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The *Maine Historical Society Quarterly* is published at 170 Stevens Hall, University of Maine at Orono, Orono, Maine 04469, and is received by 2015 members and 135 libraries. Subscriptions for the *Quarterly* begin at \$18.00 per annum.

Manuscripts relating to any aspect of Maine history are invited. Submissions should reflect original, previously unpublished research done according to acceptable scholarly standards and should not exceed six thousand words. Style and footnotes should be in conformity with *A Manual of Style*, published by the University of Chicago Press.

The authors of all manuscripts published in the *Quarterly* become eligible to receive the James Phinney Baxter Award of \$100.00. Established to promote excellence in the research and writing of Maine history, the Baxter Award is presented at the discretion of the Editorial Committee to the author of the best article appearing in the *Quarterly* during the volume-year.

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The articles appearing in the *Quarterly* are abstracted in *Historical Abstracts and America: History and Life*, published by the American Bibliographic Center.

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ISSN 0163-1152

MCMATHON HISTORY 247

MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

Vol. 24, No. 4

Spring, 1985

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COVER PHOTO: The hardships of child labor captured the attention of reformers in turn-of-the-century America. In Maine, as elsewhere, children worked in a number of industries. As our cover photo of sardine processing in Jonesport shows, children were an important part of the seasonal canning industry. This issue's feature article by Jane E. Radcliffe demonstrates the variety of perspectives that developed in the Maine child labor reform movement. The photo is from the William Underwood Collection in Fogler Library's Special Collections Department, University of Maine at Orono.

RESEARCH NOTE

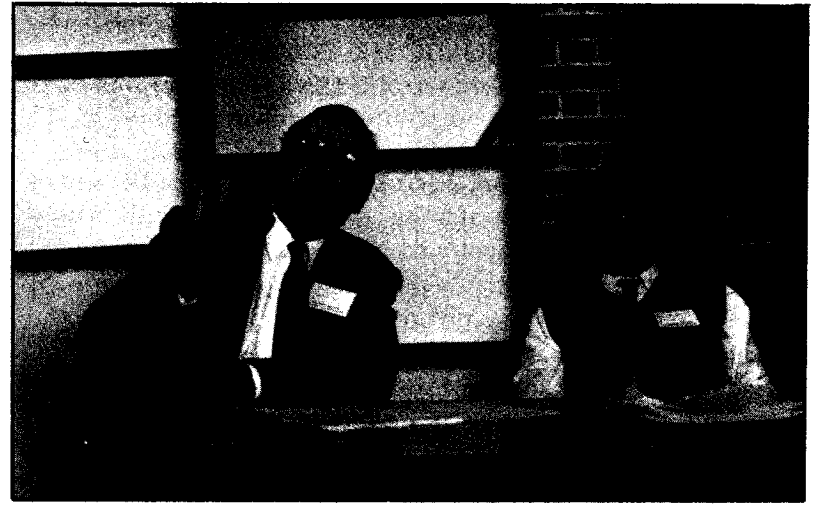
OPPORTUNITIES IN MAINE HISTORY: A PANEL

The *QUARTERLY* counts among its responsibilities an ongoing effort to acquaint MHS members with current directions in Maine scholarship, to encourage communication between like-minded academic and lay historians, and to indicate new materials and opportunities available for the study of Maine history. With this in mind, we offer the following reports of research in progress. Others with projects in Maine history in various stages of completion are encouraged to submit similar reports for publication at a later time.

The papers below were delivered at the spring meeting of the New England Historical Association, held at Bowdoin College, April 26-27. Two other papers presented on the NEHA panel are not included in this selection since in the near future the authors will contribute articles based on research discussed in their reports. The fourth report below was prepared for the NEHA conference but was not delivered at that time.

The reports describe certain works in progress at the University of Maine at Orono and at the Maine State Museum in Augusta. Although the authors share a common interest in an area defined — at least geographically — by the boundaries of the state, the fields of interest they represent range from social and family history to maritime history, early Maine technology, and environmental studies. The others on the NEHA panel discussed in addition urban and comparative history and ethnic studies. It is an interesting commentary on Maine's past that such diverse interests can be accommodated under the rubric of one state's history.

There are, of course, common themes reflected in these reports as well. First, they demonstrate that Maine history offers a varied yet truly representative slice of American history. Maine scholars explore a field with broad and important implications. The possibilities for understanding America's past through local, state, and regional studies have become even more apparent in recent decades, particularly in the fields subsumed by the "new" social history — the history of ordinary people and everyday lives. Historians are finding that intensive



The April 1985 New England Historical Association meeting. UMO historian John F. Battick makes a point while colleague Yves Frenette looks on.

research in smaller geographical areas can reveal fresh historical perspectives overlooked by scholars concerned with national trends, events, and personalities. Today, researching Maine's maritime legacy, the social structure of its seaport towns, the experience of its early artisans, or the history of its changing environment offers the satisfaction of dealing with local events that have broad applications in American history.

These reports also reflect the wealth of research material available to the Maine history scholar. The state boasts excellent repositories for family and personal papers, diaries, public documents, early imprints, and newspapers. Yet the field is relatively unexplored; indeed even our wealth of published local history has not yet been synthesized into a comprehensive analysis of regional development. The researcher in Maine history, armed with new techniques and concepts, typically finds himself or herself working with materials never before scrutinized by scholars. The following reports are offered in the spirit of encouraging others to take up the challenge of Maine history. Much remains to be done and the opportunities are boundless.

