

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR THE
BANGOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY: THE REMAKING
OF A NINETEENTH-CENTURY INSTITUTION,
1864-1984

To some, historical societies seem an anachronism in our high-tech world. Time spent in the leisurely pursuit of research for its own sake has been obscured by the intensity and purposefulness of life in the twentieth century. Indeed, liberal arts studies have declined in American universities, and it would seem that education today is pursued for profit rather than knowledge. If so, does that mean these venerable institutions belong to a passing age? It would seem so, if one had in mind the popular stereotype of the historical society: a group of intellectuals sitting in a well-appointed parlor and listening to a discourse on some obscure historical thesis. But that is a nineteenth-century concept, far from the modern organization that has evolved through a broadening and evolving sense of purpose — and a keen sense of survival. Successful historical societies have been transformed to reflect the emerging needs of the communities they serve. Although each historical society is a product of this individual community environment, it is useful to examine one organization — the Bangor Historical Society — to understand how changes that have occurred in this time-honored institution can help guarantee it a place in the twenty-first century.

The founders of the Bangor Historical Society looked to established mid-nineteenth century historical societies for models.¹ This first group in fact typified the progenitors of the nineteenth-century historical society. As with other societies, the earliest members included an equal number of lawyers, doctors, and businessmen and five clergymen. From this core group, the Bangor Historical Society absorbed into its membership men chosen for their support of the organization's goals and their community standing.² Because it was the state's second historical society, the Bangor Historical Society was able to attract interested men from throughout central Maine.



A Bangor Historical Society field day. By 1926 when this photo was taken, the Society, like similar institutions across the nation, was groping toward the broad public-oriented mission characteristic of progressive historical societies today. Bangor Historical Society photo.

The geographical distribution of membership was broad, but their social circle was small.

And yet these men did not harbor a narrow view of their work.³ Educated, professional men with ties to the Maine Historical Society and to other cultural organizations, they sought to collect and preserve whatever, in their opinion, tended to “explain and illustrate any department of civil, ecclesiastical or natural history.”⁴ Although the organization was based in Bangor, its collecting philosophy was not restricted by a regional attitude. Originally its purpose was to acquire “facts and materials in relation to the history of this part of the State, and particularly as it relates to the valley of the Penobscot,” but such diverse objects as bones of an extinct species of whale and manuscripts of the “Spanish government of Florida” made their way into the collection. This diversity too reflected the approach of early historical societies.⁵

Though typical in purpose and organization, the Bangor Historical Society was shaped by the unique blend of local members, and its early history was colored by the character of the city of Bangor as well. In 1864, the year the Society was founded, Bangor was the financial and marketing center for the thriving Maine lumber industry. The city was alive with an enterprising spirit; community leaders compared the “Queen City of the East” with metropolitan centers on the East Coast. The idea of a local historical society arose in this cosmopolitan environment. The Bangor Historical Society was founded when only 6.1 percent of America’s existing local historical societies had been established.⁶ Although historical societies are a New England tradition, this Society emerged in a city of only 16,000, while most historical societies — 91.3 percent — were found in cities with populations above 25,000.⁷ Expanding industrial centers provided the most fertile ground for historical societies, and indeed Bangor was experiencing a full economy. But a depression that would mark the end of its lumbering greatness was merely six years away.⁸

Early historical societies like Bangor’s established the rationale for later organizations. Common among these early institutions was recognition that important historical records were in acute danger and that group, rather than an individual effort was the most effective way to insure that these records survived. The purposes of the Bangor Historical Society echoed these concerns.⁹ Founded during the Civil War, at a time of national upheaval, the Society also demonstrated concern for collecting the objects of an earlier time to preserve a sense of security in a turbulent period. The Society’s twenty-two founders may have been inspired also by a need for a greater community identity in the national crisis, as well as by a feeling that those who could not help preserve the Union on the battlefield could serve by securing the nation’s past. The historical society published notice that it would gladly receive the names of dead soldiers and sailors for deposit “with the archives of the Society for future reference and perhaps, publication.”¹⁰

