

Iconic Collections Librarian Defined Era of Modernization with Timeless Civility

June 30, 2020 marked the close of a storied chapter in Maine Historical Society's own history with the official retirement of Nicholas (Nick) Noyes, Collections Librarian and former Head of Library Services, after 32 years at MHS.

Nick started his MHS career in the research library in February 1988. His addition to the staff marked a noticeable shift towards professionally trained librarians at MHS, a movement evident by the library's modernization during Nick's tenure. Under his leadership, the research library automated its card catalog system; addressed significant intellectual control and collections management projects within manuscripts, maps, monographs and architectural drawings; instituted a strong web presence and considerable technological advancements; promoted scholarship through outlets such as the New England Regional Fellowship Consortium; and saw MHS return to its earlier genealogical roots with an emphasis on collecting and supporting 21st century family history research.

Nick's contributions to MHS defined an era, most visually demonstrated through the expansive library restoration and renovation project (2007-2009) which gave the Brown Research Library its name. For the last several years, Nick hosted a monthly behind-the-scenes tour into the archives, where he shared his vast knowledge of the collections with members of the public who eagerly signed up for the tour year-round.

Nick started his MHS career in the research library in February 1988. His addition to the staff marked a noticeable shift towards professionally trained librarians at MHS, a movement evident by the library's modernization during Nick's tenure.

A lifetime MHS member before joining the staff, Nick volunteered at the library and served on an advisory board. His dedication to MHS and Maine reaches back generations, and his institutional knowledge is limitless. When it is safer to do so, we hope to welcome Nick back as a volunteer, where we may continue to benefit from his sense of humor, great charm, and expertise (and his legendary appreciation for the reading room clock.)

A retirement of this magnitude is not complete without a proper celebration. When safer days prevail, MHS plans to host a retirement event (spring or summer 2021?) worthy of Mr. Noyes' legacy.

At right: Nick Noyes, ca. 2009



RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Dawnland Couture

Deontie & Brown celebrate their Penobscot heritage through jewelry and fashion designs. Their outfit, *Dawnland Couture*, conveys the critical message that Maine is Wabanaki Homeland in the MHS exhibition *State of Mind: Becoming Maine*. The richly colored and flowing ensemble embodies ancient and futuristic visions of the sunrise in what is now known as Maine, called "Dawnland" by Wabanaki people. Featured in *Vogue Magazine* in 2019, MHS is proud to have purchased *Dawnland Couture* for our permanent collections.

Dawnland Couture outfit on the Santa Fe Indian Market Runway, 2019 by Jason K. Brown (Penobscot) and Donna Deontie Brown (Penobscot/Algonquin). Photo by Tira Howard. MMN #105623



MY MAINE STORIES | Share Your Story

Contributors Create Diverse Archive for the Future

By Tilly Laskey
Curator

Traditionally, scholars and museum professionals have collected, written, and documented history. Throughout the museum field, we are recognizing that this methodology created collections with singular narratives, limiting our ability to tell complete stories. Acknowledging that history is today and respecting localized knowledge, Maine Historical Society reconfigured the Maine Memory Network (MMN) so that individuals may submit content in two different forms.

My Maine Stories is a platform to tell personal narratives with photos, text, audio, and video. Individuals may also choose to upload photos with captions on *Share Local History*, where their items join tens of thousands of institutionally held records. Both of these initiatives diversify perspectives and contemporize Maine history for future researchers to tell the story of Maine.

In addition to general stories about Maine, MHS is actively seeking contributions from you — individual members of the public — to help document how Mainers are experiencing the unprecedented historical events of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020. We detail three examples here.



Keeping George safe in Market Square, Houlton, 2020
By Henry Gartley, individual partner
MMN #105870
Houlton's postmaster and local historian, Henry Gartley, submitted individual images of Aroostook County's response to COVID-19, including the addition of a mask to the George Washington statue in Market Square.



At top: Sign at Portland Police Department, June 4, 2020
MMN/mymainestory/BLMsigns
Joanne Arnold drove to Portland every day to examine and document signs left at the police station during the Black Lives Matter protests in June 2020. She submitted 29 photos to accompany her story, saying the project was, "an attempt to let these BLM voices speak and to 'shut up' myself as I dove into listening to these voices and doing my own work to examine white privilege."

