



Forgotten Farms Quest Homestead Forest Conservation Area Ashland, NH

This Quest is a journey through early New Hampshire agrarian history. It is appropriate for ages 6-15 with adult guidance, but it can be fun for others as well. It is relatively easy at the beginning because it follows, with a few exceptions, an established trail. After about 300 yards it leaves that trail. From there the route becomes a challenging exercise of exploration and discovery because it is unmarked. Use the map as you carefully read and follow the written instructions.

Warning

If you are not comfortable being in unfamiliar woodlands and are not used to remembering how to retrace your steps, you should not attempt to follow this Quest.

Advice

Follow the written directions carefully. The route of this Quest runs for half mile across varied terrain. At times the map on the back may be helpful. It may take up to an hour and a half to complete this Quest. Each participant should have access to a copy of the map and the directions.

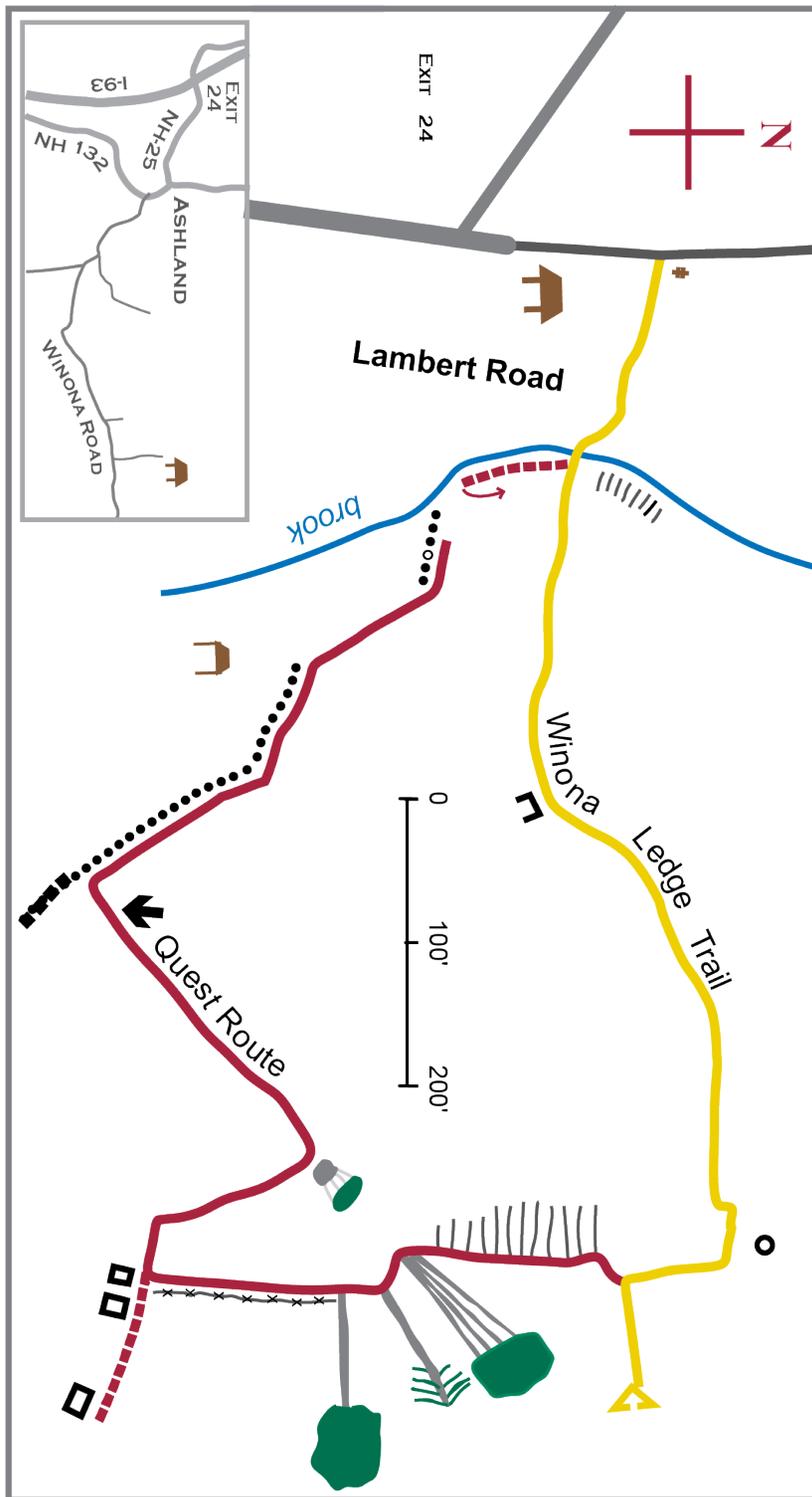
Request

As you travel through these woods, please do so without changing anything. For example, there may be a temptation to break branches, but by doing so, a trail will be created; and that will reduce the element of exploration and discovery for those who follow you. Please resist that temptation so that the next group will face the same challenges being presented to you.

