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Nature and identity in the creation of Franconia Notch: Conservation, tourism, and women's clubs

Kimberly Ann Jarvis

University of New Hampshire, Durham

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NATURE AND IDENTITY IN THE CREATION OF FRANCONIA NOTCH: CONSERVATION, TOURISM, AND WOMEN'S CLUBS

BY

KIMBERLY ANN JARVIS
BA, University of Connecticut, 1990
MS, Southern Connecticut State University, 1992
MA, University of New Hampshire, 1998

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

May, 2002
This dissertation has been examined and approved.

Dissertation Director,
Kurk Dorsey, Associate Professor of History

Lucy Salyer, Associate Professor of History

Ellen Fitzpatrick, Associate Professor of History

Sarah Sherman, Associate Professor of English

Richard Judd, Professor of History, University of Maine

Date: 27 April 2002
DEDICATION

For my father and brother

and

in memory of my mother,

Christina M. Jarvis
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Graduate School of the University of New Hampshire for its financial support. Two Summer Teaching Assistant Fellowships allowed me to complete my research and a Dissertation Year Fellowship gave me the opportunity to devote myself to writing this dissertation. Grants from the Graduate School helped defray the costs of traveling to professional conferences at which I presented my work. I am grateful for the assistance provided by the Graduate School, without which this dissertation would not have been completed in a timely manner.

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I would also like to thank Cathy Frierson for her guidance and encouragement of my career in history and in higher education, as well as for the insight and inspiration I gained through my work and travel as part of the New Hampshire/Volodga Partnership. To Ethel Sara Wolper, whose classes in Islamic history and art enriched my personal as well as my intellectual life, I offer my gratitude and thanks. I am fortunate to have been her student.

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Map of the Franconia Notch Quadrangle
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ABSTRACT
NATURE AND IDENTITY IN THE CREATION OF FRANCONIA NOTCH:
CONSERVATION, TOURISM, AND WOMEN’S CLUBS
by
Kimberly A. Jarvis
University of New Hampshire, May 2002

This dissertation analyzes the significance of the successful 1923-1928 conservation campaign that created a state park and war memorial in Franconia Notch in New Hampshire’s White Mountains. The Franconia Notch campaign utilized a century’s worth of artistic and literary interpretations that created Romantic images of the natural beauties of the White Mountains and Franconia Notch which, together with the ideas of the Progressive Era conservation movement and the cooperative efforts of the state of New Hampshire, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, and the New Hampshire Federation of Women’s Clubs, resulted in a combination of circumstances that set the Franconia Notch campaign apart from contemporary conservation efforts elsewhere in the United States.

During the nineteenth century the White Mountains became a major resort area. The increasing accessibility of the region through better roads and later the railroad not only brought tourists to the region but the timber industry as well. By the beginning of the twentieth century, many New Hampshire natives and summer residents voiced their concerns for the preservation of New Hampshire forests. These concerns provided the basis for the White Mountains conservation movement.
This study argues that the vision of Franconia Notch, which was created by nature and tourism and which was tied to ideas about state, regional, and national identity, was crucial to the success of the Franconia Notch campaign. This vision inspired a campaign to preserve a unique New Hampshire landscape and its most well known feature, the Old Man of the Mountain, as a state forest reservation and war memorial. When Franconia Notch was offered for sale in 1923, the state of New Hampshire contributed half of the $400,000 needed. The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and the New Hampshire Federation of Women's Clubs organized a publicity and fundraising campaign that lasted from October 1927 through June of 1928, raising the remaining $200,000 from 15,000 contributors. The park was dedicated in September 1928.
INTRODUCTION

Saturday September 15, 1928, was cold, windy, and overcast, but it failed to dampen the spirits of those who came to see the state of New Hampshire dedicate 6,000 acres in Franconia Notch in the White Mountains to New Hampshire’s sailors and soldiers. The ceremony took place beneath the granite profile of the Old Man of the Mountain that was only occasionally visible due to the low clouds. The last speaker of the day was Judge James C. Remick of Littleton, New Hampshire. Accepting the memorial on behalf of those who had served New Hampshire or had given their lives to protect it and the United States, Remick declared that “[t]his memorial was made by God” and its most prominent feature, the Old Man of the Mountain, was a symbol not only of the devotion of the men and women to whom the memorial was dedicated, but also of the “spiritual and material assets” of the state of New Hampshire.¹

The “unique and grand” Franconia Notch memorial that was dedicated that cold Saturday afternoon was the product of a five year campaign to save what one speaker called “the heart of New Hampshire” from the incursion of timber companies. The six thousand-acre Franconia Notch had been an important summer resort and tourist destination until a devastating fire in 1923 destroyed the Profile House, the famous grand hotel in the area. The hotel owners decided not to rebuild and lumber companies moved in to evaluate the timber in the region, which had not been touched for over a generation. Led by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, New Hampshire’s...
premier conservation organization, the Franconia Notch campaign rallied local, state, regional, and national support for the acquisition of Franconia Notch.

Franconia Notch was purchased for $400,000 using funds from a variety of sources. The state of New Hampshire contributed $200,000 and the estate of Boston financier James J. Storrow bequeathed $100,000. Between October 1927 and June 1928, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and the New Hampshire Federation of Women’s Clubs led a publicity effort that raised the final $100,000 from fifteen thousand contributors. This dissertation will explore the significance of the campaign that led to the creation of Franconia Notch Forest Reservation and War Memorial in 1928, in which New Hampshire’s singular state symbol, the Old Man of the Mountain, took center stage.

The campaign’s success was the result of a cooperative effort between the state of New Hampshire, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (founded in 1901), hereafter referred to as the SPNHF; and the New Hampshire Federation of Women's Clubs (founded in 1896), hereafter referred to as the NHFWC. This study explores how the campaign organizers' views of nature were influenced by two and a half centuries of Euro-American exploration, literary and artistic interpretation of the White Mountains region of New Hampshire, Progressive Era conservation ethics, and the impulses of both grassroots conservation groups and the women’s club movement of the nineteenth century. Literary and artistic efforts created a vision of Franconia Notch as an almost sacred wilderness, and many writers, poets, and painters found in the Old Man of the Mountain, Franconia Notch’s unique geological landmark, the essence of divinely
inspired greatness. This created vision led to the development of a lucrative tourism industry in Franconia Notch and the White Mountains. The combination of these cultural and social influences shaped the structure of the Franconia Notch campaign and added to its wide appeal to summer visitors to the region, who were among the campaign’s strongest supporters.

This analysis of the Franconia Notch campaign accomplishes three important goals. First, it focuses attention on a regional conservation campaign with national connections, which adds to the existing historiography of the national conservation movement during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In addition to expanding the discussion of the roles of grass roots groups and government in regional conservation efforts, this study of the Franconia Notch campaign examines cultural influences on the conservation movement. An analysis of how literature and art helped to create a vision of the White Mountains as a place of exceptional natural beauty demonstrates the connection to the same effort on the national level, which sought to gain for the United States a sense of its own exceptionalism.

Second, this study adds to the growing historiography on women’s roles in the nineteenth and early twentieth century conservation movement. Through examination of a variety of early twentieth century conservation campaigns led by women’s clubs, it is possible to trace the impulses that inspired these groups to become involved with conservation campaigns and nature study. Finally, this study fills a significant gap in the history of New Hampshire and the White Mountains by analyzing the region’s environmental history and its connections to the existing histories of tourism, art, and architecture. This analysis of the Franconia Notch campaign will place New

Library, Durham, New Hampshire. Hereafter referred to as the SPNHF Collection.

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Hampshire's and the White Mountains conservation movement within its historical context. As the ideas of this movement, as well as those of the current environmental movement, continue to influence the course of events in the White Mountains in the first years of the twenty-first century, an analysis tracing the origins of, and the influences on, the conservation movement in the White Mountains will add breadth as well as depth to the understanding of the history of the region.

The present collection of White Mountains literature includes a variety of sources such as mid-nineteenth century travel narratives, guidebooks and souvenir pamphlets from hotels, as well as collections of fiction and poetry written about the region. Studies from the last half of the twentieth century focus on analyses of the development of the tourism industry that spans the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There are also several studies and exhibitions that have demonstrated the cultural and social influences on the literal images of the White Mountains, those paintings, popular images, and photographs that drew ever increasing numbers of visitors to the region. The most recent of these works include Bryant F. Tolles, Jr.'s *The Grand Resort Hotels of the White Mountains* (1998) and *Summer Cottages of the White Mountains* (2000), Dona Brown’s *Inventing New England: Regional Tourism in the Nineteenth Century* (1995), Eric Purchase’s *Out of Nowhere: Disaster and Tourism in the White Mountains* (1999), and Robert McGrath’s *Gods in Granite: The Art of the White Mountains of New Hampshire* (2001). Each of these discusses, to some extent, the importance of Romantic ideas of nature on the development of the White Mountains as a mecca for artists, tourists, and explorers. Each also recognizes how the industrial development of the United States affected the development of the region’s tourism industry and the changing perceptions of nature.
These developments were directly related to the structure and success of the Franconia Notch campaign.

Tolles’s extensively researched works discuss the architecture of the grand hotels and summer cottages of the White Mountains, through which he argues that “one can better comprehend our national system of values, American cultural characteristics, and evolutionary patterns in the creation of our nation.”2 Through the architecture of the grand hotels, and the construction of elaborate summer “cottages” in northern New England, Tolles demonstrates how social, cultural, and economic developments influenced the creation of ever more elaborate and luxurious hotels that catered to the members of the upper classes and the wealthiest members of the middle classes who could afford several weeks a year at one of the White Mountains grand hotels, two of which were located in Franconia Notch.

Dona Brown’s *Inventing New England* provides an analysis of the growth of tourism in the White Mountains from its earliest and most rustic age to the beginnings of the full-scale tourism industry that developed after the Civil War. Brown examines how tourism in northern New England filled the economic gap left in the region as southern factories drew people away from under-productive northern farms. The tourists who spent their money in the White Mountains by the late nineteenth century were “looking for an imagined world of pastoral beauty, rural independence, virtuous simplicity, and religious and ethnic homogeneity.”3 This imagined world, in turn, created a nostalgic

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vision of “Old New England” and the desire to return, if only for the summer, to a simpler time.⁴ The desire to halt the influence of industrial development in the White Mountains was one of the driving forces behind the conservation movement in the region, and its most vocal supporters were often summer visitors. These visitors would prove indispensable to the Franconia Notch campaign as over ninety percent of the fifteen thousand contributors to the campaign were out of state donors.

Eric Purchase’s *Out of Nowhere* examines the economic development of the White Mountains tourism industry from a unique angle. Using the tragic and gruesome story of the Willey family as an example, Purchase demonstrates how Samuel Willey, who moved to the White Mountains to open an inn just south of the famous Crawford Notch, saw entrepreneurial opportunity in the growing White Mountains tourism industry of the 1820s. After the seven members of the Willey family and their two servants died in a landslide in August 1826, the site of their death became one of the most visited places in the White Mountains.

Where most interpretations saw in the Willeys’ fate the unpredictability of nature in a region that was defined as a Romantic wilderness of sublime beauty, Purchase argues that the Willey disaster instead demonstrates how speculators like the Willeys utilized “aesthetics to make their property attractive to customers and to give it economic value.”⁵ The White Mountains conservation movement and the Franconia Notch campaign both depended heavily upon the perceived aesthetic values of the region. These were an

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integral part of early White Mountains travel narratives and contributed to the success of the White Mountains hotel industry.

Robert McGrath’s *Gods in Granite: The Art of the White Mountains of New Hampshire* also examines the aesthetics of the White Mountains through the paintings of various artists. These artists saw the White Mountains as “the most important ‘wilderness’ in America...a repository of complex, and often divergent, national and regional meanings.” McGrath argues that in the White Mountains artists saw “the revelation of God’s presence in the natural world,” which “illuminated” the vision of natural exceptionalism created at the regional and national levels during the nineteenth century. The vision of Franconia Notch that contributed to the success of the campaign was itself a complex mixture of the meanings of wilderness, the desire to preserve the exceptional characteristics of the Notch, and the desire to maintain the flow of tourist dollars that the region attracted each year.

In this respect, the varied interpretations of the White Mountains artists and the Willey family’s situation in the 1820s that “encapsulate[d] America’s complex attitude towards land” are recreated in the Franconia Notch campaign in the 1920s. Although the publicity campaign highlighted the necessity of saving Franconia Notch for its natural beauty that in many ways defined its historical importance as well, the underlying theme of the campaign was the economic importance of the Notch as a tourist destination, as a source of revenue for the state and New England, and as the location of the headwaters of several major rivers that powered southern New England factories.

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7 Ibid., xxi.
The Franconia Notch campaign is an example of a successful, though less-well known, conservation effort that found its roots in the history of the White Mountains as one of the major nineteenth and early twentieth century resort areas of the Northeast as well as in the impulses of the Progressive Era conservation movement (1890-1920), specifically the sense of public responsibility for preservation of the threatened beauty of nature. Works such as Samuel Hays’s *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (1959) and Susan Schrepfer’s *The Fight to Save the Redwoods* (1983) focus on the first debates over the preservation and use of natural resources. Hays argues for the importance of trained experts and scientific efficiency in conservation, which led to the “centralized manipulation and control” of conservation and other reform efforts during the Progressive Era. Hays, however, also recognized that while some control had moved away from the local level, local groups became part of “larger networks of human interaction,” and took the centralized policy of the “rational use” of resources to their states and communities.8 The “rational use” forestry practices in New Hampshire that were instituted by the state Forestry Commission, the SPNHF, and the NHFWC, support this argument.

Unlike Hays, Schrepfer’s *The Fight to Save the Redwoods* focuses state and local battles in the long twentieth century campaign waged to save the redwood trees, or *sequoia sempervirens* of northern California. These battles took place between conservationists and industry. Outside interests in, and state concerns about, the redwoods led to the early twentieth century call for the creation of several state or national redwood parks, some of which were supported by the Southern Pacific Railroad,

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which controlled access to one of the parks. After World War I, however, the need for timber increased the threat from this industry to the redwoods, and the citizens’ group the Save the Redwoods League was the result. These citizens, who ranged from “patricians” to college professors to businessmen, took advantage of the economic stability of the early twentieth century which allowed them the leisure to join organizations devoted to “civic improvement” or philanthropy, or whose membership’s views coincided with their own.

The membership of the SPNHF and the NHFWC reflected these interests and opportunities. It is important to note as well that the members of the SPNHF and the NHFWC, as well as many of the members of the Save the Redwoods League, either lived in or were from the East. In Common Lands, Common People: The Origins of Conservation in Northern New England (1997), Richard Judd observes that the most prominent conservationists involved in the western conservation movement in states like California were often Easterners, coming into the West with Eastern concerns about resources and resource use. Judd argues that elite attitudes towards nature and resources had a popular basis in “the local cultures of resource use” that came “from reform-minded agricultural leaders” some of whom published their ideas in New England newspapers and agricultural journals. Regional studies about how local people perceived “common culture and landscape use” can help determine “common patterns in

9 Susan Schrepfer, The Fight to Save the Redwoods (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 11-12.
10 Ibid., 16.
11 Ibid., 17.
land form and land use” that are useful in present day understandings of the modern environmental movement. Studies of regional conservation campaigns like Franconia Notch offer the opportunity to examine local influences on campaign strategies, as well as how national conservation issues were adapted to fit the particular circumstances of the campaigns and regions in which they took place.

While the Franconia Notch campaign clearly relied upon nationally familiar ideas similar to those that shaped western conservation efforts in California and elsewhere, there were also important differences. First, the Franconia Notch campaign combined Progressive Era conservation ideas with cooperation between a grass-roots conservation group and a state government. The Franconia Notch campaign benefited from the SPNHF’s strong quarter century relationship with a supportive New Hampshire state government, which led the state to provide some of the means, financial and otherwise, to save Franconia Notch. Second, the SPNHF enlisted the aid of the conservation-minded and very able members of the NHFWC to take control of the Franconia Notch campaign’s substantial and crucial fundraising effort. Without the management skills and the enthusiastic support of NHFWC members, the Franconia Notch campaign’s success would have been very much in doubt.

Finally, the campaign’s relatively swift victory was the result of the SPNHF’s savvy publicity and fundraising campaigns, which creatively linked the necessity of saving a forest with the altruistic goal of a war memorial. The campaign’s advertising strategy also relied upon and manipulated the nostalgic connections of both the well-established summer residents and the more recent White Mountains visitors who traveled to the region by automobile. The most important symbol of the advertising campaign, the Old

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13 Judd, 4.
Man of the Mountain, added historic and cultural significance through its connections to statesman Daniel Webster, who has been credited with the most likely apocryphal declaration that the Old Man was “a sign hung out by God to declare that here in New Hampshire He made men,” and to Nathaniel Hawthorne’s 1850 allegorical short story “The Great Stone Face,” in which the Old Man of the Mountain serves as the model of greatness as well as the conscience of Ernest, the story’s main character. The campaign’s realization of its goals enabled New Hampshire to keep inviolate a symbol so important to the state’s identity that it became part of the state’s official emblem in 1945, and in the first decade of the twenty-first century it can be found on New Hampshire license plates, drivers’ licenses, state road signs, and the New Hampshire state quarter.

The story of the Franconia Notch campaign will demonstrate the methods used by the SPNHF to achieve impressive conservation goals. More importantly, it will reveal where the Franconia Notch campaign intersects with larger themes in nineteenth and twentieth century American history. The campaign found its roots in three important sets of ideas, which together create the images of the triptych of the Franconia Notch campaign. The first panel concerns the creation of the image of New Hampshire’s White Mountains as a wilderness refuge from the chaos of the industrial development of the United States, as a place where visitors could participate in strenuous outdoor activities as well as enjoy the luxuries of one of the region’s grand hotels. The second panel will trace the development of the White Mountains conservation movement in response to industrial threats to the mountain paradise and will place the movement within regional and national development of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The third panel of the triptych traces the influences of the conservation and back to nature movements on
the interests of the Appalachian Mountain Club, the SPNHF, and the NHFWC, which were the most important of the groups involved in the Franconia Notch campaign.

A sense of public responsibility for the protection of America’s resources and natural beauty was also an important component of the conservation movement, reflecting as it did the social consciousness of some reform movements of the Progressive Era. This social consciousness can be found in the mission of the SPNHF and more particularly in the ideals of the NHFWC. Women were important players in the reform movements of the Progressive Era. Both individually and through the increasingly numerous and popular women’s clubs like the local organizations that made up the membership of the state federations in New Hampshire and elsewhere, many women became involved with conservation. The role played by the NHFWC clearly identified the Franconia Notch effort with the forestry and conservation goals of women’s clubs nation-wide.

There are several significant works, including those of Vera Norwood, Karen Blair, and Carolyn Merchant, which explore the women’s club movement of the nineteenth century, the relationships between women and nature in nineteenth and twentieth century American history and where the two, the club movement and women’s views on nature, intersect. In Made from this Earth: American Women and Nature (1993), Norwood argues that “focusing on the environment, making it one’s familiar and home, had been key to women’s appreciation of nature.” Women’s involvement with nature included nature study, gardening, writing, and reform. Each of these activities were accepted “as peculiarly suited to women’s domestic responsibilities,” as nurturing the natural

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14 Vera Norwood, Made from this Earth: American Women and Nature (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), xvii
environment to make one’s town, city, or state a better and healthier place to live was as appropriate as working together with other women to improve one’s domestic or intellectual skills.15

These goals would echo those of many of the women’s clubs that were founded in the mid-nineteenth century. Karen Blair’s 1980 work *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined 1868-1914* presents the women’s club movement as an opportunity for middle class “ladies” to improve themselves through “an intellectual and social...program outside of the household” where women initially gathered to discuss literature, art, history, or more domestic issues.16 This medium allowed women to “nurture the skills that would enable women to demand reforms” in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Blair argues that it was “[t]he preservation of conventional appearances” that allowed “Domestic Feminism” to develop and later to open “new public avenues to women.”17

Merchant’s 1984 article “Women of the Progressive Conservation Movement,” provides an example of where the women’s club movement and the conservation movement intersect, as well as how clubwomen utilized the skills and opportunities offered to them at the turn of the twentieth century. Through an examination of the California’s Women’s Clubs 1900-1909 campaign to save the Calaveras groves of redwoods in northern California, Merchant’s work provides an important point of

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15 Ibid., xvii.


17 Ibid.
comparison between the more familiar California conservation movement and its strategies and the conservation movement in New Hampshire and its strategies.

The NHFWC, with its commitment to conservation and forestry, played an important role in the White Mountains conservation movement. The organization of local women's clubs at the state level provided the means through which women in rural areas of New Hampshire could share their ideas with their counterparts in urban areas. This unity aided in the success of the early reform efforts of the NHFWC and would bring the influence and abilities of almost 13,000 New Hampshire clubwomen to the Franconia Notch campaign during the 1920s. This study of the Franconia Notch campaign will expand the discussion of women's roles in conservation on the regional and local levels, while also examining the reasons why the NHFWC's members were so committed to nature.

The images on the Franconia Notch triptych, therefore, will serve to illustrate the national and regional influences on the creation of the vision of the White Mountains wilderness, the conservation movement, and the organizations most concerned with saving Franconia Notch. An analysis of each of these three key issues is necessary to arrive at an understanding of the complex nature of Franconia Notch, which was both a Romantic wilderness and an economically viable summer resort. As the region's resort history came to an end with the 1923 fire that destroyed the Profile House but left the Romantic wilderness intact, the SPNHF stepped in to acquire Franconia Notch for the state of New Hampshire. Fearing that the privately owned Notch would be sold to timber interests, the SPNHF reminded the state of the storied history of the region, and of the importance of the Old Man of the Mountain as a symbol of New Hampshire. The
Franconia Notch Forest Reservation and War Memorial was a direct result of the influences of those issues and organizations that together are the Franconia Notch triptych. The composition of and the connections between each panel demonstrate the regional and national influences on the Franconia Notch campaign, which are discussed in Chapters I through IV, while Chapters V and VI focus on the Franconia Notch campaign itself.

Chapters I and II will trace the development of the image of the White Mountains as a wilderness resort region. Utilizing travel narratives, paintings, and tourist guidebooks from the eighteenth and nineteenth century, both chapters will demonstrate how the European Romantic ideas of the sublime, the beautiful, and the picturesque were adapted to the landscape of the White Mountains. After tracing the geologic and natural history of Franconia Notch, Chapter I will examine the White Mountains region as a whole, including early settlements and the beginnings of the tourism industry. Chapter II will return to Franconia Notch through an analysis of the works of Thomas Cole, the painter who founded the Hudson River School, whose influence on many of the early White Mountains artists is clear. This chapter will also include a discussion of the development of the image of the Old Man of the Mountain, which would become the central symbol of the Franconia Notch campaign.

Chapter III will focus on the Progressive Era conservation movement, the White Mountains conservation movement, and on those conservation and forestry issues that most directly concerned Franconia Notch. Most of the development that occurred in Franconia Notch during the second half of the nineteenth century was related to the expansion of the region's two grand hotels, the Profile and Flume Houses, and the
incursion of the timber industry into the vast acres of virgin forests that still existed around the Notch. The clear-cutting practices of the “lumber barons” of the White Mountains wiped out thousands of acres of forests in a relatively short period of time, and concerns arose about the effects of these timber practices on the watersheds of some of New England’s most important rivers, as well as the dangers of forest fires caused by the sparks from lumber railroads and fueled by slash, the brush and other forest materials left behind by the timber companies. Summer residents of the grand hotels and factory owners downstream were among the first to voice their concerns about the destruction of the forests of the White Mountains that framed the views from the windows of the grand hotels. These concerns would provide the basis for the White Mountains conservation movement.

Chapter IV traces the origins of the Appalachian Mountain Club, the SPNHF, and the NHFWC to some of the same sources that inspired the conservation movement. The history of cooperation between the three organizations, particularly between the SPNHF and the NHFWC, was an integral part of the Franconia Notch campaign. Chapter IV will complete the last panel of the Franconia Notch triptych.

Chapter V and VI will discuss the Franconia Notch campaign from the Profile House fire of 1923 through the acquisition of the Notch in June 1928. The four major themes of the 1925-1928 publicity campaign, conservation, patriotism, nostalgia, and regionalism, provide the links between the two chapters. These themes were not new to the twentieth century White Mountains. The first two, conservation and patriotism, were both part of the vision of the White Mountains as a Romantic and threatened wilderness that contributed to a created past of American exceptionalism. The campaign combined
conservation and patriotism when it declared that it was the responsibility and duty of patriotic Americans to contribute towards the fund to save the Notch and create of it a memorial to those who served and died for New Hampshire in times of war. The third theme, nostalgia, was related directly to Franconia Notch’s success as a resort that catered to two generations of visitors. The SPNHF’s marketing campaign capitalized upon these visitors’ fond memories of summers spent at the Profile House or visiting the Old Man of the Mountain or the Flume. The final theme, regionalism, grew from a combination of views about New England exceptionalism and the need for economic unity in the region as well as the longing for, particularly by the middle and upper classes, a return to a simpler time.

The timeline of the campaign lends itself to two separate, though clearly linked, discussions. Between August 1923 and October 1927, the campaign focused on backstage organizational concerns and negotiations between the state of New Hampshire, the owners of Franconia Notch, and the SPNHF, while at the same time building support for the sophisticated marketing campaign that followed, which was played on the public stage and focused on a direct public appeal to raise the funds to save Franconia Notch.

The most intensive part of the Franconia Notch campaign occurred between October 1927 and March 1928, when the SPNHF and the NHFWC worked to gain the support of groups such as the American Legion, the New England Council, and the Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island State Federations of Women’s Clubs. In addition, the SPNHF and the NHFWC managed well-orchestrated public relations, marketing and fundraising campaigns that included extensive coverage of the campaign in the New Hampshire and New England press. While the Old Man of the
Mountain would eventually personify both the threat to and the significance of Franconia Notch, the human actors in this drama were the members of the SPNHF and the NHFWC who traveled across the region to make personal appeals for support of the Franconia Notch campaign.

In this study of the Franconia Notch campaign, a variety of sources was used to create the Franconia Notch triptych as well as to recreate the Franconia Notch campaign itself. Primary sources included the organizational records of the SPNHF; the NHFWC; the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, the national organization of women’s clubs of which the NHFWC was a member; and the records of the Maine Federation of Women’s Clubs as well as a variety of histories of other state federations of women’s clubs. In particular, the SPNHF records relating to the Franconia Notch campaign are an amazing collection of official and personal letters, newspaper clippings and magazine and journal articles, from which it was possible to extract a wealth of detail about the influences on and the structure of the Franconia Notch campaign.

Travel narratives, White Mountains fiction and poetry written before and during the campaign, tourist guidebooks, and paintings provide a wide range of visitors’ impressions of the region and of the Old Man of the Mountain in particular. Monographs and other works that analyze the artistic, economic, social, and environmental history of the White Mountains, as well as the histories of the conservation movement, the Progressive Era, and the women’s club movement provide the historical context in which to place the developments that influenced the events of this vivid and complex conservation campaign.
By examining the unique structure of the Franconia Notch campaign it is possible to explore the environmental history of the White Mountains region by uncovering the relationships between conservationists, politicians, women's groups, and tourists. Most importantly, it will reveal how each group viewed its natural surroundings.

Successes like the Franconia Notch campaign do not come easily in environmental conservation. The ideas of the conservation movement, the dedication of the SPNHF and the NHFWC, as well as the campaign's connection to tourists' affection for the White Mountains region and its symbol, the Old Man of the Mountains, together created that success. This dissertation will allow others to understand the importance of this remarkable example of the success of the New Hampshire conservation movement.
CHAPTER I

ROMANTIC PERCEPTIONS OF WHITE MOUNTAINS SCENERY

One early spring day in 2000 I took a group of visiting Russians on a tour of the White Mountains of New Hampshire. The scenery impressed the Russians, most of whom had never seen such high mountains before. I took them to visit the two most famous mountain passes in the region, Franconia and Crawford Notches. As we stood in Crawford Notch, one of them asked, “What is a Notch? There is no word for this in Russian.” I was surprised; it had never occurred to me that the word “Notch” would be a complete unknown to my visitors, one of whom was an ecologist. As I defined the word for them, pointing to the steep mountainsides that surrounded us to describe the mountain gap in which we stood, my visitors and I joined across almost three centuries with other travelers who came to the White Mountains to experience and to interpret the beautiful scenery that surrounded us on that cold spring day.

“What is a Notch?” This is a question that asks for more than a simple definition. It is a question about perception as well. How did settlers, travelers, timber barons, and conservationists view the White Mountains, and Franconia Notch in particular? To answer the question “What is a Notch?” and all that it entails, requires an understanding of the created vision of the White Mountains region and of Franconia Notch, located on the western slopes of the White Mountains. This question, then, is of central importance to an understanding of the campaign to save Franconia Notch.
This first chapter, and the next, will provide the image on the first panel of the Franconia Notch triptych by tracing the changing impressions of Franconia Notch and the White Mountains region from inaccessible wilderness to places of cultural and historic value worthy of preservation from the ravages of industry. Travel literature, including selected examples of personal narratives and tourist guidebooks, offers a fascinating insight into the creation of the White Mountains as a major resort area and later as an important wilderness area as well. Fiction, poetry, and images, such as paintings, lithographs, and photographs, offer an even more intriguing window into perceptions of the White Mountains and of nature itself. Together what these diverse media created is the setting of the Franconia Notch campaign, where human perceptions created the values of the land, mountains, and trees. The influences of these values on the Franconia Notch campaign played a key role in its success.

After establishing the natural history of Franconia Notch, this chapter will focus on the transformation of the White Mountains region from an inaccessible wilderness and frontier region into a scenic mecca for tourists through a selection of travel narratives. It will also explore the region’s importance to the development of a view of American exceptionalism that focused on the unique natural beauty of the United States.

The Natural History of Franconia Notch

The word “notch” is of Old French origin and its use in the English language dates to the sixteenth century.¹ The use of “notch” to describe a “narrow opening or defile through mountains”, however, originated in the United States in 1718. In this sense,

¹ The definition of “notch” as “a V-shaped indentation or incision made, or naturally occurring, in an edge or across a surface” was first used in 1577. In the *Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. X, 2nd ed., s.v. “Notch.”
"notch" was a word and a place, a unique term chosen to represent the "Notch in the Mountains," later known as Crawford Notch, "a singular curiosity in the state [of New Hampshire]."² Located in the central portion of the White Mountains, Crawford Notch was the one of the first scenic showplaces of the White Mountains and as such it defined the White Mountains as America's first Romantic wilderness. Although it became one of the most well known locations in the region, Crawford Notch was only one of the White Mountains Notches that contributed to the region's vision of Romantic scenery. Franconia Notch would help define that vision as well.

The story of Franconia Notch is one of constant change, both dramatic and subtle. The natural history of the region begins in geologic time, with the formation of what is known as the Franconia quadrangle, which surrounds Franconia Notch. (Fig. 1) This area is located in central New Hampshire, in Grafton County, on the western slope of the White Mountains. It covers most of the towns of Lincoln and Franconia, as well as parts of Woodstock, Thornton, and Livermore to the south, Bethlehem to the north, and Easton to the west. It includes the Franconia Mountain Range and portions of the Kinsman Range.

The Franconia Range, on the eastern side of the Notch, contains some of the highest peaks in the White Mountains outside of the Presidential Range, with Mount Lafayette at 5,249 feet above sea level and Mount Lincoln at 5,108 feet above sea level. Other peaks include Mount Liberty (4,460 feet), Mount Flume (4,327 feet), and North and South Twin Mountains (4,769 feet and 4,926 feet, respectively). On the western side of Franconia Notch (2,014 feet) is Cannon, or Profile, Mountain (4,077 feet), on the eastern

² Ibid.
Fig. 1

Map of the Franconia Notch Quadrangle, Grafton County, New Hampshire
Map not drawn to scale.
side of which is the Old Man of the Mountain. On the western edge of the Franconia quadrangle is Mount Kinsman (4,363 feet). There are also three lakes in Franconia Notch: Lonesome Lake, Echo Lake, and Profile Lake, the source of the Pemigewasset River, which lies at the base of Cannon Mountain.

Erosion played the most important role in the creation of Franconia Notch and in the creation of the natural curiosities within it. The Flume, the Pool, and the Basin, discussed in the following chapter, are each dramatic examples of the power of erosion over time. The Pemigewasset River and glaciation created the deep rounded valley of the Notch itself and erosion’s most recent work is the Old Man of the Mountain. The Old Man is composed of five ledges of Conway granite, one of several granites found throughout the quadrangle. The specific geologic history and human interpretation of the Old Man of the Mountains, the most important symbol of the Franconia Notch campaign, will be discussed in the next chapter.

The earliest traces of geologic activity in the Franconia quadrangle date from the Ordovician period of the Paleozoic Era, roughly 375 millions years ago. There is

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3 Cannon Mountain had gone by various names, including Profile Mountain (1827), Jackson’s Peak (1842), Freak Mountain (1844), Old Man’s Mountain (1852) as well as Cannon Mountain, which dates to 1852. In 1918, the United States Geographic Board officially named the mountain Profile Mountain, only to change the name again to Cannon Mountain in 1972. To avoid confusion, the mountain will be referred to by its present name of Cannon Mountain. Frank H. Burt, “Nomenclature of the White Mountains,” Appalachia XIII (June 1915): 371; Robert and Mary Julyan, Place Names of the White Mountains, rev. ed. (Hanover, NH: University of New England Press, 1993), 22.


5 The Old Man of the Mountain is also known as the Profile and the Great Stone Face. All three names will be used interchangeably throughout this work. There is some confusion, however, about the “correct” name for the Old Man. In some nineteenth and twentieth century guidebooks, the Old Man is “of the Mountains” and in others it is “of” a single mountain only. The state of New Hampshire refers to its symbol as the “Old Man of the Mountain,” and for consistency’s sake, it shall appear as such in this work.
evidence of volcanic debris and sediment that found its way during this time into the region via streams that brought the material from erupting volcanoes in what is now the Gulf of Maine.\(^6\) Over a period of 78 million years, during the Silurian and Devonian periods, the region was alternately just above sea level or covered by a shallow inland sea filled with corals, trilobites, and brachiopods.\(^7\) These marine animals added to the estimated five thousand feet of sediment that accumulated in the Franconia quadrangle during the latter half of the Devonian period.\(^8\) Pressure from these layers of sediment created rocks - limestone, shale, and sandstone.\(^9\)

As the sea receded about 330 million years ago, the exposed sedimentary rock layers began to erode rapidly. In addition, a great “folding” of these layers occurred, creating the Acadian Range, of which evidence in New England has all but disappeared.\(^10\) The collision of the three great landmasses of North America, Eurasia, and the supercontinent Gondwanaland created intense pressure. This pressure pushed more sediment to the surface and changed the softer sedimentary formations into more durable metamorphic rock, which was still subject to erosion from water and ice.\(^11\)

The next stage of development occurred about 290 million years ago and saw the beginnings of the shape of Franconia Notch. Molten lava filled in the crevices in the metamorphic rock. As the lava cooled, it formed igneous rocks, which took the form of.

\(^6\) Billings and Williams, 28.
\(^7\) Ibid., 29.
\(^8\) Ibid.
\(^9\) Kostecke, 29.
among others, “Kinsman”, then later “Lafayette” and “Conway” granites.\textsuperscript{12} The continuing erosion of the softer metamorphic rock gradually exposed the more erosion-resistant granite and other rocks. The result was that during the Mesozoic era, about 120 million years ago, erosion exposed present-day Kinsman Ridge and Cannon Mountain.\textsuperscript{13} Their height at that point was probably no more than 1,300 feet.

Sixty million years ago, at the beginning of the Tertiary period of the Cenozoic era, New England as a whole began to rise. In northern New England, the average height of mountain peaks rose to between 4,000 and 5,000 feet. Erosion went to work again, however, and leveled the ridges and peaks in the Franconia quadrangle to their present height, which ranges from 1,700 feet to over 5,200 feet. Streams carved out a sharp north-to-south V-shaped valley between the Kinsman and Franconia Ranges, similar to the shape that Franconia Notch has at present.

The final changes to the landscape that would become Franconia Notch, however, occurred about 2.5 million years ago, during the Quaternary period of the Cenozoic Era. As the earth entered the last Ice Age to date, cooling temperatures caused more snow to fall, which filled the deep river valleys of the White Mountains. A continental ice sheet, formed in North Labrador, began to expand southward. When it reached Franconia Notch, the ice sheet completely filled the area, covering the White Mountains, including Mount Washington, with ice up to a mile deep.\textsuperscript{14} As the glacial ice melted near the end

\textsuperscript{11} Kostecke, 30.

\textsuperscript{12} Andrew H. McNair, The Geologic Story of Franconia Notch and the Flume (Concord, NH: State Planning and Development Commission, 1949), 3.

\textsuperscript{13} Kostecke, 31.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., 35.
of the Pleistocene period, somewhere between 25,000 and 8,000 years ago, the results of this final and most dramatic erosion became evident. Franconia Notch took the U-shaped contour that characterizes it at present. Glacial erosion rounded the peak of Cannon Mountain, and exposed the rock of Eagle Cliff, near the Old Man of the Mountain.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, 36.}

Continual erosion has also caused a history of landslides in Franconia Notch and the White Mountains region as a whole, which have altered the landscape both physically and culturally. In Franconia Notch, there have been a dozen major landslides, usually caused by heavy rainfall and steep mountain slopes covered by thin soil.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, 38.} The interest surrounding the 1826 landslide that killed the Willey family did a great deal for the infant White Mountains tourism industry, attracting eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth century geologists and curiosity seekers to the site in Crawford Notch. The Franconia Notch landslide caused by the same storm that killed the Willey family closed the road through the area for two months, while landslides in September 1938 and October 1959 also buried the road through Franconia Notch in rubble from fifteen to twenty-seven feet deep.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, 39.}

Erosion has influenced other aspects of the physical make-up of the Franconia quadrangle. Glacial debris, or till, deposited by glacial melt-water near the northern end of the Notch, blocked that part of the Notch and the result was Echo Lake.\footnote{McNair, 6-7.} Little glacial debris can be found on the mountains, but in the Gale River valley in the northwestern...
quarter of the Franconia quadrangle, a 1935 study estimated there to be over 200 feet of the debris.19

Franconia Notch presents a spectacular combination of glacial lakes, exposed rock face, rocky mountain summits and dense forests. At present, Franconia Notch is heavily forested, in part the result of the protected nature of the region, first as the setting for two grand hotels, and after 1928 as a state park and forest reservation. The forest composition of Franconia Notch and the Franconia quadrangle played an important part in the region’s history as a summer resort as well as in the forestry concerns of the Franconia Notch campaign.

There are four elevations in the plant and animal life in Franconia Notch. The first, from the floor of the Notch to 2,000 feet, is the northern hardwood zone. Here, beech trees, sugar maples, and yellow birches make up a mature second growth forest uncut since the latter half of the nineteenth century.20 On the forest floor, common wildflowers are the yellow violet and red Trillium. Brook trout can be found in Profile and Echo Lakes. Birds such as the purple finch - New Hampshire’s state bird- the white-breasted nuthatch, red-winged blackbird and the red-eyed vireo live in this area, and the black bear and white-tailed deer frequent both this elevation and the next highest, the spruce/fir zone, between 2,000 and 4,000 feet.21 Located in this zone, at the northern end of the Notch overlooking Echo Lake, is the only remaining patch of virgin spruce and fir left in

19 Billings and Williams, 28.
20 Kostecke, 28, 49.
21 Ibid.
the Notch. Living amidst the forests of this region are the red-breasted nuthatch, the snowshoe rabbit, and the porcupine.\footnote{Ibid.}

The final two regions are characterized by sub-alpine and alpine conditions. Between 4,000 and 4,500 feet, there are stunted balsam firs, paper birch, and mountain ash. The conditions here are harsh, as much because of the thin soil and persistent wind as due to the fact that much of the forest floor here consists of talus, rocks that erosion has caused to fall off the cliff faces. The boreal chickadee and the red squirrel live in this region, as do sub-alpine wildflowers such as the dwarf cinquefoil, an endangered species in New Hampshire, and diapensia, a small, white bell-shaped flower.\footnote{John W. Thieret, \textit{National Audubon Society Field Guide to Northern Wildflowers: Eastern Region} (New York: Alfred K. Knopf, 2001), 498, 753.} Mountain peaks above 4,500 feet fall into the arctic alpine zone, with plant and animal life similar to that found in the Presidential Range of the White Mountains, where Mount Washington is located. Scrub trees such as birches and firs are found in some areas, but most of the peaks are treeless. The slate-colored junco and the raven are among the few birds at these elevations, and only alpine flowers, such as the diapensia, thrive here. The conditions tend to be harsh, with winds averaging from fifteen to twenty-five miles an hour at the summits of these mountains. Winter temperatures average zero to five degrees Fahrenheit in this region.\footnote{Kostecke, 48-49.}

Since the nineteenth century, these sub-alpine and alpine conditions have attracted naturalists, geologists, hikers, rock climbers, bird watchers, and occasionally those interested in fishing. Hunting is rarely mentioned as an attraction to the region, and
neither the state nor the federal government operate a wildlife management area in the region.25 Prior to eighteenth century, however, there is no record of any temporary or permanent human habitation of Franconia Notch. Long before any European or Euro-American reached the area, the White Mountains region as a whole was home to several bands of Abenaki Indians, of the same group of eastern Algonquins who lived throughout northern New England. In the White Mountains there were groups of Winnipesauki and Ossipees, who lived in the south, near the lake and mountains that bear their names, and the Pigwackets (or the Pequawkets) who lived in the Saco River Valley, between Bartlett and Conway. Recent research indicates that these groups, and their ancestors, might have inhabited Northern New England for as long as ten thousand years, stretching back as far as the retreat of the glacier that covered Franconia Notch.26

Although many Abenaki words and names grace the natural features of the White Mountains, there are no extant records to describe what the Native Americans thought about the White Mountains or even what names the groups themselves might have used to describe the region. Based upon information from early histories of the White Mountains, eighteenth and nineteenth white settlers and visitors decided upon the names, and created and perpetuated the legends that rose up about such places as Mount Chocorua, Mount Washington, and the Old Man of the Mountain. Franconia Notch itself shows the juxtaposition of European and Native American influences. The name

25 None of the guidebooks mention hunting opportunities in Franconia Notch. During the Franconia Notch campaign, the issue of Franconia Notch as a game reserve was raised by W.H. Foster, the editor of National Sportsman Magazine. According to Paul Hannah, the Society’s publicity director, the area would not become a game reserve due to its “ruggedness,” which would not be conducive to “game propagation.” Paul F. Hannah to W.H. Foster, December 7, 1927. Box 9, folder 16. SPNHF Collection.

“Franconia” is of Germanic origin, either from “Land of the Franks,” or it was used to refer to the region’s resemblance to the Franconian Alps in Germany. “Pemigewasset,” referring to the Pemigewasset River that flows through Franconia Notch, is an Abenaki word meaning “Rapidly Moving.”

The association with Indian legends was related to another, even broader, attempt to create an “American” past, as well as to shape the future of the landscape. The early recorded history of the White Mountains, and of the Franconia Notch region, was that of the American frontier experience and the rise of a fledgling tourism industry. By the mid- to late nineteenth century, there was a well-developed “image” of the White Mountains, which was a representation of an accessible wilderness that was both scenic and social. Over the course of roughly one hundred and fifty years, the White Mountains region was transformed from a forbidding place of “daunting terrible hills” to one characterized by the amenities offered by grand hotels that overlooked the “Switzerland of America.”

Although the image of the White Mountains comparing the region’s beauties to those of the Swiss Alps dates from nineteenth century, European mariners may have noted the existence of the White Mountains as early as the sixteenth century. Giovanni Verrazano recorded what might have been the White Mountains while sailing north along the eastern coast of North America in 1524. By 1561, other navigators also mentioned a

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27 Robert and Mary Julyan,, 56.


29 McGrath, Gods in Granite, xvii.
northern mountain range, its presence usually indicated on maps by roughly drawn unnamed hills in the vicinity of northern New England.  

The first European exploration of the White Mountains came in 1632. According to Jeremy Belknap, New Hampshire’s first historian, Captain Walter Neal and Henry Josselyn, both Englishmen, were among the region’s first exploration party. Neal went to investigate the interior of New Hampshire where he expected to find “divers lakes…rivers well-stocked with fish and goodly meadows filled with trees…” as well as corn, chestnuts, walnuts and many kinds of fruit. Neal and Josselyn reportedly reached the mountain later known as Mount Washington, and returned with glowing accounts of the White Mountains’ beauty. Nature’s bounty, however, was not quite as spectacular. Belknap commented on the improbability of the reports that enticed Neal, declaring that “[n]o one who is acquainted with the interior part of the country in its wilderness state can forbear smiling at this romantic description…”

Even if the White Mountains seemed to be a region with little settlement potential or promise of riches, there were others, like Neal, who were intrigued by the dense forests and the mountains. The first recorded European ascent of the mountain later named Mount Washington was in 1642, when Darby Field, an Irishman from the southern New Hampshire town of Exeter, made the trip. According to John Winthrop, who recorded the event in his History of New England, Field found several guides from “an Indian town of some 200 people” near the Saco River, possibly in the vicinity of present-day Glen.

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30 Girolamo Ruscelli, “Tierra Nueva” in Mapping the White Mountains by John T.B. Mudge. (Etna, NH: Durand Press, 1993), Illustration 1,1.


32 Ibid., 23.
New Hampshire, near the base of Mount Washington.\textsuperscript{33} His Indian guides accompanied Field for part of the way, but would not accompany him to the summit as "no Indian ever dared to go higher….\[H\]e would die if he went."\textsuperscript{34} Many of the legends that explained why the tribes in the region never climbed the mountains undoubtedly trace their origins in some small part to Field’s experience. In spite of his guides’ hesitation, however, Field refused to turn back and, with one or two Indians evidently less fearful than the rest, continued the ascent. When he reached the top, Field saw the sea and some mountaintops.\textsuperscript{35}

In June 1642, Thomas Gorge, the deputy of the province of Maine, wrote a letter to a relative in England relating what he claimed was Field’s own account of his ascent of Mount Washington. Gorge wrote that Field’s trip was difficult. When Field reached the summit he found that

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\text{at the top it was not above 20 foot square, wher he sate with much fear some 5 hours time the clouds passing under him making a terrible noyse against the mountains. Thence he discovered some 80 miles farther a very (glorious) white mountain & between 2 other great mountains as he judged some 100 miles…a mighty river bearing North & by East of him of which like or sea he could see noe end. On this mountain, he mett with terrible freesing weather…}\textsuperscript{36}
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Clearly, even in 1642 Mount Washington deserved its present distinction as the location with the worst weather in the world.\textsuperscript{37} The accounts of Field’s trip also included the first


\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 67.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 68n. What Field probably saw was cloud cover or fog, with only the highest nearby summits visible.

\textsuperscript{36} Laura and Guy Waterman, \textit{Forest and Crag: A History of Hiking, Trailblazing, and Adventure in the Northeast Mountains} (Boston: Appalachian Mountain Club, 1989), 12.

\textsuperscript{37} On April 12, 1934, winds at the summit of Mount Washington reached 231 miles per hour, the highest land wind speed ever recorded on earth. Weather above the tree lines in the Presidential Range in
descriptions of the breathtaking views from the Northeast’s highest mountain. His climb to the summit would take on a legendary flair during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, considering the difficulty of his ascent, which was presumably made without the benefit of mountaineering experience or equipment.

There is no record as to why Field made the trip, but Winthrop’s account offers a possible reason, which seems to agree with the motivation for Captain Neal’s trip ten years earlier. During a second trip to the summit, Field took away what he thought to be diamonds, which turned out to be only crystals and mica. Nevertheless, the find encouraged others to search the area for possible riches. Field was one of the first lured to the White Mountains through the promise of fortune through the exploitation of the natural resources of the region. After settlement in the late eighteenth century, speculators came to see the value in the land, minerals, timber, and the scenery of the White Mountains.

It would be thirty more years before the White Mountains would receive any further mention of any significance, however. In 1672 John Josselyn published his *New-Englands Rarities Discovered*, the first work to call the White Mountains by name. Josselyn, an Englishman, wrote the work at his brother Henry’s home in Scarborough, Maine, sometime between July 1663 and August 1671. Henry, of course, had been to the White Mountains during the 1632 expedition. Published in London, *New Englands Rarities Discovered*.

particular tends, like New England weather in general, to be unpredictable, which is dangerous for hikers any time of year. Even in August, temperatures at the base and summit of the mountain can differ by thirty degrees. Laura and Guy Waterman, 133.

38 Ibid., 13.

Rarities Discovered contained Josselyn’s sometimes factual, sometimes fantastic, scientific and botanical observations as well as the wonders, mythic or otherwise, of the New World.⁴⁰

Although it is not known whether Josselyn visited the White Mountains in person, his brother Henry would have been able to pass along his observations from his trip of 1632. In his description of the White Mountains, Josselyn wrote that

fourscore miles (upon a direct line) to the Northwest of Scarborow, a ridge of Mountains runs Northwest and Northeast...known by the name of the White Mountains upon which lieth Snow all the year and, and is a landmark twenty miles off at Sea. It is a rising ground from the Sea shore to these hills, and they are inaccessible but by the Gullies which the dissolved Snow hath made...The Country beyond the Hills Northward is daunting terrible, being full of rocky Hills, as thick as Mole-hills in a Meadow, and cloathed with infinite thick Woods.⁴¹

Josselyn’s descriptions of the White Mountains reflected the region’s reputation for inaccessibility. Its “rocky Hills” and “infinite thick Woods” did not invite settlement or cultivation. Instead, they inspired fear of the unknown and of the evil that might lurk among the trees, with little potential for settlement or resources. Unlike his brother Henry, who saw promise in the resources of the region, John Josselyn’s images of the White Mountains resembled the more common English view of nature in the seventeenth century, where any variance from the familiar pastoral landscape was viewed as unsettling.⁴²

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Early Puritan settlers in New England also expressed this view of wilderness as unfamiliar, unpredictable, and threatening. William Bradford's first impression of the New World when the Mayflower arrived at Plimouth Plantation in 1620 was not a favorable one. All he and his fellow travelers could see before them was "a hideous and desolate wilderness," which did not bode well for the future success of the settlement. Bradford's comments reflected the attitudes of many early New World settlers towards the wilderness. In Wilderness and the American Mind, Roderick Nash argued that the wilderness posed a very real threat to the survival of successive generations of European and American pioneers in the New World. For the Puritans in particular, fear and loathing of the New World wilderness also had a religious component. It was the dwelling place of Satan, a "cursed and chaotic wasteland" that posed a "dark and sinister threat" to the very fabric of civilization.

Mountains fared little better in the seventeenth century. This was the age of "Mountain Gloom," Marjorie Hope Nicolson wrote in Mountain Gloom, Mountain Glory. Seventeenth century English poets wrote in very uncomplimentary terms of mountains, calling them "The Earth deformed" and "hook-shouldered." These poets, Nicolson argued, loved Nature in her "smaller rather than her grander aspects." They preferred rolling hills and cultivated lands to the awe-inspiring heights of the Alps, which few

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46 Ibid., 37.
Englishmen or women had seen or climbed. Many settlers were also unaccustomed to the vast wooded expanses of uncultivated land in the New World, so unfamiliarity also played a role in the development of the fear of mountains and wilderness and of the “daunting terrible” country. Josselyn’s descriptions of the White Mountains would not remain the standard for long, however.

Within a century of the publication of *New Englands Rarities Discovered*, there was a rush of land grants in the “inaccessible region” of “Gullies” and “infinite thick woods” as the political inaccessibility of northern New England came to an end. With the cessation of the hostilities of the French and Indian after the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1763, political barriers to settling on the land in northern New Hampshire were reduced. Little time was lost in creating settlements in the White Mountains. In 1764 New Hampshire’s royal governor Benning Wentworth granted Jesse Searles and sixty-four other people the land that would become the town of Franconia. Eight years later, because of lack of settlement on the original grant, the same land, and more, was granted to another group by Governor John Wentworth. The 1764 grantees, who had named their town Franconia, immediately challenged the claims of the 1772 grantees, who had named their town Morristown. After a ten-year lawsuit, the first grant was found to be the legal one, and the town of Franconia declared itself chartered from 1764. By 1800, there were one hundred and twenty nine people living in Franconia.47

The town of Lincoln, to the south of Franconia Notch, was granted to James Avery and others in January of 1764, but no settlement was established until the 1780s.48

Where Franconia had the benefit of intervale land along the Gale River, complements of
the continental ice sheet that covered Franconia Notch, the town of Lincoln lacked any
real farmland. Crops were “often injured by early frosts,” there were numerous
landslides, and “wild animals [were] abundant.” It is little wonder, then, that the
population of a town that seemed “to have been designed by Nature as a residence for
creatures of habits very different from those of man” had a population of only fifty-seven
persons in 1850. It would not be until speculators recognized the value of the timber in
the vicinity of Lincoln during the 1880s and 1890s that the town’s population would
increase.

The second half of the eighteenth century, in general, was a productive time for
settlements on the White Mountains frontier. By the 1750s there were settlements to the
south of the region, near Lake Winnipesaukee, on lands granted to town such as
Meredith and Holderness. In Coos County, north of Franconia Notch, there were
settlements as early as 1763 in Lancaster and in 1773 in Jefferson, originally called
Dartmouth. The land for the town of Bethlehem, northwest of Franconia Notch, was
granted in 1790. On the eastern slopes of the White Mountains, settlement of the town of
Conway began in 1764.

There were few good roads in the region, however, and these would be necessary if
settlements, and commerce, were to continue to grow. In 1771, while out hunting moose,
Timothy Nash reported discovering “the Notch of the White Mountains,” today known as

49 Ibid., 269.

50 Ibid., 270.

51 Wallace, 18-20.
Crawford Notch, on the southwest side of Mount Washington. It was a pass purported to have been used by the Native Americans in the area to conduct their prisoners to Canada.\footnote{Timothy Dwight, \textit{Travels in New England and New York}, vol. 2 (New Haven: S. Converse, Printer, 1821; reprint Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969):97.} Nash reported his discovery to Governor John Wentworth of New Hampshire, who did not believe Nash’s story. To prove the existence of the pass to the governor, Nash, with the help of his friend Benjamin Sawyer, brought a horse from Jefferson through the Notch of the White Mountains to Wentworth in southern New Hampshire. The governor granted the two men the rights to the land as a reward.

In 1803, the state legislature chartered a turnpike through Crawford Notch, which connected the northwestern part of the state with the rest of New Hampshire. After he visited the area in the 1830s, Nathaniel Hawthorne described the importance of Crawford Notch, calling it “a great artery through which the life blood of internal commerce continually throbbed between Maine, and the Green Mountains and the shores of the St. Lawrence.”\footnote{Dwight, 97, 385n.} According to legend, the first item of “commerce” taken through the pass was a barrel of rum, on its way to Colonel Joseph Whipple of Jefferson, who was noted for his hospitality. The road through Crawford Notch was an important step in increasing the real, and perceived, accessibility of the region.

\textit{Travels in the White Mountains: “Truly grand and often awfully sublime.”}

In July 1784, thirteen years after the discovery of Crawford Notch, New Hampshire historian Jeremy Belknap and a group of scientists, naturalists, and Dartmouth College students visited the White Mountains. Belknap was the first to write a detailed first-hand...
account of the region. The purpose of his visit demonstrates a change in the perception of the White Mountains. Great value was to be found in the evidence of their geologic and natural history, not necessarily only in the mountains' rumored mineral wealth.

Belknap's excursion to observe the geology, flora, and fauna of the White Mountains for his third volume of his *History of New Hampshire* was motivated by scientific curiosity. In his *Journal of a Tour to the White Mountains in July 1784*, Belknap also described his trip as a "tour," a word used more often used to characterize a pleasure trip than one devoted solely to scientific observation. Belknap's *Journal* can be regarded as the first White Mountains travel narrative and many of his observations about the region would be quoted by most of the major White Mountains tourist guidebooks through the twentieth century.

The *Journal* was an engaging account of Belknap's experiences in the White Mountains. Of the six men who accompanied Belknap on his trip north, two of them were, like him, ministers. Of the four remaining members of the party, one was a

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54 Jeremy Belknap, *Journal of a Tour to the White Mountains in July 1784* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1876). Found among a collection of his papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society, in 1876, the Society edited and published Belknap's 1784 diary of his visit to the White Mountains.

55 The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "tour" as "to make a tour or circuitous journey, in which many places are visited, usually without retracing one's steps; to make a prolonged excursion for recreation or business." In *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. XVIII, 2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press): 305.

56 Belknap, *Journal*, 15. Belknap related the sermon that he preached while visiting Colonel Whipple and of the eight baptisms performed by the other ministers in his party. Belknap's observations included the surprised reaction of townspeople from Eaton and Conway, who evidently had never seen a group of travelers that large before, an indication of the sparse settlement and lack of visitation to the area. They also hoped that the ministers of the party would lay to rest the evil spirits who inhabited the area, an opinion, Belknap believed "derived from the Indians of that area."

57 Belknap, *Journal*, 9-10. Belknap also provided several asides in his account, including a description of his fall into "a deep hole of water up to [his] hips...[where he] received so much damage from this accident that I was ill all night." He was also asked by the rest of his party to turn back when they discovered he slowed their ascent up Mount Washington.
physician, two were students, and one man’s profession is not mentioned. In addition to his ministerial position in the Dover Congregational Church in Dover, New Hampshire and his reputation as an historian, Belknap, along with the others in his party, was one of the growing number of Americans devoted to studies of philosophy, science, and the arts. The group claimed membership in the American Philosophical Society, the Boston Humane Society, and the Academy of Arts and Sciences. One of these men, the Reverend Doctor Menasseh Cutler, later published his findings in the Philadelphia Medical and Physical Journal, while Belknap published his in the third volume of his History of New Hampshire. Both accounts are more technical than that in Belknap’s journal, indicating that whatever scientific data the weather and broken instruments permitted the group to make were put to good use and directed towards scientific audiences.

From Belknap’s Journal it is possible to gain an appreciation for the rustic conditions of the White Mountains region during its frontier stage. Belknap carefully copied by hand a map in the possession of his friend Colonel Joseph Whipple of Jefferson, with whom the group stayed for several days. This earliest detailed map of the area included the location of some of the towns along Belknap’s route, such as Conway and Lancaster. Belknap also noted where he stayed and some of the geographical features of the area, including Cutler River, named for the Reverend Dr. Cutler. The map even contained detailed descriptions of the direction in which the rivers flowed as well as changes in wind direction and temperature.

