

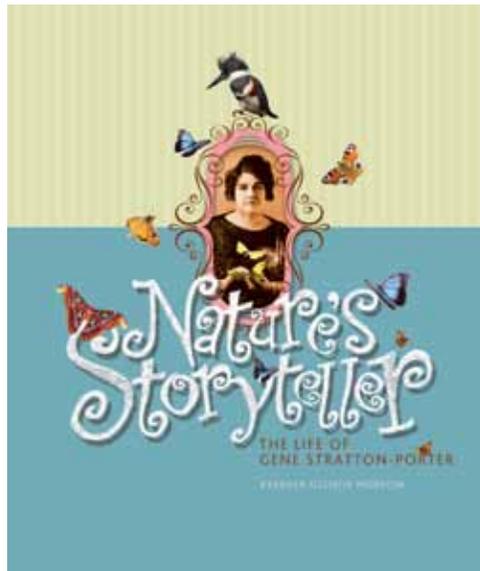
# TEACHER RESOURCE

by Meredith Jill Horn

for the Indiana Historical Society Press publication:

## *Nature's Storyteller* *The Life of Gene Stratton-Porter*

by Barbara Olenyik Morrow



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## Overview/Description

Hoosier author and naturalist Gene Stratton-Porter (1863–1924) was famous for her novels, nature essays and photography. Her novels portrayed virtuous, nature-loving characters overcoming obstacles through hard work and piety. Readers adored such works as *Freckles*, published in 1904, and *A Girl of the Limberlost*, published in 1909.

Stratton-Porter wrote her novels during significant periods of hardship in American history, such as the rapid urbanization of the Industrial Revolution and the trench warfare of World War I. The lighthearted nature of her books, with happy endings and descriptions of rural and natural Indiana, were adored by readers around the globe. From her time as a youth in rural Indiana to the height of her fame as an author and film maker in California, Stratton-Porter continually focused on appreciating and protecting natural surroundings.

In this lesson students will read Barbara Olenyik Morrow's *Nature's Storyteller: The Life of Gene Stratton-Porter* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 2010) and complete multidisciplinary activities in social studies, science, and literature.

## Grade Level

Elementary (grades 4 and 5), middle/intermediate (grades 6, 7, and 8), and high school

## Academic Standards for the Social Studies

- Indiana Standards
  - Grade 4, History, Standard 1, The Civil War Era and Later Development: 1850 to 1900 (4.1.9); Growth and Development: 1900 to 1950 (4.1.12); and Chronological Thinking, Historical Comprehension, Analysis and Interpretations, Research (4.1.15 and 4.1.18)
  - Grade 4, Economics, Standard 4 (4.4.7)
  - Grade 5, Economics, Standard 5 (5.4)

- Grade 6, History, Standard 1, Modern Era: 1700 to Present (6.1.15, 6.1.16, and 6.1.17) and Chronological Thinking, Historical Comprehension, Analysis and Interpretation, Research (6.1.18, 6.1.20, and 6.1.24)
- Grade 8, Economics, Standard 4 (8.4.3, 8.4.5, and 8.4.6)
- High School, U.S. History, Standard 1, Early National Development: 1775 to 1877 (USH 1.4); and Standard 3, Emergence of the Modern United States: 1897 to 1920 (USH 3.6 and 3.7)
- High School, Literature, Standard 3, Literary Analysis and Criticism of Fiction (Lit.3.2 and Lit.3.3)
- National Standards (National Council for Social Studies): I Culture; II Time, Continuity, and Change; V Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; VIII Science, Technology, and Society; and X Civic Ideals and Practices

## Social Studies/Historical Concepts

Women's suffrage, urbanization, industrialization, the environmental movement, agriculture, film, photography, the Progressive Era, and Indiana authors

## Learning/Instructional Objectives

Students will:

- Read *Nature's Storyteller: The Life of Gene Stratton-Porter* by Barbara Olenyik Morrow.
- Analyze and discuss Stratton-Porter's experiences as a child living in rural Indiana, a naturalist, an author, an explorer, and a film maker.
- Make a pinhole camera and draw conclusions about the value, quality, and uses of early forms of photography.
- Build bird feeders and observe the habits and movements of different types of birds.

- Organize the major events in Stratton-Porter's life into a time line.
- Pick a perspective and debate major themes in *Nature's Storyteller*.
- Compare and contrast Stratton-Porter's childhood in Indiana with their own childhoods.
- Make their own journal entries about a visit to a community nature site.
- Create a biohistorical poem about Stratton-Porter.
- Read one of Stratton-Porter's works and have an in-class discussion of its historical context.

### Time Required

Multiple class periods depending on the classroom needs and the activities selected.

### Materials Required

- For all activities:
  - Copies of *Nature's Storyteller: The Life of Gene Stratton-Porter* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society Press, 2010)
- Refer to a specific activity for a list of required materials.

### Background/Historical Context

Gene Stratton-Porter was born in 1863 during the American Civil War on a small farm near Wabash, Indiana. During the late nineteenth century, the United States experienced great change and Wabash was no exception. As the first electrically lighted city in the nation, Wabash was growing and becoming more urbanized.

The Industrial Revolution in the United States and across the world brought with it many social and political changes, such as, industrialization, overcrowded cities, longer workdays, poor public sanitation, child labor, and labor unions. Stratton-Porter's books represented something much different to the mass market. Her books portrayed wild landscapes, open country, wildlife, and

characters whose hard work and determination were rewarded with happy endings.

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Stratton-Porter was not the only American concerned with conserving the natural heritage of America. When Stratton-Porter was only eight years old, President Ulysses S. Grant signed a bill creating America's first national park, Yellowstone. In many states across the nation, residents were becoming more concerned about conserving nature for the enjoyment of future generations.

By 1900 Indiana was beginning to look much different than it once had. Urban centers such as Indianapolis, Fort Wayne, and even Wabash were becoming more commercialized and industries such as oil and gas drilling, logging, and industrialized farming changed the landscape forever.

In addition to environmental changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Indiana experienced a revitalization of the arts. Stratton-Porter was only one among many noteworthy Indiana authors of this time period. Authors such as Booth Tarkington, George Ade, Meredith Nicholson, and James Whitcomb Riley represented a growing number of Hoosier authors of distinguished national reputation.

During Stratton-Porter's lifetime women also experienced many changes, not only in their standard of living, but in their rights as American citizens. Though Stratton-Porter would not be considered a strong activist for women's suffrage, her early indifference to maintaining traditional female values of dress or behavior, and her later activism as a naturalist, exemplify the growing role of women in both the social and political spheres.

### Teacher's Instructional Plan

#### Introduction

Introduce each activity with background information and a discussion about Stratton-Porter and what it meant to be a naturalist in the late

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Discuss Stratton-Porter's role in women's history, American literature, the environmental movement, and turn-of-the-century Indiana history. Explain the diverse natural makeup of Indiana in the late nineteenth century and ask students how that has changed today. What made people want to preserve nature and what made them want to destroy it? How does your community celebrate its natural heritage?

