

literary monadnock

Explore the places that inspired the authors you love.

A literary hub
in southwestern
New Hampshire

Have a story to tell?

Send us your stories about
authors and their connections
to the Monadnock Region.

Email us at
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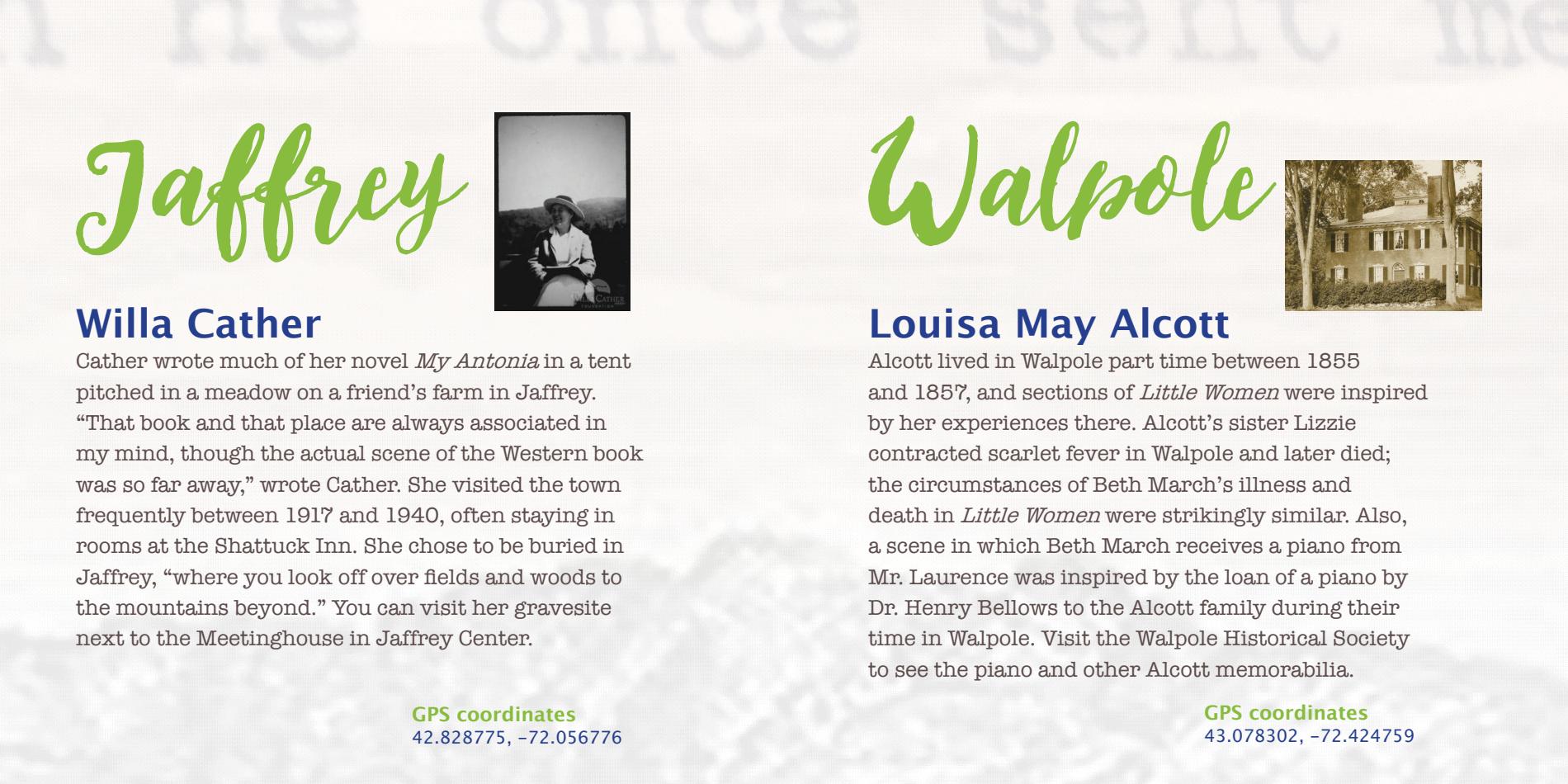


Dublin

Mark Twain

Following the death of his wife, Olivia, Twain spent the summers of 1905 and 1906 in Dublin. Take a drive around Dublin Lake, with its view of Mount Monadnock, to see why writers such as Twain and Henry David Thoreau flocked to the town in the 19th and 20th centuries for its restful setting and inspirational landscape. As Twain noted, Dublin was “the one place I have always longed for, but never knew it existed in fact until now.”

GPS coordinates
42.908601, -72.080717



Jaffrey

Willa Cather

Cather wrote much of her novel *My Antonia* in a tent pitched in a meadow on a friend’s farm in Jaffrey. “That book and that place are always associated in my mind, though the actual scene of the Western book was so far away,” wrote Cather. She visited the town frequently between 1917 and 1940, often staying in rooms at the Shattuck Inn. She chose to be buried in Jaffrey, “where you look off over fields and woods to the mountains beyond.” You can visit her gravesite next to the Meetinghouse in Jaffrey Center.