A SURVEY OF PRIMARY SOURCES FOR THE SOCIAL
AND ECONOMIC HISTORY OF
SEAFARING COMMUNITIES IN MAINE

JOHN F. BATTICK

In this necessarily brief discussion of sources for the social and economic history of seafaring communities, I shall follow the deductive method so beloved of the ancient world by proceeding from the general to the particular. That progression, of course, leads in this context from the most quantifiable to the least quantifiable forms of evidence, from the most impersonal to the most personal forms of information.

One might ask, "Why single out seafaring communities for special study?" My answer would be that seafaring communities are distinctly different from other types of communities in significant ways. Seafaring is almost exclusively a male occupation, and as the "workplace," the ship, must leave the community to perform its economic function, it creates a community in which a part of the male population is absent from the town for a large part of the time. Seafaring thus places unusual burdens upon other members of the community, especially the women, who must assume responsibilities which in other places are borne by males. As the son of a seafarer, I can remember the extraordinary tasks my mother had to undertake which, had my father been a factory worker, he would have done, or shared with her. Dad was a figure who drifted into and out of the household; mother was the lodestar.

Furthermore, most vessels that bore the port of hail of Maine towns were owned by partnerships within the communities, partnerships which included the "wealthy" of the towns, shopkeepers with a little to invest, and widows whose savings might be in shipshares and who received from the managing owner periodic payments of profits from the ships' ventures — a sort of saltwater IRA. This type of investment acted as a bond within the community, and when a ship was lost, the community were losers; when their "ship came in" the community rejoiced and shared the profits. Finally, Maine seafaring communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were involved in a patently dying industry, one

that had once made them grow and flourish, but which left them, in many instances, one-industry towns with little to fall back on. Some of the communities survived the collapse of their primary industry to flourish in other pursuits; many did not.

I am especially interested in two aspects of these communities: how their societies were structured to accommodate the demands of their chief enterprise, and how they managed or failed to adjust to the decline of that enterprise.

And as a subsidiary interest, I am captivated by the roles women played in seafaring communities, and particularly by the lives and attitudes of those women who accompanied their husbands to sea, bore and reared their children on shipboard, and who directly shared the vicissitudes of seafaring. I am currently completing the editing of a series of letters — diaries kept by a seafaring wife and mother who is, in my experience, unique in that she openly confessed to fearing for their lives and hid away in her cabin, stopping her ears to shut out the noise of the ship, during storms at sea. Never, in other diaries, have I found such confessions. Also, her chatty letters shed light on the society of her hometown, Bath, Maine, and on the early career of her husband, James F. Murphy, a famous captain.

My studies of Penobscot Bay seafaring communities began with the U. S. Census schedules, from 1850 onwards. As you may recall, this was the first census from which reliable data can be derived and in which the occupation of every male fifteen years old or older was to be recorded. (Imagine a society in which fifteen year olds were expected to have an occupation!) Each successive decennial census thereafter supplies more and different kinds of information until, by 1910, the latest available, a rather complete summary of each household's lifestyle can be approximated. But of course by then the number of Americans who followed the sea had shrunk mightily.

From the census schedules one can derive the number and size of various occupational groups within the community, as well as sex, age, marriage, and approximate family size statistics, when there are enough individuals listed to make the latter

reliable. By doing the same for successive censuses, of course, one can obtain reasonably accurate indications of trends in population, occupational distribution, and other social circumstances from which the rise or decline of local crafts and industries can be observed.

And, as the enumerators surveyed their communities neighborhood by neighborhood, street by street, dwelling by dwelling, and by family within each dwelling, one can determine the "class" composition of a neighborhood, single- or multi-family dwelling patterns, owning or renting patterns, and other community patterns. What I term "snapshots" of each family can be obtained every ten years, giving some idea, for example, of the age at which children leave the parental home, of children remaining unmarried, and the prevalence or rarity of multi-generational households. The latter, by the way, seem to be more typical of seafaring families than of non-seafarers.

Accumulation of wealth within socio-economic groups and by individuals can be discovered by examining the annual assessors' books, if these survive in usable form. In some communities, the information is quite detailed, listing real estate holdings by acreage, structures thereon and valuation, acreage under cultivation, if any, the number and worth of animals (including draft or riding horses), vehicles, stock in trade, and the number and worth of bank shares, stocks and bonds, and, for my purposes most important, the size and value of ship-shares. Inclusion of a piano or melodeon can tell us about aspirations to cultured gentility.

As the assessments are made yearly, the waxing, waning, or the dispersal of individual fortunes can be traced rather closely. Sales or transfers of real estate can frequently be more easily traced in the assessors' books than through the county registry of deeds. And, in attempting to determine the business activities of an individual, though I realize it worked hardship on the survivors, I always hope that the decedent died intestate, for in the records of the court of probate a thorough description of the

assets, liabilities, and business associates of an individual can be found.

