



Norridgewock.

This place derives its name from an Indian word signifying “smooth water between falls”; as it is situated on the Kennebeck between Madison and Scowhegan falls... It is considered one of the most beautiful places in the State, the scenery around is truly delightful, The broad “still-breasted” Kennebeck wending its way course to the bay where “the bright waters meet,” now expanding its smooth surface where the banks are low and rich intervals, on rushing with more impetuosity where its stream is confined by steep banks and the channel interrupted with rocks- the gently sloping hills covered with a heavy growth of timber or exhibiting patches of cultivated ground and the village on the banks of the river ornamented with trees and surrounded by the green hills all conspire to render the peace truly beautiful. The appearance of the village as you approach it is very pleasant. The road winds along the bank of the Kennebeck. On the opposite side of the river, the highlands in some places approach the stream with bold and rugged banks covered with trees and tangled shrubbery, in other places they retire in gentle slopes and exhibit proofs of cultivation. The spire of the village church just peers above the green trees clustered around it, as if to guard it from profaner eyes you first come upon the burying ground, and surely a [torn] beautiful place could not be selected for the resting [torn] of the dead; all is silent and still ~~and still~~ around, The [torn] glides by in its noiseless course, and the trees that serve yard, sigh their mournful requiem over the dead. consists of about forty houses, meeting House, Court H[torn]

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Description: William Allen's essay about Norridgewock and Father Rasle (1657-1724)

The principal street extending through ^{the} village is straight, and is lined on either side with a row of fine elms— There is but very little business carried on in this place, as the trade which it formerly had is now diverted to other places—

About six miles above the village on the river is Indian Old Point, This is a smooth and sunny intervale opposite the mouth of Sandy River— It was here that the Abenakis a powerful Indian tribe had placed their encampment, They called the name of their village Nanransouack— In the village of this brave people ^{who} were considered the most warlike and intelligent of the Indians lived Father Ralle. Here had this devoted catholic made himself a home in the solitude of the forest, and remained with them for thirty seven years, (from A.D. 1683 to 1720). He had acquired a complete knowledge of their language and customs, and by his eloquence he obtained an astonishing influence over their minds, He possessed a perfect command over their affections, was regarded as their Spiritual director and loved as their father, — A chapel was built and dedicated to the Holy Virgin, in which they were assembled morning and evening to pay their devotions. Forty Indian youths clothed in surplices officiated in the solemn ceremonies of their worship, which was conducted with all the pomp of catholic splendor, The fervour of their zeal was kept constantly alive by the splendour of their celebrations, and pomp of their processions. Father Ralle accompanied them in all their excursions and sympathised with them in all their privations, the influence he maintained over their minds, they were entirely in the interest of the French, of course

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