

*The New Hampshire*  
**TROUBADOUR**

BV JULY 1951

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NEW HAMPSHIRE  
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# *The New Hampshire Troubadour*

*Comes to you every month, singing the praises of New Hampshire, a state whose beauty and opportunities should tempt you to come and share those good things that make life here so delightful. State Planning and Development Commission, Concord, New Hampshire. One dollar a year. Entered as second-class matter, May 31, 1949, at the Post Office at Concord, New Hampshire under the Act of March 3, 1879.*

ANDREW M. HEATH, *Editor*

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## WHITE CHURCH SPIRES

*by Franklin Norwood Rogers, M.D.*

The white church spires of New England,  
Have a message of their own,  
To all New Englanders everywhere,  
Here is your spiritual home.

Come back to us, ye wanderers,  
Do not view us from afar,  
To admire our charming beauty,  
Pointing heavenward as we are.

Renew the spirit of your forefathers,  
Who devoutly worshipped God,  
The faith you have inherited,  
Wherever you have trod!

Yes, we have a message,  
And all the world falls heir,  
Man's soul will not perish,  
With church spires everywhere.

## PETERBOROUGH, "HOME OF THE MUSES"

by *Helen Claire Wills*

"Instead of noblemen, let us have noble villages of men."

*Henry Thoreau*

GRAND MONADNOCK rises impressively to the West, while Pack Monadnock rises in the East guarding, like vigilant sentinels, the little town of Peterborough — "Home of the Muses."

Peterborough takes its name, so we're told, from the Earl of Peterborough who died in 1745 and of whom it is written in the May 7, 1906, issue of the *Transcript*, "He was vain, passionate, and inconstant; a mocker of Christianity, and had, according to his own voluntary confession, committed three capital crimes before he was twenty." Thus, "Peterborough," a town renowned for fostering and sanctioning the arts, would seem to be a misnomer!

This is the home of the MacDowell Colony which was founded by Mrs Edward MacDowell early in the twentieth century. A colony which remains sacrosanct, in a tradition established through the years, to the writers, musicians and artists who strive, and usually succeed, in giving Art a special meaning. In passing from the main road through the gateposts into the six hundred acres of beauty a nebulous transition takes place. This is no longer the materialistic world . . . here we walk on hallowed ground. Strolling along pine-needled paths sheltered by towering pines, one is aware of the nearness of artists, past and present. To name a few: Stephen Vincent Benet, Edward Arlington Robinson, Alfred Kreymborg, Frances Frost, Lukas Foss, Ruth Draper, Thornton Wilder and Willa Cather

(whose headstone faces into the peace of the New Hampshire sunsets, a few miles distant, in the Old Burying Ground in East Jaffrey). There have been many others, equally noteworthy.

There is peace and beauty to be found in the Amphitheatre on the MacDowell grounds where it is customary, during the summer, for concerts to be given which are open to the public . . . here, where the mountains rise high in beauty against the sky and where the muses sing.

Four miles north of the village on the middle Hancock road is the Peterborough Barn Theatre, where no one is too young, or too old, to respond to the romance which emanates from both the outdoor setting and the interior of this 150-year-old building.

When a performance is given, the old barn is illuminated by candlelight . . . and is beautiful with its old wooden beams of the same type of wood as that from which violins are made; yet, it's simple, too, in its rustic decor. There's even a covered well . . . rustic too . . . and, it's never been said that it *isn't* a wishing well! The stalls of what was once just a barn are now dressing rooms, and what was once the big barn door is now an egress that over-

*New Hampshire Troubadour*

*A beauty spot near the center of Peterborough — Falls in Nubanusit River near the head of Main Street.*

FRANK A. KELLY



looks a range of hills which in themselves make a poetic drama.

For those who enjoy the professional theatre, fine interpretations are provided by the Peterborough Players under the management of Edith Bond Stearns, who plays the part of the charming and ever gracious hostess, so that all who spend an evening with the Players feel they've experienced something unique and delightful in the theatrical world. For the past sixteen years many well-known Hollywood and Broadway personalities have taken part in the productions which have been given there.

The ten-bell carillon of All Saints' Episcopal Church, which was designed by Ralph Adams Cram, add to the charm of this interesting town, and one almost feels a spirit of old-worldliness as it rings out three times each day. Another church of special interest is the Unitarian Church, which is a well-known example of Bulfinch architecture.