Jeremy Belknap, Journal, 3: The names and careers of Belknap’s traveling companions are contained in the editor’s introduction to Belknap’s work.

Belknap, Journal, 10-11.
Belknap’s *Journal* included two additional elements, among others, that would become common as the White Mountains travel narrative developed over the course of the next century. Glowing descriptions of “Mountain Glory” would often be accompanied by complaints about the weather or about swarms of black flies and mosquitoes. Belknap apparently experienced the White Mountains at their worst. He complained of rain, of overcast weather that prevented planned scientific observations, and about the insects that attacked him one morning.60

Belknap’s account of the rest of his party’s climb up Mount Washington followed closely on John Josselyn’s description of the features of an unnamed mountain and the accounts of those who ascended Mount Washington in later years.61 It should be noted, however, that the name “Mount Washington” did not come into common use until 1792, when Belknap included the mountain and its new name in his third volume of his *History of New Hampshire*. Until that time, the mountain seems to have been without an official name, as were the White Mountains themselves, being alternately known as the White Hills or the Crystal (or Chrystal) Hills. Mount Washington, the highest peak in the region, was consistently a major attraction for those in search of science as well as of

60 Ibid., 10, 12, 13, 15. Of the insects that find their way into the later accounts, the infamous black fly seems to predominate, although Belknap also encountered mosquitoes - no summer trip to the woods would be complete without them.

61 Belknap’s party chiseled their initials into the rock at the summit of Mount Washington, something that became a tradition. Later groups either used a chisel, cemented a bottle with the party’s names onto a rock, or carved their initials on sheet lead left for that purpose by Lucy Crawford, owner, with her husband, of the Notch House inn, in the 1820’s and 1830’s. At one point, the sheet was stolen by some visitors who had too much of the “spirit” from the bottles left by the Crawfords at the summit for the convenience of the guests. Lucy Crawford, *Lucy Crawford’s History of the White Mountains*, Ed. by Stearns Morse. (Portland, ME: F.A. & A.F. Gerrish, 1846; reprint Hanover, NH: Dartmouth Publications, 1966), 67, 74.
adventure or, later, of scenic vistas. Later, Mount Washington would join Crawford and Franconia Notches as the one of the most celebrated sites in the White Mountains.

Belknap's descriptions of his White Mountains surroundings were for the most part objective, as would befit an amateur scientist and naturalist's observations. Occasionally, however, he slipped into the language of Romantic description when describing the awe-inspiring beauty of the mountains surrounding Mount Washington. Belknap declared that

[t]he most romantic imagination here finds itself surprized and stagnated. Everything which it had formed an idea of as sublime and beautiful is here realized. Stupendous mountains, hanging rocks, chrystal streams, verdant woods, the cascade above, the torrent below, all conspire to amaze, to delight, to soothe, to enrapture; in short, to fill the mind with such ideas as every lover of nature and every devout worshipper of its Author would wish to have.

Belknap's language drew the reader into the experience of the landscape before him or her, inviting that reader to experience Belknap's emotions vicariously. The White Mountains region, it seemed, was a place of great and inspiring natural beauty, where Crawford Notch was "singularly romantic and picturesque." This was a noticeable change from the "daunting terrible" mountains and woods portrayed by Josselyn.

The language Belknap used to describe the natural surroundings of the White Mountain region had its foundation in European Romanticism, an intellectual and artistic movement beginning in the late eighteenth century. It emphasized an individual's emotional and imaginative reactions to Nature, in particular, and was a departure from the more orderly forms and ideas of classical thought. Ideas from Edmund Burke's 1757

62 Belknap, Journal, 3.: Belknap's party was one of many who tried to calculate the height of Mount Washington, placing it somewhere around 10,000 feet (Belknap believed higher), using the scientific instruments that the party had with them. The mountain's actual elevation is 6,288 feet above sea level.

essay _A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful_, combined with those from William Gilpin’s 1792 essay “On Picturesque Beauty,” gave to Romanticism three ideas through which to explain and examine the observer’s relationship to nature. The first was the idea of the sublime, which, when encountered in any form, inspired awe, terror, a sense of vastness and magnificence.64 The second was the idea of the Beautiful that focused on a characteristic smallness that inspired love instead of terror.65 The final idea, the picturesque, suggested ruggedness, which was accompanied by a curiosity-driven examination of ruins and rustic landscapes.66

In eighteenth century England, these ideas found expression in the poetry of, among others, William Wordsworth. The descriptions of the landscape used by Romantic poets like Wordsworth were meant to convey the intense internalized reaction of the writer to nature. Nature, as Wordsworth observed in “Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey,” had the power “to chasten and subdue,” and it also

disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused
Whose dwelling is the light of settings suns…
…Therefore I am still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear, …well-pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense,


65 Ibid., 103.


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The anchor of my purest thoughts…”67

For Wordsworth and Belknap, Nature inspired “elevated” and “pure thoughts” as well as intense emotions in reaction to “meadows, woods, and mountains.” The wilderness of the White Mountains was no longer something to be feared, but rather to be admired. By adopting the language of Burke, Gilpin, and Wordsworth, and by showing his own Romantic sensibilities, Belknap demonstrated that White Mountains scenery met the requirements necessary to make a landscape “Romantic.” He could then extrapolate that the White Mountains were the equal of any mountain range in the world.

Belknap did not hesitate to include his opinion about the uniqueness and greatness of America natural scenery in the final volume of his History of New Hampshire.68 He refuted the claims by European writers, “some of great reputation,” that the climate of America was “unfriendly,” and one that contributed to the poor health and short life span of its inhabitants.69 He condemned those who do not get their “information from the purest sources” and therefore portray America as “a grave,” where people are condemned by the climate to lead short lives. This image of America “may throw discouragement of emigration to this country.”70

Alluding to the European travelers who visited America, Belknap pointed out that “America can best be described by those who have for a long time resided in it. Those who have not seen it at all, or those who have passed through with the rapidity of a

69 Belknap, History, 171.
70 Ibid.
traveler, can be very inadequate judges; yet unhappily there are many of these classes of writers whose accounts have gained more credit than they deserve." Belknap proudly proclaimed that the people who till the “uncleared and uncultivated soil” of America are of as robust health as any “nor in fact have any people better appetites for food.” He noted the healthful effects of the many trees in the state, “which an [sic] European might call ‘rank vegetation’ …[which] increases the strength and fertility of the soil…[and] imparts to the air a balsamic quality which is extremely favorable to health.”

Belknap’s assertion about the healthy air of New Hampshire would be touted as a benefit of the White Mountains’ many resorts. By the nineteenth century, the mountains with air that had “a balsamic quality” provided a means of escape to those suffering from the dirt, noise, and “the over-stimulation of work and social life” in urban areas. The health benefits of the mineral spas at Saratoga Spring and White Sulphur Springs, as well as the fresh breezes of the seashore and mountains, were advertised by hotel and railroad companies, as well as by guidebooks and tourist newspapers. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Bethlehem, New Hampshire, northwest of Franconia Notch, had become a haven for hay fever sufferers, who came for “the superior altitude” where they could find “immunity from their attacks in this high pure air.” The health benefits of forests, which “render the climate more equitable” and tended to have “less abundant

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71 Ibid., 172.


bacteria” and dust than cities, were used as arguments in support of the preservation of the White Mountains forests in the early twentieth century.\textsuperscript{76} Regardless of whether or not the health claims of eighteenth, nineteenth, or twentieth century promoters were true, these claims attracted many visitors to the White Mountains, and aided Belknap in his argument that the American wilderness supplied sublime natural beauty the equal of any in Europe as well as health benefits that made the new nation strong and robust.

The eighteenth century saw the publication of many of the disparaging descriptions of the New World against which Belknap wrote, beginning with two French publications. Buffon’s \textit{Histoire naturelle} (1749), followed by a similar entry into Diderot’s \textit{Encyclopedie} (1751). The information contained in these pieces came from the reports of the early Catholic missions to the New World, and described the wonders people expected.\textsuperscript{77} Buffon’s account described an America filled with different plant and animal life from that known to Europeans, as well as theorizing that these “derivations from nature” were the result of the immature geological age, and therefore the inferiority, of America in general. Americans were not far enough along in their development to support “‘modern’ animals, man and institutions.”\textsuperscript{78} In 1777, William Robertson included a discussion on the influence of climate, comparing America society to those areas of the Old World with similar climates, to the detriment of the New World.\textsuperscript{79}


\textsuperscript{77} Miller: 74-5.

\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Oeuvres Completes de M. le Comte de Buffon} (Paris, 1775), Vol. XVI, 217; as quoted in Miller: 76.

\textsuperscript{79} Miller: 79.
America's responses to these widely accepted "scientific theories" were, among others. Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1784), Belknap's *History* (1783, 1791, 1792) and later, Timothy Dwight's *Travels in New York and New England* (1821). Each sought to challenge and prove false many of the theories put forth by Europeans, among them that Americans were a backward people because of the state of their natural surroundings. Many English travelers who came to the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century, such as Frances Trollope (*Domestic Manners*, 1832) and Charles Dickens (*American Notes for General Circulation*, 1842), complained about the scenery of America. To Trollope, the United States offered some redeeming qualities, but it lacked the ruins so necessary to the descriptions of a Romantic European landscape. For Dickens, the great prairies, like the people of the American Midwest he encountered, lacked variety; he was not impressed by either of them.  

Although it predates the works of Trollope and Dickens, Timothy Dwight's four volume *Travels in New York and New England* anticipated some of their criticisms even as it sought to refute disparaging remarks about America during his own lifetime. Published posthumously in 1821 and 1822, *Travels in New York and New England* was a record of Dwight's observations about the journeys he made through New York and New England between 1797 and 1807, while he was President of Yale University. In Dwight's narratives the White Mountains were on the verge of becoming "civilized."

Dwight visited the White Mountains twice, once in 1797 and again in 1803. His accounts of his travels are in the form of letters, mimicking the form of the European

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travel narratives that disparaged America.\footnote{81} To Dwight, the United States was unique, grand, and beautiful. He commented on the autumnal foliage of the White Mountains, declaring that

[o]f the effects of this change it is perhaps impossible for an inhabitant of Great Britain, as I have been assured by several foreigners, to form an adequate conception of without having visited an American forest...\footnote{82} as an English gentleman...informed me that no such scenery existed in Great Britain. In this country [America] it is often among the most splendid beauties of nature.

According to Dwight, Great Britain lacked both the spectacular foliage of New England and the appreciation for it, at a great loss to the country as a whole.\footnote{83} Dwight, along with other Americans, was beginning to realize that remarkable American landscapes were “an effective substitute for the missing national tradition,” that the countries of the Old World possessed.\footnote{84}

It is clear that Dwight and Belknap agreed that the White Mountains possessed all the attributes of a truly Romantic place, as well as being a uniquely American setting. Dwight’s accounts of his visits to the White Mountains also share other similarities with Belknap’s White Mountains journey. Like Belknap, Dwight included dates of Euro-American settlement and local folklore as well as his Romantic impressions of the scenery’s effects upon him. The weather only added to Dwight’s impressions of the region. As rain clouds moved in quickly, “the sky suddenly became dark [and] the

\footnote{81}{Jane Kamensky, “In These Contrasted Climes, How Chang’d the Scene”: Progress, Declension, and Balance in the Landscapes of Timothy Dwight.” The New England Quarterly 63, no. 1 (March 1990): 81-2.}


\footnote{83}{Ibid.}

\footnote{84}{Barbara Novak, Nature and Culture: American Landscape Painting 1825-1875 . (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 20.}

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clouds were tossed in wild and fantastical forms...[it was] a more gloomy and forbidding aspect than I had ever before seen.” Dwight found himself overwhelmed and thrilled by “the Notch in the Mountains” (Crawford Notch), with its “wild and solemn appearance...formed [on the] scale of grandeur only.” Dwight saw in the White Mountains scenery “one of the principle objects which had allured us into this region,” but chose not to climb Mount Washington, content to look upon it from afar.

While Belknap was proud of the independence of the settlers in the rustic wilderness of the White Mountains, Dwight was more interested in their success in farming and civilizing the area. During his visit to the region, Dwight looked for the civilizing effects of the farmer and permanent settlement. In contrast to Josselyn’s gloomy and terrifying descriptions of the White Mountains landscapes, where forests and mountains prevented access and productivity, Dwight focused on the pastoral landscapes that resulted from the “gentling influences of civilization” which had transformed the White Mountains since the 1670s. One of the unifying factors of Dwight’s four-volume collection of travel narratives is this idea of the change from a wilderness to a settled, more pastoral country. During one of his trips to the White Mountains Dwight observed that

[i]he present, imperfect state of the settlements ...prevent[s] many persons from forming just views concerning the splendor of the scenery. In so vast an expansion the eye perceives a prevalence of forests, which it regrets, and instinctively demands a

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86 Ibid., 99.
87 Ibid., 98-9, 108.
89 Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New England*, x.
wider extent of smiling scenes...[which will occur when] the hills, the plains and valleys around me will be stripped of the forests which now majestically and even gloomily overshadow them.90

Dwight’s descriptions of the White Mountains showed the influence of Romantic ideology as well as a lingering connection to the Puritan fears of the unproductive wilderness that influenced Josselyn’s writings. Forests still “gloomily” overshadowed much of the White Mountains, but Dwight saw hope for the future of the region once it had been “stripped” of those forests.

While Dwight was impressed with the scenic beauty of specific parts of the White Mountains region, he also saw the promise of the region in pastoral improvements, rather than in wilderness preservation. His attitude anticipated that of those who led the industrialization of the United States, who looked to the land to produce and to support progress. This would in turn influence the ideas of the conservation movement of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The irresponsible use of the natural resources of the United States during the latter half of the nineteenth century would inform the forestry and irrigation aspects of the conservation movement, which continued to look to the land to produce, but that production would be controlled by scientific guidelines. There were those, however, who would rejoice at, rather than regret, the “prevalence of forests” and would mourn the disappearance of those forests as a consequence of the “gentling influences of civilization.” Through examination of Josselyn’s, Belknap’s, and Dwight’s writings it is possible to see the transformation of the attitude towards wilderness from that of a non-productive and fearful unknown to its beauty as a representation of the greatness of a nation.

Although it was not to Dwight’s taste, other early nineteenth century travelers welcomed the opportunity to experience the less civilized scenery and rugged accommodations of a still sparsely settled wilderness. To them, mountains were sublimely beautiful and still inspired terror, but of a very different sort than that about which Josselyn wrote. To these White Mountains visitors, the region represented the chance to pursue scientific study of a relatively unknown region, as well as to perhaps also find the excitement of adventure.

In July 1807, George Shattuck, a Boston physician, and his party journeyed to the White Mountains. They brought with them the gear of the amateur scientist: a barometer, a thermometer, a compass and chain.91 Although Shattuck’s submission to the Philadelphia Medical and Physical Journal (the same to which Dr. Cutler of Belknap’s expedition submitted his observations) was meant to include “some farther [sic] information respecting the ‘White-Hills,’” Shattuck slipped into Romantic descriptions of the view from Mount Washington, while his group attempted to figure the height of summit.92 “This ground,” he declared, “is decidedly more elevated above the ocean than any other in New-England. It presents a prospect truly grand and often awfully sublime.” When his guide, probably the innkeeper Ethan Allen Crawford, described to him another party’s enforced encampment on the summit due to inclement weather, Shattuck admitted, “I sighed, in secret, for the repetition of the same scene, that I might once behold the truly sublime in nature.”93


92 Shattuck, 30. Shattuck’s calculation was only 68 feet off the correct height of 6,288 feet above sea level.

93 Ibid., 3. A significant part of the museum located at the present Mount Washington observatory is devoted to the weather at the summit.
Shattuck’s narrative showed that he was both knowledgeable about and sensitive to the “sublime” mountain scenery. A night on the summit of a stormy Mount Washington would not only be uncomfortable, but probably dangerous as well. For Shattuck, however, it was all part of the experience of sublime nature. “Terrible” mountains provided the means through which to feel the intense emotions associated with nature. For visitors like Shattuck those emotions had moved away from the fear the evil inherent in the unknown wilderness of the Puritans.

Apparently, Shattuck and his party were not alone in their quest for research and sublime nature. That Shattuck had a guide and that the guide told him stories of other parties’ experiences indicated that the White Mountains were increasingly well known and visited. Narratives like Shattuck’s, submitted to scientific journals or magazines with more popular readership, most likely drew many other “gentleman scientists” and naturalists with the means to travel to the White Mountain region to add to or clarify their published findings, or maybe just to see the “often awfully sublime” prospect from the summit of Mount Washington.

In 1816, the same year that New Hampshire’s Attorney General Philip Carrigain’s map officially gave the White Mountains their name, Harvard professor James Bigelow made the trip to the White Mountains and climbed Mount Washington. He and the other naturalists who went with him sought the flora of the area, noting the three different vegetation zones of the “White Hills,” zones previously investigated by Belknap and Shattuck.94 Bigelow’s account, published in The New England Journal of Medicine and Surgery, included many features of the previous travel accounts, such as a history of the

94 In 1816, Philip Carrigain named the range “White Mountains,” but did not specifically identify Mount Washington. See Mudge, Mapping, Illustration VII.
area, and a similar itinerary. Bigelow described the area near Crawford Notch as “picturesque,” focusing on a cliff with flowering shrubs atop.\textsuperscript{95} An ambitious and enthusiastic member of the party, in the throes of “botanical zeal,” made a return trip to the summit a month later to catalog more plants.\textsuperscript{96} Eager naturalists and pleasure travelers alike would soon be keeping the Mount Washington guides very busy.

In August 1820, a group of six men from Lancaster, New Hampshire (northwest of Mount Washington) hired innkeeper Ethan Allen Crawford as a guide and undertook an excursion into the region. The object of their visit, explained in “Sketches of the White Mountains” in the literary journal \textit{Collections, Historical and Miscellaneous}, was to determine the height of the mountains in the region, particularly those of the Presidential Range, as well as to establish the official names of the mountains.\textsuperscript{97} This narrative reads almost as a guidebook and gave future travelers an idea of what might be seen while climbing Mount Washington. The verbal “sketches” of scenery in the area described the mountains as arranged in concentric circles, which “[give] an air of order and grandeur, beyond the power of description.”\textsuperscript{98}

Many people, however, managed to find the power to describe the wonders of the White Mountains and in doing so added to a growing body of literature about the region. As the number of travelers to the White Mountains increased so did the number of their travel narratives published in journals and periodicals. Between 1823 and 1838, there


\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., 334.

\textsuperscript{97} Mudge, \textit{Legends}, xxx.

\textsuperscript{98} “Sketches of the White Mountains.” \textit{Collections, Historical and Miscellaneous} 2 (April, 1823): 107; Mudge, \textit{Legends}, xxx.
were approximately a dozen White Mountains travel narratives like those of Shattuck and Bigelow printed in the regional popular press.\footnote{Allen H. Bent, \textit{Bibliography of the White Mountains}, ed. E.J. Hanrahan (Boston: Appalachian Mountains Club, 1911; reprint, Somersworth, NH: New Hampshire Publishing Company, 1971), 11-14.} There were, in addition, narratives like Dwight’s \textit{Travels} or other popular travel guidebooks published during the 1820s and 1830s. There is a clear indication, therefore, that more and more visitors were making their way to the White Mountains, and these narratives described the itineraries and accommodations of their writers, as well as the scenic beauties seen and experienced during the journey. In the White Mountains, it seemed, there were enough possibilities for scientific exploration and scenic views to interest a wide variety of people. It would be the narratives describing the scenic beauties of the mountains, however, that would draw the most new travelers to the area.

This increasing focus on the experience of the beauty of the White Mountains was evident in a narrative by James Pierce printed in the 1823 \textit{American Journal of Science, and Arts}. Entitled “Notice of an excursion among the White Mountains of New Hampshire and to the summit of Mount Washington in June, 1823” a good portion of the article discussed the beauty of the White Mountains. Here, river valleys were framed by elms “of uncommon altitude and beauty” and farmland was “like the Alpine vales of Switzerland.”\footnote{James Pierce, “Notice of an excursion among the White Mountains of New Hampshire, and to the summit of Mount Washington, in June, 1823, with miscellaneous remarks,” \textit{American Journal of Science and Arts} 8 (August 1824): 173.} Many travelers who visited the White Mountains during the latter half of the nineteenth century would express similar opinions about the region. These travelers had probably visited the Alps as well, as a visit to Switzerland would have most likely been part of a nineteenth century Grand Tour of Europe. It was a most impressive
comparison between the White Mountains and the Alps, clearly demonstrating a change of opinion about the value of mountains, which seventeenth century poets had once declared “The Earth deformed.” By the nineteenth century, mountains had become the most sublime of all scenery.  

From the top of Mount Washington, the settlement of the area, according to Pierce’s description of “alpine vales,” remained sparse: “only one occupied dwelling meets the eye in twenty miles.” In reality, the new road through Crawford Notch to connect Portland, Maine to Lancaster, New Hampshire had been completed, and commerce to and from the White Mountains increased. In 1817 in Conway, on the eastern slopes of the White Mountains, there were retail stores, grist and saw mills, and three distilleries to serve the business and private needs of over one thousand residents. In the town of Franconia, a factory produced pig iron from iron ore extracted nearby in the town of Lisbon. Civilization and industry had arrived in the White Mountains.

By the 1820’s, travelers like Pierce became more commonplace. These travelers came searching not for rock formations or weather patterns, but rather for specific sights of natural beauty, each with its own picturesque or sublime descriptions. Travelers began to expect that there would be accommodations and personal guides provided for them, and several families in the White Mountains obliged them by opening their homes as inns or taverns and offering their services as tour guides. Now called tourists, White Mountains visitors expected to see the “sublime” scenery about which they read, and

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101 Nicolson, 5.
102 Ibid., 174.
looked forward to feeling the emotions that the “grandeur and power” of the White Mountains scenery would inspire in them.

The travel narratives presented in this chapter demonstrate how historians, scholars, and travelers consciously or unconsciously used the European construct of Romanticism to create an American national identity based, in part, upon the exceptional natural beauty of the White Mountains. The beauty of the White Mountains region drew travelers from the United States and Europe to the area in increasing numbers over the course of the nineteenth century. Some of these travelers who came to enjoy the natural beauties of the White Mountains published their reactions to the region in glowing Romantic terms. This influenced, in turn, the transformation of the vision of the White Mountains from that of an inaccessible, terrifying wilderness to a place with remarkable scenery that inspired the intense emotions associated with the sublime, the beautiful, and the picturesque.

These travel narratives, in part, set the scene for the White Mountains tourism industry. Such narratives, and the guidebooks that became increasingly prevalent beginning in the 1830s, established the White Mountains in the canon of the nineteenth century “Tour” of the United States. This tour, like the Grand Tour of Europe, was meant to highlight the most important places in the United States. Including the White Mountains as part of this tour offered the region’s natural beauties in Romantic terms familiar to the well-read and well-traveled European visitor. In this way the United States gained, if not a past which reached back thousands of years, a natural exceptionalism which placed the scenery the United States on par with that of Europe.

104 Ibid., 180.
The White Mountains offered something to New England as well. The claim to regional exceptionalism on the part of the New England states was particularly evident. Belknap and the Lancaster, New Hampshire residents of the August 1820 expedition to the summit of Mount Washington together assigned the names of the first five presidents of the United States to the highest peaks in the White Mountains. In so naming the mountains not only did these names do honor to the presidents, but, as McGrath argued, "New Englanders laid claim to a form of political and cultural hegemony. To many regional chauvinists, the White Mountains...denote by the process of synecdoche America at large together with the ideal of democratic freedom." 105 This regional exceptionalism was a common theme in the White Mountains guidebooks used by tourists throughout the nineteenth century, and it would be an important unifying factor, at least for the New England states, during the Franconia Notch campaign in the twentieth century.

The White Mountains contributed to a growing sense of American national identity. Democratic freedom combined with the challenges of a frontier settlement surrounded by summits "lofty and majestic" and scenery "sublime and solemn" provided a powerful and attractive definition of American exceptionalism. 106 The Franconia Notch campaign’s twentieth century appeal to do one’s patriotic duty and save a uniquely American wilderness found its roots in early nineteenth century ideas of Nature and its uses to bolster American nationalism.

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105 McGrath, Gods in Granite, 61.

106 “Sketches”: 102-103.
CHAPTER II

CREATING A VISION: INTERPRETATIONS OF WHITE MOUNTAINS SCENERY
1820-1860

“A Suburb of Paradise”

“When the busy citizen has grown weary under the pressures of business or study, and
loses his ability to eat or sleep, or to take pleasure in either the present or anticipated
comforts, let him visit the mountains and inhale their electric air, forgetting for the
month his home-cares, and adapting his thoughts to the ennobling surroundings.”
(1876)¹

“Close your eyes and try to envision an idyllic place where there is blue sky and
waterfalls, long-range... mountain views, a dash of history and a pinch of
excitement... a comfortable bed at the end of the day or a pleasant place to throw your
sleeping bag under the stars and plenty of different things to do.” (2001)²

On December 12, 2001, several of the families of rescue workers killed in the
September 11, 2001 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City came to
North Conway, New Hampshire, located in the Mount Washington Valley, at the
invitation of local residents. One can only imagine the feelings of unreality this “idyllic
place” of high snow-capped mountains beneath blue skies must have inspired in
comparison to the devastation the families left behind for a few days. What is clear,
however, is that representation of the White Mountains as a place of refuge from the
cares of world has changed little over the past one hundred and twenty-five years. The
substance of the two above quotations, which describe the mountains’ “electric” air, the

¹ Sweester, 34.
"forgetting...of home-cares," and the adapting of one's thought to "the ennobling surroundings." offer the most powerful argument for the allure of the White Mountains. The White Mountains were, and are, an idea, a construct, as much as a reality. They are, to broaden the meaning of a phrase used by Thomas Starr King, the author of one of the more exceptional White Mountains guidebooks, "a suburb of Paradise."³

This chapter examines the image of Franconia Notch and the White Mountains through a discussion of the rise of the White Mountains tourism industry through 1860. Tourist guidebooks, fiction, poetry, and images - paintings, lithographs, photographs - will provide the means through which to explore the development of the "White Mountains Tour" and the Old Man of the Mountain's place in the hierarchy of White Mountains symbols. As designers of the White Mountains vision, artists and writers utilized the cultural, social, and economic influences of their times to create a place apart from, yet very much a part of, the rapid changes that occurred in the nineteenth century United States.

The efforts of artists, writers, poets, and entrepreneurs interpreted the remarkable scenery of the White Mountains in human terms, which in turned helped shape the perceptions of land and resources in the region as the United States became a more industrialized and urban nation during the mid-nineteenth century. Travelers and artists came more often to the White Mountains as the region became more accessible first through better roads and then via railway lines from Portland, Maine; Portsmouth and Concord, New Hampshire; and Boston, Massachusetts. Their patronage supported the growing number of inn and hotel entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs, who were often

farmers as well, supplemented their annual incomes by providing accommodations to
summer visitors, expanding and improving their facilities to meet the needs of these
travelers.

The vision of the White Mountains developed from the guidebooks, poems, fiction,
and images written, painted, or drawn by summer travelers and the promotions and
advertising of the inn, hotel, and later railroad entrepreneurs. Glaciers and erosion
physically created the mountains, notches, and valleys of the White Mountains region,
but human creativity, ingenuity, and the desire for profit defined the symbolism and
significance of those features for generations of visitors.

Catering to Summer Visitors: The Beginnings of the White Mountains Hotel Industry

The 1820s saw increasing settlement and commerce in the White Mountains. This
was due, in part, to the growing accessibility of the region as a result of better, or at least
more, roads. Between 1769 and 1810, the government of New Hampshire chartered
twenty-four turnpikes, including four through the White Mountains. (Fig. 2) The first,
chartered in 1803, was the Tenth New Hampshire Turnpike, which went from Bartlett
through Crawford Notch, part of present day U.S. Route 302. The Jefferson Turnpike,
chartered in 1804, connected to the Tenth Turnpike and went through Jefferson and
Lancaster, which today roughly corresponds to U.S. Route 302 to State Route 115 to U.S.
Route 2. In 1807, the state legislature authorized a turnpike from Littleton to Crawford
Notch (Interstate 93 and U.S. Route 302) and in 1809 the Pemigewasset Middle Branch
Turnpike (part of U.S. Route 3, today known as the Franconia Notch Parkway) through

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4 Merrill and Merrill, 11.
Fig. 2

Map of the routes of four nineteenth century White Mountains Turnpikes, including the Pemigewasset Middle Branch Turnpike that provided access to Franconia Notch. Map not drawn to scale.
Franconia Notch received its charter, although, like many of the roads, it took several years to complete. Although road conditions tended to vary from moderately bad to often impassible, the roads provided much needed access to markets in Portland, Maine, Boston, Concord, and Vermont to sell farm produce and manufactured goods and to purchase supplies to support the growing population of the region.

The economy of the White Mountains region initially developed around agriculture and limited manufacturing. In *The Hill Country of Northern New England*, Harold Wilson argued that the economy of northern New England followed a series of developments from the self-sufficiency of farmers from the late eighteenth century through the 1830s. By the advent of the railroads in the 1840s and 1850s, there was a transition towards a more commercially based agriculture. From the 1870s until the end of the century, however, there appeared to be a marked decline in both the population and agricultural production in parts of the region. This decline, Wilson argued, was due to the increasing industrialization of southern New England, as well as the availability of better land in western New York, the Midwest, and the Great Plains. The final thirty years of the nineteenth century produced the idea of the “abandoned farm,” of empty cellar holes, over-grown fields and collapsed barns.

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8 Wilson, 9. Interestingly enough, these abandoned farms would themselves become part of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century tourism industry in northern New England, as people began to buy the old farms as summer homes.

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In the White Mountains, however, there arose another industry both to support the existing commerce and bring profits where agriculture sometimes could not. In the early years of the nineteenth century, farmers traveling to and from markets in Portland or Portsmouth, New Hampshire could find lodgings at several taverns along the various turnpikes. As Eric Purchase argued in *Out of Nowhere: Disaster and Tourism in the White Mountains*, the reasons many of the first White Mountains innkeepers opened their doors was to create a business out of the interest generated in the White Mountains’ landscapes, as well as to supplement the income made from farming. There were many who took advantage of the increased traffic in the region. On the eastern slopes of the White Mountains, the town of Conway, on the road to Portland, had five taverns in the year 1800. When he visited the Crawford Notch in 1797 and again in 1803, Timothy Dwight stayed at Eleazer Rosebrook’s farm, which had recently opened as a public house.

It is to Rosebrook’s son-in-law and his grandson, however, that falls the credit for creating the real basis for the “White Mountains Tour” and the industries that accompanied it. The son-in-law, Abel Crawford, was probably the first to clear the land upon which Rosebrook would build his farm in 1791. Abel Crawford also built the first series of taverns in the region, to be followed by his son Ethan Allen Crawford. In 1817

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9 Purchase, 7.
10 Ibid., 6.
13 Laura and Guy Waterman, 38.
Ethan Allen Crawford inherited his grandfather Rosebrook’s property, which Crawford rebuilt and expanded in 1819.  

Ethan Allen Crawford’s efforts at improvement of lodgings and access were aimed at winter as well as summer travelers. Initially, the highest volume of traffic on the Tenth New Hampshire Turnpike was during the winter months, when the snow covered the roads and farmers could take advantage of cleared roadbeds without having to deal with the ruts beneath the snow. By keeping the roads cleared during the winter season, both Abel and Ethan Allen Crawford assured their establishments of a steady stream of customers, who would lodge at one of the Crawford inns on the way to and from markets in Portland, Maine and Portsmouth, New Hampshire. But the Crawford family also saw the potential in catering to the interests of the travelers who stopped at their inns during the summer months.

In addition to expanding and improving his inn, in 1819 Crawford cleared a path from Crawford Notch to the summit of Mount Washington. By 1821, Crawford’s newspaper advertisements of his walking path drew enough visitors that he and his father constructed a carriage path from Crawford Notch to the western base of Mount Washington. Three years later, the carriage road connected to a bridle path to the mountain’s summit. The Crawfords’ inns were not the only options for summer travelers, however. On the eastern slopes of the White Mountains, Daniel Eastman

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14 Garvin, 30-31.
15 Ibid., 31.
17 Ibid., 4.
opened the Washington House in Conway in 1812. He intended this inn to accommodate summer guests. By 1825, Conway’s summer guests had 10 inns to choose from and arrived either by stagecoach or their own carriages.\footnote{Frederick W. Kilbourne, \textit{Chronicles of the White Mountains} (Boston: Houghton and Mifflin, 1916), 159; Merrill, \textit{The History}, 883.}

It was clear by the 1820s that the White Mountains region piqued the interest of the refined travelers of the day, those people who had the financial means to travel. Drawn by descriptions of sublime mountains and picturesque views, wealthy travelers, now called tourists, followed the “tour” route laid out by Jeremy Belknap and Timothy Dwight.\footnote{For a definition of “tourist” see Chapter 1, note 56.} First used in 1780 in England, by the 1820s, the word “tourist” referred to members of an elite traveling public. These were the people, both European and American, who would have read and been familiar with the Romantic views of poets such as Wordsworth, and who took what Dona Brown described as the “Tours, Grand and Fashionable,” in both Europe and the United States.\footnote{Dona Brown, \textit{Inventing New England}, 15.}

These tourists had a different agenda in mind than had the scientists and naturalists of the previous decades, however. They were people who traveled for “pleasure or culture, visiting a number of places for their objects of interests, scenery, or the like…”\footnote{Ibid.} When Europeans like Frances Trollope and Charles Dickens visited the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century, they came with a specific itinerary in mind, that of a Grand Tour of the United States.
Modeled after the European Grand Tour, which included visits to Paris, Florence, Venice, and Rome, the American Tour included all the sights of the great cities of the United States: Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C. and later Chicago. The "Northern" of "Fashionable Tour" of the 1820s and 1830s United States would take the traveler from New York City up the Hudson River to Albany, and to Saratoga Springs, New York. The next stop on the Northern Tour would be Niagara Falls, where "America expressed itself on a grander scale than elsewhere." There was nothing in Europe to compare to Niagara Falls. The Falls were both an indication of America's natural exceptionalism and of the infinite nature of God's greatness, something that Belknap saw in the White Mountains as well.

During the 1820's and 1830s the attractions and the regions surrounding them that were contained within the Northern Tour became steadily more commercial as more travelers made the journey to see the sights and stay in the luxurious hotels built to accommodate them. At the same time, the White Mountains became an increasingly popular destination for those travelers, both men and women, who, looking for the last vestiges of true wilderness in New England, were willing to put up with rustic accommodations in order to experience it. As a result, the White Mountains became part

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22 Ibid., 18.
23 John Sears, *Sacred Places: American Tourism Attractions in the Nineteenth Century* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989; reprint, 1998), 13. There were several other natural features that drew foreign and native visitors. Natural Bridge, Virginia, in particular, was regarded as one of the wonders of the American South.
24 Ibid., 14.
of the "Northern Tour," which included the "coal mines of Pennsylvania, Niagara, Quebec, and New England."  

What really made the White Mountains a "somewhere" rather than a "nowhere," in the words of Eric Purchase, went beyond the region's remarkable scenery and its inclusion in guidebooks. In August of 1826, the White Mountains would gain the one aspect of the Romantic landscape it lacked: a genuine, tragic ruin.

When the White Mountains Lost an Innkeeper but Gained National Attention.

The Crawfords were not the only family to lay claim to the early tourist trade in the Notch in the Mountains. Samuel Willey and his family moved to the Notch in 1825, after purchasing a house from Ethan Allen Crawford. With the establishment of the Willeys' inn, there were three places for farmers and tourists to stay during their travels though the "picturesque" Crawford Notch. At the northern entrance of Crawford Notch was Ethan Allen Crawford's Mount Washington House. Six miles south was the Willey House, and six miles further south was Abel Crawford's Mount Crawford House.  

The dry summer of 1826 would alter this arrangement and create the "ruins" for which Frances Trollope searched.

Writing to his family from Hanover, New Hampshire in September 2, 1826, the Reverend Carlos Wilcox described how he and his party encountered terrible weather in the White Mountains on August 28, 1826. A storm had brought with it high winds and flooding rains, so much so that the Reverend Wilcox and his party were forced to stop

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26 Ibid., 29.

and pitch camp at Bethlehem, short of their intended destination of Mount Washington. The next morning, they reached the summit of Mount Washington where "the neighboring peaks...formed a grand outline far up in the blue sky." During their travels through the region, the group had to avoid rivers that were sometimes at least ten feet above their normal levels. The high water had washed away bridges, parts of the Tenth New Hampshire Turnpike, as well as much of Ethan Allen Crawford’s farm. Another party with whom Wilcox spoke saw at least thirty landslides in the mountains, although there were probably many more due to the dry conditions of the soil prior to the storm. While Wilcox and his party stayed at Ethan Allen Crawford’s inn, they heard the news about the fate of the Willey family.

It was a dramatic and intriguing story, all the more so because, in spite of many theories and conjectures, there was never any certainty about how the members of the Willey family actually spent their last moments. A search party reached the Willey House on August 31. Deserted and surrounded by the landslide debris from the mountain (present day Mount Willey) behind it, the Willey house stood undamaged by the storm and its aftermath. It appeared that the Willey family of seven and their two servants left the house in a hurry, leaving their beds unmade and clothes strewn everywhere. The irony of the Willey family tragedy was that the landslide that they expected to cover their house bypassed the structure all together. The family might have been killed while

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28 Letter from Rev. Carlos Wilcox, as printed in “The late Storm at the White Mountains, with Reflections Suggested by the Late Disaster, from a Sermon Recently Preached in that Vicinity,” Christian Spectator 8 (December 1826): 626-7.

29 Wilcox, 225.

30 Ibid., 224,226.

31 Ibid., 629.
running across the yard or were perhaps inside the barn as it was destroyed in the landslide, but there was no way to tell. Only six bodies were recovered from the area, some at a distance from the site. One of the Willey’s five children was found drowned in the river nearby. Three of the bodies of the Willey’s other children were never found.32

Newspapers and popular journals all over New England covered the tragedy, attracting tourists to the site. To honor the memory of his fallen neighbors, Ethan Allen Crawford “wrote with a piece of red chalk on a planed board this inscription: THE FAMILY FOUND HERE...[and] nailed it to a dead tree...but [s]ome of the occupants of the Willey’s house, since that time, worse than brutes, tore it down and used it for fuel.”33 The original Willey House remained standing until it was destroyed by fire in 1899. The site continued to be well marked and well known, however, and continues to be so today.34

The importance of the Willey tragedy for the inclusion of the White Mountains as a legitimate part of the “Northern Tour” cannot be underestimated. The story was told and retold in the guidebooks and descriptions of the region. Reverend Wilcox and others preached sermons using the Willey story as their text. Wilcox warned in his sermon that “human frailty” must be realized as the “‘everlasting mountains’ melt away.”35 Some White Mountains guidebooks devoted several pages to the Willey story, some including only the basic facts of the event, while others included theories as to how the family

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33 Ibid., 92, 236.

34 The site of the Willey tragedy is well marked on U.S. Route 302.

35 Wilcox, 329-330.
died. Fifty-two years after the event, the "Willey Tragedy" was the cover story of the 1878 White Mountain Echo, a newspaper devoted to the sights and goings-on of the White Mountains tourism season.  

The Willey story served as evidence of the drama and uncertainty of life on the White Mountains' frontier, adding depth and significance to the region's early history by allowing tourists to vicariously relive the Willeys' experience. Purchase argued that the writers and painters who would later celebrate the White Mountains scenery would also "deplore tourism's vulgarity." Few, if any, recognized the fact that "both the pleasure and disgust of tourism originated from entrepreneurs like the Willeys having invented the business of selling the enjoyment of Nature in the White Mountains." The success of the White Mountains tourism industry, as well as the timber industry during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, was a direct result of speculation in what was first viewed, by John Josselyn in particular, as essentially worthless mountain land. While the connection between speculation and the growth of the timber industry was obvious to conservationists and tourists alike, the connection between tourism and speculation would elude most people. Indeed, the Franconia Notch campaign specifically targeted summer visitors in its advertising campaign, whose support of the campaign was crucial to its success.

36 Benjamin Willey's Incidents in White Mountain History (1856) included three chapters about the Willeys. Benjamin was Samuel's brother, and his discussion of the event put forth several theories about what happened to the family and their servants.


38 Purchase, 17.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.
The entrepreneurial spirit thrived in the White Mountains as successive hotel proprietors built larger and larger inns around the slowly deteriorating Willey House, which stood until it burned at the end of the nineteenth century.\footnote{Tolles, 145.} What guidebooks and other interpreters of the White Mountains landscapes missed, however, was that the Willeys were a symbol of something truly new. What drew Timothy Dwight’s admiration of the growing number of farms evident on his trip to the region in 1803 was the idea that land only had real value when it was “civilized,” cultivated for human use so that it produced agricultural produce, supported livestock, or provided minerals or timber.\footnote{Purchase, 13.} This idea was a common one among eighteenth and nineteenth agrarians, whose vision of America was that of a nation of yeoman farmers.

The Willeys, the Crawfords, and the successive generations of White Mountains hotelkeepers, however, demonstrated that the scenic tour was also a product of the land. What these hotel entrepreneurs sold was the intangible vision of the White Mountains as a place of Romantic scenery, where Nature could be seen in its “original,” untouched state.\footnote{Ibid.} This vision was one that was limited to those who could afford the time and money to make the trip to the mountains. The White Mountains became a product to be sold to those members of the middle and upper classes who wished to experience the scenic beauties of the region through the medium of the mountain hotels and mountain guides. The combination of these two ideas created images of a rugged wilderness filled
with sublime mountain views that offered an escape from the everyday cares of life to those who could both afford and appreciate it.

“It’s Jefferson!” The Old Man of the Mountain and Franconia Notch

In the White Mountains there were the “Seven Wonders of New Hampshire,” natural features so remarkable that they drew countless visitors to the region. Included were the 44,586 acre Lake Winnipesaukee (actually to the south of the White Mountains), Mounts Washington and Chocorua, and Crawford Notch. The other three wonders could be found all in one place: Franconia Notch, the Old Man of the Mountain, and the Flume. Each remarkable within its own right, these three wonders drew people to the western slopes of the White Mountains to experience what one twentieth century description hailed as the “Little Yosemite.” In Gods in Granite: The Art of the White Mountains, Robert McGrath argued that these seven “wonders” served as “natural shrines.” The images, textual and visual, these wonders inspired provide evidence, McGrath continued, of “the unique covenant that has always been claimed to exist between God, Americans, and the land.”

Seeing God’s work in Nature was important to understanding the symbolic representation of the central symbol of the Franconia Notch campaign, the Old Man of the Mountain. The interpretations of the Old Man of the Mountain, the Flume, and Franconia Notch were late to the Romantic scenery of the region. The representations that would grow up around them, however, would place them securely within the pantheon of shrines at which to worship Nature in the White Mountains.

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44 McGrath, Gods in Granite, xxviii.
By the time the Willey tragedy created an even more Romantic aura around Crawford Notch, there existed a definitive White Mountains Tour, outlined in several guidebooks. If one left from Boston, according to the fourth edition of Theodore Dwight’s *The Northern Traveller and Northern Tour* (1830), one could catch a stagecoach to Concord, New Hampshire. Passing through Conway, one came next to the site of a “tremendous catastrophe,” the Willey House. The Willey tragedy had been built up by guidebooks, the popular press and tourists who wrote about their visits to the region as a “catastrophe so melancholy, and at the same time so singular in its circumstances that…it will always furnish the traveller with a melancholy subject of reflection.”

The sharp-eyed traveler would still be able to view havoc wreaked on Crawford Notch by the storm of August 1826. Romantic sensibilities allowed the tourist to appreciate how isolated and terrified the members of the Willey family must have felt as they fled their home into the “way of destruction.” Once one reached Ethan Allen Crawford’s House, Crawford, a qualified guide, would be available to lead interested travelers, including ladies, if desired, to the summit of Mount Washington.

Dwight included an alternative to the Conway-Notch route. If one were traveling from New York through Vermont, towards the western slopes of the White Mountains, one might go to Littleton, where there was an “excellent inn.” Beyond that, however, the traveler was told that “such is the wilderness of the country, that we can do little more

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48 Ibid., 296.
than enumerate the places. The road is new, and in many places rocky..."$^{49}$ The White Mountains frontier was still in evidence everywhere and made travel more exciting for those who desired that experience.

Beyond Littleton, Franconia, "a secluded village among the mountains" offered "excellent accommodations" as well as a stagecoach that ran twice a week between Plymouth, New Hampshire and Concord. The situation of the village was "highly romantic."$^{50}$ Finally, just south of Franconia was Franconia Notch, which, remarkable in its own right, contained something extraordinary "which bears a resemblance to the human face in profile...called the 'Old Man of the Mountain.'"$^{51}$ (Fig. 3)

Franconia Notch and the Old Man of the Mountain, the wonders of the western slopes of the White Mountains, were formed from the same granite, Conway granite, exposed after 200 million year's worth of erosion. The Old Man, however, was "the result of a series of fortunate and almost miraculous accidents," according to the opinion of one geologist.$^{52}$ A "complicated series of fractures... and cracks" on the east side of Cannon Mountain before the continental ice sheet covered Franconia Notch combined with the results of "frost action" breaking away blocks of the granite formed five horizontal ledges. Together, these created the "likeness" of the profile of a man, the face of which is forty feet, five inches tall, twenty-five feet across, and twelve hundred feet above Profile Lake.$^{53}$

$^{49}$ Ibid.

$^{50}$ Ibid.

$^{51}$ Ibid.

$^{52}$ McNair, 7.

$^{53}$ Ibid., 7-9.
Fig. 3
Old Man of the Mountain, Franconia Notch. Undated photograph. SPNHF Collection. Photo Courtesy of Milne Special Collections, University of New Hampshire Library.
be viewed only from a few angles in Franconia Notch, which might account for its relatively late recognition as one of the White Mountains Seven. Unlike Mount Washington, which was mentioned as early as the 1640s, and Crawford Notch, which was featured in Belknap’s *Journal* of 1783, the Old Man of the Mountain was not “found” until 1805, several decades after the settlement of the two towns at either end of Franconia Notch, Franconia to the north and Lincoln to the south.

One recent geological explanation about the formation of the Old Man of the Mountain estimated that the Profile might be a very recent work of erosion, perhaps only a few hundred years. This might account for the fact that while the existence of Franconia Notch was most likely known to the Native Americans in the region and was certainly known to eighteenth century Euro-American settlers, the presence of the Old Man of the Mountain was not documented until the beginning of the nineteenth century.54 Once found, however, stories and legends grew up quickly around the Old Man and Franconia Notch became one of the important sites on the White Mountains Tour.

The most accepted version of the story about the discovery of the Old Man of the Mountain concerns an 1805 state survey for a road running north from North Woodstock through the Notch to the town of Franconia. Either Luke Brooks and Francis Whitcomb of Franconia or Nathaniel Hall of Thornton (south of the Notch) looked up from Profile Lake at one point during the trip and saw the Profile. Brooks and Whitcomb were reputed to have seen the Profile and both said at the same moment “It’s Jefferson!”, referring to President Thomas Jefferson.55 So began a series of adoptions of the Old Man

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54 Raymo and Raymo, 37.

of the Mountain to represent presidents and mythical figures, as well as to be the feature subject of stories for adults and children and poems of varying quality.

The Old Man of the Mountain, according to Robert McGrath, was the most "anthromorphised symbol of the White Mountains." The "human" characteristics assigned to the Old Man of the Mountain created an almost personal bond between the five granite ledges on the side of Cannon Mountains and those who viewed and read about it. The Franconia Notch campaign captured that feeling well in its publicity materials. The threat to the Old Man from the lumber companies that looked to strip the slopes of Cannon Mountain was humanized through the perceived danger to the Old Man who could do nothing to help "himself." He would rely upon his "friends" to save him from danger.

The Old Man of the Mountain was introduced to the public through a variety of travel narratives and guidebooks. In 1828, Benjamin Silliman's well-received and popular American Journal of Science and Arts, which published several accounts of the White Mountains by both scientists and travelers, included a "Notice of the Profile Mountain in New Hampshire," by General Martin Field. His report, which included a rough sketch of the Profile, described Franconia Notch as a place of "sublime mountain scenery" and the Old Man of the Mountain as "a rare phenomenon" that "exhibits the profile of a human face, in which every line and feature are conspicuous. But after passing the mountain to the south, the likeness is immediately lost."

\[\text{(Field) 64.}\]

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56 McGrath, Gods in Granite, 131.


58 Field: 64.
of the Old Man of the Mountain was short, but to the point. It established the Old Man as a “rare phenomenon,” as a natural curiosity that might interest the readers of the Silliman’s magazine, and encourage them to visit Franconia Notch and see the Old Man for themselves.

In addition to launching the Old Man’s career, Field’s description of Franconia Notch demonstrated that the western slopes of the White Mountains were becoming as accessible as the eastern slopes. Field, who lived in Vermont, probably took the stage from Littleton to Franconia Notch, down the road that the town of Franconia had surveyed in 1805. This road was built and maintained by the town and the state of New Hampshire until 1904, when the state purchased the rights of the road.59 The existence of this road was crucial to the development of Franconia Notch. With little permanent human habitation in the area, there would have been little chance of the development of Franconia Notch as a resort by the mid-nineteenth century. Limited access would have meant less publicity about the Old Man of the Mountain as well as the other natural wonders of Franconia Notch, which, in turn, might have resulted in the failure of the campaign to save Franconia Notch from the timber industry during the 1920s.

Fortunately, this was not the case. Franconia, a few miles northwest of Franconia Notch, was a town of over three hundred people that supported “an extensive iron factory establishment...a powder magazine, a saw-mill, a grist-mill, ten or twelve dwellings, a store, and a warehouse” by the 1820s.60 The improvements begun on the Franconia Notch road in 1805 most likely came about because of the establishment of the New

59 Kostecke, 4; Sarah N. Welch, Franconia Notch History and Guide (n.p.: 1981), 5-6; Welch, A History of Franconia, 64.

60 Merrill and Merrill, 134.
Hampshire Iron Foundry on the Gale River in Franconia that same year and its expansion three years later. It was owned by Massachusetts investors, and was successful, employing ten men to work the mine and anywhere between thirty and one hundred men to work at the Foundry, which produced between 250 and 500 ton of cast iron per year by the late 1830s. Eventually, cost competition with Pennsylvania iron works would cause the iron factory to shut down operations during the 1870s. The Iron Foundry, however, was not the only business in town. A good portion of the population was involved in agriculture during the 1840s, but it would be the summer boarding business that would become the most prosperous and successful business in the town by the second half of the nineteenth century.

Before 1835, travelers to Franconia were served by a single inn located near the Iron Foundry. By 1835, however, Stephen C. and Joseph L. Gibbs had opened the Lafayette House in Franconia Notch. This inn was small, able to accommodate only a few guests, and in this way would have been similar to other early inns and taverns in the region where sleeping on the floor because of overcrowding was a common occurrence.

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61 Merrill and Merrill, 134-5.
62 Welch, *History of Franconia*, 47.
63 Welch, *History of Franconia*, 51. Dwight mentioned the existence of the Franconia Foundry in his 1830 *Northern Traveller*, although there is little indication that the Foundry became a major tourist attraction. This was, however, an appropriate site to include in a guidebook as factories, government buildings, churches, universities, prisons, and asylums were all part of the nineteenth century Grand Tour experience, whether in Europe or the United States. Dona Brown, *Inventing*, 16-21.
64 Alfonso J. Fogg, *The Statistics and Gazetteer of New Hampshire* (Concord, NH: D.L. Guernsey, 1874), 160. In 1870, income from the "summer boarding business" was $120,000. That same year, agricultural production was valued at $68,428.
66 Tolles, 38.
The Lafayette House was built on the same site as that later occupied by a series of structures known as the Profile Houses, the most well known of the Franconia Notch grand hotels. The site of these hotels was between Profile and Echo Lakes, close to the present day location of the Cannon Mountain Aerial Tramway station, in Franconia Notch State Park. (Fig. 2)

Franconia Notch had much to offer to the tourist interested in Romantic scenery. There were three glacial lakes in the region – Profile, Echo, and Lonesome Lakes. Lonesome Lake, located on Cannon Mountain, became a popular hiking spot because of its views of Mount Lafayette and the rest of the Franconia Range. The other three water spots in the region, the Flume, the Pool, and the Basin, were each natural curiosities caused by water erosion. (Fig. 2) The Flume was a relatively recent find. In 1808, local resident “Aunt Jess” Guernsey accidentally found the Flume while fishing. It took her quite some time to convince others that it existed, but once found, the Flume became - and remains - one of the most popular sights in Franconia Notch. It is a 700-foot long gorge, eroded out of Conway granite by the Flume Brook. The granite walls range between sixty and seventy feet high, and at their narrowest are ten feet apart.

The force of the Pemigewasset River created the Pool and the Basin, located just north and northwest of the Flume Gorge. The Pool, forty feet deep and one hundred fifty feet across, is filled by the falls of the Pemigewasset River. Tourists visiting the Pool after 1853 could be ferried around and discuss philosophy with John Merrill, known as

67 Ibid.


69 Kostecke, 65. Since the mid-nineteenth century, wooden walkways have been built along the Flume Gorge to allow visitors safer and easier access to the attraction.
“the Professor,” who came back every summer to entertain visitors, and collect fees for his tours of the Pool, well into the 1880s.\textsuperscript{70} The Basin, just south of Profile Lake, is a glacial pothole, thirty feet in diameter, where water from a small waterfall created a whirlpool that gradually hollowed out the Conway granite to a depth of more than fifteen feet.\textsuperscript{71}

The English traveler Harriet Martineau saw many of these sights while she stopped at the Lafayette House during its inaugural season in 1835. She found that although the inn had not been open long, many guests had come before her. She called Franconia Notch “the noblest mountain pass I saw in the United States,” and made sure that she and her party saw the “principle features of the pass.”\textsuperscript{72} She did not include the Old Man of the Mountain (perhaps due to the overcast conditions during her trip) in her account of her visit, but she did see either the Flume or the Basin.\textsuperscript{73}

Martineau’s trip followed what would become a tour within a tour. Later visitors to Franconia Notch would want to take in “all the principal features of the pass,” too. Besides the Old Man of the Mountain, the Flume, the Pool, the Basin, and Echo and Profile Lakes, later visitors would take advantage of bridle and hiking trails to many of the summits in the area. Franconia Notch offered the complete package to the summer traveler. But it also contained sublime scenery as distinctive as that of the rest of the

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid., 67.

\textsuperscript{71} Ibid., 71.

\textsuperscript{72} Kilbourne, \textit{Chronicles}, 146, 167.

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid. Kilbourne assumed that when Martineau referred to the “Whirlpool” that she meant the Flume. It seems more likely, based upon that description and the fact that the weather was miserable, that Martineau and her party visited the Basin. The Flume, which is a river, would probably have been too long and wet a hike for the time the group seemed to spend in the region.
White Mountains region and as such would draw visitors interested in more than just its hiking trails.

**Painting a Vision of the White Mountains: Thomas Cole’s Interpretation**

The painter Thomas Cole was one of those visitors interested in more than merely seeing Franconia Notch’s natural splendors. Cole came to experience the sublimity of the White Mountains. In his 1835 “Essay on American Scenery,” Cole wrote that in the White Mountains of New Hampshire was

> a union of the picturesque, the sublime, the magnificent; there the bare peaks of granite, broken and desolate, cradle the clouds; while the vallies and broad bases of the mountains rest under the shadow of noble and varied forests; and the traveller...cannot but acknowledge that although in some regions of the globe nature has wrought on a more stupendous scale, yet she has nowhere completely married together grandeur and loveliness—there he sees the sublime melting into the beautiful, the savage tempered by the magnificent.74

The mountains of Europe, Cole noted, might be more picturesque due to the “nakedness” of their high peaks, but, echoing Timothy Dwight’s accolades to autumn in the Northeastern United States, “the purple heath and yellow furze of Europe’s mountains...[are] the faint secondary rainbow” to the White Mountains “noble and varied forests.”75 Cole’s reflections on White Mountains scenery described not only his own attitude towards the painting of scenes of sublime and picturesque nature but those of the Hudson River School of American landscape painting as well, of which Cole was a founder.

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75 Ibid., 103.
The Hudson River School, the influence of which reached its height between 1820 and 1880, looked to the American landscape of the Hudson River Valley, the White Mountains, and later the Far West, for inspiration. The paintings of this school reflected their artists’ convictions about the exceptional nature of the United States. The romanticism of nineteenth century painting had its roots in the same Romantic ideas that inspired Belknap, particularly the imaginative and emotional feelings nature in all its sublimity inspired. The mythical qualities of these paintings added to the appeal of the White Mountains landscapes, particularly those painted by Cole.

Cole visited the White Mountains at least twice during the 1820s and 1830s. He included his reaction to Franconia Notch in his “Essay on American Scenery.” When discussing Echo and Profile Lakes in Franconia Notch, a “wild mountain gorge,” Cole described them as

[s]hut in by stupendous mountains which rest on crags that tower more than a thousand feet above the water, whose rugged brows and shadowy breaks are clothed by dark and tangled woods, they have such an aspect of deep seclusion, of utter and unbroken solitude, that, when standing on their brink a lonely traveler, I was overwhelmed by the emotion of the sublime, such as I have rarely felt...rocks, wood, and water, brooded with a spirit of repose, and the silent energy of nature stirred the soul to its innermost depths.”

Cole also recorded his impressions of Franconia Notch and the Old Man of the Mountain in his diary. While in the Notch, Cole noted that he felt “an awfulness in the deep solitude.” He noted that the “severe expression” of the Old Man was “too dreadful to look upon.” The “deep solitude” of Franconia Notch was one of its attractions to those artists, writers, and visitors who came to the region searching for its Romantic

76 Ibid., 104.

77 Ibid., 104; McGrath, Gods in Granite, 132.
sensibilities. Both the Notch and the Old Man inspired emotional responses in Cole, responses that, while similar to Dwight’s a little more than two decades earlier, also saw the value in preserving wilderness in its “natural” state.

Cole regretted that the “improvement of cultivation” meant that “the sublimity of the wilderness should pass away.”\textsuperscript{78} Cole believed “those scenes of solitude from which the hand of nature has never been lifted, affect the mind with a more deep toned emotion….Amid them the consequent associations are of God the creator - there are his undefiled works, and the mind is cast into the contemplation of eternal things.”\textsuperscript{79} Should civilization come to Franconia Notch, the evidence of God’s “undefiled works” might be altered, to the detriment of those who came to see and experience those works.

