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Book Reviews

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BOOK REVIEWS

Maine: A Bibliography of Its History. Edited by John D. Haskell, Jr. [Bibliographies of New England History, v. 2] (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1977. Pp. xlix, 279. \$25.00.)

Maine: A Bibliography of Its History is the second volume to be published under the auspices of the Committee for a New England Bibliography in its Bibliographies of New England series. The book is tall (28 cm.) and sturdy with an attractive format. The type faces and page layouts are easy on the eye. Best of all the paper is a durable, acid-free stock.

The bibliography is arranged in three parts based on a very sensible geographic base. The first section contains bibliographies and works relating to the entire state or to more than one county. The second section includes titles restricted to subjects within a single county. The final and most extensive section is divided into minor civil divisions alphabetically arranged. Subject access is provided by an extensive seventy page index. Monographs and articles dealing with Maine and other states will be enumerated in the final volume of the series.

Maine: A Bibliography of Its History "is confined to published works — principally books and magazines — written in whole or in part with a conscious historical purpose' which treat Maine-related subjects. For editorial purposes Maine has been defined by its present boundaries, and writings relating to this area are cited regardless of time-frame. Published diaries, personal papers, journals, account books, travel narratives, collective bibliography, and edited series of published government archival and vital records have been included when they contribute significantly to the printed record of a locality. Excluded are biographies of individuals. The

stated terminal date for inclusion of works in 1975, although some later works brought to the attention of the editor have been included, e.g., John E. Frost's *Maine Genealogy: A Bibliographical Guide* (item 428) published by the Maine Historical Society in 1977. The first-time user of this bibliography is advised to read the introduction carefully for a complete discussion of the scope of the work.

Using the criteria outlined above, 5,355 citations to Maine local history were identified through examination of major institutional holdings in Maine and New England. Also inspected were the published catalogs of the Library of Congress. Immediately one wonders if earlier printed bibliographies were consulted. Apparently not, for titles such as *Manual and Historical Sketch of the Congregational Church in Andover, Maine* by F. V. Norcross (1891) and *Confessions of Faith and Covenant with a Catalog of the Members and Brief Historical Notices from the First Congregational Church, Yarmouth* (1848) are not to be found. Both titles may be identified in Drew B. Hall's *Reference List on Maine Local History* (1901; item 518), Norcross on p. 843, and the Congregational Church item on p. 876.

While the method of examining library holdings is a sure one in bibliographic terms, what of those titles not held in the library collections examined? In addition to searching the existing collections, could not published bibliographies have been searched also? Would not a significant increase in the number of citations have been the result? Fugitive titles not found after a diligent search could be given the annotation "No copy located." There is no more certain way to bring lost items to light than a note of this sort in a comprehensive bibliography.

Of greater importance than the occasional lost title like those identified above is a serious omission in the citations to Civil War material. The only regimental history

identified appears to be John J. Pullen's work, *A Shower of Stars: The Medal of Honor and the 27th Maine* (item 1009). None of the fourteen other book length regimental histories identified by William B. Jordan in *Maine in the Civil War: A Bibliographical Guide* are listed. Certainly these titles are held in the institutional collections examined.

Another troublesome point involves the whole question of editions. The introduction states that for works of more than one edition, the latest only is cited and the date of the first edition, if known, is indicated in parentheses. This is not always the case. The single volume reprint edition of Louis C. Hatch's *Maine: A History* (item 546) has no annotation describing the earlier multivolume edition. Occasionally the latest edition is not identified and reference is made only to an earlier edition. Alfred G. Hempstead's *The Penobscot Boom* (item 564) contains no reference to the 1975 reprint. More importantly, the 1970 reprint of Moses Greenleaf's *A Survey of the State of Maine* (item 491) is not mentioned. The problem of editions has plagued bibliographers endlessly and no doubt will continue to do so. Readers noting other omissions or corrections are encouraged to write to the editor. Addenda and corrections will be published as part of the final volume of the series.

The reviewer wishes that a comprehensive list of serial titles examined had been published in the bibliography. The list of serial abbreviations (pp. xliii-xlv) is by no means indicative of all the titles surveyed. Apparently such local and regional magazines as *Down East* and *Yankee* were examined for their entire runs, but what other titles were also examined cover to cover? An analysis of the entries in the bibliography reveals hundreds of additional serial titles cited. Without a complete list the reader is unsure of the limits of the editor's research in periodic literature. Perhaps the final volume in the series could also include a list of all journal titles examined in their entirety.

Ease of access to the information contained in a bibliography like this is important to the user. Although the primary method of searching depends upon the book's geographical base, the index is an excellent supplementary finding aid. Items may be identified by subject or by author, editor, or compiler. Geographical references and "see" references are handled well.