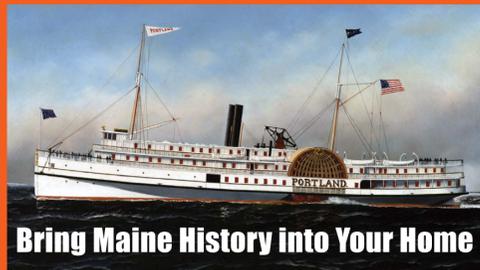
Judi Jones and her son, 2020
MMN/mymainestory/Jones
In her *My Maine Story*, "Black is Beautiful" Judi Jones of Brunswick detailed her experiences parenting. "For years I wondered if I made the right decision by raising my bi-racial son without an awareness of race and racism. These days of racial protests I think of that decision with concern and even fear."



SHARE YOUR STORY

Send in your stories and be a part of history! Visit these links and follow the easy instructions: mainememory.net/mymainestories or mainememory.net/share/individuals.shtml

MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY STORE



Bring Maine History into Your Home

Unique, Maine-inspired merchandise ships from our store to your door with the ease of a mouse-click.

Every purchase helps preserve and share the story of Maine. MHS member discounts available.

Books • Prints • Maps • Apparel • Gifts • Specialty items designed from MHS collections

mainehistorystore.com

PADDLE THROUGH TIME with the Maine Historical Society



Give the gift of membership or renew your own membership today!

mainehistory.org/membership

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Portland, ME
Permit No.
1064

MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
489 Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04101



COVER PHOTO: Black Guards including Officer Leonard Parks, center, Pvt. Arthur Williams, and Pvt. Richard Sullivan, on duty in North Yarmouth, 1942. MMN #18993

CIRCA — FALL 2020

EDITOR: Elaine Tselikis
DESIGNER: Patricia Cousins
CONTRIBUTORS: Steve Bromage, Tilly Laskey, Asata Raddiffe, and Jamie Rice

FOLLOW US: MaineHistory.org
f @ t

(207) 774-1822

PRINTING: JS McCarthy Printers



Asata Radcliffe in her Monson residency studio. Photo by Arghavan Khosravi

An Artist Reflects on the Fragility of Citizenship

EDITOR'S NOTE: Asata Radcliffe is a writer and multimedia artist. She has received numerous awards and recognition for her creative work. In 2018, she was nominated as a fellow for the first Monson Artist Residency, where she initially learned about the Black Guard soldiers in Maine. Subsequent support from the Maine Arts Commission and a collaboration with Maine Historical Society resulted in her guest curating the immersive gallery installation and online exhibition, "A Convenient Soldier: The Black Guards of Maine." Asata is currently writing and creating a body of multimedia work that chronicles her reflections and history of Maine, past and present. See more at asataradcliffe.com.

Historical museums and galleries have a duty to tell the full story of the complex nature of America, not simply celebrate a bicentennial of a state in complete denial of how it came to be, hiding behind lobsters and lighthouses.

By Asata Radcliffe
Guest Curator

In the wake of the uprising that followed the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor (and many other Black people who died from police violence), this country is again confronted with the legacy of slavery, followed by decades of the systemic dehumanization of Black people. As I worked tirelessly during the uprising to prepare for the exhibit *A Convenient Soldier*, the daily news of protests and pain seeped into my process as an artist who is attempting to create an archive that sheds light on the conflicted heroism of the army soldiers of Black men who served in Maine during World War II.

I constantly asked myself, "How can one serve in the armed forces of this country, when America continues to undermine the citizenship of Black people in such brutal ways?" As I walked the quaint Main Street of downtown Rockland back in June (2020), a White woman screamed with rage at me out of the window of her pickup truck, "GO HOME, WE DON'T WANT YOU HERE!"

