number of open grown trees. Some stood as mature pasture trees in the 1800s. Substrate is moist on lower slopes and dry on upper slopes.

### **D1, D2: WOODLAND WITH GRAZING** (8.5 acres)

These areas show signs of being continuously wooded (pits and mounds, coppiced trees) and also barbed wire, barberry shrubs and clearance cairns to indicate grazing animals. The southern unit may be tied in more closely with the neighbor's adjacent property.

### **E1, E2: UNKNOWN PASTURE/HAY** (22 acres)

The E1 area (with portions of the core farm) is submerged under an old beaver pond. Thus I was unable to ascertain from field evidence what may have occurred there. The site is flat and may have always been swampy. The unit was crops, wet hayfield, or wet pasture. Unit E2 also contains submerged areas, and dense scrub areas and I was unable to determine its history beyond that it was open. The slopes suggest it was not in row crops, so some combination of hayfield and pasture is likely.

### **F: FOREST** (162 acres)

The forest section, as I delineated it from the ground, totals very close to the 150 acres of woodland noted on the census schedule. Coppiced trees, pits and mounds (lack of smooth ground), loose rocks and ledges all indicate land that has never been converted.

### **G: TRACY FARM** (12 acres)

The small cleared area of the Tracy Farm (also called Deer Meadow by GMF) was delineated by clearance cairns, smooth ground, rich sited vegetation, and barberry. The timing of settlement and release on here has not been fully worked out.

By 1850 the farm had 50 acres improved according to federal agricultural records. I believe those areas included areas A, B1, B2, E1, E2 from the map above. It took 55 years to clear those acres (less than 1-acre per year), however, much of it was likely improved quickly to get a crop sown and hay growing. Over time, as stock animals browsed out the forest, mature trees were felled, burnt, or milled, pasture developed from forest. Moving stones on mountain farms was an ongoing chore. Perhaps during this first half of the 1800s, sheep—which formed a farm obsession over much of New England—may have comprised a more substantial part of the Mansfield farm economy. According to records sheep never reached commercial levels on the farm from the late 1840s, onward.

Hay fields were likely sown in the early 1800s. Timothy (*Phleum pratense*), red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), and red top (*Agrostis gigantea*) were grown throughout New England for forage (Russell, 1976).

The only field feature that can be tied to Mansfield is the large spreading white oak at the hilltop in the southwest corner of the property (see photo page 31). The form of the tree indicates it has always been open grown. A core showing tree rings from an upper branch indicates the tree is over 200 years old. Core from the bole was brittle, and fragmented and not recoverable. It is likely Mansfield either burned the slope releasing the tree or grazing animals opened the forest. A

second similarly aged and structured tree stands nearby, however, is now little more than a decaying bole.

The 1840 census notes two “free colored” males living on the farm with the Mansfield family. No names are given, however, their ages are 16–23 years and 50–59 years. This is noteworthy because in several pages of census documents from Canaan, CT District 33 I saw no other people of African descent living on Great Mountain at any point in the 1800s.

#### **YALE (FAMILY) ERA: 1852–1866**

The Yale family purchased the Mansfield farm in 1852 after consolidation with the Tracy Lot by Edward P. Hunt. This increased the acreage to ~300. The Yale family, however, is listed on the 1850 census records as either living in the farm house or on a house very close by; their name, along with Julius Mansfield (and family) is sequential with Dorman and Potter—the farms south and north respectively (see Fagan map below). The 1850 census lists Yale as having \$2,000 in property (the value of a farm). Thus census records suggest they had already purchased the farm, while deed records suggest that happened two years later. Nonetheless, the 1853 Fagan map shows *J. Yales* (sic) as owning and living on the site. John Yale was the eldest child of Charles and Laura. Charles died in 1850. John soon yields to second son Albert on subsequent records. The 1853 map shows a barn north of the house where the camp parking lot is today.

According to deeds and property tax records the Yale family seemed to have had a difficult time making the farm economically sustainable. They cycled in and out of debt (mostly in), and their numbers of cows fluctuated. They did not file an agricultural census schedule in 1860 suggesting they did not reach the required income threshold to file. (It is possible I was simply unsuccessful in finding their schedule.)