*The Presidential Range from Pinkham Notch, at the beginning of the Mt. Washington Auto Road, an excellent subject for an artist.*

ERIC M. SANFORD

And, speaking of churches, it's interesting to note that, as late as the mid-nineteenth century, Brigham Young held a revival here, and it was here that he was chosen leader of the Mormon Church. His thirteenth wife went with him when he finally left for the west — a Peterborough girl. Apparently she was lucky, for

*The July 1951*



we're told that she remained his favorite wife for several years!

If you've ever thought it might be fun to step back into the past you'll be surprised to find yourself walking through a street in New England, just as it was in the eighteen hundreds, when you visit the Goyette Museum which is located on an old millstream within the confines of the town. Here one walks hand-in-hand with the long ago . . . the illusion further enhanced by the gay and twinkling sounds from an old music box. Every detail is authentic not only in the shops, but in the life-sized manikins who bring a semblance of life to the street and to the shops. In another section of the museum, lovers of MacDowell's music will find some of his original manuscripts carefully preserved; there are many other exhibits, too.

Sharon, a tiny hamlet west of Temple Mountain and six miles south of Peterborough, was originally known as the Peterborough Slip. The Sharon Art Center contributes greatly to the interest of Art, for year 'round classes are conducted in jewelry, pottery, weaving, rug hooking, photography and stenciling. These classes are attended by residents of towns within a radius of fifty miles.

From a lowly town where the cotton industry—"art" of a different kind—flourished in 1818 (in the form of "Old Bell," a pioneer factory in the use of power machinery), grew this town which is now dedicated to the constant encouragement of the creative Arts.

One cannot begin to extol, in so few words, the little town of Peterborough, year 'round residence of such well known writers as Elizabeth Yates, Laura Hillyer Armstrong and William McCleery . . . suffice it to say that none can visit here without leaving richer in things of the spirit for having done so.

Of Peterborough, "Home of the Muses," it might well be said,

"Blessed with a joy that only she  
of all alive shall ever know  
She wears a proud humility  
For what it was that willed it so, —"

From *The Gift of God*  
by Edward Arlington Robinson

## AMONG THE GREAT FROM THE GRANITE STATE

by *J. Duane Squires, Ph.D.*

Fifth Series — 1. Samuel Skerry Montague  
(July 6, 1830-September 24, 1883)

AS LONG AS Americans thrill to the story of the "Iron Horse," so long will they remember the building of the first trans-continental railroad. On May 10, 1869, the locomotive, "Jupiter" of the Central Pacific Railroad, clanked cowcatchers with the Union Pacific's "119" at Promontory Point, Utah, and the whole nation joined in the telegraphic recreation of the driving of the Golden Spike which tied the East and the West together. On January 8, 1863 work on the Central Pacific had commenced at Sacramento, California, 742 miles to the West. On December 2, 1863 work on the Union Pacific had commenced at Omaha, 1032 miles to the East. Now, on May 10, 1869, the dream had come true, and a traveller could journey by rail from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Prominent in the building of the Central Pacific section of this great engineering achievement was Samuel Skerry Montague, a native of the Granite State. Born in Keene, N. H., Montague had gone to Illinois as a youth, and there had worked



on many of the local railroads which were rapidly being built in the years before the Civil War. In 1859 he joined the "Pikes Peak or Bust" gold rush, but evidently found no gold, for the next year he went on to California, and in 1862 secured a post with the newly-formed Central Pacific Railroad Company. In November, 1863, following the death of the famed Theodore D. Judah, chief engineer of the railroad, Montague was made acting chief engineer for the company, and somewhat later was promoted to be the chief engineer, a position he held until his death.

He it was who directed the surveys for the Central Pacific across Nevada and Utah, following such well-known rivers as the Truckee, the Humboldt, and the Bear. He sited the road through the mountains and desert of the region west of Great Salt Lake and engineered the loop above the lake, over which the transcontinental trains ran for thirty-four years. He it was who picked the location for the meeting of the rails at Promontory Point, 54 miles northwest of Ogden on May, 1869, as above described.

In 1903 the Lucin Cut-off directly across Great Salt Lake was completed, and the original main line abandoned for through trains. In 1942 the old main line was junked, and its rails sold for scrap. Today Promontory Point lies desolate and out of ear-

*New Hampshire Troubadour*

*Hampton Beach: The attractions of the wide, sandy beach are added to by the boardwalk, children's playground, and other facilities. The central beach area is shown above in the foreground.*

GEORGE HAGOPIAN



shot even of a whistle. A pyramidal monument marks the spot where the great events of May 10, 1869 transpired, and on it are chiseled these terse words: "Last Spike Completing First Transcontinental Railroad Driven at This Spot, May 10th, 1869." It is pleasant to record that both the State of Utah and the Union Pacific Railroad in 1951 are planning to refurbish and improve the access to this historic site. As tourists from time to time visit the place, we may hope that those from New Hampshire, at least, will recall that a native of the Granite State played a leading role in the engineering aspects of the great work.



