

Maine History

Volume 52
Number 1 *Moss, Moose, and Mills: A Historic
Look at the Maine North Woods*

Article 2

1-1-2018

Editor's Note

Eileen Hagerman
Maine Historical Society

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistoryjournal>



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hagerman, Eileen. "Editor's Note." *Maine History* 52, 1 (2018): 4-6.
<https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainehistoryjournal/vol52/iss1/2>

This Preface is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine History by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.



“Moose Hunt, 1895.” Photograph depicts two men standing beside a felled moose at Ellis Brook near Chamberlain Lake. Collections of the Maine Historical Society, Portland, ME (MMN 25573).



Paper Mill Exterior, Millinocket, Maine, c. 1904. *Great Northern Paper Company Records*. Image courtesy of Special Collections, Raymond H. Fogler Library, DigitalCommons@UMaine, http://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/spec_photos/2463/, accessed 11 December 2017.

EDITOR'S NOTE

THE MAINE North Woods, with its iconic mountains and waterways and its rich logging history and folklore, has captured the imaginations of writers, artists, and conservationists for centuries, and the popular fascination with this region and its culture continues to find expression through television shows, books, and the thousands of hikers that ascend Mount Katahdin every year. The region's natural resources also continue to inspire conflict over how they should be used and who should control them. In this issue of *Maine History*, four authors examine the North Woods and the social, environmental, and economic forces which impacted the region's development from the mid-nineteenth century into the present day.

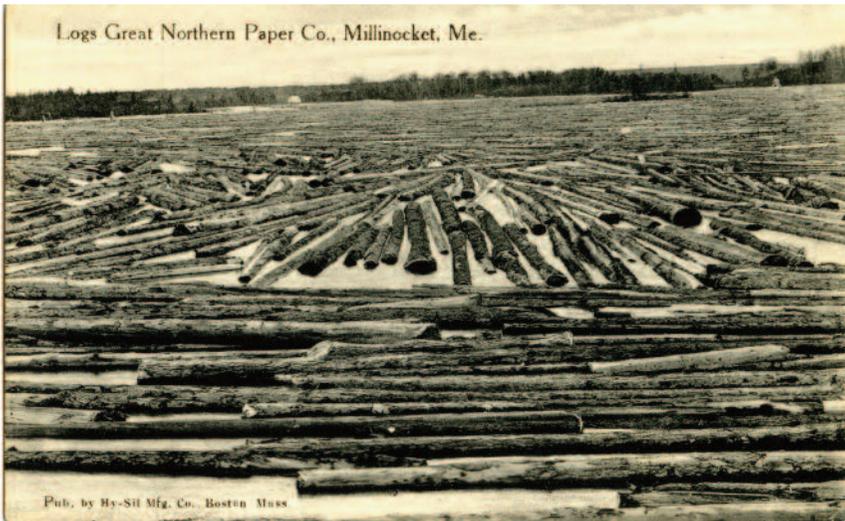
Wildlife ecologist Megan Vhay opens the issue with a colorfully written research note, which examines Thoreau's accounts of his travels through the North Woods to unpack nineteenth-century conceptions of the wilderness ideal and their ongoing relevance to twenty-first-century American life. Environmental historian Dale Potts follows with an analysis of the conservationist views embedded within early-twentieth-century novels of writer Holman Francis Day. Through Day, Potts explores the North Woods not as an isolated wilderness, but as a working landscape caught between two worlds: that of the small, independent lumberman and that of the out-of-state corporation displacing local people through wanton destruction of the natural world. Potts situates Day's vision for the North Woods as a working landscape carefully managed by local people in the context of a declining lumber economy, a rapid expansion of pulp-and-paper and hydro-electric activity, and the Progressive Era milieu of the early twentieth century.

Data and GIS librarian John Clark and historical geographer Deryck Holdsworth provide further context for the social, economic, and environmental changes which took place in the North Woods around the turn of the twentieth century. By mapping data sets from 1880 through 1930, they illustrate and explain important shifts within the distribution of mill activity as out-of-state pulp and paper manufacturers began to expand their financial and geographic reach further into the Maine interior. While the scope of their analysis extends beyond that of the North Woods, their work reveals important linkages between centers of wealth and power in the urban Northeast, shifts in manufacturing and transportation technology, and changes in the physical makeup and socio-economic life of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century rural Maine.

Historian and environmental educator Adam Auerbach follows with an exploration of the tensions surrounding the future of the North Woods—tensions over who should control and manage the region’s resources, how and to what extent those resources should be preserved, and to what extent industrial activity should play a role in the region’s development—as organizations moved to adapt to changing economic circumstances and an evolving conservationist ethos over the course of the twentieth century. By comparing national-park proposals over time, he shows that much of the current debate surrounding the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument has roots that extend deeper into Maine’s and the region’s history. Examined side-by-side, Auerbach argues, Maine’s national park debates reveal a pattern by which park promoters and opponents have increasingly couched their arguments in the language of economic development and, in doing so, have obscured the extent to which values continue to influence the debate.

It is our hope that this issue sheds light on some of the ways in which Mainers have defined and valued wilderness, managed and conserved resources, and coped with social and economic instability from the mid-nineteenth century through the present day.

Eileen Hagerman
Editor, *Maine History*



Postcard depicting Great Northern Paper Company logs making their way down the West Branch of the Penobscot River from Millinocket, Maine, n.d. *Dwight B. Demeritt Collection*. Image courtesy of Special Collections, Raymond H. Fogler Library, DigitalCommons@UMaine, http://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/spec_photos/245/, accessed 11 December 2017.