

Poetry Corner

When tromping in your woods, if you come upon an old graveyard, remember Maine poet Elizabeth Coatsworth who lived in Nobleboro with her husband, Henry Beston, at Chimney Farm.

Lost Graveyards

In Maine the dead melt into the forest like Indians, or rather,
in Maine the forests shadow round the dead until the dead are indistinguishably mingled
with trees, while underground,
roots and bones intertwine, and above earth the tilted gravestones, lichen-covered too,
shine faintly from among pines and birches,
burial stones and trunks growing together
above the lattices of roots and bones.

Now is the battle over, the harsh struggle between man and the forest.

While they lived, these men and women fought the encroaching trees,
hacked them with axes, severed them with saws,
burned them in fires, pushed them back and back
to their last lairs among the shaggy hills,
while the green fields lay tame about their houses.

Living, they fought the wild, but dead, they rested,
and the wild softly, silently, secretly, returned.

In Maine the dead sooner or later feel the hug of rootlets,
and shadowy branches closing out the sun.