# MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

## ARTICLES

COVER ILLUSTRATION: This engraving of Maine Hall shows Bangor Theological Seminary's principal structure as it appeared in 1833-1834. Maine Hall and its companion buildings reflect the concerns for economy, practicality, and function typical of New England college and seminary architecture of the antebellum period. In this issue, author Bryant F. Tolles, Jr. presents the seminary's varied institutional styles, construction, and changes in order to illustrate the architectural patterns, including vernacular features, prevalent in nineteenth-century New England campus planning and design. (From *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion*, 1853.)

## EVOLUTION OF MAINE PLACE NAMES

Maine place names are usually derived from three sources: Native American, English, or French, each with a clear distributional pattern. Native American place names are predominant through the central and eastern regions of the state, with numerous examples along the Penobscot River and its tributaries. English place names are distributed throughout the state, but are most numerous in the southwest and the western coastal regions. French names are frequent only along the St. John watershed in northern Aroostook County.

Maine place names have been investigated by numerous local enthusiasts and a small group of dedicated scholars, resulting in a massive body of toponymic data. The standard work is Ava Harriet Chadbourne's detailed study, *Maine Place Names* (1955). In 1970 her work was supplemented by Philip R. Rutherford's *Dictionary of Maine Place-Names*. Although this work goes far beyond Chadbourne, Rutherford makes no attempt to identify locality below the county level. Neither work reaches the level of precision of a third compilation, Stanley Bearce Attwood's *Length and Breadth of Maine* (1946). Attwood reviewed hundreds of documents and maps and ultimately produced an exhaustively researched list of governmental units, lakes, ponds, bogs, hills, and other features, including basic official data such as location, dates of founding, and incorporation of towns.[1]

Indian place names have been of special interest to à substantial number of people, and since the late nineteenth century at least four individuals have made major contributions in the field. One of the first modern compilers was Lucius L. Hubbard, who reviewed many northern Indian names for *Woods and Lakes of Maine* (1883). Shortly after, eastern Maine

Native American place names served to convey locational information about a site; they were actually descriptions more than they were place names. European names usually expressed other considerations, but here in the Allagash region, Megkwaka-gamocsis (or Mud) Lake carried descriptive names in both languages. Hubbard, *Woods and Lakes of Maine*, 1883.

Indian names were examined by William F. Ganong in *Monographs of the Place - Nomenclature ... of the Province of New Brunswick* (1895-1903) and *Scientific Investigation of the Indian Place-names of the Maritime Provinces of Canada* (1912-1928). The third major pioneer was Fannie Hardy Eckstorm, whose *Indian Place Names of the Penobscot Valley and the Maine Coast* (1941) has emerged as a classic in the field. The work of these three and numerous others was brought together in John C. Huden's *Indian Place Names of New England* (1962), which alphabetically lists native place names and indicates the probable dialect and meaning or meanings of each name.[2]

Despite the volume of material compiled by these and other individuals, there have been few efforts to systematically analyze patterns in the data. Most attempts have been modest; one example, "Liberty Trail Blazed Across Maine in Town Names," an article by Frank W. Loring, noted the relation between the names of several Maine towns founded after the

Revolution and American enthusiasm for national independence.[3] This paper suggests a number of general place-name patterns which have evolved from the prehistoric period to the present.

Native American place names are to be found in those areas in which European penetration was latest and weakest. To the southwest, where native populations were eliminated by colonial settlers, far fewer Indian names survived. English names are most prevalent in the southwest, the area of first settlement. The predominance of English culture, language, and power assured the general spread of English place names throughout the state. The French names in the upper St. John Valley represent an atypical situation. The Maliseets, who traditionally used the region, were badly disrupted by the Revolution. When French Acadians arrived in the area from the lower St. John, the place names they chose were easily established.[4]

**M**any native place names are still retained in Maine. Such places as Chemquassabamticook, Chesuncook, Mattamiscontis, Meddybemps, Seboomook, and Wytopitlock still can be found scattered across the map, and students of Maine's native toponymy have found many others in historic records and folk memories. These share two major characteristics. First, the vast majority are riparian or coastal. This seems to fit nicely with known Indian migratory patterns which, with some variations, date from before European intrusion and were maintained, essentially intact, well into the historic period.[5] Second, native place names originally served to convey locational information about a specific site. In fact, native names were actually descriptions more than they were actual place names in the European sense of the term. Thus, each tribe could have a different name for a single site, depending on how each described it. At several sites on the Penobscot, for example, the Micmacs and the Abnakis devised different names for the same locale.[6]

Numerous place names were related to the migratory patterns of the natives. Probably every river had a suite of names

describing specific features of the terrain significant to travel. Examples of the former include such terms as Chouacoet, or "at the outlet" (Saco River), Souadabscook, or "at the place of the sloping ledges" (Penobscot River), or Kawap-skiethwak, or "rough, rocky rapids and falls" (Machias River). Katepsknegan Falls on the West Branch of the Penobscot means "long portage around rocks"; Aquadocta, near Saco, means "at the portage, where we take canoes out of the water."[7]

Another major group of terms relates to food gathering. Many Indian names refer to river fishing and coastal clam gathering. These include names that indicate the seasonal cycle of fish, such as Chamcook River in Aroostook, meaning the "spawning place." Others note fishing activities, including Amilcungatiquoke, "at the river where fish are caught and cured," and Kenduskeag Stream along the Penobscot, "eel-weir place." Clamming is represented along the coast in such Indian names as the Abnaki term Manesaydik, "place of collecting clams," and the earlier Micmac word Abessah, "clam bake place." Although fewer, there are a number of hunting-related names along the upper Penobscot, such as Nolatkeeheemungan, meaning "between the hunting grounds."

