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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

To the Webster-Ashburton Treaty: A Study in Anglo-American Relations, 1783-1843. By Howard Jones. (Chapel Hill, N. C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1977. Pp. 251. Hardcover. \$16.00.)

In this monograph on the background and negotiation of the Treaty of Washington of 1842, better known as the Webster-Ashburton Treaty, Howard Jones has provided students of diplomatic history with the first modern, scholarly synthesis of the substantial body of historical literature which has been devoted to the many aspects of this key Anglo-American agreement. His purpose, stated in his preface, is to show how the United States and Great Britain used the tactics of compromise in the treaty negotiations, thereby reducing threats of a third Anglo-American war. He also feels that there is a need to revise the harsh conclusions of some historians about the treaty and the role of its negotiators, Secretary of State Daniel Webster and Lord Alexander Ashburton.

The author devotes some of his early chapters to an analysis of episodes like the *Caroline* affair, the McLeod case, and friction arising from the slave trade, all of which exacerbated the border and boundary problems with which much of the book is concerned. His summary of the background of what he calls "The Great Northeastern Boundary Gap" takes the story from the Treaty of Paris of 1783, with the diplomats' mistaken reliance on the Mitchell map, through the settlement of the St. Croix River problem, the negotiations before and after the War of 1812, and the abortive award of the king of the Netherlands. A separate chapter is devoted to the Aroostook War, with a focus on Maine politics and the lumber trade as well as on the international and regional implications of this nearly bloodless conflict.

In his coverage of the treaty negotiations themselves, Jones sees Lord Ashburton, retired head of the great banking firm of Baring Brothers, as an excellent choice to represent British and Canadian interests. Unlike some recent historians, he views Lord Ashburton's American wife, his friendship with Webster, and his earlier acquisition for his firm of Maine lands, purchased from his father-in-law, William Bingham, not as potential for conflicts of interest, but as assets. The point that the Bingham lands were not even in the disputed Maine area is brought home to the reader by a map showing their location. Webster is presented as a skilled negotiator, making good, and proper, use of the Maine lawyer, publisher and politician, F.O.J. Smith, to influence public opinion for the treaty. Both Webster and Ashburton are cleared of any dishonorable dealing in the famous "battle of the maps," where the American historian Jared Sparks found in France a marked map, presumably used by the peace-makers of 1783, showing the British claim, and the British discovered a similar map outlining the territory claimed by the Americans. After reviewing the considerable and controversial literature on this subject, Jones concludes that these and other marked maps which were found later represented only proposals by individual negotiators of the 1783 treaty.

Contemporaries and later historians have held divergent opinions about an agreement which was clearly a compromise. Both in Maine and New Brunswick voices were raised at the time denouncing the Webster-Ashburton Treaty as a "give-away," and there have been occasional echoes of that opinion since. Jones regards the settlement as beneficial to both countries. The United States acquired not only fertile land but also a strengthened border, especially with the transfer of Rouses' Point in New York and its misplaced fort. Great Britain retained its important military route from the Bay

of Fundy to Quebec, along with some good timberlands. Both countries and the British North American colonies, for whom the British negotiated, profited from the relaxation of international tensions.

This well-written monograph has good maps and pictures, and impressive footnotes and bibliography. The author's research has covered a wide variety of manuscript sources in the United States, Great Britain and Canada, as well as much of the pertinent printed material on the treaty and its background. It is regrettable that in making such a comprehensive study, he did not also explore the resources of such archives and libraries as that of the Maine Historical Society where he would have found the Barclay and F.O.J. Smith papers, or the Saint John New Brunswick Museum and other Maritime archives. Since his coverage of the early boundary negotiations is understandably brief, a useful addition to his secondary references would be Ronald and Julie Tallman's 1972 *Acadiensis* article, "The Diplomatic Search for the St. Croix River, 1796-1798," the most complete recent discussion of the subject. In any case, *To the Webster-Ashburton Treaty* will remain the authoritative work on the treaty for the foreseeable future.