Early historical societies took inspiration from public museums, also a relatively new concept at midcentury. In America, museums were founded during the late 1700s and early 1800s, but many lasted only a few years. The purposes of these museums varied from the study of natural history to art and entertainment. Artists such as Samuel F. B. Morse traveled with large paintings they had completed and charged the public admission to see them. Some museums consisted of art, wax figures, natural history, and curiosities. A pioneer museum developer was Philadelphian Charles Wilson Peale, who combined his artistic talent with an interest in natural history and painted natural habitat scenes as backdrops for the animal specimens on exhibit. Less scholarly was the Packard museum in Portland. This museum enticed the public with exhibits such as "the celebrated invisible Lady," wax figures "as large as life," a magician, and other attractions.¹¹ While men like Phineas T. Barnum held obvious commercial views of the museum, other such institutions were established with the expressed purpose of uplifting and instructing their visitors. One of the trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art anticipated that an understanding of art would "humanize ... educate, and refine a practical and laborious people."¹² Similar sentiments accompanied the opening of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in 1876. While these museums voiced elitist ideas, they reveal a public, rather than closed, private purpose.

From the outset, the Bangor Historical Society shared this public purpose. The collections of the Bangor Historical Society were to be shared with the community and exhibited free to the public.¹³ Historical societies like Bangor's did not restrict themselves to paper and archival materials, but also collected objects, and it was indeed these artifacts that brought the public to visit the historical society. Headquartered in the Bangor Public Library since 1883, the Bangor Historical Society offered its "cabinet of curiosities," an arrangement and display of objects not unlike those in early museums.

The collection idea had other contemporary origins. At the time of the Bangor Historical Society's founding, acquisition and display of curios were common in many households.

Harriet Beecher Stowe recommended in 1869 that children collect natural history specimens “for the formation of cabinets.”¹⁴ The furnishings of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century homes attest to the contemporary regard for the accumulation and display of objects. Pieces of furniture called what-nots displayed figurines and miscellaneous objects in many homes, and interiors were furnished with numerous paintings, photographs, and small ornaments on walls, mantles, and shelves.

The late nineteenth-century tradition of collecting and exhibiting influenced the Bangor Historical Society as well as other historical societies and museums. These organizations hung paintings close together and one above the other and showed their objects in large and frequently crowded glass cases. Although the exhibits of the past century would repel a twentieth-century viewer, they were in keeping with the cluttered interiors of the period.

What actually comprised the collections of the Bangor Historical Society? The first year of its existence established a pattern for the collection. A notice printed in a Bangor newspaper that year urged the public to donate documents and objects illustrating the area’s Indian settlements and military history as well as genealogies, church histories, and natural history.¹⁵ As a result of this plea, people contributed books, newspapers, maps, photographs, military objects, and archival material, as well as numerous Indian relics. The Bangor Historical Society was particularly proud of its Indian collection, reporting at the close of its first year, “The collection of Indian stone implements of ancient times is rapidly increasing and we think will one day be the largest and best in the country.”¹⁶

These areas of emphasis — archives and prehistorical Indian tools — proved prophetic for the collections’ direction for the next fifty years or more and were similar to other historical societies’ holdings of the same era. The objects collected by the Bangor Historical Society also reflected the contemporary study of history. Academic historians focused on state and national leaders, as well as military exploits, political



John Edwards Godfrey (1809-1884).
Photo courtesy James B. Vickery.

trends, and other major changes. This approach to history meant that historical societies collected portraits of notable leaders, as well as bayonets, swords, confederate currency, and other articles associated with military engagements.