Significantly, there are few references to Indian agriculture outside southwestern Maine. Typical is Neguntequit, an early name for Wells, meaning "old abandoned field," and Romomeko, an Androscoggin County term indicating "good corn country." The few possible agricultural references to the north or east are problematic, of late date, or both. This matches very well with early historical data. In 1605, Samuel de Champlain visited a thriving native agricultural village at Saco and quoted the Indians as saying that there were corn fields up the Kennebec River, although none at the mouth because of recent warring. A decade later, Captain John Smith found corn fields on the lower Kennebec, and in the 1630s Dutchman John de Laet noted that the natives of the Casco Bay area "cultivate the soil ... planting the maize and beans together, so that the stalks of the former answer the purpose of poles for the vines to run upon."

On the other hand, neither early explorers nor Jesuits found evidence of agriculture east of the Kennebec. The only references to such activity are two questionable reports by seventeenth-century Micmac Indians indicating that their ancient ancestors had grown corn in present-day New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. It seems probable that agriculture east of the Kennebec actually reflected increasing contact with agricultural societies to the south or the introduction of maize cultivation by the Jesuits. During the 1600s the region was gripped in the Little Ice Age; perhaps two or three hundred years earlier, corn may have been raised in the area. It has also been suggested that the shift to fur trade disrupted native efforts to raise corn. At this point, arguments supporting earlier native agriculture in the eastern region seem strained. It was not long after Europeans had arrived that they taught eastern Maine Indians how to raise corn.[8]

Indian place names with religious connotations are fairly uncommon, which suggests that anthropological models of native life have overemphasized that aspect of native culture.[9] Existing names usually refer to specific mythological stories or creatures. Maliseet names found in Hancock and Washington counties frequently suggest great struggles. For example, a submerged vein of white quartz off Cape Rosier is said to resemble water-soaked moose entrails. Called Oolaghesee or "the entrails," it is supposedly the remains of a moose calf killed in ancient times by the legendary Maliseet hero Glòoscap (Gluscap). Other monsters inhabit Maliseet toponymy. Gallowa, a name once found at several places along the eastern Maine coast, was a mythical Maliseet bird that carried away small animals and infants. Also, Nesayik (present-day Boyden's Lake in Washington County) is "the muddy lake." According to legend the water is roiled because of the death-throes of "a huge water monster," the Wiwiliamecq'.

The Penobscots borrowed some Maliseet mythologies, but of course also produced their own. Mythical Abnaki place names leave a rather different impression than do those of their
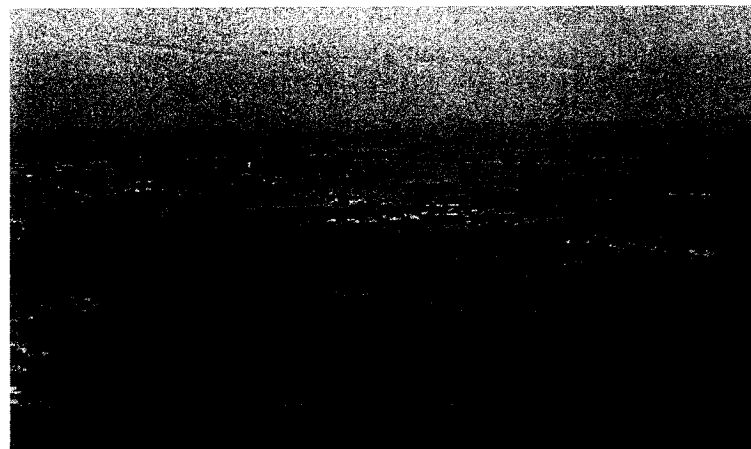


Landmarks in Penobscot Indian mythology appeared around the Hampden Narrows, prominent in this view of the Penobscot River looking north toward Bangor. Striations in the slate banks of the eastern shore inspired the Abnaki name Edali-wikek-hadimuk, or "place where the rock fairies made marks on the cliff." Photo by Brian P. Malloy.

eastern neighbors. Edali-wikek-hadimuk, at the Hampden Narrows on the Penobscot, means the "place where they [fairies] made marks on the cliff." A second term applied to this section of the Penobscot, Wanagamesswak, means "rock fairies," beings who helped the Abnaki by making arrowheads, warning of approaching enemies, and performing other helpful tasks.

One somewhat puzzling group of place names refers to specific animals, such as Awasoos (an island) and Lunksoos (a stream) on the Penobscot, meaning bear and catamount respectively, and Kinkajou in Aroostook County, meaning wolverine. It is tempting to suggest religious or mythological antecedents, but such may not be the case. These might have derived from sighting the specific creatures in the area and then designating the spot as the territory belonging to the creatures.[10]

Place names derived from personal names or events (common in European toponymy) are rarely found in native examples. Orono was a Penobscot chief, but the present-day town of Orono is a European commemoration of the historical person. The same is the case for Sasanow, an obsolete name for

the Black River and Mount Agamenticus in Georgetown, which is named for a great chief whom Champlain met. There are a few other similarly named locales, but the number is small. Also rare are those named after an incident or event. Only one, Psinkwandissek, or "scalping rock," was located. This was a ledge in Passadumkeag Stream where Mohawk Indians killed and scalped two Abnaki women and left their bodies on the boulders in the stream during the wars of the seventeenth century. Because of the descriptive nature of native toponymy, the lack of personal place names is not surprising. The absence of names based on events is more perplexing. Perhaps a world view that perceives life as part of a timeless cycle partially explains this phenomenon.[11]