Cole saw God’s work clearly in nature and helped to create through his paintings and to influence in the painting styles of those who followed him what Robert McGrath called a “pictured liturgy.”\textsuperscript{80} The White Mountains and the region’s particular features that served as the models for so many artists became “natural icons for an informed and reverential viewership,” which “reveal over time more fully and insightfully than the art of any other region of the nation the unique covenant that has always been claimed to exist between God, Americans, and the land.”\textsuperscript{81} The White Mountains became a sacred space within Cole’s canvases, preserved in a form that allowed viewers to experience “the scenes of solitude,” and then go to the White Mountains themselves to continue the “contemplation of eternal things.”

\textsuperscript{78} Cole, 102.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{80} McGrath, \textit{Gods in Granite}, xxviii.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
The "sacred space" within Cole's canvases also contributed to the idea of the natural "exceptionalism" of the United States. Since the United States was a new nation without a past, there was a desire to find, or create, one, as well as to demonstrate how the United States was the equal of Great Britain and other European countries. Lacking the castles and cathedrals of Europe, the United States instead turned to Niagara Falls and the White Mountains to provide a monumental and historic landscape. The White Mountains contributed to this national landscape through the acknowledged natural beauty of the region and through the creations of legends about its past. The site of the Willey tragedy offered ruins, while stories of local Native American leaders like Passaconaway, Kancamagus, and Chocorua provided a history.

One of Cole's favorite subjects was Mount Chocorua, a beautiful mountain in the Sandwich Range near Tamworth, New Hampshire that was named after the local Native American chief. This mountain offered what Cole and other American Romantics were looking for, which was a distinctive association with past events.\(^1\) In this case, the event was Chocorua's curse on the white men on whom he laid the blame for the death of his son.\(^2\) Cole's paintings of Mount Chocorua contributed to an American past with a "richly romantic aura of savagery subdued and of order wrested from the wilderness" as well as of an "American landscape as embodied history."\(^3\) Before the discovery of

\(^{1}\) McGrath, *Gods in Granite*, 37.

\(^{2}\) Chocorua was a chief of the Pequawket Indians. The legend of Chocorua says that the chief went to Canada and left his son in the care of the Cornelius Campbell family. When Chocorua returned, he found that his son had been accidentally poisoned. Blaming the Campbells for his son's death, Chocorua killed Cornelius's wife and children. White settlers chased Chocorua to the summit of the mountain that bears his name, where he was offered the chance to surrender. Chocorua refused, cursed the white men's field and cattle, and then jumped to his death. Mudge, "Chocorua" in *The White Mountains*, 34.

\(^{3}\) Keyes, 43; McGrath, *Gods in Granite*, 37.
Yosemite Valley and the spectacular natural beauties of the American West in the 1850s, the sublime, the beautiful, and the picturesque in the United States were defined by interpretations of Eastern landscapes based upon European landscapes. In this sense, the paintings of Cole and the writings of Timothy Dwight and Jeremy Belknap contributed to the New England’s sense of its own regional exceptionalism through helping to define the White Mountains landscape through the “discovery” of its romantic past and through publicizing its connections to the great leaders of the new nation, after which the peaks of the Presidential Range were named.

Cole did not limit himself to finding historical associations among the White Mountains, however. The cultivation of land, which he regretted as the possible fate of Franconia Notch, was present in his 1839 work *A View of the Mountain Pass Called the Notch in the Mountains*, inspired by his visit to Crawford Notch. In the painting’s background are Crawford Notch, rugged mountains and a storm; the “sublimity of wilderness” has not yet passed away. Cole, however, balanced the forbidding and sublime beauties of nature with civilization. There is a clearing in the center of the painting, complete with tree stumps, a house, a shed, and a man on horseback, although each is dwarfed by the mountains surrounding them. Cole’s vision of the Notch showed a “balance” between “the savage elements of [nature]....[and] objects of civilization.”

Civilization had arrived in the White Mountains, but it was still framed by the sublimity of nature.

Cole’s painting clearly showed the changing perceptions of the White Mountains from a “daunting terrible” land to one of a settled wilderness, where “humanity is

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85 Wallace, 42.
represented as existing in harmony with nature, rather than as a victim of her capricious force.\textsuperscript{86} While Cole might regret the loss of some of nature’s sublimity as civilization moved into the region, the contrast of pastoral and wilderness scenes within Cole’s and others' paintings provided a benchmark from which to measure the course of progress and the course of American history.

The emotions inspired by the scenery of Crawford Notch, Franconia Notch, and the White Mountains allowed Thomas Cole to continue on canvas what Jeremy Belknap created on paper over a century earlier. It was a view of American exceptionalism, one blessed by God and exemplified in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Cole’s paintings, however, also served as a form of “cultural resistance.”\textsuperscript{87} Cole’s paintings during the 1830s and 1840s created, William Truettner argued, a “nostalgia for America’s past…and sought to preserve the White Mountains as an ideal retreat for myth and a refuge” from western expansion and the doctrine of Manifest Destiny.\textsuperscript{88} As the American West loomed larger in the American imagination during the 1850s and after, it offered an opportunity for the development of a distinctly American culture, one not based merely on the European ideals of beauty, but one that related to the unique scenery and circumstances of the experiences of western expansion.\textsuperscript{89} Eastern ideas of natural beauty, however, became the basis upon which to build this new national culture. Those ideas, as advanced by Belknap, Dwight, and Cole, would continue to influence the creation of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{86} McGrath, \textit{Gods in Granite}, 22.
\item \textsuperscript{87} Ibid., 41.
\item \textsuperscript{88} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
vision of the White Mountains, and would be found in the cultural roots of the conservation movement, as well as in the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne. His vision of the Old Man of the Mountain would combine Romantic ideas of sublimity and the connection between nature and God to create a literary representation of the Old Man of the Mountain that would make the Old Man nationally famous.

**Writing a Vision of Franconia Notch: Nathaniel Hawthorne and “The Great Stone Face”**

Nathaniel Hawthorne traveled to the White Mountains in September 1832. He stayed with Ethan Allen Crawford, and experienced Mount Washington’s summit at twelve degrees below zero.\(^9\)\(^0\) Hawthorne wrote several stories based upon his visit to the White Mountains, including “Sketches from Memory” (1835) about the 1832 trip, and three allegorical tales: “The Great Carbuncle” (1837), based on an Indian legend about valuable stones reputed to be in the mountains; “The Ambitious Guest” (1835) about the Willey tragedy; and “The Great Stone Face” (1850). Hawthorne’s prose shared with Cole’s paintings and Belknap’s *History* an appreciation for the uniqueness of American scenery, as well as a satirical appreciation for those who would go to view it. In his “Sketches from Memory,” Hawthorne’s fictional narrator noted that among the party riding the stage from Conway was a mineralogist who did “great damage” with his hammer and one young man who was the epitome of the Romantic tourist: “a well-dressed young man, who carried an opera glass set in gold, and seemed to be making a

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quotation from some of Byron's rhapsodies on mountain scenery."91 Hawthorne's characters were types, rather than real people, but they reflected the composition of the travelers to the region.92

In spite of his satirical commentary on his fellow White Mountain travelers, Hawthorne's descriptions of the scenery of the White Mountains indicated both his knowledge of and appreciation for the sublimity of what was before him.93 His description of Crawford Notch from "Sketches from Memory" was impressive, although Hawthorne felt he could not do it justice. Crawford Notch was "a thousand feet from peak to base...a mighty fracture of rugged precipices on each side...[s]hame on me, that I have attempted to describe it by so mean an image - feeling, as I do, that it is one of those symbolic scenes, which lead the mind to the sentiment, though not to the conception, of Omnipotence."94 Hawthorne saw in Mount Washington one of "Earth's undecaying monuments. They must stand while she endures, and never be consecrated to the mere great men of their own age and country, but to the mighty ones alone, whose glory is universal."95 Such language indicated that New England indeed had claim to a certain standing in the political and cultural hierarchy of American history, while at the same time Hawthorne clearly took in his native land's unique and often indescribable beauties.


92 Beth L. Lueck, "Hawthorne's Ironic Traveler and the Picturesque Tour," in *Travel Sketches*, 160.

93 Lueck, *Travel Sketches*, 159.

94 Hawthorne, "Sketches from Memory," 338.

95 Dennis Berthold, "History and Nationalism in 'Old Ticonderoga' and Other Travel Sketches" in *Travel Sketches*, 142.
Nationalism, which would take Europe by storm in during the 1840s, was more gently reflected in the words of Hawthorne’s fictional narrator.

Although the Lafayette House and later hotels built near the Profile helped attract tourists, which made the Old Man of the Mountain increasingly famous and what established the Old Man of the Mountain as a nationally known symbol was Nathaniel Hawthorne’s allegory “The Great Stone Face.” Written in 1848, Hawthorne sold the story to The National Era magazine, edited by John Greenleaf Whittier. The story was printed in The National Era in 1850 and was later reprinted in The Snow-Image and Other Twice-Told Tales in 1852. “The Great Stone Face” told the story of Ernest, who lived a simple life in the valley below the Great Stone Face (the Old Man of the Mountain). Ernest hears from his mother the legend that “at some future day, a child should be born hereabouts, who was destined to become the greatest and noblest personage of his time, and whose countenance, in manhood, should bear an exact resemblance to the Great Stone Face.” For years Ernest searched in vain for the model of the Profile’s face and greatness of spirit. When great men born in Ernest’s valley returned home, Ernest failed to see in any of them the model for the Great Stone Face. Only in the verses of a great poet did Ernest think he saw the “divine thoughts” that echoed the image of the Great Stone Face, but in this he was disappointed again. It was the poet who finally pointed out that it was Ernest, a profound man of high principles, who was the “likeness of the Great Stone Face.”

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97 Ibid., 1068.
In Hawthorne’s tale, the Great Stone Face seemed to be sculptured by a “Titan [in]...his own likeness.” The children of the valley beneath the Great Stone Face were fortunate to grow up with it “before their eyes, for all the features were noble, and the expression was at once grand and sweet, as if it were the glow of a vast, warm heart, that embraced all mankind in its affections...According to the belief of many people, the valley owed much of its fertility to this benign aspect that was continually beaming over it...” The Great Stone Face was a deity for the people of the valley, providing a model of morality and all-embracing sympathy. The stone profile on the side of the mountain was the embodiment of God in Nature. Where the mountains of the Presidential Range had been dedicated to America’s presidents and political leaders, connecting them to American history, the Old Man of the Mountain had a spiritual significance that went beyond its supposed resemblance to Thomas Jefferson.

The perceived greatness of the Old Man of the Mountain was also indicated by a statement, probably apocryphal, that was attributed to Daniel Webster: “Men hang out signs indicative of their respective trades. Shoemakers hang out a gigantic shoe; jewelers, a monster watch; even the dentist hangs out a gold tooth; but up in Franconia Notch God Almighty has hung out a sign to show that in New England He makes men.” This statement, combined with Hawthorne’s story, added another dimension to the Old Man of the Mountain by creating in the Great Stone Face an allegorical figure of great feeling and virtue, as well as reiterating the connection between God, nature, and

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98 Ibid.


100 John T.B. Mudge, The Old Man’s Reader: History and Legends of Franconia Notch (Etna, NH: The Durand Press), xi, 210.
the Old Man of the Mountain. Ernest’s search for the model for the Profile’s greatness of spirit helped make the Old Man of the Mountain a spiritual and moral symbol, with both divine and human characteristics. The granite profile that had begun as a “rare phenomenon” that struck fear into Thomas Cole by the 1850s had become a semi-divine figure, which added to the popularity of Franconia Notch during the 1840s.

Franconia Notch, As Advertised: “Picturesque majesty of outline and massive breadth.”

Hawthorne’s “The Great Stone Face” helped Franconia Notch and the Old Man of the Mountains find their places in the White Mountain Seven, the most remarkable and beautiful places in the region. Other works, too, contributed to the improvement and expansion of the vision of Franconia Notch during the 1840s and 1850s. In 1838-39 Nathaniel P. Willis’s American Scenery was published in London. Of the one hundred and nineteen plates in the work, eleven of them showed White Mountain scenes, indicating the growing popularity of the region for foreign visitors as well as American visitors. Willis’s text also emphasized the connection between American nature and divine greatness. Ten years later, William Oakes’s 1825 trip to the White Mountains, combined with his interest in the botanical uniqueness of the region, resulted in the Scenery of the White Mountains (1848). His book gave detailed descriptions of the plates illustrations by Isaac Sprague. Oakes included sixteen points of interest in the White


103 Ibid.
Mountains. Of the sixteen, five, including Profile Mountain (Cannon Mountain), the Profile Rock (the Old Man of the Mountain), the Basin, and the Flume, were located in Franconia Notch.

Unlike Cole’s paintings, which were either commissioned for wealthy patrons or exhibited in galleries, Willis’s and Oakes’s published works reached a wider audience, helping to increase interest in the White Mountains among those who might be interested in the region, even if they might not have been able to afford to travel there. Guidebooks provided even more in depth information about the White Mountains, including suggesting specific itineraries for tourists to follow. In addition to Theodore Dwight’s *Northern Traveller*, there were John H. Spaulding’s *Historical Relics of the White Mountains. Also. A Concise White Mountain Guide* (1855), Benjamin Willey’s *Incidents in White Mountain History* (1856), Samuel C. Eastman’s *White Mountain Guidebook* (1858), and Thomas Starr King’s *The White Hills: Their Legends, Landscape, and Poetry* (1859). Each of these guidebooks included extensive descriptions of the Franconia Notch region, which had become, as Harriet Martineau discovered, a tour within a tour. The area was slowly coming into its own as an equal of Crawford Notch and as unique in its own way as Mount Washington.

Thomas Starr King’s *The White Hills: Their Legends, Landscape, and Poetry* was probably one of the most remarkable guidebooks ever written about the White Mountains. Published in 1859, it was based upon a collection of letters written by King for the Boston *Evening Transcript*, in which King discussed his visits to the White Mountains in 1853 and the years following. The book wove King’s own writings with the legends of the White Mountains and poetry. In his Preface, King stated that
The object of this volume is to direct attention to the noble landscapes that lie along the routes by which the White Mountains are now approached by tourists...to help persons appreciate landscape more adequately; and to associate with the principle scenes poetic passages...The author believes he has done a service to travellers, and supplied a need that is often confessed, by interweaving with his own inadequate prose, passages from Bryant, Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, Lowell, and Percival, that interpret the scenery of our highlands...[as well as] fragments...from Wordsworth, Scott, Tenneyson, Goethe, Shelley, and Byron...[which] complete the description attempted, or embody the predominant sentiment of the landscape.104

King’s *The White Hills* guided travelers through the mountains and valleys of the White Mountains region, and included information on early exploration as well as vegetation. It was a large book (the 1870 edition runs to over four hundred pages) that was meant to be a guide in the truest sense of the word.

In “Sketches from Memory,” Hawthorne satirized the young traveler with his opera glass who was quoting Byron as he gazed at the landscape. For many travelers, however, interpreting scenery according to the guidelines set by Romanticism and the Romantic poets was an important part of the touring experience. King’s book provided a guide for well-to-do tourists as well as the growing number of middle class travelers to follow in order to “see” the White Mountains in the “correct” way. King, along with Cole, Oakes, the natural scientists, and the Willeys and Crawfords, helped to educate these “scenic consumers.”105 Each in his own way promoted the vision of the White Mountains as an accessible wilderness filled with natural wonders and Romantic scenery. These promotions helped to create interest in visiting the region, and thus led to the creation of the White Mountains tourism industry. It was hoped that tourism, particularly in the post-Civil War United States, might give people a greater appreciation for the scenery

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104 King, vii-viii.
that was such an integral part of the American cultural identity, so that they might be
more reluctant to "exploit cultural resources to their fullest extent."\footnote{Sears, 8.}
This idea would play an important role in the conservation movement and certainly informed the
Franconia Notch campaign.

King’s description of Franconia Notch provided an example of some of the
language used by guidebooks to help visitors interpret and experience the scenery before
them correctly. Franconia Notch “contains more objects of interest to the mass of
travellers, than any other region of equal extent within the compass of the usual White
Mountain tour…it is a huge museum of curiosities.”\footnote{King, 107.} His description of the Old Man of
the Mountain “a piece of sculpture older than the Sphynx...with an expression really
noble, with a suggestion partly of fatigue and melancholy,” included a selection of poetry
by Robert Browning “that many readers will be glad to associate with their visit to the
spot.”\footnote{Ibid., 110-112.} Browning’s poetry referred to “Persian Xerxes” who wished to create “some
colossal statue of a man” out of Greece’s Mount Athos.\footnote{Ibid., 111.}
Although King added classical associations to the significance of the Old Man of the Mountain, he stopped
short of agreeing that the Profile was “a grander expression of Infinite power and art”
than was humankind. King declared that the Profile, made of stone, could not compare
with the wonder of Man, as “each one of us wears more of the Infinite art” than any
mountain.\footnote{Ibid., 113-114.}
King described all of the pleasures of Franconia Notch: the Basin, the Flume ("how wild the spot is!"), the various mountain peaks, and compared Franconia Notch to Crawford Notch and Pinkham Notch, which is located near Mount Washington. The mountain slopes of Franconia Notch might not have been as "high or as noble in form" as those in Pinkham Notch (which had its own hotel, the Glen House), but the Profile House, which had succeeded the Lafayette House as the hotel in Franconia Notch, was surrounded by "wild and frowning rock scenery."\(^{111}\) Crawford Notch lacked a hotel in the midst of the "astonishing spectacle" of its most impressive scenery, which was "oppressive," and not particularly conducive to comfortable accommodations.\(^{112}\) Franconia Notch, on the other hand, "bends in a graceful curve; the purple tinge of the rocks is always grateful to the eye...[and] the forest foliage...relieves the somberness of the bending battlement [of cliff and mountain] by its color, and softens it sublimity with grace."\(^{113}\)

King's descriptions of Franconia Notch and the Old Man of the Mountain completed the early nineteenth century reputation of the region and its curiosities as unique, even among the extraordinary beauties of the White Mountains. The Old Man, in particular had become established as the centerpiece of Franconia Notch. Field and Oakes recognized the geologic singularity of the Old Man, while Cole and Hawthorne saw in it the majesty of sublime beauty and a representative of the Divine Presence and a moral arbiter. While King was not as impressed with the Old Man's reputation for

\(^{111}\) Ibid., 107.

\(^{112}\) Ibid., 108.

\(^{113}\) Ibid.
divinity, he nevertheless added classical associations to the spiritual, moral, and historic connections that already existed. Added to this was Richard Taft’s decision to name his new hotel the Profile House. The Old Man could now be considered a commercial commodity as well, as its image would begin to appear not only in paintings and drawings but on promotional literature and other tourist souvenirs.114

Franconia Notch appeared to have it all. For the traveler looking for the place to stay that offered the wildness of Crawford and Pinkham Notches without the gloom of their close and precipitous cliffs, as well as a “museum of natural curiosities,” Franconia Notch was the best location in the region. By the 1850s, it had become even easier to reach these natural curiosities, as this decade not only produced a series of guidebooks for the avid tourist, but also saw changes and improvements to the infrastructure of the White Mountains tourism industry. In 1851, the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad reached Gorham, New Hampshire, connecting the White Mountains to Portland, Maine, to Boston and to New York. The railroad supplemented the several stagecoach/steamboat routes to the region and would eventually take them over almost completely by the late nineteenth century. As the turnpike roads had done several decades before, the advent of rail travel in the White Mountains allowed people increasingly easier and more convenient access. Trips from Boston could now be made in a single day.

Franconia Notch, too, was made more accessible by the coming of the railroad. In 1853 the White Mountain Railroad, a spur line of the Boston, Concord, and Montreal

114 Many of these souvenirs were produced by or sold at the Profile House or one of its nearby souvenir stands and are now on display at the Flume Interpretation Center and the Old Man of the Mountain Museum, both located in Franconia Notch.
Railroad, reached Littleton; it reached the base of Mount Washington in 1876. In 1879, the Profile and Franconia Notch Railroad, a narrow gauge line, reached the Profile House from Bethlehem, eliminating the need for a stagecoach ride for the guest of the Profile House from that station. By 1883, the Boston and Lowell Railroad completed the Pemigewasset line, which ran to North Woodstock, south of Franconia Notch.115

Along with the increasing ease of travel came more tourists, and the need for more and better hotels. The Gibbs brothers sold the Lafayette House to Richard Taft in 1852, along with "a tract of land" in the northern portion of Franconia Notch.116 Taft already owned the Flume House, which he purchased in 1848. The Flume House was close to the Flume, Basin, and the Pool, and was popular because of its location.117

A year after his purchase of the Lafayette House, Taft built the one hundred and ten room Profile House within view of the Old Man of the Mountain. Attached to the newer hotel, the old Lafayette House would eventually become a dormitory for maids.118 The Profile House would eventually become the premier hotel in Franconia Notch as Taft and his partner Charles Greenleaf continued to expand and improve the hotel through the 1860s and 1870s. By the time the hotel burned to the ground in 1923, the Profile and Flume Hotel Companies owned not only the Profile House and its considerable collections of cottages and outbuildings, but also six thousand acres in Franconia Notch, acquired by Taft and Greenleaf as their establishment expanded.

115 Tolles, *Grand Resort Hotels*, 68.
118 Ibid., 39.
By the 1850s, the vision of Franconia Notch and the White Mountains as places of exceptional beauty that helped to define the United States as a place of exceptional natural beauty was well established. Thomas Cole’s paintings, Nathaniel Hawthorne’s prose, and Thomas Starr King’s elaborate guidebooks each helped to define this increasingly accessible wilderness. Through this intentional and unintentional publicity, the frontier wilderness encountered by Belknap in 1784 became a resort area, where “fashionable” guests, as well as the less well-to-do tourists, could stay for days, weeks, or months at a time in the fine hotels in Franconia Notch and elsewhere.

The expansion of the hotel industry in the White Mountains reflected the increasing number of tourists who had both time and money to take tours of the region. Initially, these hotels, like those built by Taft, Ethan Allen Crawford and his successor Horace Fabian, were little more than dormitory style buildings that provided shelters and meals for travelers interested in hiking to the summit of Mount Washington or taking a carriage ride through Franconia Notch. By the mid-1860s, however, it was clear that tourists were looking for more than just simple accommodations. Hotels became larger to accommodate the increasing number of guests, had porches and piazzas that showcased the surrounding scenery, and grander public rooms where guests could socialize.\(^{119}\)

The increasing number of tourists was directly related to the industrialization of the United States, which created a middle, or leisure, class. Made up of white collar workers such as clerks, teachers, and lawyers, this class aspired to the “genteel” practices of the upper class, and touring Niagara Falls or the White Mountains, using guidebooks like King’s, provided the means through which to experience nature and become more genteel

at the same time. These groups had both the time and the money to spend on improving their aesthetic knowledge through touring.

The development of a consumer oriented culture in the United States during the nineteenth century created a climate that was conducive to the promotion of Romantic scenery. In addition, the growth of tourism benefited from the increasingly complex transportation and commercial infrastructure needed to support the rapidly industrializing Northeast. Canal, improved roads, and railroads offered better access to the beauty spots of the region where the new rich could mix with the old. Wider circulation of newspapers and popular magazines, as well as tourists' guidebooks provided the medium through which to publicized the modern comforts of the tourism industry.

What was lost, however, was what Thomas Cole called “the awfulness of deep solitude.” As the White Mountains became more familiar, and more crowded, the sense of awe experienced at the summit of Mount Washington or gazing at the Profile became part of the White Mountains experience, which was sold as readily and as easily as the guidebooks that described it. While Hawthorne’s narrator from “Sketches from Memory” might look scornfully on these new pleasure travelers, who came to experience the social as well as the scenic aspects of the White Mountains in ways very different from those of the 1820s and 1830s, this experience, too, became part of the vision of the White Mountains. While still offering sublime beauty, the mountains could also offer an escape from the aggressive and chaotic society developing along with the new industries of the United States.

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121 Ibid.
This vision of the White Mountains corresponded to a growing sense of the values of nature in a society that was increasingly measuring its successes through industrial progress. In 1865, Frederick Law Olmsted noted the healing powers of nature, as "contemplation of scenes of impressive character" increased "the subsequent capacity for happiness and the means for securing happiness." The middle and upper class members of the American public, increasingly confronted with the daily stresses of the rapid industrialization and urbanization of American society, particularly after 1865, needed an escape. The White Mountains became one of those escapes.

This need for "scenes of impressive character" to "secure happiness" informed the vision of the White Mountains during the latter half of the nineteenth century. While the aesthetic and nationalistic consideration of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and first half of the nineteenth century created the vision of the White Mountains as a Romantic wilderness where nature and God could be contemplated together, the modernization of the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century informed the more complicated vision of a White Mountains wilderness that represented an antidote to "civilization." although it was the relative civilization of that wilderness that, in part, made it so attractive to the leisured classes who flocked to it. This complex vision would inform the White Mountains conservation debates throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and created the interesting coalition of ideas that led to the success of the Franconia Notch campaign.

CHAPTER III

"THE SWITZERLAND OF AMERICA": THE WHITE MOUNTAINS AS NATURE CONSUMED

A headline in the August 1998 edition of The Northern Forest Forum declared that "Conservationists Call for a White Mountain National Park."\(^1\) The article discussed the need for the preservation of New Hampshire’s White Mountains under the National Park system which "[conserves] the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife for the enjoyment of future generations."\(^2\) The Northern Forest Forum noted that the United States Forest Service, the manager of the White Mountains National Forest, with its “multiple-use doctrine,” allowed clear-cutting of the forests and extensive road building, which were detrimental to the wildlife and natural beauty of the area. Creating a White Mountain National Park, the conservation group believed, would be the “best insurance for protecting its values.”\(^3\) The article reported that New Hampshire’s congressional representatives in Washington “unanimously dismissed” the idea.\(^4\)

There were pros and cons to the idea of a White Mountain National Park. The creation of the park would cause the loss of jobs and revenue related to timber harvesting, and increased restrictions on land use or access might adversely affect the region’s economic stability. On the other hand, the National Park Service could develop and manage the White Mountains’ recreational potential more completely than the National

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1 The Northern Forest Forum (Lancaster, NH), August 1998.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
Forest Service had, thereby drawing in revenue to replace that lost as a result of the cessation of timber harvesting. The late twentieth century call for a White Mountain National Park echoed a struggle between those who advocated preserving land in its natural state and those who wanted to control the future use of its resources. The situation in the White Mountains of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provides a fascinating example of the evolution of this conservation ethic, the origins of which can be traced back even further to the eighteenth century, with the recognition that the White Mountains were exceptional nature.

The economic value of the exceptional nature of the White Mountains was an increasingly important topic during the latter years of the nineteenth century. During this time, the development of a widespread timber industry and its threat to the scenic beauty of the White Mountains contributed to the impetus for, among other developments, the founding of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF) and the dedication of the New Hampshire Federation of Women’s Clubs (NHFWC) to the preservation of the natural beauty of New Hampshire.

The timber industry’s threat to the scenic beauty, as well as ecological health, of the White Mountains concerned summer residents, railroad and hotel owners, and many of those who lived in New Hampshire. Some of the strongest condemnations of the clear-cutting practices of the timber industry came from the guests of the grand hotels, as well as from the members of the Appalachian Mountain Club, whose interests in the preservation of the natural beauties of the White Mountains began in the 1870s with the founding of the organization. Each of these groups would later play key roles in the Franconia Notch campaign.

4 Ibid.
The irony of the White Mountain conservation movement was that the development of an industrial and consumer economy in the United States, which provided the means for the region's success as a summer resort, also caused the devastation of hundreds of thousands of wooded acres in the White Mountains. The upper and middle classes' economic successes resulting from industrial growth provided them with the financial means and the leisure time to support the well-advertised growing White Mountain tourism industry. Members of these two classes were responsible for the call to save the White Mountains' forests. Indeed, the conservation effort had a variety of roots, both local and national, many of which found expression in late nineteenth century American social and political cultures that led to the rise of Progressive Era reform programs in urban America.

There was another connection between industry and conservation in the White Mountains. The profitability of the factories and mills of the industrialized Northeast was one of the driving concerns behind the creation of the White Mountain National Forest in 1911. The headwaters of several major New England rivers, it was argued, were adversely affected by the unregulated forestry practices of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As water remained an important source of power for the mills in southern New Hampshire and neighboring Massachusetts, the decreasing river flows caused by increased silt deposits from the White Mountains could cause a decline in manufacturing profits, directly affecting factory owners and workers in the city of Manchester, more than one hundred miles to the south.

This chapter will detail the second panel of the triptych of the Franconia Notch campaign through discussion of the development of the White Mountains conservation
movement, primarily focusing on events that occurred in the Franconia Notch region
beginning in the late 1870s. This movement will be set within the ideology of the
national conservation movement. New Hampshire became a focus of this developing
movement in the eastern United States as a result of the threat to the vision of the pristine
natural beauty of the White Mountains.

**The Progressive Era Conservation Movement**

The Progressive Era conservation movement reflected the ideas behind a variety of
Progressive reforms between 1890 and 1920. Many of these reforms were an attempt to
bring under control the increasing chaos of American society. Industrialization
encouraged the rapid growth of urban areas throughout the United States and the
resulting overcrowded living conditions and overtaxed urban infrastructures motivated
many Progressive reformers to find solutions to these problems. The sense of social
responsibility inspired among these primarily white, middle-class urban reformers of the
late nineteenth and early twentieth century would extended beyond concerns over
improving urban living conditions and infrastructure, the regulation of corporations, and
the quality of food and consumer products to the conservation of natural resources and
the preservation of the natural, unique beauty of the United States.

The rapid industrialization and the economic growth of the United States during the
latter half of the nineteenth century was fueled in part by the country's seemingly
inexhaustible natural resources in land, water, timber, and mineral wealth. Exploitation
of this wealth, however, began to cause concern during the 1880s and 1890s, when it was
becoming clear that the laissez-faire economic practices of the United States, also
responsible in part for its growth and prosperity, had resulted in the near disappearance of
several animal species, and the depletion of forests in the Midwest, the South, the East,
and the Pacific Northwest.5 Cities and industrial areas saw water, land, streets, and air
polluted, sometimes to disastrous levels. The reform efforts that occurred between 1890
and 1920 stemmed from the need to clean up the cities and to control the use of natural
resources, particularly water and timber. Many of the Progressive reformers were
college-educated men and women who relied upon scientific research and surveys to
improve conditions of public health in the cities, as well as through the regulation of
production and quality of consumer goods, among other reforms. This new faith in
science and research was also put to use in the management of natural resources.

Since the 1950s historians have interpreted Progressive reforms and reformers in a
variety of ways. In 1955 Richard Hofstadter argued that nineteenth century middle-class
Protestant reformers feared that they had lost the authority of their status to the industrial
capitalists and their trusts, as well as the growing strength of unions. These reformers
hoped that government reform and regulation of these groups, particularly the
industrialists, would restore the middle class to its rightful place.6 Hofstadter did not
discuss Progressive Era conservation issues, unlike Gabriel Kolko, who saw the
connection between the management of natural resources and business interests. In 1963
Kolko noted the importance of the industrialists between 1900 and 1916, arguing that

5 Richard Judd, Common Lands, Common People: The Origins of Conservation in Northern New
England (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 91. Some of the more well known of the
endangered species were the American bison, the snowy egret, and the passenger pigeon. While the bison
and the snowy egrets have survived, the passenger pigeon disappeared forever in 1914, with the death of
the last pigeon, named Martha, in the Cincinnati Zoo. See Andrew C. Isenberg, The Destruction of the
Bison (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000) and Jennifer Price, Flight Maps: Adventures with
Nature in Modern America (New York: Basic Books, 1999), especially Chapters 1 and 2.

government solutions to the problems of American society at the time reflected business and financial interests. Kolko pointed out that scientific forestry practices utilized by the federal government were supported by some of the largest timber concerns in the United States. Kolko stated that the “progressive” era was actually a “conservative triumph” for American industrialists.

In 1967, Robert Weibe examined the “new middle class,” the college educated reformers who were trained in scientific research at the University of Chicago and Columbia’s School of Social Work in New York City. Reform organizations looked to these “experts” to find solutions to the problems of the day, including overcrowded cities and ineffective government. Wiebe argued that between 1877 and 1920, a “new system...emerged,” that “assigned far greater power to government...and it encouraged the centralization of authority.” In the case of conservation, initial efforts to curb the use and abuse of resources such as forests, water, and mineral, were made at the state. When the federal government became more involved with resource management, the opposition to federal control from some Western states actually served to weaken the goals of Progressive reforms.

In New Hampshire, management of forest resources began in response to the uncontrolled cutting of the White Mountain forests during the 1870s and 1880s. Forestry management was advocated, albeit on a relatively ineffective scale, by the state of New

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8 Ibid., 2.


10 Ibid., xiv.

11 Ibid., 185-86, 214.
Hampshire during the 1880s. While some timber companies adopted wise use forestry management practices, others continued to clear-cut their forest land.\(^{12}\) In the case of the White Mountain conservation movement, forestry experts working with the SPNHF developed relationships with many of the forest land owners in the White Mountains. Those relationships between industrialists and conservationists were used successfully to promote wise use forestry in the White Mountains during the first decades of the twentieth century and after.\(^{13}\)

In New Hampshire and on the federal level, government officials, experts, and industrialists each played important roles in the development of the conservation movement. The concern for the diminishing natural resources of the United States inspired a variety of public campaigns and government programs, on the local as well as the national level. Some people, such as United States Forester Gifford Pinchot, believed that there was a need to use responsibly the resources that were left, for "the greatest good, to the greatest number, for the longest time."\(^{14}\) Conservation, according to Pinchot, brought with it "the inevitable result [of] national efficiency." This efficiency would be the deciding factor in the "great commercial struggle between nations...so from every point of view conservation is a good thing for the American people."\(^{15}\) Conservation would therefore contribute to the continued progress of the United States.

\(^{12}\) Wallace, 37.


\(^{15}\) Ibid., 50.
Others, such as John Muir, the champion of wilderness and one of the founders and the first president of the Sierra Club (founded in 1892), believed that “[t]housands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people [were] beginning to find out that going to the mountains was going home...that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as foundations of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life.”¹⁶ Those who thought like Muir felt that there needed to be places of quiet natural beauty, which would allow people to escape the anxiety and dirt of city life. Those people who became involved with the White Mountains conservation movement and later the Franconia Notch campaign would bring an interesting combination of these two views to their efforts to save the White Mountains forests.

In his 1959 work Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency, Samuel Hays argued for the importance of Progressive Era experts and for scientific efficiency, both of which were necessary for the many of the Progressive reform movements’ “centralized manipulation and control.”¹⁷ Hays used the conservation movement to demonstrate the shift in “decision-making away from the grass-roots...to the larger networks of human

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interaction.18 Progressive reformers sought to bring more state and federal government control, as well as regulation, to the problems of turn of the century America. In the case of conservation, Hays argued that "conservationists" on the local level were "led by people who promoted the 'rational' use of resources, with a focus on efficiency [and] planning for future use..."19 Although the national agenda shaped many reform efforts, Hays argued that local influences continued to shape these reform efforts as well.

The conservation movement began with fights over local, state and federal water and grazing rights in the West. While some historians have argued that conservation was more of a concern in the Western United States, the efforts to save the White Mountains and Appalachian forests, along with those to preserve the forests in New York's Adirondack Mountains indicate that Eastern conservation efforts and ideas were as important as those that influenced Western conservation campaigns, particularly as the concern shifted to efficient forest management. By the mid- to late nineteenth century, clear-cutting timber, a widespread practice in the lumber industry, began to negatively affect watersheds across the country.20

Believing that a method of scientific management of timber harvest could alleviate these problems as well as conserve the country's dwindling timber reserves, Gifford

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18 Ibid., x.
19 Ibid., xii.
20 Ibid., 23, 27. For a discussion of the importance of Western states in the conservation movement, see Elmo Richardson's The Politics of Conservation: Crusades and Controversies, 1897-1913 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962). Richardson argued that these crises and the conservation movement as a whole were influenced not so much by a quest for efficient management of natural resources as the political influence the Western states, at whom many of these resource management programs were aimed. Richardson agreed with Hays that the conservation movement "might be called the epitome of the Progressive Era," but that the focus on the federal government's role alone was too limiting. (vii) The influences of the Western states should not be underestimated, although many of the region's attempts to gain control of its resources from the hands of the federal government ended in failure. (120).
Pinchot established the practice of "sustained yield forestry," in which forests were maintained to provide timber for an extended period of time.\textsuperscript{21} In 1905 Pinchot was appointed head of the new United States Forest Service and set about not only putting his ideas into practice but also to educate the public through leaflets and brochures about the goals and objectives of the Forest Service.\textsuperscript{22}

Under Theodore Roosevelt's and William Howard Taft's administrations, this new professionalism, according to Hays, created the idea of scientific management of public lands, where lands managed by the government could be efficiently developed to their full potential. Guiding this process were committees of trained professionals, who kept order among "carefully classified natural resources."\textsuperscript{23} In contrast to the views of Muir, who led the cause for the unmanaged preservation of the natural beauty of public lands like Yosemite, Pinchot argued that commercial use of these lands, for which a government permit could be obtained, should precede their recreational use.

The battle over the use of Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park was an illustrative example of an instance where utilitarian concerns won out over aesthetic ones. For Muir, the damming of the Tuolumne River was an anathema against nature, where those
temple destroyers, devotees of ravaging commercialism [who] seem to have a perfect contempt for Nature, and, instead of lifting their eyes to the God of the mountains lift them to the Almighty Dollar. Dam Hetch Hetchy! As well dam for water-tanks the people's cathedrals and churches, for no holier temple has ever been consecrated by

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 28.


\textsuperscript{23} Hays, 69.
the heart of man.\textsuperscript{24}

The idea of Hetch Hetchy and Yosemite Valleys as shrines to nature had its roots in the same Romantic ideology that inspired Cole's paintings and Belknap's descriptions of the White Mountains. The Franconia Notch campaign benefited from and utilized this idea of consecrated nature in campaign rhetoric, particularly to point out the appropriateness of a natural, growing, shrine through which to honor those who had given their lives in defense of the United States.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{24} John Muir, "Hetch Hetchy Valley," in \textit{John Muir: Nature Writings}, 721. Originally published in \textit{Our National Parks} (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1901). During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the city of San Francisco experienced a population growth and needed a new water supply. City officials looked to the Tuolumne River in the Hetch Hetchy Valley section of Yosemite National Park as a new source of water. Although Hetch Hetchy's natural beauty rivaled that of the Yosemite Valley, it was not as well-known. After being refused a federal permit to build a dam in Hetch Hetchy in 1903, the city of San Francisco tried again and the permit was granted in 1906. Between 1908 and 1913, the campaign to preserve Hetch Hetchy was fought in the newspapers of the West and throughout the nation by preservationists, led by John Muir and the Sierra Club. In spite of these efforts, the petition to dam the Tuolumne River within the confines of Yosemite National Park was granted in 1913.

\textsuperscript{25} There was a spiritual base to the conservation movement, some of which was clear in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century interpretations of the White Mountains. The connections between nature and God were clear in the writings of Belknap, Dwight, Cole, and through the utilization of the Willey tragedy as a commentary on the fate of man at the hand of God. In "John Muir and the Roots of American Environmentalism," Donald Worster also examined the religious roots of American environmentalism. For Worster there were four aspects of Reformed Protestantism that influenced conservationists: moral activism; zealousness; egalitarian individualism; and aesthetic spirituality. Moral activism supported the belief that the world could be a better place if it was more organized. This was an important influence on Progressive reforms as a whole, with Gifford Pinchot's forest management providing an example of the conservation movement's idea of "control." (190) Zealousness influenced campaign propaganda like that involved in the campaigns to save the White Mountains and Franconia Notch. It "turned a private response to nature into a crusading cause." (197) Egalitarian individualism influenced the preservationists' views for the rights of nature to exist without interference from man. (198) The contradiction inherent within this, of course, was that the National Parks, the creation of which Muir supported, were managed by the federal government and visited by ever increasing numbers of people. Human involvement was unavoidable if these parks were to be preserved and enjoyed as they were intended to be. Nature's values were products of human creation, regardless of whether those values were a result of "aesthetic spirituality," where "in nature's beauty one could find the glory of the creator and by contemplating beauty one could be delivered from evil" or values that came from a more practical source relating to nature's ability to ensure human survival. (199) See Donald Worster, "John Muir and the Roots of American Environmentalism," in \textit{The Wealth of Nature: Environmental History and the Ecological Imagination}, 184-202, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
In New Hampshire, there was an interesting combination of these two points of view, the utilitarian and the aesthetic. The outcry of summer visitors and New Hampshire natives against the clear-cutting practices of timber companies in the White Mountains during the last quarter of the nineteenth century reflected first a concern for the beautiful scenery of the region and then for the financial well being of White Mountains residents and factory owners in the southern New Hampshire. By the last decade of the nineteenth century there were calls for the New Hampshire state government to take control of the situation. Hays's argument for centralized control of natural resources under the guidance of government agencies staffed by trained professionals was reflected in the New Hampshire Forestry Commission, which became a permanent part of the state government in 1893.26

Private concerns over the White Mountains' forests found a champion in the SPNHF, which developed a close relationship with the state of New Hampshire. This relationship would be as important to the Franconia Notch campaign as was the Romantic vision of the White Mountains. Although the SPNHF supported the management of resources for the public good, there were instances, such as the campaigns to save Lost River, Crawford, and Franconia Notches, all of which will be discussed later, when the

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26 J. Leonard Bates observed in 1957 that many Progressives “believed that a larger amount of government interference and regulation in the public interest was required,” particularly with regards to public lands.26 Democracy was central to the movement, and Bates argued that the conservation movement was a “social faith,” like other Progressive movements.26 “The organized conservationists,” Bates observed, “were concerned more with economic justice and democracy in the handling of resources than with the mere prevention of waste.”26 Two years after Bates argued for the democratic forces of conservation, Hays argued for the importance of centralized efficiency and experts. The contradiction between Bates's and Hays's interpretations of conservation demonstrate the complexity of the movement, which was reflected in New Hampshire. For Bates, the conservation movement challenged corporate control of natural resources, which should have been under the control of the state and federal government. See J. Leonard Bates, “Fulfilling American Democracy: The Conservation Movement, 1907-1921,” The Mississippi Valley Historical Review 44 (June 1957): 29-57.
SPNHF leaned more towards preservationist goals than utilitarian. Preserving the natural beauty of New Hampshire through saving some of its unique scenic places was the underlying purpose in several of the SPNHF’s campaigns during the first three decades of the twentieth century.27

As demonstrated by the SPNHF, the Progressive Era conservation movement, and the White Mountains conservation movement that it would influence, was a complex combination of social and cultural influences, some of which have already been hinted at in the discussion of the creation of the vision of the White Mountains. In *Wilderness and the American Mind* (1967), Roderick Nash argued that the conservation movement had its beginnings in an appreciation for a wilderness that was, in mid-nineteenth century America, beginning to disappear. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, areas of wilderness, like Yellowstone National Park and New York’s Adirondack Forest, were the focus of efforts to keep unique natural curiosities out of the hands of private investors or to preserve important water sources.28 Only later, Nash argued, did people begin to realize that in the “establishment of the first national park and state park had been preservation of *wilderness* (author’s italics).”29 While the initial reasons for land preservation were “utilitarian,” others began to notice that there was beauty too in what was being preserved, a beauty that went beyond thinking of the scenery around them as

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27 See Chapters 4, 5, and 6 of this dissertation for a more complete discussion of these campaigns.


29 Nash, 108.
"the beautiful decorations."^30

Wilderness also became associated with ideas about the American past, relating to the "frontier and pioneer experiences" which some believed "responsible for many unique and desirable national characteristics," including qualities of "virility [and] toughness" which came about through contact with "savage" wilderness.^31 For some Americans, wilderness continued to hold "aesthetic and ethical values" for "the opportunity they afforded for contemplation and worship."^32 By the first years of the twentieth century, the proponents of utilitarianism were in opposition to the goals of the preservationists, whom they "accused of wanting to lock up valuable natural resources."^33

Nash pointed out, however, that even the greatest wilderness enthusiast could not completely escape civilization as such a crusade required the use of city resources and connections.^34 This dichotomy was also visible within the image of the White Mountains, in which the increasing popularity of the region as a summer resort was a result of the influences of civilization.^35 Even the most dedicated conservationists did not suggest that the White Mountains would be better off without the tourism industry.

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^30 Ibid., 112.
^31 Ibid., 145.
^32 Ibid.
^33 Ibid., 112.
^34 Ibid., 129.
^35 In his 1901 *Our National Parks*, Muir wrote that "mountain parks and reservations" were an antidote to the "stupefying effects of the vice of over-industry and the deadly apathy of luxury." The National Park Service was established in 1916 to "promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments, and reservations...which purpose it to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." See Muir, "The Wild Parks and Forest Reservations of the West," in *Nature Writings*, 721 and "An Act to Establish a National Park Service, and for Other Purposes, Approved August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535). *America's National Park* Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
As exemplified in the concerns of the SPNHF, the conservation movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was as influenced by local concerns as by a national ideology. In 1997 environmental historian Richard Judd examined the popular roots of the conservation movement, arguing that “[c]onservation had its origins in the clash of everyday observances and dogged traditionalism on the one hand, and wrenching changes in the social and natural landscape on the other. It is a grass-roots phenomenon.”36 Judd argued that agrarian ideas were an important influence on the New England conservation ethic, where “popular conservation blended agrarian pietistic attitudes of nature, with a newer, Romantic urban based vision of the forest.”37 Local debates over “eastern landscapes and resources,” like that of the creation of the White Mountain National Forest and the campaign to save Franconia Notch “contributed heavily to America’s conservation legacy.”38 Local influences on conservation would become even more evident as women became involved increasingly involved in the conservation movement by the end of the nineteenth century. Local interests and local issues, as well as personal definitions with their natural surroundings, drew members of local, state, and national women’s clubs into conservation campaigns and reforms aimed at the creation of green spaces in cities.

As the above discussion suggests, there was a variety of issues that defined the Progressive Era conservation movement and that of the White Mountains as well. There

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36 Judd, 11-12.
37 Ibid., 91.
38 Ibid., 10.
was the evolution of a wise use and efficiency policy, particularly in relation to forestry, which was based, in part, upon agrarian ideas about man’s relationship with the land. The grass roots of the conservation movement were as important to its development as the political events on the state and federal levels. There was a sense, too, of social responsibility. The influence of anti-modernism and the back to nature movement added a sense of urgency to the preservation of the wilderness for those who feared the psychological and health benefits that would be lost should the wilderness disappear. These areas of great and unique scenic beauty had for a century been a defining component of American nationalism, viewed as God’s gifts to the American people and a reflection of His greatness. Their collective loss would be the country’s loss. Each of these aspects influenced the White Mountains conservation movement and resonated, in turn, throughout the campaign to save Franconia Notch.

The Profile House: Conspicuous Consumption Beneath the Great Stone Face

While the foundations of the conservation movement can be traced as far back as the late eighteenth century, it was not until the 1880s that there was a sense of the danger posed by the timber harvesting practices in the White Mountains. Prior to 1867, a good percentage of the forest land in the White Mountains remained under state ownership and economic development in the region focused more on the tourism industry, agriculture, and animal husbandry, smaller scale timber harvesting on privately owned woodlots.39 The decades following the Civil War saw the growth of the White Mountain tourism industry almost side by side with the timber industry.

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By the 1890s, the White Mountain tourism industry offered an opportunity for visitors to forget the cares of everyday life. As the grand hotels reached the peak of their elegant history during this decade, the United States was struggling. There were major strikes at the Homestead Steel Mills in Pennsylvania in 1892 and at the Pullman Company in Chicago in 1894, reflecting the labor troubles and financial instability of the time. The financial Panic of 1893 ushered in the depression of the 1890s, with an unemployment rate as high as twenty percent. In 1892, the Populist Party called upon the federal government to take the lead in helping farmers, laborers, and merchants against the railroads and the trusts and monopolies that were responsible for the United States’ financial woes.40

Many regions of the country suffered through this difficult period, but the White Mountains tourism industry seemed to feel little of the effects of this instability.41 While its seasonal revenues dipped in 1893, perhaps due in part to the draw of Chicago’s Columbian Exposition, August 1894 saw a slight increase, and the 1895 season was a success. Throughout the remaining years of the decade, the White Mountains would experience some of the most lucrative summer seasons on record.42

The White Mountains, of course, attracted a well-to-do clientele who could afford to spend the money and the time at a resort in the region. During the nineteenth century,


41 Tolles, *Grand Resort Hotels*, 143; Buckley, 112. See also Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982) and Chambers, especially Chapter 1.

42 Buckley, 113.
a scenic tour or vacation not only offered an escape from "the torrid confinements of the cities to cooler and more congenial country air," but also the opportunity to "stake claims to a genteel status." Thomas Starr King, through the various poetical and historical White Mountains associations he created in *The White Hills*, was among those who encouraged the development of an aesthetic based upon nature, literature, poetry, and history. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the beauty of the White Mountains and the luxury of the grand hotels offered wealthy tourists the proper setting in which to take advantage of this aesthetic gentility while at the same time demonstrating the considerable power they held over the White Mountains tourism industry; should their aesthetic experience not meet their expectations, there were other resorts to which they could take their business. The preservation of White Mountains scenery, therefore, was influenced by both aesthetic and economic considerations. Summer residents were among the first to raise their voices in support of the preservation of the White Mountains forests. Maintaining the magnificent forest and mountain surroundings was clearly in the best interest of hotel owners as well. The concern of both groups would be reflected in their involvement with the Franconia Notch campaign.

As the White Mountains region as a whole became an established and well-known resort area by the 1890s, Franconia Notch remained a favorite destination of many White

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44 Summer residents were among the Franconia Notch campaign's strongest supporters, contributing to the campaign through the NHFWC. In addition, owners of the several of the White Mountains resort hotels, including the Frank H. Abbott and Son Company, the last owner of the Profile House, produced a brochure for "our New Hampshire Visitors" in support of the Franconia Notch campaign. The brochure declared that "[i]t is hoped that you will consider it a privilege to contribute to subscribe to the purpose that this Sentinel of Franconia Notch [the Old Man of the Mountain] may continue forever his vigil over unspoiled acres of spruce and fir." "To Our New Hampshire Visitors..." February 27, 1928. Box 9, folder 19. SPNHF Collection.

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Mountains travelers, who enjoyed the increasing luxury offered at its grand hotels, the Profile and Flume Houses. The luxury of the Profile House, in particular, combined with the contrasting cliffs and dense forests surrounding it, created the ambiance of a remote mountain retreat that became so popular that by the late 1870s had its own railway line.\footnote{Tolles, \textit{Grand Resort Hotels}, 69 and caption, figure 2-24, page 66.} The setting offered guests access to clean, invigorating mountain air, while at the same time catering to their needs by providing the same city life amenities to which they were accustomed, which drew guests back year after year.

The hotel’s yearly improvements, designed with its guests in mind, were noted by several regional newspaper, among which was the \textit{White Mountain Echo and Tourist Register}, owned and edited by Markinfield Abbey in Bethlehem, New Hampshire and \textit{Among the Clouds}, which was printed at the summit of Mount Washington.\footnote{In addition to being one of the most popular hiking destinations in the White Mountains, Mount Washington also supported a series of rugged hotels. The Tip-Top House, built in 1853 and which still stands at the summit, served as the office of \textit{Among the Clouds}. The “first summer daily paper to be printed on a mountain summit,” \textit{Among the Clouds} was the idea of newspaper editor Henry M. Burt. He began publishing the newspaper in 1877, and his son Frank continued to publish the paper until 1917. In 1908, the printing office at the summit of Mount Washington, as well as the United States Signal Station, the Summit Hotel and several other buildings burned in a spectacular fire visible for miles. From 1910 until 1917, the paper was published at the base of Mount Washington. Tolles, \textit{Grand Resort Hotels}, 60-61. See also “Excerpts from \textit{Among the Clouds},” in \textit{The White Mountain Reader}, ed. Mike Dickerman (Littleton, NH: Sherwin Dodge Printers, 2000), 153; “Fire on Mount Washington, from \textit{Among the Clouds},” in \textit{Mount Washington: Narratives and Perspectives} ed. Mike Dickerman (Littleton, NH: Sherwin Dodge Printers, 2000), 198-204.} These two regional newspapers were devoted to the activities of and relating to the summer season in the White Mountains, and reflected the interests of the elite clientele that frequented Franconia Notch.

In Franconia Notch, the two grand hotels capitalized on their closeness to the natural attractions of the area, including the Flume and the Old Man of the Mountain. The first Flume House, built sometime between 1848 and 1849 and located in the southern
portion of Franconia Notch, was the first hotel purchased by Richard Taft, who later owned the Profile House as well. In The Grand Resort Hotels of the White Mountains: A Vanishing Architectural Legacy, Bryant F. Tolles, Jr. noted that the hotel’s “placement” was “strategic.”

The Flume House’s piazzas offered its guests mountain and valley views, while being close to the Flume, the Pool and the Basin. Tolles pointed out that “every effort was made here, as at the other White Mountain hotels of the era, to provide people with varied social and recreational options as well as opportunities to intimately relate to nature...” This was even more evident in the Profile House, the second Franconia Notch hotel purchased by Taft.

The Profile House grew into a major resort complex between the late 1860s and the 1890s. Its clientele included President Ulysses S. Grant (August 1869) and William H. and Cornelius Vanderbilt and their families (August 1878), as well as guests from throughout the United States and Europe. Its owners catered to “Ward McAllister’s Four Hundred,” the most well known names in Society during the Gilded Age.

The activities and facilities the Profile House offered to its guests reflected the interests of the

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47 Tolles, Grand Resort Hotels, 65. The first Flume House burned to the ground in 1871. The second Flume House, built on the site of the first, operated, according to Tolles, “in tandem” with the other Taft and Greenleaf hotel, the Profile House. Expanded and improved between the 1882 and 1883 seasons, the Flume House remained in operation until it burned in June 1918. It was not rebuilt a third time. See Tolles, Grand Resort Hotels, 129-130.

48 Tolles, Grand Resort Hotels, 66.

49 In 1874, the “Franconia Notch trade was estimated to be worth $120,000, or twice the area’s agricultural income.” Fogg’s Gazetteer estimated that same year that the income from the White Mountains was $1,000,000, with approximately 20,000 visitors passing through between June and September. Buckley, 68, 69, Fogg, 61.

50 Abbott, 13. To the White Mountains came the members of New York, Boston, and Midwestern society, including the society minister Henry Ward Beecher, whose late summer services at the Twin Mountain House in Carroll, New Hampshire attracted hundreds of people each Sunday. For a more complete discussion of New York society during the Gilded Age (1870-1900) see Jerry E. Patterson, The First Four Hundred: Mrs. Astor’s New York during the Gilded Age New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 2000.)
well-to-do clientele that frequented the hotel, as well as many of the other White Mountain grand hotels. There was a billiard hall, a bowling alley, a music room, a post and telegraph office, a barbershop, and a souvenir shop. By the 1890s, activities at the hotel included badminton, tennis, croquet, and golf, as well as fishing, horseback and wagon riding, and hiking.51

 Guests could also take a cruise around Echo Lake on a little steamer or make use of the rowboats on both Echo and Profile Lakes. The August 3, 1881 issue of the *White Mountain Echo* noted the athletic events at the Profile House, including a one hundred yard dash, in which eight men participated, a tug of war, a high kicking contest, and a wheelbarrow race, where “blindfolded [participants were] turned around three times, and need[ed] to cross the finish line 50 yards away.” Two men actually finished the race, while one wandered off behind the hotel “encouraged by much applause from the onlookers.”52 Some hotels even fielded baseball teams.53

 There were many indoor planned activities as well. There were dances at the Profile House, as well as a more elaborate affair held once a summer at the Maplewood Casino in Bethlehem.54 The Profile House’s menu was a selection of sophisticated dishes that benefited not only from foods imported from Boston and New York, but also from the fresh produce and dairy products that Richard Taft’s Profile Farm supplied to the

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52 Bethlehem (New Hampshire) *White Mountain Echo*, 3 September 1881, 19. In subsequent citations, the newspaper’s title will be abbreviated as *WME*.

53 The August 17, 1878 issue of the *White Mountain Echo* noted that in Bethlehem, the Town Nine defeated the Sinclair House Nine 8 to 5. “Base Ball at Bethlehem,” *WME*, 17 August 1878, 12.

54 Abbott, 18. The Grand Ball and Cotillion was the “high light” of the summer season for Abbott. The Maplewood Casino would host a truly gala event, where the “cream of the White Mountain summer cotillion set” dances in full evening dress until “almost dawn.”
hotel. On Sunday August 13, 1876, the menu served in the first Profile House’s 50 foot by 130 foot dining room, allegedly “the largest dining room in New England,” included a choice of two soups, boiled salmon in egg sauce, three boiled and several roasted meats in a variety of sauces, three cold dishes, eleven entrees, twelve vegetable choices, fourteen relishes, seven pies and puddings, and sixteen other dessert choices. The wine list included Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin Champagne at $4.00 per quart, clarets, a variety of red and white wines from all over the world, sherries, ports, brandies, and ales. Frank O. Carpenter’s 1898 Guidebook to the Franconia Notch and the Pemigewasset Valley believed that it was “a cuisine of unrivalled quality and variety.” It was conspicuous consumption at its best.

Music also played an important part of the activities of the Profile House, again reflecting the tastes of the hotel’s guests. On August 14, 1877, a “Grand Vocal and Instrumental Concert” program included the “Air of Elizabeth” from Richard Wagner’s opera “Taunhauser,”(sic) sung by Signora Luisa Cappiani. There was a duet from Mozart’s opera “The Marriage of Figaro” and a selection from Mendelsohn, among others. In July 1878, the White Mountain Echo noted that “Messrs. Taft and Greenleaf, of the Profile House, are ever studying how to make the time pass pleasantly for their guests. Besides having the famous Baldwin Orchestra to discourse its sweet strands daily

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55 The Profile House Farm also grew its own grapes and had a stocked trout pond. Hancock, 31.


57 Frank O. Carpenter, Guidebook to the Franconia Notch and the Pemigewasset Valley (Boston: Alexander Moore, 1898), 89.
in the grand parlor and the verandas, they sent them out to the lake Wednesday afternoon, where they gave an orchestra concert." In 1893, an ensemble of members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, "unsurpassed by any [other orchestra] in the White Mountains" also played "every afternoon and evening" on the verandas and in the grand parlor, which could seat up to five hundred people. By the end of the nineteenth century, the social activities and service at the White Mountains grand hotels were as much an attraction to the high society guests as were the region's natural beauties.