Alice R. Stewart
University of Maine

The Journals of John Edwards Godfrey, Bangor, Maine, 1863-1869. (Rockland, Maine: Courier-Gazette, Inc., 1979. Pp. 442. Paper. \$8.95.)

Books about Maine and its history are of varying degrees of importance and excellence. To a lover of Maine all are worth a try, and one who thirsts may drink, if only

to choke and swallow hard, as well as to enjoy. But authors too have their disappointments in discovering too late that another has chosen the same subject and is ready to publish. Painful too are the headaches of lost notes, misplaced files, unmet deadlines, and poor sales, not to mention bona fide critics who save their roughest treatment for the amateur's careless use of facts to knock out an otherwise valuable study. In spite of this, what is more exciting for a creative mind than to find new sources of historical information and to make fresh interpretation of the old? *The Journals of John Edwards Godfrey*, written by a judge of probate in the crucial years of the Civil War, describing the daily life and social and political events of fellow Bangoreans in a book of five hundred pages, are a creative writer's dream.

Occasionally book critics in the *Quarterly* have confessed a personal interest in the book under review. For this reviewer, *The Journals of John Edwards Godfrey*, in substance and implication, are a microcosm containing all the ingredients needed for teaching and writing local history. Town and regional history is the proving ground for state and national history. This sounds simple enough, but to show it for a given fifty-year period of the nineteenth century presents inexhaustible ramifications. In 1860 over 65,000 Maine-born natives lived in other states of the Union, making their impressions on national history as governors and congressmen and contributing to the industrial and professional life of the nation. But whether the *Journals* stand on their own as a reliable record or are used in historical analysis depends upon whether they meet the tests of accuracy, honesty, style, and substance.

To judge the *Journals* is to know the manner of man who recorded them. If James Vickery, the editor and current president of the Bangor Historical Society, had not given us, in his introduction, a precise and clear account of

Godfrey's life in nineteenth-century Bangor, much would have been revealed in Godfrey's own full and lively entries. From first to last, in instinct and performance, Godfrey was an historian. He was a member of the Maine Historical Society, a contributor to the Society's *Collections*, and, in 1864, one of the founders of the Bangor Historical Society. He was the author of the "Annals of Bangor," published in the *History of Penobscot County* (1882), and is listed twenty times in Joseph Williamson's *Bibliography of Maine* (1896) for minor essays. In the period covered by the *Journals*, he was anything but in his dotage, having only reached the magic age of his mid-fifties when a fruitful past had made any dream of the future for Bangor seem possible. In his own mind, a comparable balance had been struck between the insatiable desire for wealth inherent in Bangor's burgeoning lumber economy and the need for improving the quality of the city in its cultural growth. It was too soon, he supposed, for the suddenly rich to have tastes equal to their means.

Godfrey's span of life was the span of the century. He had seen, as a lad of five, his father's house and library destroyed by the British in 1814, when the Redcoats sailed up the river from Castine and sacked Hampden and raided Bangor. Twenty years later, after studying law, he settled in Bangor. He had seen Maine grow. No Maine town at this time was free from shanties and unsightly streets. A few fine houses had been built, but, for many years, there would still be bawdy houses and the dives and saloons of the Devil's Half Acre, as each spring river-drivers and woodsmen, starved for sin, returned from a long winter in the wilds of the north. Diaries begun in this period are not extant. But from the later work done by Godfrey in his "Annals of Bangor," his interest was constant and to publish his observations must have been his intent. His legal talents would nurture it, and his long tenure as county probate judge would give him access to

personal history, which is the charm of the book. Honesty characterized Godfrey's life, and frankness was a trait; rancor and backbiting are hardly visible in his observations. Justice was a basic principle of his profession.