Like many of the Black soldiers who served in Maine to guard the railways between 1941-1945, I too had family who served in the armed forces during WWII. When

I was verbally attacked by the woman in Rockland just a month ago, I reflected on the "where" of home that she is referring to, as if I am not an American citizen. As the daughter, granddaughter, and grandniece of men who served during two wars in this country, why is it that White people in Maine, and across America, feel that this country does not belong to me? Citizenship is a birthright. And yet, there is an endless sentiment in White America that Black people, by default of slavery, are not true citizens. This message dismisses the billion-dollar economy that arose from the slavery of Black people that currently allows this country to thrive—for White citizens. Demanding that I "go home" diminishes my birthright as an American citizen, as well as my lineage as a descendant of Kadahadacho and Hopi people. Demanding that I "go home" dismisses the fact that America is my home. Demanding that I "go home" is a clear rejection of the horrors of hundreds of years of slavery and genocide of African and Native American peoples that cleared the way for the America we have inherited in 2020, and Maine was one of the first states to gain its wealth from that bloody inheritance.

Some upper-middle class White people have said to me that the woman who expressed her rage from her passing



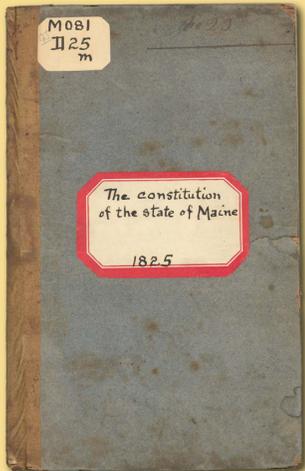
Pvt. Florentino Lopez with Atkins children, North Yarmouth, 1942. / MMN #105862



Guard stationed at Onawa Trestle in Morkill, circa 1943
Courtesy of Bob Roberts, Monson Historical Society / MMN #105936

vehicle is most likely from a "certain demographic" as if to say that racism and white supremacy operate solely from small towns in Maine. Racism has been allowed to thrive because of all

demographics of White Americans that stand by and allow its terrors to continue generation after generation. This is the crux of the *Convenient Soldier* exhibit. Since these soldiers stood guard on the trestles and railways of Maine during the 1940s despite the racism they endured, my two years of research has informed me that not much has changed. We cannot host an exhibit to merely celebrate the static nature of isolated photos of historical figures. Historical museums and galleries have a duty to tell the full story of the complex nature of America, not simply celebrate a bicentennial of a state in complete denial of how its statehood came to be, hiding behind lobsters and lighthouses. The comfort zone of this passivity has led to the erosion of our democracy and the stark social and political divisions we now experience here in Maine. People now say the future is uncertain. Unfortunately, it has been predictable and recurring, as it was for the Black Guards in the 1940s, and as it is now for citizens like myself.



Maine Constitution, 1825 (before redaction)
MMN #101558

OBJECT LESSON | Redaction of the Maine Constitution

By Tilly Laskey
Curator

When Maine won the vote for independence from Massachusetts in July 1819, politicians began crafting the Maine Constitution. Requirements for separation are detailed in Article X, including Maine's responsibility to assume the treaty obligations of Massachusetts to the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot Tribes, and the creation of a Land Agent.

While the Constitution provided strong protections for religious freedom, extended voting rights to Black men, and had no property requirement to vote, it disenfranchised women, the poor, and "Indians not taxed," which tied representation to taxation.

In 1875, Maine Governor Nelson Dingley consolidated the Constitution to "take out portions which in the changed condition of the affairs of the state were useless and cumbersome." On January 1, 1876, Sections 1, 2, and 5 of Article X of the Maine Constitution ceased to be printed. Coincidentally, this redaction occurred at the same time Maine was in a legal battle to compensate the Passamaquoddy Tribe for islands lost in an 1874 court decision, complicated by Maine's lingering Civil War debt and the proposed sale of public lands.

Even though it is obscured, Article X remains lawful, and "with the same effect" as if printed. This 1825 edition in our collections contains all of the Constitution's original text of Article X.

The implications of the 1875 redaction is the subject of MHS's upcoming exhibition, *REDACT: Obscuring the Maine Constitution*.

While the Constitution provided strong protections for religious freedom, extended voting rights to Black men, and had no property requirement to vote, it disenfranchised women, the poor, and "Indians not taxed," which tied representation to taxation.