The Profile House, like other grand hotels, kept improving its facilities in order to attract both old and new customers. Its reputation - "having all the delights and comforts with which modern times surround the traveler in the most luxurious city hotels, await the guest in this eyrie in the heart of the primeval forest" - was one that Richard Taft and Colonel Charles Greenleaf worked hard to maintain. Beginning in the late 1860s, a variety of cottages was constructed on the property at the base of Cannon Mountain. Ranging from eight to seventeen rooms, these cottages offered "the opportunity for family quiet and seclusion free from all cares of housekeeping." By 1923 there were twenty cottages "occupied through the summer by prominent families of Boston, New

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59 WME, 27 July 1878.


61 Carpenter, 89.

62 Ibid.
York and other cities, who constitute a permanent clientele for the hotel, unexcelled in value and influence."\textsuperscript{63}

In 1905, Greenleaf and the owners of the cottages decided that the main building of the Profile House complex would be torn down and replaced with a more up-to-date structure. The "New Profile House," which opened in July 1906, reflected the changes in the hotel industry. There were now two entrances, one for automobiles and one for carriages and horses, "a grand foyer... with walls richly decorated in red and handsome white columns," a two story dining room and a "cupola 35 feet high."\textsuperscript{64} The guest rooms had "a large closet, electric lights and steam heat" as well as "a great number of private baths."\textsuperscript{65} The new complex, with a capacity to accommodate five hundred guests, was "considered a matter of state pride and interest, as well as one of personal or business success" for Colonel Greenleaf.\textsuperscript{66}

Extant twentieth century photographs of the Profile House show a complex of buildings nestled in Franconia Notch, in the shadows of, but not overwhelmed by, Cannon Mountain and Eagle Cliff. An undated brochure produced by the Profile House noted that it was the "largest hotel in New England" as well as one of the most well known and was "appreciated by thousands of summer visitors."\textsuperscript{67} Other than a short

\begin{footnotes}
\item[64] \textit{Among the Clouds} July 1906, as quoted in Tolles, \textit{Grand Resort Hotels}, 199.
\item[65] Ibid.
\item[66] Metcalf, 75.
\item[67] Richard Taft and Henry Greenleaf, "Profile House, Franconia Notch, White Mountains," (n.p, n.d) Hancock, Frances Ann Johnson Papers, Special Collections, ML/36, 3:6, Rauer Special Collections, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire. The brochure most likely dates from the 1870s, as it includes a notation about the new Flume House, which had been rebuilt between 1871 and 1872. Tolles, \textit{Grand Resort Hotels}, 129.
\end{footnotes}
notation about the accommodations at the Flume House, the brochure focused primarily on a variety of quotations about the beauty of Franconia Notch, including Thomas Starr King’s description of the region. It included short descriptions of Profile and Echo Lakes, as well as about the Flume, the Pool, and the Basin. The Old Man of the Mountain was described as “the most remarkable natural curiosity in this country, if not in the world.” A similar advertisement was included in issues of the White Mountain Echo. Both the advertisement and brochure noted the Profile House’s proximity to the natural attractions of Franconia Notch, as well as those in other parts of the White Mountains.

The benefits of staying at the Profile House were also included in Sweester’s The White Mountains: A Handbook for Travellers (1876) and Carpenter’s The Franconia Notch and Pemigewasset Valley (1898). Sweester’s guidebook declared the Profile House “one of the best summer hotels in the United States,” and Carpenter raved about the food served at the hotel and the service of its staff, which made guests feel welcome. The Profile House offered “interesting excursions for ‘men of action’” and “comfortable verandas” from which to view the “rich beauty of forests and cliff” for “quieter souls.” The hotel offered luxurious accommodations at the most “loftily situated” location in the White Mountains at 1,974 feet. The Profile House management offered its guests the best of both the created and the natural worlds of Franconia Notch. It was a far cry from the early days of the White Mountain hotel trade, where the traveler

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68 Ibid.

69 Ibid.

70 Sweester, 260; Carpenter, 89.

71 Sweester, 260.
often had to make do with a bed on the floor and a simple dinner at Ethan Allen Crawford's table.

By the end of the nineteenth century a very definite summer season, or "heated term," as the *White Mountain Echo* described it, developed, revolving around the needs and activities of the guests of the various hotels and resort towns of the White Mountains. In Franconia Notch, nature had become "incorporated," where many different aspects of nature became commodities to be consumed.\(^7^2\) The perceived values of the Notch mountains, the Flume, and the Old Man of the Mountain now went beyond those aesthetic values associated with their scenic, Romantic beauty. By the late nineteenth century the natural features of Franconia Notch had become capital, contributing to the success of the Profile House and its continuing expansion. Nature had become an extension of the social experiences of grand hotel life, utilized by both hotel management and guests as a spectacular backdrop for cultural events and athletic activities. Guests utilized this setting to

As the most remote regions of the White Mountains became more accessible as smaller railroad lines and better roads were built, so began the next stage in the development of the vision of the White Mountains, to that of a threatened wilderness. As industrialization, in the forms first of the railroad and later the timber baron, made incursions into Franconia Notch, the region became a focus in the call for the preservation of the unique scenery of the White Mountain region.

Save Franconia Notch!: The Beginnings of the White Mountains Conservation Movement

The first call to save Franconia Notch from destruction came early, even before the worst ravages of timber harvesting in the region were evident. In Franconia Notch, the White Mountains, and elsewhere, the success of the tourism industry depended upon continuing to improve and expand upon the services and facilities offered to visitors. Not only were the grand hotels of the White Mountains competing with each other for the guests who came to the mountains each summer, but there came increased competition from regional resorts in New York’s Adirondack Mountains, on the Maine and Massachusetts coasts, in Newport, Rhode Island, and, of course, the new parks in the West. As the West became more accessible, so did the nation’s first national park, Yellowstone (1872) and Yosemite, which became a California state park in 1864, and a national park in 1890.  

Richard Taft and Charles Greenleaf were interested in finding ways to increase business to the Profile House through improving transportation to and from the hotel. Until 1879, people interested in Franconia Notch and the Profile and Flume Houses took the Boston, Concord and Montreal railway line to Bethlehem, north of Franconia Notch. It took until 1882 to bring a railway line to the resort town of North Woodstock, at the southern end of the Notch. A stagecoach ride of several miles from Bethlehem or later from North Woodstock would bring guests to the front door of the Profile House. During the 1878 season, Taft, Greenleaf, and several other investors formed the Franconia Notch and Profile Railroad Corporation and proposed constructing a narrow gauge nine-mile

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73 For a discussion of tourism in the West, see Anne Farrar Hyde’s *An American Vision: The Western Landscape and National Culture, 1820-1920*. 

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railroad from Bethlehem to the Profile House, thereby eliminating the need for a slower, bumpier coach ride. It was a significant financial commitment on the part of the Profile House. The total cost of the new line was estimated to be in the area of $100,000. 74 There were some, however, who did not necessarily want to exchange the old ways for the new.

On August 10, 1878, the *White Mountain Echo* took a stand on conservation issues. In an article entitled “SAVE FRANCONIA NOTCH!” the newspaper summarized “[a] timely and eloquent protest” from a letter published in the Boston *Advertiser*. 75 The “protest” came from a “concerned citizen” who called the proposed railroad “a threatened act of vandalism.” His words anticipated those of Muir in response to the proposed destruction of Hetch Hetchy: 76

The Franconia Notch is one of the few grand, wild, yet accessible bits of natural scenery in New England yet left uncontaminated by railroads, and now, to the horror of everyone who has visited this spot, save for those pecuniarily interested in the proposed desecration, a railroad to run through the Notch is projected and likely to be built. It will simply ruin the place-and for what? To enable people to reach it a little more quickly....The pass is so narrow that the railroad would obtrude itself upon the eye from every point....There has been ruin enough of this kind wrought in our country. No spot has been sacred. Everything that came in the way of utilitarianism, as understood from a money-making point of view, has been sacrificed. It is time that this was stopped, and no better place to stop it [than Franconia Notch]... 77

The August 31 issue of the *White Mountain Echo* included an excerpt from the Boston *Evening Telegram*, which argued that “maybe distance from the rails and the stage ride are [some] of the blessings of the place as a summer resort. For cool air, for splendid

74 *WME*, 24 August 1878.

75 *WME*, 10 August 1878.

76 “Save Franconia Notch!” *WME*, 10 August 1878.

77 Ibid.
scenery, for walks, rides, and for trout fishing, Franconia Notch has no rival.” In the opinion of the *White Mountain Echo*, any change to Franconia Notch would clearly be a detriment to guests’ experience, even if that change came in the name of convenience.

Over the objections of the “concerned citizen,” the Profile and Franconia Railroad began operations in the summer of 1879, although the *White Mountain Echo* noted that there were still two Profile House stagecoach runs daily at the height of the season. The railroad itself was “unseen and almost unheard” as it brought passengers the ten miles from Bethlehem to “a little depot hidden among the trees.”

It is interesting that a newspaper devoted to the hotel trade and social activities of the White Mountains would have objected to a new convenience designed to make guests’ experiences more pleasurable. Of course, should the unique beauty of Franconia Notch be altered or damaged in the name of convenience those alterations could adversely affect the possibilities for future “pecuniary” benefits for the White Mountains hotel industry. While recognizing the consequences of the damages to the beauty of Franconia Notch, the *White Mountain Echo* did not include within its columns any commentary about the other environmental consequences of the expansion of the White Mountain tourism industry beyond the alteration or destruction of scenery. An increase in the number of tourists would further tax the resources of the White Mountains region. There would be increased water usage, increased sewage, and an increase in fuel

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78 *WME*, 31 August 1878.

79 Carpenter, 89. The Profile and Franconia Notch Railroad operated as a private corporation until 1892 when the Boston, Concord, and Montreal Railroad took over the line. After operating “for several years at a considerable loss,” the BC & M Railroad abandoned the line in 1921. Most guests came to the hotel by automobile by the early 1920s. See Frederick W. Kilbourne, “A Closed Chapter in White Mountain History: The Franconia Notch as a Summer Resort,” *Appalachia* XVI 3 (February 1926), 310.
consumption at both the hotel complexes and by the railroads, should the various lines need to add cars or increase the number of trains.\footnote{80} People were certainly aware of the dangers of unhealthy water and air, as evidenced in the many advertisements about the health benefits of the mountains. Carpenter asserted that the Pemigewasset Valley, the location of his own summer cottage, was “a perfect health resort. Malaria is unknown...The drinking water is of remarkable purity and the drainage is in most cases sanitary.”\footnote{81} Bethlehem was thought to be particularly healthy, “where hay fever suffers find instant and permanent relief.”\footnote{82} By the 1870s, the town’s reputation for helping those with hay fever convinced the American Hay Fever Association to hold its annual conference in Bethlehem, thus providing in the “many victims of this distressing malady” a “permanent clientele for the hotels” during August and September, when Bethlehem became the “Sneezers Paradise.”\footnote{83} In 1877 and 1878, Bethlehem completed a significant number of improvements, including improving water and sewage systems, as well as making a more consistent effort to water town streets to keep the dust from bothering those guests looking for “pure, bracing air...a constant and health-giving tonic.”\footnote{84}

As long as the improvements implemented by the hotel industry did not disrupt the familiar landscape of the White Mountains there was little protest from the guests, the hotel owners, or the regional press. Even when the forest cover of the White Mountains

\footnote{80} Tolles, \textit{Grand Resort Hotels}, 144.

\footnote{81} Carpenter, 130-131.

\footnote{82} Ibid., 131.

\footnote{83} Kilbourne, \textit{Chronicles}, 332-334. See also Child, 158.

\footnote{84} Buckley, 66-67; Carpenter, 131.
began disappearing it would take decades before a major conservation effort was implemented in the region.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the three most valuable industries in New Hampshire were manufacturing, the timber and growing pulp and paper industry, and tourism. All three were dependent in some way upon the White Mountains for survival. The headwaters and tributaries of the Androscoggin, Saco, Merrimack, and Connecticut Rivers flow from the White Mountains. The mills located on these rivers, such as the Amoskeag Mills on the Merrimack River in Manchester, required a steady supply of water to maintain production and profits. The pristine mountain scenery with its vast forests was one of the strongest assets of the White Mountains tourism industry. Those same trees that covered the slopes and valleys of the White Mountains were also a fortune in waiting for land speculators and timber barons. Once wide-scale timber harvesting began in the White Mountains there arose a threat to the well being of the first two industries, manufacturing and tourism, as well as to the longevity of the timber industry itself. The White Mountains conservation movement would provide the means through which to repair the damage and manage the forest resources of the region more effectively.

The utilization of New Hampshire's timber resources can be traced to when the first Europeans settled the seacoast towns of Portsmouth and Exeter in the seventeenth century. By the early nineteenth century, increasing agricultural production, rather than wood products, was the primary reason for the cutting of New Hampshire trees. The resulting cleared fields were planted with corn, wheat, and hops, with New Hampshire

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85 Charles D. Smith, “A Mountain Lover Mourns” New England Quarterly 33 (March-December 1960), 38. During the 1889 season, the tourism industry was worth an estimated $5 million dollars.
producing one-sixth of the hops in the United States in 1840. In addition, livestock, particularly sheep, grazed on these fields and were an important source of revenue between 1830 and 1860. The growth of factories in southern New Hampshire also added to the need for cleared land. By 1850, the land needed for industry, combined with that needed for agriculture and sheep farming, resulted in the clearing of approximately two-thirds of the southern half of the state, with New Hampshire's forest cover at 48% in 1860, its lowest recorded point.86

New Hampshire's forest cover percentage was on the rise during the late 1860s and 1870s, however. Harold Fisher Wilson's study of nineteenth century towns in northern New England, including those in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, trace a population loss in the region overall, particularly after the 1870s.87 Wilson believed that there were several reasons for this. The first was the increasing industrialization of southern New England. The mills at Manchester, New Hampshire were among the largest manufacturing concerns in the state from the early nineteenth century until well into the twentieth. As their work forces expanded, people living in northern parts of the state migrated south, leaving their farms behind. In addition, the availability of abundant and cheap land in western New York, the Midwest, and later the Great Plains, affected the agricultural profitability of the farms.88 As people left to take advantage of the

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87 Wilson, 8-10. See also Hal S. Barron, Those Who Stayed Behind: Rural Society in Nineteenth Century New England (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984). Barron's argument differs from Wilson's in that while he noted the population loss from the town of Chelsea, Vermont, Barron argued that this strengthened, rather than weakened the town through the increasing homogeneity of the population.

88 Wilson, 8-10.
opportunities offered in southern New Hampshire and elsewhere, cleared farmland became overgrown with trees. The loss of revenue from farming and the increasing need for timber in the United States after the 1860s turned attention to the timber resources of New Hampshire, which included the immediate potential to be found in the existing northern forests as well as the future potential in the young forests growing on abandoned farmland.89

The economy of northern New England, according to Wilson, followed a series of developments from the self-sufficiency of the family farm from the late eighteenth century through the 1830s, to a transition towards a more commercially based agriculture with the arrival of the railroads between 1840 and 1870. From the 1870s until the end of the century, there appeared to be a marked decline in both population and agricultural production in parts of the region.90 The final thirty years of the nineteenth century produced the reality of the “abandoned farm,” of empty cellar holes, over-grown fields and collapsed barns.91

C. Francis Belcher, in The Logging Railroads of New Hampshire, argued that the primary reason for the delay in the large-scale usage of New Hampshire’s timber resources was ownership.92 Until 1867, the state of New Hampshire still owned a


90 Wilson, 8-9.

91 Ibid., 9. In a sense, the summer trade in northern New England would eventually benefit from these abandoned farms, as affluent families purchased them and made them into summer homes, some even trying to recreate a working farm on the properties. See also Dona Brown, Inventing New England, especially Chapter 5.

92 C. Francis Belcher, “The Logging Railroads of the White Mountains, Part I” Appalachia XXV (December, 1959): 517. Belcher’s work on the logging railroads of the White Mountains appeared in Appalachia in nine parts between 1959 and 1965. First references to each article will offer the complete citation, while subsequent references will be cited as Belcher, Part I, or Part IX, as the case may be.

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considerable amount of land in the White Mountains. That year, in order to raise money to “benefit a ‘literary fund’ for school financing and maintenance,” of New Hampshire’s common schools, the state sold its final 172,000 acres of public land throughout the state and in the White Mountains. The land in the White Mountains was sold to “local landowners and land speculators” for $26,000.\footnote{Wallace, 33. See also Kilbourne, \textit{Chronicles}, 384; Heffeman and Stecker, 157.} Mount Washington, one of the jewels of the White Mountains, was sold for $500.\footnote{Buckley, 95. Mount Washington was sold to Aurin M. Chase “who successfully lobbied a bill through the [New Hampshire] legislature authorizing the state to sell it to him. Chase then deeded the mountain to David Pingree of Salem, Massachusetts and E.S. Coe of Bangor, Maine, who repaid Chase $500 and an additional $2,000 for his services.” After years of legal action regarding the rights of the owners and those of the Mount Washington Railway over rental fees, right of way, and the ownership of the summit of Mount Washington, in 1897 “Pingree and Coe sold...Mount Washington and Mounts Clay, Jefferson, and Adams to the Bartlett Lumber Company for a reputed $100,000.” Buckley, 96-98.} The sale of the White Mountains land, the arrival of the railroad and the post-Civil War industrial boom changed the economic and practical dynamics of the timber situation in the region. Spruce and fir were needed for the pulp that was used to produce paper, and the relatively untouched White Mountains forests were rich in both species of trees. The first major lumber operation in the White Mountains began in 1870 with the construction in Whitefield, New Hampshire, of the John River Railroad. In fifteen years, this company grossed over half a million dollars annually, employed over 300 men, and owned 30,000 acres.\footnote{Belcher, Part I: 523. In 1888, Brown’s Lumber Company donated one acre on Mount Madison to the Appalachian Mountain Club. The Appalachian Mountain Club built its first alpine hut on the site.} According to Belcher’s research, between 1870 and 1950 there were seventeen railroads operating in the White Mountains, although there might also
have been additional smaller lines of which there are no extant records.96 During the height of the White Mountains timber industry, the Pemigewasset Wilderness, the region between Franconia Notch and Zealand Valley, was affected by the land speculation and timber harvesting. The controversy about the region that arose after 1890 in particular contributed to the call to save the White Mountains forests.

The availability of timber and the increasing number of railways in the White Mountains region brought the annual timber harvest value to $1.7 million by 1870.97 By 1880, when logging began on the banks of the Pemigewasset, Androscoggin, Saco, and Swift Rivers, the forest products value reached $5.6 million. By 1890, New Hampshire’s timber was worth $9.2 million and over 800 large- and small-scale lumber mills were in operation in New Hampshire, mainly in the White Mountains.98 Ten years later, the paper and pulp industry alone in New Hampshire was worth almost $7.2 million.99 The industry moved quickly to capitalize on the hundreds of thousands of uncut acres of spruce and fir trees that were available and became an important economic force in the state.

Many of the great timber barons of the White Mountain timber industry operated in the tradition of the robber barons of the Gilded Age, for whom immediate profit was the goal. But there were scattered attempts to work towards managing timber production by selective cutting of trees. The Saunders family, who owned the Sawyer River Lumber

96 Wallace, 33.

97 Ibid.

98 Hill, 27 and Wallace, 33. See also Judd, 99-100.

Company, which was located in Livermore, New Hampshire, just east of Lincoln, cut parts of their 30,000 acres three times between 1877 and 1937. Selective cutting meant that the Saunders focused their efforts on certain tree species (spruce and some hardwoods) of a specific diameter each time the timber was harvested, allowing less mature trees to continue to grow. There was usually a twenty-five to thirty year gap between harvests.

This was not, however, the more common method utilized by White Mountain timber barons. Thousands of acres were clear-cut, meaning that every tree in an area was cut, regardless of size and species. Only the most valuable trees would be used and the remaining trees and debris, known as slash, were left on the ground. This slash was often the cause of devastating forest fires. The Saunders family’s selective cutting practices left little behind to fuel fires caused by lightning strikes or sparks from locomotives. The clear-cutting practices of the Henry and Sons Company, however, resulted in widespread fires in the late 1880s, in 1903, and again in 1907.

James Everell Henry’s Henry and Sons Timber Company would become legendary in the White Mountains timber industry. At one point, the company owned over 100,000 acres in the Zealand River Valley, and acreage in the towns of Carroll, Bethlehem, and Lincoln. Henry was responsible for building the lumber village of Zealand and for the revitalization of the town of Lincoln, both the sites of his lumber and pulp mills. Henry

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102 Ibid.

103 Ibid.
began logging in the Zealand Valley sometime in the early 1880s, taking advantage in 1884 of the right of way given to the New Zealand Valley Railroad by the state of New Hampshire.\textsuperscript{104} Having a rail line enabled him to increase his timber harvests from the previously inaccessible region around Zealand Notch, south of Crawford Notch.

In less than ten years, the Boston \textit{Transcript} noted that “[t]he beautiful Zealand Valley is one vast scene of waste and desolation; immense heaps of sawdust roll down the slopes to choke the stream…”\textsuperscript{105} In 1890, a survey done by the J.E. Henry and Sons timber company near Franconia Notch created concern among summer residents.\textsuperscript{106} By 1892, Henry, with the assistance of land transfers from the head of the New Hampshire Land Company, George B. James, and from George Van Dyke, who had extensive land holdings near Pittsburg in northern New Hampshire, moved into Lincoln, just south of Franconia Notch. The advantage of this area, aside from its essentially untouched forests, was that in 1882, North Woodstock, just southwest of Lincoln, had become the terminus of the Pemigewasset Railroad, connecting the region to Plymouth, New Hampshire and therefore to Concord, New Hampshire and southern New England.\textsuperscript{107}

As the clear-cut slopes of the White Mountains became more obvious, protest arose over the timber practices of the land speculators. In February 1888, the weekly publication \textit{Garden and Forest} included an editorial by historian Francis Parkman. In the

\textsuperscript{104} Belcher, “Logging Railroads of the White Mountains Part IV: The Zealand Valley Railroad,” \textit{Appalachia} XXVII (December 1961): 359. Belcher noted that the new railroad was intended to connect Woodsville, New Hampshire, on the western border of the state, with the Crawford Notch region, which would offer a new route to this popular tourist region. Belcher noted that by 1906 the “shorter, inside route to the heart of vacationland was too costly…” Ibid: 361.

\textsuperscript{105} \textit{Boston Transcript}, 20 July 1892, as cited in Belcher, Part IV: 353.

\textsuperscript{106} \textit{Bicentennial Book of the Town of Lincoln 1764-1964} (n.p., 1964), 27.

\textsuperscript{107} Tolles, \textit{Grand Resort Hotels}, 166.
editorial, Parkman noted that the “White Mountains...[yield] a sure and abundant income by attracting tourists and their money...” to what he called “unique objects of attractions”. However, Parkman went on to point out that

[These mountains owe three-fourths of their charm to the primeval forests that still cover them...When land speculators get possession of forests they generally cut down all the trees and strip the land at once, with an eye to immediate profit. The more conservative, and, in the end, the more profitable management consists in selecting and cutting out the valuable timber when it has matured, leaving the younger growth for future use....A fair amount of timber may be thus withdrawn from the White Mountains, without impairing them as the permanent source of a vastly greater income from the attraction they offer to an increasing flux of tourists. At the same time the streams flowing from the White Mountains, and especially the Pemigewasset, a main source of the Merrimack, will be saved from the alternate droughts and freshets to which all streams are exposed that take their rise in mountains denuded of forests. The subject is one of [great] importance to the mill owners along these rivers.”

Responsible forestry practices would benefit the two more valuable industries in the state, manufacturing and tourism, while adding longevity to a growing source of income, timber harvesting.

In December 1888, Garden and Forest editor Charles S. Sargent again reflected on the forests of the White Mountains forests. Commenting on the planned six million feet of timber scheduled to be cut in the vicinity of Mount Washington during the winter of 1889, Sargent pointed out that “[the timber] might be cut, if proper care was taken in doing it....But care is never taken, or very rarely, in American wood-cutting operations, and it is a foregone conclusion that in this case it will be followed by disastrous fires...” Sargent believed that it was in the best interests “of the public that the White

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109 C.S. Sargent, Garden and Forest I (December 12, 1888): 493. See also Charles D. Smith: 38.
Mountains forests should be perpetuated in all their beauty and usefulness." He suggested that a group, whether the state of New Hampshire, the railroads, or the hotel owners, purchase the White Mountains forests. Such a purchase would benefit the state through "abundant water supply and in the yearly disbursement of thousands of visitors from beyond the borders of the state." If the railroads or the hotel owners purchased the forests, these could be made "perpetually attractive, which would mean perpetual preservation of the forests."

In response to the increasing concern over the use of New Hampshire's timber resources, the state had established a temporary forest committee to investigate the problem in 1881, and a permanent Forestry Commission followed in 1893. The Forestry Commission's role as educator was an important one, as members of the commission were invited to speak at a variety of meetings, including that of the Appalachian Mountain Club in 1893. That same year, the concern over the White Mountains forests found its way into print, on both the regional and national levels.

The February 1893 issue of the Atlantic Monthly magazine featured "The White Mountain Forests in Peril," written by the Reverend Julius H. Ward, author in 1890 of The White Mountains: A Guide to Their Interpretation. Ward's article was effusive in its descriptive language and perhaps exaggerated the situation in 1893, but his concern for the future was genuine. Ward began by noting that the White Mountains were

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110 Sargent: 493.
111 Ibid., 494.
112 Ibid., 493-494.
"rightly called the Switzerland of America." But these mountains, with "attractions unique and individual" were in danger from the owners of the region's forests. According to Ward, the "increasing scarcity of spruce lumber...and the manufacture of paper from wood pulp" caused owners to cut all varieties of trees on their properties, to the point that "the vitality of the soil to produce trees" was also destroyed. Entire regions once covered with trees had been devastated, including the regions north and east of Crawford Notch to the base of Mount Washington and the area north of Mount Washington. Ward described the devastation in region in Biblical terms, declaring that the Brown Lumber Company had "cut off the tree as the locusts in Egypt destroyed the blades of grass in the days of Pharoah."

Ward was afraid that because the White Mountains were "within easy reach of the market" and because there was a tariff on the importation of Canadian lumber, the forest owners would "push their best lumber into the market with all possible speed" while doing irreparable damage to the region's rivers, particularly the Merrimack and Pemigewasset. The problem was, Ward believed, that there were no laws to regulate the forests of the White Mountains. While the state of New Hampshire had created a Forestry Commission, Ward noted that the Commission had done nothing "beyond excellent essays on the different conditions of the mountain forests."

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115 Ward: 248.

116 Ibid.

117 Ibid., 249.

118 Ibid., 251.
privately owned, “there is public interests in [the White Mountain forests] throughout the
nation…and the demand exists that the White Mountain region shall be in some way
regarded as public property.”119

In addition, the relationships between those most concerned with the White
Mountain forests were complex ones. The railroads, dependent upon the tourists who
came to the mountains expecting to see undamaged green slopes, also worked with the
forests’ owners through leasing them track to enable their timber to reach the market.

Ward suggested that the only fair way to manage the forests would be to have the state of New Hampshire purchase “an agreement” with the forest owners limiting the size of the
trees that could be cut. Funding this would be difficult, but Ward suggested that a
combination of state funding and private contributions might provide the means to
manage the White Mountains forests.120 Ward was eloquent in his appeal on behalf of
the White Mountains forests, declaring that

[the]ese White Mountain forests have the nature of a perpetual estate. They must be
preserved…like ancient traditions…Much depends upon the attitude of outside people
towards the White Mountain region. If the public spirit of men of wealth could be
aroused, and large contributions should be made to secure the protection of these
forests for all time, it might result in a popular movement that would not only preserve
the integrity of these mountain forests, but make them immensely more popular to
multitudes of people than they have ever been before.121

In Ward’s opinion, it was up to the New Hampshire legislature and the Forestry
Commission to take the first steps.

119 Ibid., 252.
120 Ibid., 254.
121 Ibid.
Ward believed that if "the sturdy farmers of the State, its capitalists, and all the people who possess public spirit" banded together, they would be able to protect New Hampshire's "unique distinction," which was "having a domain which nature has pointed out for a great public park...a people's hunting and tramping ground, where the domain is as free as the air, and where every American feels that the endowments of nature are as permanent and secure as the Constitution."\(^{122}\) In a phrase that would be repeated often during the Franconia Notch campaign over thirty years later, "every patriotic American" had a duty to protect the White Mountains' "beauty and utility and integrity...amid all the dangers which threaten [the White Mountains'] existence."\(^{123}\) To Ward, the natural beauty of the White Mountains was as important to the definition of the national character of the United States as the principles of freedom upon which the country was founded. There were others, too, who felt as Ward did, and their opinions were voiced later in 1893 through the pages of the *White Mountain Echo*.

The year 1893 was an important one for the White Mountains for several reasons. In addition to the nationwide coverage of the peril to the White Mountains forests as represented through Ward's *Atlantic Monthly* article, the New Hampshire building at the World's Fair Columbian Exposition in Chicago that summer was overrun with visitors, as noted by the Fair commissioner from New Hampshire, Frank W. Rollins.\(^ {124}\) The White Mountains' exhibit at the Fair "opened up a new world" to those Europeans and Americans who were not familiar with the region. The *White Mountain Echo* reported

\(^{122}\) Ibid., 254-255.

\(^{123}\) Ibid., 255.

that Russians officials visited Mount Washington and other sites in the White Mountains region soon after they visited the Exhibition's New Hampshire building.  

In order to promote the region, the *White Mountain Echo* and the town of Bethlehem together took out a full-page advertisement in the Columbia Exposition guidebook, which advertised the White Mountains as a "rewarding detour on the route between Boston and Chicago." This increase in publicity, Rollins noted, would "be the direct means of causing thousands of people to visit the State."

The White Mountains were gaining nation-wide and international attention through the display at the Columbian Exposition and through the distribution of the *White Mountain Echo* to a variety of hotels and resorts throughout the Northeast and the world. According to the July 15, 1893 edition of the *White Mountain Echo*, the newspaper could be found in Switzerland, Belgium, England, and France. But the exposure would do little good if the White Mountains' forests, one of the region's strongest selling points, were in danger of disappearing.

The *White Mountain Echo* took up the cause of the White Mountains forests by addressing many of the issues raised by Ward earlier in the year. The lack of action on the part of the state of New Hampshire was of real concern. In 1890, Ward and the *White Mountain Echo* had obtained 3,000 signatures on petitions sent to the New Hampshire legislature asking for the "preservation of our woods." These petitions had been

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125 Ibid.

126 Buckley, 111. Although the *White Mountain Echo* did what it could to encourage White Mountains towns, hotel owners, and the railroads to contribute money for a more elaborate advertising display, there was little support among those most concerned with the tourism business of the White Mountains.

127 *WME*, 15 July 1893, 5.

ineffective, leading the *White Mountain Echo* to believe that the members of the legislature in the opinion of the paper, had “such venal proclivities that they sacrifice patriotism to pelf.” Money, it seemed, spoke to the legislature more than the petitions with their 3,000 signatures, according to the *White Mountain Echo*’s sources.

The July 22, 1893 edition *White Mountain Echo* reprinted an article from the *Manufacturer’s Gazette*, which stated that

> [t]he White Mountain country is the most accessible spot combining natural scenery and forest value. These mountains are within one day’s travel of 12,000,000 people, and within four hours easy railway ride from Boston....They should be the pride of our citizens, and a great attraction, not only to New Englanders, but to the Western people and foreigners.

Like Ward, the article also noted the importance of the White Mountains to those living outside of the region. For tourists, the White Mountains offered “[a] sojourn in the country during the hot month of the summer [that] is no longer regarded as a luxury that only the favored few can afford. It is a privilege that a very large majority of the population may enjoy, if they will, and there is no doubt that it profits them in the long run in more abundant health and in bodily and mental vigor.” For “a large number of brain workers and toilers in the realm of commerce...a respite from labor is absolutely necessary.” Many of the “large number of brain workers and toilers” and their families supported the White Mountain tourism industry, and the reputation of the region as a

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131 “Prospects of the Season,” *WME*, 7 July 1894, 7.

132 Ibid.
Romantic wilderness was an important one to maintain, in order to ensure the economic stability of the industry.

In July 1893, the *White Mountain Echo* broke the news that tourists who were usually “charmed” by “the beauty of [Franconia Notch’s] foliage, the loveliness of its lakes, and the sight of the stern Old Man...will be shocked to find that the ruthless lumberman has invaded [the Notch].”\(^{133}\) The land in question was just below the Basin, in between the Flume House and the Profile House, and extended from the east bank of the Pemigewasset to the summits of the Franconia Mountain range.\(^{134}\) It was owned by F.C. Whitehouse of Concord, New Hampshire, who not only cut timber where people could see, but who also built “unsightly saw-mills and several shanties” for his workers.\(^{135}\) The *White Mountain Echo* believed that the “passage of a cyclone could not have produced a worse picture” than the work of Mr. Whitehouse and his mills.

The *White Mountain Echo* made a point of following the story throughout the summer of 1893. The July 8 edition not only contained an editorial on the “Franconia Notch Outrage,” but also reprinted editorials from the Concord, New Hampshire *Monitor* and the Boston *Herald*.\(^{136}\) In addition, the paper noted that transporting the timber to the North Woodstock railroad station had so damaged the Notch road, which was maintained by the state, that it was almost “impassible.”\(^{137}\) Any further damage to the trees was averted, however, when “the owner of all the property along the road through the Notch”

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\(^{133}\) “Vandalism,” *WME*, 1 July 1893, 5.

\(^{134}\) Ibid.

\(^{135}\) Ibid.


\(^{137}\) *WME*, 8 July 1893, 5.
purchased fifty acres of the "devastated property" that was closest to the Notch road.\textsuperscript{138} The purchaser was most likely Colonel Charles Greenleaf, owner of both the Flume and Profile Houses, who, the \textit{White Mountain Echo} reported, paid $5,000 for the fifty acres.\textsuperscript{139}

The situation was of great interest to parties besides the \textit{White Mountain Echo} and Colonel Greenleaf. The matter was discussed at the twenty-eighth meeting of the Appalachian Mountain Club, held at the Waumbeck Hotel in Jefferson. Present at the meeting were members of the New Hampshire Forestry Commission, including its first chairman, Joseph B. Walker. A full report of the meeting was included in the July 15 edition of the \textit{White Mountain Echo}. The issues covered were similar to those noted by Ward and the \textit{White Mountain Echo}, which were the need for "rational treatment" of the White Mountains forests for the benefit of the state of New Hampshire. Mr. Addey, editor of the \textit{White Mountain Echo}, was invited to speak at the meeting. Addey said that in his opinion "outside aid" for the purchase of White Mountains forests was not a good idea. State laws and money would be more suited to the situation.\textsuperscript{140} Little seemed to come from the meeting beyond a restatement of the principles held by those interested in the conservation of the White Mountains' forests.

Another meeting regarding the state of the White Mountains forests was held in the region during the summer of 1894. The American Forestry Association held its annual meeting at North Woodstock, New Hampshire, at the invitation of the New Hampshire

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{140} "The Forests Discussed," \textit{WME}, 15 July 1893, 2.
\end{flushleft}
Forestry Commission. Members of the Appalachian Mountain Club and the American Association for the Advancement of Science joined the meeting as well. The White Mountains gatherings of these professional organizations, precursors of today’s professional conferences, included not only meetings but field trips as well. This particular meeting included the option of a hike through the Franconia range, in order to view the timber works of F.C. Whitehouse, as well as a tour of those of J.E. Henry and Sons in Lincoln.

In addition to the visit to Lincoln, meeting participants listened to addresses by those most concerned with the White Mountains, including Joseph B. Walker and George H. Moses, the secretary of the New Hampshire Forestry Commission and future U.S. Senator from New Hampshire. Also invited to speak during the meeting was George B. James, the president of the Connecticut chartered and Boston controlled New Hampshire Land Company, which would soon be accused, along with J.E. Henry and Sons, of being one of the most destructive lumber companies in the region.

Although the substance of James’s talk was not recorded, it might have been based on an article published a year earlier in *New England Magazine*. In this 1893 piece, Moses wrote an article for the May 1895 edition of the *Granite Monthly*, most likely inspired by his visit. Although Lincoln as a town had existed since the 1760s, when J.E. Henry and his sons moved into the region the town only had sixty-six residents, according to Child’s 1886 *Gazetteer of Grafton County*. Lincoln became a company town, in the tradition of that built by George Pullman to house his workers. Moses agreed with one newspaper’s description of the town as “the Grand Duchy of Lincoln,” where the government was “intensely paternal and the administration is most rigid.” (324). Many of the workers there were not able to purchase their company owned, unappealing “garishly ochre and umber” houses until after World War II, according to the research done by Belcher for his work on the White Mountains logging railroads (Belcher, Part V, 504-05) Moses noted that the town’s inhabitants were “dependent for everything” on the Henrys, which had interesting political implications, particularly in relation to the “agitation for the preservation of the forests of the White Mountain region.” (326) He did note that the company was attempting to harvest its timber in a more responsible manner, although the workers were careless as to where they let the trees fall, creating more damage than was necessary. (327) George H. Moses, “Pullman, New Hampshire,” *Granite Monthly* 18 (May 1895): 320-327.

142 *WME*, 28 July 1894, 14.
James noted the value of the White Mountains' scenery as well as its timber. He believed that “[t]he practice of intelligent forestry is all important in the development and preservation of these magnificent White Mountain forests...”\(^{143}\) Utilizing “progressive forestry” meant that “the White Mountains are worth many times the present value attached to them by the wood chopper who only seeks for one crop and one cutting, regardless of the possibilities of future workings.”\(^{144}\) James also stated that “[r]ational forestry” meant “broader co-operative ownership” of forest lands. Small owners banding together, or “joint-ownership of a large tract [of land]” would mean that “profitable management” was secured.\(^{145}\) This was the style of management practiced by the New Hampshire Land Company, and it would come under fire at the turn of the century.

Throughout the summer of 1894 the *White Mountain Echo* continued its campaign against “destructive forestry” and “wood-butchery.” It reprinted a letter from the Boston Transcript from a correspondent who had recently toured the “Pemigewasset Wilderness,” the region under the ownership of J.E. Henry, but previously owned by George James’ New Hampshire Land Company. The forests in the region were as yet untouched, but the correspondent feared that the new owners would “speedily clear it of every vestige of timber and leave the land as unsightly as it has left the 35,000 acres in the Zealand region,” the Henrys’ first major timber operation. The *White Mountain Echo* noted that “[f]rom what was a little over a year ago a forest wilderness, now rises a cloud of smoke belched forth from a sawmill, whose hungry teeth are bent on destroying...the

\(^{143}\) George B. James, “Preservation of the White Mountain Forests” *New England Magazine* 8 no. 6 (August 1893): 716.

\(^{144}\) James: 717.

\(^{145}\) Ibid., 716.
noble forest growth."146 It was hoped that during the scheduled visit of the American Forestry Association that some of its members might be able to convince the Henrys’ to abide by a more “scientific system of forestry.”147

The years between 1870 and 1900 were significant for the development of the White Mountains as the “Switzerland of America.” The region managed to retain its popularity as a mountain resort in the midst of economic upheavals and the social chaos that resulted from the rapid urbanization and industrialization of the United States. The hotel entrepreneurs of the mid- and late nineteenth century built upon the White Mountains’ reputation as a Romantic wilderness to create a nationally and internationally known oasis of natural beauty and solace for the increasing number of people who could afford a few weeks to a few months of vacation each year. Guidebooks and newspapers such as the White Mountain Echo helped publicize the luxurious amenities offered by hotels such as the Profile House, while at the same time reiterating the vision of the White Mountains as an accessible wilderness. The Profile House, named after its famous neighbor, was a successful resort because of its beautiful scenic location as well as because of its fine service. Taft and Greenleaf, the hotel’s owners, utilized nature as an integral part of their guests’ experience through architectural features such as verandas that looked out over the region’s beautiful scenery and by offering excursions to Franconia Notch’s collection of natural curiosities.

146 “Destructive Forestry,” WME, 4 August 1894, 7.

147 Ibid. The Echo’s concerns about the White Mountain forests did not effect its own use of paper. In 1880, the paper estimated that it sold 600 papers per week between July and late September, each edition averaging twenty pages. In 1882, the Echo announced that it used “nearly three tons of paper” that year. WME, 30 July 1881, 5; WME, 16 September 1882, 5.
The years between 1870 and 1900 also saw a change in the way the resources of the White Mountains were utilized. As the region experienced a loss of agricultural revenue as farm owners abandoned their land looking for better opportunities in the factories of southern New England and the farmlands of the West, tourism and timber became increasingly important sources of revenue. While there were only a few complaints against the improvement or changes made by the hotel entrepreneurs during this time, some of the timber barons became targets for complaints about irresponsible forestry practices that became increasingly noticeable, particularly as some of those changes affected the production of factories to the south or occurred on the road through Franconia Notch. The result was a series of articles in the press expressing fears about the fate of the White Mountain forests, as well as offering solutions to the problem. The state of New Hampshire created a Forestry Commission to address forestry issues, primarily through education. It would not be until the organization of the Society in 1901, however, that there would be a unification of efforts regarding forestry and conservation in New Hampshire and the White Mountains.

The image on the second panel of the Franconia Notch triptych reflects the development of the conservation movement on the national level, as well as in the White Mountains. The growth and success of this movement depended on a variety of circumstances, including the individuals and groups who managed federal policies and organized the conservation campaigns meant to conserve resources or preserve places of natural beauty or historic significance, or, in the case of Franconia Notch, both.

The significance of the organizations that were instrumental in this movement to save the White Mountains and Franconia Notch will be discussed in the next chapter.
These organizations will create the image on the third panel of the Franconia Notch triptych. This final panel will demonstrate that the development of the White Mountains conservation movement, while its elements were specific to New Hampshire, was also part of a larger national movement that combined many of the ideas of the Progressive conservation movement with those of the nineteenth century women's club movement.
In September 2001, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests celebrated its centennial at the organization’s annual conference at the Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire. Included among the activities was a visit to Franconia Notch State Park, the site of one of the organization’s greatest successes. There is no doubt that the White Mountain National Forest and Franconia Notch State Park, in addition to a variety of other parks and reservations throughout New Hampshire, would not exist without the dedication of this conservation group.

The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF), the New Hampshire Federation of Women’s Clubs (NHFWC), and the Appalachian Mountain Club, were the grass roots groups that were instrumental in the creation of the White Mountains conservation movement and the success of the Franconia Notch campaign. Each of these private organizations worked to further conservation goals on the local, state, and regional levels. The formation of groups like these reflected the trend towards organization that was an important aspect of Progressive Era reform movements. Their membership also reflected in large part the profile of Progressive reformers, who were white, of the middle class, and who lived in cities. These groups also had in common their dedication to nature, and a commitment to the conservation of the White Mountains forests.
The importance of the parts played by the SPNHF and the NHFWC in organizing and managing the Franconia Notch campaign cannot be underestimated. These two groups took the vision of the White Mountains as a threatened wilderness, combined it with the ideas of the Progressive conservation movement, and utilized their organizations' commitment to the preservation of the natural beauty of New Hampshire to create a winning combination that resulted in the success of the Franconia Notch campaign. Their cooperation, overlapping membership, and the SPNHF's influence with the New Hampshire legislature, make these groups interesting case studies of the Progressive conservation movement.

What the study of the NHFWC and the national General Federation of Women's Clubs, of which it was a part, also represents is an expansion of the discussions about women's role in the conservation movement. Women's clubs like these offered to many women the opportunity for education and involvement in reform efforts concerning issues important to them, such as reforms of the educational system and city infrastructures, such as water and sewage systems. Members of local, state, and national women's clubs also lobbied for city parks, state parks, and forest reserves, and became involved in the conservation movement on the national level. The Franconia Notch campaign, and conservation campaigns elsewhere that preceded it, represent the intersection of the ideals of the women's club movement with those of the Progressive conservation movement.

This chapter presents the last panel of the Franconia Notch campaign's triptych as it analyzes the organizations behind the campaign. The profiles of the three groups, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the NHFWC, and the SPNHF, that are presented in this
chapter demonstrate each group's connection to wider regional and national developments, while also showing how each group developed its unique mission and agenda in relation to its own vision of nature and of the White Mountains. The call to save the White Mountains forests, and Franconia Notch in particular, united these organizations on several occasions.

The Appalachian Mountain Club: Hiking with a Purpose

The founding of the Appalachian Mountain Club in the 1870s was inspired by some of the same ideas as those that influenced the conservation movement. The Appalachian Mountain Club was also representative of a continued interest in the White Mountains as a region that offered continued opportunities for scientific exploration and nature study outside of the increasingly luxurious resort hotels. Through its trail system, the Appalachian Mountain Club offered access to wilderness and the chance to experience the primitive in an area that was becoming increasingly crowded and commercialized. Members of the Appalachian Mountain Club also brought awareness to the Northeast that areas of scenic beauty or historic value should be set aside and preserved, and private groups, as well as local and state governments, could work to save these areas.

The 1860s and 1870s saw the organization of the first hiking and walking clubs in the Northeast. Many of the founders and first members of these groups were college professors, professionals, and members of city athletic clubs who were interested in nature and in hiking as a sport as much as for exploration, as well as for the contemplation of and connection to nature which was part of the Transcendental
movement that reached its height during the 1840s and 1850s.\footnote{Guy and Laura Waterman, 183-189.} Founded at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts in January 1876 by a group of “professional engineers and scientists” who lived in and around Boston, the Appalachian Mountain Club reflected these interests, as well as those of its members. The first issue of the group’s journal \textit{Appalachia} noted in June 1876 that the Appalachian Mountain Club was “organized...for the advancement of the interest of those who visit the mountains of the New England and adjacent regions whether for the purpose of scientific research or summer recreation.”\footnote{“Introductory,” \textit{Appalachia} 1 (June 1876): 1.}

The Appalachian Mountain Club immediately began promoting its mission and activities. “One hundred and eight circulars” describing the new organization were sent to “proprietors of hotels and boarding houses in New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania,” hoping to interest the summer tourist as well as the avid hiker in the Appalachian Mountain Club.\footnote{“Secretary’s Report,” \textit{Appalachia} 1 (June 1876): 108.} From the beginning, the Appalachian Mountain Club planned to educate and provide resources as well as explore, noting that one of the group’s goals was to collect “books, maps, photographs, sketches, and all available information of interest to frequenters of the mountains.”\footnote{Ibid.} One of the organization’s goals was to develop a trail system through “clearing new paths...and other improvements” within the mountains of New England that were frequented by Appalachian Mountain Club members.\footnote{Ibid.}
Although many subsequent issues of *Appalachia* would include reports on mountains outside New England, including European and Asian mountain ranges, a main focus of the Appalachian Mountain Club was the exploration of and improvement of hiking trails in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Indeed, one of the first goals the Appalachian Mountain Club hoped to accomplish was the publication of “a detailed and accurate map of the White Mountains on a large scale and of the very best workmanship.” Of the twenty-six papers included in the March 1877 issue of *Appalachia*, thirteen of them focused on the White Mountains, including “The Geology of the White Mountains” by Charles H. Hitchcock. Hitchcock, a member of the Appalachian Mountain Club, was the leader of the state of New Hampshire’s geologic survey of the White Mountains, which began in 1868 and upon the completion of which “nearly every corner of the [White Mountains] was known, explored, and publicized.” Other articles that same year included descriptions of hikes through the region.

The Appalachian Mountain Club’s interest in the White Mountains continued throughout the first fifty years of its existence, but its focus was not limited to the creation of new hiking trails or the development of a library. In 1890, Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard University from 1896 to 1909 and the Councilor of Topography for the Appalachian Mountain Club, called a meeting of “persons interested in the preservation of scenery and historic sites in Massachusetts.” As a result of the meeting, the Appalachian Mountain Club changed its charter to allow the group to act as “public

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7 Guy and Laura Waterman, 167.

trustee” and “acquire by gift from individuals, or bodies of subscribers, parcels of real
estate possessing natural beauty or historical interest…” Another result was the creation
of a “private society” called the Massachusetts Trustees of Public Reservations. This
society was the first of several throughout New York, New England, and Great Britain
that focused on matters of preservation. Its acquisitions would allow “future
generations…opportunities for beholding the beauty of nature [which] are of great
importance to the health and happiness of crowded populations…” These
“opportunities for beholding the beauty of nature” included Monument Mountain in
Great Barrington in western Massachusetts. Other private organizations, such as the
Hancock County Trustees of Public Reservations in Maine, had established Mount Desert
Island as a public reservation in 1903, and the SPNHF had established six public
reservation in New Hampshire by 1914. The formation of the Massachusetts Trustees
of Public Reservations was an important step towards recognizing that there were lands
throughout New England of scenic beauty endangered by development or misuse.

This new aspect of the Appalachian Mountain Club found its way into several of
the group’s field meetings, many of which took place in a variety of locations throughout
the White Mountains. In 1893, the same year that the New Hampshire legislature created

9 Ibid., 260.


11 Ibid.; “Report of the Councillors” (July, 1891); 259-260. In his article, Chamberlain credits Eliot’s call
for such organizations as the inspiration for the formation of several groups, including: Massachusetts’
Metropolitan Park Commission (1890); the New Hampshire Forestry Commission (1893); the New York
State based American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society (1892); Great Britain’s National Trust
(1895); New Hampshire’s Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (1901); Maine’s Hancock
County Trustees of Public Reservations, focusing on preserving Mt. Desert Island (1903); Rhode Island’s
Public Park Association and a Metropolitan Park Commission to develop the area around Providence

12 Chamberlain: 171-179.
an official Forestry Commission, the focus of the Appalachian Mountain Club’s field meeting, held at the Waubeck Hotel in Jefferson, New Hampshire, was the fate of New Hampshire’s Forests, as described in the previous chapter. The 1899, 1904, and 1907 issues of Appalachia also included descriptions of talks on New Hampshire forest issues by Joseph T. Walker and Philip W. Ayres, both members of the SPNHF. Ayres himself, who was the SPNHF’s forester from 1902 until his retirement in 1935, also served as president of the Appalachian Mountain Club in 1919.

The Appalachian Mountain Club was also important for another reason. Laura and Guy Waterman note in their comprehensive work Forest and Crag: A History of Hiking, Trailblazing, and Adventure in the Northeast Mountains that the success of the Appalachian Mountain Club was in part due to its inclusion of women in its membership at its second meeting. Women’s participation with hiking in the White Mountains was noted as far back as 1838, when Benjamin Silliman, editor of the Journal of American Science and Arts, noted that “ladies sometimes go on this adventure” referring particularly to the ascent to the summit of Mount Washington. In Silliman’s “judgment,” however, “they should not attempt it “because of the fatigue that resulted from the arduous climb” and the fact that they must make the trip “unaided.” If women did “insist on making this ascent, their dress should be adapted to the service (author’s italics), and none should attempt but those of firm health and sound lungs.” Silliman

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13 Laura and Guy Waterman, 191.

14 Benjamin Silliman, “Remarks by the Editor” American Journal of Science and Arts 34 (April 1838): 77.

15 Ibid.
did make the point, however, that all climbers, both men and women, should be healthy and able to handle the climb.\textsuperscript{16}

From its inception the Appalachian Mountain Club’s membership included an increasing number of women interested in hiking and exploring, who contributed to the organization through sharing their experiences and through the contribution of a variety of articles that were printed in \textit{Appalachia}. Of the initial membership of one hundred and nineteen reported in 1876, twelve members were women; ten years later that number rose to sixty-seven.\textsuperscript{17} Women almost immediately began contributing articles to \textit{Appalachia}. In 1877, Miss M.F. Whitman described “A Climb Through Tuckerman’s Ravine,” located on Mount Washington. In the same issue, Mrs. W.G. Nowell wrote about “A Mountain Suit for Women,” emphasizing the need for a simpler costume, as women’s dress “has done all the mischief. For years it has kept us away from the glory of the woods and the grandeur of the heights. It is time we should reform.”\textsuperscript{18} Nowell described the cumbersome nature and danger of traditional skirts, which caught on rocks.\textsuperscript{19} The suit. Nowell decided, should be feminine, but needed to be practical and safe as well.\textsuperscript{20} Later articles by Whitehouse described sensible advice for short trips and camp life, and continued to contribute articles about hiking in a variety of locations.\textsuperscript{21} Practical issues,

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{17} “Membership Report” \textit{Appalachia} I (June 1876): 107.

\textsuperscript{18} Miss M.F. Whitman “A Climb Through Tuckerman’s Ravine” \textit{Appalachia} I (June 1877): 130-135; Mrs. W.G. Nowell, “A Mountain Suit for Women” \textit{Appalachia} I (June 1877): 181-183.

\textsuperscript{19} Nowell: 182. Nowell describes an instance where her skirt was caught on a rock while climbing Tuckerman’s Ravine. She was almost thrown over the edge as a result. Nowell: 182.

\textsuperscript{20} Nowell: 183.

\textsuperscript{21} Miss M.F. Whitman, “Camp Life for Ladies” \textit{Appalachia} II (June 1879): 44-48.
as well as stories about hiking and nature and scientific exploration filled the pages of *Appalachia*.

The women of the Appalachian Mountain Club participated in the same activities as the men, although none of them appears to have served as an officer within the first two decades of the group’s existence. That women became members of the Appalachian Mountain Club not only speaks to the growing number of organizations in which men and women shared their interests together but also demonstrates the increasing connection between women and nature, whether it was through hiking or conservation campaigns.

**Women, Nature, and the White Mountains: From Casual Observers to Dedicated Conservation Crusaders**

Women’s interest in the White Mountains as a place of natural beauty and exploration developed along with the tourism industry. Although men wrote many of the earliest White Mountains travel narratives, women, too appreciated the Romantic beauties of the region. Harriet Martineau wrote her impressions of Franconia Notch in the late 1830s, couched in language of Romanticism. Lucy Crawford’s 1846 *History of the White Mountains* is an account of Lucy and Ethan Allen Crawford’s contacts with and constant struggles against nature as farmers and innkeepers in the “Notch in the Mountains,” among the grandest of all natural settings in the White Mountains. Nature was also an intimate companion of women who lived outside the White Mountains region, whether they were farmer’s wives, women who gardened, or those who studied botany or ornithology.
An illustration of this relationship between women and nature, as well as of the sense that nature should be preserved because of its connection to America’s own national history, was found in Susan Fenimore Cooper’s *Rural Hours*. Published in 1850, Cooper’s book was a journal describing the changing of the seasons around her upstate New York home. A well-read naturalist, Cooper’s views of nature both reflected contemporary prevailing ideas and anticipated some of those of the Progressive conservation movement. In her 1993 study *Made from This Earth: American Women and Nature*, Vera Norwood argued that in *Rural Hours* Cooper, like other nature writers of the time, wrote about the places she knew, and in doing so, showed that “Americans could now find a record of their achievement in the land they had domesticated.” But “Americans [also] had a responsibility to preserve as historic monuments those features of its original face, for without them [Cooper’s] country would be in danger of losing its knowledge of the past.” Preserving unique aspects of nature was the moral responsibility of those who valued the past. Seeing the importance of American history through both simple and grand nature was a product of the United States’ attempt to forge for itself a lengthy history to rival that of Europe and Great Britain. The moral responsibility reformers felt towards managing resources and saving that same defining natural beauty was an important aspect of the conservation movement and of the Franconia Notch campaign.

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23 Norwood, 33.
Cooper also articulated the idea that women, "as conservators of tradition, had a responsibility to resist ambitious manipulation of God's creation."\(^{24}\) Norwood viewed Cooper's connection between women's nurturing and protective natures as an influence on the other late works of literature and natural history written by women that demonstrated "their sense of the particular bond between themselves and nature."\(^{25}\) Late nineteenth century American women would combine their sense of moral responsibility to nature with their awareness of its historical importance and utilize their nurturing and protective instincts to become a force in the Progressive conservation movement.\(^{26}\)

One of the means through which women were able to articulate their concerns for nature was through a variety of clubs and organizations that developed between the 1860s and 1890s. The Audubon Society of America, the members of which devoted themselves to the study of birds and to bird watching, was first founded by George Grinnell in 1886. It fell apart under the weight of its own rapid expansion in 1888, and was revived in 1896 by Mrs. Harriet Hemenway of Boston.\(^{27}\) Gathering prominent members of Boston

\(^{24}\) Ibid., 40.

\(^{25}\) Ibid.


society, both male and female, about her, Hemenway and the Audubon Society decided to “work for reforms in the feather trade and for bird protection in general.”

The group’s first focus was a boycott of egret feathers, the long white plumes that were part of the millinery designs of the late nineteenth century. The plumes were at their most beautiful during the egret breeding season and hunters often killed the parent birds at their nests just after their young had hatched. It was a crusade to save a species that was in danger of disappearing because of human vanity. That the egret still exists today is due in part to the dedication of women like Mrs. Hemenway and to the organizational power of groups like the Audubon Society. The women’s club movement, which was well underway by the time Hemenway called the first meeting of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, was a formidable force in urban reform as well as in conservation, and had a history of involvement with campaigns to improve the quality of life for club members and for those around them, reflecting the Progressive reforms of the late nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth century.

During the first half of the nineteenth century women of the middle and upper classes often became involved in public charity work. By the late nineteenth century, divisions developed between the two classes in relation to what types of charity work they performed. Some of the wealthiest women, those who might spend the season in Newport, Bar Harbor, or the White Mountains, became involved in philanthropic enterprises, rather than direct acts of charity. Young, college-educated, middle class women sometimes chose to live in settlement houses in poor neighborhoods or to lobby

28 Price, 63.
29 Ibid., 88.
for or direct changes in prison or insane asylum conditions. The mothers of these college educated women were often members of women's clubs themselves. Women's clubs ran the spectrum of those for the elite, like the Chicago Women's Club, to those for local women for whom it meant an opportunity for the exchange of ideas as well as a sense of community. During the last decade of the nineteenth century, there were new opportunities for women to become involved in meaningful activities outside of their homes.