Next, discuss the environmental movement today and how our world is changing. What do you think was the message that Stratton-Porter would want readers to take away from her books? How can you get excited about your community's natural heritage?

## ACTIVITY 1: Make a Pinhole Camera

This activity will introduce students to a basic property of light and how it is used in everyday life. Using the pinhole camera, students will be able to understand how the camera image is inverted because light travels (with only a few exceptions) in straight lines.

The instructions for making the camera were adapted from the Columbia Education Center Web site, Lesson Plans and Web Activities, "Making a Pinhole Camera" by Patricia Willett, Designs for Learning Differences, Albuquerque, New Mexico, at <http://www.col-ed.org/cur/sci/sci01.txt> (accessed November 15, 2010).

### Time Required

One forty-five-minute class period

### Materials Required

- Salt or oatmeal box, one for each group
- Shoe box, one for each group
- Wax paper
- Rubber band, one for each box
- Pin
- Sticky tape
- Scissors
- Sheets of black paper and white paper

### Procedure

- Divide the students into smaller groups and explain that each group will make a pinhole camera and observe what happens as they look at objects.
- To make the camera:
  - Using a pin, punch a small hole in the center of the salt or oatmeal box's bottom.
  - Remove the box top, put wax paper over the open end, and use a rubber band to secure it in place.
- Have students point the camera at brightly lit objects and explain what they see.
  - The observer's eyes will need to be about twelve inches from the wax-paper screen to see a sharp image.
  - If the camera is used in a lighted place, the observer's eyes must be shielded from light.
    - To make a shield, roll a sheet of black paper into a large tube around the end of the box with the wax-paper screen and secure it with sticky tape.
    - Look into the paper shield's open end to see the images on the screen.
- Have students explain what they see on the camera's wax-paper screen.
- Have students explain how they moved the camera to:
  - Make the image move right, left, up, and down.
  - Make the image appear smaller and larger.
- Have students describe what happens when the camera is still and the image moves.

- Ask students how they would make a brighter, sharper image appear on the screen.
- Have student try these additional activities and explain what happens:
  - Change the pinhole size.
  - Line the inside of the box with black paper.
  - Line the inside of the box with white paper.
  - Use a longer or larger box such as a shoe box.
  - Use paper other than wax paper for the screen.
- To conclude the activity, discuss what challenges Stratton-Porter may have had taking photographs in nature and how she might have overcome these challenges.

## ACTIVITY 2: Make a Bird Feeder

This activity will allow students to use their own creativity to build bird feeders and observe the habits and movements of different types of birds. Many questions about birds may be explored, but students should be able to draw conclusions about the location of feeder sites and the time of day the birds feed. Students will make simple bird feeders, describe the feeding behavior of birds, and keep track of their observations using graphs.

The instructions for making the bird feeder were adapted from the Columbia Education Center Web site, Lesson Plans and Web Activities, “For the Birds” by Maura O’Conner, Living Lightly in the City, and submitted to the CEC Web site by Julie Yamamoto, West Canyon Elementary, Caldwell, Idaho, at <http://www.col-ed.org/cur/sci/sci200.txt> (accessed November 15, 2010).

### Time Required

One forty-five-minute class period to make and set up the bird feeders; up to two weeks to collect observation data

## Materials Required

- Pine cones
- Cord or string
- Wax paper
- Bird seed
- Egg cartons
- Sand
- Block of wood
- Hammer and 2- to 3-inch nails
- Milk or juice jug  
(DO NOT USE detergent or bleach bottles)
- Peanut butter

## Procedure

For younger students:

- Select a simple design for the bird feeder and have students make one from the materials provided.
- Have students hang their feeders on trees that can be observed from the classroom or another nearby location.
- Encourage students to check the feeders at least twice a day.
- Have students describe what they see:
  - the color of birds
  - the number of birds feeding at one time
  - interactions between the birds
  - interactions between the birds and other animals

For older students:

- Let the students use their own creativity to design and make their bird feeders.
- Set up a class experiment to determine the best site for a feeder.

- Decide on three ten-minute periods throughout the day when students will observe and record the number of times birds feed at each site.
- Make bar graphs to record the results of their observations.
- To conclude the activity, discuss what challenges Stratton-Porter might have encountered in observing nature and birds in particular. How did she overcome these challenges?

## ACTIVITY 3

### Time Line

Students will organize events of Stratton-Porter's life into a time line using images from the Indiana Historical Society's Digital Images Collection. This activity is to be completed after reading the book.

Students will organize ten events in Stratton-Porter's life into chronological order based on Morrow's story.

### Time Required

One forty-five-minute class period

### Materials Required

- Print images from the Indiana Historical Society's Digital Images Collection (each one measuring 8 1/2 in. by 11 inches) representing events in Stratton-Porter's life. The images are listed below and may be found in the Digital Images Collection on the IHS Web site at <http://www.indianahistory.org>. Copies of the images are provided on pages twelve through twenty-one of this lesson.
  - "Farmhouse, S. P. Scherer's Farm (Bass #C-683)" (Item ID: folder499\_doc8.jpg)
  - "Wabash Street Looking North, Wabash, Indiana"(Item ID: P0391\_BOX13\_WABASH\_001)
  - "World's Columbian Exposition Ticket" (Item ID: P0406\_320 Front)
  - "Maps of Decatur and Geneva in Adams County" (Item ID: G1400\_I55\_1876\_69)
  - "Oil Well, Geneva, Indiana" (Item ID: P0411\_BOX1\_FOLDER1)
  - "Front and West of Limberlost Cabin, Home of Gene Stratton-Porter" (Item ID: P031\_BOX8\_GENEVA)
  - "Girl with a camera" (Item ID: P0281\_2\_1\_27)
  - "Freckles' Title Page" (Item ID: PS3531\_07345\_F7\_1904)
  - "Gene Stratton Porter's Home at Wildflower Woods near Rome City, Indiana" (Item ID: P0408\_BOX20\_ROME\_CITY)
  - "Hotel Green, from City Park, Pasadena, California " (Item ID: M0660\_Christmas Greetings\_Box26\_007A)
- Fifteen cardboard pieces, each one measuring eight by eight inches square.

### Procedure

- Make ten square cardboard pieces and place them on the floor in a row. Place the five extra cutouts in a row in front of the original ten to allow extra spaces for students to move within the pattern.
- Divide the class into groups of ten. Each student in the group of ten gets to hold a printed image from the list provided.
- The ten students must arrange themselves in chronological order of Stratton-Porter's life without verbal communication. Students may stand on the extra cutouts to help facilitate movement into the correct chronological order in the time line.

## ACTIVITY 4: Historical Debate

Students will pick a perspective and the class will debate major themes (naturalist, capitalist, and suffragette) from *Nature's Storyteller*. This activity is to be completed after reading the book.

