

## HANOVER HIKE OF THE MONTH

### September – Trescott/Paine/AT Loop

*An easy hike through the woods and  
bygone times of rural Etna*

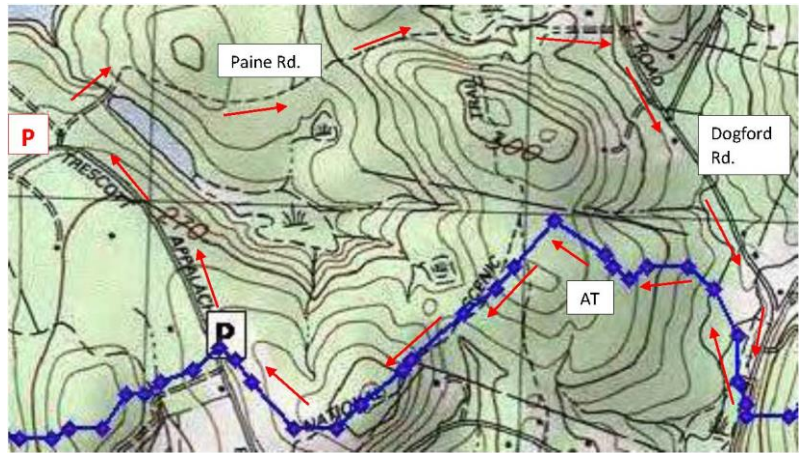
**Hiking distance:** 3.4 mile loop

**Elevation gain:** 600 feet

**Time:** 2 hours

#### Driving directions:

- **From Downtown Hanover and the Green**, drive E on E. Wheelock St. and up the hill 1.7 miles to the junction of E. Wheelock, Grasse, and Trescott Roads. Bear R to continue on Trescott Road and drive 1.2 more miles to the Trescott gate at a sharp bend.
- **From Etna village**, turn W onto Trescott Road and drive 1.3 miles to the Trescott gate at a sharp bend.
- Park at the marked trailhead parking area near the kiosk. Please do not block the gate.



#### What you should know:

- ❖ Today's hike takes you on a loop that begins on the Trescott Water Supply Lands, follows an historic road past two cellar holes, visits a 19<sup>th</sup> century cemetery, and returns on the Appalachian Trail. The two forested legs of the hike are linked by short walks on the public portions of Paine, Dogford, and Trescott Roads.
- ❖ You're about to visit lands owned by the Trescott Water Company (Town/Dartmouth) and the permanently protected corridor of the Appalachian Trail as it skirts Etna village.
- ❖ Dogs must be leashed while on the Trescott Water Supply Lands and waste must be picked up and carried out in order to protect drinking water. Elsewhere, dogs are welcome if under your control.
- ❖ Archery season begins Sept. 15. Deer hunting is encouraged on the Trescott lands to improve the forest, and it is wise to wear blaze orange Sept. 15-Dec. 15. Hunting is also permitted on AT lands.

#### HIKING DIRECTIONS

- **Welcome to your water source!** Drinking water for much of Hanover and Dartmouth College comes from these lands, so special rules apply for recreational use. Take a moment to check the kiosk display to acquaint yourself with these rules and pick up a trail guide.
- Take the short path R of the kiosk that leads around the fence to Knapp Rd., avoiding a logging road at L. At Knapp Rd., turn R back toward the gate and after 25 yards, turn L onto Paine Road. For over a century, this was a four-way intersection.
- The route now called Paine Road was laid out in 1782 from Jeremiah Trescott's place to Dogford Road, "to accommodate him for Meeting." He'd been asking for an easier route from his house to Hanover Center since 1775. Who Paine was and why the road now bears that name remain a mystery.



- Paine Road leads invitingly down a gentle hill for several minutes' walk. Approach the dip in the old road softly; if you're lucky, you'll get a glimpse of a great blue heron or other wildlife in the wetland at R. This valley is not as small as it first appears - it extends over a half mile and feeds Parker Reservoir. The wetland captures sediment washing off higher ground before it can enter the drinking water reservoir.
- The old road continues up out of the hollow. Just as it swings R, stop and look for the remains of an old stone wall at L. You have found the site of the Wright-Mason Farm.
- To find the farmhouse's cellar hole, follow the line of this wall into the woods to a pile of large, flat stones, about 35 paces from the road. From this point continue straight, another 25 paces, to a small grassy rise. The cellar hole may be invisible until you're nearly upon it.
- Here is what seems like the remains of a very small house. Actually, most early homes had cellars under only a part, as a cellar was not easy to dig and was needed just for storage of apples and other supplies, not for the many purposes to which we put basements today. Other foundations on the N side suggest the house had an ell.
- In 1855, one H. Wright occupied this farm. Little is known about this family. By 1885, Charles Mason, Jr. owned the place. It was removed when the Parker Reservoir was built.