Karen Blair's 1980 *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined 1868-1914* presented the women's club movement as an opportunity for middle class "ladies" to improve themselves through "an intellectual and social...program outside of the household" where women initially gathered to discuss literature, art, history, or more domestic issues.\(^30\) The first women's clubs began on the local level and were designed as self-help and self-education gatherings that had a social purpose as well. Here women could talk to others within their town about domestic skills, share ideas, and, eventually, address the issues that affected themselves and their families in a communal atmosphere that gave them a sense of belonging. By the late nineteenth century, the women in these clubs began to focus not only on literature and the arts, but on local and national reforms as well, and "found a way to influence American concept of community responsibility and social welfare" through their organizations.\(^31\)


The rapid industrialization and urbanization of the United States during the latter half of the nineteenth century were responsible for the change in focus of some of these groups. By the turn of the twentieth century, the increasingly dismal conditions of factories and cities “force[d] women to recognize the claims of society to their best thought and endeavor.”32 Women’s clubs in cities and towns offered club members the opportunity to work on projects such as educational and sewage reform. “Municipal housekeeping,” as such work came to be known, allowed women a chance to focus their nurturing instincts on the larger problems of society outside the home.33 These women gained insight into municipal politics without having to step too far outside the boundaries of respectable behavior.

In “The Work of Women’s Clubs in New England” which appeared in *New England Magazine* in 1903, Martha E.D. White stated that “the women who originated this club idea were the women who had been prominent in the abolitionist movement and earnest in the advocacy of women’s advancement...the desire for intellectual improvement and broader social intercourse has [also] been an impelling motive in their growth.”34 Out of such clubs, the focus of which was “on facing the problem of


civilization with the determination to do something toward their solution,” grew women’s organizations and reforms.35

One of the most important aspects of the woman’s club, however, was to create “an order which shall render the female sex helpful to each other” as well as “actively benevolent to the world.”36 This was the stated purpose of the Sorosis Club, one of the first women’s clubs. Founded in New York City in 1868 by newspaper columnist Jane Cunningham Croly, the Sorosis Club was the driving force twenty-one years later behind the creation of the national General Federation of Women’s Clubs.

In 1889, there was the desire among the Sorosis Club’s membership to organize a meeting of women’s clubs from all over the United States. This meeting focused on several issues, including the idea of the woman’s club, the growth of club life and its influence on communities, as well as to acknowledge that “[t]he associated life of women is now an established fact....This life has produced as its first flower a bond of good fellowship to which every good clubwoman responds.”37 The meeting drew participants from the fifty-eight clubs from all over the country, and the General Federation of Women’s Clubs became a reality in April 1890, voting to hold its national meetings every two years. It was the second national meeting, or Biennial, held in Philadelphia in 1894, that inspired “the lone delegate from New Hampshire,” Mrs. Lillian Streeter, to unite the New Hampshire women’s clubs.38

35 Ibid., 461.
37 Wood, 32.
38 Alice Harriman, The History of the NHFWC of Women’s Clubs 1895-1940 (Bristol, NH: Musgrove Printing House, 1941), 20.
A year earlier, Streeter had founded the Women’s Club of Concord, which became the first New Hampshire club to join the General Federation of Women’s Clubs. In 1895, Streeter invited all of the local women’s clubs in New Hampshire to an organizational meeting in Concord, New Hampshire in October 1895. Twenty-eight clubs sent forty-seven delegates to Concord. During the meeting it was decided that the NHFWC would draw on the “vigorous thinking” of the rural town clubs and the “different mental thought of the cities, and to unite both upon public questions is our desire.”

Twenty-three clubs decided to join the NHFWC and to focus their energies on the “[t]raining of teachers, school methods, morals and the environment of children in school, street and country roads, care of the defective and dependent, municipal cleanliness, [and] prevention of slums…”

These issues reflected the founding ideas of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, which “was a revelation of a new force...[that] had turned the thoughts of the members from the old meaningless routine of social life into a wider, more stimulating interest in participation in educational and civic affairs.”

The NHFWC not only provided an umbrella organization through which to organize state-wide reform efforts, but it also connected the New Hampshire women to the larger national club movement through membership in the General Federation of Women’s Clubs. Interest in the NHFWC and its goals increased, and by the end of 1895 membership had grown to thirty-two clubs.

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39 Harriman, 26.

40 Ibid, 26-27.

41 Wood, 34.
Reforms of education and cities were not the only activities of the NHFWC, however. The organization’s interest in New Hampshire’s conservation issues was evident from the first organizational meeting, when the group made a point of dedicating itself to “preserving God’s gift of exceeding beauty to our hills and valleys.” This commitment to preserving New Hampshire’s beauty would take a variety of forms, both literal and symbolic.

Education was an important aspect of the NHFWC’s conservation program. The first annual meeting of the NHFWC, which took place in Manchester in October 1896, included an address on “Women’s Work in Forestry” by George H. Moses, the Secretary of the New Hampshire Forestry Commission. The NHFWC’s connection to nature, however, was perhaps most clearly seen through the symbols and words by which it chose to represent itself and its mission. In October 1896, the members also chose their motto: “In principle, like our granite; in aspirations, like our mountains; in sympathy as swift and far-reaching as our rivers.” The women chose green and gray as their colors and the Old Man of the Mountain as the symbol of their Federation.

That the women of the NHFWC chose natural symbols and the colors of New Hampshire granite and the forests to reflect their strengths and fine qualities was significant. From the inaugural meeting of the NHFWC there was a clear recognition of it members’ connection to nature, as well as to the state of New Hampshire. These women educated themselves about the important conservation issues of the day, and were...

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42 Ibid.
44 Harriman, 23.
clearly aware of historical and symbolic values of nature in New Hampshire. This
devotion to the protection and the wise use of New Hampshire’s resources and of its
scenic beauties would benefit the state on many occasions and would energize the
Franconia Notch campaign.

The New Hampshire women supported social welfare as well as conservation. By
1898, the NHFWC had three committees in place: sociology, education, and forestry.
Members of the sociology committee focused on the treatment of the insane, while the
education committee looked to bring parents and teachers together for “greater sympathy
and unity.” That same year, Susan Knapp, president of the Somersworth, New
Hampshire, Woman’s Club and a member of the Forestry Committee, addressed the
annual meeting about “What Forests and Shady Roads Mean to New Hampshire.” In
1900, the Forestry Committee, in its annual report, encouraged town and city clubs to
sponsor lectures on forestry in their communities. Chairman Ellen Mason of North
Conway urged members “to lead or cooperate a practical observance of Arbor Day” in
their towns and public schools.

That same year, nine NHFWC’s member clubs had local women on the school
boards of their towns, and they used their positions to enforce child labor laws by making
sure children remained in school. NHFWC members also served on the State Board of
Education and fought for legislation providing for the state guardianship of children

46 Ibid.
47 Ibid., 2.
attending the School for the Feeble-Minded as well as for the equal guardianship rights of both parents for their children.\textsuperscript{49} As the wives of prosperous businessmen, lawyers, and newspaper editors, the members of the NHFWC utilized their good reputations and contacts within their communities as well as their own energies to help their programs.\textsuperscript{50}

By 1898, conservation was firmly established as one of the most important issues discussed by the NHFWC. The 1899 annual meeting in Portsmouth included a “fine program devoted to forestry, folk-lore, wood-carving, and educational subjects.”\textsuperscript{51} Another field meeting in North Conway included “an excursion through Crawford Notch,” regarded as one of the most awe-inspiring sights in the White Mountains, as well as an elegant reception at the Kearsarge Hotel.\textsuperscript{52} The activities of the NHFWC continually incorporated visits to other natural scenic places of New Hampshire, such as the Star Island Hotel on the Isles of the Shoals in 1901.

Women’s clubs in other states participated in conservation efforts as well. During the early years of the twentieth century, women in Buffalo, New York supported conservation efforts when they petitioned for the creation of a city Bureau of Forestry.\textsuperscript{53} Committees on the national as well as local levels participated in social welfare and urban beautification campaigns as part of their membership within their local clubs. The efforts of Mrs. Hemenway and other Boston society women in 1896 to save the egret from extinction due to the millinery taste of other less sensitive women has already been

\textsuperscript{49} Harriman, 125-6.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., 37.
\textsuperscript{51} Mrs. Eliza Nelson Blair, January 20, 1898, as quoted in Harriman, 26-27.
\textsuperscript{52} Harriman, 29.
\textsuperscript{53} Blair, 90.
The Mesa Verde, Colorado (1897-1906) and Calaveras Grove, California (1900-1954) campaigns did not hesitate to take advantage of Theodore Roosevelt’s commitment to conservation by lobbying for their projects during his administrations. In May 1908, Roosevelt invited Sarah P. Decker, President of the General Federation, to discuss conservation issues at the Conference of Governors held in Washington, D.C. She was the only woman to be so honored.

The strategy of the campaign to save Franconia Notch in which the NHFWC played such an instrumental role found its beginnings in a variety of conservation campaigns from both the East and West during the first decades of the twentieth century. A strong connection to the conservation ideas of the Progressive movement was evident in the focus of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs’ policies, and this ideology influenced the focus of some of the New Hampshire women’s campaigns as well.

As it developed, the women’s club movement focused on the intellectual curiosity of its members, and for those interested in forestry the opportunity for study was there. Using what they learned from instructional literature and educational speakers, women took their studies beyond the weekly or monthly meeting to the library and the forest, examining the scientific and literary aspects of nature conservation. Women learned not only about the scientific structure of trees but also “the utilitarian aspects of forestry as the conservation of wood and water.” Some clubs, such as the California Federation of Women’s Clubs, lobbied state legislatures for the creation of forestry schools in their

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54 Ibid., 103.
55 Blair, 106.
56 Merchant: 62.
57 Ibid.
states. Clubwomen utilized their knowledge during their active participation in conservation campaigns.

In *National Parks and the Woman's Voice*, Polly Wells Kaufman pointed out that women's roles in the conservation movement have been "overlooked by historians who documented environmentalists in male-directed organizations."\(^5\)\(^8\) Women, Kaufman argued, made "enormous contributions to the National Park System," for example, through their work as rangers, interpreters, and preservation supporters. Their "greatest contribution," however, was "their perspectives and values."\(^5\)\(^9\) Women who worked as preservationists outside of the Park Service contributed through their sense of the "valuation of the continuation of life."\(^6\)\(^0\) In the case of conservation campaigns, women were concerned with preserving nature, or, in the case of Mesa Verde National Park, of preserving evidence of a culture long disappeared. In *Women and Nature: Saving the 'Wild' West*, Glenda Riley concurred with Kaufman's argument, seeing women as "'social conservators,'" who "typically believed that they should safe guard not only landscapes but also native peoples and historic structures," which provided evidence of the unique nature of the American experience.\(^6\)\(^1\)

The conservation campaigns that women sponsored and participated in were often complex, dealing with legal issues on the local, state, and federal levels. The campaigns that resulted in Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado (1897-1906) and Calaveras Grove


\(^{59}\) Kaufman, xiv.

\(^{60}\) Ibid., xiv.

State Park in California (1900-1954) demonstrated many of the frustrations that women encountered as they spearheaded the efforts of the conservation movement. Mesa Verde National Park, in the southwestern corner of Colorado, demonstrated an interesting aspect of the conservation movement that was not specifically related to the preservation of scenic beauty, although the cliffs and canyons, as well as the flora and fauna of the region, add to the park's value. It was "America’s first cultural park...and the first...national park in the world to preserve solely the works of prehistoric people..." In this respect, Mesa Verde preserved a truly American past more distantly connected to the Romantic ideals of nature than influenced the conservation efforts in the White Mountains.

The Mesa Verde area was home of the Anasazi, whose culture reached its "golden age" between 1100 and 1300 C.E. The ruins of the cliff dwellings, deserted since the thirteenth century, were rediscovered by the Spaniards in the eighteenth century, but it would be the exploration of the region during the mid-1870s that would eventually lead to the creation of a national park. In many ways, the development of Mesa Verde into a national park paralleled the development of the White Mountains tourism industry, albeit on a smaller scale. There was a period during the 1880s where one family controlled the accommodation and tours to the cliff dwellings and the preservation of the area was

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62 Author Willa Cather was enthralled by Mesa Verde during her visit there in 1912. Her vibrant and lyrical descriptions of the area provided the settings for some of her works, including Song of the Lark (1915), The Professor's House (1925) and Death Comes for the Archbishop (1927). For a discussion of Cather's nature writing, see Mary R. Ryder, "Willa Cather as Nature Writer: A Cry in the Wilderness," in Such News of the Land: U.S. Women Nature Writers, ed. Thomas S. Edwards and Elizabeth A. De Wolfe (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2001), 84.

63 Duane A. Smith, Mesa Verde National Park: Shadows of the Centuries (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1988), ix.

64 Duane A. Smith, Mesa Verde, 3.
inspired by the fear that a place of such historical importance would have its resources, in this case the fragile pottery and cliff dwellings, plundered or damaged beyond repair. It would take the leadership and devotion of one woman, Virginia McClurg of Colorado Springs, Colorado, to save the area from possible future destruction.

McClurg visited the Mesa Verde ruins several times during the 1880s and by 1894 was lecturing in Denver about Mesa Verde and the need for its preservation. While McClurg initially failed to interest the United States Congress in her call for a national park, she found support closer to home in 1897 when she presented her case to the three-year old Colorado State Federation of Women's Clubs. Within a year, the women of the Colorado Federation had created the Committee for the Preservation and Restoration of the Cliffs and Pueblo Ruins of Colorado, with McClurg as Chairman.

McClurg enlisted the talents and persistence of the members of the Colorado Federation of Women's Clubs in a letter writing campaign to Washington. Although it was initially proposed that the Colorado Federation of Women's Clubs act as trustee of the park until a national park could be created, it was decided in 1900 that a separate group should be created to deal with the issues that would arise. The result was the Cliff Dwellings Association, founded in 1900, with McClurg as president. The following year involved "trials and tribulations" for the new groups as McClurg and the members of her organization traveled hundreds of miles to get permission to lease the land from its

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65 Ibid., 42.
67 Duane A. Smith, *Mesa Verde*, 44.
owners, the Ute Indians. McClurg’s crusade to save the ruins of one native population meant the removal of another one, to which many in Colorado were not at all adverse.\(^{69}\) Success came in 1906 when Mesa Verde became a national park.

Many of the conservation campaigns organized and sponsored by women’s clubs often were led by capable, strong-willed women whose names would become synonymous with the campaigns they managed. Virginia McClurg’s efforts were largely responsible for the creation of Mesa Verde National Park, and those of Mrs. Lovell White would shape the California Federation of Women’s Clubs and other groups’ campaigns to save the sequoias and redwoods of California.

In January 1900 it was discovered that the Calaveras Grove of Big Trees, Sequoia gigantean, which are located on the western slopes of the Sierras approximately 50 miles north of Yosemite National Park, were “bonded to an eastern lumber firm, eventually to be used for commerce.”\(^{70}\) During that year, the San Joaquin Valley Commercial Association “immediately started investigations with a view to save the Grove and have it purchased by either the state or federal governments.”\(^{71}\) Under White’s leadership, the California Federation of Women’s Clubs offered its assistance to the San Joaquin Association, which was accepted.

The California Federation of Women’s Clubs next passed a resolution that declared “men whose souls are gang-saws are meditating the turning of our world-famous

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\(^{69}\) Duane A. Smith, 43.


\(^{71}\) Gibson, 174.
Sequoias into planks and fencing worth so many dollars.”\textsuperscript{72} The destruction of the trees would be detrimental to the health of the people of California, as they were located in the Stanislaus River’s watershed.\textsuperscript{73} It was “[b]etter [to have] a living tree in California than fifty acres of lumberyard. Preserve and plant [the trees] and the State will be blessed a thousandfold in the development of its natural resources…”\textsuperscript{74} The California Federation of Women’s Clubs enlisted the aid of whomever it could, sending appeals to other state women’s clubs federations throughout the country as well as to the General Federation of Women’s Clubs.

The result was “an avalanche of protests and petitions descending upon Senators and Congressmen from every state, calling their attention to the need for immediate action.”\textsuperscript{75} In response to the overwhelming public support for the preservation of the Big Trees, the owner of the land, R.B. Whiteside, left the grove “untouched.”\textsuperscript{76} In February 1900 White enlisted the aid of a California Federation of Women’s Clubs’ Vice-President Mrs. A.D. Sharon, who was in Washington, D.C. when the campaign began. Sharon interviewed members of California’s Congressional delegation about the Calaveras Grove and even spoke with President William McKinley.\textsuperscript{77} A Congressional bill in favor of acquiring the Big Trees was passed and signed by the President in March of 1900. The

\textsuperscript{72} Merchant: 59.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
gold pen that signed the bill was presented to the California Federation of Women’s Clubs.\textsuperscript{78}

The celebrations were short-lived, however. The bill only authorized negotiations for the purchase of the grove; it had not allocated any funds for a purchase.\textsuperscript{79} Another bill was presented to Congress in 1903 and failed. In the same year, both the NHFWC and the Maine Federation of Women’s Clubs issued resolutions in support of the Calaveras Grove campaign, along with other clubs throughout the nation.\textsuperscript{80} In spite of the nationwide support, White knew that more needed to be done. She and her fellow California clubwomen then organized a national campaign that netted 1, 500,000 signatures in support of the creation of a national park around the sequoias. When the petition was sent to Washington, White noted that “[t]his is the first instance on record where a special message has been sent to Congress at the request of an organization managed by women.”\textsuperscript{81}

In response to the petition, President Theodore Roosevelt sent a message to Congress that declared “[t]he California Big Tree Groves are not only a California but a national inheritance and all that can be done by the government to insure its preservation should be done.”\textsuperscript{82} It did little good. It would not be until 1909 that Congress would authorize the exchange of National Forest land for that of the Grove, providing that both

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{80} NHFWC of Women’s Clubs Annual Meeting program, 1904, Box 38, SPNHF Scrapbook 1901-1905, Book 1. SPNHF Collection; Maine Federation of Women’s Clubs Yearbook, 1903-1904, Maine Federation of Women’s Clubs Collection, Box 1742, Special Collections Department, Folger Library, University of Maine, Orono, Maine, 16.

\textsuperscript{81} Gibson, 176.
tracts “be of value substantially equal.” No land was ever found. In 1926, the northern section of the Calaveras Grove was still under the ownership of Whiteside and still uncut, but the southern section of the Grove was sold to another timber company. It would take almost another thirty years and the combined efforts of the newly formed Calaveras Grove Association (1926), the Calaveras Garden Club, and a “state-wide education campaign” for the Calaveras Big Trees State Park to finally become a reality in 1954, over half a century after White’s first efforts.

White’s commitment to conservation was not limited to her frustrating fight to preserve the Calaveras Groves. She was also president of the Sempervirens Club, founded in 1900. Begun over a camp-fire during a hike among the redwoods near San Jose, the Sempervirens Club’s membership included college professors, sportsmen, and clubwomen, nature lovers and photographers, all of whom were dedicated to saving the other big trees of California, the coastal redwoods. Although at first the efforts of the campaign to save the Big Basin redwoods near Santa Clara, California, just south of San Francisco, suffered set backs on the state level, its success came much more quickly that that of the Calaveras Grove campaign. In 1901, the California state legislature authorized $250,000 for the purchase of 3,800 acres, creating Big Basin State Park, which was subsequently enlarged by an additional 5,200 acres. White would go on to serve as Forestry Chairman of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs from 1910 to 1912 and

82 Ibid.
83 Gibson, 176.
84 Ibid; Merchant: 60.
85 Gibson, 14-15; Merchant: 60.
86 Gibson, 18.
the Save the Redwoods League, which evolved from the Sempervirens Club in 1918, continues its work for the preservation of the coastal redwoods in the twenty-first century.

Although many of the most well-publicized early conservation campaigns were in the West, and focused on the creation of national parks such as Mesa Verde, or state battles such as those to save the California sequoias or redwoods, there were conservation campaigns in other areas of the country that were also equal in importance, if perhaps a little less well-known. In Minnesota, the state federation organized a campaign to save the Chippewa Forest Reserve, in danger from a state law allowing the harvesting of “dead and down” timber.87 Members of the Wisconsin Federation of Women’s Clubs also campaigned to save land for state parks and forest reserves.88

The Maine Federation of Women’s Clubs, the first state federation to join the General Federation in 1892, passed a variety of resolutions supporting the creation of a state forest reserve around Mount Katahdin during the first three decades of the twentieth century. The Maine Federation of Women’s Clubs, like the NHFWC, took nature-inspired symbols and colors to represent its membership. The Club pin was an “oxidized silver stick pin in the form of a pine cone” and the club colors were “brown and green, of the shades found in the pine tree and its cone.”89 It too had a forestry committee by the turn of the century, and annual meetings included talks on “The Need of Forestry in

87 Merchant, 61.


89 Maine Federation of Women’s Clubs Yearbook, 1900-1901, Maine Federation of Women’s Clubs Collection, Box 1742, Special Collections Department, Folger Library, University of Maine, Orono, Maine, 4.
Maine and What Club Women Can Do to Aid the Work.\textsuperscript{90} The Maine Federation of Women's Clubs was delighted when the state legislature appropriated funding to hire a Yale Forestry School graduate to fill a professorship at the University of Maine, and pledged in 1904 “active efforts” on behalf of forestry in the state of Maine.\textsuperscript{91}

Women of other states in the Northeast were also interested in conservation. The New Jersey Federation of Women's Clubs, founded in 1894, noted two years later that “one of New Jersey’s natural wonders...the Palisades, those towering rocky cliffs bordering the Hudson River in northern parts of the state” were “in danger of destruction as commercial interests began blasting them away.”\textsuperscript{92} Although a joint commission representing the New Jersey and New York state legislatures had been appointed in 1895 to decide what to do with the Palisades, the New Jersey Federation of Women’s Clubs formed its own committee in 1897, after much study of the situation. The presidents of the New York and New Jersey Federations of Women’s Clubs convinced Governors Foster Voorhees and Theodore Roosevelt, of New Jersey and New York respectively, to put into place a permanent commission to “obtain an Interstate Park.”\textsuperscript{93}

By 1900, the state of New Jersey had donated $50,000 and the state of New York $400,000 towards the purchase of the Palisades on both sides of the Hudson River. This was followed by a $125,000 gift from financier J.P. Morgan, and the Palisades bill passed

\textsuperscript{90} *Annual Meeting Program 1901, 1903*, Maine Federation of Women's Clubs Collection, Box 1742, Special Collections Department, Folger Library, University of Maine, Orono, Maine, n.p.

\textsuperscript{91} *Maine Federation of Women's Clubs Yearbook, 1903-1904*, Maine Federation of Women's Clubs Collection, Box 1742, Special Collections Department, Folger Library, University of Maine, Orono, Maine, 16.


\textsuperscript{93} Williams, Hudson, et. al., 58.
In addition to preserving the cliffs on the shores of the Hudson River, the New Jersey Federation of Women's Clubs also supported other causes popular with women's clubs. In 1902, the New Jersey Federation of Women's Clubs supported the Audubon Society's proposed law "to prohibit live pigeon shooting" and two years later New Jersey Federation members supported the movement to save the "aigrette (sic) from extinction by refusing to wear such plumage in their hats." 94 Maine Federation of Women's Clubs members from Gardiner, Maine noted their interest in birds through a plea to "save the song-birds and to save the birds whose plumage was used for millinery purposes." In 1896, "[a]ll of the members [of the Gardiner club] signed a pledge promising personally not to wear hats bedecked with birds-wings and this pledge was circulated among the girls at the High School." 95 It was a popular crusade and one that united a variety of organizations and stretched across the generations.

While many of the women's clubs focused on conservation or preservation issues in their own states, the General Federation of Women's Clubs' national agenda also influenced many of the resolutions passed by the state federations, as well as many of the projects undertaken by federation members. 96 In 1905, The Federation Bulletin, the

94 Williams, Hudson, et. al., 59.


96 The Hollis, New Hampshire Women's Club waited until 1919 to join the NHFWC. The Hollis women did not want to be told how to run their club, and were not happy with some of the "recommended"
General Federation's of Women's Clubs monthly newsletter, was pleased to note that “thirty seven State Federations have organized Forestry Committees…and the Chairmen are enthusiastically spreading the propaganda of tree-planting and forest perpetuation.”

Those states that had no forestry committee as yet, it was expected, would “fall in line at their next annual meeting.”

This stern warning was followed by the recommendations offered to the state federations by the General Federation of Women’s Clubs in order to support and expand the forestry program. These included working towards the appointment of a state forester in every state, the “introduction of some instruction of forestry into every school,” and “the creation of State Forest Reserves.”

The General Federation of Women’s Clubs also voiced its support for the “legislation looking to the securing of Federal Reserves in the Southern Appalachians Mountains and the purchase of the…Calaveras Groves in California.”

The General Federation of Women’s Clubs’ goal through introducing guidelines for its Forestry program was to “nationalize our interests and sympathies until the special work of each State becomes the general work of all States.”

Recognition of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs’ importance and influence in the conservation movement was acknowledged in 1916 with the appointment programs and guidelines designed by the state Federation. The Hollis group, for example, did not subscribe to the NHFWC’s newsletter, but the group did enjoy getting to know other clubwomen in nearby towns. Joan Tinklepaugh, The Woman's Way: A History of the Hollis Woman's Club 1906-1996, (n.p.), 45,47.


98 Ibid.

99 Ibid. The Southern Appalachians bill would eventually lead to the creation of the White Mountain National Forest in 1911.

of Mary King Sherman as a trustee of the newly formed National Park Service. Sherman, a native of New York, had married Chicago journalist John Dickinson Sherman in 1887. Soon after her marriage, she joined the exclusive Chicago Women's Club, where she was recording secretary. She was an active member in the General Federation from 1904 until her death in 1934, serving in a variety of leadership positions including Recording Secretary during the administration of Sarah Platt Decker, an avid conservationist, and as President between 1924-1928. She was known for her interest in the American home and was Chair of the General Federation committee on the Home through the early 1930s. Conservation, however, was one of the most important issues during her first years with the General Federation and earned her the sobriquet "The National Park Lady."  

Sherman spent three years, 1910-1913, with her son in her family's mountaintop cabin in Estes Park, Colorado. Bedridden by recurring malaria caught during a 1904 visit to the Panama Canal Zone while serving as a representative of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, as well as by severe shoulder and back trauma, Sherman had little to think about, she said in a 1924 interview, besides the mountains and sky that were outside her window.  

In 1913, when she was finally able to climb to the top of Long Peak accompanied by her son, Sherman recalled:

Long days I sat watching those mountains... And I had become obsessed with a longing to stand on the highest peak and look over the vast range on the other side, unknown to me. It was a ridiculous thing to think of in my condition; but the idea had taken possession of me that if I could only get to the top something wonderful would happen...And when after all I did reach the spot where the whole glory of the mountain ranges breaks upon you in all their magnificence-something wonderful did happen. It was all so much more glorious than I had dreamed that I was fairly

101 Frances Drewry McMullen, "The National Park Lady" The Woman Citizen (May 17, 1924): 10. General Federation of Women's Clubs Archives, Presidents' Papers (Record Group 2), Papers of Mary Sherman. Hereafter abbreviated as GFWCA, followed by the appropriate Record Group notation.

102 McMullen: 10. GFWCA, Presidents' Papers (Record Group 2), Papers of Mary Sherman.
overcome by emotion. I had lived almost all my life in flat country— and though I had loved natural beauty, I had no conception of such splendor as this. It was a profound revelation. And as I sat there, drinking it in, I made a solemn vow that if I were able to make the return trip in safety, I would devote the rest of my life to helping others see and feel what I had experienced - the vast beauty of the world. I pledged myself to help save such scenes as this for that purpose.\textsuperscript{103}

Although she does not use the language, Sherman's reactions to the mountains of Colorado were reminiscent of many visitors' first reactions to the Romantic beauty of the White Mountains.

Inspired by her experience, Sherman returned to her work with the General Federation of Women's Clubs. She was appointed Chair of the Conservation Department in 1914. She reorganized the Department, revamping old programs and developing new literature. A year later she was instrumental in lobbying Congress for the creation of Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. She represented the General Federation of Women's Clubs at the Park's dedication ceremony.\textsuperscript{104}

Through Sherman's efforts, the support of the General Federation of Women's Clubs was thrown behind the creation of the National Park Service in 1916. She supported the successful 1916 campaign for Grand Canyon National Park, which had been in the works for thirty-three years. By 1920 she had been involved in lobbying for six national parks, as well as fighting for the independence of the National Park Service from the "great water and irrigation interests" that threatened the movement for park conservation, of which the Hetch Hetchy Valley situation was an early example.\textsuperscript{105} Her efforts were rewarded by an honorary lifetime trusteeship in the National Park Service.

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{104} Wells, 88-89.

\textsuperscript{105} McMullen: 1 1.
Mary King Sherman brought women's work in conservation onto the national stage. She recognized, as did the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the potential power in organizing women throughout the United States. State federations could call upon their sister organizations when support was needed and national campaigns could be more effectively carried out on the state and local levels if the state federations were both aware of and in accord with the national group. The Federation Bulletin, later renamed The Clubwoman, the biannual national meetings, which were both professional and social events, as well as planned visits of the national officers to state federation meetings all contributed to the sense of unity felt by clubwomen across the nation. The NHFWC would not hesitate to call upon fellow clubwomen when it needed their support for the Franconia Notch campaign.

While the California Federation of Women's Clubs and the Sempervirens Club were fighting to save the big trees of the West in 1900, the fight to save the forests of the White Mountains continued in the East. Ten years earlier the White Mountain Echo had advocated the formation of a White Mountain Association, where White Mountains hotel proprietors, whose profits depended in large part on the maintenance of the scenery, could work together to stop the incursion of the timber barons. On the state level, before little was done by the state to deal with the forestry situation beyond the creation of the New Hampshire Forestry Commission. It would take the efforts of the SPNHF to push through legislation that would result in the creation of the White Mountain National Forest and later the creation of Franconia Notch State Park. The most vocal opposition during the last year of the nineteenth century came from a summer resident of the White Mountains.
"Let Us Organize": The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests

In 1900, the Reverend John E. Johnson, an Episcopal missionary to the White Mountains, published an essay entitled "The Boa Constrictor of the White Mountains." It was a scathing condemnation of the harvesting practices of George B. James’s New Hampshire Lumber Company, which Johnson accused of wanting to "deforest and depopulate the region lying around the head waters of the Merrimack River in the heart of the White Mountains." 

James had been a featured speaker at the 1894 American Forestry Association conference and had published his views on forestry in the year before. Johnson, however, saw in the New Hampshire Land Company’s policies not a well-managed system of forestry but rather the reason for the destruction of the lives of many living in the White Mountains region. Any abandoned farms on company lands, which might become boarding houses to provide income for local people or summer homes for newer residents, were off-limits and could not be purchased by anyone who was not a lumberman. The company would not permit the building of any roads through its land, even if that road were to bring visitors to a waterfall or some other scenic spot.

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106 Johnson had a summer home near the Agassiz Basin Waterfall, near Woodstock, New Hampshire, south of Franconia Notch. Carpenter, 131.


108 Johnson, 242. Johnson’s opinion that timber companies had no right to deprive the public of access to their lands probably came from his anger towards the companies, whom he blamed for the financial ruin of local farmers. Another possible argument for his position was that the White Mountains, a popular area for exploration and hiking since the eighteenth century, should be perpetually open to all to explore. The Profile and Flume Hotel Companies supported the development of hiking trails on company property in Franconia Notch, which benefited the hotels in the region. A similar policy, however, might not benefit the New Hampshire Land Company, as summer homes and hikers would stand in the way of timber operations. Whether or not Johnson would have been willing to allow the public access to his private land in Woodstock in order to discover its natural delights, is unknown.
Johnson called upon New Hampshire politicians to unite “to crush such an unmitigated outrage upon the rights of humanity as the New Hampshire Land Company.”

At times, Johnson’s attack on the New Hampshire Land Company bordered on hysterical, but some of his points were valid. According to the research done for the November 24, 1900 issue of the *New England Homestead*, there was a good deal of merit to Johnson’s claims. The *New England Homestead* was the eastern edition of the *American Agriculturalist*, printed in Springfield, Massachusetts, and as such was concerned with the fate of the New England farmer.

The *New England Homestead* found that the New Hampshire Land Company, along with other companies, had quietly been acquiring land for years. Operations around the “famous Franconia Notch” had been on a “colossal scale,” and had forced out the residents of neighboring towns. The timber practices of the New Hampshire Land Company had the potential to “rob” the state of New Hampshire and “the vast army of worshippers at nature’s footstool who annually turn to the White Mountains for health and recreation.” The state would lose the estimated “$10 million” the visitors brought annually, and the New England region as a whole would suffer from a decrease in visitors to this popular resort area. Factories in southern New England depended upon the waterpower from the northern forests. If a “proper forestry method” was not

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109 Johnson, 245.


111 Ibid.

112 Ibid.

113 Ibid.
promoted, the “depopulation” of New England’s rural districts, which was adversely affecting New England farm production, would continue. Clearly, the long-range effects on a variety of groups throughout New England were potentially devastating.

There was “a remedy,” however. “The first step” the New England Homestead proposed,

is to organize a White Mountain Forestry Association. Talk alone cuts no figure. The lumber barons are united as one man. The vast public, if united as one man, can easily secure justice. Protest, long and loud, is well enough, but let us organize so as to make protest effective. Will every friend of the White Mountains, of forestry, of New Hampshire, of New England instantly write the Homestead offering their moral support for the proposed White Mountain forestry association? Money is not needed so much as organized public opinion.... Instant action is imperative.\(^{114}\)

The New England Homestead even included a blank form to cut out and mail in to show support for the forest conservation movement. It was entitled “To Save New England’s Farms, Homes, and Industries: The White Mountain Forestry Association.”\(^{115}\)

In its January 19, 1901 issue, the New England Homestead announced that a “Forestry Meeting” was planned for January 21 in Concord, New Hampshire. Nine people gathered that day to organize the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. Among them were Frank Rollins, whose term as governor of New Hampshire would end that year; Joseph T. Walker, the son of Joseph B. Walker, the “forestry pioneer” of New Hampshire; and Ellen McRoberts Mason, who was the Chairman of the NHFWC Forestry Committee and was also responsible for suggesting the name of the organization.\(^{116}\) By the end of March 1901, the SPNHF had already created a mailing

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\(^{114}\) Ibid.

\(^{115}\) Bruns, 12.

\(^{116}\) Bruns, 8. In addition to Mrs. Mason, original SPNHF membership included Orlando B. Douglas, president of the New York Medical Society, George H. Moses, editor of the Concord Monitor, as well as

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circular and advertising posters, which were designed to attract those interested in saving New Hampshire’s forests.

A wide membership in the SPNHF was encouraged, with the annual dues set at "twenty-five cents, in order to be within the reach of all." At the NHFWC’s annual meeting in Keene, New Hampshire, Mason announced the formation of the SPNHF. She encouraged clubwomen to pay the twenty-five-cent annual dues and to join an organization dedicated to preserving the natural beauty of New Hampshire. The money from all of the annual dues would be "very useful in carrying out the work of the SPNHF," which was summarized as "to preserve the forests of New Hampshire, to protect our scenery, and to encourage the building of good roads."

The SPNHF’s mission reflected many ideas of the conservation movement, including the wise use of forests and the creation of public forests to accomplish this goal. The SPNHF worked to achieve its aims through federal and state legislation for the protection of forests and through a program of lectures and school programs, the goal of which was public education about forestry issues. The SPNHF’s push for more forest reserves reflected a concern throughout the Northeast about the threat to dwindling forests and the consequences thereof. In 1883, New York state legislature voted to "withdraw from further sale" 600,000 acres of state-owned land in the Adirondack

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the Episcopal bishop of New Hampshire. Later membership included Mrs. Frances Cleveland and Gifford Pinchot; Ogden and Clark, 93.


118 Ibid. The SPNHF’s involvement with the movement for good roads will be discussed in the next chapter.

119 Judd, 104.
region; the 2.8 million acres Adirondack Forest Preserve was created in 1892. In 1883, at Joseph B. Walker’s urging, the state of New Hampshire allowed the Forestry Commission to accept “donations of lands and monies for the establishment of reservations.”

Building upon this foundation, the SPNHF “identified two principal means of preserving the forests of the Northeast: 1) federal legislation to provide authorities the necessary means to purchase lands for inclusion in proposed federal reservations and 2) state legislation to create a number of state parks and forest reservations similar to those being developed in New York and Pennsylvania.” The SPNHF focused on forestry needs throughout New Hampshire, but the situation in the White Mountains received particular attention after the SPNHF hired Philip W. Ayres as its forester in 1901. It was clear that something needed to be done to protect the White Mountain forests, as the SPNHF’s initial attempts to educate and build support through lectures were proving ineffective. By 1903, clear-cutting in the White Mountains and drought contributed to at least six forest fires in the White Mountains region between April and June, with over 84,000 acres burned. All told, fire destroyed over two hundred thousand acres of forests throughout the state.

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120 Ogden and Clark: 93. Box 25, folder 2. SPNHF Collection.


122 Ogden and Clark, 93. Box 25, folder 2. SPNHF Collection.

123 Ibid.

Once he was appointed forester, Ayres changed the tactics of the SPNHF. He promoted the acquisition of land by the federal government while at the same time working closely with the lumbermen, “to aid and educate them in their operations.”

Ayres and the SPNHF found a middle ground between preservation and conservation, recognizing the historic and scenic value of the White Mountains and other areas throughout the state, while also promoting good forestry practices. The organization did not seek to eliminate timber harvesting completely, but rather to control it and manage it so that production would be efficient, not wasteful. In 1909, future SPNHF president Allen Hollis drafted legislation that led to the creation of the position of state Forester, as well as providing for “state responsibility for forest fire control.”

The goals of the SPNHF reflected those of the NHFWC and even the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, as one of its forestry objectives had been the appointment of a forester in every state. “From the very first,” the NHFWC stated that it, “worked in perfect accord” with the SPNHF and “immediately lent its support to the broad conservation programs” designed by Ayres. Ayres, who remained the SPNHF’s forester until 1935, reflected the SPNHF’s connection to Progressive Era ideas, as well as to the conservation movement. Ayres’s first training was in social work. Before moving to New Hampshire, Ayres worked with the Charity Organization Society of New York, where he was director from 1897-1902. During the 1880s, Ayres helped to found

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125 Ibid.
126 Ibid.
128 Harriman, 110.

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and design the curriculum for the Columbia University School of Social Work, whose students read the works of Jane Addams and Jacob Riis on the living conditions of urban populations. After this first career ruined his health, at age forty Ayres turned to forestry for his second profession, receiving a degree in Forestry from Cornell University in 1901. Ayres’s career highlighted the activities of a Progressive reformer. His own sense of social responsibility and organization demonstrated a clear connection to the mission and purpose of the NHFWC, with which Ayres would develop close ties during his years with the SPNHF.

Ayres’s first important focus, however, was to find a solution to the situation in the White Mountains. When he and Frank Rollins met in Boston in 1901 to discuss the possibility of Ayres’s joining the SPNHF as its forester, Rollins told him that the White Mountains were being stripped of their forests by the six major logging companies in the region. Rollins wanted to save “at least a portion of the White Mountains” and needed a trained forester to help with the effort. Ayres suggested that a White Mountain National Forest might be the only way to guarantee protection of the forests in the region. When Rollins agreed with Ayres’s assessment, Ayres decided to become SPNHF forester, with the understanding that he be allowed to “take the White Mountain campaign beyond [New Hampshire] to promote the idea of protecting the region as a national resource.”

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130 Bruns, 7.

After traveling throughout the state, speaking to timber company owners, and assessing the situation in the White Mountains, Ayres determined that New Hampshire, with a small population and inadequate tax base, needed federal as well as state funds to help solve its forestry problems. Following the state’s unsuccessful efforts to attempt to purchase cut-over White Mountain land for the reseeding of trees, in 1903 SPNHF member and New Hampshire’s United States Senator Jacob H. Gallinger, along with New Hampshire’s United States Representative Frank D. Currier, introduced legislation in Congress to create a White Mountain forest reserve, declaring that “[t]he White Hills are...a national pride and treasure, as truly as is the Yellowstone Park.”

The introduction of a White Mountain forest reserve bill followed the introduction of a Southern Appalachian forest reserve bill in 1902. This bill was meant to bring under federal ownership lands in West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee. The situation in the forests in the Southern Appalachians was similar to that of the White Mountain forests. Harmful forestry practices were blamed for devastating floods, and there was concern about the flow and protection of the headwaters of the Ohio, Tennessee, and Potomac Rivers that were located in the region.

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132 Ibid., 8.
133 Bruns, 10.
135 The National Forest Reserve, 2. The report also noted that the Southern Appalachians received the most rainfall in the United States after the Northern Pacific Coast, from “50 to 100 inches per annum.” As the region had “no lakes and marshes” to “regulate the flow of streams” or grasses growing on “cleared lands” to hold the soil in place, “the forest” was the only “protector of soil.” As soil washed down from the mountains, it was “ruining the agricultural resources of the region” as well as “siltiing up” the rivers.
The Southern Appalachians bill had the support of Gifford Pinchot and the United States Senate, but had failed to pass in the House of Representatives.\textsuperscript{136} Pinchot was not initially in favor of the New Hampshire-supported bill, fearing that it would interfere with the passage of the Southern Appalachians bill.\textsuperscript{137} According to Ayres, Pinchot changed his mind about the White Mountain bill after he realized the advantage of having the New England states' Congressional delegations' backing for a bill so similar to that concerning the Southern Appalachians.\textsuperscript{138} In 1906, Pinchot supported a combined Southern Appalachians/White Mountain bill that would bring proper forestry management to both regions, as well as work towards flood control.\textsuperscript{139}

In addition to Pinchot and the SPNHF, the memberships of the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the NHFWC added their voices to the call for National Forests in the East.\textsuperscript{140} The combined bill gained the support of Chambers of Commerce from many cities across the country, including that of Los Angeles, California, as well as several forestry organizations, the Connecticut Lumber Dealers Association and other business groups, and the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution.\textsuperscript{141}

\textsuperscript{136} Bruns, 10.


\textsuperscript{138} Ayres, "National Forests:" 2-3. In addition to the realization that the Southern Appalachian bill would not pass without more support, Ayres wrote that Pinchot was influenced by a 1904 resolution supporting the bill that was introduced by the Reverend Edward Hale, Chaplain of the U.S. Senate, who had been a part of the Hitchcock survey of the White Mountains during the 1840s.

\textsuperscript{139} Address by Gifford Pinchot, Esq., U.S. Forester, presented at Huntington Hall, Boston, Massachusetts, January 20, 1906. Box 31, folder 26. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{140} "Forestry Petitions," \textit{The Federation Bulletin}, 3 (February 1906): 225.

\textsuperscript{141} "Organizations that Supported the Weeks Act," from \textit{American Forestry Association Bulletin} 2, 1911. Box 31, folder 2. SPNHF Collection.
There was, however, also considerable opposition to the Southern Appalachians/White Mountain bill in Washington. Some in Congress doubted the scientific validity of the connection between deforestation and the flow of rivers.\(^{142}\) The most powerful opposition to the White Mountain bill came from the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Joseph Cannon of Illinois. His attitude was “not one cent for scenery,” and Cannon worked to block the bill’s passage, in spite of the fact that the main intent of the bill was to save the forests for economic, rather than scenic, reasons.\(^{143}\) It was not until 1908, when John W. Weeks, a U.S. Representative from Massachusetts who was a native of Lancaster, New Hampshire, indicated his support of the bill that Cannon’s attitude towards the bill changed. Cannon agreed to allow the bill to have a fair hearing in its committee if Weeks could find a way to make the bill more favorable to business interests.\(^{144}\)

Weeks reworked the Appalachians/White Mountain bill twice. By 1910, the bill, which would be voted into law as the Weeks Act in 1911, stated that “the consent of the Congress of the United States is hereby given to each of the several states in the Union to enter into any agreement or compact... with any other State, or States for the purpose of conserving the forests and the water supply of the states entering into such an agreement.”\(^{145}\) While the Weeks Act did not create forest reserves in either the White

\(^{142} \)“Weeks Act,” *People and Place*, 8.


\(^{144} \)“Weeks Act,” *People and Place*, 9.

\(^{145} \)United State Department of Agriculture, Forest Service *Purchase of Land Under the Weeks Law in the Southern Appalachians and the White Mountains*, by Henry S. Graves, 27 March 1911, United States Department of Agriculture, 7. Box 31, folder 33. SPNHF Collection.
Mountains or the Southern Appalachians, it did provide the means through which forest lands could be set aside under federal management.

This was good news not only for those interested in saving the White Mountains forests, but also for mill owners and workers downstream in southern New England in particular. By 1913, surveys, purchases and title transfers began the process of creating the White Mountain National Forest, using the funds appropriated by the Weeks Act. The initial area of the White Mountain National Forest was 600,000 acres, mostly in New Hampshire, although there were 30,000 acres in Maine as well.146 The entire Presidential Range, once threatened by timber barons, came under the protection of the United States Forest Service, in 1914.147 Franconia Notch, owned by SPNHF member Colonel Henry Greenleaf's Profile and Flume Hotel Companies, and Crawford Notch, also privately owned, were not included in the initial National Forest purchases, although some land in Franconia Notch would come under eventual federal control.148 It would be up to the SPNHF to encourage the state of New Hampshire to purchase these two important and unique properties.

Once the Weeks Act passed, the SPNHF and the NHFWC continued to work in New Hampshire towards preserving other areas in the state that were either endangered by irresponsible timber practices or of unique and historic value to the state. The members of the NHFWC supported and worked to ensure the success of the SPNHF's campaign for the preservation of Crawford Notch, which the state of New Hampshire

146 Bruns, 13.

147 Kilbourne, Chronicles, 397.

148 See Chapter 5.
purchased in 1911. In 1912, the Federation raised several hundred dollars to help
preserve the caves around Lost River Gorge in the White Mountains, around which the
SPNHF purchased 148 acres for $7,000.149

In 1922, the SPNHF and NHFWC turned their efforts to the preserving shade trees
along New Hampshire's highways, as part of the SPNHF's Committee on Highway Shade
Trees.150 The circular mailed throughout the state declared that

Nature has richly endowed our roads with shade. We believe that our people will
respond heartily and generously to this appeal to further protect and beautify our roads.
The committee feels that on Memorial Day, May 30, 1922, we should make a
beginning throughout the state. We are appealing to you and through you to your
individual friends, and to the organizations to which you belong, to do two things as
follows: First: will you undertake to get a movement started in your community to
plant memorial shade trees to our soldiers and sailors who have enlisted from New
Hampshire in defense of our country?...Second: Can you start a movement in your
community to have deeded to the town as memorials to our soldier and sailors and as a
patriotic action to shade the highways, the growth that is within the limits of the
highway?...We feel that...great good will result from the control of the growth within
the highway by state and town authorities.151

Alta McDuffee, president of the NHFWC from 1922 to 1924, was a founding member of
the committee. An experienced organizer, McDuffee would go on to organize the
NHFWC's operations during the Franconia Notch campaign. McDuffee's efforts and
interests would eventually lead her to be appointed as Assistant to the Forester of the
SPNHF in the 1930s.

The SPNHF would utilize many of the strategies of these earlier campaigns in 1923,
when the campaign to save Franconia Notch began, including turning to the NHFWC to
ask for its members' help. Building upon an existing conservation-friendly climate in the
state, the SPNHF utilized that support to bring to New Hampshire the forestry

149 Bruns, 110.
150 "Committee on Highway Shade Trees" circular, May 1922. Box 11, folder 1. SPNHF Collection.
infrastructure it lacked. The SPNHF achieved much during its first two decades. It had set aside thousands of acres of land as forest reserves both through its own efforts and with the help of the federal government, the state of New Hampshire, and the NHFWC. The Appalachian Mountain Club had established itself as an important force in the region, managing the wilderness experience for amateur and professional hikers. By the 1920s, the conservation practices of the SPNHF met with approval in New Hampshire. With a good reputation to back them, the SPNHF’s campaigns brought stability to the forests of New Hampshire, a tract of land at a time.

The three organizations discussed in this chapter complete the Franconia Notch triptych. All of the major players in the Franconia Notch campaign are now in place. The vision of the White Mountains as a place of scenic Romantic beauty that was enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of visitors each year was established during the nineteenth century. The White Mountains conservation movement had successfully halted any immediate threat to the region’s forest, but there remained the lingering reminder that privately owned land was still in danger of the over-harvesting of its timber.

That threat would again become a reality when, in August 1923, Franconia Notch’s premier grand resort hotel would go up in flames, leaving vulnerable to the timber industry 6,000 acres of mature growth and virgin forests, not to mention the scenic wonders of the Flume, the Pool, the Basin, and the Old Man of the Mountain. It would take the best efforts of the SPNHF, the NHFWC, the state of New Hampshire, the Appalachian Mountain Club, and many other concerned organizations and private citizens to save in perpetuity the Franconia Notch, where “over all, rocks, woods, and

151 Committee on Highway Shade Trees Appeal, May 6, 1922. Box 11, folder 1. SPNHF Collection.
water, brooded the spirit of repose, and the silent energy of nature stirred the soul to the innermost depths."\(^{152}

\(^{152}\) Cole, in *American Artists*, 104.
CHAPTER V

"THE OLD MAN SEEKS THE ETERNAL PROTECTION OF HIS STATE:"
THE CAMPAIGN TO SAVE FRANCONIA NOTCH,
AUGUST 1923 TO OCTOBER 1927

On Sunday September 30, 2001, a 20-foot wooden flagpole flying a nine-by-twelve foot American flag appeared attached to the forehead of the Old Man of the Mountain. In an interview with the Manchester Union Leader, a prominent daily newspaper in New Hampshire, Jim Lindorff of Littleton, New Hampshire said that after watching the television coverage of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C. and the expressions of patriotism that followed, he felt that “we’ve got to get the flag up there [on the Old Man of the Mountain].”¹ After acquiring a flag from the local Veterans of Foreign Wars Post in Littleton, Lindorff gave the flag to five rock climbers. Just after 3:00 p.m. on that Sunday afternoon, the flag was flying from the Old Man. Lindorff said that “[t]here were quite a few spectators who applauded and cheered. We all felt very good....The Old Man of the Mountain is the symbol of New Hampshire....”² By October 2nd, however, the state’s Division of Parks and Recreation decided that the flag had to come down, as it was proving a distraction to the tourists driving through the Notch during the height of the White Mountains’ Fall foliage season.³

² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
This scene, of an American flag flying from the Old Man of the Mountain, gazed upon by thousands of tourists, demonstrates the power that this collection of granite ledges continues to hold over the White Mountains and New Hampshire. Designated as New Hampshire’s state emblem in 1945, the image of the Old Man of the Mountain can be found in prominent locations throughout the state. The outline of the Old Man surrounds state route numbers on road signs and is on the side of New Hampshire state police cruisers, both of which are seen often by New Hampshire residents and visitors alike. Most significantly, the Old Man of the Mountain was chosen to grace the New Hampshire state quarter, issued by the United States Mint in 2001. The Old Man of the Mountain, the most visible, as well as most famous, symbol of Franconia Notch, retains its place as one of the most recognized symbols of New Hampshire.

Patriotism was one of the most persuasive themes of the Franconia Notch campaign. Combined with a well-defined conservation ethic in New Hampshire, it supported the urgent call for the preservation of a region that was of great historic and scenic value to New Hampshire, New England, and the United States. In addition to patriotism, there was a sense of the White Mountains’ importance to New England’s, as well as New Hampshire’s, history. By the 1920s the historic and natural importance of Franconia Notch was inextricably linked to its economic success, giving the landscape of the Notch historic, symbolic, and productive values. This combination was not new to the region. The image of Franconia Notch as a luxurious resort as well as a place of natural and unique beauty had been one of its primary attractions to visitors. This duality

4 The Old Man can also be found in such diverse official and unofficial places as the sides of New Hampshire Park and Recreation vehicles, on toll tokens, on the Profile Seafood Shop’s sign on State Route 9 in Hillsborough, New Hampshire and on the sides of the Old Man Nutty Brown Ale carton. The Old Man is also a popular subject for post cards, magnets, coffee mugs, and other New Hampshire souvenirs.
would play well throughout the campaign, adding an economic justification to reasons supported by conservation and patriotism.

The following two chapters will trace the progress of the Franconia Notch campaign. This chapter will follow the campaign through its earliest stages, from August 1923 until October 1927, while at the same time demonstrating how the underlying themes of the campaign, patriotism, regionalism, and nostalgia, influenced the development of the campaign’s marketing strategy. The second chapter will discuss the events of the Franconia Notch publicity campaign as it reached its height between October 1927 and September 1928.

This chapter will provide a snapshot of the early twentieth century White Mountains, focusing on the changes to Franconia Notch, including the decline of the grand hotel and the rise of the popularity of the summer cottage and the automobile. It will also discuss briefly social and cultural activities that occurred pre- and post-World War I, focusing on those relating to the growing importance of the idea of New England as a region with cultural as well as economic connections. The involvement of Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPHNF) Forester Philip Ayres and of the New Hampshire Federation of Women’s Clubs (NHFWC) in the early days of the Franconia Notch effort will demonstrate the importance of both to the eventual success of the campaign to save Franconia Notch.

Twentieth Century Changes in the White Mountains

By the first years of the twentieth century, the White Mountain tourism industry began to reflect, for better or for worse, the changes brought about by the arrival of the
automobile. In 1905, the New Hampshire State legislature decided that “[a]fter careful
consideration by men interested in the substantial advancement of the state, and with a
view to making it more attractive to summer tourists, many thousands of whom now
journey thither in automobiles,” it was time to invest in road improvements.5 The state
of New Hampshire devoted $125,000 per year for six years toward the improvement of
the state’s “main highways,” one of which ran through Franconia Notch.6 It was the first
time that the state had made such an appropriation.7

Good roads were a popular and important issue by 1905. In 1901, the SPNHF
included its support of good roads in its mission statement and it was an important
campaign of both the General Federation of Women’s Clubs1 and the NHFWC. Two
years later, a national conference on good roads, held in St. Louis, Missouri, was attended
by Theodore Roosevelt and William Jennings Bryan.8 Good roads were as important in
rural areas as they were in cities. Well-maintained roads meant lower transportation costs
as farmers brought their produce to market, which meant lower prices for those who lived
in the cities. Better roads also led to higher property values in rural areas.9

This was of particular importance in areas of northern New England, which saw a
population loss during the latter half of the nineteenth century.10 Improved roads might

5 Bureau of Labor, Second Special Report of the Summer Boarding Business and Resorts in New
Hampshire (Concord, NH: n.p., 1906), vii.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.


9 Ibid., 204.

10 See Chapters III and IV for a discussion of the economic conditions of northern New England.
mean a higher resale value for abandoned farms and land left behind, which might encourage summer residents to purchase the farms or build summer homes in New Hampshire. By 1912, the summer tourism business was a lucrative one for the state of New Hampshire, with $10 million "annually left here by summer tourists reaching every town in the state." Good roads, village and town improvement societies, and increased publicity would draw more people to the region each summer.

The White Mountains tourism industry catered to the new tourists as well. Some White Mountains grand hotels, like the Profile House, which, in 1905, added a separate entrance to the hotel for automobiles as well as a garage for two hundred cars, and the Mount Washington Hotel, an ornate Spanish Renaissance structure built in 1902 and still in operation, benefited from the new automobile trade by being located on or near main

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12 N.J. Bachelder, “New Hampshire and the Summer Industry” in New Hampshire Board of Agriculture, Report of the Board of Agriculture from September 1, 1910 to September 1, 1912 (Manchester, NH: Arthur E. Clark, 1912), 20. There were three thousand hotels and boarding houses and five thousand summer homes in New Hampshire by 1912. In his address, Bachelder noted that there were a variety of financial benefits that resulted from the increase in summer homes, in particular. More people meant an increased need for produce, with the possibility for higher prices. Other benefits came from the “vast army of eminent statesmen, famous educators, great financiers, noted authors, poets, and sculptors and diplomats of a world-wide reputation” visiting rural towns, “stimulating better thoughts and higher ideals of citizenship....Boys and girls deprived of high school training” could “derive social and mental development by association with people of culture and refinement who annually spent their summers in New Hampshire country towns.” (21) This elitist attitude, while it recognized the limited opportunities of some rural areas, also failed to recognize that an influx of hundreds of visitors each summer could also be disruptive, bringing increased traffic, dirt, and noise, along with a boost for the local economy. Some natives resented the summer people, whether they benefited from their trade or not. This feeling is certainly as common in the beginning of the twenty-first century as it was in the beginning of the twentieth. In an unusual partnership, a number of permanent and summer residents of the town of Stoddard, New Hampshire, located in the southwestern part of the state, banded together in the late 1980s and early 1990s to stop the construction of a condominium complex on Pickerel Cove, a sensitive wetlands area of Highland Lake. The Highland Lake Association raised the money to purchase the land in question and in 1991 it was donated to the SPNH.

13 Ibid., 22.
highways. By 1912, over 70% of the summer guests staying at the Mount Washington Hotel arrived by automobile, displacing the railroad as the primary mode of White Mountains transportation.\(^{14}\)

The relationship between automobiles and the grand hotels was a reciprocal one, similar to that between the railroads and the hotels. The Alpine House in Gorham, New Hampshire, was built in 1851 by the Atlantic and St. Lawrence Railroad at its White Mountain terminus. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the railroads promoted their routes to the White Mountains, as well as the hotels along those routes, through advertisements in regional papers like the White Mountain Echo and through the publication of a series of guidebooks about the region. When hotels like the Mount Washington welcomed automobiles, they would often become the “official hotels of the larger and better established motor clubs.”\(^{15}\) The tour itineraries developed by the American Automobile Association, founded in 1902, included several routes for the White Mountains. These routes took drivers from the Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods to the Profile House in Franconia Notch. Longer tours included Crawford Notch and could go as far south as Lake Winnipesaukee, a round trip distance of one hundred and forty eight miles.\(^{16}\)

There were drawbacks to the arrival of the automobile, however. Automobiles changed the pace of the White Mountains. The peaceful road through Franconia Notch,

\(^{14}\) Kilbourne, Chronicles, 407.

\(^{15}\) Tolles, The Grand Hotels, n. 15, 236.