Place name studies have suggested significant revisions in our understanding of tribal distributions. It was traditionally thought that the Sacos or Sokois, Androscoggins, Kennebecs, Abnakis, Penobscots, and Passamaquoddys were located in Maine from southwest to northeast respectively. The Pennacooks were to the south in New Hampshire, while the St. John or Maliseet Indians were in New Brunswick to the northeast, with some upriver intrusion into northern Maine.[12] This neat package now seems untenable. Research on the Sokois Indians indicates that they were not even a Maine tribe but resided in Connecticut. The connection between them and the Saco area was made by William Williamson in his 1832 *History of the State of Maine*. His error was then dutifully repeated until recently.[13] While it is not wholly clear exactly who the Saco Indians were, they were perhaps related to natives of the Fryeburg area. It does seem increasingly possible that these Indians were in fact Pennacooks rather than Abnakis, a possibility supported by their more sedentary agricultural culture.

Even more dramatic is the mounting evidence that there was a major eastward shift in tribal groups through the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The possibility of such a movement was first noted by Fannie Hardy Eckstorm as she completed her work on native place names. Eckstorm was

struck by the fact that many Maine names were not Abnaki, the dialect of present-day Penobscots and Passamaquoddys, but Maliseet and Micmac. This intrusion of Maliseet and Micmac names into Maine, especially in Washington and Hancock counties, as well as some specific phonetic variations, led her to suspect that Canadian Indians had moved into Maine in the past, an idea further supported by the seemingly greater age of the Micmac and Maliseet names as compared to the Abnaki.[14] Recently, Alvin Morrison, with the aid of James Wherry, pursued Eckstorm's suggestion and produced a model for the central and eastern part of Maine and southeastern New Brunswick. They found that in the early seventeenth century Abnakis seemed to be established in southern Maine up to the Kennebec. Western Etchemins resided between the Kennebec and the Penobscot and from the Penobscot to the St. John were the eastern Etchemins, beyond which were the Souriquois or Tarratines (later known as the Micmacs). In the early 1600s the Micmacs moved south and briefly held the coastal and riverine terrain, leaving behind a smattering of place names.

About 1700, or shortly thereafter, the Etchemins as a whole shifted eastward; the eastern group probably became the Maliseet or St. John Indians, and the western element, the Passamaquoddy. This suggestion is clearly supported by the continuing ties between the Passamaquoddys and Maliseets during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. At the same time, some Abnakis moved eastward to the Penobscot basin where they were joined by other Abnaki groups in the eighteenth century. It is possible that this shift was largely caused by English pressures from the southwest and may have occurred fairly rapidly as the colonists intensified military efforts to crush native resistance.[15]

This proposed shift is also supported by early maps. Two French maps dating from 1700 and 1703 divide the Abnaki and Etchemin at the Kennebec. However, a third French map of about 1705-1710 suggests a shift east with the Abnaki having moved into the region between the Kennebec and Penobscot. A 1713 map by Jesuit Joseph Aubery indicates Abnaki penetration to the St. John, although Aubery seems to have mixed

This interesting 1703 map, "Carte du Canada ou de la Nouvelle France," shows Maine's early English and French settlements and the homelands of the Abnaki and Micmac Indians. Maliseets occupied the territory between the two, although place names and other research suggest that these boundaries were in flux. Guillaume Del 'Isle, Baxter Rare Maps and Plans Collection, courtesy Maine State Archives.

Abnakis and Maliseets in his terminology. A contemporary Dutch map, however, divided the two groups at the Penobscot. The French, who had been driven from the region by the English, had lost contact with Maine Indians by the mid-1700s and were simply calling them all Penobscot. In fact, by this time the Abnaki-speaking Penobscots and Passamaquoddys and the Maliseet-speaking St. John Indians had more or less established themselves in the regions where they remain today.[16]

The probability of this shift is further supported by a dialect breakdown of native place names by county. Micmac names appear in small numbers all along the coast and up the Penobscot River, with the most (fourteen) in Washington County. Excepting Penobscot County, no inland county had any place names from the language. These data clearly support the thesis of a rapid capture and loss of the Maine coast and large rivers by the Micmacs. Maliseet names, however, show up in small numbers throughout the state with only Androscoggin and Somerset counties now devoid of any such names. The fact that nearly half of Washington County and a quarter of Hancock County native place names are Maliseet suggests substantial, long-term Maliseet settlements in eastern Maine. Furthermore, these and Micmac names are often older than local Abnaki equivalents.

The more recent arrival of the Abnaki in Washington County is suggested by two other place names, both describing petroglyphs in the area. Humolatski-hegon, or "many rock carvings" and Sepsis-edal-apskit, or "bird punched up or carved in rock" describe the carvings themselves rather than the descriptive mythological interpretations they represent. These names do not designate any special meaning to these carvings, suggesting that their meaning was unknown when the Abnakis arrived.