*Cellar hole of the Wright-Mason Farm*



- Return to the road and continue E (away from the wetland). Ahead on a rise at L is an impressive "fairy ring" where five large ash trees spring from a single place. All are sprouts from the stump of a single earlier tree.
- Paine Road levels out, lined by a nice low stone wall at L and handsome sugar maples 20" in diameter. They were probably set out along the road by the Wrights and their mid-19<sup>th</sup> century neighbors, the Johnsons, when the surrounding land was open pasture or cropland. Now, the forest has returned but the maples still reign.
- 0.3 miles and 15 minutes from your car, look for the Mason Trail at L. Continue straight on Paine Road.
- 20 minutes from your car, arrive at a log landing – a sunny opening where timber pulled through the woods by a skidder is cut to length before transfer to a lumber truck.
- As you proceed, stone walls follow the road and head off into the woods at right angles, separating fields and pastures of another time. They were likely built by A.D. Johnson, whose home site you will soon visit, during the "Sheep Craze" of the mid-1800s. A close look reveals small stones among larger ones, indicating the land nearby was cultivated, making it worth the trouble to move minor rocks.
- About 5 minutes' walk past the log landing is a flat spot at L, site of the Johnson-Camp Farm. This cellar hole is easily visible from the road. While it is nearly square, the farmhouse that stood over it was probably rectangular. The 1855 map shows A. D. Johnson here. By 1885, Carlton Camp lived here, of the family that gave Camp Brook its name and a veteran of the Civil War (Company B of the 18<sup>th</sup> NH Volunteers). His farm consisted of 75 acres with a sugar orchard of 150 trees and 40 more acres leased from a William Doten.
- After exploring the cellar hole, continue E on Paine Rd. At a sign and barbed wire marking an old water company boundary, walk around the large pine at R to pass through a gap in the fencing.
- Paine Rd. heads gently downhill and, on a sunny day, light through the trees catches your attention. You've reached a major wetland in the headwaters of Mink Brook where cattails and other marsh plants grow amid the standing skeletons of dead white pines. A big wetland in a bowl like this helps hold heavy rains like a sponge, protecting people downstream in Etna from sudden flooding.
- A mesh cage, oddly out of place in these woods, is part of a monitoring program by the Hanover Biodiversity Committee to measure deer browsing pressure on Trillium.
- Climbing up out of the bowl, Paine Rd. once again becomes a traveled way (restored to active use in 1971). Here, private land is posted in some places. Please take care to respect these neighbors.



→ 1/2 hour from your car, reach Dogford Rd. Turn R and walk on its edge, following the drainage from the wetland. Just past Jones St. is a good patch of wetland wildflowers in joyous bloom at this season: orange jewelweed and white turtlehead (R ). Its flowers are so sturdy that only bees are strong enough to pry them open for pollination. Walking allows you to enjoy the riot of roadside flowers blooming at this time of year – goldenrod, Queen Anne’s lace, yarrow, New England aster, and pink clover.



*Turtlehead*

→ 10 minutes’ walk brings you to Hanover Center Road. Turn R and take a few moments to wander through the nearby cemetery, established in the early 1840s. Most of the families who farmed the Trescott Water Supply Lands now rest here, along with their Etna neighbors. Some of their names are being memorialized on trails in the water supply lands.



*Detail on the Mason grave marker*

→ A tall obelisk near the gate marks the 1883 Chandler family plot, and just behind, an ornately carved obelisk (L) marks the burial place of Julius J. Mason and his successive wives Sarah Camp and Lydia Chandler. Other markers bear the names Bridgman, Childs, and Chase. William Hall (1825-1912), pictured below at his farm (site of today’s Parker Reservoir), is buried here. Heart-breaking are stones for “Little Baby” and other children.

→ After visiting the Trescott lands’ long-ago occupants, follow the roadside fence to the far opening, turn R on Hanover Center Rd. and R again onto the Appalachian Trail S at the US Forest Service sign. Trescott Rd is 1.3 miles and under an hour away.