The vital records of towns and cities prior to the twentieth century tend to be somewhat haphazardly kept. Baptismal, marriage, and interment records of Catholic and Episcopalian congregations are usually well preserved, but those of other churches are not. Since there were very few Catholics and Episcopalian in Penobscot Bay communities in my time period, I have had to fall back on the sometime chaotic records in town offices. If a town clerk has been of a genealogical bent, or if the Mormon Church has been interested in the community, one may find a handy index to such vital records as do survive. Taking a lead from the census schedule, a search of the vital records can result in establishing such demographic factors as age at marriage, number of live births, infant and child mortality, and longevity.

If the municipality under scrutiny was large enough, there might exist local business directories, which are of valuable assistance in ascertaining the numbers of establishments in particular manufactories or trades, as well as lists of professionals. Successive directories can indicate the creation or dissolution of business partnerships as well as the degree of local competition. And, since frequently both business and home addresses are listed, one can get confirmation of the physical concentration of businesses as well as occupational group residence.

So far, I have mentioned only public records. Private papers and business records are somewhat harder to come by but are, naturally, much more important for getting a grasp of other aspects of community life. Some formerly flourishing seaports or shipbuilding towns have very active historical societies, a visit to which in a spirit of earnest and sympathetic concern can result in obtaining access to private holdings. A few town libraries and museums have small archives collections, which the custodians are usually quite proud to show to the researcher. In Penobscot Bay, we have the sizable collection of the Penobscot Marine Museum in Searsport, now lodged in their new library building.



A group of Searsport, Maine, ship masters and their families on board the American clipper *Electric Spark* off the coast of Peru in 1865. Courtesy Penobscot Marine Museum Library.

Such depositories may also have originals or copies of the work of local historians, genealogists, and antiquarians which, approached cautiously, can yield very useful information. I do recall, however, getting into a small squabble with a local historian over whether or not a certain sea captain's child nicknamed Ellie was male or female. He insisted that "Ellie" was male because a locally published work on ship captains had said so, and that "Ellie" had gone to sea. I had to point out that "Ellie" was either female or that the parents had twice lied to the census-taker, for that was what the schedules said — though it was true that Ellie, at age eighteen, had accompanied her father to sea in 1880.

Some quite voluminous and complete family, company, or vessel records collections are to be found in the larger archives repositories in the State Museum in Augusta, the Maine Historical Society in Portland, the Maine Maritime Museum in Bath, and the Special Collections Department of the Fogler Library at the University of Maine at Orono.

Captain's logbooks and letters are usually too succinct, too concentrated upon business matters, to be useful to the researcher in social history, though some correspondence between captains and managing owners and the business papers of some ship operators can tell us about arrangements for payment of the ship master's salary to his dependents, or for the subsistence of families accompanying the captain at sea. Much more informative are the private letters and diaries of captains and their spouses for the insight they bring into personal experiences, attitudes, and values.

I cannot stress too highly the place of women's writings in the study of shipping and shipboard life and of social practices and attitudes ashore in seafaring communities. Since writing was one way of filling up the long, lonely hours at sea, wives wrote down most of the details that the captains never bothered to mention — about food, housing arrangements, commonplace and petty events, the nature and personalities of the officers and crew, and experiences in foreign ports, as well as bits of gossip or queries concerning fellow townspeople, which are the basic stuff of social history. The late James Balano's edition of his mother's diaries, *The Log of the Skipper's Wife* (1979), and Joanna FreeHand's flawed but useful *A Seafaring Legacy: the Photographs, Diaries, Letters and Memorabilia of a Maine Sea Captain and His Wife, 1859-1908* (1981), as well as the series of letters by Maria Higgins Murphy which I am currently editing and earlier published diaries of whaling wives, present to the social historian a treasury of materials. (Incidentally, the Murphy letters were pointed out to me among the Sewall Company papers by the curator of the Bath Museum, Mr. Nathan Lipfert. They were labelled "Log of the W. F. Babcock," and as such would probably have escaped my notice.)

There is a wealth of materials still to be examined out there, material that can be approached by students at all levels with enlightening and gratifying results. In the second half of my two-semester maritime history course, I require students to write a term paper from primary sources. Occasionally, a student will uncover family papers that have lain in the attic for

generations, and the result, from the standpoint of historical awareness on the student's part, you can well imagine. I urge you all to take a shot at the social side of seafaring. You never know what will surface.

John F. Battick received a Ph.D. in history from Boston University in 1967. His initial area of specialization was Stuart England. More recently, he has turned to an older, more personally familiar subject: maritime history, with an emphasis on the social history of seafarers and seafaring communities. The son of a seafarer, Mr. Battick himself served at sea in the U. S. Navy in the 1950s. His most recent publication is an article titled "The Searsport Thirty-six: Seafaring Wives of a Maine Community in the 1880's" in the AMERICAN NEPTUNE (Summer 1984).