This place-name analysis paints the shifting Indian populations only in broad strokes, and must be used in conjunction with other historical data. It does not discuss, for instance, the more than twenty small villages listed on the Maine coast in Samuel Purchas's 1623 *Description of the County of Mawooshan Discovered by the English in the Yeere 1602, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9*. Nor does it help us understand the location of small villages, numbers of fighting men, or patterns of leaders that are presented in William Pitkin's early 1690s *Map of the Eastern Country*. It will only be by studying these groups, identifying their succession of leaders, recording their populations, and tracing their movements through time that a more complete story can be developed. We know certainly that there was a

For much of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries Norumbega, a mythical northern land of milk and honey, appeared on most maps of North America, thanks in good part to the fertile imagination of David Ingram. Gerard (Gerharus) Mercator's famous 1569 map (the first to use Mercator Projection) prominently displays this apocryphal place name. Collections of the Maine Historical Society.

major population decline throughout the region, although it hit some groups far harder than others. And we know that some groups have been extinguished for all intents and purposes, their few survivors dwelling with still vital tribes in Maine and Quebec.[17]

Still, the research on native place names is further advanced than that for their European counterparts. One feature that quickly emerges from an examination of European toponymy is a difference in name patterns prior to and after the onset of permanent settlement in the 1620s and 1630s.[18]

The region was first visited by explorers in the early sixteenth century. It was during these early years that the legend of Norumbega, a fabled region and city of great wealth, emerged. The name first appeared as "Oranbega" on Girolamo da Verrazzano's 1529 map of his brother's 1524 voyage. In less than three decades, the region had become the northern land of milk and honey, due in large part to the descriptions of Pierre

Crignon, Jean Alfonce, and Andre Thevet. In the late 1550s the area was visited by David Ingram, an Englishman who obviously understood the possibility for a good story. Apparently he and two companions had been set ashore on the Gulf Coast of Florida in October 1557, and had then proceeded overland on Indian trails all the way to Maine. After two years of wandering, they boarded a French ship at the mouth of the St. John River in New Brunswick and sailed back to England, where Ingram began recounting his adventures in the New World. Norumbega, he proclaimed, was the *Cibola* of the North, a "town halfe a myle longe" with "many streets farr broader than any street in London." The men wore "hoops" of gold and silver on their arms and legs, "garnished with pearls, divers of them as big as one's thumb." The women were covered with gold plates and ornaments, and the houses were upheld by pillars of gold, silver, and crystal. The country abounded in gold, silver, and pearls; in fact, Ingram claimed that he had personally found gold nuggets as large as his fist in springs and brooks. He also claimed he was chased by such creatures as a horse-like beast with tusks. Seldom had a traveler done less to further truth about the New World. After Ingram's accounts, Norumbega appeared on practically every map of America for the rest of the sixteenth century. In 1604, explorer Samuel de Champlain sailed up the Penobscot, and after a brief perusal of the region, wrote a short, pithy eulogy of Norumbega.[19]

Champlain, like other explorers before and after, named various features of the Maine coast, including the St. Croix River and the islands of Petit Manan, Mount Desert, and Isle au Haut.[20] Ten years later, Captain John Smith explored New England's shores and labeled numerous spots, which he then attached to his famous map of New England. Nearly all his names, though, have been discarded. The only people whom Smith's names impressed were the Dutch, who continued using his designations on their maps well into the eighteenth century.[21]

Smith was not the first to furnish the Maine coast with short-lived names. The early European cartographers, loath to leave any spot empty, embellished the American coast with

great numbers of Latin place names. The mapmakers ex-
changed these back and forth, and the chronology of early
American maps can be traced by following the changes, addi-
tions, and deletions of these Latin names. The only thing that
kept this exchange going was lack of first-hand knowledge of
the New World itself. As solid geographical data began filter-
ing back to Europe, the many Latin names began disappearing
from the maps of America; most were gone by the early 1600s.[22]

At least a few early names derived from events. In 1524,
Italian explorer Giovanni da Verrazzano, sailing from France,
coasted the whole Eastern Seaboard and probably landed in the
Casco Bay region. The natives were highly suspicious and after
some marginally successful trading he returned to his ship.
When he and his men looked back, they found the natives
making "all signs of scorn and shame that any brute creature
would make ... such as showing their buttocks and laughing."
The supposed location of this revealing harbinger of
European-Indian relations is known as "Savage Rock."[23]

Many names emerged from uncertain roots and appeared
to be in general use by fishermen and traders, examples being
Damariscove and Richman's Island. Often there are theories as
to the origins of such place names; however, there are no
definite explanations.

The names adopted during the pre-settlement period were,
as with most Native American names, point specific. The
Europeans along the Maine coast were seasonal transients and
needed precise locations to aid in navigation and identification
of choice fishing, curing, and fur trading locales. Monhegan,
Damariscove, Pemaquid, and the Isles of Shoals were impor-
tant fishing rendezvous and navigational guides from the first
decade of the seventeenth century. Unlike native place names,
though, European names were not necessarily descriptive.
Some locations were named after individuals; some retained
native names, and some grew from events. In other words, for
these early Europeans, the place names had a reality of their
own, independent of specific geographic features. Of course,
there were descriptive place names, such as Isles of Shoals and
Isles de Bacchus. Still, these do not alter the fact that place

names had a different status in the European topographic
environment than in that of the native.

An even greater toponymic difference appeared as
Europeans (especially English) began settling in Maine. Con-
cerned with territorial ownership, division, and administra-
tion, they introduced a place-name pattern organized on the
basis of spatial enclosure, in which a key element was boundar-
ies. Geographic features were de-emphasized, except as boun-
daries or where they practically forced recognition (names of
coastal ledges, for instance).

