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## Book Reviews

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*Islands of the Mid-Maine Coast: Blue Hill and Penobscot Bays.* By Charles B. McLane. (Woolwich, Me.: Kennebec River Press, 1982. Pp. 508. Cloth. \$35.00.)

Charles B. McLane, professor of government at Dartmouth College, has to his credit a distinguished line of books, including *Soviet Policy and the Chinese Communists, 1931-1946* (Columbia University Press, 1958); *Soviet Strategies in Southeast Asia under Lenin and Stalin* (Princeton University Press, 1963); and a three volume study, *The Soviet Union and the Third World* (Central Asian Research Centre, 1968-1970). That he has published a new book is no surprise. That its subject is Maine islands and their history might, however, catch one off guard. Indeed, what could be further removed from international politics than the quiet rocks and isles of our coast?

While this reviewer cheerfully lists himself as an island enthusiast, he has also observed the dangerous waters surrounding island histories. Maine islands have been the subject of some of the worst paintings and books ever foisted onto the public. Works like Edward Rowe Snow's *Romance of Casco Bay* (Dodd, Mead & Co., 1975) achieved a kind of cult status. It was written with little regard for the facts, but pretends to be history. Such works have caused the public to view skeptically truly scholarly efforts at island history. Consequently, the field has been abandoned largely to romantic popularizers.

Within the past decade, interest in state and regional history has become more widespread and acute. Researchers have shown new vigor and skill in exploring the primary sources that exist in abundant, if scattered, form. McLane's entrance into the field strengthens this trend and adds greatly to the growing body of our shared knowledge.

McLane and his wife, Carol, have a summer home in Brooklin, Maine, and have made summer cruises along the coast since 1960. In that time, they became fascinated with the stories they had heard about various islands. Rather than accepting yarns at face value, McLane brought his professional skills to bear. Legends were tracked back to primary

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source materials, including deeds, family records, census material, and newspaper accounts. At the same time, the book is a labor of love, born of the McLanes' leisure activities. This invigorates the text, and what might have been a rather dull source book sparkles throughout.

Boasting a color view of artist Fitz Hugh Lane's *Owl's Head, Penobscot Bay* on the dust jacket, this locally produced volume could well grace any stylish coffee table. Within, the reader is treated to more than one hundred photographs and maps of the region. This makes the book useful not only to the scholar but to boating enthusiast as well. The internal organization is deft. There is an introduction that discusses the historical development of the islands as a whole. The text identifies (a major accomplishment in itself) and discusses some two hundred places within ten geographic sectors. Islands like tiny Mink are covered in a paragraph. Others, including Long Island (Frenchboro), have more significant populations and histories and receive proportional treatment. Particular emphasis is given to the genealogy of pioneer and long-established families. All of this encyclopedic material is backed by a first-rate annotated bibliography, appendices, and an index.

Anyone wishing to do a more in-depth study of a particular locale will find a perfect point of departure in this book. In fact, one is hard pressed to name a field of interest that is not at least touched upon in McLane's sweep. Observations by visitors such as Nathaniel Hawthorne and Fitz Hugh Lane are employed. Illustrator Charles Dana Gibson, who summered on Seven Hundred Acre Island, is dealt with, as is Ferdinand de Filippo, an Italian banker from the North End of Boston, who fled to Long Island (Blue Hill) in the 1890s. Readers will be surprised, I think, by the various architectural structures that once existed. Illustrations, maps, and description of workers, housing, and cutting sheds tell an extraordinary tale of the past. The photographs themselves, always well integrated with the text, make up an unusual archive of island life.

McLane's introduction is perhaps the best general essay on

the islands to date. He traces settlement patterns from the time of the Indians through the era of European exploration and settlement. He explores a number of problems that retarded settlement prior to the Revolution, the greatest of which was the “incessant rivalry between England and France for sovereignty.” This period was followed by the hard years of the Revolution itself, and the author follows the islanders’ responses with some care. In terms of economic development, McLane traces occurrences against the backdrop of national events. Supply and demand, changes in communication, and competing individuals played rather decisive roles in the development of the islands. The first self-sufficient souls to put down roots were the farmers who dominated the landscape for much of the nineteenth century. Fishing, it seems, was more important as a seasonal occupation. The rise and decline of this industry in its several forms is of particular import and interest. So, too, the spectacular post-Civil War appearance of the granite quarrying industry transformed the local economy, reshaped the landscape, and brought forth Irish, Italian, and Scandinavian laborers.