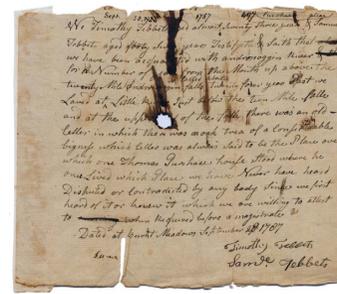
Beyond Borders: Mapping Maine and the American Northeast Boundary

By Jamie Rice
Director of Collections and Research

In April 2020, Maine Historical Society received a \$341,935 Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The funded project, entitled *Beyond Borders: Mapping Maine and the American Northeast Boundary, 1625-1893* will result in full text online access to over 20,000 pages of manuscript materials. These include records, correspondence, indentures, depositions, surveys and maps from three of MHS' most significant holdings: the Pejepscot Proprietors, the Kennebec Proprietors, and the Barclay Collection.

These three holdings were selected from MHS' nearly 10,000 distinct archival collections because of their historical significance to Maine, New England, and the United States; the frequency with which they are handled in person; preservation concerns; the uniqueness of the holdings, including their documentation of a critical time of contact between Indigenous communities and European settlers; and their relationship to one another in respect to content. All three collections document the emergence of what is now known as Maine as a unique and independent entity, distinct from Massachusetts and British colonial rule, and later the federal government. Collectively, the records span from 1625 to 1893.

However, despite their significance, nearly 90% of the three collections are not accessible online.



Tebbets deposition on Ten Mile Falls, 1787.
Pejepscot Proprietors (Coll. 61, Vol.7) / MMN #6382



Map of "Scituate" Brunswick, 1738. Map 7, Pejepscot Proprietors (Coll. 61) / MMN #4323

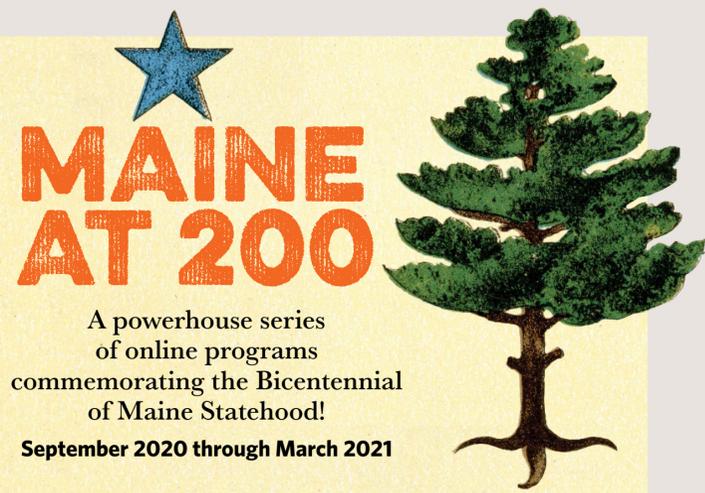
All three collections document the emergence of what is now known as Maine as a unique and independent entity, distinct from Massachusetts and British colonial rule, and later the federal government. Collectively, the records span from 1625 to 1893.

Therefore, the *Beyond Borders* project aims to provide free, full-text, online access to the complete collections, and develop innovative access and discovery tools using Maine Memory Network as its platform.

The first collection to undergo digitization is the Pejepscot Proprietors (Coll. 61). Digitization is taking place in-house, with the Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education to digitize the largest and most complex maps and bound volumes. The Pejepscot Proprietors (a.k.a. the Proprietors of the Township of Brunswick) is the most heavily consulted of the three collections, popular with scholars, genealogists, and the general public. The smallest of the three collections, it includes nearly 4,000 pieces and spans from ca. 1627 through 1866. Although the company was incorporated in 1714 and ceased 100 years later, the records include previous land dealings for modern Brunswick and surrounding towns. The collection also includes municipal records, Revolutionary War materials, and a host of unexpected pieces of Maine history.

The *Beyond Borders* project runs through the end of 2022, launching each online collection as it becomes available. Throughout the project, portions of the collections are closed to research while undergoing digitization. The project will help generations of Mainers better understand how today's Maine towns, communities and organizations came to be. Stay tuned for the exciting next phase, the Kennebec Proprietors.

