

9-1-1994

## An Eden Out of a Country Farm: Purity and Progress in the Landscapes of The Poland Spring Resort

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### Recommended Citation

Richards, David. "An Eden Out of a Country Farm: Purity and Progress in the Landscapes of The Poland Spring Resort." *Maine History* 34, 2 (1994): 136-153. <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistoryjournal/vol34/iss2/5>

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DAVID RICHARDS

AN EDEN OUT OF A COUNTRY FARM:  
PURITY AND PROGRESS IN THE LANDSCAPES  
OF THE POLAND SPRING RESORT

*For the Ricker Family, proprietors of the Poland Spring Hotel, Maine's landscape was significant because its richness translated into riches. Scenery conveyed powerful images and metaphors that appealed to urban elites. The various overlays of meaning – geological, aboriginal, agricultural, Arcadian, and industrial landscapes – suggest the evocative appeal of Maine's countryside for urban travelers escaping the perils and frustrations of urban, industrial life.*

Turn-of-the-century patrons of the Poland Spring Hotel enjoyed an ever-varying landscape as they made their way from the railroad station through the wooded countryside to the hilltop estate.<sup>1</sup> Upon debarkation from the train at Danville Junction, the passengers were taken on “an exhilarating ride over a picturesquely undulating country, past broad fields and rocky pastures, through pleasant woods and open spaces with fair views of distant hills and mountain tops.” As they approached their destination, they were treated to the sight of the hotel’s towers, “rising like castle turrets above the trees.” An entrance gate to the grounds had been constructed in 1894, and patrons entering this portal began the mile-long ascent to the edifice itself. The curving road passed through deep woods adjoining the famous mineral spring. Perhaps they saw Penobscot Indians encamped along the way, enhancing the air of rusticity. Whatever the preliminary attractions, the real reward lay at the top. Here, at the “mammoth hotel,” the pilgrim could gaze out



# Poland Spring

and marvel at nature's panorama. "Vast stretches of rich landscape" provided the visual feast for which the hotel was renowned.<sup>2</sup>

For the Ricker family, proprietors of the Poland Spring Hotel and the mineral water bottling company that added to its fame, the landscape was significant because its richness translated into riches. The Rickers knew that the descriptions of the natural and built surroundings published in guide books would appeal to readers in major eastern cities. Implicit in the landscape were powerful images and metaphors that had evocative appeal among urban elites. A century later the idealized resort landscape is significant because it illuminates values that urban travelers held dear. By examining the landscape that proprietors and patrons of the Poland Spring resort created, we gain insight into their culture.<sup>3</sup>