## Time Required

One or two forty-five-minute class periods

## Materials Required

- “Debate Notes” handout
- Pens or pencils

## Procedure

- Divide the class into groups—those who will argue in favor of the theme or idea and those who will argue against it.
- Assign a theme (naturalist, capitalist, or suffragette) to the student groups and describe the main idea or point of view for the debate.
- Provide each student with a “Debate Notes” handout provided on page twenty-two of this lesson, so they can graphically organize their arguments.
- Explain the debate rules:
  - Each side will be given time to determine what they want to say, in what order they want to present their points, and who will make the presentation.
    - The instructor should determine the length of time needed to prepare for the debate.
  - Make sure students understand:
    - The debate is limited to the theme assigned to the team.
    - They may not use personalities of those involved either negatively or positively.
    - Time limits are set by the instructor.
    - The use of a rebuttal in the debate.
    - Criteria that the class will use to determine which group made the most compelling argument.
- Allow teams time to prepare for the debate.

- Conduct the debates based on the rules established by the instructor.
- During each debate, have students record their thoughts and reactions to the points made by each group.
- At the conclusion of the debate, discuss the key arguments each team made during the debate. Which team was most persuasive? Why?

## ACTIVITY 5: Journals

Students will make their own journal entries about a visit to a nature site in their community. As an alternate, use “The Loblolly Nature Trail,” Ball State University’s Web site at [http://www.bsu.edu/web/landandlit/special\\_projects/loblolly/draft/stops/stop01.htm](http://www.bsu.edu/web/landandlit/special_projects/loblolly/draft/stops/stop01.htm) (accessed November 15, 2010) to complete this activity.

## Time Required

Multiple class periods depending on the length of the field trip

## Materials Required

- Blank paper or artist sketchbooks
- Pencils, pens, and colored markers
- Optional: Internet access if using “The Loblolly Nature Trail” or other Web site in lieu of an outdoor field trip.

## Procedure

- Discuss with students prior to visiting the nature site what they should be observing.
- Remind students of the topics Stratton-Porter emphasized in her novels:
  - Wildlife present
  - Natural habits of animals
  - Locations of the animals’ homes
  - Colors that nature has supplied
  - Different types of plants

- Pay close attention to the birds. (They were one of Stratton-Porter's favorite animals to observe.)
- Take a field trip to a local nature site, or use "The Loblolly Nature Trail," Ball State University's Web site at [http://www.bsu.edu/web/landandlit/special\\_projects/loblolly/draft/stops/stop01.htm](http://www.bsu.edu/web/landandlit/special_projects/loblolly/draft/stops/stop01.htm) (accessed November 15, 2010).
- At the start of the "field trip," distribute paper, pens, pencils, and colored markers to students and ask them to record their observations based on the class discussion. Encourage students to include written text and sketches in their journal entries.
- To conclude the activity, have students share their observations, journal entries, and artwork with the class.

## ACTIVITY 6: Compare/Contrast

Students will read *Nature's Storyteller* and then compare and contrast Stratton-Porter's life as a child in Indiana to their own lives.

### Time Required

One forty-five-minute class period

### Materials Required

- "Gene Stratton-Porter's Childhood" handout
- Pens and pencils
- Whiteboard and markers

### Procedure

- Provide each student with a "Gene Stratton-Porter's Childhood" handout, found on page twenty-three of this lesson.
- Ask students to complete the handout on their own by comparing and contrasting Stratton-Porter's childhood to their own.
- To conclude the activity, meet as a group to discuss student responses.

- On the whiteboard, make a list of the similarities and differences that students suggest during the class discussion.

## ACTIVITY 7: Biohistorical Poem

After students have read *Nature's Storyteller*, they will create a biohistorical poem about Stratton-Porter. If time permits, have students read their poems aloud to the class.

### Time Required

One forty-five-minute class period

### Materials Required

- *Nature's Storyteller: The Life of Gene Stratton-Porter* by Barbara Olenyik Morrow
- "Biohistorical Poem" handout
- Pencils or pens

### Procedure

- Distribute a "Biohistorical Poem" handout provided on page twenty-four of this lesson to each student.
- Ask students to create a poem about Stratton-Porter by using words and phrases found in *Nature's Storyteller* to complete each line in the handout.
  - Title: First and last name of the historical figure
  - Line 1: First name
  - Line 2: Four traits that describe this person
  - Line 3: Brother/sister/daughter/son of . . .
  - Line 4: Lover of . . . (names of three ideas)
  - Line 5: Who feels . . . (three feelings)
  - Line 6: Who fears . . . (three items)
  - Line 7: Who would like to see . . . (three items)
  - Line 8: Resident of . . . (city and state)
  - Line 9: Last name

- Example: Gene Stratton-Porter
  - Gene
  - Photographer, naturalist, author, and Hoosier
  - Daughter of Mary and Mark Stratton
  - Lover of birds, butterflies, and bats
  - Who feels curious, determined, and adventurous
  - Who fears boredom, destruction, and war
  - Who would like to see parks, rain forests, and wildflowers
  - Resident of Rome City, Indiana
  - Stratton-Porter

## ACTIVITY 8: Analyzing Literature

Students will read one of Stratton-Porter's novels, poems, essays, or nature books and participate in class discussions of its historical context. Following the reading assignment, students will evaluate the book's historical perspective and consider the time period in which it was written.

### Time Required

Multiple class periods; time outside of class may be needed to complete the reading assignment

### Materials Required

Copies of (or excerpts from) one of Stratton-Porter novels, poems, essays, or nature books:

- Novels
  - *The Song of the Cardinal* (1903)
  - *Freckles* (1904)
  - *At the Foot of the Rainbow* (1907)
  - *A Girl of the Limberlost* (1909)
  - *The Harvester* (1911)
  - *Laddie* (1913)
- *Michael O'Halloran* (1915)
- *Friends in Feathers* (1917)
- *A Daughter of the Land* (1918)
- *Her Father's Daughter* (1921)
- *The White Flag* (1923)
- *The Keeper of the Bees* (1925)
- *The Magic Garden* (1927)
- Nature Books
  - *What I have Done with Birds* (1907)
  - *Birds of the Bible* (1909)
  - *Music of the Wild* (1910)
  - *After the Flood* (1912)
  - *Moths of the Limberlost* (1912)
  - *Birds of the Limberlost* (1914)
  - *Homing with the Birds* (1919)
  - *Wings* (1923)
  - *Tales You Won't Believe* (1925)
- Poetry and Essays
  - *Morning Face* (1916)
  - *The Fire Bird* (1922)
  - *Jesus of the Emerald* (1923)
  - *Let Us Highly Resolve* (1927)
- To locate Stratton-Porter works:
  - Check the resources of a local library
  - Contact the Gene Stratton Porter Historic Site in Rome City, Indiana, at <http://www.genestratton-porter.com/> (accessed November 15, 2010).
  - Contact the Gene Stratton-Porter and Her Limberlost Swamp in Geneva, Indiana, at <http://www.genestrattonporter.net/> (accessed November 15, 2010).

