



Dawnland Couture on the Santa Fe Indian Market runway, 2019
Decontie & Brown (Penobscot) Photo by Tira Howard,
Collections of Maine Historical Society, MaineMemory.Net #105623

Maine is Wabanaki Homeland. The word "Wabanaki" translates to *People of the Dawnland*, including the Maliseet, Micmac, Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, and Abenaki Nations. They have inhabited what is now Northern New England, the Canadian Maritimes, and Quebec since time immemorial, according to oral histories, and for at least 13,000 years according to the archaeological record.

Jason K. Brown (Penobscot) and Donna Decontie Brown (Penobscot/Algonquin) are jewelry and fashion designers who celebrate their creativity and Penobscot heritage through their company, Decontie & Brown. Jason Brown described *Dawnland Couture* as the, "embodiment of the rising sun in the wild woods of Wabinakiland. It pays homage to our territory being the first place in North America to feel the touch of the sun."

State of Mind: *Becoming Maine*

March 13, 2020–January 31, 2021
Maine Historical Society
489 Congress Street
Portland, ME 04101
www.mainehistory.org
www.mainememory.net/stateofmind



Curated by Tilly Laskey, Maine Historical Society, with community advisors: Anne Chamberland, Archives Acadiennes, University of Maine, Fort Kent; Deborah Cummings Khadraoui, Abyssinian Meeting House; James E. Francis Sr. (Penobscot) Director of Cultural and Historic Preservation, Penobscot Nation; Bob Greene, Author, Portland, Maine; John Johnson, Portland, Maine; Daniel Minter, Indigo Arts Alliance; Lise Pelletier, Director, Archives Acadiennes, University of Maine, Fort Kent; Darren Ranco (Penobscot), Professor of Anthropology and Coordinator of Native American Programs, University of Maine; Donald Soctomah (Passamaquoddy) Director, Passamaquoddy Cultural Heritage Center and Passamaquoddy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer.

The separation from Massachusetts in 1820 had different meanings and implications for residents grounded in geography, culture, race, and economic standing. Understanding that the history of how Maine became a state is rooted in the stories of people, *State of Mind: Becoming Maine* focuses on four distinct communities—Wabanaki, Acadian French, Black, and English-speaking people—all who have deep ties to the land now known as Maine. While multitudes of distinct cultural communities have, and continue to call Maine home, the Wabanaki have cared for this land for millenia. The French, Black, and English-speaking people have resided here since the early 1600s, and represent a wide range of perspective. These communities were also particularly impacted by the effects of statehood on existing treaties, sovereignty, land ownership, borders, slavery, citizenship, and colonialism.

As we commemorate the Bicentennial of Maine's entrance into the United States in 1820, this exhibition recognizes that Maine has been continually evolving over the past 13,000 years, into a state of "becoming" the place we know in 2020.