Early on, the Bangor Historical Society began an active program of preparation and presentation of papers on historical topics. Among these early addresses were "The Locality and Settlement of the Ancient Penobscot," by John E. Godfrey; "Ornithology," by Harry Merrill; and "Arnold's Expedition up the Kennebec and Assault on Quebec," by Captain Henry N. Fairbanks.¹⁷ With this activity, combined with the accumulation of valuable artifacts and documents, the Society established itself in the tradition of earlier historical societies: a learned society, a collection, and a library.¹⁸

During its early period, the Bangor Historical Society developed securely within the context of its models, but the study of history itself was changing. Eager to recover from the sectional interpretation which had dominated American history, post-Civil War professional historians examined national themes. Local historical societies were seen as guardians of the local culture for a provincial audience and thus were alienated

from academia. Departments of history in American colleges were formed in the 1870s and 1880s, and as the discipline developed professional historians separated themselves further from local historians. Trained in documentation and analysis, these new historians scoffed at the work being done at the community level by “amateurs” and criticized their methodology for giving equal significance for every local event. The new historian was “expected to examine and distinguish different sorts of materials open to him, he is pledged to keep in subordination his personal opinions.”¹⁹

Local history was indeed moving in a different direction. Using early documents of the city’s history, members of the Bangor Historical Society followed formats used by their colleagues in other historical societies. John Edwards Godfrey’s “Annals of Bangor,” in the *History of Penobscot County*, adopted the emphasis prevalent in nineteenth century local and regional history: factual chronology, vignettes of community life, and biographical sketches of prominent men. *The Bangor Historical Magazine*, edited by Joseph W. Porter, combined genealogy, historical sketches, and reprints of historical documents. Edward Mitchell Blanding, longtime secretary of the Bangor Historical Society, published in the *New England Magazine* the standard promotional account of the city’s history popular at the turn of the century.²⁰ Although such efforts were often fine examples of contemporary local history, they were shunned by a skeptical historical intelligentsia. Whereas earlier a bond had existed between universities and historical societies, a rift developed in the late nineteenth century that exists to this day.²¹

This isolation on a national level had implications for the Bangor Historical Society. In 1906 the University of Maine, eight miles from Bangor, established a history department. Any symbiotic relationship which might have developed between the two groups was compromised by time and circumstances. The first department chairperson, Caroline Colvin, was an academic historian. Her opinion of local historians is not documented, but she did not become a member of the Society until 1920, and Society minutes do not indicate that she ever

addressed the group. Admittedly, the Bangor Historical Society remained a male group until 1913, when women were formally admitted.²² But Colvin's limited role in Society activities could be attributed to something more than her gender, for the Society eagerly elicited addressess from "amateur" female historians, especially Fanny Hardy Eckstorm.

Conflicts between the Society and academic historians were of less immediate concern than the loss of the entire collection in the city's great fire of 1911. In the 1870s, Bangor had experienced an economic decline in the lucrative lumber trade. The city recovered and thrived on a combination of manufacturing, wholesaling, and banking. But what decline in the lumber industry failed to do in the 1870s, fire accomplished in one dramatic day in 1911. Raging through the eastern half of the city, the conflagration gutted downtown Bangor, destroying 8 churches, 285 houses, and numerous public buildings. Many of the buildings were insured, but irretrievable were the collections of the Bangor Public Library and the Bangor Historical Society, housed in the same building. The reaction of the historical society to this catastrophe reveals the character of the organization in 1911. The first recorded meeting after the fire, January 2, 1912, must have been a somber gathering for the organization. Yet the minutes are remarkably brief, and contain no discussion of the losses suffered, the consequences for the organization, or plans to reorganize and rebuild the collection. What does exist is a newspaper account of the Society's past year, clipped and pasted into the official record, a common practice by the secretary.

This lack of clear direction stood in visible contrast to the decisive attitude that energized the rest of the community. Bangor leaders had pledged to rebuild the city within the year, and did. The fire had offered the leadership of the historical society the chance to make a fresh start, to set new goals, and work toward a new organization. Nevertheless, they continued on, much as they had prior to 1911. There is little evidence of new thought, new direction, or a resurgence of activity. Rather, the members bemoaned the losses and sought to replace them with similar objects.