\(^{16}\) Thomas Anderson, “Our New England Alps as a National Health Resort” New England Magazine XXXVIII (May 1908): 321. By the second decade of the twentieth century, it was not uncommon to see automobiles on the Mount Washington Carriage Road in Glen, New Hampshire. This road to the summit of Mount Washington opened to coaches and carriages in 1861 and is still in operation today.
once the purview of carriages and coaches, changed with the arrival of the “buzz-wagon,” which added noise, dust, and “a liberal flavoring of gasoline,” and brought with it the dangers of speeding, inexperienced drivers.\textsuperscript{17} The automobile also contributed to the decline of the influence of the railroad in the White Mountains. The automobile drew business away from the railroads as people began to enjoy the benefits of an “exalted, aristocratic gypsy’s life” that allowed them to travel where they wanted, to stop when they wanted, and to leave when they wanted, no longer dependent solely upon railroad or coach schedules.\textsuperscript{18}

Some grand hotels not as easily accessible from the main highways also suffered from summer tourists’ increasingly transient lifestyle. Hotels that relied upon the annual return of the same families who would spend months at a time at one location saw a drop off in business as the more affluent clientele either “did” the mountains more quickly in their autos, or purchased their own summer homes, some of which were associated with the grand hotels. Among these were the Profile House cottages, which were privately owned structures built on land owned by the hotel.\textsuperscript{19} The ownership of these cottages “revert[ed] by outright sale to the hotel company” ten years after each structure was built.\textsuperscript{20} The company would then either sell or rent the cottages back to the original or to

\textsuperscript{17} Anderson: 319. See also Flink, 99-100. By 1906, some racing automobiles reached average speeds of over 125 miles per hour, although a car driven through Franconia Notch would most likely be driven more slowly.

\textsuperscript{18} Anderson: 319-20.

\textsuperscript{19} See Chapter III.

new owners.\textsuperscript{21} Other summer homebuyers built cottages throughout the White Mountains, with several cottage colonies developing in areas such as North Conway and Intervale on the eastern slopes of the White Mountains and Tamworth, New Hampshire, which overlooked scenic Lake Chocorua and Mount Chocorua.\textsuperscript{22}

In part because of the relative ease of travel by automobile, the White Mountains and Franconia Notch became increasingly popular destinations for summer visitors.\textsuperscript{23} The Old Man of the Mountain and the other natural attractions in Franconia Notch drew an estimated 100,000 tourists annually by 1923.\textsuperscript{24} In 1926, staff at the Flume recorded that there were automobiles with license plates from forty-three of the forty-eight states, five Canadian provinces, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico in the attraction’s parking lot.\textsuperscript{25} (Fig. 4) The popularity of Franconia Notch was obviously not diminished by the reported damage of lumber operations in the region during the 1890s.

While the Profile House adapted to the new automobile culture, its continued prosperity was supported by the state of New Hampshire and the federal government in indirect ways. Beginning in 1899, the state began to improve the roads in the Franconia Notch region.\textsuperscript{26} By 1905, a highway was built connecting Franconia Notch to Bethlehem.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{22} See Tolles, \textit{Summer Cottages}, Chapter 9.

\textsuperscript{23} There was talk of a winter season in the White Mountains, but until the state acquired the land in 1928, the road through Franconia Notch was never plowed during the winter months. The hotel season usually ended in October as many hotels had inadequate heating systems to combat the cold White Mountains winters. Once skiing arrived in the White Mountains in the 1930s and in Franconia Notch in 1938, this would change.

\textsuperscript{24} Bruns, 52.

\textsuperscript{25} Paul Hannah to the American Automobile Association, Washington, D.C., January 7, 1928. Box 10, folder 1, SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Report of the Summer Boarding Business}, vii.
Fig. 4

"At the Flume on a Busy Day." Photograph ca. 1930. The Flume was one of the most popular natural attractions in Franconia Notch both before and after the Franconia Notch campaign. SPNHF Collection. Photo Courtesy of Milne Special Collections, University of New Hampshire Library.
and Crawford Notch. This road benefited the Profile House directly as it linked the Profile Links Golf Course, owned by the Profile House and located some three miles from the Profile House itself, to Twin Mountain, site of the Twin Mountain House, northeast of Franconia Notch.

The Federal Highway Act of 1921 also benefited Franconia Notch. The intention behind the act was to create a system of consistently numbered roads that linked communities and states. The Franconia Notch road, part of a road that began in New Hampshire’s north woods at the Third Connecticut Lake and ended in Cambridge, Massachusetts, became U.S. Route 3, which that same year was named the Daniel Webster Highway. Thus, Franconia Notch, first connected to the rest of the nation by carriage road and then by rail, became part of the first federal highway system and found its way into the new automobile travel guidebooks.

One such guidebook was the 1927 edition of *New Hampshire by Motor*, published by the State of New Hampshire Publicity Bureau. The guidebook described the various scenic drives throughout the state, including the sights found along the Daniel Webster Highway as it wound through Franconia Notch. Declaring Franconia Notch “perhaps the most famous Notch in the East,” the guide promised that if the visitor were “fortunate enough” to gaze up “at the austere and tremendous Old Man of the Mountain...he will find himself suddenly inarticulate with awe and wonder...” Tourist guidebooks since

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27 Ibid.


the mid-nineteenth century had included descriptions of this sense of wonder, and the Franconia Notch campaign would capitalize upon that tradition, still evident in the twentieth century.

It was a picturesque road that wound through Franconia Notch, surrounded on both sides by the 6,000 acres accumulated by Richard Taft beginning in 1841 and maintained, until 1921, by Colonel Henry Greenleaf. Taft and Greenleaf’s Profile and Flume Hotel Company, in which the cottage owners had shares, owned not only the Profile House and the Flume House, which burned for the second time in 1918 and was never rebuilt, but also the Old Man of the Mountain, Lonesome, Echo, and Profile Lakes, the Basin, the Pool, and the Flume, the only attraction with a gate charge. The hotel company also ran a variety of gift shops and concession stands throughout the Notch, including the Flume Tea-Room, constructed near the site of the Flume House.

While the Flume’s wooden walkways along the gorge generally paid for their maintenance, the maintenance of the most famous feature of the Notch, the Old Man of the Mountain, did not. Until the 1870s, there was little knowledge of the condition of the granite ledges that together created the profile of the Old Man that attracted so many visitors. Examinations made in 1871 and 1872 discovered that the top two ledges were beginning to fall away. Upon hearing of the situation, Colonel Greenleaf himself climbed to the top of the Old Man in 1872, taking with him “a stone mason, a blacksmith,

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32 *Manchester (New Hampshire) Union* 3, August 1923.
33 Welch, *Franconia Notch*, 15.
34 A State Survey was done in 1871, when students form Dartmouth College measured the Old Man. Members of the Appalachian Mountain Club saw and noted the erosion damage in 1872. See Kilbourne, *Chronicles*, 105 and Russell, 7.
and two or three others" to see if repairs could be made. The party was dismayed at the damage resulting from erosion. Greenleaf commented that “[t]he immensity in size and weight of the rocks convinced us that it was useless to try to preserve the Old Man of the Mountain.”

From its first year in circulation, the *White Mountain Echo* included similar gloomy forecasts about the fate of the Old Man. One written by fishing expert and regular Profile House guest W.C. Prime on August 3, 1878 feared that the Old Man, one of the “glories of Franconia Notch...will have to be counted among the ‘has-beens’ of the grand old Granite Hills of New Hampshire.”

It would require the combined efforts of the Reverend Guy Robert, Greenleaf, Edward H. Geddes, and the state of New Hampshire to save the Old Man from falling to pieces. In 1906, Roberts, a Methodist minister who was pastor to a variety of congregations throughout the White Mountains and New Hampshire, became concerned about the condition of the Old Man of the Mountain, which he described as “unique, distinctive, and inspirational.” After nine years of searching for a way preserve the Old Man, Roberts met Edward E. Geddes, who served as superintendent of several Massachusetts granite quarries from 1900 until 1939. After visiting the Old Man and surveying its condition, Geddes developed a system of turnbuckles, or large hinges, that

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35 Russell, 7.

36 Ibid.

37 *WME*, 3 August 1878.


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would keep the granite ledges in place, while at the same time allowing for the movements that occurred as ice froze and melted between the cracks in the granite.³⁹

Once Geddes’s plan was complete, Roberts spoke with Greenleaf about the restoration of the Old Man. According to the account published in 1959 by Geddes’s daughter Mabelle Geddes Russell, Greenleaf thought that the plan was a good one but felt that “while the Great Stone Face was located on the [Profile and Flume Hotels Company’s] property, it was also of State and National importance...[and] that the work should be done by the State rather than a private company...”⁴⁰ Greenleaf wrote accordingly to New Hampshire’s governor R.H. Spaulding, who met with Roberts in September 1916. After the meeting, Greenleaf received a letter from Spaulding “expressing his ready willingness to join in the expense and approved such an undertaking, if [Greenleaf] would take entire charge of the work necessary to be done.”⁴¹ Greenleaf arranged for a crew of five to assist Geddes and it took the group eight days, from September 25, 1916 until October 2, 1916, to complete the work. According to Russell, Geddes, who was fifty-three years old and in frail health at the time, “risked his life to preserve the Old Man because he loved him and believed this to be too great a part of nature’s handiwork to be allowed to go to destruction.”⁴² This argument in support of

³⁹ Russell, 9. A turnbuckle is defined as “a metal coupling device consisting of an oblong piece internally threaded at both ends into which the corresponding sections of two threaded rods are screwed in order to form a unit that can be adjusted for tension or length.” American Heritage Dictionary, 4th ed., s.v. “turnbuckle.”

⁴⁰ Russell, 10.

⁴¹ Hancock, 53.

⁴² Russell, 17.
the preservation of the Old Man of the Mountain would become the litany of the Franconia Notch campaign.

The state of New Hampshire's investment in the highway through Franconia Notch and the preservation of the Old Man of the Mountain was an acknowledgement of the importance of the region to the state and its history. This recognition would provide a precedent for New Hampshire's purchase of Franconia Notch a decade later.

"The entire Notch was like a raging furnace:" The Destruction of the Profile House

In 1921, Colonel Henry Greenleaf, whose association with the Profile House dated from the 1860s, decided that he would sell the Profile House. Greenleaf, the son of a stagecoach driver turned railroad conductor, was a resident of Franconia who had served two terms in the New Hampshire legislature, and another term as a member of the governor's Executive Council. He was a well-respected member of his community as well as a successful hotel owner. In addition to building the Profile House into one of the most successful resort complexes in the White Mountains, he was also the manager of the Hotel Vendome in Boston, which catered to the same well-heeled clientele as the Profile House.

Greenleaf hand-picked the hotel's next owner. He approached the Frank H. Abbott and Son Hotel Company, owned by Frank Abbott and his son Karl. The Abbots were well-known hotel owners. In 1886, Frank Abbott purchased the Uplands Hotel in Bethlehem, which he, his wife, and son ran during the summer season. During the winter, the Abbots, like many in the hotel business, moved to Florida, where the family

43 Metcalf: 75.
also managed several hotels over two decades. Karl Abbott, who would become a successful hotel owner and manager in his own right, involved with as many as eight or ten hotels at a time, arranged for his father’s firm to purchase the Forest Hill House in Franconia, New Hampshire in 1918.

Abbott was managing the Forest Hill House when Greenleaf offered him the opportunity to manage or purchase the Profile House and its 6,000 acres. Abbott was in shock when Greenleaf asked him if he “would like to own the Great Stone Face.”44 In April 1921, the 32 year-old Abbott agreed to purchase the hotel and the Frank Abbott and Son Hotel Company named the surrounding land Greenleaf Park in honor of its former owner.45

Under Abbott’s management, Franconia Notch truly became a commodity. Abbott installed a gate and turnstiles at the entrance to the Flume and increased the visitors’ fee from $.05 to $.25.46 Within a year, the Flume profits went from “some two or three thousand dollars a season to thirty thousand dollars…”.47 In addition to having photographers ready to take and sell pictures at The Flume and Echo Lake, there were the


45 *Manchester (New Hampshire)* Union, 3 August 1923. Hereafter referred to as *Manchester Union.*

46 Abbott, 169.

47 Ibid. In an article published in the Plymouth, New Hampshire Record, Justus Conrad told of his outrage at the “commercialization” of the Flume and the Pool by the Abbotts, and that he was waiting for the next step, which would be “commercializing” the Old Man of the Mountain “by building a high fence for the purpose of hiding him from view and charging a quarter to peek through a hole in the fence to see him.” Abbott countered with the reality of the financial situation in Franconia Notch and the lengths to which his company went to maintain the Notch. The Profile and Flume Hotels Company had maintained the Notch road for years, maintained free camping and hiking facilities and Abbott saw no problem with out of state visitors, who made up the majority of those visiting the Flume and the Pool, helping to pay for the taxes and upkeep on “this wonderful park.” Justus Conrad, “A New Way of Profiteering,” *Plymouth (New Hampshire) Record,* 31 August, 1922; Karl Abbott, Letter to the Editor, *Plymouth (New Hampshire) Record,* 8 September, 1922. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.
souvenir shops. Under the direction of Frank C. Brace, whom Abbott called an
"efficient" and "very ingenious" manager, the Profile Wonder Shops at Echo Lake and
the Old Man of the Mountain viewing area at Profile Lake did an increased business.
These, along with the Flume receipts, created a major source of revenue for the hotel
company, which, by 1923, had gone from generating an income of fifteen thousand
dollars a year to bringing in one hundred thousand dollars annually. 48

It was on August 3, 1923, when Abbott was nearing the end of his third successful
season as the proprietor of the Profile House, that the Profile House caught fire. The fire,
which was discovered sometime around noon, was thought to have started in the attic of
the four-floor hotel. Like most of the White Mountains grand hotels, the Profile House
was built entirely of wood, so the fire quickly engulfed the entire main hotel building as
well as most of the outbuildings and the twenty cottages. The hotel complex was
destroyed within a little more than four hours, in spite of help from the neighboring towns
of Bethlehem, Bretton Woods, and Littleton.49 The cause of the fire was never
determined.50

According to the Manchester, New Hampshire Union's report, it was a "spectacular
fire...visible in the mountain resorts for scores of miles."51 The employees of the Profile
House managed to save all of the guests' luggage and jewelry, as well as all of the cash in

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48 Bruns, 53. According to hotel owner Karl Abbott, the Flume was the " 'money-maker' " of the Franconia
properties, with Flume receipts coming in at anywhere between $25,000 and $40,000 per year. Once the
SPNHF took over the Flume in 1928, it was able to run it at a profit until it came into state ownership in
1947. See Bruns, 54.


50 Tolles, Grand Resort Hotels, 201.

51 Manchester Union, 3 August 1923.
the hotel safe. Around three o’clock the fire reached the garage, “the destruction of which was accentuated by a terrific explosion of the eight hundred gallons of gasoline stored there.” Abbott later recalled that Al Pettingill, the Profile House chef, told him “that it was an awe-inspiring site to watch that splendid dining room with all its snowy Irish linen and gleaming glass and silver set up for the noonday meal, with the bright flames playing through the dome [of the dining room].”

Thousands of spectators and their vehicles lined the Notch road and some looted the furniture from the cottages that had been brought out onto the lawns. Among the spectators was an Associated Press reporter, who “was able to send out a story of the fire by climbing a telephone poll and cutting in on the wire.” When it was clear that there was little to be done about the burning buildings, the local fire companies focused their energies on making sure that the surrounding woods did not catch fire. Amazingly, no one was killed and there were only a few injuries among the over five hundred guests and staff.

Karl Abbott was not at the hotel when it caught fire. He had left the Profile House in July 1923 to purchase the Kirkwood Hotel in Camden, South Carolina. He was in

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52 Abbott, 175-176.
54 Abbott, 175.
55 Ibid., 176.
56 Manchester Union, 3 August 1923.
57 Kilbourne, “A Closed Chapter”: 311.
58 Tolles, Grand Resort Hotels, 201; Manchester Union August 3, 1923.
New York City, on his way back to New Hampshire, when he read about the fire. As soon as he reached Franconia Notch the next day, Abbott made sure that each of his guests had a place to stay in one of the surrounding resorts, and that each of his staff members received his or her full summer pay and had a job for the remaining months of the summer season.

That night, the Manchester Union reported, "[t]he 'Old Man of the Mountain' looked down upon a scene of desolation..." A report written in 1926 described the former site of the Profile House as still "fire-scarred terrain...the leveled site, filled to some extent with the debris of the fire, and the few desolate looking outbuildings that remain, present[s] a forlorn sight...to one who is familiar with the history of the place and with its former material splendor, and who reflects on the gay life once going on there..." The story of Franconia Notch as a luxurious resort had come to a fiery end. Out of the ashes rose a new vision of Franconia Notch, which looked to the region's history while also looking forward to its potential.

The Campaign to save Franconia Notch: Precedents and Negotiations

The negotiations that eventually led to the successful acquisition of Franconia Notch by the state of New Hampshire and the SPNHF did not always go smoothly. As Ayres described it in January 1928, there were "some few slight misunderstandings."

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59 Abbott, 173-176.
60 Ibid., 177.
61 Manchester Union, 3 August 1923.
62 Kilbourne, "A Closed Chapter": 312.

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These “misunderstandings” occurred throughout the course of the campaign and would range from minor journalistic misinterpretations to objections over the price of the Notch serious enough to put the campaign in jeopardy.

The night after the Profile House was destroyed Karl Abbott decided to build another Profile House, this one in the style of a “Swiss chalet.” Plans were drawn up and the designs discussed for a few days. Finally, Abbott decided not to rebuild. In his memoirs, Abbott gives no reason for his decision. Expense was probably a consideration as might have been the investment of time required to rebuild before the next season began. Although the Frank Abbott and Son Hotel Company was a successful corporation, one of the primary attractions of the Profile House for Karl Abbott had been its well-established and celebrated reputation. The Profile House was also built to be a workable resort and to run “as smoothly as a luxury ship.” Abbott’s previous experiences had been managing or owning existing hotels that could be improved through renovations. Frank Abbott was ill, and the purchase of the Kirkwood added another hotel to the family company, bringing the total to five. The time and money invested in the new hotel might not have paid dividends high enough to make the effort of rebuilding the lost Profile House worthwhile.

The fate of Franconia Notch, therefore, remained uncertain. It was Frank Abbott, a native of New Hampshire, who decided what should be done with the property. He suggested to his son that Franconia Notch should become a state park, recognizing the

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64 Abbott, 177.

65 Ibid., 162-164.

importance of the Notch to the state’s history and image. Karl had grown up in the White Mountains, and had always thought the Old Man of the Mountain “the greatest natural wonder in the world.”67 The son had great respect for the father, and therefore “accede[d] to his wishes.”68

Unfortunately, turning Franconia Notch into a state park was not as simple as that. Franconia Notch was, and had been for some time, a commercial enterprise. The region had enjoyed a protected status under the management of Richard Taft and Colonel Henry Greenleaf, and after 1881, under Greenleaf alone. Outside of the Profile and Flume House development sites, much of the land owned by Greenleaf remained as forest, explored by hotel guests on short hikes through the trees or on longer horseback rides or hikes to the summits of the Franconia Range.69 In 1915, twenty-three thousand acres in the Franconia Notch region were added to the White Mountain National Forest, including “portions of Mounts Lafayette, Liberty, and Flume on the east and Mounts Pemigewasset, Kinsman, Jackson, and Cannon on the west.”70 Also purchased at that time was the Zealand River watershed, formerly owned by J.E. Henry, which had been cut over and later burned in the fires that swept through the White Mountains in 1903 and 1907.71

67 Abbott, 14.

68 Ibid., 177.

69 Laura and Guy Waterman, 346. By the 1890s, efforts were underway to create trails around Franconia Notch, but it would not be until later in the twentieth century that the Appalachian Mountain Club would establish a system of connected, maintained trails.

70 Kilbourne, Chronicles, 399.

71 Ibid. See also Belcher, Part IV: 370-371, and Belcher, “The Logging Railroads of the White Mountains Part V: East Branch and Lincoln Railroad (1893-1948)”: 519. In 1903, it was reported that ash from the fires in the White Mountains fell on the city of Nashua, New Hampshire located in southern part of the state on the Massachusetts border. Belcher, Part IV: 317.
These new National Forest lands surrounded the land owned by Greenleaf's Profile and Flume Hotel Companies. Although the Henry and Whitehouse timber operations during the 1890s had done unsightly damage to the Franconia Notch region, the Notch itself remained relatively unscarred under the ownership of Greenleaf, an avid supporter of conservation and hiking clubs, who appears not to have allowed any extensive timber operations on his lands.\footnote{Upon his death in 1924, Greenleaf willed $10,000 to the Appalachian Mountain Club and $5,000 to the Dartmouth Outing Club. He also gave $10,000 to the SPNHF, “for the acquisition and maintenance of Forest Reserves in New Hampshire.” The Appalachian Mountain Club would name a trail and a mountain hut in Franconia Notch after Colonel Greenleaf.\cite{Hancock} See \cite{Bruns}.} The Profile House fire had been a significant financial loss for the Abbots, however. The hotel itself had been of great value, with a single curtain in its lobby worth $1,200.\footnote{Abbott recalled that one of the Irish lace curtains that covered the floor to ceiling window in the lobby had been damaged and needed to be replaced. The replacement curtain cost $1200.\cite{Abbott}} But while the hotel was gone, the land remained, relatively undamaged by the fire. The United States Forest Service valued the timber in the Notch at $75,000.\footnote{\textit{New York Times Magazine}, 22 February 1925. Box 9, folder 19. SPNHF Collection.} The complete tract, six thousand acres of forests, lakes, rivers, and mountains, which stretched for seven miles on either side of the Daniel Webster highway, was estimated to be worth $500,000.\footnote{\textit{Manchester Union}, 3 August 1923.} (Fig. 5)

The Abbots, of course, were businessmen and the sale of Franconia Notch timber could help them recoup some of the financial loss caused by the destruction of the Profile House. Once rumors of the possible sale of Franconia Notch to lumber companies reached the public, Philip Ayres, the SPNHF's Forester, went before the organization's Executive Council to suggest that the SPNHF negotiate the purchase of the Notch for the state of New Hampshire.
Fig. 5
Map of Proposed Franconia Notch Purchase, ca. 1928.
Map not drawn to scale.
Courtesy of Milne Special Collections,
University of New Hampshire Library, Durham, NH.
On October 24, 1923, less than three months after the fire, the SPNHF’s Executive Council authorized “the Forester…to secure land and timber in Franconia Notch for the State of New Hampshire if a sufficient amount for this purpose is contributed.”

For Ayres, acquiring Franconia Notch became as much of a crusade as the campaign to create the White Mountain National Forest had been. Ayres would personally organize most of the Franconia Notch campaign, speaking at events throughout New Hampshire, and writing a good portion of the publicity material for the next five years.

Ayres also had a more personal stake in the preservation of Franconia Notch. He had maintained a residence in Concord, New Hampshire since 1901. Beginning in 1908, however, Ayres became involved with issues in the Franconia region. In 1908, the Pemigewasset River was seriously polluted as a result of the sulfite mill at Lincoln, according to a Franconia Board of Health report by Robert Fletcher of Dartmouth College. Although Ayres’s involvement with this incident is not recorded, a year later he wrote a letter to the Board of Health indicating his concern with the presence of sewage in Lafayette Brook, located in Franconia Notch. The sewage came from a cesspool built by the Profile House, which was located near the brook. Ayres, in his role as Progressive reformer, wrote: “that the Profile House has the legal right to pollute these

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77 Ayres also apparently maintained a residence in Newton, Massachusetts, which was near Boston, where the SPNHF's headquarters was located. The Newton residence appeared to be his primary residence after 1902. In 1923, Ayres appeared to be attempting to prove his citizenship in New Hampshire. Ayres purchased property on Butter Hill Road in the town of Franconia sometime in 1923. He built a camp there, which he named "Hideaway." It remained in the family until 1990. See Philip W. Ayres, Unsorted Records, SPNHF for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, Concord, NH. Hereafter abbreviated as Unsorted Records, SPNHF.

streams seems to me an injustice, in view of the present advanced knowledge concerning
the disposal of sewage.” 79 According to Ayres’s records, Colonel Greenleaf was notified
of the problem and a septic tank system was recommended. 80

Ayres’s interest in creating a state park in Franconia Notch had precedent in
previous SPNHF campaigns. In 1909, there was concern among the citizens and summer
residents near Mount Sunapee, in the western part of New Hampshire, that the mountain
was being subjected to devastating clear-cutting by three different timber companies.
Area summer resident Herbert Welsh organized a campaign to raise funds to buy as much
of the mountain as possible. Aided by full-time residents as well as summer residents,
such as Ozora Davis, Dartmouth graduate and President of the Chicago Theological
Seminary, who would support the Franconia Notch campaign as well, Welsh raised
$9,200. Welsh asked the SPNHF to become involved, and in 1911, the SPNHF became
trustee of 656 acres of Mount Sunapee, and a small lake called Lake Solitude. Welsh and
other concerned individuals, including Davis, formed the Sunapee Branch of the Society
for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests the following year. 81

The campaign had been of some urgency, and it left the SPNHF open to the
possibility of fundraising for other acquisitions, something the organization had not done
very often. According to Paul Bruns, author of the SPNHF’s history A New Hampshire
Everlasting and Unfallen, “[h]ad the SPNHF officers foreseen the unending toil and the


80 Philip W. Ayres, Lafayette Brook notes, August 1910. Personal Correspondence, Sewage Pollution, Profile House, 1909-1910. Unsorted Records, SPNHF. Whether or not Greenleaf heeded Franconia’s advice, in which his company alone was responsible for one third of the town’s tax base, is unclear. See Manchester Union, 3 August 1923.

81 Bruns, 39.
raising of hundreds of thousands of dollars which would follow the establishment of the
Sunapee precedent, they might have told Welsh to go jump in Lake Solitude."\textsuperscript{82}

Even if it had known what lay ahead, it probably would not have made a difference
to the SPNHF, or to Ayres. During the same year that the Sunapee campaign got
underway, the SPNHF learned of the financial difficulties of the owner of Crawford
Notch, the other White Mountains Notch celebrated in literature, poetry, and art.\textsuperscript{83} Under
private ownership for most of the nineteenth century and the beginning years of the
twentieth, the 11,500-acre Crawford Notch contained some old-growth timber, against
which the property had been mortgaged. This timber was in danger of being cut to pay
the debts of its owner, Charles Mowbry.\textsuperscript{84}

What opened the situation to negotiation was the fact that the president of the bank
that owned the mortgage on Crawford Notch was both a member of the SPNHF, and a
friend of Philip Ayres.\textsuperscript{85} Ayres stepped in, and a bill to create a state reservation at
Crawford Notch was presented to the New Hampshire State Legislature in 1911. The
effort was supported by private groups such as the Appalachian Mountain Club and the
Boston Chamber of Commerce, which organized support among New Hampshire
Chambers of Commerce, showing clearly not only that there was widespread support for
conservation in New Hampshire, but that support came as often from outside as inside the

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid., 40.
\textsuperscript{83} See Chapter I for a discussion of the place of Crawford Notch in White Mountains history.
\textsuperscript{84} Bruns, 40. See also Boston Herald, 1 January 1911.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.
The bill, which appropriated $100,000 to purchase Crawford Notch, eventually passed, and in 1913 the state acquired 5,950 acres of the “upper and most picturesque half” of Crawford Notch, including site of the famous Willey tragedy of 1826. Although the state was not able to purchase the entire tract, logging was stopped in the southern portion as well.

The year 1911 was an important and successful one for conservation in New Hampshire. The same year that saw the preservation of Crawford Notch, a well-known and historic part of the White Mountains, also saw the passage of the Weeks Act, guaranteeing the establishment of the White Mountain National Forest. The SPNHF returned its attention to fundraising the following year when it raised $7,000 to purchase a portion of Kinsman Notch in Woodstock, New Hampshire, southwest of Franconia Notch. This would become Lost River Reservation, which 36,000 people visited in 1921 and which, still in the SPNHF’s possession, remains a popular White Mountains attraction.

The SPNHF’s reputation as a successful negotiator and fundraiser was established by 1923, and certainly added authority to the SPNHF’s position as it began negotiations to purchase Franconia Notch. Unfortunately, there remain few details of the negotiations between the Abbotts, the SPNHF, and the state of New Hampshire. It is possible,

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87 Ibid.; Bruns, 41.

88 “The Crawford Notch Purchase.” Box 5, folder 5, SPNHF Collection.

89 Bruns, 43, 45. The SPNHF acquired other tracts of land between 1911 and 1920. These included the last stand of primeval white pine in New Hampshire, located in Sutton, New Hampshire; the Royal Arch, a large and impressive cave surrounded by thirty-five acres of spruce near Lake Sunapee; and Cathedral
however, to piece together an outline of those negotiations based upon a combination of SPNHF records, notes made by Ayres, and the newspaper coverage of the campaign, which was extensive.

The exact dates of the meetings between Ayres, the SPNHF, the state, and the Abbotts are difficult to determine, but between October 24, 1923 and December 1924, many, although not all, of the details that supported the SPNHF’s bill for the state acquisition of Franconia Notch were apparently settled. In an unfortunately undated handwritten note beneath a newspaper photograph of the Old Man of the Mountain, Philip Ayres wrote that

The trees growing between [Profile] lake and the Profile (all of those pictured above [in the photograph]) were under contract to be cut by George Veazie of Littleton. In a conference regarding the purchase [of Franconia Notch], ex-[New Hampshire] governors Rolland Spaulding and Robert P. Bass were present. When the agent for the owner announced the contract the two former governors took their hats and coats and left the room, announcing that when the contract was broken they would consider the purchase – not before. The contract was speedily discharged...

This is a wonderful story, demonstrating the issues that both sides encountered. The SPNHF and the state wanted Franconia Notch with its forests intact and the Abbotts needed money. It also demonstrates the close ties between the SPNHF and the New Hampshire state government.

There is some merit to the story. First, it would make sense to have these two particular governors involved with the negotiations. Both governors were supporters of New Hampshire conservation efforts. Rolland Spaulding, governor from 1915-1917, had approved the repairs on the Old Man of the Mountain in 1916 and had been a member of

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Woods, ten acres near Conway, New Hampshire, on the eastern slopes of the White Mountains. See Bruns, 47-48.

the SPNHF’s Executive Committee since 1917. Robert P. Bass, governor from 1911-1913, was a former member of the state Forestry Commission, a supporter of the federal bill to create the White Mountain National Forest, and a member of the SPNHF’s Executive Committee from 1909-1954, when he became the SPNHF’s Honorary Vice-President. These men could represent the interests of both the SPNHF and the state.

Second, throughout the campaign the SPNHF utilized the press both to update the public on the progress of the campaign and to keep alive public support. Between February and May 1925, publicity about the Franconia Notch campaign appeared in newspapers and magazines. In May 1925, Robert Bass wrote “Franconia Notch in Danger” for *Forest and Forest Life* magazine. In the article, Bass declared that

> For seven miles up and down the Notch, the forests have been protected for half a century by the owner of the two summer hotels. Timber values and taxes were low and owners could afford to hold the timber lands intact and in the wild state....[C]onditions have changed. A growing timber shortage has trebled timber values....and lumber companies are eager to exploit the region. Already two of the companies have estimated the timber with a view to removing it to their nearby mills.  

In addition to the Bass article, articles in the Boston *Globe*, and the Boston *Herald* each reported timber contracts, although no specific companies were named.  

> Although the exact details of Ayres’s report are difficult to prove, the fact remained that the Profile and Flume Hotels Company certainly had the option to sell the timber in Franconia Notch, in spite of Frank Abbott’s support for a state park. During the SPNHF’s Executive Committee meeting on September 11, 1924, the Committee agreed that a meeting between some of its members and Karl Abbott and his representative was

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92 See *Boston Herald*, 17 April 1925 and *Boston Globe*, 27 April 1925. Box 9, folder 22, SPNHF Collection.
The Abbotts wanted $500,000 for the Notch, which they felt was a fair price based upon future revenues not only from timber sales, but also from the proceeds of the various souvenir stands and the Flume. William R. Brown of the Forestry Commission, New Hampshire State Forester J.A. Foster, and others thought the property was worth $400,000. According to SPNHF records, Ayres went to governor-elect John Winant, also the SPNHF Secretary, with the second price option, probably sometime late in 1924. Winant thought that Franconia Notch was not worth $400,000 and withdrew his support for the purchase. He and Ayres had a "falling out" and Winant subsequently resigned his place on the SPNHF's Executive Committee and his position as SPNHF secretary.

Ayres and the SPNHF were in a difficult position. Ayres certainly felt that Franconia Notch was worth the price asked, and the SPNHF, which prided itself on its good relationship with the New Hampshire state government, was not willing to create any more problems. The support of New Hampshire governors for the SPNHF's forestry and conservation efforts in the past had been crucial to the successes as the creation of the White Mountain National Forest and the Crawford Notch campaign. Franconia Notch was too expensive a property for the SPNHF to acquire on its own, so to lose state support would probably mean the loss of Franconia Notch, as the Abbotts could not afford to maintain the region as a park. The Abbotts were willing to hold on to

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93 SPNHF ES Record, September 11, 1924: 240.
95 Bruns, 52.
96 Ibid.
Franconia Notch until the state or the SPNHF could raise the money to purchase it, but they needed a guarantee.\textsuperscript{97} For Ayres, the situation was growing desperate.

Ayres went to find support elsewhere. He turned to those staunch allies of the SPNHF, the members of the NHFWC, as well as to members of other New Hampshire women's groups. The women of the NHFWC had been active in several of the SPNHF's conservation campaigns since the long campaign that ended in the passage of the Weeks Act in 1911. This assistance included enlisting the aid of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, which threw its support behind the bill to create the White Mountain National Forests.\textsuperscript{98} The NHFWC also raised $625 towards the $7,000 used to purchase the Lost River Reservation in Kinsman Notch in 1912. A year later, the organization raised $173 towards the $2000 needed for the SPNHF to purchase the primeval pines in North Sutton, New Hampshire.\textsuperscript{99} In addition, the NHFWC sponsored a conference on forestry in 1920, and supported the Highway Reservations program sponsored by the SPNHF in 1922. One of the members of the Highway Reservation Committee was Alta McDuffee, who had just ended her term as NHFWC president in 1923, and who served as the first chairman of the newly formed Women's Legislative Committee in New Hampshire. McDuffee's active career on the public stage, as well as her role in the Franconia Notch campaign, will be discussed more completely in the following chapter.

It was to the Women's Legislative Council that Ayres went first. The Council was formed in 1922 to unite the efforts of a variety of women's groups in New Hampshire,

\textsuperscript{97} Boston Herald, 17 April 1925. Box 9, folder 22, SPNHF Collection. See also Bruns, 52.

\textsuperscript{98} Harriman, 125.

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., 110-111.
including the NHFWC, that were "working for the progressive legislation in which they were particularly interested." What better way to gain the support and utilize the influence of the women of New Hampshire than to speak before a group that represented some of the most visible women's organizations in the state, including the League of Women Voters and the Women's Christian Temperance Union?

Ayres was the first speaker on the agenda of the Women's Legislative Council's December 9, 1924 meeting. He outlined his forestry legislation program and asked for the Council's support. In addition to issues involving the supervision of town tree wardens and town control of unused roads, Ayres supported the creation of a "revolving fund," whereby funds the state forest reservations earned from timber sales or usage fees would be used to purchase more forest reservations. Ayres used this idea to segue to his most urgent concern, the fact that "timber in Franconia Notch may be sold at any time." He told his audience of the plan to gain support for the state "to take [the Notch] over by right of eminent domain." The Council voted to endorse all of Ayres's proposals, including throwing its support behind the Franconia Notch campaign.

Apparently, others were beginning to see the importance of saving Franconia Notch as well. By the end of 1924, Governor Winant had reconsidered his decision to withdraw his support. He told the SPNHF he could ask the state legislature for no more than $200,000, which amounted to approximately $.50 for every one of the 443,000 people

100 Henry H. Metcalf, "Representative Women in New Hampshire: Mrs. Charles H. McDuffee" Granite Monthly 60, (March, 1928): 227. Included in this group were members of the Parent-Teacher Association, of which McDuffee had been president between 1917 and 1919, the League of Women Voters, and the Women's Christian Temperance Association. See Harriman, 128.

101 Woman's Legislative Council, December 9, 1924. Box 32, folder 15. SPNHF Collection.

102 Ibid.
living in New Hampshire in 1925.\textsuperscript{103} It was an extraordinary expenditure for a state that only recently had begun to set aside conservation land and that prided itself on its recently liquidated state debt.\textsuperscript{104}

In December 1924, the following editorial appeared in \textit{Appalachia}.

The friends of conservation have scored again. The grandeur and beauty of Franconia Notch were threatened by the lumberman. But the New Hampshire Legislature and the Governor, who is an ardent exponent of conservation, went on record in favor of a generous appropriation towards the purchase of the threatened land, and it seems quite likely that a wise public will generously and cheerfully contribute the necessary balance. Appalachians have a peculiar interest in this region. It is the scene of much of their camping and tramping experience in summer and in winter. It was dear to the heart of that generous benefactor to the Club-Colonel Greenleaf....The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and its Forester, Mr. Philip W. Ayres...have merited substantial appreciation for taking the initiative in the noble effort to spare the Old Man of the Mountain from a view of desolation, thereby rendering his latter days happy and serene as of yore.\textsuperscript{105}

The celebration, however, was a bit premature. The state legislature still had to approve the purchase, as did the Abborts.

In his January 8, 1925 Governor’s Message to the two Houses of the New Hampshire State Legislature, Winant declared that “the situation at Franconia Notch, especially as it affects the Old Man of the Mountain....must be of interest to every New Hampshire citizen....”\textsuperscript{106} On January 27, the bill drawn up by Allen Hollis, president of the SPNHF, was presented to the New Hampshire House by Representative Sawyer of Woodstock, New Hampshire. House Bill 260 was “an act to provide for the acquisition by the state of the Franconia Notch, so called, lying in the towns of Franconia and

\textsuperscript{103} Bruns, 53.

\textsuperscript{104} Fred Herbert Brown, New Hampshire’s governor from 1923-1925, was able to accomplish this during his administration.

\textsuperscript{105} Editorial “Franconia Notch.” \textit{Appalachia} XVIII 4 (December 1924): 171.

\textsuperscript{106} \textit{Journals New Hampshire Senate and House, January Session, 1925}. (n.p., 1925), 47.
Lincoln, as a forest reservation and a state park."\(^{107}\) The introduction of the bill appeared to have gone smoothly. State records show no objection to the bill’s introduction or its content.\(^{108}\)

Winant and Ayres, too, seemed to have smoothed over their differences. A letter from Winant dated February 19, 1925, invited Ayres to “join in a small conference at my house, Wednesday evening next [February 25], at 7:30 on the subject of the Profile and Franconia Notch as state assets.”\(^{109}\) It took until April 21, 1925 for the Legislature to pass the bill authorizing the funds for the purchase of Franconia Notch, but there were no changes and no objections made to any aspect of the bill. What happened on April 22, however, gave the Franconia Notch campaign added legitimacy and significance.

On April 22, 1925, Dr. Zatae Straw, representing Ward 3 of the city of Manchester, asked “unanimous consent... for House Joint Resolution No. 16...authorizing the governor and the council to dedicate the Franconia Notch Reservation and State Park as a memorial to the men and women who served the nation in time of war.”\(^{110}\) It proved to be a popular and appropriate suggestion.

Zatae L. Straw, like Alta McDuffee, was a remarkable woman who would be featured as part of the *Granite Monthly*’s 1928 yearlong tribute to “prominent women of the state.”\(^{111}\) A native of Pennsylvania she came from a medical family. Her father,

\(^{107}\) Ibid., 185.

\(^{108}\) Ibid.

\(^{109}\) Letter from John G. Winant to Philip W. Ayres, February 19, 1925. Box 9, folder 15. SPNHF Collection.

\(^{110}\) *Journals New Hampshire Senate and House, January Session, 1925*, 744.

brother, two sisters, and two nephews were all “members of the medical profession.”

A graduate of Dickinson College in Pennsylvania, she received her medical training from the Women’s Medical College of Pennsylvania in 1890. After interning at the New England Hospital for Women and Children for a year, she took a position in the Department of the Interior, where she was sent to manage the government hospital on the Blackfoot Indian reservation in Blackfoot, Idaho.

In November 1891, she married Dr. Amos Gale Straw, and the couple moved to Manchester, New Hampshire, and had two daughters and two sons. Husband and wife were both practicing physicians in the city. Early in 1916, Gale Straw “was the first of all New Hampshire men to enlist in the Allied Cause...under the British flag.” He served the United States once it joined the war in 1917, and after the war was assigned to the Veterans Hospital in Northampton, Massachusetts. Zatae remained in Manchester, where she became involved in several organizations, including the Manchester Women’s Club and the NHFWC. She was “an ardent lover of the ‘great out-of-doors’, an enthusiastic sportswoman, and particularly fond of fishing...” These interests were reflected in her membership in the Izaak Walton League of America and, when elected to the Legislature in 1924, her membership on the Committee on Fisheries and Game.

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113 Ibid.

114 Ibid., 30.

115 Ibid.

116 Ibid.

117 *Journals New Hampshire Senate and House, January Session, 1925*, 744.
Straw was also a member of the American Legion Auxiliary, serving as the National Committee Woman for New Hampshire, as well as president of the Henry J. Sweeney Auxiliary Unit of Manchester.118 This, in addition to her own husband’s war service, almost certainly influenced her support of the Franconia Notch War Memorial Resolution. The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary of New Hampshire later became important and enthusiastic supporters of the Franconia Notch campaign.

The American Legion had been the idea of a group of young officers of the American Expeditionary Force. Gathering in Paris after World War I, this group decided in the winter of 1919 that there should be a way to carry the “splendid fellowship...and the vast power of cooperation” they had found in a time of war into civilian life.119 The American Legion was the result, founded in Paris in March of 1919. At that meeting were two representatives from Manchester, New Hampshire, who returned to the state in May and began organizing American Legion posts at once, the first state to do so.120 Forty-seven delegates were sent to the first national meeting in St. Louis later that month.121 By 1922, there were eighty-two posts throughout the state.

The American Legion Auxiliary was organized at the same time, to allow women to “carry into peace the sort of work back of the lines they had done during the war.”122 This group organized as enthusiastically as the American Legion, having fifty-two posts

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119 “For God and Country”: 199, 212.
120 Ibid., 199.
121 Ibid.
122 Ibid., 211.
by 1923. Although they had fewer posts, the American Legion Auxiliary claimed to be “more successfully resourceful in the matter of raising money than the men.” The NHFWC recognized the importance of the missions of both the Legion and the Auxiliary. During the administration of Alta McDuffee (1921-1923), a “committee for friendly relations with ex-servicemen” was formed under the direction of Mrs. Flora L. Spaulding, a member of the Manchester Women’s Club and president of the New Hampshire Department of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Both the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary supported the “welfare” of veterans disabled during World War I, and both looked for ways to improve the lives of veterans in general. The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary also supported Americanization campaigns of recent immigrants to the United States, an issue also supported by the General Federation of Women’s Clubs and the NHFWC. The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary in New Hampshire also worked towards “keeping green the memory of the boys who died ‘over there’” as well as “[t]o put more solemn significance into Memorial Day; to give the boys and girls of the country a glimpse of the real meaning of patriotism [and] to make them love the flag so much that they would die for it.”

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123 Ibid., 212.
124 Ibid., 213.
125 Ibid., 204, 212. For information on the General Federation of Women’s Clubs support of Americanization campaigns, see Mildred White Wells, *Unity in Diversity: The History of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs* (Washington, D.C.: General Federation of Women’s Clubs, 1953), 246-254. For information on the NHFWC’s Americanization programs, see Harriman, 175-176.
126 “For God and Country”: 204. In 1923, the *Granite Monthly* also conducted an interview with the head of the American Legion’s Americanization department in New Hampshire, Maurice F. Devine. Devine, and the article, commented on the “swarthy” Hungarians and Italians “clad in the garb of faraway lands” that rode the Manchester trains to the factories north of the city. There was clearly “an alien assimilation
worked well with the arguments used to support the campaign to save Franconia Notch, which focused on the national importance of the Notch and the Old Man of the Mountain as historical, as well as natural, symbols of the greatness of the United States.

In addition to having public support from such organizations as the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary, Straw's resolution calling for a war memorial in Franconia Notch once the land came under state control had precedent in the state legislature. In 1923, the bridge that spanned the Piscataqua River between Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Kittery, Maine, was dedicated to the soldiers of both states who died during World War I. In 1925, a resolution to create a committee to design a state memorial to mark the New Hampshire entrance to the bridge was proposed and passed in April, a few days Straw's resolution for the Franconia Notch memorial also passed the New Hampshire House and Senate on April 30, 1925.

The NHFWC and the SPNHF had also taken up the cause of patriotism, which paralleled the goals of the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary while at the same time combining them with conservation. In 1922, the SPNHF began its Committee on Highway Shade Trees, which was meant to preserve tree bordered roads, as well as to create memorials to not only those who died in World War I, but those who served and returned. This program mirrored others throughout the country that also

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127 *Portsmouth, New Hampshire.* (Portsmouth, NH: Greater Portsmouth Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of Portsmouth, 1965) n.p.

128 *Journals New Hampshire Senate and House, January Session, 1925*, 717.

129 See Chapter IV.

created parks, memorial groves, or roadside reservations to remember war dead, but in some cases also to beautify public spaces in villages, towns, or cities. In 1927, the war memorial commission set up by the New Hampshire legislature in 1925 proposed a small park to compliment the New Hampshire side of the 1923 New Hampshire-Maine Memorial Bridge. The commission recommended that there should be "an impression of unity of the bridge and monument." Aesthetics were as much a consideration as the meaning behind the memorial itself.

The aesthetics of beautiful shady roadways helped the SPNHF’s Highway Shade Trees Committee. By 1924, the SPNHF reported the creation of thirteen reservations throughout New Hampshire. This success, and the success of similar programs elsewhere, provided another basis for the appeal of “natural” war memorials, taken up by Straw’s 1925 Franconia Notch resolution. Trees symbolized life. What better way to memorialize those who had either given or devoted their lives to their country than through trees? If one tree was a fitting memorial, how much more fitting would be the thousands of trees located in Franconia Notch? To make its point even more clearly, a

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131 The Conservation Report at the General Federation of Women's Clubs Biennial Convention in Des Moines, Iowa in June 1920 promoted the idea that “[i]f each woman takes a personal interest in the conservation of roadside shade trees and the planting of trees where it is necessary, the grand total of interest and efforts would in a few years make state highways beautiful avenues and enduring ‘roads of remembrance’ as memorials to our soldiers and sailors. And this honor should not be confined to those who paid the supreme sacrifice. It should include, as far as possible, all who entered the service of their country and who stood ready to back to the limit the cause of the United States and its allies.” Fifteenth Biennial Convention Minutes, June 16-June 23, 1920, 336. General Federation of Women’s Clubs Archives, Convention Records (Record Group 3).


1924 SPNHF circular announcing the success of the Highway Shade Tree Committee program included photographs of areas that still needed protection, which were also appropriate sites for these reservations. The caption of one of the photographs read “The Timbered Covered Slopes of the Old Man of the Mountain. On Daniel Webster Highway, Franconia Notch. Unprotected.” It was not a very subtle hint.

The political and social climate of New Hampshire was supportive of war memorials. The setting of Franconia Notch was certainly an appropriate one for such an important memorial. What would remain to be seen was whether or not public opinion, in New Hampshire, and throughout New England as well as the United States would support the Franconia Notch publicity and fundraising campaign to come.

Like the Appalachian Mountain Club, the SPNHF was an organization that encouraged membership from outside state borders as well as from inside. In addition to bringing different ideas about state conservation issues to the table, out-of-state members might also bring financial or political advantages. Founded in Concord, New Hampshire, the SPNHF also maintained offices at 4 Joy Street in Boston, near the headquarters of the Appalachian Mountain Club. By operating out of Boston, the SPNHF had more consistent access to its members in Massachusetts, which in the early years of the SPNHF made up a third of its membership. In 1917 Philip Ayres succeeded where others had failed when he convinced Boston investment banker and businessman James Jackson Storrow to become treasurer of the SPNHF. Storrow, who loved the White Mountains,

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135 Ibid.


137 Letter from J.S. Loring to Philip W. Ayres, January 3, 1917. Box 2, folder 28. SPNHF Collection. See also Bruns, 35.
would serve as treasurer until ill health resulted in his resignation in 1926. His son, James J. Storrow, Jr, would take over the position.

Sometime before his death in the late summer of 1926, James Storrow and Ayres met and discussed the possibility of Storrow leaving a legacy to the SPNHF. Storrow agreed to leave the SPNHF $100,000 to support its continuing work in acquiring tracts of New Hampshire forest land. Storrow, however, died before he could record the legacy.138

The SPNHF again found itself in a difficult position. The state of New Hampshire had authorized bonds in 1925 in the amount of $200,000 to be used to purchase Franconia Notch. The Abbotts, however, still wanted $500,000 for the Notch and its concessions. There was a possibility that the region of the Notch around the Old Man of the Mountain could be purchased through a combination of the state’s $200,000 allocation and a lease to the Abbotts allowing for their company’s control over the remaining acreage of the Notch. A $100,000 bequest from Storrow would place the SPNHF in a better position to purchase Franconia Notch in its entirety.

Ayres wrote to Helen Storrow, James’s widow, and received this reply, dated March 30, 1927. “My dear Mr. Ayres – Thank you for your kind note of sympathy. My husband enjoyed his connection with the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and enjoyed knowing you personally. I am so glad he wanted to do something for the SPNHF. Most sincerely yours, Helen Storrow.”139 The $100,000 bequest would be honored.

138 Adams, 169.

139 Letter from Helen Storrow to Philip W. Ayres, March 30, 1927. Unsorted personal records of Philip W. Ayres. SPNHF, Concord, NH.
The generosity of Helen Storrow and her husband allowed the SPNHF’s Executive Council to declare on June 6, 1927 that “the policy of the Society of the Protection of New Hampshire Forests is to acquire the entire 6,000 acres [of Franconia Notch], by purchase in cooperation with the State of New Hampshire and that the SPNHF does not approve of the alternate proposition” that would allow the Abbotts to maintain the control of the property for a number of years.\(^\text{140}\) By the beginning of 1928, the Abbotts would agree to accept $400,000 as the final purchase price of Franconia Notch with the stipulation that the Profile and Flume Hotels Company run the souvenir shops and concession in the Notch during the summers of 1928 and 1929.\(^\text{141}\) With some trepidation at the massive project they were about to undertake, the members of the SPNHF’s Executive Council launched the campaign to save Franconia Notch in the fall of 1927.

Clearly, the support of the SPNHF’s out-of-state members was as important at times as was the support of its New Hampshire members. Support from Massachusetts was a critical element in the success of many of the SPNHF’s campaigns, particularly those that created the White Mountain National Forest and the Franconia Notch Forest Reserve and War Memorial.\(^\text{142}\) What was also important to the success of the Franconia Notch campaign was the sense that Franconia Notch was part of one of New England’s most popular resorts as well as part of the region’s the premier Romantic wilderness. It was linked to New England’s economic well being through the tourist dollars spent on travel

\(^{140}\) SPNHF ES Records, June 29, 1927: 284. The agreement between Helen Storrow, James Storrow, Jr and the SPNHF, dated November 16, 1927, allowed the SPNHF to spend at least $50,000 on “a single tract land.” See SPNHF ES Records, 296-300, especially 299.

\(^{141}\) Concord Monitor, 11 January 1927.

\(^{142}\) Other Massachusetts organizations, not the least of which were the Appalachian Mountain Club and the Massachusetts Federation of Women’s Clubs, would play key roles in the Franconia Notch campaign.
to and from the region and historically through it reputation as one of New England’s last
frontiers, where nature still offered challenges to those who sought adventure.

In *Imagining New England: Explorations of Regional Identity from the Pilgrims to
the Mid-Twentieth Century*, Joseph A. Conforti argued that New England’s “identity has
been encoded in narratives about its past - stories that have been continually revised in
response to new interpretive needs generated by the transformations of regional life.”\(^{143}\)
The Colonial Revival in New England between 1870 and 1910 was a new, and
privileged, interpretation of New England’s colonial heritage. Michael Kammen pointed
out that regional preservation also benefited from New England’s Colonial Revival.
Nostalgia fueled the desire to preserve historic homes and landmarks.\(^{144}\)

New Hampshire, “the focus of organized, commercial nostalgia,” was an important
promoter of the longing for a simpler time, before progress had destroyed the sense of
community in the idealized New England villages and towns and before industry
destroyed the natural beauty that surrounded them.\(^{145}\) This, of course, was also an
important influence on the conservation movement in New Hampshire. Forests felled in
the interest of impersonal corporate profits destroyed not only the natural environment,
but the human environment as well. Reverend John Johnson’s 1900 tirade against
George B. James’s New Hampshire Land Company accused the company’s practices of

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\(^{143}\) Joseph A. Conforti, *Imagining New England: Explorations of Regional Identity from the Pilgrims to

\(^{144}\) Michael Kammen, *The Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American

creating financial desperation among the rural communities of the White Mountains.\footnote{See Chapter IV.}

Industrialization, which fueled the progress of the United States, had also drawn population away from some northern New England communities.

One answer to this disappearance of a way of life many felt defined the New England States was New Hampshire's Old Home Week. Promoted by New Hampshire governor, and the SPNHF's first president, Frank W. Rollins, Old Home Week was meant to draw New Hampshire natives back from their new homes across the region or across the country to their old homes in small New Hampshire towns. Hopefully, while these people were looking for their reminders of their pasts, they had also brought with them cash with which to revitalize communities learning to value their history.\footnote{Conforti, 213. The Old Home Week tradition continues in many New Hampshire towns. In the southwestern town of Stoddard, Old Home Week had shrunk to Old Home Days, a single weekend in July. In addition to the opportunity to view the collection of the town's historical SPNHF, there is a parade featuring old fire engines and other vehicles owned by the town. A craft and bake sale features the talents of local residents, and a Friday night dance and a Saturday afternoon chicken barbeque are designed to bring the community together.} The Old Home Week idea quickly spread throughout New England.\footnote{Conforti, 213.}

A shared regional identity and the economic benefits a united New England could bring were behind the formation of two organizations that would play important roles in the promotion of the Franconia Notch campaign. The first was the New England Council, a group of prominent New England businessmen dedicated to promoting the economic interests of the New England states. This organization would be one of the strongest supporters of the Franconia Notch campaign as a way to unify the region behind a cause of national importance. The success of the campaign would not only benefit the
image of New England as the repository of natural beauty, but, economically, the increased prestige of Franconia Notch as a war memorial could draw even more tourist dollars to the region. The loss of access to Franconia Notch, not to mention the loss of the forested backdrop to the Old Man of the Mountain, could be potentially devastating to the scenic beauty of the Notch, and the fine reputation of New England as a region that took care of its places of historic and symbolic values would be irreparably tarnished.

The second organization that would provide important logistical and moral support during the Franconia Notch campaign would be the New England Conference of State Federations of Women's Clubs. Founded in 1910 by the Massachusetts Federation of Women's Clubs, the purpose behind the organization was to "work for the general good of New England, and to adopt cooperative efforts in pure food, forestry, health, and child care."\(^{149}\) The New England Conference of State Federations of Women's Clubs met annually to exchange ideas and support each state's major projects. The September 1927 conference at Burlington, Vermont provided the opportunity for Eva Speare of the New Hampshire delegation to ask for the support of sister clubwomen for the campaign to save Franconia Notch.

When Speare announced that "the Old Man was for sale...something like a gasp went up from the audience [of clubwomen]." Speare painted a rather desperate picture of the situation, declaring that "unless public opinion could be aroused to come to the rescue, there was a strong possibility that commercial interests might soon be cutting off the lumber on the property and that a dance hall might even spring up at the base of a

mountain from the summit of which gazes the Old Man.”¹⁵⁰ Seven years before, the NHFWC had hosted the annual New England Conference at the Profile House in Franconia Notch, so at least some of the women present had experienced the Notch accommodations at the height of their glory.¹⁵¹

In response to Speare’s announcement, “several women were on their feet calling for immediate and definite action.” It fell to Massachusetts Federation member and General Federation of Women’s Clubs Secretary Grace Morrison Poole to call for “an active campaign [to] be undertaken by the Women’s Conference throughout New England to save Franconia Notch and the Old Man of the Mountain.”¹⁵² By January 1928, the NHFWC would turn to the other state Federations for the promised support.

Both the New England Conference of State Federations of Women’s Clubs and the New England Council believed that in the Franconia Notch campaign was an opportunity to promote New England’s reputation as the possessor of natural beauty equal to that in other regions of the country. It also provided the chance to utilize stories of New England’s past. Through the Franconia Notch campaign legends of Native American beliefs and activities as well as those of the early Euro-American pioneers could be retold, reminding the public of New England’s long history. It would also provide the opportunity to remind the nation of the significance of the Old Man of the Mountain which was, in words attributed to Daniel Webster, God’s sign that “in New England He made men.”

¹⁵⁰ Boston Herald, 1 October 1927.
¹⁵¹ Harriman, 64.
¹⁵² Boston Herald, 1 October 1927.
By late 1927, the SPNHF’s publicity campaign, explained more completely in the next chapter, was well underway. Two years earlier, Philip Ayres had written about Franconia Notch, listing the names of literary figures who in the past had featured the Old Man of the Mountain in fiction, poetry, and eloquent guidebooks. He noted that the Notch’s “exquisite beauty” was in danger of “commercial enterprises creeping in” and damaging it. It was the SPNHF’s intention, Ayres declared, to save the Notch from destructive lumbering...[and] from commercial exploitation. The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests seeks to preserve the Notch as nearly as possible in its noble, original form, in order that here Nature’s appeal to the human spirit may find complete expression...The Old Man of the Mountain belongs to the Nation. Like Crater Lake and other features in our great National Parks at (sic) the West, it has secured and maintained National attention, but unlike them...[it] cannot be set side for public use by Presidential proclamation. It can only be saved by purchase.

The state had already made a “generous contribution,” Ayres noted, and it was up to the SPNHF to raise the rest of the funds to effect the purchase of Franconia Notch.

Ayres’s appeal touched upon the points that he and his publicity director would emphasize once the Franconia Notch publicity and fundraising campaign got underway in January 1928. He noted the importance of the opportunity of preserving Franconia Notch in its “natural” form, and protecting it from any further commercial incursion. The Notch and the Old Man of the Mountain were national treasures that would be saved by state and conservation organizations working together with an appreciation of the historic and symbolic importance of Franconia Notch. The success of that cooperative effort would depend upon the generosity of the public.

The focus on saving the forests of Franconia Notch while at the same time maintaining the region’s beautiful scenery formed the basis of the SPNHF’s Franconia

Notch publicity campaign. The campaign's sentimental appeal, which accounted for a good deal of its popularity, combined issues of patriotism and regional identity that drew the support of the American Legion and the New England Council. Conservation, underlying themes of patriotism, regionalism, and nostalgia, combined with the dedication of Philip Ayres and the members of the NHFWC, created the appealing image of the Franconia Notch campaign that would see its triumphant culmination by the shores of Profile Lake on a cold, windy day in September 1928.