McLane takes measure of both the geography and the human history of a much neglected corner of Maine. Even in an era of first-rate historical writing and research, *Islands of the Mid-Maine Coast* looms large and should serve as a prototype for further studies of the coast.

William David Barry  
Portland, Maine

*Maine’s Historic Places: Properties on the National Register of Historic Places.* By Frank A. Beard and Bette A. Smith, with Robert L. Bradley and Arthur E. Spiess. (Camden, Me.: Down East Books, 1982. Pp. 416. Paper. \$9.95)

Maine is blessed with landscapes and buildings that embody her history. People who are sensitive to this visual drama have always derived great pleasure from exploring the man-made

environment of their state. But what about people who do not know much about the architecture of the past, about the life-styles of the peoples who have inhabited Maine during the last six thousand years, about military fortifications, or about mechanical inventions? How can they share in the joy of discovering the rich heritage Maine has to offer?

The answer must be obvious, especially when the question is posed in a book review. *Maine's Historic Places* by Frank A. Beard and Bette A. Smith contains descriptions of all properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The information presented is readily understandable. The authors relate historical events to people and provide interesting accounts of buildings and sites. They do not become obsessed with facts, names, and dates. Consequently, the reader is drawn into an exploration of Maine's homes, buildings, boats, machines, archaeological sites, and places, which, by virtue of their listing on the National Register, best exemplify Maine's history. The separate explanations of the purposes of the National Register and the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, which is responsible for administering the National Register program in Maine, are well written and helpful, as is the overview of Maine history. The urge to go out and see these properties becomes irresistible.

Such a comprehensive guide could be overwhelming; Maine has six hundred entries on the National Register, and sixty of those are districts that include many individual buildings. Fortunately, the format of the book has lessened the potential problem. The state is divided into seven geographic regions and properties are listed by region, each of which is illustrated by a simple, hand-drawn map identifying communities or townships where properties are located. Arranged alphabetically by community, each property is listed by its historic name, street address, and significant dates, followed by a description. About one-third of the properties are illustrated by good quality black-and-white photographs.

*Maine's Historic Places* cannot be used to place the reader on the doorstep of every National Register property in the state;

the photographs and descriptions are not complete enough. Many buildings and sites are privately owned and accessible to the public, if at all, only visually from a public way. Buildings that are open to the public, however, have been identified in the text.

Having filled out many National Register nomination forms, this reviewer believes that Beard and Smith have done a good job summarizing what tend to be very dry and repetitive descriptions. Their guide provides enough information to give the interested reader an idea of the historic and visual value of a structure, object, or site, and the bibliography should prove helpful to those wishing to do independent research. The index assists in finding properties only if one knows their exact designations or the towns or cities in which they are located. More comprehensive indexing or liberal cross-referencing within the text would have greatly added to the utility of the book. For example, it would be helpful to be able to locate structures by reference to period, style, architect, builder, industry, and the like. As presently constituted, the book is essentially a listing that relies on the user to make his or her own connections. Nevertheless, *Maine's Historic Places* remains a pleasure to read.

Mary-Eliza Wengren  
Freeport Historical Society

*Adjustments to Empire: The New England Colonies, 1675-1715.* By Richard R. Johnson. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1981. Pp. xx, 470. Cloth. \$30.00.)

This study of the forty years that stretched from King Philip's War to 1715 is a tightly argued, carefully documented examination of relations between the New England colonies and the mother country. Those years saw a succession of events that marked the end of New England's Bible commonwealths, and the hesitant, sometimes fumbling, yet deter-

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mined aim of English officials to establish greater control over the colonies and a more effective administration of overseas possessions. As Michael Hall has noted in *Edward Randolph and the American Colonies*, a book that deals with the same period, England's colonial empire in North America was born "not at the beginning of the seventeenth century, but at the end, in the critical years after 1660-1700" (p. ix). In the volume under review here, Richard Johnson has added much to our understanding of that truth.