## LANGDON, A QUIET COMMUNITY

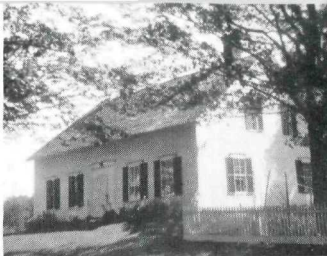
*by Mrs. Grace Porter Thompson*

FEW KNOW THE tiny town of Langdon, New Hampshire, but, like other parts of God's country, "there are those who love it." Situated in southern New Hampshire, not far from the Connecticut River, it lies among the hilly lands that border the river meadows. Originally the town was made from parts of two other towns — Walpole and Charlestown — just two left-over pieces of country side that had the courage to become a town. The name of Langdon was chosen in honor of Gov. John Langdon of Massachusetts in the brave hope that the name would be a challenge for courage and survival. The Governor is said to have promised a bell to the first church built in its precincts but death came to the doughty statesman before the bell was procured.

At first the town was settled on the hills, but, as the first mills were of necessity located on the millstreams in the valley

for the sake of the water power they afforded, the town itself slid into the valley too. A church, school, a pound, another church, sawmills and cider-mills, all aided the growth of the town. More settlers came up the Connecticut Valley by ox-team from Massachusetts and Connecticut, stopped for a while at Old No. 4 Fort in Charlestown, then wandered on to settle on the rocky but fertile hillsides. So for a time Langdon grew. Its farms came to produce some of the best cattle and stock produced in southern New England, and at the agricultural fairs of the time Langdon won many honors—in fact in proportion to the population Langdon was in 1870 the most wealthy farming town in New Hampshire.

Lyceums, musters, afternoon “balls,” and singing schools offered recreation. The stage coaches going north from Boston stopped at the big brick tavern to change horses before climbing the hills on the road to Keene, and two other taverns offered food and shelter to man and beast (not to mention a swig of rum). The big brick tavern had a dance hall with a floor laid on bands of rubber for “give,” and boasted a painted room done in the best style by an itinerant artist. Several homes also boasted painted rooms done by these wandering artists who took their pay for this imparted elegance in “board and room.” Another ambulant fraternity who brought a contribution were the itinerant preachers who usually came by horseback bringing pictures of another sort, these of infant damnation and hell-fire for sinners. All this by way of background in the story of a New England community.



*The Porter Homestead at  
Langdon.*

The zenith of the town of Langdon was too soon reached. The railroad passed it by on its way up the river valley. Markets were far distant entailing a day's journey over the hills with loads of wool or other commodities to Keene. Bellows Falls was a small community and not much of a market then. Little by little, Langdon accepted its destiny — that of a quiet New England community, sending its sons and daughters far afield to seek a livelihood or to fulfill their ambitions. Some few came back to claim their ancestral acres but not many come to "farm" them in the old sense. It now has only rural mail delivery and depends upon larger towns for shopping facilities. The church that was built in 1789 still opens its doors once a year for an Ancestors Service, and the town hall down stairs under the same roof still functions for town meetings. Many of the sturdy old homes still stand, loved and cared for by descendans of the first families.

One, the Porter Homestead, I am privileged to own and enjoy. This farm land was in part originally cleared and owned by Captain Palmer in 1785 when George Washington was still alive. In middle life the Captain sold his holdings to his wife's relatives, the Porters, who added acres to the original lots of the Palmer's, so that now the farm consists of 178 acres "more or less." Burrill Porter, son of Asahel Carpenter Porter, who married Susan Garfield of Charlestown, built a new story-and-a-half house to replace the first log house, and it is this house that still stands, sturdy and strong after its 145 years. It was here that my father was born in 1846, the youngest of a family of eight.

The house has its old fireplace and Dutch oven, some of the original H and L hinges on the old doors, and pine panels

22 inches wide beside the stairs. The modern age has marched across the fields with poles that carry electricity and telephone. The two wells of pure water are adequate for its modern plumbing.

The old Concord grape vine has descendants bearing fruit. The long rows of maple trees that border the fields and highway through the farm were set out about the year 1863 and when decorated in full green costume of Spring and Summer or in gorgeous Autumn colors do not show their great age. Then they still stand tall and fair. But when these leafy robes are gently removed by Autumn winds — then they show their knobby knees and elbows. Then they show ravages wrought by seasonal storms and hurricanes, and the wear and tear of many tappings for maple syrup.