As for style and substance, the *Journals* are unlike the conventional diaries of the times. Entries are addressed to "My Dear Sons," whether the two boys were in Buenos Aires or in Bangor, or fighting with the Union army in Port Hudson, or ranging Vinal Haven for visible grass to pasture sheep. Family centered in only a limited way, but he mentioned many times the names of his townsmen and the everchanging spread of the city. Diverse subjects are of state and national import. Weather is noted with welcome relief from the boring daily inclusion of most diariests of the period, often only inferred. If the day were bitterly cold, they were "snug and snowed in," and if they ventured outdoors they "lunged from house to house without benefit of snow rollers." In late March, it was feared the three lower bridges across the Kenduskeag would go out, and they probably did. And, again, in mid-April, if unwelcome snow was falling, there would always be the mud season and the perennial need for boardwalks when the ladies were a stylish ankle length. Because he had a mind that was always with it, Godfrey's current comments were often bolstered with references to previous events.

Literary style was no trouble for Godfrey. As the editor points out in the introduction, as an avid reader of the best nineteenth-century literature, Godfrey had collected a library of Americana, largely devoted to colonial and Maine history. His letters to the *Bangor Whig and Courier*, written in 1856, portray a use of words that shows perception and expresses pride and hope in the future of the state. On a trip to Grand Falls, New Brunswick, he was more than ever impressed with the unsurpassed fertility of

the soil in Maine, and those who lived in the older settled parts of the state could hardly imagine the beauty of the Aroostook region and the thrift of the people. Fort Fairfield was a gem, and such landscapes were rarely witnessed. But driving the hundred miles from Milford to Linneus was a melancholy sight. Houses were deserted, with grounds grown up to bushes; newly painted houses were seldom seen. Houlton was a new world when he arrived, so fresh and cheerful did everything appear. To bring to a thriving state economy the energy and determination of these people in the north, Godfrey, like his friend John A. Poor, became an ardent promoter of railroad development.

Maine's growth was Bangor's growth. Both shared in whatever prosperity came to the Penobscot. For years the lumber industry had flourished there. But even before the advent of the early, short-lived railway lines, lumber, as building material, had been sent coastwise with equally useful bits of pig iron from the Katahdin area and slate quarried in quantity from the Piscataquis region. Bangor, too, in its coastwise trade, picked up profit from the millions of paving blocks cut from the granite of Waldo County and, to some extent, from the lime quarries of Knox. Maine, in many ways, was engaged in building the South and West long before the Pacific states were added to the Union. Bangoreans with moderate incomes became the first "rusticators" to cooler spots along the Maine coast, going down river to Northport's camp-meeting grounds, to Dillingham's Point in Camden, and to Hancock Point, and later to Acadia on Frenchman's Bay. So local history becomes regional and state history.

Many people in these years were on the move. State promoters urged their migration to northern Maine, but more went to the cities south and to the West and Far West as the mining frontiers opened after the gold rush

in California. Earlier migrations west had drawn substantially from the logging operations on the Penobscot to the pine belt of the upper Mississippi. After the Civil War, volunteers who had left the state for the first time saw adventure in the westward movement and were loath to return to the farm. Before the war Godfrey's own two sons had engaged in sheep raising in South America. Frank, the youngest, was only twenty-seven years old in 1867 and had passed through all phases of life. He had been a sailor, a shepard in Buenos Aires, an officer in the Union army, and a fighter against the Indians during their last stand in the Far West. He had roughed it in Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Utah, and California, and then returned to Bangor and read law, finally settling in California. It was in the decennial census of 1870 that Maine showed its only decline in population.

Many of Frank's adventures are included in the *Journals*. When Godfrey himself journeyed beyond the mountains as far west as Chicago, his narrative is filled with references to former residents of Bangor, some of whom he visited en route, their family connections, and the honor that had come to them in their adopted state. Scores of those active in city and state affairs are mentioned by name and are listed in the book's excellent index. When in the West Godfrey made his own observations. The Great Lakes looked like an inland sea. In Ohio the barns were sheds, and the houses showed few signs of comfortable living. It was fifty years after the famed "Ohio fever" of 1816, when the natural elements had sent shivering Yankees across the Appalachians to the hazards of a new frontier. Stories of this dismal trek are told in Godfrey's "Annals of Bangor." Thus, Maine history identifies with national history and, in the telling, reveals patterns of continuity. If history is narrative, then the *Journals* are such in embryo.