Professor Johnson, who is an historian at the University of Washington, offers new insights and fresh interpretations of the subject and the period, and in the process illuminates the account with a wealth of detail drawn from an exhaustive mining of the sources. Eschewing what Jacques Barzun has called "quanto-history and psycho-history" in *Clio and the Doctors: Psycho-History, Quanto-History and History*, Johnson has based his study on the conventional sources of the historian of institutions and politics: public records in the English and American archives, modern collections of the printed documents, contemporary pamphlets, and the correspondence and other personal papers of the public figures of the times. He has also made effective use of the extensive body of modern scholarship dealing with the period. Despite a statement on the jacket of this book, the decades of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are not a "neglected era." The period has attracted historians from the days of Thomas Hutchinson in the eighteenth century to our own times. Those years saw far-reaching changes in nearly all aspects of New England life, and though the focus of Johnson's study is political and institutional, the author reveals throughout an understanding of the religious, social, and economic forces that both shaped and reflected those changes. He examines in detail the ways in which New England was increasingly drawn into commercial relations with the outside world after 1660, and how a "fragile prosperity" based in no small part on illegal trade put the colonies on a collision course with the London government. New England's successful prosecution of King

Philip's war brought appeals to Whitehall for confirmation of old boundaries and jurisdictions, and the same period witnessed a move by the heirs of Mason and Gorges to be put back into possession of New Hampshire and Maine. All of this invited royal intervention even as the government of Charles II was, on its own initiative and for its own purposes, moving towards a greater direction of affairs in the once autonomous Puritan commonwealths.

The author's approach in treating these, and later, events is regional and comparative; it is also transatlantic. Moving back and forth across the Atlantic, and among the centers of power in New England itself, Johnson provides the modern reader with a remarkably detailed account of the issues. If at times the trees obscure one's view of the forest, a patient and careful reading pays rich dividends, for the author's command of the primary sources results in an account backed with striking pictures of politics and politicians in an age that might seem at first sight too remote from our own times to hold our attention. But that is not so. Johnson finds an early instance (1689) of the now familiar official "leak" – in this case from officials inside the Plantation Office who wished to influence policy, and who chose the contemporary medium of the anonymous pamphlet to reach their intended audience (pp. 165-66). We learn of the "New England Walk" in the precincts of the Royal Exchange, and of a New England Coffee House (the Sun) in the same area (p. 327). We catch the tone and flavor of political invective: thus we feel the anger and disgust of Cotton Mather at Governor Joseph Dudley's "diabolical skill" in winning over former enemies: "[Dudley's] Caresses of the *Table*, which are enough to Dazzle an Honest Countryman"; Dudley's "Mixture of *Coaking* and *Bouncing*" (p. 388). Such passages give flesh and blood to the story, the principal theme of which is to describe and analyze the deeply significant changes that took place in New England's relations with the mother country during this critical period.

Professor Johnson takes up in turn the major events of that story: the vacating of the old Massachusetts charter in 1684;



the accession of James II; and the Glorious Revolution of 1688-89 that saw in England the forced flight of the king, and in New England the collapse of the Dominion and the fall of its unpopular governor, Sir Edmund Andros. These momentous events marked a crisis. Edward Randolph, the most stubborn promoter of royal interest and a persistent critic of New England had predicted that the very existence of the Dominion would “unhinge” the Puritan commonwealths (p. 202). On the other side of the political and ideological fence, Samuel Sewall had voiced the distress of the supporters of the old way in New England. “The foundations being destroyed,” he wrote, “what can the Righteous do?” (p. 71). Professor Johnson suggests that a new synthesis emerged from the transatlantic dialectic that those opposing values and points of view reflected. “The quest for the Massachusetts charter”; the interaction of competing factions and interests in New England and London in the early years of the reign of William and Mary; “confusion and conflict” during the 1690s and the emergence of a new transatlantic politics after 1700 — these are the chief divisions of the author’s account of the period after 1689.