## Procedure

- Have students read one of Stratton-Porter's works selected by the instructor.
- Have students consider how environmental protection and conservation were revolutionary concepts for her time.
- Stress the point that Stratton-Porter's environmental awareness was unique for the time period (late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries).
- Caution the students to avoid judgment based on their own personal views, bias, and present-day values as they complete the reading assignment.
- Finally, discuss major differences between conservation efforts in Stratton-Porter's lifetime and the conservation efforts of today:
  - Compare how many national parks existed during her lifetime and the present day.
  - Consider how many jobs were available to conservationists during her lifetime.
  - Compare concerns of the lumber and oil industries during Stratton-Porter's lifetime and today.
  - Discuss issues related to public landfills. Where did the trash go when Stratton-Porter was alive?

## Enrichment Activities

Invite a naturalist or nature photographer to class to discuss their work observing and photographing animals in their natural habitats.

Invite a representative from a local environmental group to come to class and discuss current environmental issues.

## Assessment

### Preactivity Assessment (prior to beginning the lesson):

- Assess student knowledge of the historical themes with a brief quiz using vocabulary from the text.
- Have students explain what they know and would like to know about the key historical themes covered in the *Nature's Storyteller*.

### Midpoint Progress Assessment (at the halfway point):

- Assess student progress with a quiz covering key historical themes using vocabulary from the text. Compare these results to the preactivity assessment results.

### Postactivity Assessments (at the conclusion of the lesson):

- Repeat the midpoint assessment varying the vocabulary and incorporating content from the text, in-class discussions, and activities selected from this lesson.

## Publications

Bockstahler, Oscar L. "Contributions to American Literature by Hoosiers of German Ancestry." *Indiana Magazine of History* 38 (September 1942): 231–50.

Boomhower, Ray E. "The Gene Stratton-Porter Sites." *Traces of Indiana and Midwestern History* 12 (Winter 2000): 29–31.

Gabin, Nancy. "Fallow Yet Fertile: The Field of Indiana Women's History." *Indiana Magazine of History* 96 (September, 2000): 213–49.

Jackson, Marion T., ed. *The Natural Heritage of Indiana*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.

Long, Judith Reick. *Gene Stratton-Porter: Novelist and Naturalist*. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, 1990.

Weber, Ronald. *The Midwestern Ascendancy in American Writing*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992.

## Web sites

### General

Columbia Education Center Web site, Lesson Plans and Web Activities. "Making A Pinhole Camera" by Patricia Willett, Designs for Learning Differences, Albuquerque, New Mexico. <http://www.col-ed.org/cur/sci/sci01.txt> (accessed November 15, 2010).

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University of Illinois. Urban Programs Resource Network. "A Walk in the Woods." <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/woods/> (accessed November 15, 2010).

### Primary Sources: Agriculture

Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. "Trends in American Farming." [http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module\\_pop\\_resource.php?module\\_id=342&resource\\_id=685](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module_pop_resource.php?module_id=342&resource_id=685) (accessed November 15, 2010).

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Library of Congress. American Memory. "Report of the National Conservation Commission." <http://memory.loc.gov/learn//features/timeline/progress/conserves/report.html> (accessed November 15, 2010).

Library of Congress. American Memory. "The Necessity of Conserving Our Resources." <http://memory.loc.gov/learn//features/timeline/progress/conserves/teal.html> (accessed November 15, 2010).

### Primary Sources: Industrialization

Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. "Responses to Industrialism." [http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module\\_pop\\_resource.php?moduleid=341&resource\\_id=678](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module_pop_resource.php?moduleid=341&resource_id=678) (accessed November 15, 2010).

### Primary Sources: Urbanization

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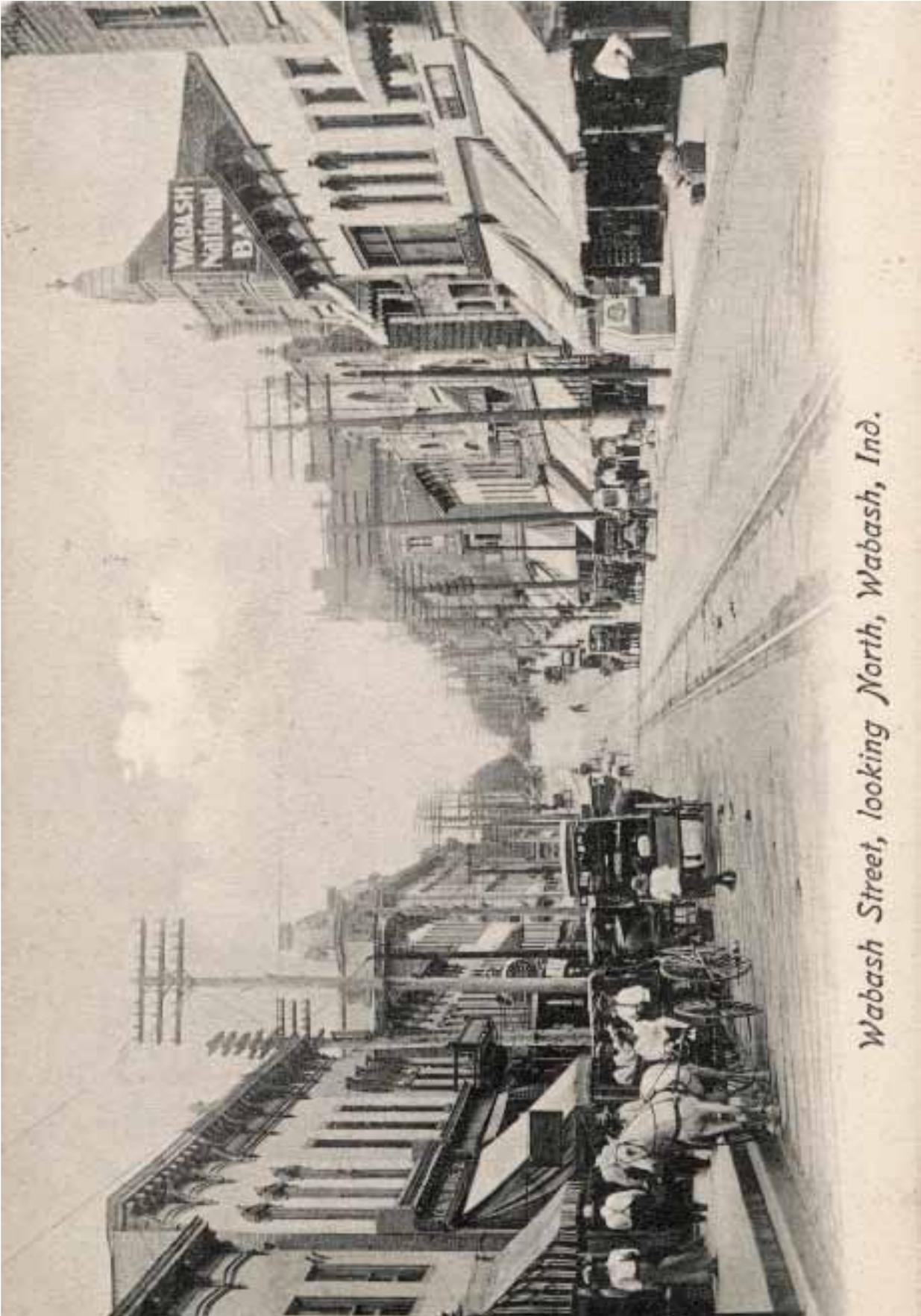
## Primary Sources: Women's Rights

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[http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module\\_pop\\_resource.php?module\\_id=341&resource\\_id=676](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module_pop_resource.php?module_id=341&resource_id=676) and [http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module\\_pop\\_resource.php?module\\_id=343&resource\\_id=692](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module_pop_resource.php?module_id=343&resource_id=692) (accessed November 15, 2010).