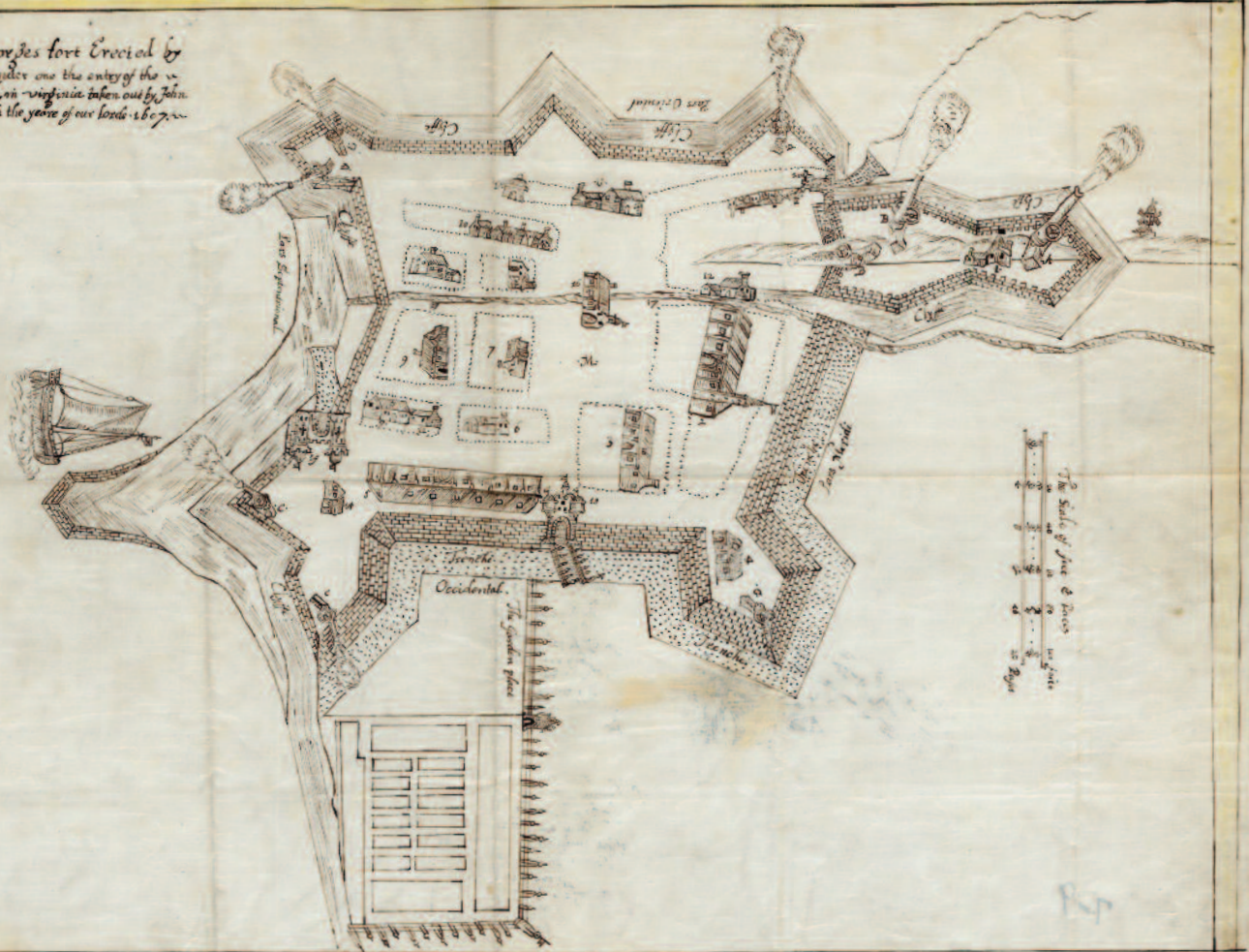
“Évangéline” grosse tête (exhibit installation), 2014
 Melanie Bourque
 Reproduction 1755 Acadian woman’s outfit, 2014
 Courtesy of Archives Acadiennes, University of Maine, Fort Kent

French Acadiens were the first Europeans to found a permanent settlement in North America on St. Croix Island in 1604—preceding the founding of Jamestown in 1607 and of Québec city in 1608.

The Acadiens prospered until the British forcibly removed them to American colonies during 1755-1763. Known as “Le Grand Dérangement,” this forced expulsion of over 14,000 Acadiens left approximately 7,000 of them dead. Today, Acadiens celebrate their heritage each August 15 in Tintamarre parades, wearing grosse tête and making joyful noise to show their presence and to restate, “We’re still here.”

The draught of s^t Georges fort Erected by
 Captayn George Popham together with the entry of the
 famous Prince of Sagadahock in Virginia taken out by John
 Jarent the viii day of October in the year of our lord 1607.

- A a dorny Cutheringe.
- B. Sakers
- C. Munitions
- D. Sakers
- 1. the Regiments house
- 2. the Chapell
- 3. the Admirals house
- 4. the Munition house
- 5. the Store house
- 6. the Writings house
- 7. the Vice Admirals house
- 8. the Battery general
- 9. the Provosts house
- 10. the Sargents Maisters house
- 11. the Corporals house
- 12. the Barbers house
- 13. the Smiths house
- 14. the Cooks house
- 15. the Bakers house
- 16. the Court of guards
- 17. the Lake
- 18. the Land gate
- 19. the Water gate
- 20. the porters gate
- 21. the Justice place
- 22. the east and west lodgings



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Maine 1607

Fort St. George, reproduction of 1607 document
 Collections of Maine Historical Society, MaineMemory.Net #7542

Englishman Ferdinando Gorges's first attempt to settle the region now known as Maine was in 1607 near Phippsburg, where his envoys George Popham and Raleigh Gilbert built Fort St. Georges. The colony failed, with survivors returning to England on *The Virginia*, the first English vessel built in North America.

Undaunted by the Popham failure, Gorges sought and received a grant in 1622 for a huge parcel of land in New England from King James I of England, which he named the "Province of Maine." Gorges spent much of his time and money trying to develop this English colony in Maine, but never set foot in the region.