The Bangor Historical Society was not in a position to deal effectively with the crisis it faced in April 1911. "The Bangor Historical Society is not dead," the leadership proclaimed — not after the fire, but four months *before* the fire at an Annual Meeting!²⁴ The Society had met many of its stated goals: it had created an enviable collection; it had presented papers by respected local and state historians; and its members had published some admirable local history.²⁵ But in fact, the organization had been plagued by a declining membership, inadequate facilities, and lack of funds. The surviving records contain a litany of requests for money, space, and members, but no plan for achieving these objectives emerged. The decline of the Bangor Historical Society cannot be attributed to a single cause. Certainly the death, in 1884, of its leading member, John Edwards Godfrey, had left a void in the organization, but other factors contributed to the lack of direction.

Local historical societies had grown increasingly insular at the turn of the century. As the field of history professionalized, academic historians sought positions in the growing number of university history departments. Their increased mobility made it unnecessary and impractical to settle into and understand the communities near their campuses. Scholars established their publishing credentials in a competitive market with national themes intended for a broad, rather than regional audience.²⁶ For their research materials, academics turned to national repositories. With a diminished usefulness as research centers, local historical societies sought to justify their presence in the community. Deprived of the contributions of academic historians with new ideas and methods, local historical societies came to represent the community-based elites. The nation's centennial and the colonial revival provided a rationale for these organizations, but further narrowed their perspectives.

Now regarded as antiquarian, local historians wrote about community events and people in terms they understood. Historical societies began to place greater emphasis on genealogy

and relatively less on research and publication, further alienating them from the broader context of history.²⁷ Increased identification with those who traced their families to the founding of the community set the historical society apart from the general population. Americans in the new century witnessed a changed nation, and many were uncomfortable with the new order. The later nineteenth century brought a flood of eastern European immigrants to cities across the country. Already exclusive in their memberships, historical societies became havens for Anglo-Saxons. To the new arrivals, the historical society was a shrine to past deeds and men unknown to them.

Exclusiveness affected not only the organization's membership, but also its collections. Objects associated with famous men or events and colonial items such as candle molds, footwarmers, and spinning wheels fascinated Americans during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. When the Bangor Historical Society mounted an exhibition in 1934 to celebrate the city's centennial, the portraits and exhibits reflected the influence of the Colonial Revival. Portraits of early prominent Bangor people, photographs of the city, high-style furniture, and kitchen implements associated with open-hearth cooking featured prominently. Noticeably lacking were objects from immigrant groups, from Bangor's lumbering days, or indeed from any industrial endeavor. Rather, the exhibit reflected the lives of the leaders and a narrow range of cultural and early everyday life. It ignored much of the richness of the city's history. A few historical societies, notably the American Antiquarian Society and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, were moving away from a narrow focus on elite history, exclusive membership, and attention to collecting and preserving.²⁹ These organizations adopted a new model: the historical society as an educational institution. But this example had not inspired other historical societies. The Bangor Historical Society, like many older eastern organizations, continued the more narrow format established by its founders.

The care the organization gave its collection also deteriorated during this period. It devoted less time and effort to

Mary Curran (1839-1917) was the first woman member of the Bangor Historical Society, beginning her activities there about 1893. Between 1902 and 1915 she served variously as secretary, librarian, and cabinet keeper. *Bangor Daily News* photo.



record-keeping and research on the collection. The absence of full-time staff to catalog and properly care for objects resulted in static exhibits of unrelated artifacts and documents. Explanations of objects on exhibit consisted of simple identification. Gifts to the collection were assigned numbers and recorded in an accession book, but interpretive research on the objects was neglected. Objects were usually placed in already crowded glass cases, without regard to their long-term preservation.

In 1954 the local chapter of the Sons of Union Veterans agreed to allow the Society to share space and exhibit part of its collection in the GAR Memorial Home. But even this move did not generate new ideas within the organization, since the Society became a mere occupant in a building it could not use exclusively for its purposes. The Society dwindled to a few dedicated members, with little money and no clear direction. Although individuals within the Society recognized the value of preserving the history of the Penobscot River Valley, the organization was unable to articulate that purpose to the larger community. Historical societies that adopted the progressive educational model were in a position to serve the needs of their

communities, but those like the Bangor Historical Society continued the tradition of the learned society/library model that it had embraced at its inception. The field was changing dramatically, but the Bangor Historical Society was mired in the past.