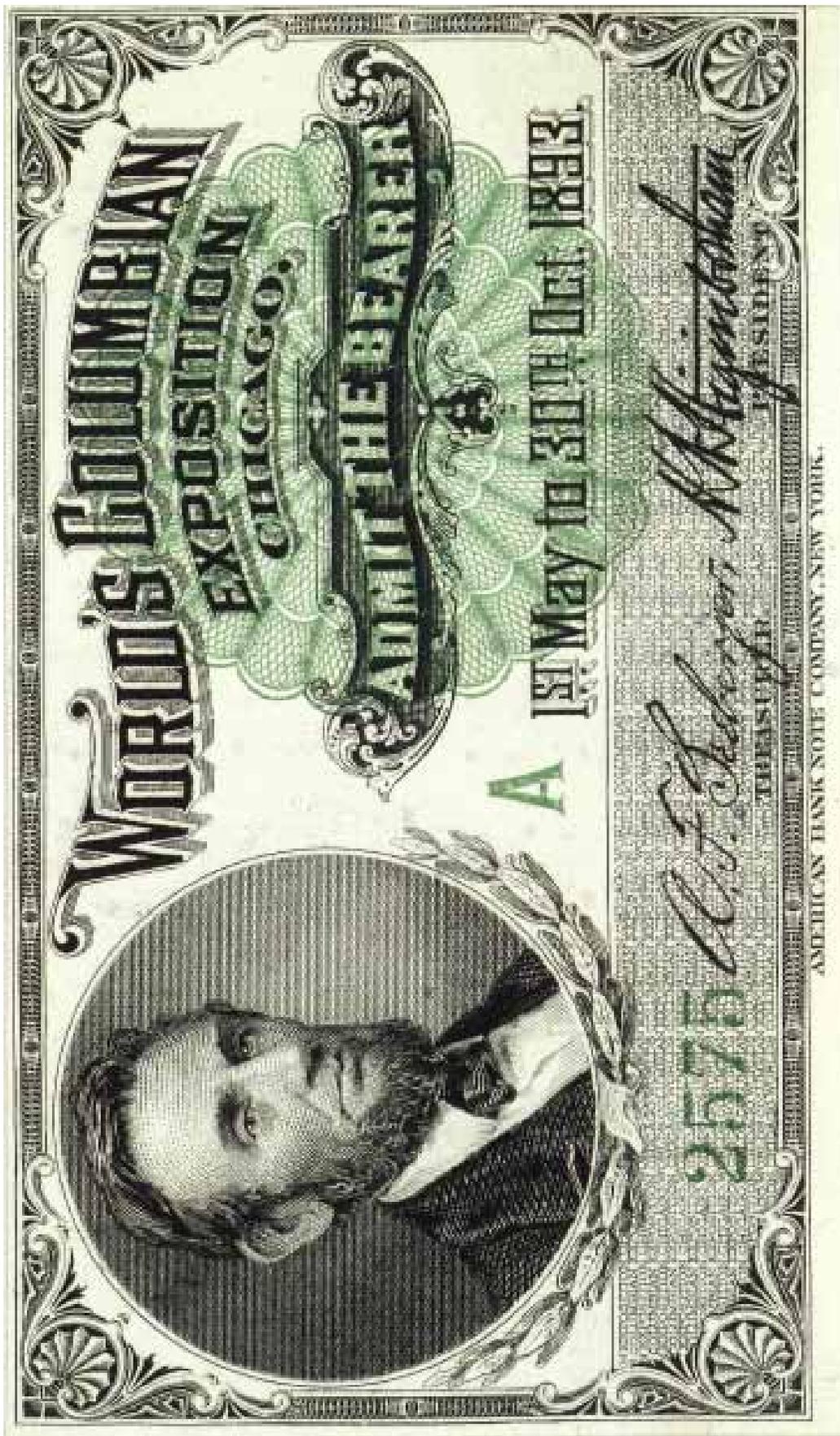
Library of Congress. American Memory.  
"Women's Sphere Cartoon." <http://memory.loc.gov/learn//features/timeline/progress/suffrage/cartoon.html>  
(accessed November 15, 2010).



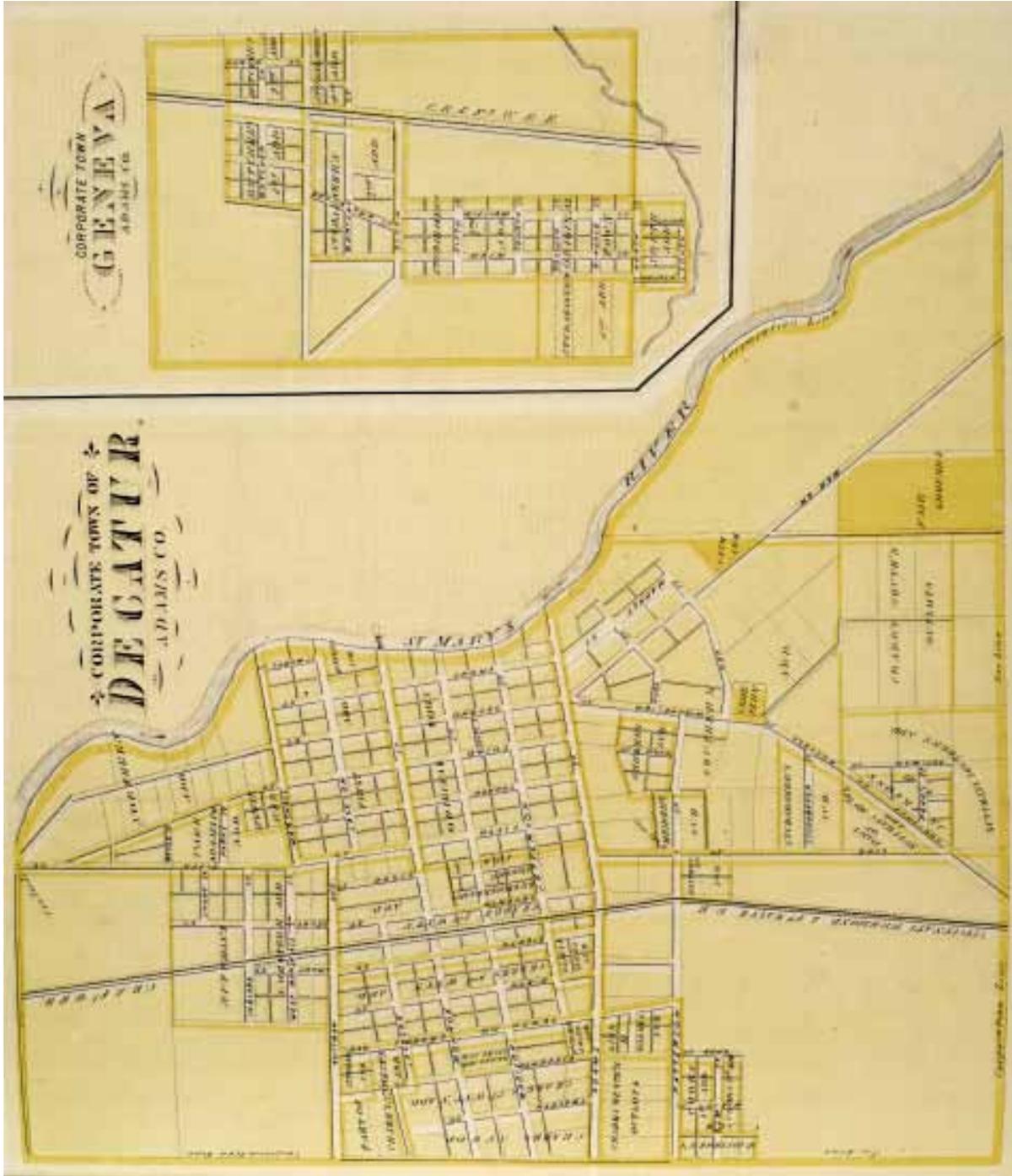
“Farmhouse, S. P. Scherer’s Farm (Bass #C-683)” Gene Stratton-Porter’s early youth was spent on an Indiana farm. (Indiana Historical Society, Digital Images Collection, Item ID: folder499\_doc8.jpg)