A special debt of gratitude is owed to James B. Vickery, who painstakingly transcribed and edited the manuscripts, and to Mrs. Ivan Orcutt of Portland and Mrs. Charles H. Sawyer of Edgecomb, granddaughters of John Edwards Godfrey, who generously funded their publication. A second volume, ending about the time of Godfrey's death in 1884, is in preparation.

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The Archaeology of New England. By Dean R. Snow. (New York: Academic Press, Incorporated, 1980. Pp. 379. Hardcover. \$32.50.)

Rarely does an archaeologist produce a book that can easily introduce a complex subject to the public while stimulating reflection and reanalysis by his colleagues. Dean Snow has accomplished this task in a well-illustrated introduction to Maine prehistory (13,000 to 300 years ago). This book, the first general text on New England prehistory since 1935, is written for the college student and the interested layman, but should be useable by gifted high-school students.

The book's organization is a new approach in archaeology. An introduction easily introduces modern archaeological research aims and techniques. There follows an intriguing chapter describing the Indian population and lifestyles of New England at 1600 A.D., which could profitably be used in high-school courses on

regional history. Having established a picture of Indian life as a comparative base, Snow then proceeds chronologically from the earliest inhabitants toward the present in a discussion of the evidence for past environments and lifestyles.

His interpretive approach to dry stones and bones is the great strength of this book, providing an easier grasp of the true interests of archaeologists. We study stones and bones, but we attempt to understand how men have made a living and dealt with their fellow men. For example, pages 202-16 reconstruct the lifeways of the people of the Moorehead complex: Snow envisions them as maritime hunters using large dugout canoes with organized crews, crew leaders, and social mechanisms to maintain the organization. This adaptation produced the "Red Paint" graves and a religious cult that fueled a long-distance maritime trade network that reached to northern Labrador.

Snow was an assistant professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Maine at Orono from 1969 until 1972. He was the first modern research archaeologist to work in Maine, making the book disproportionately (and pleasantly) Maine-oriented. The strength of the book, as previously stated, lies in Snow's quickness to use archaeological data to reconstruct past behavior. However, most of Snow's colleagues will have specific disagreements with many of his interpretations, due mostly to the fact that he is five or more years out-of-touch with new data, at least from Maine.

For example, Snow expresses a view (pp. 178-79 and elsewhere) that shell heaps (middens) contain few bits of data other than shells; and that other sites that contain little shell (located mostly in upper estuaries) were the main village locations containing all the artifacts. He also feels that the sixteenth-century Indian seasonal cycle of

wintering in the interior and summering on the coast applied to most of the last 3,000 years. He developed these ideas after working on the Damariscotta oyster shell heaps (which don't contain much artifactual material) and the Grindle site (a specialized late-Ceramic summer-fall habitation). Both sites are atypical; he never did dig a "typical" Maine clamshell midden.

A decade of research since Snow departed Maine has shown that the "typical" shell heap does in fact contain many data and represents multi-seasonal use. Some, at least, represent year-round use during the past 5,000 years. Snow has built his summer-coastal/winter-inland settlement hypothesis into an extension back in time of his circa-1600 population estimates. Evidence from the Turner Farm on North Haven, at least, indicates that there may have been many more year-round coastal resident groups in the past than he considers.

Finally, since 1972 Snow has maintained an obsession with the importance of woodland caribou to Maine Indian subsistence patterns. However, of the tens of thousands of deer family bones identified from Maine sites, only a handful are caribou. On page 200 he gives a ludicrous interpretation of a Beothuck (Newfoundland) Indian hunting corral, a caribou drive-fence, as a "stout fence to protect the hunters." It is evident that Snow does not understand the place of caribou in Maine subsistence patterns, or caribou behavior in general.

In sum, *The Archaeology of New England* is very valuable in its behavioral/reconstructive approach to Maine archaeology. Read it and enjoy it; but don't believe everything you read.

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Commission