Although local historians comprised the largest group within the American Historical Association, a national organization of historians founded in 1884, their role had receded with the ascendancy of the professional historian. Collectively local historical societies were not quiescent. As early as 1904 leaders petitioned the AHA for representation, and the Conference for State and Local Historical Societies was formed. The two associations were constantly at odds however, and in 1940 nonacademic historians founded the American Association for State and Local History, which provided information exchange and technical services to a burgeoning group of historical organizations.

Studies conducted by the AASLH in 1960 and 1980 charted the growth of historical agencies and supported the conclusion that Americans were rediscovering their national heritage following World War II. After the war, the United States enjoyed affluence and leisure that fueled a sense of nationalism and a renewed interest in American history. "Energetic [historical] administrators and trustees capitalized upon receptive conditions nurtured by the tremendous growth of popular interest in history, and tapped private and public resources to revitalize their institutions, or to strengthen and expand their programs."³¹

In Bangor this national trend was felt by the mid-1960s. An important stimulant to new thinking was the transfer of ownership of the GAR Memorial Home to the Bangor Historical Society. As with other historical societies, the emphasis on publication and maintenance of libraries began to give way to the creation of a museum and to historic house preservation.³² What had been known in Bangor as the GAR Memorial Home was, in fact, the important Greek Revival home of Thomas A. Hill, designed by the nationally recognized architect Richard Upjohn. Negotiations to transfer this building to the Bangor

Historical Society were successfully concluded in 1974 and the building became the home of the Society and its museum.

Traditionally the leadership of the Bangor Historical Society had been held by a small group of men, the president being elected virtually for life. In the 1960s membership records indicated increasing flux; new leaders sought to revitalize the organization. As was true of other American historical societies, the 1960s also witnessed changes in the collections of the Bangor Historical Society.³³ Archival material and Indian and military objects were still offered, but a gradual broadening of the range of objects occurred. The Bangor Historical Society received its first quilt in 1961 and additional bedcoverings were received shortly after. Clothing, formerly limited to parts of military uniforms, began to arrive by the mid-1960s.

The broader collections philosophy paralleled the academic community's changing view of history. For a growing number of social historians, objects relating to the lives of women and children and everyday household goods and furnishings began to take on an importance formerly reserved for military battles and other major political and economic events. New social history concepts broadened our understanding of community history, from a record of its notable leaders and their impact to a panorama of its many citizens and their daily lives. These new ideas helped to focus, as well as broaden the concept of local history. At Bangor Historical, for instance, natural history, souvenirs, and curiosities were no longer accepted for the collection. For almost a century, the exhibits at the Bangor Historical Society had hardly changed. Long glass cases held minerals, insects, old bullets, souvenirs from foreign countries, exotic weapons, and other miscellaneous objects. In the 1970s the jumble of artifacts gave way to conceptual exhibits, which were becoming accepted practice in professional museums.

The change was not always smooth. With the Bangor Historical Society still adhering to traditional models, local people, inspired by national historical activity, circumvented the establishment and founded an entirely new organization,

Penobscot Heritage. Begun as a Junior League community project in 1969, this organization captured local imagination with its concept of a “museum of living history.” Professionally organized and managed, Penobscot Heritage brought together community leaders and academics to educate and excite the community about its history. The organization was consistent with the national trend toward “museums without walls.” Penobscot Heritage’s successes in popularizing local history challenged the Bangor Historical Society to modernize its own organization and introduce more effective business practices and procedures. Volunteers adopted a standardized catalog system to effectively manage the collection that was growing rapidly. These organizational changes became increasingly important once the Society assumed ownership of its historical house in 1974 and became responsible for allocating limited funds to restoration and maintenance.