There is not room in a review of this scope to analyze in depth Johnson’s treatment of these complex matters. If one could choose a single episode for discussion, however, the negotiations that led to the framing of the Massachusetts charter of 1691 (the “second charter” or the “charter of William and Mary”) would be this reviewer’s choice. The story is told in Johnson’s third chapter, “London Interlude: The Quest for the Massachusetts Charter.” The outcome of those negotiations was crucial to the eventual settlement of relations between England and the former Puritan commonwealths, at least until the eve of the Revolution. If there is an institutional “hero in this book, it would have to be Increase Mather, who labored with impressive skill during his long sojourn in England (1688-1692) to influence those who were its framers. Drawing on a rich documentation that allows the modern historian to see the episode in close detail, Johnson provides

us with a fascinating picture of the Reverend Increase Mather, a Puritan divine, threading a successful way through the corridors of power in the London of James II and William and Mary. "Clear sighted and energetic," Mather kept those who wished stronger royal control on the defensive; after 1689, he was successful in identifying the cause of Massachusetts and New England with that of Glorious Revolution in England. Because he also had to deal with the leaders of the popular party in Boston, who favored a return to the terms of the old charter of 1629, Mather's was the lot of those who espouse a middle course. "It was Mather's fate," writes Johnson, "to prefigure rather than accompany New England's accommodation to empire, and he suffered accordingly" (p. 226).

The author's conclusion make these points: By the end of the seventeenth century there were forces at work in New England that, even if there had been no crises in politics, nor disruptions of war, would have drawn the Bible states into the larger world. Internally, too, the original Puritan consensus had weakened as the rule of the founders in church and state gave way to leadership of the second and third generations. War and constitutional crisis hastened and sharpened change, requiring new formulas. What emerged was a new constitutional structure, and a new transatlantic politics. Although a major ingredient of this new order was the presence of royal authority in the executive (in Massachusetts and New Hampshire) and an anglicization of governmental functions, especially in the administration of justice, important elements of the Puritan inheritance persisted. As Johnson points out, this anglicization of government "was only in small part a royalization . . . The colonists' allegiance was given to English constitutionalism rather than to the crown" (p. 419). And even more fundamentally, although New Englanders in the eighteenth century may have employed the terms of English Whiggism, they were inspired "by the same profound belief in godly rule" that had shaped the New England view of government before 1680. Confronted by a royally appointed

governor in Boston, Puritanism in Massachusetts reassumed a part of what it had always been in England, “an ideology of political opposition” (pp. 408-9). Professor Johnson sees in this something that was to have profound importance for the future of the American constitutional experiment. The years following the Glorious Revolution, “when New Englanders learned to live with but not under royal government,” he writes, “were more broadly formative for the subsequent course of events in English America than we have hitherto realized” (p. 420).

This is not a book for beginners, unless the beginner is ready to jump in at the deep end of the pool. For such a person, some preparation might be in order: the pertinent chapters of Wesley Frank Craven’s volume in the New American Nation series, *The Colonies in Transition, 1660-1713*; or David Lovejoy’s book, *The Glorious Revolution in America* come to light as providing detailed yet broader views of the period. So armed, even the non-specialist may find, as this reviewer did, that *Adjustment to Empire* is a rewarding and thought-provoking treatment of a significant period of our history.

Although the subtitle of this book tells the reader that it treats of New England as a whole, it is the story of Massachusetts that dominates. That is probably as it must be, for here as in so many other areas of New England’s early history, it was the “Bay mare” that led the way. Yet at times one wishes for a fuller look at these episodes and issues as they were perceived and acted on in Providence, New Haven, Hartford, Portsmouth — even in the struggling, war-battered settlements of the old Province of Maine. One could wish, too, for illustrations in a book that contains such a rich assortment of personalities, and which depends for a really full understanding of issues on a clear and accurate sense of the boundaries of regions and particular colonies. There is one small map of New England in 1680 (minus most of Maine and New Hampshire) on page 2. This reviewer found no significant errors, typographical or other. Footnotes are where they should be, at the foot of the page, and the bibliographical listings are a

model of completeness and organization. The index, too, is full and accurate.

Neal W. Allen