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this program, do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



A powerhouse series of online programs commemorating the Bicentennial of Maine Statehood!
September 2020 through March 2021

2020 has been a challenging year, heightening the need for information, context and connection. Join us for compelling virtual (Zoom) dialogues with distinguished historians and authors. Explore how Maine became a State in 1820, what that has meant to Maine people, and how 13,000 years of history shaped the issues that matter to Mainers today. The series is part of Maine Historical Society's ongoing effort to preserve and share Maine's story, and to recognize the experiences, perspectives, and contributions of all Maine people.

SOME OF OUR FEATURED PRESENTERS: (each held 6:00 to 7:00 pm)

See the COMPLETE schedule of additional programs with details and how to register on mainehistory.org/programs. Please register early; we expect these events will fill up quickly!

September 14, 2020

Freedom's Woods: The African American Community of Peterborough in Warren, Maine
Dr. Kate McMahon,
Smithsonian Institution



October 8, 2020

Liberty Men, Great Proprietors, and Maine Today
Alan Taylor,
Author and Professor of History,
University of Virginia



October 22, 2020

Becoming Maine
Liam Riordan,
Professor of History,
University of Maine



November 11, 2020

Pandemics in Wabanaki Communities
James E. Francis, Sr., Director,
Cultural and Historic Preservation,
Penobscot Nation



January 7, 2021

Medicine in Early Maine
Dr. Richard Kahn,
Medical Historian
and Author



January 21, 2021

Acadiens in Maine
Lise Pelletier,
Director, Acadian Archives
University of Maine-Fort Kent



February 25, 2021

Maine Art Collection at MHS
Earle Shettleworth,
Maine State Historian



March 11, 2021

Maine's Bicentennial: Looking Backward and Forward
Colin Woodard,
Award-winning Author
and Journalist



IN THE GALLERIES & ONLINE

STATE OF MIND: Becoming Maine
Ongoing

A CONVENIENT SOLDIER: The Black Guards of Maine
Opens September 23, 2020
Limited Engagement

REDACT: Obscuring the Maine Constitution
Opens September 23, 2020
Limited Engagement

Schedule a time to view exhibits in-person, or see them anytime online. Go to mainehistory.org for details.

Relaunching MHS Bicentennial Programs and Activities

By Steve Bromage
Executive Director

Maine's Bicentennial, 2020, continues to be a remarkable year. It has been decades since Americans have been challenged so broadly and deeply. The combined impact of the coronavirus and the killing of George Floyd has created a sense of crisis and a defining moment. People in Maine are concerned about their health, jobs, family, and what life will look like going forward; at the same time, routines and rituals that provide comfort and communal connection have been disrupted. George Floyd's killing has called on the nation to explore, acknowledge, and address underlying issues like systemic racism and white privilege. How are those complex issues reflected in Maine? They magnify other urgent concerns Mainers are focused on, including building a stronger Maine economy, the consequences of climate change, and demographics.



While it seems hard to focus on anything beyond the next few weeks and months—as schools struggle to re-open, businesses reposition to remain viable, and individuals and families try to imagine the future—it is so important that we find the path forward. Many of you with whom I talk are hungry to come together and to make sure Maine comes through, stronger.

The Bicentennial gives us the opportunity to use history to better understand Maine today and to envision and shape the Maine we want going forward.

MHS is excited to relaunch our Bicentennial programs and activities which we will feature from September through next March. In addition to *State of Mind: Becoming Maine* and the many online resources available on Maine Memory Network, we have expanded and will offer our entire Bicentennial public program series virtually, via Zoom. For MHS, the immediate and widespread adoption of Zoom has provided an incredible opportunity and platform for reaching and serving a much broader audience—a central goal of our Strategic Plan.

Likewise, MHS is poised and well-prepared to contribute and provide leadership as Mainers focus on social justice issues. Recent exhibits and initiatives—like *400 Years of New Mainers: Making Paper, Making Maine*; *Veterans' Voices*; *Holding Up the Sky*; and *State of Mind*—all have provided information, perspective, and a calm place to explore, discuss, and address contemporary topics that Mainers are grappling with. In this newsletter, you'll read about *A Convenient Soldier* and *REDACT*, both of which continue this work.

Institutionally, MHS is focused on both supporting the needs of the Maine community during these challenging times, and ensuring MHS's financial well-being as we navigate so many new realities.

We are all in this together. Thank you for your interest, support, and commitment to MHS and to Maine.

—Steve