

TITLE NAME SYNONOMOUS WITH SUCCESS

Gene Stratton Porter... Hoosier Works Respected In The Pa

By JOE GASKILL

ROME CITY—The story of nature-loving Gene Stratton Porter is one with a past, present and future as it pertains to her life, her writing and her Limberlost homes near here and at Geneva. The cabin in wildflower woods at nearly Sylvan Lake and her Limberlost Cabin at Geneva now are State Memorials, maintained by the Indiana Department of Conservation's division of state parks, lands and waters.

The great author and naturalist is very much a part of the history of both locales, bringing fame to the names of both memorials. From the time she wrote her first nature articles, in 1903, until her tragic death in a California automobile accident, the title name of Gene Stratton Porter was synonymous with success. She was a lady of nature in the truest sense and the twenty-three works which she wrote in her twenty-three years

of writing about the nature she loved have been respected in the past, treasured in the present and hallowed in the future.

Indiana's most widely-read woman writer was born Aug. 17, 1863, on "Hopewell" farm near Wabash. She grew to young womanhood in a country new and rich in interest for the nature lover and she had every encouragement from her parents.

Following marriage in 1886, the Porters lived for a while in Decatur, but after the birth of their daughter, Jeanette, the family moved to

Geneva, then surrounded by swamps and marshland and covered with a heavy growth of timber.

The area around Geneva had been named "Lumberlost" after an early surveyor and resident, "Lumber Jim" Corbus, who reportedly was lost in the quicksand of the swamps.

In 1895 when the Porter's new home was built, Mrs. Porter called it "Lumberlost Cabin." It was designed and landscaped by Mrs. Porter and it was here that she completed her first book to be published, "The Song of the Cardinal." There are 14 rooms in the two-story log cabin. The entrance hall, library and dining room are paneled in quarter-sawn oak wood. Rooms downstairs include a conservatory, library, dining room, music room, two bedrooms, kitchen

and bath. There are four bedrooms upstairs.

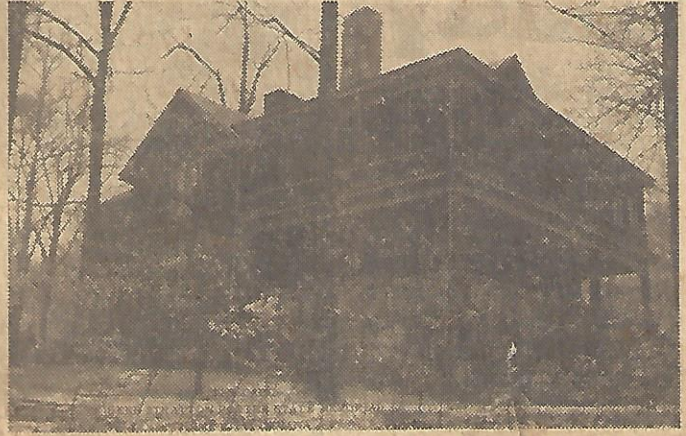
The Porter family remained in their Geneva home until 1913. By that time most of the timber had been cut away and the swamps had been drained, leaving the area lacking in atmosphere and setting for Mrs. Porter's books. Her search for a suitable, new location took her to Rome City and Sylvan Lake.

The primeval woods with endless varieties of wildflowers and wildlife offered Mrs. Porter endless material for the books she planned to write. She already was the author of ten books but new inspiration compelled her to write on.

The new cabin, also designed by Mrs. Porter, was constructed in one year from Wisconsin ce-



Living Room, 'Wildflower Woods'



The Cabin, Porter Memorial

ier Author And Naturalist; st, Treasured In The Present

dar logs and is a two-story, fourteen room "cabin." The entrance hall and dining room are paneled in wild cherry, hand-rubbed and waxed, while upstairs rooms are trimmed in maple and hard pine.

There are six rooms plus a bath and photographic darkroom downstairs and seven bedrooms, bath and a large cedar-lined closet upstairs. The front room fireplace, containing a number of miniature carved stone Aztec Indian heads brought from Mexico by Mr. Porter for his private collection, is a terrific show-piece.

Out-of-doors, a winding path leads back through an archway of overhanging trees and shrubs for more than a half-mile.

Mrs. Porter's writing was not confined to books but was also published in McCall's magazine, Good House-

keeping, the Ladies' Home Journal and others. Her works have been translated into seven different languages, as well as Braille.

Mrs. Porter highlighted her own stories with outstanding photographs. She took up photography as a hobby and became so interested in it that she began using her own photographs to illustrate her nature books.

In 1918, in her late fifties, Mrs. Porter was advised to leave her native Hoosierland because of her health. She made repeated trips to California as a visitor, but in 1923 left Indiana permanently and went to the West Coast, building a home on Catalina Island and was building another home when fatally injured as her auto was struck by a street car at an intersection in Los Angeles on Dec. 6, 1924.

Her Limberlost Cabin near here was the scene of the filming of several reels of motion pictures in connection with the adoption of the book "The Harvester" for the screen, "shot" in June, 1927. Her first work to be adapted for motion pictures was "Michael O'Halloran." Her "Freckles" and "The Girl of the Limberlost" perhaps have had the greatest readership of any of the books she wrote.

In 1929 the Limberlost Cabin was taken over by the Boy Scouts of the Anthony Wayne Area of Fort Wayne and for several years was the happy summer home of the Boy Scouts, camped of course near the Cabin.

Each year thousands of visi-



GENE STRATTON PORTER
Author, Naturalist

tors come to the Gene Stratton Porter State Memorials and leave her workrooms, amazed by the vigor and perseverance evinced by this truly extraordinary woman of nature.



ANIA DOREMANN
Pianist



The Study, Porter Memorial

AR—The Coffee Concerts by the Philharmonic String Quartet audiences. The Quartet members are on the permanent staff of the