154 Ayres, "Earnest Effort": 193-194.
CHAPTER VI

"THE OLD MAN RALLIES HIS FRIENDS...": THE CAMPAIGN TO SAVE FRANCONIA NOTCH, OCTOBER 1927 TO JUNE 1928

On an overcast fall day in 1987, I was admiring the Old Man of the Mountain from the viewing area on the northbound side of the Franconia Notch Parkway. The driver of another car that had just pulled into the viewing area walked over to stand near me. For a few moments she, too, looked at the Old Man in silence. She then turned to me and asked "Is that it? I drove all this way for that?" Evidently, beauty is indeed in the eye of the beholder.

Fortunately for Franconia Notch, there were many who felt that there was something quite remarkable about the Old Man. The Franconia Notch campaign relied upon the sense of wonder that the Old Man of the Mountain had evoked since the Profile's first recorded sighting in 1805. What is even more remarkable than the Old Man itself is the fact that fifteen thousand people cared enough about the collection of granite ledges to contribute over $100,000 to keep the Old Man of the Mountain's surroundings intact. The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests' (SPNHF) publicity campaign captured the scenic beauty of Franconia Notch, emphasized the historic importance of the region, and manipulated the anthropomorphic image of the Old Man of the Mountain to increase the perceived threat to Franconia Notch. It proved to be a successful strategy.
This chapter will describe the Franconia Notch campaign from November 1927 through June 1928. Using newspaper and magazine articles, publicity circulars, and letters, this chapter will analyze how the Franconia Notch publicity campaign utilized the themes of regionalism, conservation, patriotism, and nostalgia, while also discussing the ways in which the Old Man of the Mountain came to be the most powerful and visible symbol of the campaign. This chapter will also examine the influences of past conservation campaigns in the West in the strategies adopted by the SPNHF, as well as the how the New Hampshire Federation of Women’s Clubs (NHFWC), the American Legion, and the Appalachian Mountain Club all contributed.

The State of the Campaign

In April 1925, the state of New Hampshire recognized the importance of Franconia Notch through the appropriation of $200,000 towards its purchase from the Profile and Flume Hotels Company. According to the provisions of the legislation, Franconia Notch was to be set aside as a “Forest Reservation and a State Park...where the care and management thereof shall be vested in the forestry commission...Such property shall at all reasonable times be open to the public ...."¹ That same month, a resolution was also approved that authorized “the governor and the council to dedicate the Franconia Notch Forest Reservation and State Park as a Memorial to the Men and Women of New Hampshire who have served the Nation in times of war.”²

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¹ New Hampshire State Legislature, Legislative Act Authorizing Acquisition of Franconia Notch, April 21, 1925, Chapter 101, as reprinted in Hancock, 163-4.

² New Hampshire State Legislature, Joint Resolution, April 30, 1925, Chapter 260, as reprinted in Hancock, 164.
The legislation reflected the duality of conservation. It recognized the importance of Franconia Notch through its proposed dedication as a war memorial to commemorate those who had protected New Hampshire and the United States. Franconia Notch, however, would also remain a productive landscape. First, the Notch would continue to be open to the public, who would come to see the Old Man of the Mountain and the other natural wonders of the Notch. Second, the region’s forests would come under the direction of the New Hampshire Forestry Commission, which would extract timber “not needed for forest conservation or for the preservation of the scenic beauty” of Franconia Notch. In this way, the state saved an historic landmark while also gaining additional timber revenue.

The state’s financial support had limits, however. Negotiations between Karl and Frank Abbott, the owners of Franconia Notch, the SPNHF, and the state had reached an impasse in early 1927. In his address to the New Hampshire House and Senate, outgoing Governor John Winant spoke about the Franconia Notch acquisition.

The legislature of 1925 permitted the purchase of the Franconia Notch property and authorized a bond issue of $200,000 for this purpose. The owners of this property [the Abbotts] refuse to sell for less than $500,000. It is my opinion that this price is unreasonable. Its assessed value is approximately $225,000. The property has not been purchased, nor the bonds issued. The Governor and the Council have the power to proceed to take this property by eminent domain.3

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3 Journals New Hampshire Senate and House, January Session, 1927 (Manchester, NH: Granite State Press, 1927), 28. In January 1928, the SPNHF’s publicity director, Paul Hannah, wrote to U.S. District Court Judge George Morris, husband of Lula Morris, president of the NHFWC. Hannah asked Morris about the feasibility of the state’s taking Franconia Notch by eminent domain, in light of the complaints that the state was paying too much for the property. Morris asked that his opinion not be published but that “I understand the facts that the price to be paid seems reasonable especially in view of the large expense that would be incurred in the condemnation proceeding.” Fortunately, there was no need for the state to pursue this course of action. See letter from George F. Morris to Paul Hannah, January 14, 1928. Box 10, folder 2, SPNHF Collection.
New Hampshire’s patience with the Abbotts was coming to an end. By the end of January, 1927, however, the state decided to amend the 1925 act to renew the Franconia Notch bond issue. Once an acceptable agreement could be arranged between the Abbotts, the state, and the SPNHF, the $200,000 offered by the state towards the purchase of Franconia Notch would still be available. The motion passed the House and Senate by March 1927.\footnote{Journals New Hampshire Senate and House, January Session, 1927, 420.}

By September 1927, the SPNHF’s Executive Council, after discussing the Franconia Notch situation “at length,” decided to “urge upon the Governor [Huntley Spaulding] and the Council the necessity of immediate action to acquire the Franconia Notch, either by purchase or condemnation and authorizing the officers of the SPNHF for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests with their campaign to raise the funds needed for the purpose…”\footnote{SPNHF ES Records, August 31, 1927, 286. Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, Concord, NH.} By this time, the SPNHF most likely knew that it would have access to the bequest left by James Storrow, which would bring the total funds available for the Franconia Notch purchase to $300,000, still $200,000 short of the Abbotts’ asking price. The highest amount of money the SPNHF had raised until this point was $8,000, used to purchase the Lost River Reservation in 1912. It might be an impossible task, but the SPNHF, urged by Philip Ayres, was willing to make the commitment to raise the remaining $200,000.

By October 6, 1927, however, the SPNHF had some of the pressure taken off of it. The Boston \textit{Globe} reported that a “tentative agreement” had been reached between the state, the SPNHF, and the Abbotts. Although the \textit{Globe} indicated that the Governor...
would bring the agreement before the state’s Executive Council by October 10, it took until January 5, 1928 for the agreement to gain the final approval of Governor Huntley Spaulding and his Executive Council.\(^6\) The final agreement between the state of New Hampshire, the SPNHF, and the Abbotts arranged for the purchase of the entire Notch for $400,000 while allowing the Abbotts the rights to run the concessions in the Notch during the 1928 and 1929 seasons.\(^7\) The souvenir stands had been profitable in the past, so this arrangement allowed the Abbotts to continue that investment for two more years, while at the same time guaranteeing the sale of the property and turning its upkeep over to the state. Karl Abbott was able to comply with the wishes of his father for the creation of a state park in Franconia Notch.

At the final price of just under $67.00 an acre, Franconia Notch represented a significant investment on the part of the state and the SPNHF. To put the price into a more modern perspective, accounting for inflation, the agreement to purchase Franconia Notch for $400,000 that was approved in January 1928 translates into $4,222,222 in 2002, or a little over $700 per acre.\(^8\)

Under the final agreement, the campaign to raise the remaining funds took on an added element of risk beyond the financial commitment. The state and the SPNHF’s initial option to purchase the property expired on March 1, 1928, at which point the SPNHF was still $25,000 short of its $200,000 goals. What convinced the Abbotts and

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\(^6\) *Boston Globe*, 7 October 1927. Letter from Paul Hannah to David Mitchell White, November 9, 1927. See also letter from Paul Hannah to J.H. Mueling, January 5, 1928. Box 10, folder 4, SPNHF Collection.

\(^7\) *Concord Monitor*, 11 January 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

\(^8\) The 2002 Consumer Price Index (CPI) was “based upon changes between fourth quarter of 2000 and 2001.” Source: “What is a Dollar Worth?” Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis Website; available from http://minneapolisfed.org/economy/calc/cpihome.html; Internet; accessed January 10, 2002.
the state that the SPNHF could guarantee the remaining funds was the donation of $10,000 from philanthropist Edward Tuck. The Abbotts were willing to give the SPNHF the additional time it needed to raise the remaining $15,000 and so extended the final payment deadline to June 1, 1928, giving the SPNHF three more months to complete its fundraising goal. The option was therefore extended to April 1, with the final payment to come on June 1, 1928.

While the SPNHF had gained in having to raise $100,000 instead of $200,000, the organization now only had a matter of months in which to raise the required funds. There had been talk of the SPNHF taking a mortgage for the remaining funds, rather than through a major fundraising campaign. Ayres countered that “[i]f this is done...it will be necessary to commercialize Franconia Notch. Last year the gross income for the small fee charged for the enjoyment if the Flume was $20,000.” A mortgage would require the SPNHF to raise the entrance fee on the Flume and “[n]o improvements can be made until the tract is paid for and New Hampshire will have to wait for its war memorial...until 1936.” The SPNHF preferred to be able to use the profits from the Flume entrance fees and any other concessions for improvements for the Notch.

A mortgage was not the answer, so the SPNHF needed to create an appealing fundraising campaign. In the past, the SPNHF focused on encouraging private gifts of land, or on state and federal legislation to create forest reserves. It had solicited smaller donations from its membership and other organizations either through personal contacts

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9 Hotel and Travel News (Boston, Massachusetts), 27 April 1928; Boston Post 29 February 1928.


11 Boston Globe 11 January 1928. As discussed in Chapter V, the Abbotts' “commercialization” of the Notch had led to some bad press for the hotel company in 1922.
or through circulars that described the campaign, its purpose, and requested donations. The SPNHF had become adept at each of these methods. Ayres, in particular, wrote and spoke often not only about forestry but also in support of the SPNHF’s campaigns. But the level of publicity required to raise the funds for the purchase of Franconia Notch would surpass any since the campaign to create the White Mountain National Forest.

The Franconia Notch campaign, of course, had an added twist. The SPNHF was not lobbying the United States Congress for the funding for the purchase. Rather, the Franconia Notch campaign would turn to ordinary people, wealthy businessmen, philanthropists, and even school children to ask for both money and support. The SPNHF needed a strategy that would provide a good return in both the marketing and financial aspects of the campaign. Ayres found the idea by looking to the Western conservation campaigns of California and Washington.

“Buy a Tree for a Dollar and Save Franconia Notch.”

By the 1920s, there had been two major campaigns to save the sequoias and redwoods of California. The first, under the direction of the California Federation of Women’s Clubs, utilized petitions, letter writing campaigns, lobbying, and newspaper publicity to encourage the passage of Congressional legislation to protect the sequoias. The second, under the precursor to the Save the Redwoods League, worked to save groves of redwoods on the coast near San Francisco. By 1918, the Save the Redwoods

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12 In the case of the campaign to save Crawford Notch, the SPNHF needed to $1000 for the cost of a survey of the region. The SPNHF eventually paid $8,000 for the complete Lost River Reservation acquisition in 1912. See Bruns, 45.

13 See Chapter IV.
League organized and introduced innovative strategies into its conservation campaigns, which focused not only on legislation, but on fundraising as well.

Fundraising campaigns in general had gained in sophistication since the beginning of the twentieth century. In addition to the personal contact made through door-to-door canvassing done during World War I Red Cross and other drives, income tax deductions for charitable donations encouraged wealthier donors to continue their philanthropy.14 The Save the Redwoods League, led by wealthy and influential men and women like Stephen Mather, the first director of the League as well as of the National Park Service, utilized the personal approach to encourage donations.15 During a “scenic tour” of the Redwood Highway near San Francisco, “prominent citizens” were encouraged to “select and name a memorial grove for family or friend. Dedication ceremonies provided occasions for publicity with bronze plaques embedded in granite placed among the trees.” It was a successful strategy, as “[m]emorial groves counted for one-third of the funds raised [by the Save the Redwood League] in the 1920s.”16

The idea of symbolically “selling” trees to pay for the purchase of the land on which they grew was also adopted by the Washington State Federation of Women’s Clubs. Beginning in 1923, the Chair of Conservation, Jeanne Cathiness, “outlined a plan for raising funds for saving an ‘Evergreen Forest’ for posterity in the state of Washington.”17 Cathiness suggested selling “Save A Tree” badges or “buttons” to raise money for the project. The buttons, which had the picture of an evergreen tree on a white

14 Schrepfer, 20.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid., 21.
background, would be made of “celluloid, metal, and gold.” The celluloid buttons would cost $1, the metal buttons $5 or $10, and the gold buttons $100. A gold button would entitle the buyer to “select a tree and place upon it a metal plate with his or her name, or that of an honored friend.”18 The money raised would be used to purchase land on which there were still “accessible stands of virgin timber.” There was a sixty-three acre tract of land on the Snoqualmie Pass, “about halfway between Seattle and Ellensburg, Washington.” The Washington State Federation of Women’s Clubs negotiated a price of $30,000 for the acres, on which grew Douglas fir, cedar, hemlock, and spruce. The owner of the land donated $5,000, leaving the Washington women to raise the remaining $25,000.19

The fundraising campaign, which ran during the same period as that of the Franconia Notch campaign, began during the administration of President Esther Maltby (1925-1927). The land was acquired in February 1928. In March, the Washington State Federation turned the land over to the state of Washington to become a state park. The park was officially dedicated in 1929, and the gold button contributors saw the dedication of bronze plaques beneath the trees they had chosen to be put aside for their loved ones.20

The SPNHF and Ayres had two successful fundraising options before them. In both cases, the fundraising focused on using trees as incentive for donations, the end result

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18 Mathews, 86.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid. In 1939 the Washington State Federation of Women’s Clubs had to give up its forest and find a new one, when it was discovered that the Federation forest had been left unprotected by lumbering operations on the lands next to it. As a result, in 1938 “strong winds had blown down a number of the big fir trees, and since the forest bordered on a highway, the highway department declared it a menace to passing traffic.” The park land was subsequently sold, and the bronze dedication plaques stored until the Federation purchased another tract of land in 1941. The new land, 251 acres, was located on the Naches Highway, 15 miles east of Enumclaw, Washington. See Mathews, 130-131.
being a dedication ceremony or a plaque to commemorate the memorial tree or grove as well as the purchaser. The first method, used by the Save the Redwoods League, relied upon high profile contributors willing to donate large sums of money. The second plan, the "Save the Trees" program, was aimed towards people of above average income while still offering the incentive of a dedication tree and plaque. Ayres would take the idea one step further.

Based upon Forest Service reports, Ayres estimated that there were 100,000 trees in Franconia Notch. Each of these trees could be symbolically "sold" for $1. For those interested in pledging larger amounts, for $50 or $100 one could "purchase" an entire grove of trees. These trees, however, were not meant for consumption. Contributors would receive a response thanking them for their donation. They also received a notice that after the successful completion of the campaign, they could mark their tree as they saw fit, so long as they did no lasting damage to the tree itself. The "Buy a Tree for $1" campaign offered contributors the opportunity to memorialize loved ones lost during World War I. The trees purchased would become part of "a natural Soldiers and Sailors Memorial - the first of its kind in the country." Contributors also gained symbolic ownership of a piece of New Hampshire history.

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21 Response card for Tree Purchase, 1928. Box 9, folder 17. SPNHF Collection. William R. Brown, Chairman of the New Hampshire Forestry and Recreation Commission, noted in his 1958 book Our Forest Heritage that Ayres published the information about marking the trees in Franconia Notch without realizing the legal implications of giving away any sort of "title" to what would become state property. Brown noted that "[w]hen the first acceptees replied they would soon be up to place tags on their trees or build a fence around a memorial to grandfather, the state had to intervene." There is no record of what happened to those who desired to tag their trees, or if any provisions were made for an alternate marking system. William R. Brown, Our Forest Heritage, 99.

By late September 1928, Ayres and the SPNHF agreed upon the “Buy a Tree for $1” campaign idea. It was an appealing way to approach the fundraising aspect of the Franconia Notch campaign. Almost everyone who was interested in helping in the effort to save the Notch could afford to do so in a reasonable manner. What needed to be developed now was the marketing aspect of the publicity campaign. What was the best way to reach those who would be most interested in contributing to the cause? Recognizing that the Old Man of the Mountain and Franconia Notch had been visited by people from around the country, the SPNHF looked to a nation-wide promotional campaign as a way to expand its fundraising base.

The American Nature Association had agreed to help promote the SPNHF’s campaign. The American Nature Association, based in Washington, D.C., produced a publication, *Nature Magazine*, that was read nation-wide. In addition to offering to accept donations, in October 1927 the American Nature Association published an article in *Nature Magazine* about the Franconia Notch campaign entitled “Sawed or Saved?”.

The Association also sent out publicity circulars describing the campaign, one of which reached the editor of the Tulsa, Oklahoma *Tribune*.

The Tulsa *Tribune* criticized New Hampshire and the Franconia Notch campaign in a scathing editorial printed on October 6, 1927. Entitled “Is New Hampshire Dead?”, the editorial began by discussing “Old Home Week,” which had been the idea of New Hampshire governor Frank W. Rollins. The *Tribune* noted that this “‘Old Home’ idea came from a state that has old homes…and old home towns…[but] that has seen so many of its sons and daughters take wind and fly away that there wasn’t much of a state left to

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23 The earliest publication that mentions the “Buy a Tree for a $1” campaign is the *Nature Magazine* article from October 1927.
brag about."\textsuperscript{24} New Hampshire had come to national attention for a second time, "this time via Washington."

The American Nature Association has started a campaign which asks every American to send $1 to save the forests of the White Mountains.\ldots This is a fine and worthy thing to do. The White Mountains are altogether too splendid as they rest under the forest blankets which nature gave them. But where is the commonwealth pride of New Hampshire? Is New Hampshire depleted of appreciative people?\ldots Are its sons and daughters so forgetful of the Old Home splendors after this whole generation of Old Home promptings as to be impotent in the face of the avaricious axe man?

The one asset upon which New Hampshire may hope to build [which is] her rich endowment of scenic grandeur.\ldots Must Washington appeal to the nation at large to save New Hampshire? Is New Hampshire so much a story of the dead past that today New Hampshire cannot save itself? The appeal which the American Nature Association sends out on behalf of New Hampshire is splendid in itself, but it is a nation-wide announcement that New Hampshire is dead.\textsuperscript{25}

The Tulsa \textit{Tribune} did not disagree with the validity of the American Nature Association's appeal. Indeed, there was no doubt, according to the \textit{Tribune}, that New Hampshire's scenery was "altogether too splendid" and well worth saving. The rest of the picture that the Tulsa \textit{Tribune} painted of New Hampshire was a grim and humiliating one, however. New Hampshire appeared to be a state deserted by its residents, who left to look for better lives elsewhere and could only be brought back through a promotional campaign. New Hampshire appeared to have little pride left in itself, or was so apathetic that it would be willing to let someone else take care of its greatest asset, the White Mountains. The SPNHF took this editorial as a challenge.

By utilizing the national membership base of the American Nature Association, the SPNHF had hoped to draw national attention to the need to preserve a regional scenic landmark of national significance. The technique had been used for the Hetch Hetchy

\textsuperscript{24} Tulsa (Oklahoma) Tribune, 6 October 1927. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
campaign and for the Calaveras Groves campaign. Although the efforts of the former had failed, those of the latter had succeeded. In both cases, national attention had been drawn to conservation efforts in California. The SPNHF had met with success using this tactic early in the century in its pursuit of the White Mountain National Forest bill, and had every reason to believe, in spite of the Tulsa Tribune's comments, that it would meet with success again in the Franconia Notch campaign.

In a campaign that was characterized by remarkably supportive editorials and other coverage by the press, solicited by the SPNHF or otherwise, this editorial is a something of an anomaly. The Tulsa Tribune's source of information was a small description of the danger to Franconia Notch from "the voice of the axe." The American Nature Association's description, as quoted by the Tulsa Tribune, noted the highlights of the region, including Nathaniel Hawthorne's connection to the Old Man of the Mountain, as well as the other natural sights of the region. It appeared that the Tulsa Tribune writer was unaware of the measures already taken to insure the protection of the Notch by the state legislature as well as the SPNHF and James Storrow. Whether or not that information would have made a difference to the Tulsa Tribune, it reiterated that the SPNHF needed to focus its most intense efforts in its own backyard, New Hampshire and New England. Franconia Notch could be promoted as effectively in New England as elsewhere.

Effective promotion of the Franconia Notch campaign was going to require a major time and management commitment, which was more than Philip Ayres could do by himself. Ayres, therefore, hired Paul Hannah to be the campaign's "press agent," to
assist with the publicity effort. Hannah, a native of Berlin, New Hampshire, had graduated from Dartmouth College in the spring of 1927. Class valedictorian, and a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Hannah had also served on the editorial board of the school's daily newspaper *The Dartmouth*. From December 1927 through February 1928, Hannah would travel around New England to meet with newspaper editors, write publicity articles, and handle much of the campaign correspondence, including the large number of endorsement requests sent to a variety of individuals throughout the country. The SPNHF would require both Ayres' and Hannah's skill with words to put together an advertising campaign that would be compelling enough to raise $100,000.

The advertising campaign was designed to utilize all the medias readily available to the SPNHF and to focus on regions or groups that would be most likely to contribute to the Franconia Notch fund. The national campaign was conducted through articles published in magazines with national circulation, such as *Nature Magazine* (October 1927), *American Forests and Forest Life* (December 1927 and January 1928), *Landscape Architecture* (January 1928), *Field and Stream* (February 1928), and the General Federation of Women's Clubs *The Clubwoman* (March 1928). Magazine and professional journals with a more regional focus included *Common Ground*, the publication of the Massachusetts Teachers Association, as well as the newsletters of the New Hampshire, Maine, and Massachusetts State Federations of Women's Clubs.

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26 Letter from Paul Hannah to Stewart Hoagland, November 9, 1927. Box 9, folder 17. SPNHF Collection.

27 Hannah would leave his position at the SPNHF sometime in February 1928 to accept a position on the staff of *Nature Magazine*, the publication of the American Nature Society. He would later attend George Washington University Law School, be honored by the American Bar Association for distinguished service to the legal profession in 1975. In 1986, Hannah received the Dartmouth Alumni Award. “Address”, Dartmouth Alumni Council, Paul Francis Hannah, '27.
Ayres also recognized the importance of the Boston connection to the White Mountains. In November 1927, he wrote to Hannah that he had "just got a big bunch of Boston published magazines to print articles on the Notch." Although Ayres did not specify the publications to which he referred, the Franconia Notch campaign would find a place in *Appalachia, Open Road*, a magazine for young boys published in Boston, and the *Automobilist*, a publication for automobile enthusiasts in the East, also a Boston publication.

Again recognizing the importance of support from Boston, Hannah even inquired into radio time on WNAC, Boston's "first broadcasting station," which had been established in 1922. While the influence of radio in the late twenties was not as widespread as it would become in the 1930s, it was another publicity option. There is no record of whether or not the SPNHF took advantage of the "five minute talk," which cost $75, or the "ten minute talk," at $150. Hannah also arranged for several photographs of the Franconia Notch region to be put on display in the art gallery of the Boston City Club.

The SPNHF also utilized methods that had led to its past success. One of these was a direct mail campaign where publicity circulars were mailed to members. These circulars were also made available to the general public. They included illustrated single page descriptions of the campaign and reprints of the articles from *Nature Magazine*.

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30 John J. Fanning to Hannah, January 10, 1928. Box 10, folder 1. SPNHF Collection.

Field and Stream, and American Forests and Forest Life, as well as from the Boston American newspaper, whose publisher, Colonel Frank Knox, also owned the Manchester Union. These circulars not only represented the breadth of the campaign effort, but were an indication of the level of professionalism that had developed in the SPNHF's marketing campaigns as well.

The major focus of the campaign, however, was on local, state, and regional newspaper coverage. Beginning in November 1927, Hannah sent letters to every major paper in New Hampshire, both daily and weekly, asking if “they would be willing to take part in the campaign and to receive subscriptions [donations towards the Franconia Notch fund] through the newspaper…”32 The Manchester Union, the daily paper with the largest circulation in the state, covered the campaign extensively. Once the campaign got underway, the Union included full-page photo collages of Franconia Notch as well as human-interest stories about those who contributed to the Franconia Notch campaign. Both were weekly features in the Union between January and March of 1928.

The Boston papers, the Globe, the Transcript, and the Herald, also provided fairly extensive coverage. Hannah next looked to the major city newspapers of the neighboring states of Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. He traveled to Portland, Maine, Springfield, Massachusetts, and New Haven, Connecticut to conduct personal interviews with the editors of the newspapers of those cities, all of whom agreed to take what articles Hannah would send to them and to cover stories of local interest connected to the campaign as well.33

32 Hannah to William E. Langdon, November 8, 1927. Box 9, folder 17. SPNHF Collection.

33 Hannah to Harry N. Bigelow, Editor, Press Herald, Portland, Maine December 23, 1927; Hannah to John B. Callahan, Editor Springfield (Massachusetts) News, December 17, 1923; Hannah to M.W. Dickey,
Hannah’s letters to newspaper editors outlined the way the SPNHF planned on handling publicity. The first set of these letters was written in early and mid-November. Besides a description of the campaign describing the “selling” of Franconia Notch trees for one dollar and the campaign’s supporters, the letter addressed the Tulsa Tribune editorial. Commenting on the “Is New Hampshire Dead?” criticism, Hannah wrote that “[s]uch a comment, coming after the failure of such a campaign as is now being conducted, might be considered as a just criticism. We however, feel certain that the state is not “dead”, that it is going to prove itself able to take care of its scenic beauties.”\(^3\)\(^4\) The SPNHF was acknowledging the validity of some of the Tulsa Tribune’s criticisms, but a change in focus in the publicity campaign would be able to show just how much New Hampshire cared about its “scenic beauties.”

It had been decided that the best way to run the newspaper aspect of the campaign would be to have some advance publicity. The SPNHF, however, would concentrate most of its efforts on an intensive campaign, where articles would be sent out for publication every day for two weeks. Until early November, however, the exact timing of the two-week intensive publicity campaign was unclear.\(^3\)\(^5\) Nature made that decision for the SPNHF.

On November 2, 1927, it started to rain in New Hampshire and Vermont. In Hanover, New Hampshire, it rained for “more than thirty-six hours...[with] a rainfall of

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\(^3\) Editor Springfield (Massachusetts) Union, Spring, December 17, 1927; Hannah to H.W. Cornell, Editor, New Haven (Connecticut) Register, December 17, 1927.

\(^4\) Hannah to H. Webster Eldredge, November 14, 1927. Box 9, folder 17. SPNHF Collection.

\(^5\) Ayres to John J. Jackson, December 12, 1927. Box 9, folder 17. SPNHF Collection.
6.36 inches.\textsuperscript{36} The flood destroyed sections of railroad track on the Vermont-New Hampshire border, stopping train service for at least a day.\textsuperscript{37} By November 10, the Boston \textit{Herald} reported that “[d]amage to New Hampshire bridges and highways was estimated at $2.7 million….The greatest damage was in the mountain districts in the Pinkham, Crawford, and Franconia Notches, where there was damage of about $1.25 million…”\textsuperscript{38} Two days later, at a meeting of the SPNHF’s Executive Council, it was decided “that the campaign for raising money for Franconia Notch in New Hampshire should rest until after January 1, 1928…”\textsuperscript{39} The entire campaign schedule had to be reconfigured.

This was a smart public relations move on the SPNHF’s part. The floods in New Hampshire and Vermont were front-page news and financially devastating. Several lives had been lost in Vermont as well, so it would seem callous to pursue a conservation campaign, with its emphasis on fundraising, when many had lost their homes or worse.\textsuperscript{40} Hannah acknowledged as much in a letter to the editor of his hometown paper, the Berlin \textit{Reporter}, on November 23, 1927 in which he wrote that “we [the SPNHF] have decided to postpone our intensive campaign on Franconia until after the first of the New Year, due to the ravage caused by the flood and the centering of attention on it. There is still time for much educational work and our news letters will [continue to] go out…”\textsuperscript{41}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[36] Hanover (New Hampshire) \textit{The Dartmouth}, 5 November 1927.
\item[37] Ibid., 4 November 1927.
\item[38] Boston \textit{Herald}, 10 November 1927. Box 36, folder 72. SPNHF Collection.
\item[39] SPNHF ES November 16, 1928, 294. SPNHF, Concord, New Hampshire.
\item[40] Hanover (New Hampshire) \textit{The Dartmouth}, 4 November 1927.
\item[41] Hannah to John H. Houlihan, November 23, 1927. Box 9, folder 17. SPNHF Collection.
\end{footnotes}
Hannah put a positive spin on the situation, demonstrating the public spirit of the SPNHF and its concern for the situation in New Hampshire, while at the same time realistically acknowledging that the Franconia Notch campaign could not compete with the drama of the news of the flood.

Ayres, too, found a way to utilize the November flood to benefit the SPNHF. In a letter to the editor of the New Haven, Connecticut Register, Ayres pointed out that the Franconia Notch campaign “at the present time, links up with three national movements: the forest conservation movement; the widespread interest in flood prevention, which has concerned the East since the Vermont flood [of November]; [and] the drive that has swept the nation to prevent the despoliation of natural wonders.”\(^4\)\(^2\) Ayres neatly linked the Franconia Notch campaign to both regional and national concerns. A month later, when the intensive newspaper campaign was actually able to begin, these regional and national connections would characterize the articles written by the SPNHF, as well as the Franconia Notch “human interest stories” that Hannah urged newspaper editors to publish along with the material he sent.\(^4\)\(^3\)

The NHFWC’s Efforts to Unite New England and Save Franconia Notch

The NHFWC was the SPNHF’s most important ally in its effort to save Franconia Notch. During the fall of 1927, the NHFWC took charge of the SPNHF’s campaign to raise $200,000 to purchase Franconia Notch. The NHFWC made the Franconia Notch campaign a regional effort by uniting the efforts of Women’s Clubs throughout New England.

\(^4\)\(^2\) Ayres to John J. Jackson, December 12, 1927. Box 9, folder 17. SPNHF Collection.

\(^4\)\(^3\) Hannah to John H. Houlihan, November 23, 1927. Box 9, folder 17. SPNHF Collection.
England, and also helped to bring national attention to the campaign through the General Federation of Women’s Clubs. Mrs. Lulu Morris, wife of U.S. Senator George Morris, a long-standing member of the SPNHF, led the NHFWC as its president. Mrs. Alta McDuffee, past president of the NHFWC and one of the SPNHF’s Vice-Presidents at Large since 1922, was asked by Philip Ayres and Morris to spearhead the NHFWC’s Franconia Notch campaign.

McDuffee was well suited to the position. A native of Dayton, Maine, McDuffee had been a teacher in Massachusetts before her marriage in 1900 to Charles McDuffee of Alton, New Hampshire. As public-spirited as his wife would become, Charles McDuffee was a businessman and a public servant, who served on Alton’s Board of Education and as a town selectman. He was a member of New Hampshire’s 1912 Constitutional Convention and served a term in the state legislature (1915-1916). The couple had one daughter.44

Alta McDuffee also devoted herself to worthy causes. She served as chairman of the Alton Board of Education. She was instrumental in the movement to establish a high school in Alton and was president of the New Hampshire Parent Teacher Association between 1919 and 1921. She joined the Farmington, New Hampshire Women’s Club and then founded the Alton Women’s Club in 1922, at which time she was also president of the NHFWC. In addition to her work as chairman of the Women’s Legislative Council, McDuffee served as chairman of the Alton branch of the Red Cross during World War I,

and she was also involved with the New Hampshire branch of the League of Nations Non-Partisan Organization.45

McDuffee might have welcomed the chance to manage the Franconia Notch campaign for reasons beyond those related to conservation or public service. On January 28, 1927, at age fifty-eight, Charles McDuffee died of an aneurysm.46 Alta’s dedication to the Franconia Notch campaign, therefore, was both remarkable and possibly even necessary for her. The success of the Franconia Notch campaign rested squarely on the shoulders of McDuffee, Morris, and the nearly 13,000 members of the 151 clubs that made up the NHFWC.47

Ayres approached the NHFWC about enlisting its members’ help with the Franconia Notch campaign sometime before the organization’s annual field meeting on September 20-21, 1927. At that meeting, the NHFWC passed a resolution supporting the purchase of Franconia Notch and the SPNHF’s fundraising effort.48 A week later, the NHFWC had enlisted the aid of the New England Conference of Women’s Clubs at the Burlington, Vermont meeting, setting in motion activities throughout New England.

By November 1927, McDuffee and the NHFWC had assigned a portion of $50,000 of the $100,000 needed to purchase Franconia Notch to each of the eleven cities and two hundred and forty towns of New Hampshire as their quota. The NHFWC’s eight district

45 Metcalf, “McDuffee,”: 226.


47 Springfield (Massachusetts) Union, 13 January 1928.

48 “Resolutions Passed at Field Meeting,” NHFWC Bulletin (October 1927), 7.
chairmen were assigned to supervise their parts of the state. Each town's quota was based upon its population and its perceived ability to raise funds. The largest city in the state was Manchester, with a population of just over 83,000. Its quota was $10,000. The other largest cities in the state - Nashua, Concord, Berlin, Dover, and Keene - were assigned $4,000, $4,500, $2,500, $2,000, and $1,700, respectively. These six cities, and their women's clubs, were responsible for almost half of New Hampshire's $50,000 quota. Smaller cities and town, such as Franklin (population 6,318), Ashland (population 1,300), and Madison (population 482) had smaller quotas of $700, $200, and $35, respectively. Each club's membership knew to contribute generously, as well as to encourage the residents of their towns to do so as well. It became a contest within the NHFWC to see which town would go “over the top” first by achieving its quota. That honor would go to Ashland and Keene, which had reached their quotas by February 1, 1928.

49 Paul Hannah to Mrs. Bertram Blaisdell, Meredith, NH, February, 1928. Box 10, folder 3. SPNHF Collection.; Manchester Union, 5 January 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection. As not all towns in New Hampshire had women's clubs, the next closest town club was assigned the responsibility for the "unfederated" town as well. The districts of the NHFWC were as follows: 1: Antrim/Keene; 2: Meredith/Plymouth; 3: Derry/Manchester; 4: Newport; 5: Hanover; 6: Somersworth/Portsmouth; 7: Concord; North Conway; 8: Berlin/North Country.

50 Harriman, 111.


52 The populations of the cities listed were as follows: Nashua: 29,723; Concord: 22, 546; Berlin: 21,000; Dover, 13,029; Keene: 11,855. Source: H.N. Morse and L. Dewey Burnham, Every Community Survey of New Hampshire (New York: Home Missions Council, 1928), 32. The Ashland Women's Club, founded in 1926, joined the NHFWC in 1927. The enthusiastic group of fifty-seven members was the first to send their town "over the top." Not only did they reach their quota, they exceeded it - by over $1000. Ashland's final tally was $1233. See Louise Brock, The History of the Ashland Woman's Club, 1926-1982 (n.p., 1982), 1.

53 Boston Herald, 12 March 1928. Box 9, folder 17. SPNHF Collection. The term “over the top” was used quite often during the campaign. It was a used during World War I as “the order for the [Allied soldiers] to charge the German lines.” Many of the strategies used during the war were utilized again during the
In addition to seeing to the overall management of the fundraising campaign in New Hampshire, McDuffee also dealt with the public relations aspect of the Franconia Notch campaign. On February 1, 1928, when the intensive campaign had been underway for just under three weeks, there was concern that only $40,000 of the final $100,000 had been raised to date. McDuffee countered the pessimism with the optimistic statement that “[l]ocalities in which circumstances have delayed active campaigns have been encouraged by the ease with which many communities have raised their quotas, and are determined that their [town] will contribute 100% to the ultimate success of the drive.” McDuffee also noted that “such optimism and willingness to work was all the more remarkable in view of the fact that most of the $100,000 must come from contributions of $1 or less and no large gifts are in sight, and thus nearly one quarter of the population of the state must be successfully solicited.” While acknowledging the difficulty of the task she had undertaken, McDuffee was careful to give credit to those who were out seeking donations, as well as to add additional urgency to the fundraising effort.

There was only one instance in New Hampshire of any resistance to the goals of the campaign. McDuffee encountered it during her late January or early February 1928 visit to Berlin, New Hampshire, Hannah’s hometown. Berlin was a city of 21,000 in 1928, and was home to the Brown Company, one of the largest timber concerns in the White Mountains. The Brown Company supported conservation efforts in the White Mountains and New Hampshire. The first purchases in the White Mountain National

Franconia Notch campaign. This included following the same canvassing routes as those that had been used during wartime Red Cross drives. For definition of World War I terminologies, see Arthur Guy Empey, Over the Top: By the American Soldier Who Went (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1917), 303.

54 Manchester Union, 1 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

Forest had been land offered to the federal government by the Brown Company and a member of the Brown family, William R. Brown, served as chairman of the New Hampshire Forestry Commission for forty-three years between 1911 and 1954.\textsuperscript{56} In spite of the fact that Brown, who was an influential man in Berlin, supported the Franconia Notch campaign wholeheartedly, McDuffee and the Berlin Women’s Club President Eva Heck told Hannah that there was an “undercurrent” in the city that was “hampering the efforts of the [Berlin] club.”\textsuperscript{57} Apparently, there were some citizens of Berlin, never named in any of Hannah’s, Heck’s, or McDuffee’s correspondence, who believed that “the price to be paid for the Franconia Notch tract is excessive.”\textsuperscript{58}

Declaring such a claim ridiculous, Hannah, concerned with whether or not his home town would meet its $2,500 quota, suggested that perhaps a committee of supportive business leaders led by the mayor of Berlin might join Mrs. Heck’s effort to promote the Franconia Notch campaign.\textsuperscript{59} By February 8, the committee Hannah suggested had met with Heck, and she was hopeful that the Berlin quota would soon be filled.\textsuperscript{60} Apparently, Hannah’s solution worked. Berlin met its quota and the chairman of the Berlin fundraising effort, Miss Esther Anne Uhlschoeffer, declared that “the work of bringing into public ownership this most picturesque spot has unified, solidified, and strengthened

\textsuperscript{56} William R. Brown, \textit{Our Forest Heritage}, ix.

\textsuperscript{57} Warren James to Hannah, Berlin, NH, February 4, 1928. Box 10, folder 3. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{59} Hannah to Warren James, Boston, MA, February 7, 1928. Box 10, folder 3. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{60} Heck asked Hannah if the Berlin Women’s Club could take credit for the $500 that William R. Brown had given to the Franconia Notch campaign at SPNHF headquarters in Concord. Eva Heck to Hannah, Berlin, NH, February 8, 1928. Box 10, folder 3. SPNHF Collection.
the clubwomen of the state. I wish we had another equally large task upon which to embark.\textsuperscript{61}

In addition to her duties in New Hampshire, McDuffee also acted as the contact between the NHFWC and the General Federation of Women’s Clubs during the campaign. In November 1927, McDuffee contacted Vella Winner, the editor of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs newsletter \textit{The Clubwoman}. McDuffee wrote that

New England’s Women’s Clubs have been considerably aroused during the last six months over the fact that Franconia Notch, with its Old Man of the Mountain, is in danger of being sold for its lumber. The NHFWC has been working, and I have been giving the whole of my time for several weeks, in connection with a national campaign to raise $100,000 to complete the purchase price which will give this region to the state, for a state park.

As Franconia Notch is the property of the nation, so well known is it, we in New Hampshire are anxious that the whole nation understand just what may happen to Hawthorne’s Great Stone Face….We are sure that women throughout the country are deeply interested in Franconia Notch, and the article would be welcome to them.\textsuperscript{62}

A little less than a month later, McDuffee wrote more urgently to Winner, who had evidently not responded to McDuffee’s first letter. McDuffee outlined the same national connections that Ayres had, while also informing Winner that

Franconia Notch and the Old Man of the Mountain have [now] assumed added national significance, due to a country-wide activity to save them from the effects of lumbering. This region has linked itself, in the eyes of the editors, with three national movements: the forest conservation movement, flood prevention though reforestation, and the drive to prevent the destruction of national landmarks…. The women of clubs in all parts of the country are asking for information and how they can aid.\textsuperscript{63}

In this second letter, which connected the Franconia Notch campaign to national conservation movements that were concerns of the General Federation of Women’s

\textsuperscript{61} Avis A. Croteau, \textit{Historical Notes of the Woman’s Club of Berlin, NH 1900-1982} (Berlin, NH: Smith & Town Printers, 1983), 10.

\textsuperscript{62} McDuffee to Vella Winner, November 19, 1927. Box 9, folder 16. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{63} McDuffee to Vella Winner, December 6, 1927. Box 9, folder 16. SPNHF Collection.
Clubs as well, McDuffee's tone suggested that other clubwomen were more than merely interested in the Franconia Notch campaign. She stated that they wanted to know how to help, and the *Clubwoman* would be the prefect way to reach like-minded women throughout the United States.

Although McDuffee's letter was polite, she was not going to wait another month for a response from Winner. Winner must have understood McDuffee's determination, as "Franconia Notch in Danger," written by McDuffee, appeared in the January 1928 issue of the *Clubwoman*. Fortunately, the deadline for the purchase of the Notch had been extended until June.64 Although it was certainly published later than McDuffee would have wanted, the article's inclusion in the General Federation's of Women's Clubs nationally circulated newsletter certainly indicated the organization's recognition of the importance not only of the Franconia Notch campaign, but also of the NHFWC's efforts. Lula Morris would report on the campaign's success during Conservation Session of the General Federation's of Women's Clubs Biennial meeting in San Antonio, Texas in May 1928, to the applause of her audience.65

McDuffee, along with Ayres, became a personal ambassador for the Franconia Notch campaign. In addition to her statements to the press, she visited women's clubs around New Hampshire. Hannah made sure that local newspaper editors were well aware of when Mrs. McDuffee came to town. Between December 2 and December 10, McDuffee visited several towns in New Hampshire, including Wolfeboro, Somersworth,

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Milford, Antrim, and Exeter. Her visits had a threefold purpose. First, she went to help organize the district for the Franconia Notch campaign. Second, she went to meet with businessmen and district club leaders, as well as town officials, to explain the campaign to them, as well as to reiterate its importance. Finally, these visits provided the opportunity for additional press coverage of the campaign. McDuffee’s visits to New Hampshire towns indicated the type of hands-on campaign that was a necessity, given the financial goal that needed to be reached, and it was also part of the redesign strategy that resulted from the Tulsa Tribune’s critique of New Hampshire’s level of interest in the Franconia Notch campaign.

McDuffee’s role as ambassador was not limited to her representing the campaign in New Hampshire. She also worked closely to coordinate fundraising and publicity efforts with the state Federations of Women’s Clubs in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Maine. This regional effort would result not only in wide-spread publicity for the campaign, but in $7,000 in contributions from women’s clubs outside of New Hampshire by the time the campaign ended in June, 1928.

The notice of the campaign that had been given to the New England Council of State Federations of Women’s Clubs in Burlington, Vermont in September 1927 prompted the Massachusetts Federation of Women’s Clubs to include an article in the December 1927 issue of its monthly newsletter Federation Topics. The “Buy a Tree” movement was “heartily endorsed” by the Massachusetts Chairman of Conservation,

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66 Hannah to W. Prindle, December 1, 1927; Hannah to W.B. Rotch, December 1, 1927; Hannah to Somersworth Free Press, December 1, 1927; Hannah to John Templeton, December 1, 1927; Hannah to H. Webster Eldredge, December 10, 1927. Box 10, folder 2. SPNHF Collection.

67 Hannah to H. Webster Eldredge, December 10, 1927. Box 10, folder 2. SPNHF Collection.

68 Hotel and Travel News 2 April, 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.
Mrs. D.M. Goodridge. Mrs. Goodridge would support the campaign even more vigorously in January 1928, when she sent a letter to every club president in the Massachusetts Federation of Women’s Clubs. In the letter, Goodridge laid out the Massachusetts plan for assisting the NHFWC. Noting the January 9, 1928 starting date for the intensive publicity campaign, Goodridge wrote that

…it would seem desirable to bring our work of soliciting funds to focus at the same time that we may have the benefit of the information and enthusiasm aroused by the papers.

Will you kindly make a vigorous campaign for funds not only among your club members but throughout your community? This may make it necessary for you to increase the size of your conservation committee and to ask for the cooperation of other organizations in your town. Every nature lover everywhere should become a center of influence in selling as many trees as possible.

I am enclosing a copy of a letter containing detailed information which Mrs. McDuffee, the representative of the NHFWC, has prepared for the clubs of New Hampshire and will apply in every respect to the clubs of Massachusetts...

The Massachusetts Federation of Women’s Clubs was clearly committed to the Franconia Notch campaign.

This commitment took the form of a variety of fundraisers at Women’s Clubs through the state of Massachusetts. The women of the Kalima Club in North Attleboro, Massachusetts collected $181 dollars from a variety of residents and groups in their town. Other Massachusetts women’s clubs promoted the campaign in local papers, as well as through activities such as food sales and drives to raise money to purchase a grove of trees and dedicate it to John Greenleaf Whittier, the Massachusetts poet for

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70 Mrs. D.M. Goodridge to Massachusetts Federation Club Presidents, January 5, 1928. Box 10, folder 5. SPNHF Collection. In a handwritten note on the bottom of this letter, Philip Ayres noted that “Mrs. Goodridge did great work in Massachusetts.”

71 Attleboro (Massachusetts) Sun, 21 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.
whom the White Mountains, particularly the Old Man of the Mountain, was a favorite subject.72

Women’s clubs in Rhode Island and Connecticut also became involved in the Franconia Notch campaign. Mrs. Edward H. Whitney, president of the Rhode Island Federation of Women’s Clubs, was in charge of the campaign in Rhode Island. In November 1927, Florence Edgers, the Rhode Island Federation’s Chairman of Press and Publicity wrote to Hannah that she would be happy to act as a liaison with the Rhode Island press for the Franconia Notch campaign, as she would be able to utilize her contacts with eleven of the state’s newspapers. On January 20, 1927, Whitney issued a statement through the Providence, Rhode Island Journal declaring that “while the White Mountains are technically part of New Hampshire, they belong to every New Engander who loves scenic beauty.”74 Whitney’s declaration that the White Mountains were important to the entire region helped to establish that should the campaign fail, it would be not New Hampshire’s loss but the region’s loss as well.

McDuffee’s travels took her next to Connecticut, where in early February she met with members of the Connecticut Federation of Women’s Clubs, as well as the president of the Connecticut Automobile Club, in New Haven, Hartford, and Waterbury, three of the largest cities in the state. Her visits seemed to be a success, as Hannah followed them up with letters that encouraged the presidents of these organizations to promote the

72 Amesbury (Massachusetts) News, 28 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.


74 Providence (Rhode Island Journal), 21 January 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection. On March 25, 1928, the Journal reported that the Rhode Island Women’s Club of Providence donated $73 to the Franconia Notch campaign, as well as $50 to the building of a new library in the flooded area of Vermont. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.
campaign to save Franconia Notch, "a New England landmark and a nationally known scenic spot" which, "should it be despoiled of its heavy timber, not only New England, but the entire country would be the losers."\textsuperscript{75} He urged them to give the newspapers in their cities "advance notices on any benefits, bazaars, or socials that are arranged...Local 'news,' any 'human interest' incidents which occur, endorsements by clubs or prominent individuals, will make good copy for them."\textsuperscript{76} Although the SPNHF would issue press releases throughout the campaign that put a human angle on the effort to save Franconia Notch, local events, like those held by the women's clubs in North Attleboro, Massachusetts, gave the campaign a localized character under the umbrella of a coordinated regional publicity effort.

The Maine Federation of Women's Clubs responded enthusiastically to the Franconia Notch campaign as well. In November 1927, Hannah wrote to Miss Anna Dingley of Lewiston, Maine, that

I have been told by Mrs. McDuffee...that you were very much interested in the efforts that are being made to save Franconia Notch, and that you were especially interested in seeing that the Women's Clubs in Maine became helpful to the project. Our State is seeking to have a newspaper in each New England State collect subscriptions, and run a local campaign in the state to help raise $100,000, the sum needed to assure the State's purchase of Franconia Notch....We cannot expect Maine, which has plenty of wonderful scenery of her own to look after, could get so aroused about our Notch, but of course the Old Man of the Mountain really is not a state possession - it is part of the natural and traditional heritage of the whole nation.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{75} Hannah to Mrs. Alfred C. Wurts, February 10, 1928. Box 10, folder 4. SPNHF Collection.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{77} Paul Hannah to Miss Anna Dingley, November 21, 1927. Box 9, folder 17. SPNHF Collection. Miss Dingley was an appropriate person to utilize as, according to Hannah's letter, she was related to the editor of the Lewiston, Maine Journal, whom Hannah had contacted earlier in November. Later in the campaign, the Journal would include several of the SPNHF's articles about the campaign, as well as local news of fundraising activities.
Hannah, like McDuffee and Ayres, was careful to point out in most of his correspondence with out-of-state newspaper editors or when requesting an endorsement from businessmen or civic leaders that the Old Man of the Mountain belonged to New Hampshire, New England, and the nation, which made its preservation imperative and very much a part of "the drive that has swept the nation to prevent the despoliation of natural wonders."

The Maine Federation became closely involved with the Franconia Notch campaign. In January 1928, Mrs. Josephine Skofield, President of the Maine Federation of Women's Clubs, wrote to McDuffee, that

"it gives me pleasure to submit the following endorsement of the work, to which you are giving such splendid support: The Maine Federation of Women's Clubs is heartily in sympathy with the movement recently inaugurated for the preservation of Franconia Notch, so dear to the hearts of all lovers of Nature. No more worthy ambition could possess the minds of Club Women of this section of our Country, than seeking to preserve inviolate, this valuable asset to posterity."

At the Maine Federation of Women's Clubs Mid-Winter meeting in January 1928, McDuffee formally asked the Maine women "to cooperate with the women of the other New England states in the preservation of Franconia Notch...At the close of Mrs. McDuffee's talk it unanimously voted to approve the project presented by her and it was suggested that the information be disseminated among clubs and their cooperation be urged." 

The members of the Maine Federation of Women's Clubs would adopt some of the same fundraising methods as the Massachusetts Federation of Women's Clubs. In

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79 Maine Federation of Women's Clubs, Record Book of Annual and Midwinter Meetings, 1926-1937. Box 345, Maine Federation of Collection.
addition to outright donations, members of the Lewiston, Maine, Women's Club held a benefit auction and card party, the proceeds of which were donated to the Franconia Notch campaign. The Advance Club of Lewiston raised more than $20 at a card party its members hosted.\(^{80}\)

Local fundraising efforts on behalf of the Franconia Notch campaign took place throughout New England. Those sponsored by the various state Federations of Women's Clubs of New England not only demonstrated the importance of the Franconia Notch campaign to the region, but also the level of cooperation that existed between the state Federations of Women's Clubs. It was this cooperation between states that was one of the reasons for the success of the Franconia Notch campaign. Although the state of New Hampshire would supply half of the funds necessary to complete the purchase, ninety-two percent of the final $200,000, which included the $100,000 bequest from James Storrow, came from out of state sources, including summer residents who gave donations towards the quotas of the towns in which they owned summer homes.\(^{81}\)

The Franconia Notch Campaign “Strengthens and Solidifies” New England

The New England women's clubs helped their sister clubs in New Hampshire out of a sense of unity among their organizations. Economic unity and the economic health of

\(^{80}\) *Lewiston (Maine) Journal*, 20 February 1928; 24 February 1928; 25 February 1928; 1 March 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection. Women in other towns in Maine such as Fryeburg, which is located in the White Mountains, and Houlton, in northern Maine, contributed generously as well, with Fryeburg sending $64 and the Houlton Women’s Club sending $25 to purchase trees to honor their founder. *Portland (Maine) Press Herald*, 27 February 1928 and *Bangor (Maine) News*, 1 March 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

New England was the primary reason for the support given to the Franconia Notch campaign by the various Chambers of Commerce throughout New England, as well as the New England Council. Although “New England states [did] not seem to be able to adapt themselves to this new industry at a moment’s notice, as do people in Florida and California,” the tourism industry in New England was an important source of revenue and, when utilized properly, could also provide the means through which to promote the region’s attractions, economic and recreational, to the rest of the nation.\textsuperscript{82} The Springfield, Massachusetts, Chamber of Commerce noted that “‘The Old Man of the Mountain,’ known to hundreds of thousands of persons not only from all parts of this country but to many from foreign lands, is an outstanding historical landscape feature typifying, in the minds of many, the strength and solidity not only of New England but of the Nation.”\textsuperscript{83}

The Providence, Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce also approved of the goals of the Franconia Notch campaign. The organization’s Board of Directors approved a resolution supporting the SPNHF’s efforts to “save the ‘Great Stone Face’ of the White Mountains, by the purchase of the forests around it” and gave Hannah permission to use it as the Providence Chamber of Commerce’s endorsement of the campaign.\textsuperscript{84} Supporting the SPNHF’s campaign to save Franconia Notch would not only demonstrate the solidarity of New England, but could also help other states attract tourists and even

\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Carroll County (New Hampshire) Independent}, 29 April 1932. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{83} Harry H. Creswell to Hannah, Springfield, Massachusetts, January 5, 1928. Box 10, folder 1. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{84} Richard B. Watrous, to Hannah, Providence, Rhode Island, January 5, 1928. Box 10, folder 1. SPNHF Collection. Watrous, the Chamber of Commerce’s General Secretary, also included a personal note along with his organization’s endorsement, declaring that he was “personally...very much in sympathy with the movement and I am glad to enclose my dollar for ‘one tree.’”

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industry, should those from outside the region find that New England was a hospitable place not only to visit, but also in which to live and do business.

One of the most high profile regional organizations that endorsed the Franconia Notch campaign was the New England Council. Founded 1924 in Worcester, Massachusetts during a meeting of the governors of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, as well as New England’s leading industrial leaders, the New England Council’s purpose was to “[address]...the task of making New England more conscious of its advantages, and stimulating among all interests the activities and enterprises necessary to put New England ahead.” The members of the New England Council believed that “New England is the reservoir of the most skilled labor, the most skilled direction, and the highest intelligence in the United States. If she has been lacking in anything it is in that collective sense of the community which has pushed other communities ahead.” The Franconia Notch campaign offered a perfect opportunity for the New England Council to encourage a “collective sense of community.”

In addition to promoting industrial development in New England, the New England Council also promoted the recreational resources of the region, the neglect of which, according to Mrs. Mary Pratt Potter, president of the Massachusetts Federation of Women’s Clubs, was “caused by the close attention to industrial expansion.” The 1927 annual meeting of the New England Council included an address on New England’s

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87 *Chelsea (Massachusetts) Record*, 14 January 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.
recreational resources and "the necessity that they be adequately protected and preserved." The development of New England as a "national playground" included the distribution of the 1928 edition of "How to Find Where to Go in New England" which listed the "attractive scenes and outstanding points of interest in New England." By 1932, the New England Council spent $27,000 a year to promote tourism in New England. That Franconia Notch was one of these "attractive scenes" and an "outstanding point of interest" that also happened to be a familiar to many outside New England contributed to the value of the New England Council’s endorsement of the Franconia Notch campaign.

In the January 10, 1928 endorsement, which became an integral part of the SPNHF’s first press releases during the intensive publicity campaign, John S. Lawrence, President of the New England Council declared, in concert with the Tulsa Tribune, that New Hampshire and New England would be derelict in their duties to themselves and the nation if they failed to act to save Franconia Notch and its famous "Old Man of the Mountain" from destructive lumbering, and they would likewise be delinquent did they not give to the American public the opportunity to share in the movement to preserve [Franconia Notch] intact for future generations.... The campaign to “Buy a Tree for a Dollar and Help Save Franconia Notch,” therefore has my hearty endorsement. A tree is worth a dollar at any time....

The New England Council also felt that the Franconia Notch campaign represented one of the first “public opportunities” since its founding to “strengthen and solidify New England and to increase prestige in national affairs.”

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88 New England Council: 6
89 Ibid. See also Carroll County Independent, 29 April 1932. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.
90 John S. Lawrence to Hannah, January 10, 1928. Box 10, folder 1. SPNHF Collection.
91 Boston Herald, 13 January 1929. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.
Franconia Notch provided a means through which to bring the conservation and economic interests of New England together.

The success of the Franconia Notch campaign would not only save a well-known former resort and its famous landmark, it would also aid in the growth of the New England tourism industry. The campaign itself did as much to promote New England as the tourist friendly White Mountains and Franconia Notch regions. By 1932, during some of the darkest days of the Great Depression, tourism remained one of the most important industries in New England, bringing in 3 million people a year who spent $500 million on a combination of transportation, lodging, food costs, as well as on amusements and souvenirs.\textsuperscript{92} The success of the Franconia Notch campaign would go a long way to not only proving New Hampshire's commitment to conserving its natural beauty, but it would also provide another building block on the "solid foundation [that] has been laid for [the] future development" of tourism in New England.\textsuperscript{93}

"There are New Hampshire trees that are waiting in great trepidation..."

The Franconia Notch campaign had begun as a drive to save the forests in the former resort area from almost certain destruction at the hands of the timber industry after the Profile House fire of 1923. The conservation of the forests that would become the property of the state of New Hampshire once the Franconia Notch purchase was complete provided the means through which Philip Ayres was able to link the campaign in New

\textsuperscript{92}\textit{Carroll County Independent}, 29 April 1932. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid.
Hampshire to other movements throughout the nation, including forest conservation, flood control, and the preservation of scenic beauty.