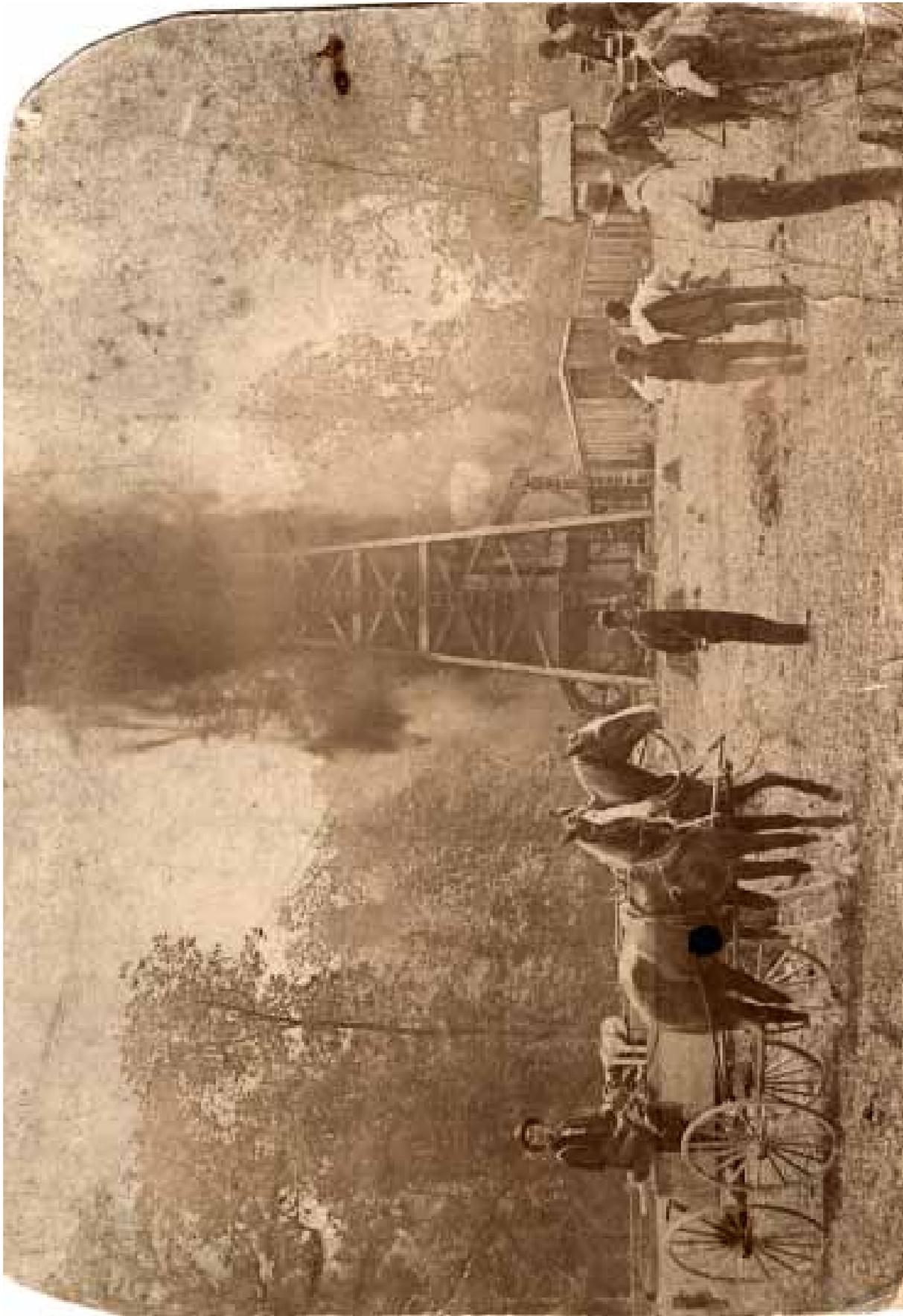
“Wabash Street Looking North, Wabash, Indiana” Stratton-Porter’s young adulthood was spent in the city of Wabash, Indiana. (Indiana Historical Society, Digital Images Collection, Item ID: P0391\_BOX13\_WABASH\_001)



“World’s Columbian Exposition Ticket” Stratton-Porter and her husband, Charles, attended the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago, Illinois. (Indiana Historical Society, Digital Images Collection, Item ID: P0406\_320 Front)