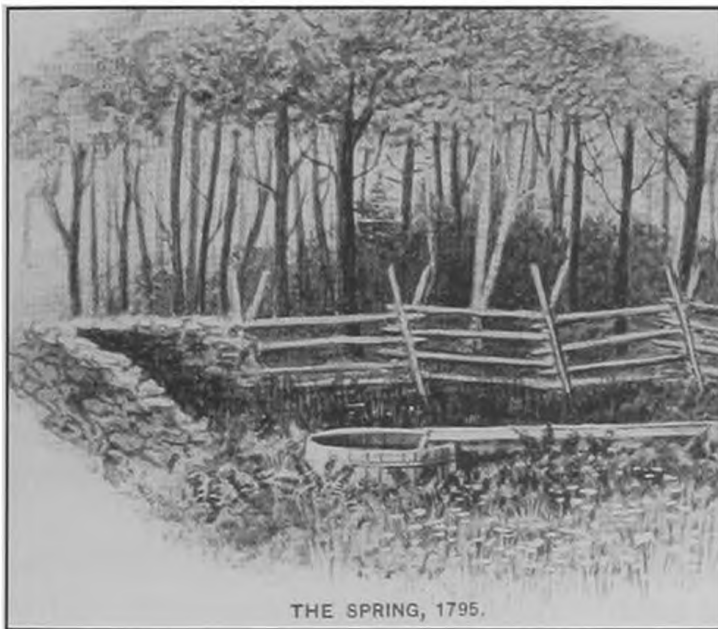
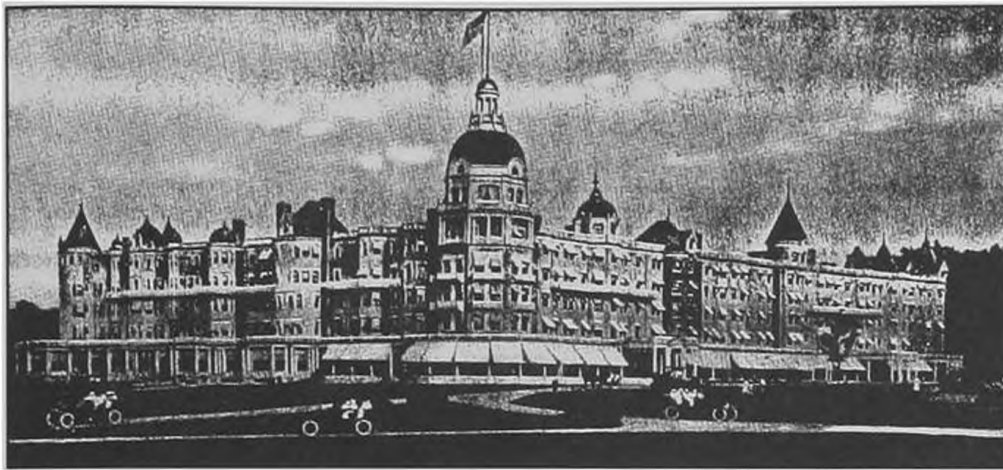
Progress was one of the cultural values most cherished by the predominantly wealthy, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant clientele of the resort. Yet the components of this ideal — industrialization, immigration, and urbanization — proved to be a mixed blessing for members of this elite group. On the one hand, progress offered the benefits of wealth, status, and free time that defined the leisure class. On the other, it created the problems of labor unrest, ethnic slums, and political corruption that upset the social order. These late-nineteenth-century perplexities threatened the social purity of this elite world. The leisure class longed for a refuge, and the proprietors of the Poland Spring resort gladly created one.

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According to an 1895 editorial published in the resort's weekly newspaper, the Hill-Top, urban America was populated by "toiling and seething masses," manipulated by "the crafty plans of the leading spirits of political movements" and rocked by "the great movements of warlike strife." Enjoining readers to forget their cares, the editorialist prescribed the rejuvenating tonics of pure water and pure air found at Poland Spring as an "antidote to the comings and goings of the busy world."<sup>4</sup> Each summer thousands of tourists heeded this call to the "wilds" of Maine. At Poland Spring they could participate in the idealization of Maine's social, geological, and aboriginal landscapes; they could help transform the virtues of the agricultural world into the pleasures of an Arcadian landscape; they could hold the industrial landscape at a safe distance. Central to the success of this complex, multilayered landscape was the desire to ameliorate the destabilizing tendencies of progress with the revitalizing ideal of purity.

**T**he geological landscape was the foundation for the Poland Spring resort — the source of Poland's pure spring water. According to local publishers, the waters boiled up to the surface from porphyritic veins intersecting the bedrock. W.H.H. Murray, a travel writer, explained that "[Nature] poured from deepest depths beyond the guess of man, a stream of water so pure that he who sees it remembers it ever after as a marvel." The proprietors of the resort, aware that the rock beneath them protected these marvelous waters, appreciated, preserved, and promoted the geological landscape. In addition, many champions of the resort attributed the healing power of the mineral water to the geology of the spring.<sup>5</sup>

The geological landscape also provided a forum for emphasizing the favorable characteristics of the region's populace. At the dedication of the resort's new library and art building in 1895, Maine Senator William P. Frye attributed in part the success of the Ricker brothers to their "hill-side, rocky farm in the grand old Pine Tree State." Frye pointed to the rock-bound coast, great forests, rushing rivers, and rugged terrain, which endowed the state with a "magnificent crop of men and women."<sup>6</sup>



The Poland Spring Hotel and the spring that helped spread its fame. The spring appeared often in the Rickers' many promotional guides.