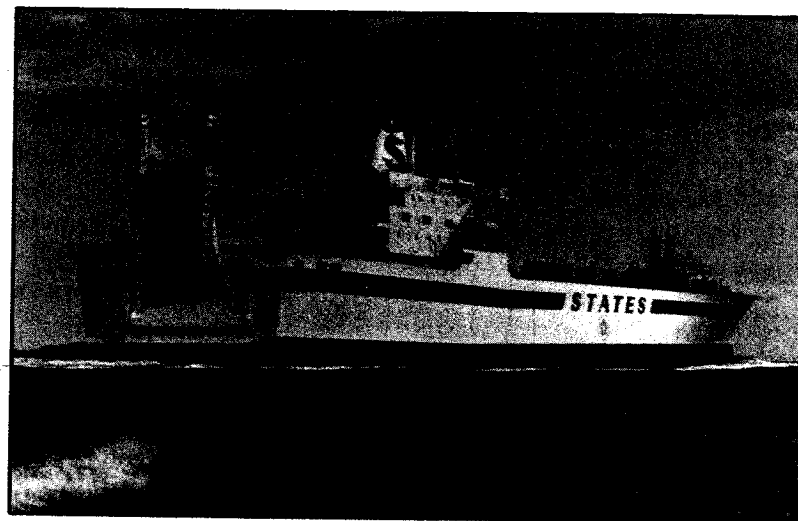


CONCEPTUAL PROBLEMS IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY MAINE MARITIME HISTORY

LAWRENCE C. ALLIN

Rolling out a battery of hoary petards can help us waft away some of the mists that cloud the history of twentieth-century maritime Maine. The marshalled petards are simply these questions: Which? What? Why? How? When? Where? Their sounding is familiar, even in a salt-water setting.

The first asks: "Which Maine?" Is it the geographic reach of land and water between the St. Croix and the Piscataqua rivers? Probably not. The answer seems to be more complex in scope and content. Broadly considered, maritime Maine, along with its ships, trades, shipbuilding industry, and geography, expanded to worldwide proportions in the nineteenth century and was shaped profoundly in the twentieth by Yankee ingenuity — and crying need. The tears dried in 1914 with the completion of the Cape Cod Canal, which gave Maine a



The Bath Iron Works "Ro-Ro" *Maine* is the lead ship in a class of four such vessels. The freighter, built with a large stern ramp to service ports with underdeveloped facilities all over the world, was launched in late 1975. Courtesy Bath Iron Works.

straight-line navigation route — free of its greatest hazards off the Cape — from Sandy Hook, or the Virginia Capes, to the Bay of Fundy.

This straight-line route has been profitably used by many Maine vessels — the "What," if you will, of our construct. The vessels are simply tools. As such, they have different forms for different uses, and their forms must be studied in terms of an evolving economy. At one time during this century, six-masted schooners came out of Maine yards and carried coal. In 1898 Bath Iron Works launched the steam-powered *Winifred*, a tramp, a general cargo freighter that carried what she could find to where it was needed. Later, the Maine-class "Ro-Ro's" also carried general cargoes. The Ro-Ro's were again tramp steamers, but represented a new departure — another advance in a very competitive transportation industry. As tools, Ro-Ro's are floating warehouses as much as they are means of transportation. Their innovation comes in the form of huge stern ramps and side ports that allow cargo to be "rolled on" and "rolled off" by truck or tractor. The Ro-Ro's carried goods

in special packages — simply pallets, trailers, trucks, and containers. These containerized cargoes — again, tools — revolutionized twentieth-century vessels, vessel-building, and seaports.

New economies and new technologies have also advanced the need for liquid cargo transportation along Maine's straight-line coastal routes. Maine is increasingly dependent upon tankers, which carry the state's liquid cargoes: petroleum, grains, and chemicals for the paper industry. Texaco built tankers in the state during World War I, but Maine did not build its first peacetime tanker until 1974. Maritime historians must do more than describe Maine's ships; they must be aware of how Maine's "maritime tools" have served an evolving modern economy and how economic changes have forced adaptations in ships and shipbuilding techniques.

Maine's twentieth-century maritime tools for war have been complex in type and number. Since the beginning of the century, Bath Iron Works has built torpedo boats, destroyers, and more. Goudy and Stevens and the Hodgdon Brothers of the Boothbay region built wooden maritime tools of war for both world wars. So did many others. Maine's maritime industries are its strongest link to the much-discussed U. S. military-industrial complex. More serious research needs to be done on the impact of the warship industry on the social structure of coastal Maine and on Maine politics and economics.

Robert Greenhalgh Albion, Maine's greatest historian of the sea, said there are three reasons to build vessels. The first is to earn a profit, as exemplified by cargo vessels and tankers. The second, exemplified by warships, is the need to defend the profit-making vessels. The third is to help spend the profits; the exemplars in this case are yachts. Maine has its twentieth-century America's Cup defenders and its twentieth-century *America* herself. In many of Maine's seacoast towns, small-boat construction continues the shipbuilding legacy that began in the early seventeenth century. The present-day industry thrives on Maine's fastest growing economic sector: the vacation trade. The impact of pleasure-boat firms such as the Hinckleys in

Southwest Harbor, where fine yachts are built, needs to be assessed as part of a changing technology and a changing social and economic climate along coastal Maine. Have Maine yachts contributed significantly to hydrostatics, hydrophysics, and shipbuilding? Can we ascertain a distinctive social construct revolving about yachting on the long Maine coast? I think so.

The incessant petard "Why?" should be quieted. Why build the vessels? What can their construction tell us? It can tell us much about how Maine's sea-borne economy has changed in the twentieth century. From heavy involvement in worldwide shipping routes, Maine's maritime economy by the beginning of the twentieth century had narrowed to a coasting trade. Holly Bean's six-sticker, *George W. Wells*, built in 1900, was made to carry coal in the coasting trade. The *Winifred*, BIW's first freighter, exemplified those motor vessels that also carried coal and as importantly dry chemicals for Maine's paper industry. In the 1950s tankers arrived to carry oil for domestic heat, petroleum for our Canadian neighbors, jet fuel for the aviation industry, and wet chemicals for the paper industry. Ro-Ro's and LASH ships now carry wood and pulp out of Eastport, much of it, once again, in the foreign trade. Too, one might say that the warships carry violence and that the yachts carry pleasure. The interrelationships between the cargoes, the vessels, and the industries and people they serve merit exploration.

