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CORNISH | NEW HAMPSHIRE | FALL / WINTER 2011

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DEAR FRIENDS,

This season, amid all of the other events — contemporary exhibitions, concerts, lectures and education, sculpture workshops and Sculptural Visions, there has been particular celebration of “The Puritan” (officially *the Deacon Samuel Chapin Monument*). Completed 125 years ago, this is one of Saint-Gaudens' most iconic sculptures.

Banners of the “Puritan” graced the park; a new book, *In Homage to Worthy Ancestors: The Puritan/The Pilgrim* was completed; and to mark this event a book talk and signing by three of the authors was held in July. The first-page article here provides an overview of these important works from the book's introduction.

Publication of another noteworthy book, *The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris*, which features a section on Saint-Gaudens, was celebrated with a talk and book-signing at the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site by the Pulitzer Prize-winning author David McCullough. (see p. 7)

Looking ahead, plans are in the works to re-design the interior of the New Gallery, where a plaster version of the “Puritan”, slightly re-worked after 1900, is exhibited. This will help improve sight lines to the monument so that the viewers can better appreciate the artistry of this masterful work.

Byron Bell
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Photo: Henry Duffy

Augustus Saint-Gaudens, *Deacon Samuel Chapin Monument* (the “Puritan”), 1887, Springfield, MA.