*POLAND SPRING  
CENTENNIAL (1895)*

In a tribute to E.P. Ricker written three decades later, Lewiston journalist Arthur G. Staples again linked the virtues of the “stout old family” to the environment, which he described as “a hill-top on a farm of granitic substratum.” Staples suggested that this geological landscape endowed the Rickers with “their fibre and fullness of life.”<sup>7</sup>

The significance of Poland Spring’s geological landscape to late-nineteenth-century observers was threefold. First, it was a reassuring constant in an era of unsettling changes brought about by revolutionary technological innovations. The basic geological structure of the site was the same in 1890 as it had been eons ago. Second, the geology of the area was presumed

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to assure the timeless purity of the spring water. The Poole brothers, local historians, observed that the geological “formations through which the spring percolates” accounted for its “renowned freedom from organic matter, and its medicinal properties.”<sup>8</sup> Third, the geological features of Maine were believed to have contributed to the sturdy character of the state’s inhabitants. Immutability, purity, and Yankee virtues — all etched in the geological landscape — served as the bedrock upon which the Ricker family, targeting a specific wealthy urban clientele, was able to build a “ministry of pure water.”<sup>9</sup>

**T**he owners and promoters of the resort used the historical presence of the “red race” on the hilltop to symbolize a second idealized relationship between humans and nature. The Pooles made passing reference to the impact of the aboriginal inhabitants, mentioning the large number of arrowheads, tomahawks, and other relics found near the spring. Another promotional piece attached much greater significance to the area’s pure-blooded, “thoroughbred” Indians. In the estimation of this writer, the Indians “kept close to Nature, observed her closely and lived in harmony with her laws.” They understood “the healing qualities of pure air, pure water [and] pure sunshine.”<sup>10</sup>

Beginning in the 1890s and continuing into the 1920s the Rickers preserved a contrived and controlled semblance of the aboriginal landscape by allowing families of Penobscot Indians from Old Town to set up an encampment near the spring each summer. In an 1894 article, George H. Haynes observed that the sight “carries one back in imagination to the primitive days.” The Indians reminded Haynes of the rewards of a more natural relationship between humans and the landscape. Primitiveness had at least one instructive and redeeming feature in his opinion: The Indians appreciated that the spring was “nature’s reservoir” and accordingly treated it as a “sacred fount.”<sup>11</sup> Asked why he permitted the Indians on his property, Edward Ricker responded: “Well, they come here to sell their work and to a certain extent as long as they are quiet, they are an attraction.”<sup>12</sup> In truth, the



The Aboriginal Landscape. The Rickers used this scene in *Poland Spring Centennial* (1895) to illustrate the aboriginal history of the resort. This legacy symbolized an idealized relationship between humans and nature – represented here by the “sacred font” out of which the Indians drew healing waters.

Indians provided a much richer metaphor. An article appearing in 1895 offers insight into their meaning for elite urban travelers:

Newell Neptune sits in his tent, and makes the bows and arrows, or stands behind his display of baskets and tells you of his work.

Examine the neat construction, inhale the fragrance of sweet grasses, and imagine this stalwart descendant of the savage, drinking from the same spring his forefathers drank from, and we think all will admit it is an object lesson in the possibilities of human progress and development.<sup>13</sup>

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**A**n exemplar of craftsmanship and a lesson in progress, the Indian served the Poland Spring promoters as a reminder of America's passage from savagery to civilization.

Speeches presented at the town of Poland's centennial celebration in 1895 provide additional insight into the aboriginal landscape. Here, too, Native Americans affirmed the progress Poland Spring's white inhabitants believed they had made in civilizing the wilderness.<sup>14</sup> The first orator, Bert M. Fernald, portrayed the "primitive condition" of the town's early years: "The savages roamed with freedom over our hills and vales, feasted on the beasts of the forest, quaffed from the bubbling springs, sat by the noisy brook, and listened to its enchanting music."<sup>15</sup> Without regard for how the natives were displaced, Fernald proceeded to praise Poland's white forefathers for instituting a town whose "history is replete with the evidences of its progress."<sup>16</sup>

Native Americans occupied an ambiguous place on the Poland Spring cultural landscape. The purity and sensitivity to nature in Indian spirituality might be admirable, but the presence of the Indians at Poland Spring negated the value attached to progress. As a consequence, the Rickers confined them to a campground located near the spring. The encampment served as a reminder of a purer, yet less civilized past.

