

WRITINGS IN MAINE HISTORY

Books

EVERSON, JENNIE G. *Tidewater Ice of the Kennebec River*. Freeport, Maine, published for the Maine State Museum by the Bond Wheelwright Co., 1970. xiv, 241 p. \$9.95

This important book for all interested in the history of the ice and refrigeration business is by a Maine resident who personally witnessed tidewater river ice harvesting during its heyday from the 1890's to World War I. Beginnings of the American commercial natural ice trade, once vast in extent, have previously been told largely from the records of Frederick Tudor, first American ice millionaire, whose papers are in Baker Library at Harvard University. The Tudor papers embrace dealings and shipment of natural ice to southern United States ports, across the equator, and throughout the world. Some factors which made for the decline of the natural ice trade and the growth of installations of ice factories in the United States were discussed decades ago by Oscar E. Anderson, *Refrigeration in America*.

Jennie G. Everson's book happily and graphically fills a gap in published history. One of its outstanding and original features is the large number of splendid photographs of now vanished natural ice plants established in Maine by businesses whose urban marketing systems were located southward along the Atlantic seaboard. The reader sees the ice men cutting, storing, and shipping their product. He views ice vessels and, also, ice villages where men, working the tools of industry, lived, in some instances, the year round. One sees hundreds of part-time workers joining in harvests, sometimes hectic, as weather threatened supplies. Oceanic towing of ice brings into the picture Charles W. Morse, who, while accumulating millions of dollars in the organization of the American Ice Company, witnessed the decline of the commercial natural ice trade.

To do *Tidewater Ice* justice, it is essential to place it in the frame of reference of the ice trade as a whole. The trade declined not only on the east coast where Morse and other big entrepreneurs operated, but simultaneously, in the Middle West and the Sierra Nevadas. A basic reason was that refrig-

eration demands had outgrown convenient natural ice supplies. Commercial ice factories were economical and reliable sources of a necessity. The American Ice Company played in the East a salutary part in facilitating transition from stream ice to machine ice. Vast abandoned wooden structures along northern rivers and lakes were not symbols of neglect; they were monuments to advances in business and technology. Human brain power, in a simpler age, had provided basic ideas for more complicated and now essential mechanisms. Human brawn, as presented here, had put ideas to work.

This book is enhanced by diagrams and pictorialization of models, made by Mrs. Everson's husband, of ice houses and ice processes. The Maine State Museum is to be congratulated on a handsome publication making a constructive contribution to early American technological and business history.

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RAY, ROGER B. *The Indians of Maine: A Bibliographical Guide*.
Portland, Maine Historical Society, 1972. 40 p. \$3.00.

With the increasing number of persons interested in the colonial and precolonial history of North America, Roger Ray has aided all who may undertake research of the Indians of Maine by preparing and publishing a bibliography of manuscripts, letters, publications, and other source material on the subject at the Maine Historical Society in Portland, Maine.

Director Gerald E. Morris of the Society in his introductory remarks has pointed out that the bibliography is primarily a listing of materials at the Society's Library with entries from other institutions. These entries were noticed by Mr. Ray while he was doing research on the subject in Massachusetts, Maine, and New Brunswick. The reader is also informed that the present publication is an outgrowth of a preliminary

inventory of the Society's holdings on Maine Indians, compiled by Roger Ray and published in 1969.

Mr. Ray in his commentary gives a very brief statement on our knowledge of the Maine Indian and the relationship of the Indian to Mother Earth. He does not go into depth on the subject of the origin of man in Maine, his relationship to nature, his myths, and religion. The educational controversy occupied Mr. Ray's attention as it seems to have become a significant development in the acculturation of the Maine Indian.

That portion of the bibliography dealing with Indian deeds touches upon a very important concept of land use, inheritance, and ownership by the Indians. Although we do know that certain territories, generally bounded by rivers, mountains, and lakes belonged to certain tribes and that hunting territories belonged to various family groups within the tribe, there was an overall understanding that the territory was not individually owned.

The subject arrangement of the bibliographical material has been meticulously categorized, thus enabling the student to refer to that topic most pertinent to the question.

The bibliography is not confined to a listing of publications and manuscripts but is, in some instances, a descriptive commentary upon certain items so that the researcher may have an introductory insight to certain manuscripts and letters. The Elijah Kellogg diaries and letters are treated in this fashion as well as government-related documents.

It appears to me that Mr. Ray has entered into a field of research that is going to command more and more of his time for his publication *Indians of Maine*, 1969, grew into *The Indians of Maine: A Bibliographical Guide* published in 1972, and, as time goes on, more and more references to articles related to the Maine Indians or items about Maine Indians in other publications are going to be brought to his attention, necessitating revised and up-to-date issues.

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