The 1970s also brought changes for Penobscot Heritage. Funded through federal grants and located in the City Hall, the organization was forced to streamline its operations after 1975 by federal cutbacks and lack of local bureaucratic support. As the Sons of Union Veterans had formerly shared space with the Bangor Historical Society, the Society now welcomed Penobscot Heritage into its home. Common purposes led to the merger of the two historical agencies in 1984.

Today the Bangor Historical Society blends the functions originally intended by its founders with the museum concepts envisioned by Penobscot Heritage. As part of its innovative approach to Bangor history, Penobscot Heritage prepared exhibits that highlighted important themes relevant to the community. Large stationary exhibits, with complementary traveling exhibits for school children, dealt with “Fur Trapping and Trade in the Penobscot Region” and “The Golden Era of Logging on the Penobscot.” By 1983 the Bangor Historical Society too had developed interpretive exhibits. “Made in Bangor: Economic Emergence and Adaptation, 1834-1911” examined the economic foundations of the city, and



The collections of the Bangor Historical Society. In the last two decades societies like Bangor Historical have abandoned displays of curios such as this for more thematic and interpretive exhibits. BHS photo.

“Allegro Vivace: The Pageantry of Bangor’s Musical Traditions” explored the city’s rich music heritage.

These years brought enormous growth and change for museums and historical societies across the country. The number of historical societies more than doubled between 1960 and 1984.³⁴ Along with this dramatic growth came greater public involvement, forcing historical societies to become more active, to grant greater access to their collections, and provide services and information on a wide range of topics.

Training programs for museum guides or interpreters were initiated and historical societies and museums began offering special activities for school children.

In 1960 the AASLH warned that historical societies must adapt to changes underway or be quickly outdistanced by more aggressive colleagues.³⁴ Demands by society, by new concepts in history, and by economic realities forced historical institutions to examine and restructure their organizations and open their doors to new ideas. Some resisted, but others heeded the advice, moving from volunteer managers to professional historical administrators, curators, and museum educators, who could develop programs integrated with the goals of restructured organizations designed to encourage active community participation and to teach history within a broader conceptual framework. Generally, the community responded enthusiastically to these changes. Moreover, academic historians were becoming interested in community studies. Returning to historical societies as the repositories of local history, historians were greeted by professional staff eager to share their collections and reexamine local history. The existing gulf between the societies and historians narrowed, as each had something to offer the other.

The fundamental changes in historical society missions since the 1960s were not made without sacrifices. The costs of saving the nation's heritage are staggering. While there have been some strides, the majority of historical societies are underfunded, inadequately staffed, and crippled by limited facilities. It is ironic that these three concerns had been raised by founding members of the Bangor Historical Society and were echoed throughout its 125-year history. There is one difference today: the demands on the historical society are greater than ever before. It is no wonder that the latest study by the AASLH is titled *A Culture at Risk: Who's Caring for America's Heritage?* While historical societies have adapted over time and are becoming more responsive to their communities, their effectiveness is compromised by needs that are timeless.

NOTES

¹Leslie W. Dunlap, *American Historical Societies, 1790-1960* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1944), chs. 2 and 3.

²The founders of the Bangor Historical Society included 7 lawyers, 7 businessmen, 5 clergymen, 3 physicians, and 3 from various fields. All were recognized names in the community. James B. Vickery, ed., *The Journals of John Edwards Godfrey, 1863-1869* (Rockland, Maine, 1979), p. 77.

³Membership dues, frozen at \$1 until the 1960s, insured membership to anyone interested. *Bangor Daily News*, August 12, 1963; *Whig and Courier*, June 28, 1864.

⁴Act of Incorporation, March 3, 1864.

⁵*Whig and Courier*, June 28, 1864; *Fiftieth Anniversary of the Bangor Historical Society, 1864-1914* (Bangor, 1914), p. 33; Dunlap, pps. 17-18.

⁶Charles Phillips and Patricia Hogan, *A Culture at Risk: Who Cares for America's Heritage?* (Nashville, 1984), p. 31.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁸David V. Van Tassel, *Recording America's Past: An Interpretation of the Development of Historical Studies in America, 1607-1884* (Chicago, 1960), p. 181; James B. Vickery, *Made in Bangor: Economic Emergence and Adaptation, 1834-1911* (Bangor, 1984), p. 7.