The lack of an agricultural schedule limits what can be concluded about the family's farm activity. Improved acres on the Grand List reached 180 in the late 1850s under Yale. In 1854, just a few years after they acquired the farm (and the passing of Charles) the farm had 10 horses and 20 cows. This is the most livestock the farm ever had. They had a carriage and a clock—both considered luxury items. Despite the debt(s), they had the appearance of doing well.

But in 1864 their number of animals in the Grand List drops to zero. In 1865 they have no real estate listed, and four animals. In 1866 they sell the farm to Ellen, Lewis, and Russell Mansfield. Charles Yale, the third son, is the seller. It is unclear what happened to Albert, or mother Laura who would be 70 years at the time of sale. The Yale era has more questions and speculations than others. Nonetheless, if the 180 improved acres is accurate (150 acres is listed in the 1870 schedule) then the farm reached its maximum development under Laura Yale and her boys.



THE 1853 FAGAN MAP OF CANAAN, CONN. Note the J. Yales farm with two buildings at lower left of center, and C. Dorman and Heirs of C. Potter south and north respectively.

### **MANSFIELD-CHATTLETON ERA: 1866-1936**

Ellen, Leuris (also spelled Lewis), and Russell Mansfield bought the farm in 1866 from the Yales. According to census records the three siblings (and other siblings) had been living one or two houses away (but owned no farm) with their parents Julius and Lucinda Mansfield in 1850. Julius was son of Joseph Mansfield, cousin of Elisha D. Mansfield, and farm founder Elisha Mansfield was his great uncle.

Ellen Mansfield married Xavier Chattleton presumably in late 1868. Xavier was an immigrant from France and the only non-US born person to ever live on the farm according to census records. Census records indicate a *Chattleton* woman resided as a "servant" on a nearby farm; she was likely Xavier's sister. In 1870 Ellen and Xavier were living in Norfolk with one-year old George. In 1870 the farmhouse houses the rest of the Mansfield family including Julius and Russell, and also a family named Hines, the head of which was a collier.

The Grand List property tax records from Canaan offer a limited look into the farm. First, it is striking that Mansfield (Russell primarily) and Xavier Chattleton filed together and separately for the farm. In some years they divided assets and listed separately even down to listing half of a house each. And in other years, one would file and not the other.

Nonetheless, in the 25 years of records showing livestock from 1869 to 1894 the farm averages 14 cows (range 6–20).

Xavier Chattleton in most years keeps one horse. The number of cows is typical for a farm in this period (Russell, 1976). Other animals are kept, but only in small numbers. During this time improved acres remains fairly steady at 150 acres jumping briefly to 175 acres in the 1880s.

The agricultural census records for 1870 and 1880 provide a wealth of information with much more detail than the local Grand List. In 1870 and 1880 the farm had a total of ~5 acres in corn, oats, and potatoes. The land for crops was located in the flat valley bottom along either side of the road with the house and barn. As shown on the reconstructed farm map, this area totaled 10.5 acres and included crop fields and buildings, paddocks, etc. It would also have included a vegetable garden.

Most New England farms kept 1–3 acres of potatoes in the 1800s, mainly for human consumption (Russell, 1976). Oats were used as animal feed and for human consumption.

With a cider press operating in Meekertown by 1838 (Nickerson, undated) apples would have been a considerable crop. Cider was the preferred beverage in early America as most water sources were contaminated. I found three apple trees in the upper hayfields. Two are small diameter and likely resulted from seed in the mid-1900s, while the other is 22 inches in diameter and may date to Chattleton era. A larger orchard likely occurred in that area.

The federal census largely confirms what is documented in local tax records regarding acreage. In 1870 the farm had 150 acres improved, and in 1880 the schedule lists 75 acres improved and 85 acres in "old field" for a total of 160 acres. The Grand List documents 175 acres. Those 85 acres of old-field in 1880 might suggest the beginnings of decline. I suspect the 85 acres of old field included areas: C1, C2, C3, E1, D1, D2, and G which together total ~75 acres. These areas were pasture and a number of open grown trees emerged beginning in the middle-late 1800s.

According to the agricultural schedules, in 1870 and 1880 hayfields comprise 36 and 20 acres respectively. (The 1870 count is 40 tons which, at the state average of 1.1 tons per acre, amounts to 36 acres.) The three hayfield areas I delineated based on field evidence total 18.8 acres (B1: 3.6 acres; B2: 4.1 acres; B3: 11.1 acres). I identified these based on the presence of smooth ground, clearance cairns, and stone fences. That these are somewhat more marginal lands (sloped, areas of ledge, farther from farm core) compared to the flat areas, suggest they were not prime lands for row crops. In addition, the E1 area was likely also for hay and would have accounted for additional acres.

