



White Pine and Blue Water: A State of Maine Reader

Henry Beston

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Here is a volume that is true Maine--as eloquent of "downeast" as a bough of fir balsam, as the thunder of a wave of a rocky shore, as the lonely splendor of the northern lights in the sky behind Katahdin. In WHITE PINE AND BLUE WATER has been collected the best of three centuries of fact and fiction written about the wonderful country that is Maine.

The recorded history of this northern land starts in the troubled era when the French and English battled each other and the Indians for sovereignty, told here in the words of early travelers, missionaries, soldiers. Then came the bloody days of revolution when Benedict Arnold marched on Quebec. The volume records the strange tale of two forgotten heroines, Maine women who accompanied their husbands on the trek through the Maine wilderness.

As America grew, prosperity came to Maine through her ports. Her seafaring days are described by such authors as Rachael Field and Edwin Arlington Robinson, while 19th century men and women--Longfellow, Henry Thoreau, Harriet Beecher Stowe and James Russell Lowell among others--relate their own experiences in the Maine of that era. The inland Maine of tall trees and great rivers comes to life in the words of writers such as Stewart Holbrook and Ben Ames Williams.

In telling of the Maine of living memory Robert P. Tristram Coffin describes the ice trade on the Kennebec and Sarah Orne Jewett writes of an old seacoast mansion. F. Marion Crawford notes the entrance of the summer visitor at Bar Harbor in the eighteen nineties.

The farmlands and farmers of Maine command the attention of Elizabeth Coatsworth, Gladys Hastings Carroll and E. B. White, while Ruth Moore tells of Maine fishermen and Louise Dickinson Rich describes that imposing man, the Maine guide.

Henry Beston is a student of things American, a distinguished naturalist, and a Maine farmer. In preparing this volume he has been able to draw on a knowledge both of Maine literature and of the land itself. His wife is Elizabeth Coatsworth, the poet. Mr. Beston has written a number of books, including NORTHERN FARM, which state-of-Mainers put at the top of their own list.

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Cynthia Caron:

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