There are several unexpected bonuses in *Maine: A Bibliography of Its History*. The most welcome is the inclusion of many Maine state government agency histories. Another plus is a short section entitled "Supplementary Bibliographies and Guides." The books listed enumerate some of the material excluded from the bibliography by editorial decision. Examples of works which may be identified by the titles listed here are doctoral dissertations, biographical works on individuals, and historical fiction. Other noteworthy points are the informative annotations which appear as needed and the location of items not listed in the *National Union Catalog* or in the catalogs of the Library of Congress.

The Committee for a New England Bibliography is to be congratulated for its fine achievement. The Committee's editor has conscientiously identified, transcribed, and classified the writings on Maine history on a scale never before attempted. *Maine: A Bibliography of Its History* will be appreciated by researchers for years to come. No individual or institution dealing in any way with Maine history can do without this book.

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Tombstones and Paving Blocks: The History of the Maine Granite Industry. By Roger L. Grindle. (Rockland, Maine: Courier-Gazette, Inc., 1977. Pp. xi, 277. \$11.95.)

Roger Grindle has produced a much needed account of the Maine granite industry during the period 1877-1945. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the granite industry was an important industry in Maine which ranked among the three leading states in granite production. Maine granite was marketed as far west as Chicago, St. Louis, and Houston, and as far south as Yorktown, Virginia.

The development of the granite industry is described in conjunction with the problems and needs of the industry's labor force and the efforts of granite workers' unions to protect the working man. The author points out that marketing was very competitive, and exploitation of Maine labor was one means by which the industry remained competitive.

Despite the relatively weak labor movement in Maine, the Granite Cutters Union, the Paving Cutters Union, and the Quarry Workers Union experienced several successes with respect to working hours and wages paid in the industry. Union successes, for the most part, were achieved by organized workers at individual granite mining firms and not by the unions acting on behalf of all Maine granite workers.

While native labor was used to develop the granite industry, foreign labor, particularly Italian immigrants, also played an important role. The conflict between native and immigrant labor, however, sapped the strength of the labor movement and limited the successes of unionism.

The granite industry began to decline during the second decade of the twentieth century. The cost of granite, the availability of less costly competing materials, changes in policy pertaining to the construction of federal buildings,

and World War I severely hurt the granite industry. The author very ably describes the impact of the industry's decline upon the granite producing areas of Maine.

The change in federal policy with respect to building contracts which seriously hurt the Maine granite industry, demonstrates the extent to which the industry depended upon government for its development. Like Carter Goodrich and other American economic historians, Roger Grindle clearly shows that laissez-faire economics is a misnomer as applied to state and federal policies in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Maine granite was used to construct federal, state, and municipal buildings, including post offices, courthouses, custom houses, bridges and other public structures. In addition, Maine granite was used to construct cathedrals, churches, and large office buildings. Government contracts and large scale construction contracts served to stabilize the industry, particularly during a period of substantial economic instability caused by depression, war, and other factors. Nevertheless, there were frequent fluctuations in the fortunes of the Maine granite industry, and the winter months were traditionally the slowest period for the industry.

The major achievement of the author is his description of the growth of an important Maine industry about which little has been known. The author recognizes that additional research is required to provide a comprehensive understanding of this and other important Maine industries. He further suggests that an economic history describing the growth and development of Maine industries would significantly contribute to the understanding of Maine history. I enthusiastically support this suggestion.

In order to understand the actual contribution of the granite and other Maine industries to the economic

growth of the state, one must be able to put them in proper perspective. In terms of the Maine granite industry, for example, more information is needed about the entrepreneurs, labor policies as compared or contrasted to labor policies of other industries, and marketing methods.

Grindle points out that in 1901, Maine led the nation in terms of value of granite production, but without accurate knowledge of other Maine industries, the reader cannot evaluate the significance of the granite industry to the state. A comparison with other Maine industries with respect to value of output, employment, capital investment, and wages would permit an evaluation of the role of the granite industry in Maine's growth and development. The annual reports of the Bureau of Industrial and Labor Statistics provide the necessary data for comparison and evaluation.

In 1901 when Maine led the nation with respect to the value of granite produced, pulp and paper, lumber, and textile manufacturing significantly exceeded the granite industry in value of output, wages, employment, and capital investment. The boot and shoe industry, on the other hand, ranked below granite in all of these variables.

Another area of importance and interest is the role of the entrepreneurs. Some of the questions raised by this topic are: Why did entrepreneurs invest in the granite industry during the initial stages of its development? Did granite industry entrepreneurs invest in other industries inside and outside of Maine? To what extent was the industry financed by out-of-state capital? How did the industry's entrepreneurs react as the granite industry began to decline?