Similar exploration would lead us to the "How." The technology of handling vessels, the boatbuilding crafts, and the organization of shipyards have changed remarkably in this century. Bath Iron Works was a forerunner in the corporate organization of American shipbuilding. To maintain a competitive edge, the works underwent several changes in corporate structure, as well as in personnel, yards, and building tools. The Portland Ship Ceiling Company, unknown today, played a major role in military shipbuilding by constructing wooden vessels during World War I. The PSCC too introduced startling changes to its field. Changes as dramatic occurred in Portland during World War II, when both ways and graving docks were used to turn out hundreds of Liberty and Victory ships. This is

perhaps the least admirable of Maine's twentieth-century salt-water stories. Under extreme pressure during the war mobilization effort, the Portland yards were poorly managed; the product was less than Maine's best.

The twentieth-century transformations in Maine's shipbuilding firms and their facilities are a fascinating element of America's evolving corporate structure and heavy industrial technology, and need to be assessed as such. Just as important, the quality of Maine shipbuilding — metal and wood — needs to be scrutinized. The mist of legend and parochial pride should be dispelled by informed and balanced investigation. We need to know if Maine men truly built a quality product for their times, and in the context of their times.

The "When" — the chronology — is the next puff of our petards. When did the twentieth century truly begin in Maine shipbuilding? Was it in 1893, when the last American wooden square-rigger, the *Aryan*, went over from the Minot Yard in Phippsburg? Was it in 1898, when Bath Iron Works launched the *Winifred*, the first American steam-powered tramp? Was it in 1900, when Holly Bean sent over the giant *George W. Wells*? I must opt for the *Winifred* and 1898 for the beginning of our present Maine maritime century. This because she represented the most dramatic change in cargo moving, cargo handling, and patterns of trade.

That century may have ended in 1982 with BIW's construction of the prosaic sugar barge, HSTC1. The vessel and date are watersheds because with this construction the federal government ended subsidies to commercial shipbuilders. Because of this, the merchant marine, as we knew it, is dead.

The "Where" of our six petards booms with changes in port facilities and locations — phenomena related to shipbuilding. Searsport is Maine's most interesting example. The last vessel slid down the Searsport ways in 1891, and the town's importance as a port diminished. Then in 1905 an entirely new port was begun on Cape Jellison. The facility burned in 1924, and up went a new port closer to old Searsport. Its facilities are still remarkable, and today an even newer, more modern port is rising on Sears Island. The legal and environmental problems

associated with this port raise new issues that are inevitably a part of the modern shipping industry. They deserve close scrutiny. The port itself will offer further opportunities to study Maine's twentieth-century responses to its maritime environment and to its ongoing economic challenges.

Where does one find the information for such studies? Town records, tax ledgers, maps, reports of boards of trade, harbor masters' reports, and harbor commissioners' reports offer insights. Almost always overlooked are the reports of the Corps of Engineers, available in federal documents repositories in the annual reports of the secretary of war, especially in the earlier twentieth century. There is no better set of documents on American harbors and the needs of navigation. The reports of the Geodetic Survey are also overlooked as sources of information about hydrology and the geography of hinterlands. Coast Guard reports yield information about wrecks, conditions of navigation, and other considerations that are most valuable to the historian. With these sources, and hundreds of others, one can wheel the petards into battery and fire away at our ignorance of Maine's twentieth-century shipbuilding.

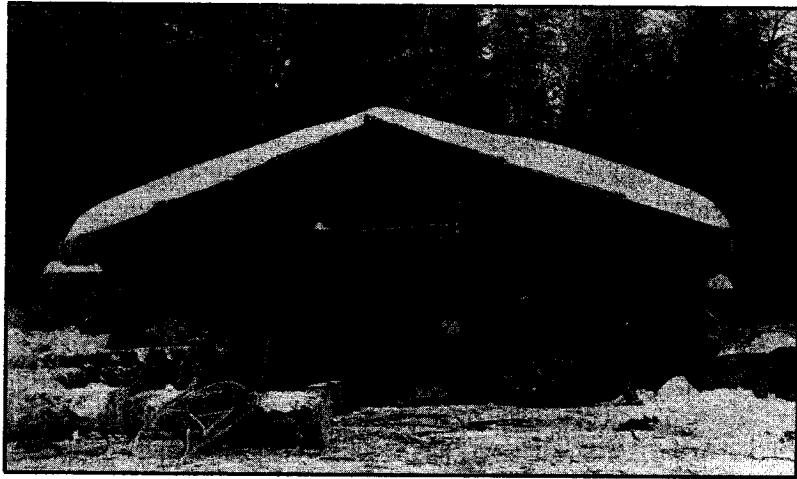
Lawrence C. Allin has published extensively in Maine and maritime history and currently teaches three separate courses on the history of Maine at the University of Maine at Orono. He took his maritime training at the Munson Institute and the University of Maine.



RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES IN MAINE ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY

RICHARD W. JUDD

My research has been directed toward understanding the role of natural resources in the development of northern Maine. The timberlands of the upper Penobscot, St. John, Allagash, and Aroostook rivers have been in continuous commercial use for over a century and a half, and the impact of this activity on



Woodsmen pose while sharpening axes. The camp was located in the Houlton area probably in the late 1800s. Courtesy Southern Aroostook Historical and Art Museum.

the overall development of the region has been enormous. Northern Maine — Aroostook County, largely — is host to not only some of New England's finest forestlands but also to its most productive farms, and it is the interaction of human ambitions with these two natural features — the trees and the soil — that gave the region its distinctive economic character.

Researchers in Maine's forest history are fortunate in that they begin with an unusually fine body of literature at their disposal. Richard Wood, Clarence Day, Philip Coolidge, David Smith, and Edward D. Ives, among others, offer a solid chronological and conceptual framework for Maine's lumbering and agricultural traditions. With this background, I was able to develop a sharper focus: specifically, the connections between lumbering and the broader economic history of the region. Typically, the elements of forest history — the trees, the technology, the business practices, and the labor force — have been treated as though they existed in a historical vacuum. The links to other forms of economic development have not been given serious attention. Historians sometimes assume lumbermen contributed to agricultural development by clearing

forests to make room for farms; at other times they point to the legacy of marginal farming and rural poverty that the "lumbering frontier" left behind as it swept across the nation. Aroostook County, where lumbering and agriculture existed side by side for over 150 years, presents an opportunity to put these stereotypes to the test.

Lumbering in Aroostook County, I found, was part of a closely integrated frontier economy. It is virtually impossible at times to distinguish between farmer and woodsman, merchant and lumberman, or lumbering depot and emerging agricultural town. My interests included the industry's role in creating an infrastructure for agriculture and town development, its impact on landownership and land-use patterns, its reactions to northern Maine's changing labor force, and its financial connections with local merchants and settlers.

Sources for understanding these connections seem almost inexhaustible. The relationship between farm and forest is revealed in records of land sales, sawmill and woods camp account books, and correspondence about lumbering roads and other forms of logging infrastructure, all available in a variety of business papers in the Maine State Library, the Maine Historical Society, and the University of Maine's Fogler Library. Just to mention one interesting collection, we have available the Stetson-Cutler papers, which are the remains of a firm that cut timber on the upper St. John in Maine, processed it in their mills at the port of Saint John in New Brunswick, and shipped it to their wholesale houses in Boston and New York, duty free, by virtue of a special international trading agreement known as the Pike Law. These records put Maine lumbering not only in a regional perspective but in an international context as well.

Accounts from early country stores tell us much about the links between lumbering and farming; stores acted as intermediaries through which semisubsistence farmers reached out to the broader market economy; for early settlers, such stores transformed produce, woods labor, and forest products into cash, credit, or goods from the outside. They also served as labor recruitment centers, and they were frequently owned by

prominent lumbermen operating in the area. A sample of accounts from such stores can be found in almost any major state repository.

The journals and letterbooks from the state Land Office, kept in the Maine State Archives, offer the best source of information on the particulars of dividing land between farmers and lumbermen and other land-use matters. They reveal conflicts between lumbermen and settlers and the daily concerns of both groups. This key source, along with traditional materials such as newspaper accounts, annual agricultural and forestry reports, diaries, and reminiscences, provide a well-rounded picture of the relation between lumbering and farming in nineteenth-century Maine.

In the last ten years, environmental historians have turned increasingly to state and regional studies in order to understand relations between human and natural history. Maine forest history provides some interesting research possibilities along these lines as well. The surveys of the state Land Office are an invaluable source for describing upland Maine's topography, forest cover, and landownership patterns in the nineteenth century. These periodical timber surveys suggest possibilities for some interesting chronological overlays in selected townships, representing changes in the Maine woods. Impressions of Maine's early forest could also be gathered from a large corpus of travel and explorers' accounts. To mention a few, Bangor Public Library has a copy of Park Holland's northern Maine wilderness journal, recorded between 1784 and 1794, and the Maine State Library holds the journal of surveyor Eben Greenleaf's 1816 trip to Moosehead Lake. Numerous surveys were done in connection with the northeast boundary dispute between 1824 and 1842, and we have the magnificent natural resources surveys undertaken by Ezekiel Holmes, Charles T. Jackson, and Charles H. Hitchcock between the 1830s and 1860s. Other possibilities are the Fannie Hardy Eckstorm papers and of course Thoreau's classic *Maine Woods*, forerunner to hundreds of travel accounts of lesser literary note but

of great importance for providing nineteenth-century impressions of the changing Maine woods. We also have timber cutting records for northern woodlands operations going back to the 1840s. These tell in precise statistical detail what has been taken out of the Maine woods and indirectly what the human impact upon the forest has been.

The University of Maine's forestry school has been producing literature on forest theory and practice in the state since the turn of the century. This material includes a number of graduate and undergraduate projects describing state-of-the-art forestry dating from about 1907 and annual reports on a variety of topics dealing with natural changes and human impact in the forest. This literature offers possibilities for a multidisciplinary study of Maine's forest environment. Such work would be in the vanguard of today's environmental history and would have applicability throughout the boreal regions of North America.