Maine was divided early into large tracts, the first of which
was granted in 1622 to Sir Ferdinando Gorges and Robert
Mason. The grant designated as Maine extended from the Pis-
cataqua to the Kennebec and ran 120 miles inland. In 1629 the
eastern portion was assigned exclusively to Gorges. After a
twenty-year battle between Massachusetts, Gorges's heirs, and
local officials, the region was incorporated into the Bay Colony
as York County. In 1630, a second grant called Ligonia was
made in Gorges's territory. In 1642 George Cleeve of Falmouth
resurrected the Ligonia Patent by inducing Englishman Alex-
ander Rigby to purchase the charter. After a five-year battle,
Cleeve was able to establish a government over the area, only to
see it crumble under Massachusetts Bay Colony pressure two
years after Rigby's death in 1650. Meantime, settlers from the
Plymouth Colony acquired a large area of land on the Ken-
nebec through three Indian grants between 1629 and 1653. The
whole property was sold to several wealthy merchants in 1660,
and by the mid-1660s, a government had been set up for the
river settlements. It lasted until the English inhabitants in the
region were driven out in King Philip's War, 1675-1678. The
whole area between the Kennebec and Penobscot rivers was
granted to the Duke of York, the future James II, in 1664. The
policy of massive grants continued into the next century. In the
1760s Samuel Waldo was able to acquire great holdings, and in
1791-1793 William Bingham purchased tracts which make up
much of present-day Washington and Piscataquis counties.[24]

The pattern of land divisions which spatially organizes the state is a hierarchical system including counties, towns, farm plots, urban blocks, and house lots. In urban areas, spatial organization is maintained by an outpouring of place names identifying streets, avenues, drives, and so forth. But the impulse to organize territory is also demonstrated in areas with little or no population. In the more vacant northern and western regions, there was no great pressure to found new settlements. Nonetheless, in the early 1800s, Massachusetts (of which Maine was still a part), subdivided the empty lands into a series of townships and ranges identical to the newly developed federal rectangular survey system.[25]

From the beginning, Maine towns echoed their English heritage.[26] Many seventeenth century communities borrowed names such as Kittery, York, Biddeford, and Falmouth directly from English places. Similar names would be used well into the nineteenth century, but never to the degree they were used during the early period, when the need for ties to England was the greatest. During the eighteenth century, war and expansion marked Maine's development and, not surprisingly, the events and people behind them are mirrored in place names. Major political figures were honored in town names such as Pownal, Bowdoinham, and Winthrop, as were military leaders, by Gorham, Winslow, Waldoborough, and Fryeburg. Great proprietors also left their mark in such communities as Sanford, Hallowell, and Vassalborough.

The American Revolution formed a watershed in Maine town toponymy. Tremendous pride in the new nation, its war heroes, and its ideals is reflected in new community names. War heroes were immortalized in the naming of Warren, Thomaston, Starks, Steuben, Wayne, and Washington. Between 1790 and 1825, other great Americans were similarly honored in the towns of Jay, Clinton, Madison, Monroe, and Franklin, while in the same period independence itself was celebrated in Union, Columbia, Unity, Freedom, and Liberty. At the same time there was a great passion for classical themes, as Americans began contemplating their destiny. Thus a new group of towns was formed with such names as Athens, Rome, Corinth, Carthage, Troy, and Smyrna.



The late eighteenth-century Acadians of northern Maine were far more removed from their European origins than their English counterparts. To name their new settlements in the upper St. John Valley, they turned to one enduring link to their European past — their Catholic faith. Both the church and town represented here were named for Saint Agatha. Courtesy Madawaska Historical Society.

The post-Revolutionary years saw several other patterns, which, while distinct, were less specifically tied to the war. Foreign country and city names came into vogue in the late 1790s and provided many town names until the mid-1830s. Also, while earlier instances exist, the late eighteenth century seemed to mark the beginning of numerous semidescriptive town names. The earlier names frequently mirror the coastal nature of settlement, with names like Islesboro, Eastport, and Northport. A few inland names related to topographic features date from before the nineteenth century, but it seems that in the 1820s and 1830s, as inland settling progressed rapidly, names such as Greenfield, Springfield, Greenville, and Eastbrook show up most frequently. Many nineteenth- and twentieth-century local place names relate to individuals, and across the map one finds such names as Shaw Hill, Bartlett Island, Hawthorne Point, and Stores Corner. Similarly, descriptive place names make up a substantial body of names including Bald Head, Back Cove, Deadwater Brook, Brush Mountain, and the Plains.

Interestingly, the names selected for French communities are significantly different from their English counterparts, reflecting a strong Catholic tradition with such names as St. Francis, St. John, St. Agatha, and Notre Dame. The Acadians of Nova Scotia were far more isolated from their homeland than were their English neighbors. Caught between French and English rivalries and quite dependent economically on Massachusetts, they frequently found themselves thrown upon their own resources. Clearly by the time they moved into the upper St. John Valley, they had turned inward to their Catholic traditions for inspiration in naming their new communities.

As was true earlier, Europeans continued using place-specific names.[27] Rocks, ledges, points, coves, and other features critical to navigation were carefully named and charted as soon as possible. Preserved by coastal charts and pilot books and reinforced by experience, these probably make up the best maintained group of local place names. Other early names reflected two of Maine's major colonial economic activities — fishing and farming. Coastal settlements frequently have such names as Fishermen's Cove, Stage Island, Cod Ledge, and Fish Point. The coastal region contains nearly as many agricultural names, including Hog Island, Hay Island, Hay Brook, and Barn Cove, indicating substantial salt-water farming activity. Many of these names on the southwestern coast date back to the seventeenth century, suggesting, as recent research has demonstrated, that farming was at least as important as fishing, if not more so, from the period of earliest settlement. As would be expected, sawmill and gristmill sites are named along streams and small rivers from the seventeenth century on, with those of larger mills and factories first appearing in the nineteenth century.

Aroostook County presents a different pattern, one typical of inland Maine. The largest number of occupational place names relate to logging and lumbering, a phenomenon also found on the upper Penobscot River in Penobscot and Piscataquis counties. Aroostook County, however, also includes numerous agricultural names, which reflects its large farming

district, and starch-mill sites, which provide evidence of the large potato crops.