By His HONOUR

SPENCER PHIPS, Esq;

Lieutenant-Governour and Commander in Chief, in and over His Majesty's Province of the *Massachusetts-Bay* in *New-England*.

A P R O C L A M A T I O N.

WHEREAS the Tribe of *Penobscot* Indians have repeatedly in a perfidious Manner acted contrary to their solemn Submission unto His Majesty long since made and frequently renewed;

I have therefore, at the Desire of the House of Representatives, with the Advice of His Majesty's Council, thought fit to issue this Proclamation, and to declare the *Penobscot* Tribe of Indians to be Enemies, Rebels, and Traitors to His Majesty King *GEORGE* the Second: And I do hereby require His Majesty's Subjects of this Province to embrace all Opportunities of pursuing, capturing, killing and destroying all and every of the aforesaid Indians.

AND WHEREAS the General Court of this Province have voted that a Bounty or Encouragement be granted and allowed to be paid out of the Publick Treasury, to the marching Forces that shall have been employed for the Defence of the *Eastern* and *Western* Frontiers, from the *First* to the *Twenty-fifth* of this Instant *November*;

I have thought fit to publish the same; and I do hereby Promise, That there shall be paid out of the Province Treasury to all and any of the said Forces, over and above their Bounty upon *Indians*, their Wages and Subsistence, the Premiums or Bounty following, viz.

For every Male *Penobscot* Indian above the Age of Twelve Years, that shall be taken within the Time aforesaid and brought to *Boston*, Fifty Pounds.

For every Scalp of a Male *Penobscot* Indian above the Age aforesaid brought in as Evidence of their being killed as aforesaid, Forty Pounds.

For every Female *Penobscot* Indian taken and brought in as aforesaid, and for every Male Indian Prisoner under the Age of Seven Years, taken and brought in as aforesaid, Twenty-five Pounds.

For every Scalp of such Female Indian or Male Indian under the Age of Twelve Years, that shall be killed and brought in as Evidence of their being killed as aforesaid, Twenty Pounds.

Given at the Council-Chamber in *Boston*, this Third Day of *November* 1755, and in the Twenty-ninth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord *GEORGE* the Second, by the Grace of *GOD* of *Great-Britain*, *France* and *Ireland*, KING, Defender of the Faith, &c.

By His Honour's Command,
J. Willard, Secr.

S. Phips.

GOD Save the KING.

BOSTON Printed by *John Draper*, Printer, to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governour and Council. 1755.

We Walk On; Eternally by James Eric Francis Sr., Indian Island, 2020
Collections of Maine Historical Society, MaineMemory.Net #105625

In 1755, in an attempt to clear the region for English-speaking settlements, Massachusetts lieutenant governor Spencer Phips issued proclamations that offered bounties for "pursuing, capturing, killing, and destroying all and every" Penobscot citizens.

James Eric Francis Sr. (Penobscot) painted *We Walk On: Eternally* in reflection of Maine's Bicentennial. Francis noted that, *The artwork urges the citizens of Maine to join hands with the Indigenous population of Maine and walk eternally into the future and move beyond the deadly acts of the past. The use of language, color, and symbolism helps to affirm our resilience as Penobscot people historically, presently, and into the future.*



The McIntyre family, Houlton, circa 1900
Collections of Maine Historical Society, MaineMemory.Net #1130

For a state known as one of the Whitest in the nation, Maine has had a remarkably long and strong Black presence. Centuries before Maine broke away from Massachusetts to become a state in 1820, people of color have fished and farmed, sailed, and labored on the rocky shores of the most northeastern part of the United States.

Black communities are closely tied to the success of the Maine economy, initially as unwilling subjects through the institution of slavery and the triangular trade, and later as active participants and leaders in vital industries like maritime, shipbuilding, and service sector businesses. Most recently, the influx of New Mainers has boosted Maine's 21st century economy.



Map of Maine, 1835, by Thomas Illman.
Collections of Maine Historical Society, MaineMemory.Net #105630

The shape of Maine has changed over time, reflecting settlement, international treaties, wars, and military actions. Each change has had severe consequences for Wabanaki people and Acadian communities whose families are—even as of 2020—split between the United States and Canada.

As a district of Massachusetts, Maine had little say about how the wars fought between England and France affected the state's international borders. After the Revolutionary War (1775-1783), attempts to set Maine's Northernmost border were slowed by a lack of understanding of the topography, with surveyors and mapmakers sent by both the United States and Canada to explore the region.

