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## Tides of Change

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The Damariscotta Mills baseball team of 1921-22. Baseball was a focus of recreational activity in the Nobleboro area, as it was throughout America by the 1920s. Courtesy Nobleboro Historical Society.

This local history is an all-inclusive one — well written, containing ample photographs, bibliography, and index. Nevertheless, this reviewer is puzzled by the fact that there is no mention of Henry Beston and his wife Elizabeth Coatsworth, both prominent writers, who lived in Nobleboro overlooking the Sheepscot River. George Dow, a retired professor of agriculture and life science at the University of Maine and currently president of the Nobleboro Historical Society, and Robert Dunbar, a professional writer, have provided a real service to local history with this important book.

James B. Vickery  
Bangor

*Tides of Change: A Guide to the Harraseeket District of Freeport, Maine.* By Bruce Jacobson, Joel W. Eastman, Anne Bridges. (Freeport, ME.: Freeport Historical Society, 1985), Pp. 81, paper, \$

*Tides of Change* is a unique local study that combines historic community profiles with ecological descriptions of the Harraseeket Historic District of Freeport, Maine, to illustrate

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the relationship between human history and natural resources. This juxtaposition of history and environmental studies resulted from the collaborative effort of the Freeport Historical Society and the Maine Audubon Society in the Harraseeket Interpretive Project of research and public programs. Funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the *Guide* was designed as a teaching tool and presents historic and ecological research data that invites hands-on investigation of the Harraseeket Historic District and its estuarine environment.

Comprised of Freeport's four settlements — Wolf Neck, Mast Landing, Porter's Landing, and South Freeport — the Harraseeket watershed in the nineteenth century was dependent on the ocean and its resources for its prosperity. While all communities within the district had some share of the varied economic activity, each settlement had its own identity. In Wolf Neck, "salt water" farmers enriched the soil with organic ocean matter, seaweed and marsh "mulch" easily available at the shore, and harvested salt marsh hay for cattle feed and bedding. A bevy of mill, shop, and commercial activity at Mast Landing integrated the economic life of the Harraseeket District. Porter's Landing, the early shipbuilding and docking site of the region, later assumed the role of trade center to Freeport Village and inland markets. During the sailing era the deeper port of South Freeport boasted four major shipyards and was the most populated of the settlements.

For area residents, daily life included direct contact with the natural resources of the environs of the Harraseeket estuary. The ecological balance and species abundance of each settlement is recorded for the four biotic communities — water, mudflat, salt marsh and upland — found within the watershed. Following the historic narrative of each settlement, a description and list of community members is provided. Throughout this study, community refers to all plants and animals, including people, that interact as a group in a common location. A profile of a plant or animal species important to that community illustrates the inter-relationship among living organisms that was central to the Harraseeket Interpretive Project.

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The authors are to be commended for their reliance on primary sources for the historic data in *Tides of Change*. The 1860 Census, contemporary maps and deeds, and journals and diaries replaced the undocumented lore of antiquarian local history. Used as a teaching tool, *Tides of Change* offers educators a rare opportunity to combine history and science in an enriching on-site educational feast. As each section ends, the authors have provided readers with a tour of the settlement areas that lives up to their promise of an in-hand guide. For historians the conclusion provides the historical framework that was missing at the beginning. A bibliography and repositories of research materials collected and cited are given. Jon Luoma drew the delightful illustrations.

Marilyn Zoidis  
Freeport, Maine

*Cities on the Saco: A Pictorial History*. By Jacques M. Downs. Photo reproductions by Taylor H. Conrad. (Norfolk, Va.: Downing Company, with financial underwriting by the Garland Manufacturing Company, 1985. Pp. 203. \$26.50.)

*Cities on the Saco: A Pictorial History* is an excellent example of a "new" type of local history publication, which is in reality the revival of the late-nineteenth-century county histories. The Downing Company is a commercial publisher that specializes in producing picture histories of cities and states. A contract is made with a local historical society or library, and then in consultation with the society the company hires a local historian to research and write a text and to select photographs to illustrate the book from the collections of the society and other local institutions. Downing then solicits underwriting of the book from local businesses, and takes charge of the editing, layout, and publishing of the history. Obviously, a community could undertake such a project on its own, but a local historical