There is a significant difference in incident-related and folk names between coastal regions and the inland sections. Off the mid-coast near Southport, there is a place called Collector Ledge, known for its tendency to "collect" fishermen's traps and boats. Another group of rocks is named the Cuckolds for having deluded sailors into hitting them. Conversely, the lumber industry dominated the more colorful names in northern Maine. Dead Horse Gulch was a place where horses were thrown after they died while working on a logging team, and Boot Swamp is a spot where a logger lost his boot while slogging through the mud. Ghost Landing Bar on the Allagash relates to a mid-nineteenth century logging incident. A logger was killed when a pine tree he was cutting fell on him. When the log was taken to the water to be floated to the mill, it was found to have a rotten heart and was left on the bank. Afterward, passers-by reported seeing a ghost beseeching them to put the log in the river so that the dead lumberman's soul could finally rest.

Implicit in these evolving nomenclature patterns is the question: Why do some place names become established while others disappear? The answer seems straightforward: those names most frequently used have the highest potential for survival. If that is correct, names utilized in spatial organization have a substantial advantage. They form the toponymic substructure for all governmental activities from tax collecting and school administration to police protection and water and sewer service. Similarly, land deeds, plots, maps, and even signs serve to establish this category of names. Some of these names have slipped from usage — for example, Bakerstown (Poland), Beaver Hill (Freedom), Pumpkin Town (New Cornish), and Van Burketts (Franklin).[28] However, as a group, these place names have proven exceedingly resilient.

Point specific, especially local, place names are less frequently reinforced by published records and are often familiar

As with many Maine towns, the naming of Franklin, shown here about 1900, reflected Mainers' pride in the new nation, its heroes, and its ideals. During the Federalist period towns were often named after prominent patriots of the Revolution. Sometimes, these names supplanted older designations; Franklin was formerly Van Burketts, the change, perhaps, indicating the diminished influence of a pioneer family in the locality. Courtesy Franklin Historical Society.

only locally. Not surprisingly, their survival is less certain. This is especially true for Indian names. Largely utilized by a nonliterate society, they were almost wholly dependent on oral transmission and long-term stability in social patterns. They were especially sensitive to shifting utilization of geographical regions. Some groups, including the Androscoggins and the Kennebecs, were either killed off or driven from their original lands. Others, including the Penobscots, Passamaquoddys, and Maliseets, saw their traditional migratory economies disrupted by reservation patterns and white intrusion. Many local names were lost, and a substantial number that have been resurrected through folk traditions are of questionable accuracy. Even those that have been rescued are little more than artifacts of a different time.

Obviously, some native names have survived. In the area around Old Town and upstream on the Penobscot, many are

still used, as are a substantial number around and above Passamaquoddy Bay. In both instances, these reflect proximity to continued Indian occupation and thereby the opportunity to transmit names through the generations. A number of these and other native names throughout the state have been even more solidly institutionalized by their inclusion on state highway maps.

Ironically, many of the Indian names that have been retained were altered to fit the boundary patterns of the European system. For example, in the Abnaki language, Penobscot indicated only the rocky section of the river between present-day Bangor and Old Town; Europeans applied it to the whole river, ignoring other native place names established for other portions of the river. Likewise, in Abnaki, Kenduskeag referred only to the outlet of that stream into the Penobscot River; again, Europeans extended it to the whole stream.

European point-specific names have suffered in much the same way as native counterparts. A substantial number have disappeared. A prime cause for their demise is the incompatibility of the name with spatially organized patterns. For example, although stubbornly holding on, Sand Hill in Augusta is gradually receding before Washington Street. Also, changing economic, transport, and other social patterns can leave a name with no specific reference or meaning. Chelsea Station now exists only as a sign at the Maine State Museum, the railroad having been dismantled and forgotten decades ago.

Some categories of names have endured. One group includes major (often boundary-related) geographic features such as streams, rivers, and significant anomalies. A second category is made up of geographic features pertinent to navigation. The permanence of these and other local names is always enhanced if they are included on charts or maps, especially those used by substantial sectors of the public.

Some locational names persist because of widespread local use or similarly named buildings or streets. There are local names that have lost all significance other than as street or building names — the Annabessacook Road running through North Yarmouth, for instance. Having been extracted from

their original context, they have little resilience and remain extant only as long as the building or road they signify remains intact. Examples of such alienated names are as close as the telephone book yellow pages. Until its recent merger, the Canal National Bank operated in southern and central Maine, even though the Cumberland and Oxford Canal was long defunct. The Abnaki Club is located in Augusta. Still, the most interesting name is the legendary Norumbega. Although long extinct as a geographic entity, it continues on with a life of its own. I remember reading some years ago that Hodding Carter II bought the Norumbega estate in Camden, Maine. I soon after found in an issue of *Art New England* a sculpture titled "Norumbega." I'm still looking for the predecessor of the Old Orchard Beach hotel and motel equipment supplier known as Atlantis Enterprises, Inc.

**P**lace names are relics of our past; they etch into our consciousness the overlays of culture that make up our regional history, giving permanence to past events and personalities, to older ways of thinking about landscape, to traditional metaphysics. In short, they preserve a regional character and at the same time reveal new dimensions to regional history. In Maine, place names reflect the different inhabitants of Maine and their historic patterns of settlement and migration, as well as their daily activities. They show that each group brought a different perspective to the state. Native Americans emphasized physical geography, food gathering, and the mythology that symbolized harmony with their environment. The French brought their Roman Catholic traditions; the British remembered the Old World in place names as they commemorated people and incidents in America. Finally, a new nation immortalized the heroes and events which set it free.

