

# 96 Poore Family Homestead Historic Farm Museum

629 Hollow Road, Stewartstown, New Hampshire

---

The Poore Family Homestead is a unique historical settlement and museum like no other in New Hampshire. Nestled between Bishop and Gulch Brooks in Stewartstown along Route 145, the 100-acre settlement offers a glimpse into the life of a frontier family, settled along the Connecticut River before electricity and the Industrial Revolution reached the rural corners of New England.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, self-sufficiency was a way of life for New England homesteaders, as they trekked from more densely populated areas to the northern frontiers of New England, building farms along the many Connecticut River tributaries.

Harvesting the family's food, weaving clothes of homespun wool, creating tools in the blacksmith shop, and surviving the cold, harsh northern winters were all part of life for the intrepid settlers that forged homes in the wilderness areas. This hard-working, self-reliant character helped to shape the culture and people and is still reflected in the values and lifestyle for many native New Englanders.

The Poore Family was one of these early homesteaders with deep roots in the region. In 1784, Samuel Poore and his new wife, Anna, moved from Massachusetts to join his grandparents, who were among the first families to settle in New Hampshire. Samuel and Anna made their home on 140 acres near Goffstown. Samuel's brothers, George and John, soon followed.

During their lifetime, Anna and Samuel had 10 children, who dispersed throughout Vermont and New Hampshire. One son, Job, born in 1789, married Rebecca Knapp and purchased 100 acres in Stewartstown from Moses Heath in 1832. From their seven children were born many grandchildren, including John Calvin Kenneth Poore, born in 1885. Kenneth, as he was known, continued the family farming tradition throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with dairy cows, pigs, fowl, hops and wheat, and a large garden.

In 1979, an aging Kenneth founded The Poore Family Foundation for North Country Conservation, preserving and maintaining the family settlement as a historical homestead and educational site. Located on the original estate is 30 acres of cleared farm land, 70 acres of forest, and original barns and outbuildings. The homestead museum has an abundance of everyday items, as well as farm equipment, that tie the family to the region for the past 200 years, including tools, clothes, artifacts, diaries, letters, magazines and newspapers dating from the pre-Civil War period to the present.

The Poore Family Foundation has since completed modern improvements to the site, including an amphitheater to host outdoor traditional performing arts and establishing the Bishop Brook Gorge Nature Center, located in the forested portion of the homestead.

The Bishop Brook Gorge Nature Center offers nature-based learning for local schools, as well as enrichment programs for youth during the summer, and educates visitors about the Bishop Brook ravine, which supports old-growth trees and has remained virtually untouched by human influence. In addition to the Nature Center, a trail system was implemented to further access the forested portion of the site.

Sources:

The Poore Family Foundation for North Country Conservancy. 2013. Web. Accessed 10 June 2013. [www.poorefarm.org/](http://www.poorefarm.org/)

Jorgensen, Warren D. "Poore Family Homestead Historic Farm Museum." American Profile. 2004. Web. Accessed 10 June 2013. <http://americanprofile.com/articles/poore-family-homestead-historic-farm-museum/>

Winer, Mark J. "Kenneth Poore and How I Met Him." The Poore Family Foundation. Unknown date. Web. Accessed 11 June 2013. <http://www.poorefarm.org/files/Mark%20Winer%20How%20I%20Met%20Kenneth.pdf>

The Poore Family Foundation for North Country Conservancy. "Poore Family Homestead historic Farm and Museum Brochure." The Poore Family Foundation. Unknown Date. Web. Accessed 11 June 2013. <http://www.northcountrychamber.org/uploads/Poore%20Brochure.pdf>

Creighton, James H. "The Family Poore, Prehistory to the Present." 2002. Web. Accessed 11 June 2013. <http://www.poorefarm.org/files/Legacy%20of%20John%20Poore%20Story%201635.pdf>