Other projects that might be profitably undertaken include a legal history of Maine lumbering. James Willard Hurst's monumental *Law and Economic Growth: The Legal History of the Lumber Industry in Wisconsin* offers a model, but Maine researchers would have the advantage of working in a state where legal codes date from the earliest years of the lumber industry in North America. The various statutes that provided the legal infrastructure for lumbering in Maine were adopted directly from English common law. This pioneering and evolutionary dimension is absent in the Wisconsin study. Indeed, Maine law no doubt provided the precedents for the Wisconsin lumbermen. Ample opportunity to trace the evolution of legal practices exists in collections of Maine and Massachusetts legislative statutes, acts, debates, and legal proceedings. Court records abound with civil suits related to lumbering and land-use practices, and these are virtually untouched by historians.

Maine could also benefit from a survey of the industry's labor force. Certainly woods workers in the late nineteenth

century were the most cosmopolitan of all Maine workers. The shifting recruitment of native Maine, Canadian, and recently arrived European workers is a distinctive feature of the state's woods industry. Nineteenth-century newspapers often listed the names and destinations of local men going into the woods seasonally; these lists provide a glimpse of changing nineteenth-century, recruitment patterns. Business records — again, in abundance in Maine repositories — could tell us more about this. They could also put us in contact with the very obscure Maine sawmill worker and suggest the impact of changing technology and seasonality upon this important labor force.

Forest history, conservation history, and environmental history in Maine have exciting potential. They build upon a solid scholarly tradition and have a wealth of documentation at their disposal. The material is available, and the possibilities in a state with a longstanding commitment to forest research, conservation, and environmental protection, are limitless.

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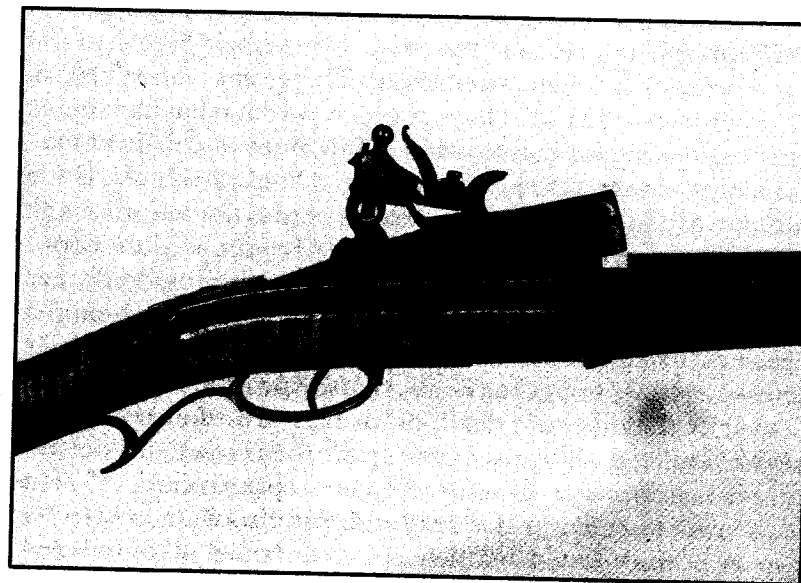
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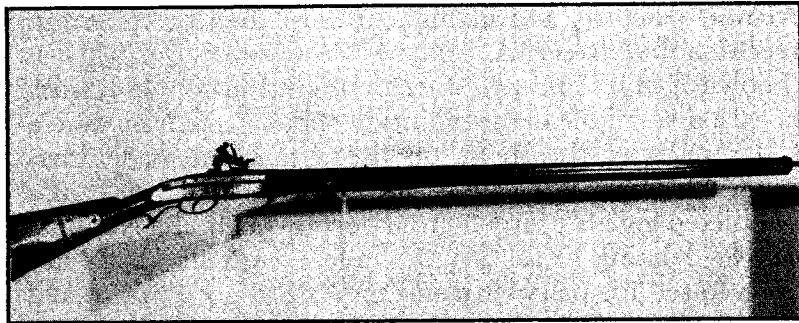
RESEARCHING EARLY MAINE CRAFTSMEN: JOHN H. HALL AND THE GUNSMITH'S TRADE

John H. Hall is, paradoxically, one of the best known and one of the most enigmatic figures to emerge from the history of the District of Maine. Hall has long been recognized as the

inventor, patentee, and manufacturer of the first American breechloading firearms, and he has more recently been acknowledged by students of technological history as having played a pivotal role in the evolution of the "American System of Manufacture" (involving the use of machine-made interchangeable parts). What has been known of Hall, however, has been pieced together largely from documents in the National Archives relating to his lengthy (and eventually successful) efforts to sell his patent arms to the federal government and from records of the Rifle Works at the Harpers Ferry Armory, which Hall established in 1819 and superintended until 1840.

An early (ca. 1814) breechloading flintlock rifle invented, patented, manufactured, and sold by John H. Hall. The key feature of Hall's rifles (and pistols) was a pivoting breechlock which tipped upward (as shown here) to permit loading of powder and ball at the rear of the barrel rather than from the muzzle as in more conventional arms of the period. The breechloading feature made it possible to reload Hall's rifles much more rapidly (and more safely, in a military situation) than a typical "muzzle loader." Maine State Museum by Greg Hart.