During the War of 1812, questions over international trade, the occupation of Eastport, and allegiances of Mainers were challenged. Even after statehood, Maine's Northern border wasn't fixed for another 22 years, until the end of the Aroostook War in 1842 through the Webster-Ashburton Treaty.

Washington 27th Feb'y 1806

Gentlemen.

You are now legislating at Boston,
for the Interest of the district of Maine.

Permit me to ask you if severing Maine
from Massachusetts would not be serving
your Country, & promoting its best Interests,
& Honours.

The Representatives from Maine, who are here,
are all waiting to hear of some of your trans-
actions relative to the subject —.

When shall the old State of Maine shake
off its degradation of district? when shall
this unnatural servitude cease? a servitude
of Magnitude, to a Bugaboo — How long shall
the main Body be contrained by a King?

How long shall the Trunk be in servitude &
pay suit, service, homage & tribute — to a Limb, long
since amputated by N. Hampshire? Are we always
to be a kind of sub Colony, to a sub state? 85-

Orchard Cook on his frustration with Maine's separation movement, Washington DC, 1806
Collections of Maine Historical Society, MaineMemory.Net #103678

As early as 1680, residents of Maine signed a petition seeking a separation from Massachusetts. Starting in 1792, six formal attempts called for Maine's statehood, prior to the winning vote in 1819. Motivations for separation were based on Massachusetts's lack of military support, and the cultural differences and the economic disparity between Maine and Massachusetts.

In 1806, Orchard Cook addressed several leaders of the separation movement about his frustration with Massachusetts, as well as the current state of the movement, noting, *How long shall the Trunk be in servitude & pay suit, service, homage & tribute—to a Limb, long since amputated by N. Hampshire? Are we always to be a kind of sub Colony, to a sub state?*

Washington Jan 25. 1820
Dear Sir - This afternoon, a Letter signed
by yourself and several others, and directed
to the Senate and Representatives in
Congress from Maine, was duly re-
ceived - I have communicated its contents
as requested and also to your Brother, who
this morning took his seat in the Senate
to universal satisfaction - I am un-
willing, if necessary, to comply with your
wishes, if necessary, by inserting an in-
terduction of slavery in the Maine Bill
- but I am perfectly satisfied it would not
answer any valuable purpose - The
restriction has been opposed on the ground
that Congress have no right to impose any
on the admission of a state into the Union
so that if a restriction were added to the
Maine bill, they would vote against the
Bill and restriction too and act consistently

Prentiss Mellen to William King regarding the Missouri Compromise, Washington, D.C., 1820
Collections of Maine Historical Society, MaineMemory.Net #102203

Maine's bid for statehood came at the same time the slave-holding territory of Missouri was also campaigning for statehood. Mainers had barely survived the schisms of the vote for separation when Henry Clay of Kentucky offered the possibility of a "compromise" where the two requests for statehood would be packaged together—Maine would join the nation as a free state, and Missouri as a slave state to maintain a balance of free and slave states in the Union.

Many people of Maine, who were strongly abolitionist, opposed the very bill that would give them independence. Senator Prentiss Mellen, who later became the first President of Maine's Anti-Slavery Society, wrote this letter to William King trying to overcome Maine's new connection to Missouri and slavery.



Sally Holmes's silk satin evening gown, Alfred, circa 1825
Collections of Maine Historical Society, MaineMemory.Net #105484

Sarah Brooks Holmes (1773-1835), known as Sally, lived in Alfred. Her husband, John Holmes, was instrumental in Maine's separation from Massachusetts and was one of Maine's first United States Senators. Maine Historical Society's collections include three of Sally Holmes's evening dresses she wore in Washington DC during the Monroe presidency.

The creation of the state of Maine in 1820 wasn't specifically applicable to women like Sally Holmes, since under both Maine and Massachusetts law, women did not have the ability to vote, and typically, a married woman's property, contracts, and labor belonged to her husband.



William King, Bath, circa 1845
Collections of Maine Historical Society, MaineMemory.Net #23437

Nearly thirty years after the first calls for Maine independence in 1792, separation won in 1819 with the overwhelming majority support of 70% of voters. Kennebec County contributed the most votes in favor of independence with places like Augusta reporting 99%. Hancock County was the most closely divided, with 52% in favor.

William King was a Democratic-Republican politician who spearheaded Maine's separation from Massachusetts and became Maine's first governor in 1820.