The "Avenue of Maples" has long distinguished the farm.

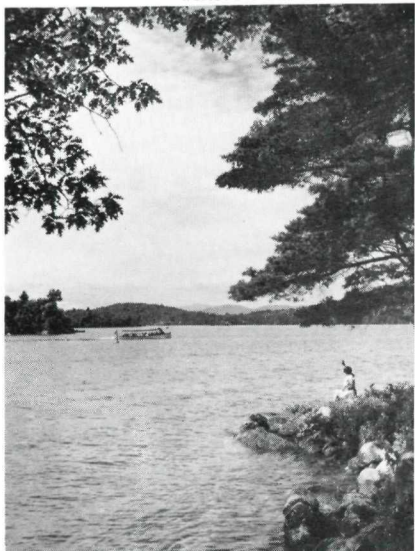
Old Tory Hill that guards the area is an eminence of about 950 feet; a well-known landmark, it commands a great view of neighboring villages.

The Homestead is now occupied by tenants who do not do much real farming but who take great pride in keeping house and grounds in fine condition, and the owner has a great deal of pleasure in her frequent visits.

*New Hampshire Troubadour*

*Boat passing Governor's Island,  
Lake Winnepesaukee, near The  
Weirs.*

WINSTON POTE



FRONT COVER: Fort Point Light at New Castle. Color photo by Arthur Allen Peterson.

BACK COVER: Mt. Chocorua with birches and stone wall in foreground, with just a glimpse of Lake Chocorua in the middle distance. Photo by Lilo Kaskell.

FRONTISPIECE: The Christopher Wren spire of the Colonial church in Hancock. During the summer bathers use the carriage stalls behind the church as bath houses when they take a dip in nearby Norway Pond. Photo by the Eames Studio.



NEW HAMPSHIRE OPEN HOUSE AND GARDEN WEEK, sponsored by the New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs for the benefit of the planting project at the Crotched Mountain Crippled Children's Rehabilitation Center, will be held August 7-11:

Aug. 7—Rye  
Aug. 8—Littleton  
Aug. 9—Sugar Hill  
Aug. 10—Walpole  
Aug. 11—Portsmouth.

Admission fee to each town is \$1.20. Tea will be served each day. For programs and complete information address Mrs. Everett Pierce, Wilton, New Hampshire.



## NEW HAMPSHIRE BOOKS AND AUTHORS

*Forests and Men*, William B. Greeley, 225 pages, Doubleday and Company, New York, \$3.00. Mr. Greeley is a former resident of New Hampshire, and at present is chairman of the board of American Forest Products Industries.

*Do You Know New Hampshire?*, by Frances Ann Johnson, a booklet of 50 educational cartoons, the Courier Printing

Company, Littleton, N. H., \$1.00. Miss Johnson tells a great many interesting facts about New Hampshire through drawings and brief text.

*NH*

A documentary motion picture, "Rx—The Story Behind Your Doctor's Prescription," is a 20-minute sound film produced by Louis de Rochemont of Newington, New Hampshire and recently released by a large drug concern.

*NH*

The Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges has recently been organized in Boston, for the purpose of assisting historical organizations in preserving the existing covered bridges still standing on American roads, and also to preserve and perpetuate covered bridge lore and legend.

Interested people are invited to get in touch with the president, Leo Litwin, 18 Hillcrest

*New Hampshire Troubadour*

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St., Arlington, Massachusetts, or the secretary-treasurer, George Pease, 181 Summer Ave., Reading, Massachusetts. Dues are \$2.00 a year, and members, upon joining, receive a brochure of covered bridge material. Any covered bridge enthusiast is welcome at the meetings, which are held the fourth Tuesday of each month.

*NH*

*Pottery made by Ernest A. Young of Concord (shown in photo), blind veteran who is learning a new life work, will be on sale at the Craftsmen's Fair of the League of New Hampshire Arts and Crafts July 31 through August 4 at Gilford. At work only since March, he is being instructed by League potters, who are much impressed with his progress, said to be as good as that of a student of a year's experience. Also offered at the 18th Annual Fair will be work of many other New Hampshire craftsmen in the fields of jewelry, weaving, woodworking, ceramics, rug hooking, rug braiding, and needlework.*

CONCORD PHOTOGRAPHY SERVICE





## THE STONE WALL

*by B. Telfair Mines*

Men come and go, some leave a trace,  
Of efforts, through the years,  
A memory perhaps of joy,  
A distant thought of tears.  
But stone walls speak of labor,  
Of toil by calloused hand  
Where some forgotten pioneer,  
has said, "Here ends my land."

JUL 2 1951