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This Quest created by Phil Preston.



Directions

Lambert Road leaves the north side of Winona Road 2.2 miles from NH-132 in Ashland (near the fire station) and 5.2 miles from NH-104 in Meredith.

Forgotten Farms Quest

A Lakes Region Quest – A Journey of Exploration and Discovery

● Point of Interest

Beyond the kiosk a trail on the right
Descends to a brook that's just out-of-sight.
Walk down the other side to a stonewall
To where the water goes over a fall.

● A very big stone was placed in the brook.
Think of how much effort moving it took.
T'was a culvert to carry any load,
And just one link on the old Province Road.

It was a road that ran across the state
In order to carry people and freight.
That stonewall marked in an earlier day,
From the coast through the hills, the only way.

*In Spring, trillium grows up from the ground.
In Summer, Indian Pipe's all around.
In Fall, colorful tree leaves have the goods.
Look about as you travel through these woods.*

Go back to the trail, to find something old,
Abandoned for years, the reasons untold;
● Dumped over the bank no longer needed
With the effect on the land unheeded.

Follow blazes to the top of a field.
What kind of crop do you think it might yield?
● Beyond are three high walls of stones well-placed.
Guess in which direction the main door faced.

Walk through a pasture where tall trees grow now.
Cross a stonewall by a corner somehow.
● Look for a pit that's about four feet deep.
A farmer might need it while raising sheep.

Stay on the trail, that is where you belong,
But you won't stay on it for very long.
You must stay alert and follow each clue.
No wondering about, that just won't do!

When the trail turns left, take a few steps right

● And stop when a steep ledge comes within sight.
Now turn left and walk down along this ledge.
Be careful. Don't go too close to the edge!

● At the ledge's end there's is a four-stem oak.
It is not very far, just a short poke.
● Look southeast to find two holes in a pine.
What animal might have stopped there to dine?

From that pine look downhill for a big tree.
It's trunk is one of the biggest you'll see.
● Near its base there is an old rusted fence.
It lies on the ground, but does that make sense?

Follow bits of that fence on down the slope.
Look about; you'll find more for sure, we hope.
It's amazing that they are still around.
You can find them on trees and on the ground.

A forgotten farm is where the fence leads.
What once stood here met all a family's needs.
● Two foundations are all that have survived
Of a farm and family that here thrived.

Look around before we move on. But first
● Try to find a spring that won't quench your thirst.
Remember that you came here just to see,
So what you discover, just let it be.

The Province Road, you've seen it once before.
Did you think you'd be on it one time more?
It went right past this very location,
Providing this farm with transportation.

● Follow the road to find another site,
But leave with these foundations on your right.
It isn't too far; thirty yards or less.
Whether a house or a barn, it's your guess.

Turn back around once you've made up your mind
And leave this single foundation behind.
Soon you'll begin a more difficult test
As you continue to follow this quest.

Go back to where a house and barn once stood.
They're gone now because they were made of wood.
Now walk west towards the piney woods ahead,
But before you reach them, turn right instead.

With pines on your left, a the hill on your right,
● A boulder with birch fingers comes in sight.
From here you can see a familiar ledge,
But all you can see is its lower edge.

With your back to both the ledge and this rock,
Look down through all the trees and start to walk;
Always downhill, but never up or flat.
Avoid the branches, hold onto your hat!

Going downhill, bear right as you descend.
● At a stonewall, your down-slope walk will end.
[If you go too far left, you'll miss that wall
You'll just have to retrace your steps, that's all.]

Go right at that wall until it's no more.
Through trees you'll see the field you passed before.
● Below that field is the final stonewall.
It will take you to a place you'll recall.

● Now find a metal box. [It's the last test.]
Open it so you can complete this quest.
It's along the wall sheltered by a rock.
You'll see it as you continue your walk.

Replace the box and leave behind no trace.
Continue straight to a familiar place.
Can you, from here, make it back to your car?
You've been here before; so it's not too far!