The White Mountains were already an established part of the forest conservation movement though the Weeks Act of 1911, which established the White Mountain National Forest. Approximately 600,000 acres in New Hampshire and Maine were already national forest land, and the SPNHF was also involved with the United States’ Forest Service’s purchase of 22,500 acres in the Waterville Valley section of the White Mountains, which would become part of the White Mountain National Forest in 1928.94 Franconia Notch was enough of a national concern for the United States Forest Service to not only complete a survey of the region, but also offered $100,000 under the Weeks Act to purchase portions of Franconia Notch that adjoined National Forest land. When the proposal was placed before the state of New Hampshire, however, it was refused. The state “desired to have the whole Notch as its own property without Government cooperation” and issued bonds for that purpose.95 Franconia Notch had enough value, economically, through its timber and tourism resources, and historically, because of the Old Man of the Mountain as a symbol of New Hampshire, for the state of New Hampshire to make a twenty-year financial commitment to bring the region under its control.96

95 The NHFWC Bulletin (December 1927), 6. New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, New Hampshire. One can only guess at the reason why the state turned down the Forest Service’s offer. Perhaps New Hampshire preferred to have complete control of the region, in order that it might develop it in ways that would benefit the state. This development included such the Cannon Mountain Ski Area that would be built a decade after the Franconia Notch campaign created the Franconia Notch Forest Reserve.
96 The bonds that financed the state’s $200,000 purchase of Franconia Notch were officially issued on July 1, 1928, at 4% interest, and would be paid off, at $10,000 per year, on July 1, 1948. Source: Report of the
The state, the SPNHF, and the NHFWC cared deeply enough about the fate of Franconia Notch to commit significant resources to ensure that the Notch would remain out of the hands of the timber industry. Other organizations interested in conservation issues also committed resources to the campaign, through letter writing, endorsements, or donations.

The Appalachian Mountain Club combined a regional interest in Franconia Notch with the desire to preserve the region’s forests. Appalachian Mountain Club president George Rust wrote about Franconia Notch to the membership of his organization in November 1927. After noting the threat to the Notch and the terms of the agreement between the state, the SPNHF, and the Abbotts, Rust declared that this was a venture from which no one or no organization, not even the SPNHF, which would operate the money-making portion of the Notch when it took control of the Flume, would profit. “All income from the Notch,” Rust wrote “will be used for maintenance and improvement of the property in an attempt to restore the Notch to its original primeval beauty.”

After including a description of the financial means through which Franconia Notch would be saved, Rust urged Appalachian Mountain Club members that “it is needful for everyone who knows it and loves it to do all he can, both in contributions and in spreading information to others who may be interested.” Franconia Notch had been

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State Treasurer for the State of New Hampshire for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1929 (Concord, NH: Concord Press, 1929), 6, 16.

97 George Rust to Appalachian Mountain Club Members, November 18, 1927. Box 9, folder 15. SPNHF Collection. Plans for Franconia Notch included the planting of several hundred trees and removing evidence of human habitation, such as moving the former Profile House building to areas where they were difficult to see.

98 Ibid.

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important to the Appalachian Mountain Club since the 1870s and members throughout New England gave generously, with contributions from members in New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut totaling over $7,000 by the end of the campaign.99

Other hiking and recreation groups also contributed to the campaign. Hannah appealed directly to the Dartmouth College Outing Club, asking if the organization, to which the White Mountains and Franconia Notch meant so much, would be willing to send letters to its alumni to ask for donations towards the purchase of Franconia Notch.100 The Dartmouth Outing Club agreed to do so and also contributed $100 to the campaign to create a "shrine for Dartmouth war heroes and a rendezvous for Dartmouth summer visitors."101 The Field and Forest Club of Wauban, Massachusetts donated $500 to secure a "grove next to the Forest Hills Hotel."102 The Nashua, New Hampshire chapter of the Izaac Walton League helped to organize a major fundraising event, which raised $1000 in January 1928.103

99 Dean Peabody, Jr, "Franconia Notch Purchase," _Appalachia_ XVII (June 1928): 66. The general contributions from the Appalachian Mountain Club broke down as follows: General contributions: $4,442; New York Chapter: $100; Merrimack Valley Chapter (MA,NH): $125; Narragansett Chapter (RI): $125; Worcester Chapter (MA): $213; Connecticut Chapter: $250; Appalachian Mountain Club Treasury: $1,760. Total contributions: $7,015.

100 Hannah to Dan Hatch, November 15, 1927. Box 9, folder 16. SPNHF Collection.

101 Ibid. See also _Boston Globe_, 11 January 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

102 _Boston Traveler_, 5 March 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

103 _Nashua (New Hampshire) Telegraph_, 27 January 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection. New Hampshire's Fish and Game Commissioner, who was also a member of the Izaak Walton League, noted that "that preserving such large wooden tracts are necessary for the conservation of wildlife." The Izaak Walton League was founded in 1922 in Chicago "to save outdoor America for future generations." During the 1920s, the Izaak Walton League supported a variety of issues, including the creation of the Upper-Mississippi Wild Life and Game Fish Refuge, and the purchase of Waterville Valley in New Hampshire, along with prevention water pollution. "History of the Izaak Walton League"; available at http://www.iwla.org/history; Internet; accessed December 10, 2001.
There were also individuals who cared deeply enough about Franconia Notch to contribute generously to the campaign. New Hampshire governors Huntley Spaulding and John G. Winant each gave $1,000 to the campaign, and SPNHF president Allen Hollis gave $500. Mrs. John W. Weeks, the wife of Senator John W. Weeks, the author of the Weeks Act, sent $100 to the Unity Club of Lancaster, New Hampshire. The workers at the Beverly, Massachusetts United Shoe Manufacturing Corporation sent a $45 contribution, declaring that they, who had enjoyed many hours within Franconia Notch, which is nature’s handiwork, are sympathizers of the present action which is being taken to preserve the Great Franconia Notch from the ax of man that...in the future we will continue to view and adore the uncommercialized New Hampshire State Forest Preserve instead of a barren waste of lands of primeval tree stumps. Let’s not allow the ever-hungry lumber king to be “Monarch of all he surveys.”

The “Tool Job boys” of the United Shoe Manufacturing Corporation were not the society families who had owned the cottages at the Profile House. These workers might have been among those increasing number of people who drove to the White Mountains and enjoyed the White Mountains tour from the relative comfort of a 1920s automobile. The time they spent in Franconia Notch was as important to them, and the campaign, as it had been to the Notch’s wealthiest visitors, who also contributed generously through a variety of the women’s clubs in New Hampshire. The Old Man had indeed “rallied his friends” to save the Franconia Notch forests from being destroyed.

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104 Winant and Hollis made their contributions through the Concord Women’s Club and the Concord Club, respectively, while Spaulding’s donation was made through the Rochester Women’s Club. Manchester Union February 20, 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

105 Coos County (New Hampshire) Democrat, 22 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

106 Beverly (Massachusetts) Times, 16 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

107 The Manchester Union reported on February 22, 1928, that former Profile House guests had contributed almost $2,000 towards the campaign’s goal of $100,000. Those who summered in other parts of New Hampshire...
Support for the conservation goals of the Franconia Notch campaign included many endorsements and editorials that spoke about the importance of the Notch and of the campaign’s conservation goals as necessary and well as worthy. The February 19, 1928 issue of the Boston Herald included a letter to the editor from Herbert A. Jump which combined an appeal to save the forests of Franconia Notch with what would be lost should the campaign fail. Jump wrote that

There are trees in New Hampshire that are waiting in great trepidation. They are wondering whether the campaign to raise funds for the saving of Profile Notch in the White Mountains from the woodsman's axe will be successful. Profile Notch and the Old Man of the Mountain, the great stone face of Hawthorne's romance, do not belong exclusively to New Hampshire. They belong to all New England, yes to all the United States. No more pathetic tale is conceivable than to report a few days hence that our love of beauty here in the United States, our sentiments for a unique masterpiece of nature are so weak that we have allowed the onward march of business to blot out of existence a piece of landscape beauty altogether matchless in the civilized world.¹⁰⁸

Jump’s sentiments echoed those of Warren S. Brown, who sent a check for $10 to Hannah, asking that a grove of trees be set aside in honor of Henry David Thoreau. Along with his check, Brown enclosed a selection of quotations from Thoreau, one of which saw the value of “precious natural objects” belonging to the public.¹⁰⁹ Jump or Brown could as easily have referred to John Muir’s opinion on the destruction of Hetch Hetchy as being the destruction of “Nature's sublime wonderlands, the admiration and joy of the world.”¹¹⁰ To Jump and Brown, the destruction of Franconia Notch would

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have been as disastrous as the destruction of Hetch Hetchy was to Muir. The “Yosemite of the East,” as Ayres called Franconia Notch, was as much a national treasure to Jump and Brown as was that to which Ayres had compared it.

Saving Franconia Notch to Honor Soldiers and Sailors: A Patriotic Crusade

The conservation and regional interests discussed above helped the Franconia Notch campaign gain support from many throughout New England as well as throughout the nation. The American Nature Association’s appeal that was critiqued by the Tulsa Tribune was reprinted in the Salt Lake City Telegraph, the Herald of Augusta, Georgia, the Telegraphic of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and the Lima, Ohio News. Six women’s clubs between Seattle and Tacoma, Washington raised $15 to “purchase six white birch trees” in the Notch. Those trees would be symbols of the part the Washington Club women “played in saving the historic forest from extinction.” A banker from Houston, Texas, whose name was not printed, nor was the amount he donated, wrote that “[w]e aren’t exactly clear how the people of New England can afford to let this Notch get into danger. The White Mountains are too beautiful under their forest carpet as they are now.” Additional donations came from Arizona, Pennsylvania, California, and

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111 Salt Lake City Telegraph, 11 October 1927; Augusta (Georgia) Herald, 15 October 1927; Pine Bluff (Arkansas) Telegraphic, 6 October 1927; Lima (Ohio) News, 5 October 1927. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

112 Seattle (Washington) Times, 15 April 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection. The six Washington women’s clubs were: the Sumner Garden Club; The Sumner Civic Club; The Puyallup Woman’s Club; The North Puyallup Women’s Fortnightly Club; The Auburn Garden Club; The Riverside Club.

113 Boston Transcript, 6 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

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Vancouver, Canada. Although the SPNHF’s nation-wide campaign had not started out on a particularly positive note, former residents and those who summered in New Hampshire showed their support for the Franconia Notch campaign as well as their appreciation for the beauty of the region.

In his endorsement of the Franconia Notch campaign, Boston Chamber of Commerce president Andrew J. Peters emphasized the national importance of Franconia Notch while drawing on the regional and patriotic appeal of the campaign. Declaring the “‘Franconia Fund’ a national matter,” Peters believed that

[states lines, mythical, save on maps and in governments, should fade entirely before the common interests of New England, especially in the conservation of forests and natural scenic playgrounds...that the few remaining scenic spots untouched by commercialization, which form the resorts for business centers in New Hampshire and the nation at large, should be given adequate protection....Franconia Notch...fulfills the first requirement of a National Park, which is to establish and maintain a national reputation... [Franconia Notch] forms the hub of New England’s tourist centers catering to increasing numbers of Americans. Its losses through lumbering would mean a loss of prestige to New England.

Peters also saw the war memorial in Franconia Notch as both a unifying factor, and that “[t]here should be no state division in showing respect for the soldiers and sailors who died overseas, and the establishment of this park is a duty above local feeling.”

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114 The donation from Arizona, which was for $2,000, was from the wife of the president of General Motors, a native of Manchester, New Hampshire. *Manchester Union*, 15 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection. Donations from Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Florida, California, and Canada were sent to the Unity Club of Lancaster, New Hampshire. Although there is no additional information, it is reasonable to assume that these people had either moved away from the area, or had summered in the region. Several New Hampshire towns and women’s clubs reported that they had received donations towards the Franconia Notch campaign from summer residents and Lancaster noted that these summer residents were more generous than local residents, although this was not the case in many town. The role Lancaster school children played in the Franconia Notch campaign is discussed below. *Coos County Democrat*, 8 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

115 Peters had also served in the Massachusetts House and Senate as well as the United State House of Representatives. He had served as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in the Customs Department, and had been mayor of Boston during the Boston police strike of 1919.

116 *Boston Transcript*, 1 January 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

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Furthermore, the Franconia Notch war memorial would be unusual, but very appropriate, in that it was nature constantly renewing itself. Peters believed that “[t]hese 100,000 upright trees typify the spirit of the war dead. The fact that thousands of Americans have visited Franconia Notch, and that other thousands will come in the future, further adds to the value of such a monument and makes it a national concern.” The Franconia Notch war memorial, proposed by New Hampshire legislator and American Legion Auxiliary member Dr. Zatae Straw in 1925, would provide the opportunity for many ordinary people to memorialize their loved ones in the “self-perpetuating” war memorial of Franconia Notch.

The New Hampshire American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary, for whom the war memorial aspect of Franconia Notch would have special meaning, endorsed the campaign in January 1928. In response to Hannah’s letter asking for the American Legion’s official endorsement, the American Legion sent an announcement to each of its posts in New Hampshire. Telling American Legion members that he had “pledged the support to this most worthy endeavor,” Frank N. Sawyer, the American Legion Department Adjutant charged members “with the responsibility of seeing to it that as many members of your post as possible ‘Buy a Tree for $1.00.’ I feel that should the Legion fail to cooperate on this movement, we would be putting ourselves in a position contrary to our constitution – ‘For Community, State, and Nation.’”

Sawyer’s endorsement was followed by that of Sara L. Redfield of the American Legion Auxiliary Americanism Committee. Redfield wrote to the American Legion

117 Ibid.

118 Frank N. Sawyer to All Post Adjutants, New Hampshire American Legion, Concord, NH, January 15, 1928. Box 10, folder 2. SPNHF Collection.
Auxiliary presidents that "I believe that the American Legion Auxiliary can do nothing more in the line of Americanism and good citizenship that to give its heartiest cooperation in assisting the Club Women of New Hampshire to raise finds for the purchase of our own wonderful Franconia Notch that it may be saved from destructive lumbering." The emphasis was on duty and fundraising. Sawyer’s letter, which ended “ACTION, COMRADES, ACTION,” left little doubt about the vigorousness of the American Legion’s support of the Franconia Notch campaign.

On January 24, Hannah released a joint statement by New Hampshire’s American Legion Commander Ralph G. McCarthy and American Legion Auxiliary leader Anna G. Butler. The statement declared that “the proposed Franconia Notch soldiers and sailors memorial [will be] a shrine at which a nation will pay homage to the war dead…the 5,000 [Legion] men, their wives, and mothers will not cease work until the entire…purchase price…is collected.” Butler asserted that “New Hampshire money could not be spent to greater advantage than for the Franconia Notch purchase.” McCarthy summed up the appeal of the Franconia Notch campaign for the American Legion, while at the same time recognizing how such a unique memorial could affect those who visited.

Increasing numbers of people from all parts of the country will come to Franconia Notch to pay their respects at this shrine. They will carry away not only a feeling of the beauty of the mountain scenery, but also a sense of the service these men have rendered their nation…[T]his nationally famous tract, rich in legend and New England tradition…deserves preservation and its dedication to war heroes is decidedly fitting.

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121 Ibid.
122 Ibid.
McCarthy and Butler, Sawyer and Redfield, called upon their organizations’ members to support the goals of the Franconia Notch campaign. The combination of a state sponsored forest reservation and a war memorial provided the opportunity for a variety of contributions and fundraising efforts.

One contribution that found its way into many of Hannah’s press releases was the letter written by a young woman who bought five pine trees in the name of her brother, who died at Verdun in France. “We wish he could lie in New Hampshire soil,” she wrote, “but we shall be proud to have his memory live in those five tall pines, in the war shrine under the Profile where thousands of visitors may see.” 123 C.B. Dubois, a veteran of the Civil War Battle of Gettysburg and a resident of Nashua, New Hampshire, donated $20. 124 Under the direction of Dr. Zatae Straw, the Manchester American Legion Auxiliary’s fundraising efforts collected over $1,000 and the American Legion Auxiliary post in Rochester, New Hampshire purchased “a group of trees in memory of the ex-servicemen of Rochester who had passed away.” 125 Straw’s proposal for a war memorial had proved to be both appropriate and popular.

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123 Manchester Union, 21 January 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.


125 Manchester Union, 1 March 1928; Rochester (New Hampshire) Courier, 27 January 1927. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection. Apparently Flora Spaulding had been correct when she said that the American Legion Auxiliary women were better at raising money than the men. Although there are only a few notations indicating the exact amounts of American Legion or Legion Auxiliary fundraising efforts, there are none that come close to the amount raised by Straw.

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Selling the Old Man: History, Nostalgia, School Children and the Franconia Notch

Campaign

On January 16, 1928, a photograph of the Old Man of the Mountain appeared in the Boston Transcript. Entitled “How the Old Man Will Look Cut Over,” the photograph showed the Old Man of the Mountain looking out over a collection of fallen trees and stumps. The caption read “The Composite Picture Above Shows How a Logging Drive Would Leave the Slopes of Franconia Notch.”126 (Fig. 6) It was a dramatic example of how fragile and unprotected from the encroachment of commercialism the Old Man of the Mountain and the forests of Franconia Notch really were.

In reality, of course, nothing had happened to the Old Man of the Mountain – yet. The image was a composite photograph designed by the SPNHF to demonstrate the worst that could possibly happen should the SPNHF not be able to raise the $100,000 necessary to complete the Notch purchase. The disturbing image of a beloved landmark so abused created controversy.

The Malden, Massachusetts News was appalled at what it called “the most wanton defacement that has ever befallen any natural scenery in this country since the white man came here.”127 The News declared the destruction of forests on the slopes of Cannon Mountain “as sacrilegious as to strip a priest of his robes or to unfrock a bishop.”128 Although the Malden News was apparently the only newspaper to mistake the composite photograph for reality, the SPNHF issued a statement on February 9 that apologized for

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126 Boston Transcript, 16 January 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.
128 Ibid.
As the Old Man Will Look Cut Over

The Composite Picture Above Shows How a Logging Operation Would Leave the Slopes of Franconia Notch.

The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests is Conducting a Drive to Purchase the Notch as a Park, and Save It from the Axe.

Contributions towards saving the trees in Franconia Notch may be sent to James J. Storrow, Jr., Treasurer, 4 Joy Street, Boston.

Fig. 5
The Composite Photograph, January 1928. The SPNHF's publicity campaign effectively utilized threats to the forests surrounding the Old Man of the Mountain. SPNHF Collection. Photo Courtesy of Milne Special Collections, University of New Hampshire Library.
not labeling the composite photograph more clearly, adding that “we hope that if you use these pictures you will point out that the Notch is not yet cut, and nature lovers are asked to save it.”\textsuperscript{129} The composite picture, which was meant to shock people into donating to the campaign in order to prevent the catastrophic event depicted in the photograph, could have derailed the campaign very quickly had the reaction of the Malden News been more widespread. Why contribute to save Franconia Notch when it was clear that its most attractive and beloved feature had suffered damage that would take a generation to repair?

Fortunately, few thought that the destruction had actually occurred. There is little evidence in any of the press releases or in the records of the SPNHF or the NHFWC that fundraising or publicity came to a halt. There were some newspaper editors who thought that the SPNHF was actually exaggerating it portrayal of the threat to Franconia Notch. The Milford, New Hampshire Cabinet was pleased that the owners of the Notch admitted that what they wanted from the state was the value of the revenue from the Flume and the souvenir shops, and that in the end that was what the state and the SPNHF were buying, not “6000 acres of rough land [and] timber.”\textsuperscript{130} The timber in Franconia Notch was “in no danger of being slaughtered and has never been in serious danger” as the Abbotts had always intended to allow the state to have Franconia Notch as long as the state could afford to pay for it.\textsuperscript{131}

\textsuperscript{129} Hannah to Editors, Newport (Rhode Island) Press and Woonsocket (Rhode Island) Call, 9 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{130} Milford (New Hampshire) Cabinet, 12 January, 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{131} Ibid.
This was not the angle the SPNHF chose to pursue in its publicity campaign. Rather, it looked to play upon the threat of what would happen should the SPNHF not reach its fundraising goals, which gave the campaign a sense of urgency that was lost on the editor of the Milford Cabinet. The composite picture in the Boston Transcript clearly illustrated that threat and placed at its center the Old Man of the Mountain. The unnamed timber companies and their irresponsible forestry practices were more than convenient villains, however. For decades bare mountain slopes caused by clear-cutting had caused forest fires and other damage in the White Mountains. The SPNHF’s publicity campaign effectively utilized the timber industry threat.

The Old Man became the personification, both figuratively and literally, of the Franconia Notch campaign. The New York Times Magazine article of February 1925 continued a long tradition of calling the Old Man of the Mountain “he” when it described the Old Man as seeking “the Eternal Protection of His Native State.”132 Discussing the Old Man’s history, the New York Times Magazine article noted that scientists were unfamiliar as to whether or not the Old Man of the Mountains “was created, or…was born and grew naturally to his present superannuated age.”133 The Old Man, however, was more than a mere natural creation. “[C]ut by nature in the mountain rock,” the Old Man was “an eerie, supernatural fragment of the gods, a sort of “oversoul” to the entire Franconia Notch region, the mark, moreover of New Hampshire.”134

133 Ibid.
134 Ibid.
The supernatural nature and anthropomorphic descriptions of the Old Man of the Mountain were common themes in the countless poems the Profile inspired during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some of these, written by Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of the Christian Scientist movement, John Greenleaf Whittier, or John T. Trowbridge, were well-known. Others, written by fourteen-year-old school girls or in honor of the Franconia Notch campaign, were more obscure, but no less genuine in their expressions of wonder. Hawthorne’s allegorical short story “The Great Stone Face” introduced the idea of the Old Man as the conscience of Franconia Notch, and the Italian artist Casola in Edward Roth’s 1864 novel *Christus Judex* used the Old Man of the Mountain as his model for his painting of Jesus Christ. The Divine or semi-Divine nature of the Old Man was, of course, a literary contrivance, for there was no record that any of the native American tribes in the area looked upon the Old Man of the Mountain as a divine creation. The Romantic impulses of Thomas Cole and the writers and poets who followed him created that image.

The combination of the presence of the Old Man of the Mountain and Franconia Notch’s natural beauty had inspired travel writers to describe the Notch as a sacred shrine. The creation of a war memorial deepened the sacral nature of Franconia Notch, as it would be dedicated to those who served, as well as those who died, for New Hampshire. Andrew Peters had made the astute observation that war memorials should know no state lines, which would not only increase the prestige of the Franconia Notch memorial, as well as add to its significance as a quasi-religious place. In this light, the

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135 See Chapter II for a discussion of the Old Man of the Mountain.

136 Edward Roth’s *Christus Judex. A Traveller’s Tale* has been reprinted in John T.B. Mudge’s *The Old Man’s Reader: History and Legends of Franconia Notch* (Etna, NH: The Durand Press, 1995), 31-76.
destruction of the forests around the Old Man of the Mountain took on the aura of a
religious, as well as a patriotic crusade. To destroy the forests of Franconia Notch would
eliminate what a local pastor believed the members of his congregation felt when they
looked upon the Old Man, which was "the awe and reverence in the majesty and dignity
of his [the Old Man's] expressive feature and presence."\(^\text{137}\)

The SPNHF's publicity campaign utilized these images of the Old Man of the
Mountain and combined them with stories of Franconia Notch in days past. In a letter to
Lula Morris, Hannah specifically asked for "some fresh material on the Notch...legends
connected with the district, queer historical happenings...in short, all the fact and fiction
we can reach."\(^\text{138}\) Hannah contacted Karl Harrington, an Appalachian Mountain Club
member and a Latin professor at Weslyan University in Connecticut. Hannah hoped that
Harrington, as the author of *Walks and Climbs in the White Mountains* which had been
published by the Appalachian Mountain Club in 1926, might have stories to tell.

Harrington sent a reply to Hannah that told of his experiences riding through Franconia
Notch in a stagecoach.\(^\text{139}\)

Unlike the "convenience of rolling swiftly in one's own car" through the Notch,
Harrington's memories of the leisurely paced day-long tour of Franconia Notch had the
"peculiar charm" of the "old-fashioned way of seeing the sights."\(^\text{140}\) One of the
highlights of the day was Profile Lake, where "the Old Man's face burst upon us

\(^{137}\) *Boston Monitor*, 14 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

\(^{138}\) Hannah to Lula Morris, November 16 1928. Box 9, folder 17. SPNHF Collection.

\(^{139}\) Hannah to Karl P. Harrington, December 28 1927. Box 9, folder 17. See also Karl P. Harriman to
Hannah, Middletown, Connecticut, undated. Box 9, folder 15. SPNHF Collection.

\(^{140}\) Karl P. Harriman to Hannah, Middletown, Connecticut, undated. Box 9, folder 15. SPNHF Collection.

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mysteriously, as if out of a clear sky, a face of serious mien, yet calm repose, ever gazing
at the grandeur of the noble mountains across the valley...”\(^{141}\) Harrington’s memories of
the Old Man and Franconia Notch demonstrated the nostalgia of summer visitors, and
this nostalgia contributed to Harrington’s fear that the opportunity to experience “one of
the finest days that could be spent in the mountains” might be lost to the “ruthless
lumbering [that] will ever ruin for happy visitors those delightful nooks and curiosities of
nature.”\(^{142}\)

Other stories came unsolicited. Ellen F. Butterfield from Milwaukee, Wisconsin,
wrote that her grandfather was Clark Knapp, the owner of one of the first inns in the
White Mountains. The woman wrote that she remembered her grandfather entertaining
such celebrities as Jenny Lind, the Siamese twins, and P.T. Barnum. “The twins,” she
wrote, “were poorly behaved and quarreled with us constantly. Jenny Lind sang for us in
the old hotel. Mr. Barnum used to say that he came to the Notch to get the Old Man to
travel with him.”\(^{143}\) Stories such as these added to the historical significance of the
Notch, as well as creating an image of the “peculiar charm” of the days when the Old
Man observed the activities of famous guests the Notch. The SPNHF relied upon the
recollections of people like Harrington and Butterfield to not only aid the publicity effort
but also to inspire monetary donations to bring the campaign to a successful conclusion.

\(^{141}\) Ibid.

\(^{142}\) Karl P. Harriman to Hannah, Middletown, Connecticut, undated. Box 9, folder 15. SPNHF Collection.

\(^{143}\) Ellen F. Butterfield to James Storrow, Jr., Milwaukee, WI, November 9, 1927. Box 9, folder 16.
SPNHF Collection. See also Lewiston (Maine) Evening Journal: “Sunlit Trail with Maine Folks”
1 February, 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.
This nostalgia, along with the traditions and history attached to the Old Man of the Mountain and Franconia Notch, formed the basis of the SPNHF’s strategy to interest New Hampshire school children in the Franconia Notch campaign. In January 1928 Hannah received approval from New Hampshire’s state superintendent of schools Ernest W. Butterfield to announce “Franconia Notch Day” to New Hampshire town superintendents and to school principals. Butterfield also sent out an announcement to the superintendents declaring that

you and I, and other school people in New Hampshire have little use for special instruction in “School Weeks,” “School Days,” and “School Drives.” We believe strongly in supplementary and vitalized school instruction every week and every day. We do not use the schools for external propaganda but we wish the schools to take a vital part in the state life. Societies, organizations and individuals, the legislature, and the Governor and Council, are greatly interested in the attempt to preserve Franconia Notch for the American people.144

At a meeting of New England superintendents, Butterfield encouraged his out of state colleagues to pledge “themselves to have the teachers in their schools tell their pupils the old legends and Indian tales connected with Franconia Notch and the Great Stone Face.”

The January 1928 issue of Education Magazine noted that the superintendents “unanimously endorsed the campaign.”145

The school children of New Hampshire endorsed the campaign as well. Franconia Notch week was a success in many schools throughout New Hampshire. In the town of Penacook, near Concord, New Hampshire, elementary school students sang songs about New Hampshire, and seventh and eighth grade students devoted one of their English


classes to thorough study of the legend of Franconia Notch.\textsuperscript{146} School assemblies were held and the Franconia Notch campaign was discussed.\textsuperscript{147}

The study of the Notch was based upon a list of titles of books and poems, as well as possible topics for essays that Hannah had sent to New Hampshire superintendents and principals prior to the week of January 16. The titles included the fiction of Hawthorne and Roth, as well as Frederick Kilbourne's extensive \textit{Chronicles of the White Mountains}, which traced the history of the region from prehistoric times through 1916. Thomas Starr King's \textit{The White Hills}, as well as other guidebooks found their way onto the list, which also contained Bradford Torrey's \textit{Nature Stories} from 1901, a collection of nature writings about the White Mountains and Franconia Notch. Possible topics for study included the discovery of the Old Man of the Mountain, tales of early settlers, the recitation of poems about the region and the opportunity to create new legends and stories.\textsuperscript{148}

The measure of the attraction of the campaign for school children was clear through the amount they contributed financially and through their enthusiasm for the programs at their schools. Although Hannah made it clear that "it is not our purpose to ask the school children for the little amount of money they have, but rather through them to educate parents to support the drive," school children contributed approximately $1,000 to the final $100,000.\textsuperscript{149} Thirty four young girls from three high schools in Manchester, as


\textsuperscript{147} Miss Hattie M. Gordon to Hannah, Nashua, NH, January 13, 1928. Box 10, folder 2. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{148} Hannah to New Hampshire Superintendents, January 6, 1928. Box 10, folder 5. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{149} \textit{Christian Science Monitor}, 1 March 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.
well as students from other schools stood outside shops and went door to door on a cold Saturday in February to sell “tags” which would indicate that contributor had purchased so many trees in Franconia Notch. The final tally for the day was just over $375.150 Rochester, New Hampshire high school students, who discussed Franconia Notch in their English classes, raised $40, and students in the Raymond, New Hampshire school raised $13.151 Students in the Lancaster school system together raised $152.152

The enthusiastic support of school children was so amazing that it inspired Ann Storey to write “Leading, not Following” in her Manchester Union column “From Woman’s Angle.” Storey wrote that “children are showing more interest in this endeavor than their parents” and that children’s contributions, although smaller, were far more numerous than those of the adults. Storey chided the adults for their lack of interest, declaring that for their children’s sake they should be interested. Materialism has a stranglehold on the nation as matters at present stand, there is a growing indifference to tradition, to customs, the things that militate the to the preservation and cultivation of the finer things in life. The things that go to make worthwhile have come to be scorned; beauty, unless it is expressed in terms of a gloriously designed car or similar appurtenance to modern living, is ridiculed! And yet, few of us could exist long without the attribute of beauty in life. And for the majority of us, it has come through nature, and nature that is near our immediate environment. Maybe we do not realize just what an influence it unconsciously exerts, but unless we are unusually obtuse, we have some appreciation of the natural wonders we encounter. Franconia Notch is such a natural wonder and we can only hope that the fathers and mothers will come to realize this fact as acutely as the children and send their dollars to help swell the fund needed to preserve this beauty spot for all time.153

150 Manchester Union, 27 February, 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.


152 Coos County (New Hampshire) Democrat, 1 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

Storey’s editorial summed up the attractions of the Franconia Notch campaign, which were the preservation of nature and tradition for the present and future children of New Hampshire.

The SPNHF utilized children’s involvement with the campaign in the human-interest stories included within press releases. On the same day that Storey’s editorial appeared, the Manchester Union published a photograph of Wilbur E. Webster, who was described as the “youngest tree owner” to date in the campaign. Webster, aged four, was pictured in his snowsuit.\textsuperscript{154} The actual amount Webster contributed was not disclosed. Although Webster probably had no idea why his picture was being taken, he became a symbol of children’s love for Franconia Notch. It provided the SPNHF with a charming angle to the campaign.

The Franconia Notch campaign, which borrowed ideas from western conservation campaigns, was nevertheless unique to its circumstances. The combination of image of the White Mountains as a mountain paradise and mecca for tourists influenced the White Mountains conservation movement, which in turn shaped the campaign for Franconia Notch. The threat to the forests of Franconia Notch, and the desire to preserve a unique piece of its history inspired the state of New Hampshire, as well as the SPNHF and the NHFWC, to commit substantial financial resources to preserve a region that had helped to define the state. Regional efforts to unite New England into an economic unit benefited the campaign in that it drew the endorsements of businessmen and former politicians concerned with the region’s image nationally.

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid.
The proposal to create a war memorial in what would become Franconia Notch State Park added a patriotic dimension to the campaign that worked well in 1920s New Hampshire and New England. The war memorial added to the spiritual mystique that already surrounded the Old Man of the Mountain, which had become the symbol of the threat to Franconia Notch. To allow the timber companies to take from the slopes of Cannon Mountain the forests that had always framed the Old Man would destroy the setting of the natural shrine created by writers and poets in the nineteenth century. The state's summer residents saw in the Old Man of the Mountain and Franconia Notch a fascinating piece of New Hampshire history that represented the way life allegedly used to be, and which would no longer even be a memory should the Notch be altered by "commercial" interests. New Hampshire school children saw in the Old Man of the Mountain a friend in trouble, and donated their pennies and nickels to the Franconia Notch campaign.

The success of the Franconia Notch campaign was the result of a savvy, although not always perfect, publicity campaign that the SPNHF designed to touch upon the most attractive aspects of the campaign. The support of Alta McDuffee, Lula Morris, and the NHFWC allowed Paul Hannah and Philip Ayres to concentrate upon the public relations and marketing aspects of the campaign, while the nearly 13,000 women of the NHFWC took care of raising the necessary funds. The partnership between the two organizations was at its strongest and most effective during the Franconia Notch campaign. Together, the SPNHF and NHFWC worked to allow the state of New Hampshire to gain control of Franconia Notch in June 1928. Both groups would take their bows and receive credit for
their perseverance and cooperation at the dedication of Franconia Notch State Park in September 1928.
EPILOGUE

"THIS MEMORIAL WAS MADE BY GOD"

By June 1928, the purchase of Franconia Notch was complete. The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF) and the New Hampshire Federation of Women’s Clubs (NHFWC) had reached the $100,000 fundraising goal set during the fall of 1927. Fifteen thousand people contributed to the fund, mostly through single dollar donations, although there were donations from between $50 and several thousand dollars as well. The NHFWC’s fundraising efforts alone contributed over $65,000, with almost sixty percent of the two hundred and forty cities and towns in New Hampshire either reaching or exceeding their assigned quotas.\(^1\) It had been a very successful fundraising drive.

The final agreement between the Abbotts, the state, and the SPNHF had arranged for the transfer of all 6,000 acres of Franconia Notch to the state, with half the purchase price to be provided by the state and the other half by the SPNHF. The agreement also stipulated that the Abbotts would retain control of the revenue from souvenir shops and the Flume during the 1928 and 1929 seasons, after which these attractions would become state property. The New Hampshire Forestry Commission would work to restore Franconia Notch to its “primeval splendor” while the SPNHF had arranged to “have its representatives on the ground to assist its members and contributors and other visitors to

\(^{1}\) Howard Mansfield, “Franconia Notch: Sawed or Saved?” in People and Place, 15. One hundred and forty three towns made or exceeded their quotas.
the Notch.”2 The SPNHF, however, got more than it planned from the purchase of Franconia Notch.

By June 1928, Governor Spaulding and the state of New Hampshire decided that the management of the Flume, which welcomed between 80,000 and 100,000 visitors a year, was too large an operation for the New Hampshire Forestry Commission to undertake, and Spaulding was even more hesitant to give control to the state legislature.3 As New Hampshire lacked any state department devoted to parks or to recreation, Spaulding and his Executive Council decided that in 1930 the SPNHF would take control of the approximately 1,000 acre Flume property for twenty years, until the state had paid off its debt on the remaining 5,000 acres. At that point, ownership of the Flume would revert to the state.4 In the meantime, the Society would be responsible for the maintenance of the Flume property, while retaining all revenue from entrance fees and the Flume Tea Shop.5

The Society accepted its new responsibility and announced that it would invest any profits from the Flume into “improving and restoring Franconia Notch and for other forestry purposes.”6 The work began immediately. In addition to the 1923 fire damage

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3 Bruns, 54.


6 Ibid. Between 1928 and 1948, the Society paid $48,000 in taxes to the town of Lincoln, in which the Flume property was located, put close to $100,000 into property improvement at the Flume and elsewhere,
in the vicinity of the Profile House, in 1927 a swath of trees had been accidentally cut at “one end of Echo Lake...clearing a large area, and leaving slash that was a decided fire risk.” Arthur A. Shurtleff, a landscape architect from Boston who had helped the SPNHF with the restoration of the Lost River Reservation, was hired by the SPNHF and the Forestry Commission to draw up plans for the restoration of Franconia Notch. In 1929 the SPNHF released funds for restoration work in Franconia Notch that included the planting of 6,000 trees in the area where the Profile House had once stood, the removal of fallen trees and brush, and the repair of hiking trails. The remaining buildings of the Profile House complex were either dismantled, re-used, or moved out of site, the plan being to place any noticeable evidence of human habitation out of sight from the majority of visitors, restoring Franconia Notch to its “primeval” state, to leave the region looking as untouched by human hands as possible. All projects were specifically designed “in order to keep environmental impact to a minimum.”

The same month that the SPNHF, the state, and the Abbotts settled the final details of the Franconia Notch purchase, New Hampshire Forests, the publication of the State Forestry Department, devoted five pages of its June issue to Franconia Notch, declaring it was “only fitting” after “persons in all walks of life throughout New England, and even in many other states as well” had heard about and supported the Franconia Notch and gave over $87,000 to the Forestry Commission for grants and rentals. Over $12,000 was spent repairing damage from the Hurricane of 1938. See “Report on Franconia Notch Acquisition” Box 9, folder 26, SPNHF Collection. See also Clark, Tani, and Owen, “A Study of the Franconia Notch State Reservation,” 24-25 and Bruns, 55.

7 Manchester Union, 18 January 1928.

campaign. To celebrate the state’s acquisition of the Notch, *New Hampshire Forests* decided to “chronicle in a modest way something of the past history of the White Mountains which is so well deserving of all that has been written or sung regarding it.” The *New Hampshire Forests* focus was more fitting that its author realized. The success of the Franconia Notch campaign had depended upon the “chronicle...of the past history of the White Mountains,” as well as upon the commitment to the campaign’s goals by the various groups that devoted their members’ time and resources to its goals.

The dedication of Franconia Notch as a state Forest Reservation and Memorial Park took place on September 15, 1928. On that cold, windy Saturday afternoon, as clouds occasionally obscured the view of the Old Man of the Mountain, those who had worked diligently for five years to save Franconia Notch for future generations to enjoy gathered by the shores of Profile Lake, beneath the Old Man. The words and events of the ceremony provide an opportunity to evaluate how the vision of the White Mountains, the Progressive conservation movement, and the interests of the grass roots organizations most involved with the Franconia Notch campaign influenced its structure and outcome.

At the dedication ceremony, the four themes of the campaign - conservation, patriotism, nostalgia, and regionalism - blended with the history of Franconia Notch to create a festive occasion that celebrated the efforts of those who had symbolically saved the Old Man of the Mountain and the Notch from destruction at the hands of the timber industry while at the same time recognizing the solemnity of the creation of a unique war memorial. Master of Ceremonies and State Forestry Commission Chairman William R.

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10 Ibid.
Brown declared the newly created Franconia Notch park unique because through it “New Hampshire here and now gives to all the world the best she has, in scenic beauty, typifying her spirit of hospitality, her offer of rest and inspiration to the weary, and the best use of God’s great outdoors...in [which] she pays a fitting tribute to her sons and daughters who have served the country with the steadfastness of these hills...”¹¹ The Franconia Notch Forest Reservation and Memorial Park, with the Old Man of the Mountain, “whose benign face has looked down upon every epoch of our history with inspiration and blessing,” would bring as much honor and prestige to New Hampshire as it would to the men and women it memorialized.

Former governor John Winant, under whose administration the initial bond issue passed the New Hampshire state legislature in 1925, recognized the deeper significance of the Franconia Notch war memorial. Winant believed that

[s]eldom has all that is lovely in nature and unselfish in the memory of man been so perfectly united as in the dedication of this Memorial Park...All who stop here will gaze upon the great stone face and enjoy the beauty of lake and fern and forest....to the occasional pilgrim who comes with knowledge of those things for which men cared so much in this new land of ours that they gave life itself so that others might enjoy them – may he find here a sense of permanency of all good things and go out with new strength and high courage...¹²

Winant saw in the beauty of Franconia Notch the opportunity to remind visitors of the sacrifices made by those who defended New Hampshire and the United States in times of war and perhaps to inspire emulation of their “patriotic service.”¹³


¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 3.
Allen Hollis, SPNHF president, who, along with Philip Ayres, was recognized for his "unremitting labor and tireless pursuance of negotiations" for Franconia Notch, "the very heart of New Hampshire," saw inspiration in the "unselfish patriotism" of the fifteen thousand people who donated anywhere from ten cents to $100,000 to preserve Franconia Notch.\footnote{Ibid, 7.} "[A]ctuated by loyalty, public spirit, generosity," these people were a credit to "our institutions and our times." Hollis also gave credit to the Old Man of the Mountain for giving those contributors, who were "his children," the opportunity "to prove that they are worthy sons and daughters of a noble sire."\footnote{Ibid.} The Old Man of the Mountain had been a well-chosen symbol of the campaign for more than simply historic reasons. It had provided inspiration through the threat to an historic landmark that was, in Hawthorne's "The Great Stone Face," the conscience of Franconia Notch.

Lula Morris, president of the NHFWC, reflected the public-spirited inspiration of which Hollis spoke when she recognized the importance of the work done by Alta McDuffee and the almost thirteen thousand women of the NHFWC. Morris declared that when she took credit for the invaluable work done by the NHFWC, she did so "humbly and reverently, grateful that [the] task was given them to do and that the women of New Hampshire did not fail their state."\footnote{Ibid, 8.} The NHFWC met and surpassed a daunting combination of high financial goals and short deadlines to fulfill its mission statement of granite-like principles and highest mountaintop aspirations. These ideals, and the NHFWC's commitment to the scenic beauty of New Hampshire, had saved the serenity

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Ibid, 7.}
\footnote{Ibid.}
\footnote{Ibid, 8.}
\end{footnotes}
of the Old Man of the Mountain and kept the mountain slopes of Franconia Notch covered with trees.

New Hampshire Governor Huntley N. Spaulding recognized the contributions of the state of New Hampshire to the campaign and gave credit to the “intelligent, patriotic and far-seeing public service” of the New Hampshire legislature which had “prolonged the life of the [1925 Franconia Notch] appropriation” in 1927, when the negotiations for the purchase of Franconia Notch still had not reached a satisfactory conclusion. In doing so, the state of New Hampshire sent a clear signal that Franconia Notch was too important to lose.

To Spaulding was given the honor of unveiling the bronze tablet attached to a granite boulder on the northern shore of Profile Lake that dedicated Franconia Notch as a “living, yet eternal, monument to the memory of those from New Hampshire who have served this state and nation in the wars in which our country has been engaged. As the Old Man of the Mountain faithfully guards this highland pass, so they have helped to guard, in America and around the world, the cause of Liberty.” The Old Man, which kept watch over Franconia Notch, had come to symbolize, as well as honor, New Hampshire and all those who had served the state in times of war.

It was Judge James W. Remick of Littleton, however, who would capture the essence of the singular nature of the forest reservation and war memorial, as he accepted it on behalf of those to whom it was dedicated. Remick observed that

\[\text{Ibid., 13.}\]

\[\text{Ibid. The text of the bronze tablet, which still stands near the shores of Profile Lake, is as follows: “State of New Hampshire Franconia Notch Forest Reservation and Memorial Park. Acquired with funds appropriated by the Legislature of 1925 and the donations of fifteen thousand contributors secured through the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. Dedicated as a Memorial to the Men and Women of New Hampshire who served the Nation in Times of War. September 1928.”}\]
As a general rule, memorials are made by man, occupy but little space, and are dedicated to some particular personage or group associated with some particular event. This memorial was made by God, comprises 6,000 acres, as beautiful and grand as the sun ever shone upon...

The sentiment for the beautiful and the spirit of gratitude expressed by this memorial assures us that New Hampshire, in spite of her material development, is still mindful of the things of the soul...

...As the days and years go by may the crystal purity of [Franconia Notch’s] lakes and streams, the rich verdure of its forests, and the noble majesty of its peaks, inspire us to higher thinking and noble living. 19

Remick echoed Winant’s hope that Franconia Notch would inspire others to lead a better life, while at the same time proving to those who doubted their intentions that the people of New Hampshire had not given in to crass commercial interests. The dedication was a statement they, as well as summer residents and other out-of-state contributors, cared enough about Franconia Notch to persist in negotiations and fundraising until the region could be purchased and protected.

More importantly, Remick’s remarks echoed the most appealing aspects of the Franconia Notch campaign. God had blessed New Hampshire, New England, and the United States with the unique natural beauties in Franconia Notch. In Nature was found the eternal renewal of life, and there could be no more appropriate way to honor those who gave their lives, in Huntley’s words, to the “cause of Liberty.” The “living, growing” war memorial commemorated Franconia Notch’s and the Old Man of the Mountain’s association with history, patriotism, and freedom. At the same time, it also affirmed the goals and values of the conservation movement as the state forest reservation would provide for the wise use of the trees in the region as well as for the preservation of the scenic beauty of Franconia Notch.

19 Ibid, 15-16.
The themes of patriotism and the celebration of nature were continued in the concert and play that followed the ceremony. A color guard and buglers from Riley V. Strong Post of the American Legion in Littleton, New Hampshire and the 172nd Field Artillery Band of Manchester, New Hampshire “added impressiveness to the ceremony...[and] entertained with martial music.”\textsuperscript{20} The students of the Kilburn School in Littleton performed an allegorical pageant “Woodland: A Tree Conservation Play” that depicted the saving of Franconia Notch, which was written by Frances Ann Johnson (later Hancock), who was a teacher at the school.\textsuperscript{21}

In the pageant, there were two groups of children, one group dressed in blue to “represent the clear waters of Franconia Notch lakes and streams” and the other group was dressed in green “to represent the forests that had been saved from the lumber companies.”\textsuperscript{22} The last event of the day was a performance of Johnson’s song “Old Man of the Mountains,” sung by the students of the Kilburn School. Hancock wrote later that

\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Littleton (New Hampshire) Courier}, 20 September 1928. Hancock, Frances Ann Johnson Papers, Box 2, folder 69. Baker Special Collections, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH. By February 6, the Riley V. Strong American Legion post had already donated $33.77 to the Franconia Notch campaign and was planning other fundraising events. \textit{Littleton (New Hampshire) Courier}, 6 February 1928. Box 9, folder 22. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{21} Hancock, \textit{Saving the Great Stone Face}, 80. Hancock, whose maiden name was Johnson, had also written a poem entitled “Franconia Notch” which had won the National Life Conservation Society’s $100 prize in its “America-Beautiful” contest. The award was given at the New York Federation of Women’s Club’s celebration of author and conservationist John Burrough’s birthday in April 1928. The poem was reprinted in the \textit{Littleton Courier} on January 18, 1928. When Ayres wrote to Johnson to ask for the use of the poem in the Franconia Notch campaign, Johnson was only too pleased to offer her poem to “help advance the further protection of New Hampshire Forests. See Johnson to Ayres, Littleton, NH, February 15, 1928. Box 9, folder 21. SPNHF Collection. Johnson, who married at age 61, devoted most of her life to teaching and writing about New Hampshire, particularly about the White Mountains. She wrote several items for the New Hampshire Parks and Recreation department, as well as the preface to the 1955 New Hampshire Parks and Recreation reprint of Hawthorne’s “The Great Stone Face.” Johnson’s song, “Old Man of the Mountains” was published in 1926. A draft of Johnson’s preface to “The Great Stone Face,” several of her works for the Park and Recreation Division, the “Old Man” song and “Woodland” can be found in the Frances Ann Johnson Hancock Papers in Baker Special Collections, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH.

\textsuperscript{22} Hancock, \textit{Saving the Great Stone Face}, 80.
she had been disappointed with the day’s weather, as low hanging clouds obscured most of the Old Man of the Mountain throughout the dedication ceremony. Just as her students sang the song’s refrain “Old Man of the mountains, Proud, noble, supreme” Hancock recalled that “[t]he wind swept aside the tumbling clouds, and the Old Man came into full, clear view. Then, as the song ended, clouds again veiled the Great Stone Face. It was as though he had recognized the tribute of little children.” Hancock’s pageant and song, sung by school children, brought to the dedication ceremony the final elements that contributed to the success of the Franconia Notch campaign, those of the enthusiasm of school children and the mystical symbolism of the Old Man of the Mountain.

All of the elements in the Franconia Notch triptych could be found in the dedication of the Franconia Notch Forest Reservation and War Memorial. The appreciation of Franconia Notch’s natural beauty evolved from the Romantic image of the White Mountains as a place of sublime beauty that had been created by the historian Jeremy Belknap and the painter Thomas Cole, and was refined through the writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Thomas Starr King. This image had been transformed by hotel and railroad owners into a gentler, more accessible vision of the White Mountains as a mountain oasis where it was possible to escape the chaos of city life. The Franconia Notch campaign was the result of the end of that era.

The goals and visions of the Franconia Notch campaign were the product of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries’ reaction to the threat of the timber industry in the White Mountains, which extracted from the region the very cool green forests that defined the Romantic image and the mountain oasis. This threat to the economically viable vision of White Mountains tourism and to the industries that flourished south of

23 Ibid. See also “Franconia Notch,” in People and Place, 15.
the region, combined with the enthusiasm of those who wanted to get back to nature, encouraged the growth of the White Mountains conservation movement as well as the increasingly nostalgic image of the rapidly vanishing era of the grand hotel.

The conservation movement, in turn, led to the creation of the SPNHF. It also inspired the members of the NHFWC to compare their organization's fine qualities to those of their native state's mountains and rivers and to choose for their symbol the Old Man of the Mountain, whose stern profile looked out over Franconia Notch. The continuous anthropomorphism of the Franconia Notch's granite profile worked to the advantage of the organizers of the Franconia Notch campaign. The perceived timber industry threat to the Notch created concern about the fate of the Old Man of the Mountain. The additional elements of urgency and protectiveness that resulted from this concern added to the mystical appeal of the Old Man as the sentinel of the Franconia Notch war memorial.

Three key issues and influences led to the success of the Franconia Notch campaign. First, the Society effectively combined the call for a memorial to New Hampshire's servicemen and women with the image of the White Mountains, and of the Old Man of the Mountain in particular. This created a campaign that combined conservation and patriotic values with the historic importance of a region of exceptional natural beauty. The Franconia Notch publicity campaign built upon the more than one hundred-year old tourism industry in the White Mountains region, relying on nostalgic recollections of summer visitors to encourage contributions to save the forested slopes of Franconia Notch. The focus on the Old Man of the Mountain, most notably through the
composite picture of January 1928, added to the sentimental appeal of the campaign through its emphasis on the threat to the Old Man’s “home.”

Second, the SPNHF, the NHFWC, and the state of New Hampshire worked together in a spirit of cooperative enterprise to acquire Franconia Notch through state funding, direct publicity, and fundraising. Where campaigns in other states managed statewide and national letter writing and petition activities that relied upon state legislative or congressional action to achieve their goals, the Franconia Notch campaign utilized the dedication of grass roots and recreational groups, business, civic organizations, and school children, towards its own effort to purchase Franconia Notch for the state of New Hampshire. The campaign eventually targeted regional and nation-wide audiences and, indeed, could not have succeeded without the donations from these sources. By involving the state government from the beginning of the campaign, the SPNHF, with its loyal ally the NHFWC, effectively utilized a network of support built up over almost thirty years of state conservation activities and created an organized, enthusiastic, and savvy marketing campaign that was effective within, and reached beyond, New Hampshire’s borders.

Lastly, Progressive Era conservation and reform agendas bound the SPNHF and the NHFWC together through many conservation campaigns, and the conservation movement informed the SPNHF’s argument for the creation of a state park in Franconia Notch. In order to achieve the goal of saving Franconia Notch, the SPNHF turned to the state government, the only organization powerful and wealthy enough to assure success in the conservation effort. It was a sense of social responsibility for the preservation and wise use of forests threatened by the irresponsible clear-cutting methods of the timber
industry that led Philip Ayres and the SPNHF to pressure the state to agree to the Franconia Notch purchase. Through the success of the Franconia Notch campaign, the SPNHF and the NHFWC lived up to the commitment within their organizations’ missions to preserve the scenic beauty and natural resources of New Hampshire.

This commitment continued in the years following the Franconia Notch campaign. The NHFWC maintained its support of the SPNHF’s conservation efforts. In 1932, the NHFWC again dedicated itself to helping the SPNHF fundraise the $7,000 needed to purchase 1,500 acres on Mount Kearsarge in central New Hampshire. The campaign was a success, in spite of the “economic situation” of the Great Depression, with the New Hampshire Federation donating over $3,700.24

Alta McDuffee did not lead this latest campaign, as in 1930 she joined the staff of the SPNHF as the Assistant to the Forester.25 While in this position, McDuffee worked closely with the Roadside Beautification program, which was a continuation of the Society’s Highway Shade Tree Committee. She was also present as the representative of the NHFWC at the October 3, 1947 ceremony when the SPNHF’s title to what had become the Flume Reservation was officially transferred to the state of New Hampshire.26

That same day saw the dedication of a bronze plaque on the north shore of Echo Lake in memory of Philip Ayres, who had died in November 1945. Ayres had remained as the SPNHF’s forester until 1935, when he retired to accolades from the forestry

24 Harriman, 113.

25 Ayres to Viola S. Smith, Boston, MA, June 6, 1930. Box 11, folder 16. SPNHF Collection.

community. During Ayres’ tenure as Forester, the SPNHF successfully lobbied for the creation of the White Mountain National Forest, which had reached seven million acres by 1935. He had organized or contributed to the acquisition by the state of four of the White Mountain notches, most notably Franconia Notch. By 1935 there were 125 roadside reservations, more than double the number in 1930, and the Society owned 2,800 acres in permanent forest reservations. It was an amazing list of achievements by someone for whom forestry had been a second career.

The later development of Franconia Notch under state ownership was geared towards the view to “use but not abuse” the region. The state wanted to allow for the “comfort of the myriads of nature lovers who will pour through this Notch” while at the same time offering “careful protection of its natural scenery.” During the winter of 1928 the state kept the road through Franconia Notch plowed. By 1932, there were ski trails on Cannon Mountain. In December 1934, more than two hundred people came to a meeting to object to the “increasing commercialization” of Franconia Notch by the state and the SPNHF. Their complaints centered on the expansion of camping and cabin facilities in Franconia Notch and how that would affect local cabin owners, rather than the Notch itself.

No one but the SPNHF, however, objected to the proposed construction of an aerial tramway to the top of Cannon Mountain in 1935. Two years later the SPNHF had

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27 Manchester Union, 12 March 1935. Box 2, folder 30b. SPNHF Collection.
29 Welch, Franconia Notch, 7.
30 Manchester Union, 4 December 1934. Box 9, folder 27. SPNHF Collection.
31 Ibid.
"withdrawn its objections" and the state authorized another bond issue for Franconia Notch, which funded the construction of the Cannon Mountain Aerial Tramway, which opened in 1938.32 Cannon Mountain became a ski area during the winter and a popular hiking and sightseeing attraction during the late spring, summer, and during the fall foliage season. Today, the Tramway's parking lot lies near where the Profile Hotel once stood.

Although the entire Franconia Notch region had officially become the property of the state of New Hampshire during the October 1947 ceremony, the Notch would be threatened once again a decade later. In 1956, the Interstate Highway Commission commissioned a study for the route Interstate 93 would take between Plymouth, New Hampshire and the town of Franconia. The beauty of Franconia Notch was again endangered, this time by the need for better and faster access to points in northern New Hampshire than U.S. Route 3 could provide. Over the next twenty years plans that included everything from a "superhighway" to a four lane divided highway and four-lane tunnel through Eagle Cliff were argued over and approved. Concerns about an increase in landslides in the Notch as well as the safety of the Old Man of the Mountain were raised, in light of the extensive changes that would need to occur to build an interstate highway through Franconia Notch.33

The SPNHF, recognizing the damage such a project would cause, gathered the support of the NHFWC, the Appalachian Mountain Club, the New Hampshire Audubon Society, and the New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs, and protested the various

32 Hamilton, 14.
33 Bruns, 82.
proposed interstate highway plans.\textsuperscript{34} Finally, in 1978, the state of New Hampshire abandoned the plans for a highway through Franconia Notch. Construction began that year instead on a two-lane limited access parkway, which was completed in 1986, over one hundred and eighty years after the first road through Franconia Notch was surveyed.\textsuperscript{35}

Since the nineteenth century, Franconia Notch has inspired a sense of wonder in its visitors and pride in the residents of New Hampshire. The late nineteenth and twentieth century threats to the region reinforced its importance to conservation groups, school children, and summer visitors. First a wilderness, then a luxurious summer resort, Franconia Notch finally became a multiple-use public park. Although nature clearly played and continues to play the major role in shaping the physical landscape of Franconia Notch, humans, too, have influenced that landscape, both literally and figuratively. Franconia Notch has been interpreted as a Romantic landscape, with sublime mountains, beautiful lakes, and picturesque views, as a mountain retreat, as a threatened wilderness, and as a memorial that inspired thoughts of freedom, patriotism, and gratitude. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Franconia Notch remains one of New Hampshire’s premier state parks. Its national significance was recognized by nineteenth century visitors and by the twentieth century National Park Service, with which Franconia Notch is a Registered Natural Landmark.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{34} Rosemary Conroy and Paul Doscher, “The Second Campaign to Save the Notch,” in \textit{People and Place}, 16-17. See also Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests “Franconia Notch – Park or Speedway?” 1968. Box 25, folder 5. SPNHF Collection.

\textsuperscript{35} “The Second Campaign to Save the Notch,” 17.

\textsuperscript{36} George Hamilton, “Introduction” as quoted in Kostecke, n.p.
These changes in the interpretation of Franconia Notch were the result of cultural, social, and economic influences both created and controlled by humans. Human actions and the desire for profit were behind the development of Franconia Notch as a resort as well as behind the threat to its natural beauty. On a cold September afternoon in 1928, humans stepped back and acknowledged Franconia Notch’s spiritual and natural values as they designated it to honor the memories of those who had given their lives to preserve the freedom of the United States. Since that day, the development of Franconia Notch has depended upon humans’ interpretations of how the region might best be used, whether for recreation or to improve the transportation system of northern New England.

The irony of Franconia Notch, like many of America’s natural wonders, is that it would probably have been altered beyond recognition long ago had it not been for aesthetic and economic considerations relating to the appropriate uses of the region as determined by humans. Humans have not only shaped some of the physical attributes of Franconia Notch but they have also controlled for two centuries its image as a Romantic wilderness as well as its symbolism as a war memorial and nature preserved. In the Franconia Notch campaign, the Old Man of the Mountain became the measure beside which the state of New Hampshire, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, the New Hampshire Federation of Women’s Clubs, and the thousands of others who contributed to the campaign placed their patriotism and love of nature. The success of the Franconia Notch campaign was a fitting tribute to the granite profile that Nathaniel Hawthorne personified as the conscience of those it overlooked.
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