It is important, occasionally, to renew our understanding of place names in order to enrich our past. Pioneers like Lucius L. Hubbard, William F. Ganong, Fannie Hardy Eckstorm, and Ava Harriet Chadbourne have done Maine a great service by preserving the meaning of names on the land; they leave us the

task of fusing this rich place-name heritage with our understanding of Maine's history gained from other sources.

## NOTES

[1] Ava H. Chadbourne, *Maine Place Names and the People of Its Towns* (Portland, Maine: Bond Wheelwright, 1955); Phillip R. Rutherford, *The Dictionary of Maine Place-Names* (Freeport, Maine: Bond Wheelwright, 1970); Stanley Bearce Attwood, *The Length and Breadth of Maine* (Augusta, Maine: Kennebec Journal Print Shop, 1946).

[2] Lucius L. Hubbard, *Woods and Lakes of Maine* (Boston: Ticknor and Company, 1883); William F. Ganong, *Monographs of the Place-Nomenclature, Cartography, Historic Sites, Boundaries, and Settlement Origins of the Province of New Brunswick*, "Contributions to the History of New Brunswick," nos. 1-7, *Transactions* of the Royal Society of Canada, third series, sec. 11 (Ottawa, 1912-1928); Fannie Hardy Eckstorm, *Indian Place-Names of the Penobscot Valley and the Maine Coast* (Orono, Maine: University of Maine Press, 1941); John C. Huden, *Indian Place Names of New England* (New York: Museum of the American Indian, 1962).

[3] Frank W. Lovering, " 'Liberty Trail' Blazed Across Maine in Town Names," *Portland Sunday Telegram*, February 1, 1948.

[4] For the troubles of the Maliseets during the Revolution, see Frederick Kidder, *Military Operations in Eastern Maine and Nova Scotia During the Revolution* (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell, 1867), pp. 112, 117, 120; and Richard I. Hunt, Jr., "British-American Rivalry for the Support of the Indians of Maine and Nova Scotia, 1775-1783," M. A. thesis, University of Maine, 1973.

[5] Information on seasonal migratory patterns can be found in Bruce J. Bourque, "Prehistory of the Central Maine Coast," Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1971; Bourque, "Aboriginal Settlement and Subsistence on the Maine Coast," *Man in the Northeast* (Fall 1973), pp. 3-11; and Frank G. Speck, *Penobscot Man: The Life of a Forest Tribe in Maine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1940), pp. 35-36.

[6] The descriptive nature of native place names is noted in Eugene Green and Celia Millward, "Generic Terms for Water and Waterways in Algonquin Place-Names," *Anthropological Linguistics* 13 (January 1971): 47.

[7] The data on specific place names are taken from Huden, *Indian Place Names of New England*, and Eckstorm, *Indian Place-Names of the Penobscot Valley and the Maine Coast*, unless otherwise indicated.

[8]For information on agriculture, see Bourque, "Aboriginal Settlement and Subsistence on the Maine Coast," p. 10; and Alvin H. Morrison, "Dawnland Developments: Toward Better Understanding of Wabanaki Participation in the Fur Trade, 1500-1700," paper presented at the 75th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, D.C., November 17-21, 1976, pp. 3, 9-10. Original sources include Samuel de Champlain, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain*, general ed. H. P. Biggar (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1922-1936), vol. 1, pp. 321, 326-30; John Smith, "A Description of New-England," in *Travels and Works of Captain John Smith*, ed. Arthur G. Bradley (Edinburgh: J. Grant, 1910), vol. 1, pp. 203; H. A. Ford, ed., *History of Penobscot County* (Cleveland: Williams, Chase & Company, 1882), p. 31; quotes John de Laet's *Novus Arbus*, 1633; Mark Lescarbot, *The History of New France*, ed. W. L. Grant (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1907-1914), vol. 3, pp. 195, 250.

[9]See Green and Millward, "Generic Terms for Water and Waterways," p. 48.

[10]Communication from Wayne Newall, former director of the Wabanaki Bilingual Educational Program, June 11, 1980.

[11]*Ibid.*

[12]Studies that generally endorse this view include William D. Williamson, *The History of the State of Maine* (Hallowell: Glazier, Masters & Company, 1832), vol. 1, pp. 463-84; Speck, *Penobscot Man*, pp. 16-19; and Dean R. Snow, "Wabanaki Family Hunting Territories," *American Anthropologist* 70 (1968): 1143-51.

[13]Gordon M. Day, "The Identity of the Sokokis," *Ethnohistory* 12 (Summer 1965): 237-48.

[14]Eckstorm, *Indian Place-Names of the Penobscot Valley and the Maine Coast*, pp. xxvi-xxvii; Eckstorm, "The Indians of Maine," in *Maine: A History*, ed. Louis Clinton Hatch (New York: American Historical Society, 1919), vol. 1, pp. 44-52.

[15]Alvin H. Morrison, "Dawnland Decisions: Seventeenth-Century Wabanaki Leaders and their Responses to the Differential Contact in the Overlap Area of New France and New England," Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1974; James D. Wherry, "A Flow Chart: Depicting Tribal Distributions, Possible Shifts and Possible Name Changes as Derived from French Sources of the 17th and 18th Centuries," unpublished paper, ca. 1977. For tribal shifts, see "Treaty at Halifax, August 15, 1749...," Maine Historical Society Manuscript Collections, misc. box 38/8; "Treaty at Halifax, February 23, 1760...," Maine Historical Society Manuscript Collections, misc. box 38/8; Karl V. Teeter, "The Main Features of Malecite-Passamaquoddy Grammar," vol. 65, pp. 191-249, in Jesse Sawyer, ed., *Studies in American Indian Languages* (Berkeley, California, 1971); [Ronald Banks], "Survey of Massachusetts' Relationship with the Passamaquoddy Tribe," unpublished paper, 1971, pp. 4-8.