The E1 unit in 2018 is inundated under an abandoned beaver pond. It appears in the 1934 photo the area was in early successional stages and more so in 1941. It is possible the area was wet (saturated) which could have facilitated nice

marsh grasses for hay. The unit may have added an additional 8 acres of hay. The other E2 area may also have had hayfield (or pasture). According to Volo and Volo (2002) a farm required one cleared acre of hay to winter a cow, plus some grain. The upper limit of the herd at any time was 20 cows, which would require 20+ acres of hay. This is the amount documented in the 1880 census while field evidence I collected indicates at least 19 acres of hay among three fields.

Cows would be pastured in all areas at some time during the season. After corn was harvested, for example, they might release cows to browse the stubble. After hay was collected cows would pasture in the hayfield. Cows may also have had free reign in the forest at times, however, the oak and laurel woods offer little to cows that isn't toxic. (Pigs do well feeding on acorns and would have been roaming woods.)

The majority of the cattle pasture was in units C1, C2, and C3. A description of each unit is above. The outer areas contain rich site indicators and are quite moist. Together, the three areas total 55 acres and when combined with the grazed woodland of D1, total 59 acres. There is much variability in the amount of pasture required for cattle; it depends on the size of the animals, the quality and fertility of the soil, the aspect, and how intensively the farmer manages it. A report by Warren and Williamson (1941) showed pasture milk cattle on over 500 farms on New York state required on average 2.78 acres of pasture each year. At that average, the 20-cow

maximum held at the Mansfield-Chattleton farm would require 56 acres of pasture. When area of ledge, shade trees, and swales are removed, but the likely-pasture units E1 and E2 are added, the farm contains approximately the average pasture required (2.78 acres) as suggested by Warren and Williamson (1941) for the number of cows (average 14) held on the farm according to census and property tax records.

Regarding the forest, field evidence from coppice trees indicates widespread woodcutting. The stand by the Director's Cabin was last cut around 1850. Stands off farm property on the ridge to the west show white oak last cut around 1870. Coppiced red oaks—some cut multiple times—stand in the forest area throughout the farm mainly in the always-forest and along field edges. It is assumed most of the wood cut went to the charcoal industry and household use. In 1870 the farm housed a collier and his family. Softwoods (hemlock) went to the mill.

In 1879 the farm cut 1300 cords for \$1,024 and paid a \$900 mortgage debt to the Falls Village Bank. The wood amounts to \$20/cord in 2018 dollars. It was cut from 140 acres of forest as listed on the same 1880 schedule and therefore amounts to 9.3 cords per acre. It would have taken 75 trees per acre, at 8 inches in diameter per tree, to achieve that quantity. Stocking levels in today's more mature forest at Great Mountain is 20–25 cords per acre (Jody Bronson, personal communication). In 1957 the US Forest Service noted stands

in Connecticut surpassing 15 cords per acre “were not plentiful” (Griswold and Ferguson, 1957). In 1880 the forest was being cut regularly so a 10-cords/acre harvest should be considered moderately heavy and would have left few reserves. Census schedules indicate most neighbors were cutting a few dozen cords per year or up to 200 cords.

Russell Mansfield died in 1896 and it seems, according to written records, the farm began to unravel shortly thereafter: property was no longer entered on the Grand List in Canaan; and the population census for 1900 shows only the four teenage Chattleton children remain on site with Ellen and Xavier. The other eight children had dispersed. In 1909 Ellen died, and in 1910 there is no census record for the farm. Field evidence suggests widespread abandonment of the pastures around 1900; a handful of cored trees provided dates between 100 and 125 years. Although mowing the core farm fields appears in the 1934 aerial photo, it seems the rest of the farm was abandoned during the first decade of the 1900s.

Though the Mansfield-Chattleton family had a 60-year tenure, in effect, half of this time the land was largely unfarmed and in recovery from the previous 100 years of activity. It is unclear what activities, if any, occur on the farm from ~1900 to 1930s. Perhaps a neighbor was making hay. Apparently the house burned down in the early 1930s when hunters stopped in to use it (GMF staff). The 1934 aerial photo appears to show just a cellar hole at the time confirming local history.