GPS coordinates
42.828775, -72.056776



Walpole

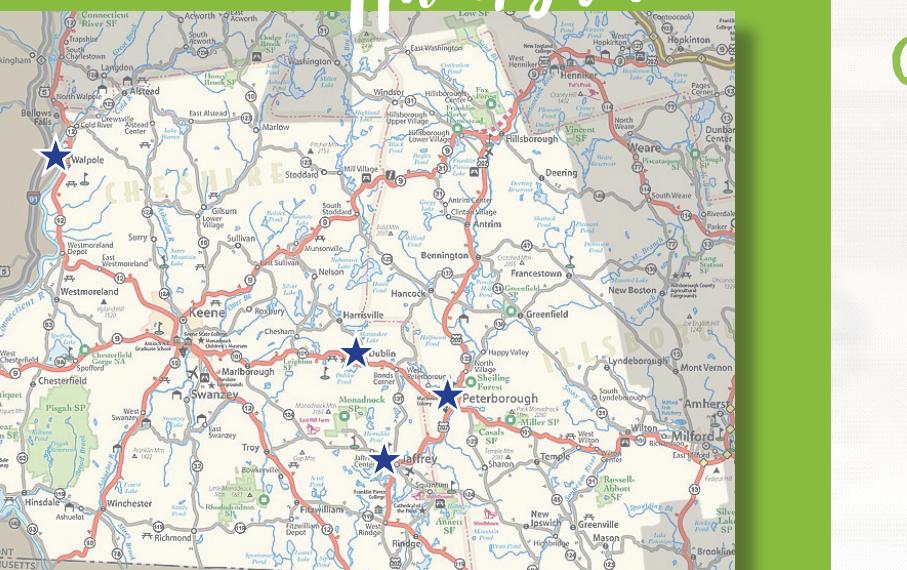
Louisa May Alcott

Alcott lived in Walpole part time between 1855 and 1857, and sections of *Little Women* were inspired by her experiences there. Alcott’s sister Lizzie contracted scarlet fever in Walpole and later died; the circumstances of Beth March’s illness and death in *Little Women* were strikingly similar. Also, a scene in which Beth March receives a piano from Mr. Laurence was inspired by the loan of a piano by Dr. Henry Bellows to the Alcott family during their time in Walpole. Visit the Walpole Historical Society to see the piano and other Alcott memorabilia.

GPS coordinates
43.078302, -72.424759

Today, the Monadnock Region continues to attract and inspire authors in virtually every genre. Visit the Peterborough Town Library for a list of local authors and their work.

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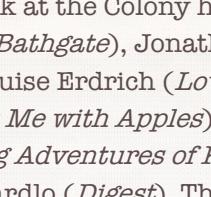


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Peterborough

Thornton Wilder

Wilder wrote portions of his play *Our Town* and likely completed it during a residency at The MacDowell Colony in 1937. Although he never identified Peterborough as the model for Grover's Corners, there are undeniable similarities between the two towns. The cemetery on Old Street Road is believed to have been an inspiration for the graveyard scene in the play's final act, and Peterborough's main street, Grove Street, likely informed the name of the fictional town.



GPS coordinates
42.877713, -71.950710

The MacDowell Colony

The oldest artists' colony in the United States has offered creative sanctuary to writers and artists working in seven disciplines for more than a century. Fellows and their work at the Colony have included E. L. Doctorow (*Billy Bathgate*), Jonathan Franzen (*The Corrections*), Louise Erdrich (*Love Medicine*), Ruth Reichl (*Comfort Me with Apples*), Michael Chabon (*The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*), and Gregory Pardlo (*Digest*). The MacDowell Colony is open to the public once a year on Medal Day. Throughout the year, you can visit the gravesites of founders Edward and Marian MacDowell on High Street near the Colony.

Courtesy of The MacDowell Colony

Elizabeth Yates

The prolific children's book author and winner of the Newbery Medal for *Amos Fortune, Free Man* wrote many of her works at the restored farmhouse in Peterborough that she referred to as "shieling," a Scottish word for "shelter." She gave her

home and property to the State of New Hampshire.

Today, Shieling Forest on Old Street Road is open to

the public, and you can walk its woodland trails,

wander its chestnut-tree grove, or picnic in its meadow.

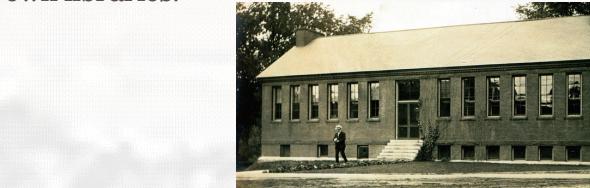


Courtesy of The MacDowell Colony

Peterborough Town Library

Visit the first tax-funded, free public library in the United States, founded in 1833. This historic library at the intersection of Concord, Granite, and Main Streets became a model for publicly supported libraries throughout the country and the world.

In 1849, the State of New Hampshire strengthened the public library movement started in Peterborough, becoming the first state to pass a law authorizing towns to raise money to establish and maintain their own libraries.



GPS coordinates
42.878080, -71.948131

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