[16]Guillaum del' Isle, *L'Amerique Septentrional, Dressee dur les Observations de Mrs. de L'Academie Royale des Sciences* (Paris, 1700); del' Isle, *Carte du Canada ou de la Nouvelle France* (Paris, 1703); *Carte de la Nouvelle France ... Dressee dur les Memoires les Plus Nouveaux Recueilles Pour l'Establissement de les Compagne Francoise Occedent* (early 1700s); Joseph Aubery, *Carte de Canada avec Partie du Cotes de Nouvelle Angleterres et de l'Acadie* (1713); *L'Acadia, le Province de Sagadahock e Maine, ... e Connecticut* (late 1700s); Jo. Blaeu, *Extrema Americae c versus Boream, ubi Terra Nova, Nova Francia, Adjacentiaq* (Amsterdam, ca. 1650-1660); section of Jonathan Mitchell's 1755 map representing Maine in Henry S. Burrage, *Maine in the Northeastern Boundary Controversy* (Portland: State Printers, 1919), facing p. 34. All maps, excepting the Mitchell map, are part of the Baxter Rare Map Collection at the Maine State Archives.

[17]Samuel Purchas, ed., "The Description of the Country of Mawooshan Discovered by the English in the Yeere 1602 .... in Hakluytus, *Posthumus, or Purchase his Pilgrims* (Glasgow: J. MacLehose & Sons, 1907), vol. 19, pp. 400-05; William Pitkin, *Map of the Eastern Country, ca. 1690* (Maine Historical Society, Manuscript Collections, misc. box 38/9); "An Estimate of the Inhabitants, English and Indian, of the North American Colonies, Also their Extent in Miles — 1726," *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 20 (1866): 7-9.

[18]The arrival of Europeans, both transient and permanent, to Maine shores, and more important, the dates of their arrival, are covered in Edwin A. Churchill, "The Founding of Maine, 1600-1640: A Revisionist Interpretation," *Maine Historical Society Quarterly* 18 (Summer 1978): 21-54.

[19]Maps relating to Norumbega include the following: copy of world map by Diego Ribero, 1529, in Baxter Rare Maps; "Tracings of Verrazzano's Course on the Maiollo (1527) and Girolamo da Verrazzano (1524) Maps," in Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages, A.D. 500-1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 321; Jasomo di Gastaldi (1556), and Gerard Mercator maps (1569) in J. G. Kohl, *History of the Discovery of Maine* vol. 1 of *The Documentary History of the State of Maine*, ed. William Willis (Portland: Bailey and Noyes, 1869), p. 226. See also Sigmund Diamond, "Norumbega: New England Xanadu," *American Neptune* 11 (April 1951): 95-107.

[20]Champlain, *Works of Champlain*, vol. 1; Samuel Eliot Morison, *Samuel de Champlain: Father of New France* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), pp. 45-60.

[21]Smith's map of New England with his portrait on the upper corner has been reproduced countless times. Variations of the map were published by other nationalities, especially the Dutch. Several can be found in the Baxter Rare Map Collection.

[22]"French Map of the East Coast of America, ca. 1543," in Kohn, *Discovery of Maine*, p. 351. See also [Edwin A. Churchill], "Discussion of Changing

Conceptions of Atlantic Coast in Early Centuries of Exploration," Appendix C, Bruce Bourque, ed., *Historic Shipping*, vol. 3 of *Summary and Analysis of Cultural Resource Information on the Continental Shelf from the Bay of Fundy to Cape Hatteras* (Boston: Institute of Conservation Archaeology at Peabody Museum of Harvard University, 1979).

[23]Lawrence C. Wroth, *The Voyages of Giovanni de Verrazzano, 1524-1528* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 140-41.

[24]The best sources for these early grants include Henry S. Burrage, *The Beginnings of Colonial Maine, 1602-1658*, chapters 9, 11-14, 16, 19, 21-22; Robert Moody, "The Maine Frontier, 1607-1763," Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1933; Ronald Banks, "Grants and Charters," in *The Maine Bicentennial Atlas: An Historical Survey*, ed. Gerald E. Morris (Portland: Maine Historical Society, 1976), pp. 2, 4-5 (text), and plates 4, 7, 10; Churchill, "Too Great the Challenge," chapter 5. Most of the grants can be found in Mary Frances Farnum, *The Farnum Papers, 1603-1871*, vols. 7 and 8 of *Documentary History of Maine* (Portland, 1901-1902).

[25]Harold W. Wright, "Designing Our Wild Land Townships," *The Northern* [Great Northern Paper Company] 5 (December 1925), pp. 14, 304; Lawrence D. Bridgham, "Maine Public Lands, 1781-1795, Claims, Trespassers, and Sales," Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1959; David C. Smith, "Maine and its Public Domain: Land Disposal on the Northeastern Frontier," in *The Frontier in American Development*, ed. David M. Ellis, et al. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), pp. 113-37; Margaret F. Wilde, "History of the Public Land Policy of Maine, 1620-1820," M. A. thesis, University of Maine, 1932.

[26]Unless otherwise indicated, Chadbourne, *Maine Place Names* is the source used for town names.

[27]Unless otherwise indicated, Rutherford, *Dictionary of Maine Place Names* is the source used for point-specific names.

[28]Attwood, *Length and Breadth of Maine*, pp. 25-28.

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