

Poetry Porch: Poetry

Androscoggin Riverwalk

By Joan S. Soble

To my father

You would have loved the riverwalk.

You would have paused to watch
The Androscoggin flowing past
Sloping slabs of gray stone
Sprouting pine and spruce.

But the narrow swinging bridge
That spanned the river,
Offering pedestrian transit
From bank to bank,
Really would have interested you.

Gingerly, you would have stepped onto it,
Then, gaining trust in it and you,
Continued across it,
Stopping just beyond its far end
To pore over the placard
That told its story:

For decades, French-Canadians
Had moved across *Le Petit Pont*
Going to and from Cabot Mill,
And church and school,
All on the Brunswick side.

Nothing moved you more
Than tales of humble people
Who, sensing opportunity,
Left beloved homes behind
For promising new ones.