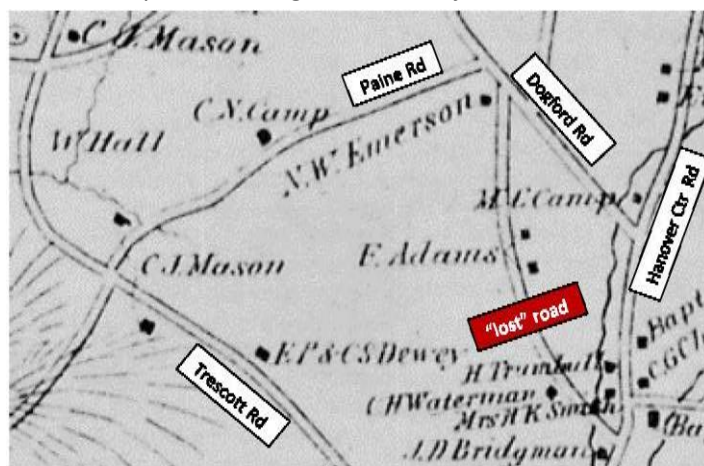
*William Hall, c. 1890*

→ The 2,190 mile-long Appalachian Trail threads through a national park that spans the eastern seaboard from Maine to Georgia. Conservation efforts along its route have protected valuable wildlife habitat and cool forests – and historic sites. The fern-lined, white-blazed trail heads between the cemetery and a forested wetland fed by Monahan Brook, a tributary of Mink Brook. Check tracks at wet spots – are all human and dog? We saw a bear track when scouting this route. Cross the brook on a sturdy log bridge and follow it up to an old field, where goldenrod reaches for the sky and apples ripen on trees planted 150 years ago. This is wonderful wildlife habitat.

→ 10 minutes’ hike from the road brings you over another log crossing as the trail begins to climb gently but steadily out of the little valley. Young woods are punctuated by big bull pines.

→ 9 minutes later, arrive at a trail junction marked by an orange Dartmouth Outing Club sign directing you to the L. A stone wall just beyond marks an old property line. A few minutes later, reach a Y junction with similar sign. You’ll bear R here; a service trail bears L.

→ An odd metal object leaning against the sign is your cue to explore the large cellar hole just W of the trail (at R as you face the sign). Beyond the nearly intact cellar hole are three dressed granite foundation slabs. Metal objects of mysterious purpose are scattered about. Beyond is a complex set of foundations indicating that an elaborate barn stood here. What is such a thing doing out here in the woods? The 1855 map of Hanover shows a mysterious road linking Dogford and Hanover Center Rds with a single home near the N end. The 1892 map (R) shows two more places, owned by F. Adams, midway on the road. Today’s Partridge Road once linked Hanover Center Road with Jones Street,



and it is the remains of the Adams farm you've discovered. The Adams family once owned all the land between Dogford and the east leg of Trescott Road. When the farm was sold and subdivided to create the Trescott Ridge subdivision in the 1960s, Partridge Road was re-routed and the Adams farmhouse (R) was bulldozed.

- Return to the trail junction and take the R fork to continue on the white-blazed Appalachian Trail. The AT follows Adams' handsome, well-made stone wall for quite a distance. Sharp eyes will note other walls joining it to separate former pastures where tree roots now graze. The AT is busy at this time of year – the day we were out, we met 8 hikers, hailing from Florida, Chicago, Massachusetts, and Vermont.



*Adams House, c. 1960*



- The AT heads up around a knob and through gaps in other, older walls. 20 minutes from the cellar hole, you're suddenly in a thick pine forest, likely a cattle pasture abandoned 80 years ago, and the trail swings R to skirt an old field. The sound of passing cars hints that Trescott Road is near.

- The trail drops gently down the slope to another souvenir from Etna's agricultural past – the circular foundation of a silo, now moss-covered. Nearby is a curious

rectangular cement box and platform, possibly a milk cooling structure for a dairy farm.

- Soon the trail approaches the back of a kiosk placed to inform AT hikers coming the other way. While the AT proceeds straight, turn R here to take the pine needle-strewn path that leads through the woods to a small AT parking area. Turn R onto Trescott Road and walk 10 minutes back to your car.

*This Hanover Hike of the Month has been generously sponsored by*



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*September 2019*