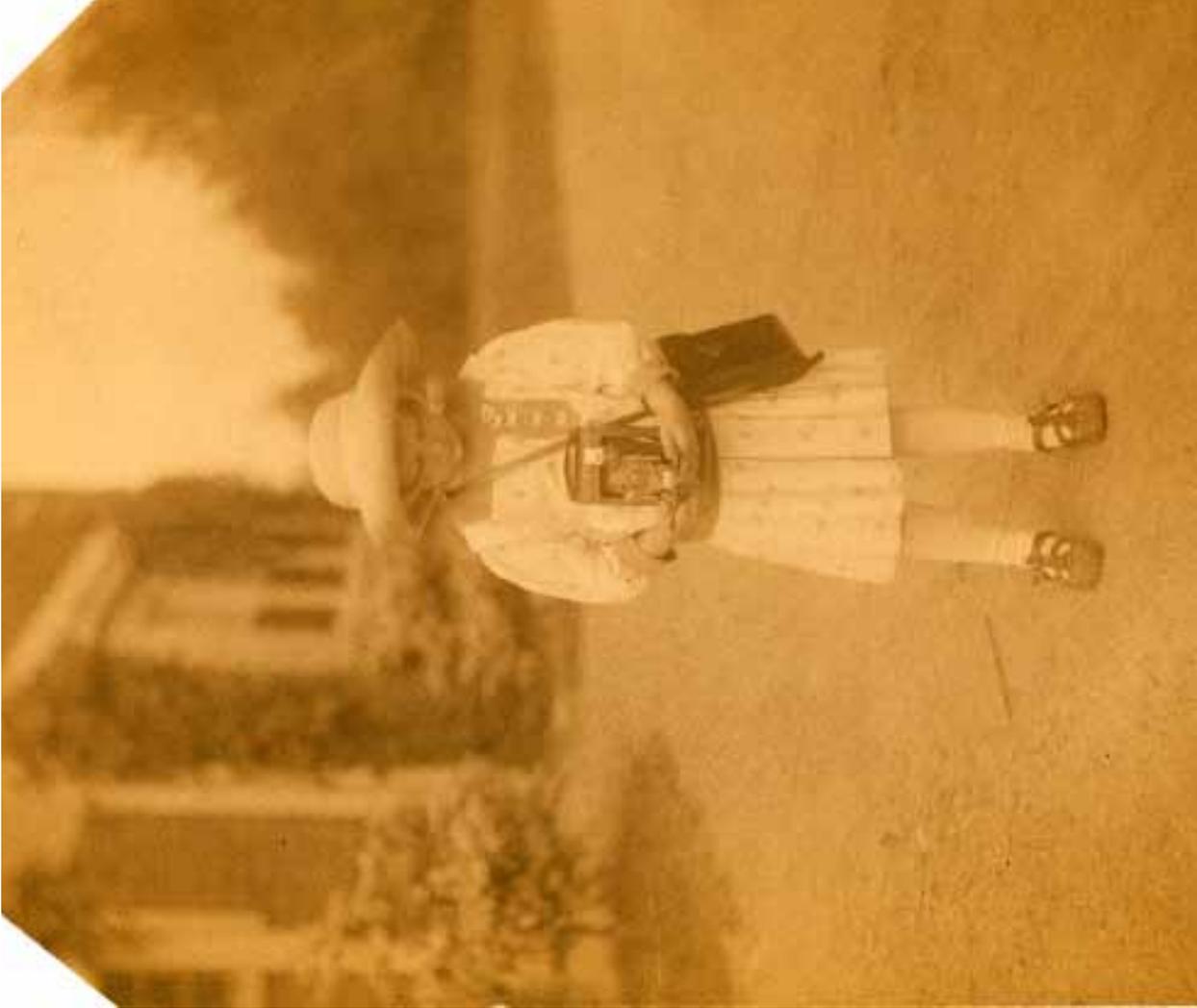
“Maps of Decatur and Geneva in Adams County”  
The site of Charles Dorwin Porter and Gene Stratton-Porter’s first home after they were married.  
(Indiana Historical Society, Digital Images Collection, Item ID: G1400\_I55\_1876\_69)



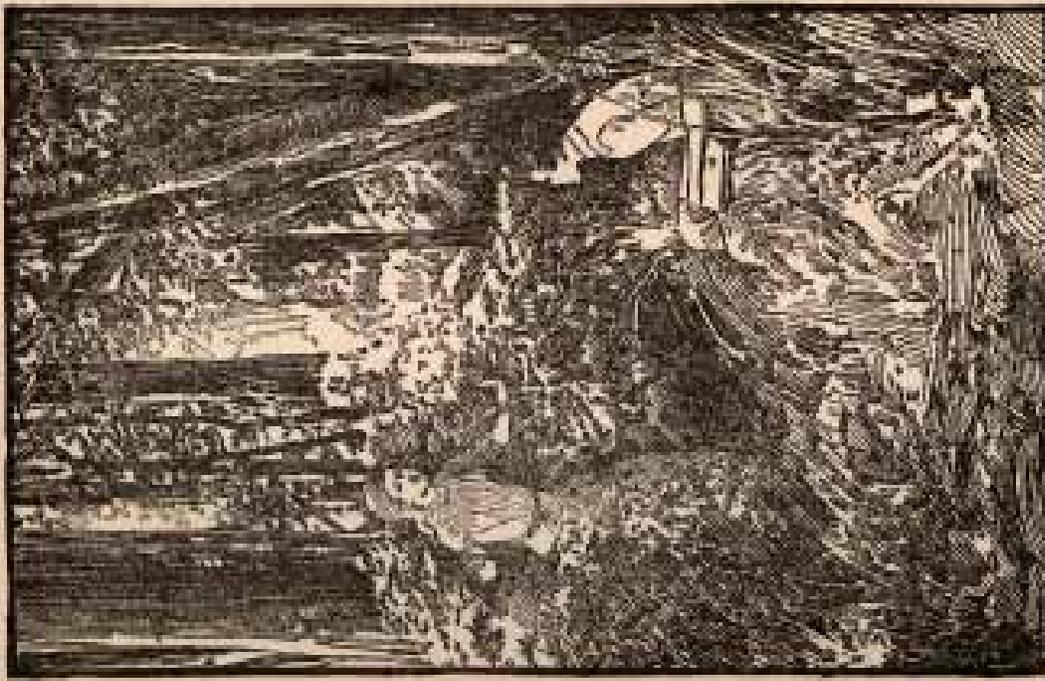
“Oil Well, Geneva, Indiana”  
One of Stratton-Porter’s husband’s investments and the industry that would destroy much of Indiana’s natural swampland.  
(Indiana Historical Society, Digital Images Collection, Item ID: P0411\_BOX1\_FOLDER1)



“Front and West of Limberlost Cabin, Home of Gene Stratton-Porter” The first home that Stratton-Porter helped design.  
(Indiana Historical Society, Digital Images Collection, Item ID: P031\_BOX8\_GENEVA)



“Girl with a camera” This young girl receives her first camera for Christmas in 1895. (Indiana Historical Society, Digital Images Collection, Item ID: P0281\_2\_1\_27)



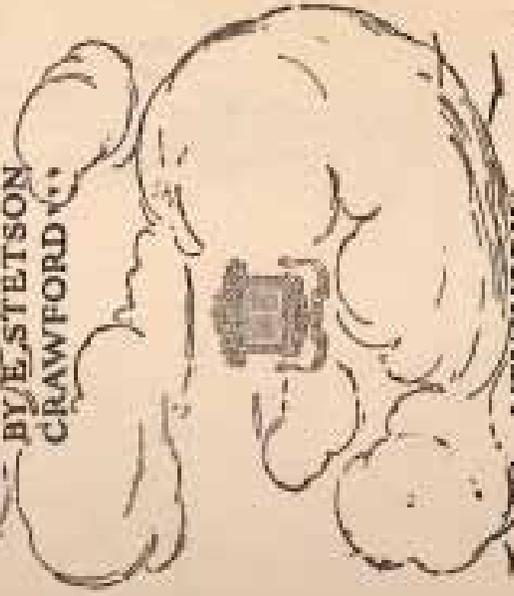
"The bushes parted and the face of an angel looked through."