⁹*Whig and Courier*, June 28, 1864.

¹⁰*Journals of John Edwards Godfrey, 1863-1869*, p. 109; *Whig and Courier*, July 12, 1864.

¹¹*Whig and Courier*, June 28, 1864.

¹²*Jenks' Portland Gazette*, March 5, 1805.

¹³Calvin Tomkins, *Merchants and Masterpieces: The Story of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1970), p. 16.

¹⁴Catherine E. Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The American Women's Home* (Hartford, 1975), p. 297.

¹⁵*Whig and Courier*, June 28, 1864.

¹⁶*Fiftieth Anniversary of the Bangor Historical Society, 1864-1914*, p. 20.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹⁸*A Culture at Risk*, pps. 9-10.

¹⁹H. Morse Stephens, "Modern Historical Writings," *World's Work* 4 (1902): 2316, in David Van Tassel, "From Learned Society to Professional Organization: The American Historical Association, 1884-1900," *American Historical Review* 89 (1984): 944.

²⁰David J. Russo, "Some Impressions of the Nonacademic Local Historians and Their Writings," *Local History Today* (Indianapolis, 1980), pps. 8-9, 11-12.

²¹Interesting accounts of this alienation can be found in Van Tassel, "From Learned Society to Professional Organization," pp. 929-956, and John

Hingham, "Herbert Baxter Adams and the Study of Local History," *American Historical Review* 89 (1984): 1225-1239.

²²Bangor Historical Society minutes record the official vote allowing women membership in the organization in 1913. In 1893 Mary Curran, librarian of the Society, was named as a member and in 1895 Henrietta G. Rowe was also listed as a member. *Fiftieth Anniversary of the Bangor Historical Society, 1864-1914*, pp. 82, 87.

²³*Made in Bangor*, p. 7.

²⁴*Bangor Daily Commercial*, January 3, 1911.

²⁵"We have not yet made much progress with the Historical Society. I think some who would be interested otherwise, are too mean to give a cent to help it on. However, we will see what we shall see." *Journals of John Edwards Godfrey, 1863-1869*, p. 87.

²⁶Hingham, "Herbert Baxter Adams," p. 1233.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 1237.

²⁸Russo, "Nonacademic Local Historians," p. 12. Charles Brooks in *History of Medford* [Massachusetts] (Boston, 1855), p. vi, says: "These registers of early families in New England will contain the only authentic records of the true Anglo-Saxon blood existing among us; for if foreign immigration should pour in upon us for the next fifty years as it has for the last thirty, it will be difficult for a man to prove that he has descended from the Plymouth Pilgrims." And John M. Killits in *Toledo and Lucas County, Ohio* (Chicago and Toledo, 1923), p. iii, says, "We note, perhaps with regret, that in some parts of the country, men of alien lineage and habits of thought are taking over places hallowed with memories of early struggles in the development of our American commonwealth ... Wherever historical associations ... make up local atmosphere, we may look for beneficial results when residents of any extraction are brought under their influence." The Bangor Historical Society admitted two Jewish members and an Albanian immigrant in the 1920s and 1930s.

²⁹Dunlap, *American Historical Societies*, p. 40; *A Culture at Risk*, p. 11.

³⁰*Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, 1812-1849*, p. 504, in Dunlap, *American Historical Societies*, p. 21.

³¹Clement M. Silvestro and Richmond D. Williams, "A Look at Ourselves: A Report on the Survey of the State and Local Historical Agencies in the United States," *Bulletin of the American Association for State and Local History* 2 (1962): 390.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 433.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 417.

³⁴*A Culture at Risk*, p. 1.

³⁵*Museums for a New Century: A Report of the Commission on Museums for a New Century* (Washington, D.C., 1984), p. 19.

³⁶Silvestro and Williams, "A Look at Ourselves," p. 390.