### **TRACY LOT**

Other than information from deeds, the Tracy Lot in Norfolk, and its 12 acres of agricultural improvements with robust cellar hole, is a mystery. Despite detailing the locations and names of farms in all of Canaan and Norfolk, the 1853 Fagan map shows nothing in the area except trees; what is today the Number 4 Trail (GMF road) does not exist then. A road from Tobey Pond, to near Crissey (Mud) Pond was in place by 1853, however, no one was living along it past the Crissey farm (at what is today Childs Pond and the GMF shop). (Today the road is mostly an unmaintained logging road.) The road ended at Chattleton Road near the Potter farm. The Tracy Lot lies south of this. It's worth noting that a number of small settlements occur in the forest that may have been squatters, tenants, or other unauthorized heathens of Meekertown.

Field evidence of the cellar hole suggests a house built after 1830 on account of no central fireplace. The site's 12 acres of old fields are dominated by sugar maple, ash, and maidenhair fern (suggesting a rich site). While a few legacy trees may reach 200 years, the majority of the stand is probably close to 100+ years. This suggests a similar abandonment period to the Canaan side of the farm (~1900). But it is a mystery as to whether the Mansfield-Chattleton family used this area, or if they leased it, or when and who lived there. Perhaps if we had the names of other people who lived close by then the census records may offer clues.

It is also possible that John Tracy did settle the farm with a small cabin (as Mansfield did in 1795) and then abandoned it before 1800, only to have it resettled later with a more substantial house (the cellar hole). The cellar indicates someone was storing winter root vegetables so was living there year round. Stephen Rosseter bought the farm on debt in 1843 from Edward P. Hunt. I speculate he resettled the land, built a house, etc. According to deeds Hunt retained ownership after 5 years; Rosseter either died or otherwise failed to pay the debt.

### **CHILDS-YALE F&ES: 1936/40-**

Ted Childs bought the farm from the estate of Ellen Chattleton in 1936. The aerial photograph from 1934 shows the farm core was still mowed and maintained at that time. However, it appears the house site was only a cellar hole. This confirms local lore that the house burned down in the 1930s as a result of careless hunters. No other structures are visible (see map pg. 18).

In 1934 fields of the farm core were still mowed/maintained. These include a slightly enlarged area of what is mowed around camp today (then totaling 8.5 acres) plus the small hayfields south on Chattleton Road. Perhaps they were mowed for hay, or perhaps they were mowed out of nostalgia to keep the family farm from reverting entirely into trees. Grover Chattleton, second youngest of the Chattleton kids,

lived on the mountain less than a mile away. The upper pastures and hayfields in 1934 had passed to shrubby successional thickets, then roughly 30 years into succession.

In 1934 the Tracy Lot is completely forested indicating an earlier abandonment date. A different forest type (darker canopy) from the matrix forest is evident on the 12 acres of old field; this is the current sugar maple and ash stand. Tree canopies in the image look relatively mature suggesting the trees might be older even than 50 years (1880).

The next aerial image, taken in 1941 shows a newly constructed Yale Forest Camp, and further succession in the pastures and fields. The area that is today an old beaver pond behind camp begins succession from field to scrub-shrub. One of the old hayfield areas behind camp (unit B3 on the map above) is still periodically mowed.



YALE CAMP AT GREAT MOUNTAIN FOREST in 1941. Note succession in most of the pasture areas and beginning in hayfields.

## **CONCLUSION: 125 YEARS OF CHANGE 1795–1920**

Elisha Mansfield (with brother Joseph) carved out habitat from the hemlock-hardwood forest of Great Mountain beginning in 1795. Change progressed slowly over the next 100 years until the farm reached its peak of production in the 1890s under the Chattletons. Over 150 acres of forest was modified resulting in a farm with people, buildings, cows, sheep, new grasses, and barberry. Later changes included the loss of rattlesnakes and chestnut trees.

Perhaps 20 babies were born on the farm with last names Chattleton and Mansfield. People died on the farm as well (likely Russell and Ellen Mansfield, Charles Yale, perhaps others). The farm was home to around 50 people at various times including immigrants, African Americans, kids and elders.

