NOTES ON THE NAME OF FRANKENSTEIN TRESTLE

As motorists drive north through Crawford Notch, in New Hampshire, Frankenstein Cliff is a very prominent bluff on the west side of the highway, just south ofMt. Willey. There is a hiking trail to the top of Frankenstein Cliff that branches off from the trail to Arethusa falls. "Frankenstein" has nothing to do with the story by that name about the mad scientist, Victor Frankenstein, written by British author Mary Shelley and published in 1818.

Instead, both the cliff and the railroad trestle at the base of the cliff were named for Godfrey N. Frankenstein (1820- 1873), a noted artist from Springfield, Ohio. Dr. Samuel Bemis, a Boston dentist who owned much of Crawford Notch at that time and, who named many of the features of the White Mountains was a friend of Godfrey Frankenstein. Dr. Bemis gave Frankenstein's name to the cliffs just above Bemis Station on the Maine Central Railroad's Mountain Division, as well as the Frankenstein Railroad trestle.

This engineering feat of its day was built in 1871 by the Portland and Ogdensburg Railroad. It was a 500 foot long iron structure that spans one of the deepest gorges, or crevasses (80 feet) in the White Mountains. The trestle was replaced by a new steel one in 1895. Godfrey Frankenstein painted many famous landscapes of the region, including his 1847 "White Mountains in New Hampshire".

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