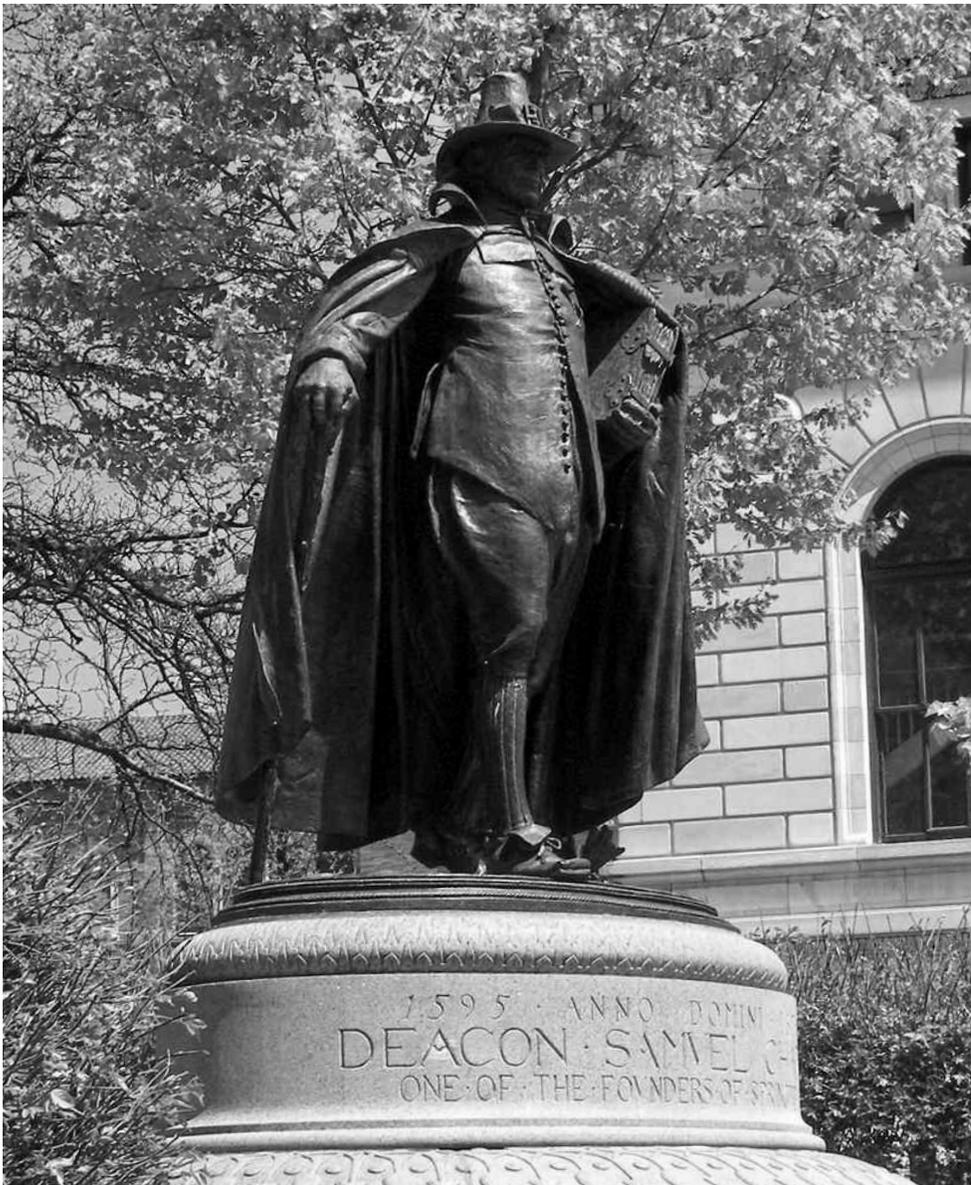
THE PURITAN & THE PILGRIM

Adapted from the Introduction to the new book,
In Homage to Worthy Ancestors: The “puritan” / The Pilgrim

By Henry J. Duffy Curator, Saint-Gaudens NHS

One of my enduring memories from childhood is seeing a large photograph of Saint-Gaudens' “Puritan” sculpture in my classroom as the iconic image of the early settlers of New England.

(*The “Puritan” & The Pilgrim cont. on page 2*)



Augustus Saint-Gaudens, *Deacon Samuel Chapin Monument* (the “Puritan”), 1887, Springfield, MA.

introduction, came the project to devote significant new research to discovering the story of how this sculpture came to be. There are really three stories to tell: the first two are about the “Puritan” in Springfield and the Pilgrim in Philadelphia.”

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a personal commission,
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They are similar, but really different icons — one the tale of a city and a family, and the other the more generalized iconography of the American State being formulated at the turn of the Twentieth century as President Theodore Roosevelt, among others, strove to create a new, more powerful public face of America as a politically strong and morally upright nation. The third story is about the reductions produced by Saint-Gaudens for sale. The sculptor saw this as a source of income, but because Saint-Gaudens was the man he was, these small sculptures became works of art in themselves. He never made simple mechanical reductions of his large works — each edition was a separate, smaller work.

Photo: Henry Duffy

The powerful pose of this striding figure, enveloped in a flowing cape and holding a Bible in one hand and heavy cudgel in the other, expressed the zeal of the early Colonial settlers who would one day lead an extraordinary revolt against the ways of Europe in favor of a new democratic ideal.

The idea of the new book was borne out of a meeting with Sarah Chapin Langham,

Executive Director of the Laurence Levine Charitable Fund, in New York City, at the opening of the retrospective exhibition of Augustus Saint-Gaudens at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.¹ From that

¹ “Augustus Saint-Gaudens in the Metropolitan Museum of Art” June 30 – November 15, 2009. Accompanied by a special issue of *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* written by the exhibition curator Thayer Tolles.

In these works, Saint-Gaudens voiced the spirit of patriotism newly emerging as the country began to find its way on the world stage. In creating the “Puritan” for the Chapin family in Springfield, the sculptor created not just a personal commission, but a striking image of how the young nation saw itself. The commission was unusual as well in that the Chapin family was an equal partner in the

creation of this monument to Deacon Samuel Chapin, one of the earliest settlers of the city of Springfield, in western Massachusetts.

Not much is known of the historical figure of Samuel Chapin. He was born in England, came to the Massachusetts Colony around 1635, and settled in Roxbury. His link to Springfield came in 1642-43, when he brought his family west to join the settlement of Agawam founded by William Pynchon in 1636. Chapin's public role as a founder of what would become Springfield comes with his appointment as a Selectman or magistrate in 1652. He died in November, 1675 shortly after an attack by neighboring Native Americans who burned the town. Saint-Gaudens' sculpture of Deacon Chapin represented a family and a city.

The Civil War monuments of Saint-Gaudens often come to mind when we think of his work, but it was the "Puritan" sculpture that stayed in the artist's studio from the moment of its creation in 1887 until his death. The piece was exhibited time and again, in America and Europe, and it quickly took on iconic status.

With Saint-Gaudens' use of the cape and the hat, the figure achieves a grace and lightness that seems to make the monument move.

By the 1880s Augustus Saint-Gaudens was well-established as an artist of note. Important and innovative monuments such as the *Farragut* in New York City and *Lincoln: The Man* (called "Standing Lincoln") in Chicago brought new life to



Photo: Den Sweeney

Augustus Saint-Gaudens, *The Pilgrim*, 1905, Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, PA.

American sculpture. Personally, and professionally Saint-Gaudens seemed set on a course of success and well-being.

In this atmosphere, he accepted a commission from the Chapin family to produce a monument to Deacon Samuel

Chapin, a seventeenth-century immigrant from England who had followed his faith to the New World. Like so many of his commissions this one came through what we would call "word of mouth". Saint-Gaudens and his wife Augusta had

(*"Puritan"* continued on page 4)



Augustus Saint-Gaudens, early clay sketches.

known the Chapins since his earliest days in New York. One of his first portrait reliefs was of Emelia Ward Chapin (1842-1922), wife of Chester W. Chapin, Jr. This relief was made in 1879, when Saint-Gaudens was still living primarily in Paris, working on the *Farragut*. Two years later, Saint-Gaudens followed with a bust in plaster (later in marble) cut by himself and his brother Louis St. Gaudens, of Emelia's father-in-law, Chester W. Chapin, Sr. It was this bust that would serve as a model for the face of the *Deacon Samuel Chapin Monument*.

The Chapin family would play an extraordinary role in the completion and dedication of the monument. It was, from the start, a family piece. Saint-Gaudens called Chester Chapin, Jr. his friend. The father, a Massachusetts Congressman and railroad developer, asked Saint-

Gaudens to honor his ancestor Samuel Chapin. His own bust was used as a model for the face, since no one knew what the Deacon looked like.

Saint-Gaudens wanted from the beginning to depict the strength of Chapin through the figure. For this, he used a Dutch model named Van Ortzen, a tall, heavy-set man of imposing physical strength and size.

² These wonderful images are divided between the Rauner Library at Dartmouth College, and the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish, NH. They provide a rare glimpse into the working methods of the sculptor. A painter will sketch with pencil or chalk, but, for a sculptor, these small studies – usually described by the French term “macquette”, give the artist the ability to see in three dimensions what the finished piece might look like.



Archival photograph: DeWitt Clinton Ward, SGNHS

Augustus Saint-Gaudens, The “Puritan” (Deacon Samuel Chapin), 1883-86; remodeled 1898; this cast, after 1898, bronze, 30 1/2” H (77.5 cm), National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. Promised Gift of Daniel Wolf and Mathew Wolf in memory of their sister, the Honorable Diane R. Wolf.

The details of costume came to him from the women of the Chapin family, who looked through old books and prints for details. They helped create the costume worn by the model.

Saint-Gaudens' photographer DeWitt Ward recorded some of the early clay sketches for the “Puritan”². In them, we see the characteristic appearance of the model Van Ortzen, solid, heavy features and a stocky build. He sits or stands with

a ponderous quality that speaks of determination and stolid faith. We see Saint-Gaudens experimenting with what the model should hold – a short stick or a cane. In some he holds a cape, carelessly and a bit awkwardly at his side. These first poses are overly detailed in costume and expression. It was only near the end of the creative process that the simplified shapes we know today emerged.

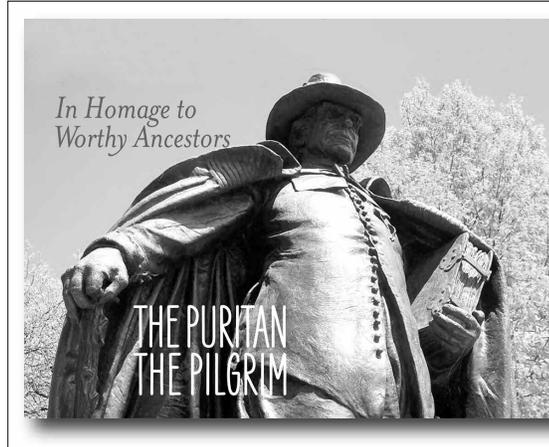
The pose of a simple stride forward, holding a massive bible and a knotty stick give purpose to the figure. And the enveloping hat and cape give movement and the sense of opening up from enclosure to light.

In the small clay sketches one can see Saint-Gaudens experimenting with other poses such as a seated figure, a man standing at a lectern, a deer standing next to the man, or a dog curled up at his feet. The cape appears in a few early sketches, once on the man's shoulders, several times held bunched in his arm. The hat came, according to a posthumous story printed in the newspaper, from William Merritt Chase, who had it left over from a masquerade³.

Saint-Gaudens always liked more interesting drapery on figures. Modern clothing, especially men's clothing, he found pedestrian and boring. He could not

³ The article appeared in the *Springfield Republican*, September 8, 1907. Apparently the masquerade occurred in Munich, Germany, when Chase was a student. He had held on to the hat, and produced it when Saint-Gaudens remarked that he was having difficulty creating the right shape for the sculpture's hat.

⁴ Martiny (1858-1927) became well-known in New York as a sculptor. He was distantly related to the Italian Renaissance painter Simone Martini (c.1284-1344). He remained with Saint-Gaudens for five years before setting out, quite successfully, on his own. For a flavor of how he was seen in New York see: "A Sculptor Who is Also a Captain of Industry", *New York Times*, March 27, 1904.



NOW AVAILABLE

*In Homage to Worthy Ancestors:
The Puritan / The Pilgrim*

Copies of the book are now available through the museum shop at the SGNHS (603-675-2175, X 106) or through the Eastern National website: (<http://www.eparks.com.store>)

Cover of the new publication, designed by Barbara Jones

make it sparkle in a relief or figure. The early Colonial dress could be more interesting, and that is likely the reason that he first came to the hat and cape in the "Puritan". But they are also elements that work visually and compositionally. Without them the figure, already large and imposing, would be heavy. With those elements, the figure achieves a grace and lightness that seems to make the monument move.

The piece was exhibited so often that it became known as the iconic American image of the "Puritan".

The sculptor Philip Martiny assisted Saint-Gaudens with the "Puritan"⁴. He had met Saint-Gaudens early, while working on the Cornelius Vanderbilt house in New York. He was also French, and had an exceptional facility in carving wood. He could bring lightness and volume and texture to the material. It says something about Saint-Gaudens' goal for the piece that he chose Martiny to help him. Perhaps he felt that this was the man to provide the detail and crispness to the costume and figure to prevent it from being ponderous.

As always, Saint-Gaudens was unsatisfied with the final bronze, and took the

opportunity to make adjustments to it soon after it was unveiled in 1887, when he returned to Paris. He took the plaster of the "Puritan" with him where a young art student photographed him and his plaster workers in front of the newly formed cast. The piece was exhibited successfully in the Salon of 1898, receiving a medal, and in 1900 was placed outside the Grand Palais during the Exposition Universelle. To make it water-resistant, an ingenious metallic finish was devised that gives the piece the look of aged bronze⁵.

The piece was exhibited so often – constantly after its dedication in Springfield – that it became known as the iconic American image of the "Puritan"⁶. Very quickly Saint-Gaudens added it to the works that he created in reduced form. Casts were sold to private and public collections, including schools.

In 1902, Saint-Gaudens was asked by The New England Society of Pennsylvania to create a new sculpture destined for Fairmount Park in Philadelphia, but first to be exhibited outside City Hall. The Society, which included city leaders and members of President Roosevelt's Administration (the chairman was James M. Beck, Assistant Attorney General) initially asked for a replica of the "Puritan", but Saint-Gaudens took the opportunity to recreate

the figure, making subtle changes that tilted the head up, and streamlined the figure in general. Saint-Gaudens had always done well in Philadelphia, exhibiting frequently at the Pennsylvania Academy, and creating monuments to President James Garfield and Maria Mitchell, daughter of the great Neurologist Silas Weir Mitchell. The dedication in April, 1905 was the last attended by Saint-Gaudens, but not his final visit to the city. A couple of months later he and his wife Augusta attended the marriage of their son Homer to Carlota Dolley in Philadelphia. Originally placed outside City Hall, the sculpture was moved to its chosen site in Fairmount Park (across from the Boathouses on Kelly Drive) in 1920 as part of the Tercentenary Celebration of the Pilgrim landing in Massachusetts.

Funded by a grant from the Laurence Levine Charitable Fund, Sir Thomas R. Moore, President, the new book was edited by Henry J. Duffy, Curator of the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site, with contributions by Joyce K. Schiller, Curator of the Rockwell Center for American Visual Studies, Henry J. Duffy, Thayer Tolles,

Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture at the American Wing, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and by Wayne Phaneuf, Executive Editor of the Springfield Republican.

The Foreword was written by Sarah Chapin Langham, Executive Director of the Laurence Levine Charitable Fund, and a direct descendant of Deacon Samuel Chapin, the subject of the sculpture. At the park today visitors can enjoy a full-scale plaster cast of the "Puritan", presented by the artist's son Homer Saint-Gaudens in 1948.

NATIONAL TEACHERS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

JIM PERCOCO SAINT-GAUDENS' SCHOLAR

In June, Jim Percoco, history teacher from West Springfield High School in Springfield, Virginia, was inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas.

Percoco has written extensively about Saint-Gaudens, including the well-received *Summers with Lincoln: Looking for the Man in the Monuments*. He has used examples of Saint-Gaudens' work in his classroom for more than two decades and authored the Teaching with Historic Places Lesson Plan for the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site. Percoco and his students appeared in the extended version of the film, *Augustus Saint-Gaudens: Master of American Sculpture*, which was shown on PBS.

As part of a year-long exhibit in the National Teachers Hall of Fame Museum, items related to Percoco's teaching are on display including a copy of the film

Percoco invoked the memory and legacy of Saint-Gaudens in shaping his style of instruction and the Saint-Gaudens motto:

"You can do anything you please; it's the way that a thing is done that makes a difference."

and images of Percoco and his students at works of art by Saint-Gaudens with text explaining Percoco's passion for and use of Saint-Gaudens in his classroom. In his formal induction Percoco invoked the memory and legacy of Saint-Gaudens in shaping his style of instruction and the Saint-Gaudens motto that has guided his teaching: "You can do anything you please; it's the way that a thing is done that makes a difference."



Jim Percoco with his exhibition at the Teachers Hall of Fame Museum.

⁵ A cast of this piece was acquired by the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts for exhibition in 1897 or 1898. In 1948 it was exhibited at the Century Association Centennial Exhibition of Saint-Gaudens' work before being presented back to the Saint-Gaudens Memorial in 1949. It is currently on view at the Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site in Cornish, NH.

⁶ The "Puritan" was exhibited almost continuously from 1898 on. In that year Saint-Gaudens showed the piece first at the 67th Annual Exhibition of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. It is surely here that the business leaders of the city first saw the work that inspired them to bring the piece to their city. That exhibit was from January to February. By May Saint-Gaudens had the plaster cast on view in Paris at the Salon. In that exhibit he also had on view a cast of the Shaw Memorial, the *Amor Caritas*, and several reliefs and busts. Many of the same pieces were exhibited again in 1900 at the Fair. Versions of the "Puritan" continued to be shown – at the Inter-state and West Indian Exposition in Charleston, South Carolina in 1901, the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis in 1904, and again at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in January of 1907, just a few months before the artist's death. He was showing other works at the Academy Annual Exhibitions 1902-1905.



Clockwise, from top right: David McCullough speaking at the park; his new book, *The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris*; the audience in the Little Studio.

HISTORIAN AND AUTHOR DAVID MCCULLOUGH AT THE PARK FOR A BOOK TALK ON “THE GREATER JOURNEY: AMERICANS IN PARIS”

David McCullough visited the park October 8, 2011 on a beautiful autumn day to speak about his new book, “The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris”.

A crowd of 500 people listened to the two-time Pulitzer Prize winning author describe his own journey in exploring the effect of the city of Paris, France, on American artists, authors, doctors and others. From the pivotal visit of

Samuel Morse (who found the inspiration for the telegraph in Paris) to the later visits of Mary Cassatt and Robert Henri in the early twentieth century, American artists were drawn to the bustling city of culture on the Seine.

Augustus Saint-Gaudens figures large in the book. He went to Paris as a young boy, dragging his suitcase up the long Champs Elysées in 1867, bewildered by the dazzling spectacle before him. He was educated at the École des Beaux-Arts, the first American to be

admitted to the school in sculpture. As a newly-married artist in 1877 he and his bride Augusta Homer Saint-Gaudens returned to Paris to work on his first important commission *The Farragut Monument*. Still later, he would make numerous trips to Paris, becoming an established and important artist and cultural icon himself.

After the talk, Mr. McCullough signed books and chatted with many of the attendees. It was a delightful day that introduced many people to the park for the first time.

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EXCITING NEW ACQUISITION: THE SCRAPBOOKS OF HENRY HERING AND ELSIE WARD



Photo: Elise Ward, 1904 (SAGA #9227)

Golf course and Green at "Aspet" with Little Studio at the left. 1904. Gift of Mrs. Noel Leisenritt and Mrs. Lois Moore, 2011

The park was recently presented with the gift of two scrapbooks made by husband and wife Henry Hering and Elsie Ward, both assistants to Augustus Saint-Gaudens. The gift, by the artists' grand-nieces Mrs. Noel Leisenritt and Mrs. Lois Moore, includes photographs, letters, and other memorabilia. To be featured in an upcoming Newsletter, the new archive gives us a better look at the studio of Augustus Saint-Gaudens and the artist's home, "Aspet".

The Saint-Gaudens Memorial is a private, non-profit corporation chartered to advise and support the National Historic Site and sponsor programs and activities that promote public awareness of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, his work and sculpture in general.

Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site
The site is administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

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