The story of the farm mimics the story of thousands of farms across New England that were carved out of the American wilderness from stony soil and trees, and faded as the country expanded west. No single event can explain the decline of the farm. A combination of distance to markets, poor mountain soils, economies of scale, industrialization of cities with paying jobs all played a factor. Locally, the decline of the iron industry and loss of charcoal makers meant a loss of local markets for farms on the mountain.

The Mansfields, Yales, and Chattletons with their laborers, over the course of about 125 years moved rocks, smoothed the ground, cut trees, built roads, dispersed plants and seeds, built houses, and etched their living into the land of Great Mountain. This of course ignores all the non-tangible aspects of their lives. Nonetheless, the evidence of their collective tenure will last centuries as part of the unique palimpsest that is Great Mountain Forest. And for nearly 80 years, the Yale F&ES Forest Camp, the Childs family, and Great Mountain Forest Corporation have allowed thousands of students and others to experience their story.

## **IMAGES OF THE CHATTLETON FARM**

(COURTESY OF GMF ARCHIVES)

What follows are a handful of old photos of the Chattleton Farm and family from the early 1900s. Great Mountain Forest has these and others on file. Photos came from John Bachman and/or Terry Anstett. Most of the photos include Grover Chattleton—Ellen and Xavier's 11<sup>th</sup> child. Grover was born in the house in 1883. As the last boy, his parents ran out of names so they waited until the following November to name him after the winning presidential candidate. Thus he is Grover Cleveland Chattleton. In the early 1900s he worked as a lumberjack on the mountain. In 1916 he moved to Hartford to work for the phone company where he stayed until 1945. He then moved back to the mountain and lived about a mile from the family farm. He married, but had no children. He died in 1973 at age 90.



Undated photo of the farm looking west from pasture slope above. Note the rocks in foreground, scattered trees at the base of slope and among the farm (trees still extant in 2018), and buildings. Bright white feature near house are sheets out on the line showing the farm is inhabited. Photo is probably very early 1900s.



Top: Making hay on the farm. Looking east up hill to old pasture lands. Pastures are still mostly open. Photo is undated; probably very early 1900s.

Right: Grover Chatteleton with skinned rattlesnake.





Top left: Rattlesnakes on rock at farm.



Top right: Grover Chatteleton and Harry Clark coon hunting at the farm ~1920.



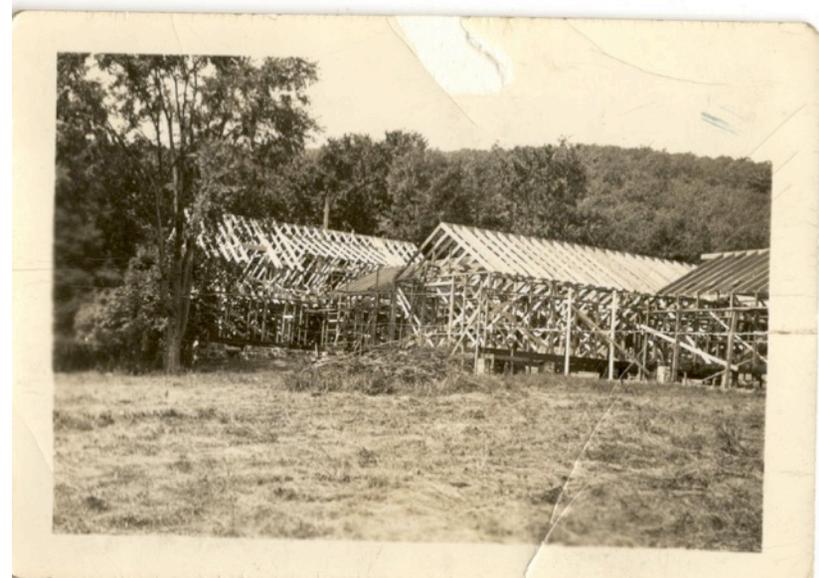
Lower: Grover Chatteleton feeding a deer (with Mr. Garrett) at the farm.



Top Left: Xavier Chattleton and son John ~1920.



Top Right: Ellen Mansfield Chattleton (bottom row, dark dress) and 10 of her children at the house in 1904.



Lower Right: Construction of Yale Camp in 1940. The reverse of this photo reads: "This is the Yale forestry, it is built on the ground where I were born. ~ GROVER CHATTLETON 1940"

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