**T**he unambiguous heroes of Poland's centennial-day orations were the town's orators white settlers — exemplars of the agricultural landscape. J.C. Davis, a centennial orator, credited "the progress of the last hundred years" to the "heroic and stalwart men, of stout hearts and strong hands," who "cleared the land, erected buildings, stocked their farms, fenced their fields, [and] fed and clothed their large families of children." Davis reminded members of the audience that their ancestors achieved this without the benefit of steel plows and other modern equipment. He added: "They ploughed the ground, planted, tilled and harvested their crops, and threshed their grain, all by hand labor, and with implements of the rudest kind, many of which were made by themselves."<sup>17</sup>



Davis's vision of Poland's past was one in which hard work and yeoman ingenuity, not industrial machinery, transformed the aboriginal wilderness into a civilized agricultural landscape.

For many nineteenth-century Americans, the agricultural landscape had powerful cultural associations. It not only supplied the nation with food and clothing, but it was the basis for an ideology that attributed individual and national virtues to laboring in the earth. The agricultural landscape thus remained significant even though the economic importance of farming had diminished in northern New England communities such as Poland. In 1895 Senator Frye validated middle-class values by connecting them with the soil. Hard work, economy, thrift, temperance, patience, and faith, he thought, were "the legitimate fruit gathered from the rocky hill-side farms."<sup>18</sup> Well into the twentieth century, promoters of the Poland Spring resort continued to employ the rhetoric of agrarianism to praise Maine's citizens. In 1904, the *Hill-Top* lauded Grange leader Solon Chase as "a product of the soil, a typical Yankee, honest, energetic, and earnest."<sup>19</sup> Two decades later, Arthur Staples updated the agrarian ideology by recounting Edward Ricker's successful management of the Poland Spring resort: Ricker was likened to "some old-fashioned farmers' boys [who] were men at sixteen and seventeen, doing the day's work as men, worrying over the bread and butter that is to be earned by the sweat of the brow and paid for at the grocery store."<sup>20</sup>

The Rickers acknowledged the agricultural origins of the Poland Spring resort by preserving their family homestead, part of which included a working farm. As well as supplying fresh food for the hotel's culinary department, the farm provided visitors with an opportunity to experience the virtues of country life. A summer vacation at the hotel offered Byron P. Moulton, a resident of the Philadelphia suburb of Rosemont, the chance to try his hand at haying. The *Hill-Top* reported that Moulton was "exceedingly proud of his skill with the scythe and can cut a fine swath."<sup>21</sup>



The Agricultural Landscape. This illustration appeared in a 1917 Poland Spring catalog. The upper portion is from Delbert Dana Coombs's "Calling the Cows" (1907). The lower portion is a photograph of actual cows.

*Hiram Ricker and Sons, POLAND SPRING (1917).*

Local artist Delbert Dana Coombs contributed to the image of Poland Spring through his pictorial representations of the agricultural landscape.<sup>22</sup> Following the opening of the Maine State Building as an art gallery in 1895, Coombs regularly displayed his work at the resort. The Hill-Top praised Coombs as "an excellent painter of the pastoral," adding that "his cattle live and move in green pastures, so naturally does he treat his subjects."<sup>23</sup> The popular artist's "In Green Pastures" was the gallery's first sale.<sup>24</sup>

One of Coombs's works is "Calling the Cows," a four-foot-by-six-foot painting dating to 1907. The central elements of the scene are the cows that Coombs painted so prolifically and so prominently. In the background, the Poland Spring Hotel rises above the trees, across from the Rickers' dairy barn. Another feature of the painting — one easily lost amidst the herd of cattle — is a pair of farm laborers, who were apparently in charge of calling the cows home.

What accounts for the obscurity of the workers in Coombs's painting? After all, labor was a fundamental element of the

agricultural landscape. It was the hard physical labor of felling forests, building farms, and plowing fields that “civilized” Poland’s wilderness, and it was farm labor that built character in men like D.D. Coombs, Solon Chase, and Edward Ricker. Coombs’s decision to depreciate the workers reflected his understanding of how urban audiences viewed the landscape of Poland Spring. Notwithstanding farmer Moulton’s foray into the hay field, the closest most elite urban or suburban residents wanted to get to farm work was a picture on the wall. One *Hill-Top* editor summed up the appeal of country life to city folk: “Visitors may lap all the cream of country life and do none of the milking.”<sup>25</sup>