The labor policies and marketing methods of the granite industry's entrepreneurs are other areas of interest and importance. These policies may not have been

different from those of other industries, but an understanding of the practices of other industries would help evaluate the labor and marketing methods of the granite industry.

Roger Grindle's intent was to focus on the growth of the Maine granite industry and its impact upon the working population. He describes the different firms, the various centers of granite production, and the activities of the granite workers with information obtained from Rockland area newspapers and the *Granite Cutters International Journal*. These sources provide very interesting information that is often unavailable in other sources.

Although the author's paragraphs often contain several topics which is sometimes confusing, the reader obtains a good picture of the life of the working man in Maine's granite industry. I hope the author continues his research, and shares it with everyone having an interest in Maine history.

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Josiah Volunteered: A Collection of Diaries, Letters and Photographs of Josiah H. Sturtevant, His Wife, Helen, and His Four Children. Edited by Arnold H. Sturtevant. (Farmington, Maine: Knowlton & McLeary Co., 1977. Pp. 559. \$14.95.)

The term "labor of love" sometimes connotes a mountain going into labor to produce a mouse. Arnold Sturtevant's *Josiah Volunteered*, while the proverbial labor of love, is no mouse. Inspired by the nation's bicentennial, he has painstakingly collected letters and pictures to tell his family's story. And while Sturtevant is the first to admit

that “there is probably nothing very ‘extraordinary’ about my great-grandparents,” he has made available in this handsome book what is all too often lacking to the historian — the daily lives, loves, and vicissitudes of an obscure but interesting 19th century family.

Despite the title the bulk of the book does not deal with the Civil War. Josiah’s war letters do shed light on the monotonous daily life of the soldier and on his deep religious convictions, which were shared by his family. One senses a certain priggishness in Josiah as he bemoans the sinners with whom he comes into contact, first as an enlisted man in the 17th Maine Regiment, then as a second lieutenant in the 80th U.S. Colored Infantry.

One wishes the editor could have dug up additional information on Josiah’s 1865-1884 activities, which are dealt with in a single paragraph (p. 141). Granted the family was all together at the Fayette Corner, Maine, homestead during this period, so there were few if any letters exchanged, but one wonders about the nature of Josiah’s stint in the legislature and his personal relationship with politicians like James G. Blaine, Eugene Hale, and Joe Manley. Judging from the government jobs he snagged, he had excellent Republican connections. One thing becomes crystal clear as the letters commence in 1884: patronage jobs paid poorly. Josiah served as Senate elevator operator (he describes his duties in fascinating detail in a November 20, 1884, letter), in the Senate post office, and in the Treasury and most of the time his family had to scrounge and scrape for enough money to buy even the most modest Christmas and birthday gifts, to pay school tuitions, and generally to keep body and soul together. To this reviewer, Josiah Sturtevant’s government experience provided fascinating insights into the sacrifices — monetary and in terms of family separation — necessitated when the family breadwinner held one of the

paltry patronage jobs so avidly sought by 19th century party faithful. One suspects that Josiah could have done just as well, if not better, tilling his Fayette Corner acres, and this warm, close family could have remained together.

The heroine of the story is Helen Ormsby Sturtevant, Josiah's wife and the mother of May, Chester, Charles, and Maude. She is tough and resilient, and she has a delightful sense of humor, whether describing family and friends dashing for the outhouse after eating bad mutton (June, 1889) or recounting her wild dancing around the farmhouse kitchen when she learned Josiah was to become an officer ("I flew around the room pretty lively," March 6, 1863). She, more than anyone, held the family together when its members were scattered. She fought gallantly but unsuccessfully for the life of her youngest child Maude who died of lung disease in California in 1891. (One of the bonuses of the book is a series of vivid glimpses of pre-freeway California). She took in boarders and washing to help make ends meet in Washington. And even at the worst of times her religion and good humor carried her through.

Josiah Volunteered leaves something to be desired in terms of organization. From the outset, the reader is deluged with family names, and while there is a genealogy included in the appendices, it is inconveniently located. A Who's Who at the beginning would have been most helpful. The history of the Sturtevant family's connection with the Fayette Corner homestead is also located toward the back of the book when it would have been most welcome at the beginning. Countless names bob up in the letters with little or no identification. Doubtless many have been lost, but those that could have been identified should have been footnoted. Instead the editor makes little use of footnotes and thereby detracts somewhat from the reader's understanding of the people and events.

But on balance, Arnold Sturtevant has done an excellent job of assembling letters and pictures and in a very real sense bringing his family to life. We know what they hoped and feared; what medicines they choked down (Appendix 21); what fruit trees they planted (Appendix 22); and, in letter after letter, how they spoke and what expressions Maine people used in the 19th century. There are monotonous and repetitious stretches in the letters, but, on the whole, this is an engrossing book.

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