As a consequence, virtually nothing has been written about the more personal side of Hall's life, or about his early formative years in Maine.

Thus, when the Maine State Museum elected to include a re-creation of Hall's Maine-based gun-making establishment as a part of its major "Made in Maine" exhibition, it was initially assumed that the representation of this shop and of its proprietor would be based almost entirely upon conjecture. Nevertheless, a bit of research "postholing" was done just to be sure that significant informational sources had not escaped the notice of previous researchers.

The results were astounding! There was, it seemed, a whole universe of Hall-related sources and data that had somehow avoided historical scrutiny. The center of this informational universe was the personal account book of John H. Hall, found in Missouri and now incorporated into the collections of the Maine State Museum. The rich detail of the account book, integrated with data from other sources, including deeds, tax records, court records, and family correspondence, has brought a new picture of John Hall into focus — a picture of a man whose boyhood hopes for a university education were bitterly dashed by the untimely death of his Harvard-educated father; who completed an apprenticeship in the cooper's trade and established himself as a journeyman practitioner of this ancient handicraft on the Portland waterfront in 1802; who also built and rented small boats, maintained a commercial

"truck garden," built a family home, and served as a member and officer of a local militia company on his way to his industrial/technological accomplishments.

In addition to offering new insights into the early life and work of John Hall, the account book provides much valuable detail regarding the commercial economy of Portland in the Federal period. Its pages define the business relationships between tradesmen, apprentices, hired help, entrepreneurs, and capitalists of the Portland area during the period from 1802 to 1818, including several who (like Hall himself) were among the founders or earliest members of Portland's Charitable Mechanic Association. Also vividly etched in the pages of the account book is the devastating impact of the Embargo Act upon commerce-related trades and mercantile interests of this maritime-oriented seaport community.

The economic infrastructure of Federal Portland, as viewed through the "window" of the Hall account book, involved a great deal of interdependence among members of the local community; yet the city was by no means parochial or ingrown. On the contrary, there is evidence that Hall (and one may presume that the same was true of his Maine contemporaries) had a sophisticated awareness of markets and of sources of supplies and services on a regional, national, and international basis.

A full exploration of this aspect of Hall's business dealings is beyond the scope of any brief research summary, but the following salient points might be cited:

- Hall is known to have drawn upon sources of raw materials and/or the services of specialized craftsmen not only within the Portland area but in Hebron, Maine; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Boston and Canton, Massachusetts; Albany, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and possibly Richmond, Virginia.

- Hall is known to have employed sales agents to assist with the marketing of his patent rifles in major cities, including Albany, Philadelphia, Alexandria, and possibly Richmond.

- Hall is known to have used cast steel in the manufacture of some of his rifles and to have sold the cast steel rifles at a substantial premium, reflecting the costliness of this material and/or the special difficulties involved in working it. (So far as is known, cast steel was not being produced in America at this time and would have had to be imported from Europe. The fact that Hall chose to use this material, and the fact that he found customers willing to pay a substantial price for it, bespeaks a sophisticated awareness of state-of-the-art technology in Federal Portland.)

In short, the evidence of the Hall account book indisputably refutes any notions of early nineteenth-century Portland as a quaint village economy. Local needs may have been largely met by local tradesmen and merchants (as indeed they are today), but this was a manifestation of logistical factors and financial considerations, and certainly not a reflection of a provincialism resulting from conscious avoidance or unconscious ignorance of a larger commercial universe.

Finally (and somewhat paradoxically, in view of the foregoing evidence of a sophisticated and specialized economic network), a detailed examination of John Hall's early life and work in Maine reveals an individual of rather diverse skills and interests — a personification of the "self-sufficient Yankee" stereotype, as characterized in generally ill-documented myths of pioneer life on the northeastern frontier. Hall emerges from the pages of his account book, and from other primary sources (including correspondence and tax records), as an individual who had not only mastered the cooper's trade and developed the specialized skills of a gunsmith, but who could function competently as a millwright and housewright, a boatbuilder, a retail merchant, a military leader, an effective participant in organizational governance and activities, a public official, and proprietor of a commercial produce garden. What seems most remarkable about all this is not the eclectic scope of Hall's interests and abilities, but the fact that this scope seems not to have been regarded as singular or even noteworthy by any of his Maine contemporaries. In his later years at Harpers Ferry, Hall

was recognized (with somewhat grudging admiration) as a versatile, ambitious, energetic, impatient and innovative individual — a quintessential "Yankee." One southern observer noted in 1828 that it seemed essential (if perhaps regrettable) to rely upon such "Yankees" as the motivating force for progress amid the tradition-bound society and economy of the southern states.

Here at home, however, Hall's "Yankee-ness" seems to have gone unnoticed amid the general tenor of the time and place. The drive, initiative, and adaptability which seemed extraordinary on the banks of the Shenandoah River were apparently accepted as the norm on the shores of Casco Bay — essential prerequisites for "making do" in Maine.

A more detailed analysis of John H. Hall's early life and work in Maine (1781-1818) is developed in a manuscript based upon the Hall account book and other previously unpublished sources, which I am presently preparing for publication at the Maine State Museum. The manuscript, tentatively titled *Buckets to Breechloaders: John H. Hall in Maine*, is scheduled for publication in 1986.

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