At the turn of the century the urban upper classes viewed rural settings such as those surrounding the Poland Spring resort as Arcadian, rather than agricultural. They valued the landscape for its spiritual qualities and recreational offerings, not for its work opportunities. Historian Peter Schmitt defined the Arcadian ideology as an “urban response [that] valued nature’s spiritual impact above its economic importance.”<sup>26</sup> In addition to its spiritual virtue, urban travelers attributed rejuvenating values of purity, simplicity, serenity, and strenuousness to the natural landscape. Unlike the agrarian ideology that rooted virtue in the cultivation of land, the Arcadian ideal rooted virtue in enjoyment.

Touting the spiritual dimension of the Arcadian landscape, the author of an article appearing in the first issue of the *Hill-Top* termed the spot a place of transformation and invited people to “drink Poland water” and “contemplate Heaven, descended on earth.” The piece went on to depict the hilltop as “a dome rimmed with lakes set in a valley so wide and far-reaching that its sides seem only the canvas for the sky to paint its picture on.”<sup>27</sup>

Two weeks later, yet another panegyric lavished praise upon the resort. The article endowed a journey to Poland Spring with the reverence generally accorded a religious pilgrimage. Here the seekers could replenish their spirit by imbibing the healthful waters. Here too, the weary professional could “lay off the impediments of daily toil” and “breathe long breaths of the pure, free air.” The author crafted a dreamscape of ponds and

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sylvan seclusion, assuring readers that their sojourn would be an exercise in spiritual renewal. The paean concluded by detailing the pleasures that awaited at what the author termed the “palace of ease and enjoyment”:

In the heat of the day the shady nooks on the veranda and the seats beneath the trees at the spring invite you...to forget the care and turmoil of the outside world, and to study the harmonies of nature in earth and sky, in hill-top and valley, in tree and flower, til in dreamy imagination life lapses into an idyll of summer.

Here was a pastoral image feeding the aesthetic yearning for nature and at the same time furnishing the luxuries of life.<sup>28</sup>

Another way people enjoyed the Arcadian landscape was through recreation. In contrast to earlier patterns in recreational travel focused on contemplation of the landscape, the 1890s resort clientele sought a more strenuous relationship to nature. Recognizing that they could promote the landscape as beneficial to physical as well as mental health, the Rickers invited visitors to sail and fish in the lakes, to walk the wooded paths, and to play tennis, croquet, or baseball on the lawns.<sup>29</sup> In 1896 the Rickers added golf to the list of available pastimes. Described by a promoter as “a healthful and delightful exercise,” the sport was recommended as another way to become oblivious to the cares of the world. In time, “Golf Is King at Poland Spring” became the popular cry, as tranquil rusticators were transformed into active recreationists.<sup>30</sup>

A fitting representation of this new recreational view of the Arcadian landscape is “At the Jump,” by Maine artist Scott Leighton.<sup>31</sup> Dating sometime between 1895 and 1905, the four-by-six-foot painting features a group of elegantly dressed riders on horseback, led by a pack of dogs in frenzied pursuit of some unseen quarry. As Leighton gazed across Middle Range Pond toward the hotel on the hilltop, he saw the Arcadian landscape of leisure, not the agricultural landscape of labor envisioned by his former student, D.D. Coombs. Leighton and other promoters of the resort were transforming pastures — the producers of



The Arcadian Landscape. N.W. Scott Leighton painted "At the Jump, Poland Springs [sic], Maine," sometime between 1895 and 1905.

*Antiques 115 (March 1979): 551, courtesy Kennedy Galleries.*

the virtuous sons and daughters of Maine — into recreational playgrounds more suited to the tastes of the urban leisure class.

**T**he industrial landscape was the most ambiguous layer. In the metaphorical language of historian Leo Marx, finding a place for the machine in the garden had long posed a challenge to a culture committed at least as intently to material progress as to pastoral perfection.<sup>32</sup> The Rickers and their patrons accepted a degree of industrial intrusion into the landscape surrounding Poland Spring, so long as the scale was small or the Rickers were the direct beneficiaries. Thus, the Hill-Top extolled the operation of a local sawmill between Middle and Upper Range ponds, only a few miles from the resort, because it was an isolated, eight-person operation.<sup>33</sup> The periodical also pointed with pride to the Poland Spring bottling house, a closer and larger enterprise where guests could see "the busy workmen preparing the water for shipment to all parts of the world."<sup>34</sup> Obviously, this industrial enterprise profited both the proprietors of Eden and the partakers of Eden's pure water.

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The machine with the greatest potential to pollute the Ricker's paradise was the locomotive. The delicate balance between the idyllic Arcadian landscape and the problematic industrial landscape almost slipped out of equilibrium in 1894, when the Portland & Rumford Falls Railroad began service over a branch line connecting Mechanic Falls and Auburn.<sup>35</sup> This new line alarmed the Rickers because the railroad company's Poland Spring Station was located only two miles from the resort. The first issue of the Hill-Top raised the concern that the Poland Spring Hotel might not survive its infancy unless "it escapes the onslaught of the excursionist and the railway."<sup>36</sup> The Rickers were worried about maintaining the social exclusivity of Eden — an exclusivity based on denying access to local residents and day-trippers.

The controversy between the proprietors of the resort and the proprietors of the Portland & Rumford Falls Railroad resulted in a hearing before the Court of Androscoggin County Commissioners. At issue was whether the east-west road running through the Rickers' property should be private or public. Claiming that it had always been a private way, the family had barred stages operated by the railroad from bringing passengers to the hotel. Hiram Ricker & Sons was challenged by the railroad and the H.K. Wampole Company, a rival hotel and spring-water enterprise located on land adjoining the resort. The petitioners requested that the county commissioners declare the road public on the basis of convenience and necessity as stipulated by state law.

Instead of acknowledging the dispute as a rivalry between business competitors trying to protect their respective economic interests, the lawyers for Ricker & Sons defended the family's position from the moral high ground of property rights. One of their lawyers' main strategies was to present evidence showing that opening the private way to the public would threaten the scenery of the Arcadian landscape. Under questioning by one of the Rickers' attorneys, witness Seth D. Wakefield of Lewiston agreed that such a move would "spoil the Poland Spring property." Joseph B. Sawyer of Pittsburgh, a visitor at the resort for



The Industrial Landscape. The illustration features (left to right) the spring house, the bottling works, and the warehouses. Carriages delivering patrons to the hotel followed a roadway through the middle of this complex.

*Postcard, "Spring House and Bottling Works, Poland Spring, Maine, U.S.A.," c. 1906, courtesy of the author.*

eight seasons, concurred that "any road that runs through there that is a public road would mar the beauty of it." Civil engineer Edward C. Jordan testified that a public road would be "out of harmony" with the views of the proprietor and "the tastes and desires of his guests." Edward Ricker himself stated that changing the status of the road "would destroy the laying out of our grounds and lawns." Asked whether the road would "destroy the beauty of the outlook," Ricker predictably responded: "Yes, Sir."<sup>37</sup>

Opponents of the petition also feared the effect of increased traffic on the resort's Arcadian solitude. Witnesses agreed that a public road would lead to a plague of "picnickers and excursionists." H.L. Pratt of Lewiston criticized the plan to make the road public, stating that it would "bring promiscuous parties there, interfering with the quiet and seclusion of the place and be obnoxious to the guests who go there for rest and quiet." The hotel physician of twenty years, Dr. Milton C. Wedgwood elaborated that "the majority of the people that come to Poland Spring are middle aged and there is hardly a floor in the house

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that doesn't have two or more sick people on it, and they have come there because it is retired and because they want quiet." James S. Sanborn, owner of a tea and coffee import company in Boston and a horse farm in Poland, warned that the resort would come to resemble Old Orchard, Revere, and Nantasket beaches if a class of people lacking wealth were permitted free access to the grounds.<sup>38</sup> Persuaded by this testimony, the county commissioners ruled in favor of Ricker & Sons.

**A** review of the lawsuit makes clear a final response to the industrial landscape: Poland Spring as a refuge for social privilege. Well-to-do white males who identified with Maine's Anglo-Saxon heritage exercised almost complete control over the landscape of the Poland Spring resort. One of the ways its promoters conveyed this exclusive status was through the imagery of a castle. George Haynes, for instance, portrayed the main structure as "a veritable castle on the hill," and the Reverend T.A. Dwyer described the hotel as "a majestic palace, as it were, crowning one of the hills like the princely home of some great potentate." Dwyer also celebrated the "ancient lineage" of the Ricker family which, he stated, had "its birth among the hills and plains of old Saxony, and was once claimed by many a noble knight." The aristocratic, almost regal landscape envisioned by people like the Reverend Dwyer was reserved for "men of influence and high social standing."<sup>39</sup>

To protect their refuge, the proprietors and patrons of the resort constructed boundaries. Certainly, the guarded gates constructed in 1894 had been intended to prevent excursionists, picnickers, and other violators of Poland Spring's pastoral purity from intruding upon the grounds. Less visible, but no less daunting, were the barriers of ethnicity which the Rickers purportedly maintained.<sup>40</sup>

The legal battle over the road running through the Poland Spring resort indicates the difficulty the Rickers faced at the turn of the century in trying to balance the values of purity and progress. It was much easier to harmonize the geological, aboriginal, agricultural, Arcadian, and industrial landscapes rhetorically than it was to do so in reality. In his remarks at





A powerful influence on  
Maine's new tourist landscape,  
Edward Payson Ricker defended  
Poland Spring from the  
onslaught of the Industrial  
Landscape. The hotel and its  
surroundings became a refuge  
for people of "influence and  
high social standing."  
POLAND CENTENNIAL (1895)

Poland's centennial celebration, Frank E. Hanscom was able to overlook conflicts resulting from changes in the landscape during the previous centuries. He commented: "So slowly and gradually has this transformation been wrought as to remain almost unnoticed by the quiet, industrious people of our little municipality." Yet the evolving layers – the bubbling fountain of the geological era, the gloomy wilderness of the aboriginal era, the cultivated fields of the agricultural era, the lavish creations of the Arcadian era, the shrieking locomotives of the industrial era – were making for a more varied landscape, and as such, one more difficult to reconcile with the ideal of purity.<sup>41</sup>

Looking back on the work of the Ricker family in 1923, Arthur Staples abbreviated the resort's history in a single harmonious phrase: "Out of a country farm they created a domain and an Eden."<sup>42</sup> The main lesson of this transformation is that, as Staples indicated, Eden was created, not discovered. It was created by people with distinct social backgrounds, economic interests, and aesthetic philosophies. Consequently the creators

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of this particular Eden held to a distinctive vision of the Poland Spring estate, a vision that defied the problems of modern progress by constructing a landscape of natural purity. Indeed, at one hilltop resort in Maine, the proprietors and patrons had the power to determine the way life should be.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>I am grateful to Professors Lucy Salyer and J. William Harris, and to fellow graduate students Elisabeth Nichols and Elizabeth DeWolfe, for commenting on this paper.

<sup>2</sup>*Poland Spring Centennial. A Souvenir* (South Poland, Maine: Hiram Ricker & Sons, 1895), p. 70.

<sup>3</sup>On the cultural significance of the landscape, see John R. Stilgoe, *Common Landscape of America, 1580 to 1845* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1982); D.W. Meinig, ed., *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979); Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982).

<sup>4</sup>Editorial, *Hill-Top* July 14, 1895.

<sup>5</sup>H.A. and G.W. Poole, *History of Poland, Embracing a Period of Over a Century* (Mechanic Falls, Maine: Poole Brothers, 1890), p. 31; W.H.H. Murray, "The Poland Spring Hotel," in *Poland Spring* (South Poland, Maine: Hiram Ricker & Sons, 1890), pp. 1-2.

<sup>6</sup>William P. Fryc, *Addresses at the Dedication of Maine State Building as a Library and Art Building at Poland Spring, Maine*, July 1, 1895 (Lewiston, Maine [Hiram Ricker & Sons], 1895), pp. 19-21.

<sup>7</sup>A[rthur] G. S[taples], *The Inner Man* (Lewiston, Maine, privately printed, 1923), p. 25.

<sup>8</sup>Poole and Poole, *History of Poland*, p. 31.

<sup>9</sup>"The Perfect Tribute," *Hill-Top*, July 28, 1917.

<sup>10</sup>*Poland Spring Water: Nature's Great Remedy and Its Marvelous Curative Properties* (South Poland, Maine: Hiram Ricker & Sons, 1890).

<sup>11</sup>Geo[rge] H. Haynes, "Poland Spring," *Hill-Top*, September 9, 1894.

<sup>12</sup>"Court of County Commissioners Hearing on Petition," transcript, September 12, 1894, p. 226, Alvan Bolster Ricker Memorial Library, Poland, Maine.

<sup>13</sup>"The Indians," *Hill-Top*, July 21, 1895.

<sup>14</sup>The close association between the town and the Rickers' image of the town is indicated by the leading roles several family members played in the centennial celebration. Alvan B. Ricker served on the planning committee that selected his younger brother, Hiram, as marshal of the centennial parade, his older brother, Edward, as one of the centennial speakers, and himself as organizer of the centennial dinner. Along with family friend Bert M. Fernald, Alvan and Hiram also coedited the book commemorating the day's events.

<sup>15</sup>Alvan B. Ricker, Bert M. Fernald, and Hiram W. Ricker, *Poland Centennial* (Poland: Ricker, Fernald & Ricker, 1896), pp. 5-6.

<sup>16</sup>For a discussion of the role that competing visions of the landscape played during the formative years of contact in the displacement of Native Americans by

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European Americans, see William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1983).

<sup>17</sup>Ricker, Fernald, and Ricker, *Poland Centennial*, p. 68.

<sup>18</sup>Frye, *Addresses*, p. 23.

<sup>19</sup>*Hill-Top*, July 10, 1904.

<sup>20</sup>Staples, *Inner Man*, p. 26.

<sup>21</sup>*Hill-Top*, August 26, 1894.

<sup>22</sup>For more on the role that artists played in the promotion of the nineteenth-century pastoral ideal, see Sarah Burns, *Pastoral Inventions: Rural Life in Nineteenth-Century American Art and Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989); and Kenneth John Myers, "Selling the Sublime: The Catskills and the Social Construction of Landscape Experience in the United States, 1776-1876," Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1990.

<sup>23</sup>"The Art Exhibition," *Hill-Top*, July 5, 1896.

<sup>24</sup>"The First Ones," *Hill-Top*, August 11, 1895.

<sup>25</sup>Editorial, *Hill-Top*, July 30, 1921.

<sup>26</sup>Peter J. Schmitt, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), p. xix.

<sup>27</sup>"Facts and Fancies at Poland Spring," *Hill-Top*, July 8, 1894.

<sup>28</sup>"A Summer Shrine," *Hill-Top*, July 22, 1894.

<sup>29</sup>Ricker, Fernald, and Ricker, *Poland Centennial*, p. 84.

<sup>30</sup>*Hill-Top*, July 14, 1895, July 10, 1926.

<sup>31</sup>Sherwood E. Bain, "N.W. Scott Leighton," *Antiques* 115 (March 1979): 544-51.

<sup>32</sup>Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

<sup>33</sup>"A Poland Saw Mill," *Hill-Top* August 9, 1896.

<sup>34</sup>"Poland Spring in the Past," *Hill-Top*, July 15, 1894.

<sup>35</sup>The concept of equilibrium between the natural and artificial landscape is discussed in Stilgoe, *Common Landscape*, pp. 202-08.

<sup>36</sup>"Facts and Fancies," *Hill-Top*, July 3, 1894.

<sup>37</sup>"Court of County Commissioners Hearing of Petition," pp. 113, 128, 145, 205.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 13, 110, 115, 118, 122-23.

<sup>39</sup>Haynes, "Poland Spring"; T.A. Dwyer, "Recollections of My First Visit to Poland Spring," *Hill-Top*, August 30, 1896.

<sup>40</sup>The most controversial example of exclusion from the Poland Spring resort is the alleged policy barring Jewish patrons. This issue would require an article unto itself to explain fully. For a sample of both sides of the debate over whether the Rickers excluded Jews, see Mel Robbins, *Poland Spring: An Informal History*, 5th ed. (Poland Spring: privately printed, 1992), p. 24; and "Ricker Raps 'History' of Spa," *Portland Press Herald*, July 27, 1975.

<sup>41</sup>Ricker, Fernald, and Ricker, *Poland Centennial*, p. 46.

<sup>42</sup>Staples, *Inner Man*, p. 28.

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