

PINCHOT FAMILY HISTORY

In 1815, during the Napoleonic wars, Constantine Pinchot, great-grandfather of Gifford, raised and equipped a company of soldiers and placed his eighteen year old son Cyril in command. Failing to arrive in time for the battle of Waterloo, Cyril turned back. The Pinchot family was then expelled from France for its allegiance to Napoleon.

Being a predominantly French settlement in 1816, Milford was a natural place for the Pinchots to settle. Here, Cyril Pinchot's son James was born in 1831. James became a successful New York businessman and made many trips to France. He married, and a son, Gifford, was born in 1865. Gifford had an enthusiasm for the rugged outdoor life which probably grew out of the many hours he spent enjoying the surroundings of Grey Towers.

Grey Towers, designed like a French chateau, was completed in 1886 by James Pinchot. Richard Morris Hunt, architect for the base of the Statue of Liberty, did the architectural work of Grey Towers.

TEA GARDEN

The "Finger Bowl" in the Tea Garden was designed by Mrs. Gifford Pinchot so that she could entertain in an elegant manner. Guests were seated around the "Finger Bowl" and food in large wooden serving dishes floated in front of them on the water.

THE BAIT BOX

Gifford Pinchot had one child, Gifford Bryce Pinchot. The child's nickname, "Mr. Fish," led to the naming of his playhouse "The Bait Box."

THE LETTER BOX

The "Letter Box" provided Gifford Pinchot with a spacious place for his political records and files. It was a haven of solitude for the many hours of research necessary for his forestry and political work.

THE COMMUNITY HOUSE

Erected in the 1830's, the Community House was the home of three generations of Pinchots up to the time that Grey Towers was completed. In 1924 it was deeded to the community to be used as a library. The Southern style building is located on the northeast corner by the traffic light in Milford.

FOREST HALL

Yale summer school forestry students originally used this structure as a lecture hall and classrooms after its dedication in 1906. It has architecture similar to Grey Towers and is located on the northwest corner by the traffic light in Milford. It was built as part of the Pinchot family endowment to the Yale School of Forestry.