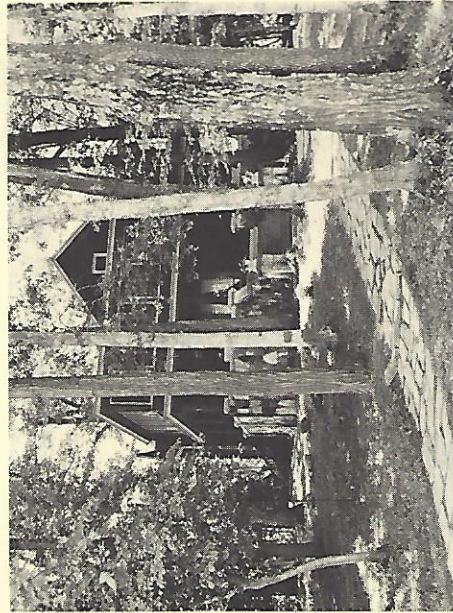


In 1920, on the advice of her doctor, Mrs. Porter moved to California. It was here she began writing occasional articles for *McCalls* and *Good House-keeping* magazines, as well as negotiating with Hollywood for the film rights to several of her books. In 1924, Gene Stratton Porter was killed in an auto accident in Bel Air.

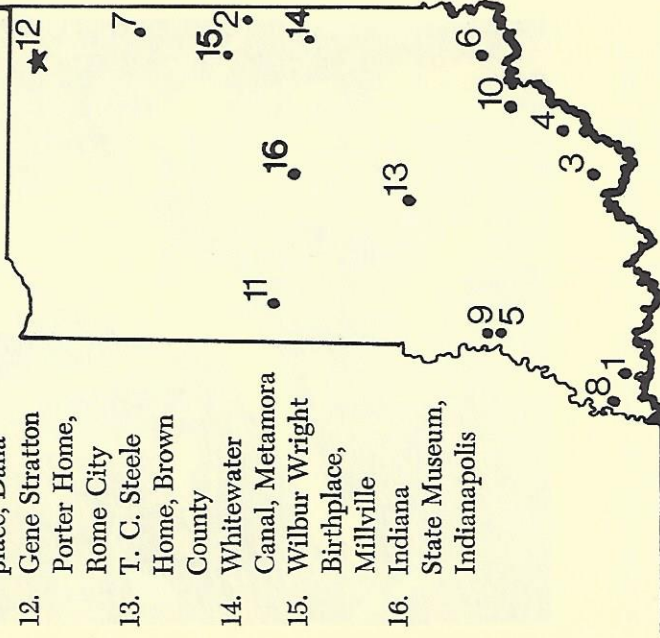
Not since the famous John Audubon has America known a naturalist such as Gene Stratton Porter. Her photographs and books document her intimate studies with nature, and her two Hoosier homes allow her readers to see for themselves the world which inspired her work.



The Gene Stratton Porter Memorial is open to the public year round, with a small admission charged. There is no admission to the grounds or picnic area. Phone (219) 854-3790.

Plan now to visit the following Indiana State Memorials:

1. Angel Mounds, Evansville
2. Levi Coffin Home, Fountain City
3. Corydon State Capital
4. Culbertson Mansion, New Albany
5. Indiana Territory, Vincennes
6. J.F.D. Lanier Home, Madison
7. Limberlost (G.S. Porter), Geneva
8. New Harmony
9. Old State Bank, Vincennes
10. Pigeon Roost, Scottsburg
11. Ernie Pyle Birthplace, Dana
12. Gene Stratton Porter Home, Rome City
13. T. C. Steele Home, Brown County
14. Whitewater Canal, Metamora
15. Wilbur Wright Birthplace, Millville
16. Indiana State Museum, Indianapolis



For further information write:

Division of Historic Preservation  
 Department of Natural Resources  
 202 North Alabama Street  
 Indianapolis, Indiana 46204  
 (317) 633-4948  
 (317) 232-1637 (after Sept. 4, 1979)

# GENE STRATTON PORTER



# INDIANA STATE MEMORIAL

Rome City

Administered by  
 Indiana Department of Natural Resources



Gene Stratton Porter, Indiana's most widely-read woman author, also was a sensitive student of nature and one of the world's first and best nature photographers. With a reported following of fifty million readers, Mrs. Porter authored twelve novels, seven nature books, three books of poetry, and one book for children. Her works have been translated into seven foreign languages as well as into braille. Seven of her novels also have been produced as motion pictures.

This outstanding authoress-naturalist, born on Hopewell Farm near Wabash, Indiana on August 17, 1863, gained her heightened awareness and sensitive appreciation of nature while she grew up in this rural Hoosier area. Under the careful guidance of her father, an ordained minister, young Gene learned to patiently approach wildlife, especially birds. Whenever she could find a brooding mother bird in a nest, Gene would sit quietly for hours to try to gain the bird's confidence. Going back daily to the same spot, Gene would advance ever closer, cautiously working toward the nest. Many times the mother would actually allow Gene to touch the nesting young.

Her natural affinity with nature became very evident in later years as Mrs. Porter distinguished herself, as a leading nature photographer. Her photographs of wildlife, especially birds, reveal a painstaking patience which allowed her to capture remarkable pictures.

Superbly capable of handling the clumsy photography equipment of her day, Mrs. Porter, seen usually in knee-length khaki skirt, high leather hiking boots, and khaki blouse, would trek deep into the woods to capture an interesting wildlife close-up. She achieved such a high degree of quality and crispness in her prints that a leading film company sent a representative to observe her methods of film development.

Mrs. Porter's illustrious writing talents came to light in 1903 with the publication of her novel, "Song of the Cardinal." Her national acclaim as a naturalist and nature lover began with the printing of her next book, "Freckles," in 1904.



Gene Stratton Porter did most of her writing while living in two Indiana homes which she designed. The first home she named "Limberlost Cabin," and it was here she wrote five novels. The cabin, located at Geneva, has been preserved as a state memorial.

In 1913, Mrs. Porter directed the construction of her family's second home. Located on 150 acres of woodland along Sylvan Lake near Rome City, the home was named "The Cabin in Wildflower

Woods." As the name implies, the area was planted with more than three thousand trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. With the vast undeveloped forest, as well as her personal formal gardens, this setting provided a rich source of material for Mrs. Porter's nature studies, writing, and photography. Many of her scenic paths, as well as her formal gardens, arbor and orchard, are still intact at the memorial, which encompasses thirteen of the property's original acreage.

The Cabin in Wildflower Woods is a beautiful, two-story log cabin structure with exterior walls of Wisconsin white cedar. Local wild cherry, hand-rubbed and waxed, was used to panel the entrance hall and dining room, and maple and hard pine trim the upper rooms. A fireplace on the lower level contains stones from every state in the continental United States.

Furnishings in the home are arranged and maintained to reflect, as authentically as possible, the lifestyle of the Porters. Many of their furnishings and personal memorabilia, including Mrs. Porter's library, are preserved here.