# FRECKLES

BY  
**GENE  
STRATTON-PORTER**

AUTHOR OF THE SONG OF THE CARDINAL

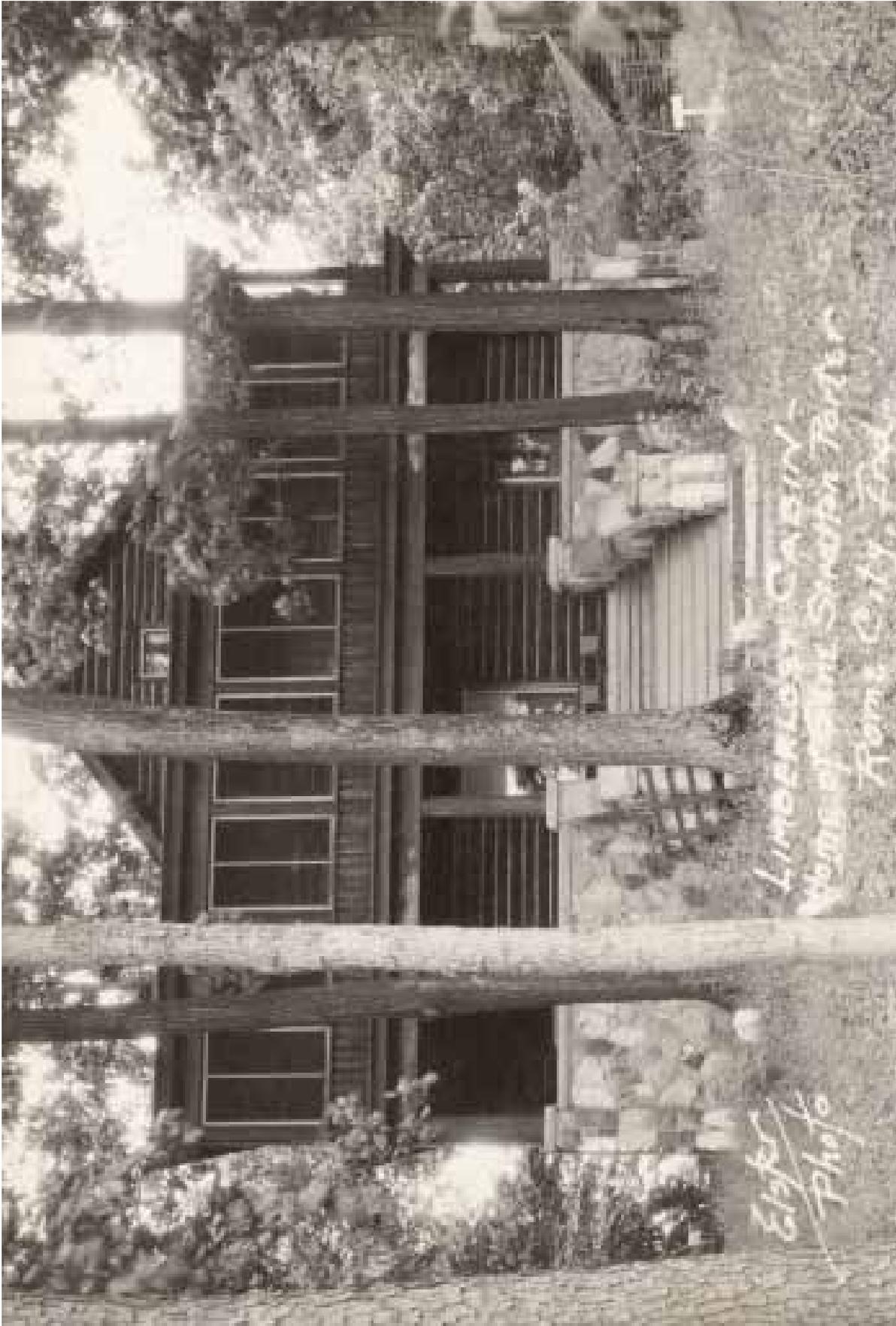
DECORATIONS  
BY E. STETSON  
CRAWFORD



NEW YORK  
**GROSSET & DUNLAP**  
PUBLISHERS

“Freckles’ Title Page”

*Freckles*, Stratton-Porter’s second novel and the first to include humans as the main characters, is published in 1904. (Indiana Historical Society, Digital Images Collection, Item ID: PS3531\_07345\_F7\_1904)



“Gene Stratton Porter’s Home at Wildflower Woods near Rome City, Indiana”  
The home where Stratton-Porter sought privacy and a sanctuary for birds and wildlife in 1913.  
(Indiana Historical Society, Digital Images Collection, Item ID: P0408\_BOX20\_ROME\_CITY)



“Hotel Green, from City Park, Pasadena, California” Stratton-Porter spent the last years of her life in California. (Indiana Historical Society, Digital Images Collection, Item ID: M0660\_Christmas Greetings\_Box26\_007A)

## ACTIVITY 4

### Student Handout: “Debate Notes”

#### Instructions:

Use this handout to organize your ideas for the upcoming debate. Consider arguments that will be made in favor of the theme or idea and the arguments that oppose this theme/idea.

Theme/ Idea	Arguments In Favor of This Theme/Idea	Arguments Against This Theme/Idea

# ACTIVITY 6

## Student Handout: Gene Stratton-Porter's Childhood

### Instructions:

Compare and contrast each topic listed in the left column to your childhood and Gene Stratton-Porter's childhood. Write a response for each topic in the appropriate column. Be prepared to discuss your responses in class.

Themes	Your Childhood	Gene Stratton-Porter's Childhood
Setting		
Historical Time Period		
Favorite Childhood Activities		
Chores		
Brothers and Sisters		
Parents		
Pets		
Clothing		
Education		

## ACTIVITY 7

### Student Handout: “Biohistorical Poem”

#### Instructions:

Your assignment is to create a poem about Gene Stratton-Porter by using words and phrases found in *Nature’s Storyteller*. Follow the format provided below to complete each of the poem’s lines.

#### Format:

Title: First and last name of the historical figure

Line 1: First name

Line 2: Four traits that describe this person

Line 3: Brother/sister/daughter/son of . . .

Line 4: Lover of . . . (names of three ideas)

Line 5: Who feels . . . (three feelings)

Line 6: Who fears . . . (three items)

Line 7: Who would like to see . . . (three items)

Line 8: Resident of . . . (city and state)

Line 9: Last name

#### Example:

Ben Franklin

Ben

Inventor, politician, ambassador, patriot

Son of Josiah and Abiah Franklin

Lover of liberty, education, and his country

Who feels curious, inventive, and determined

Who fears failure, boredom, and tyranny

Who would like to see freedom, justice, and America succeed

Resident of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Franklin

#### Gene Stratton-Porter Biohistorical Poem: