



The BALLAD of PATIENCE POTTER and PERSEVERANCE PELL

ROBERTUS LOVE
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NOW, lean and list or ye'll have missed,
Without ye heed my rhymes,
A tale that stirs, of him and hers,
In old New England times.

When Plymouth Rock was still the dock
Whereon did land our sires,
Near by did dwell one Goodman, Pell,
But late from Albion's shires.

An eke anear, for neighbor's cheer,
Did Goodman Potter bide,
Whose pilgrim soul was sound and whole—
Forsooth, it had been tried.

But these two fairs with prouder aim
Ye common flock disdain
And set them both to plight their troth
To but a single swain.

A maid as sweet as man may meet
Was Perseverance Pell,
And there were swains of mickle brains
Loved Patience Potter well.

This favored wight is Ezra White.
A fairsome youth is he.
But 'twixt ye twain this fuddled swain
Cannot himself agree.

Ye maid of Pell he loves full well,
Ye Potter lass ye same,
But for his life which one to wife
Poor Ezra cannot name.



"My only loves," quoth
Ezra, "doves
Fit each to share my
cote,
Upon my mettle ye'll
have to settle
This matter by a
vote."

So on ye street, with
gong to beat,
Ye Crier of ye town
To warn and call ye
good men all
Went loudly up and
down.



"Come one, come all, to
Publick Hall!"
Ye lusty Crier cried.
"That maid ye name is
fairest, same
Is Ezra White his
bride."

So gathered they to have his say,
Each man, and claim a kiss
From her who might be Mistress White—
Elected to the bliss.

Sweet Patience there upon her chair
In wistful patience sate,
While Perseverance by prompt appearance
Was ready for her fate.

Ye votes are cast; all in at last,
Ye tellers make ye score.
For Patience ten are told—but, then,
For Perseverance more.



Eleven polls (bless God their souls!)
Made Maiden Pell the winner.
So they begun, those twenty-one,
And kissed her—every sinner!

While Patience sate, demure, sedate,
And Ezra, much amazed,
Upon that kissing himself was missing,
Quite starkly, darkly gazed.

Then up rushed Ez. "See here!" he says,
"My choice in truth ye make.
One kissed by twenty is kissed a-plenty,
And her I will not take!

"Fresh lips for me, say I!" says he.
So Ezra White did grab
Sweet Patience Potter ('twas thus he got her
And kissed her right smack-dab!

So they were wed and lived, 'tis said,
In lifelong wedlock well,
While lived and died as no man's bride
Poor Perseverance Pell.



1907

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