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HISTORY OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN  
MAINE**

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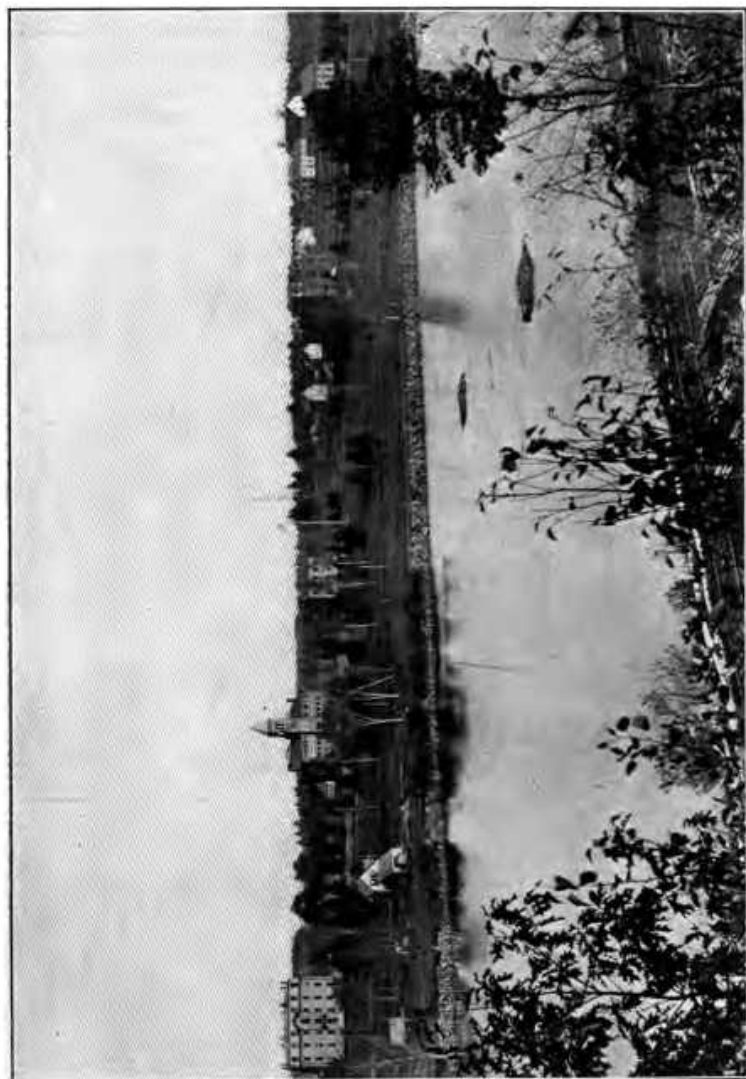
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**EDWARD W. HALL & HERBERT B. ADAMS**

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Ash Hall.

Wingate Hall.

Chemical Laboratory.

Coburn Hall. Farm Building. President's House.

GENERAL VIEW OF UNIVERSITY OF MAINE.

UNITED STATES BUREAU OF EDUCATION.  
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EDITED BY HERBERT H. ADAMS.

No. 36.

HISTORY

OF

HIGHER EDUCATION IN MAINE,

BY

EDWARD W. HALL, LL. D.,

*Librarian of Colby College.*

WASHINGTON:  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.

1903.

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*Samuel*

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## LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION,  
*Washington, D. C., January 26, 1903.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith the History of Higher Education in Maine, by Edward W. Hall, LL. D., librarian of Colby College. This monograph constitutes Circular of Information of this Bureau No. 3 of 1903, and is No. 36 of the series of Contributions to American Educational History, which have been published from time to time by the Bureau under the editorship of the late Herbert B. Adams. The present circular contains a sketch of the history of the school system of Maine as well as the history of higher education.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. T. HARRIS, *Commissioner.*

Hon. E. A. HITCHCOCK,  
*Secretary of the Interior.*

## Chapter I.

### THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

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The history of public education in Maine prior to 1820 belongs to the educational history of Massachusetts. The several enactments of the General Court of Massachusetts relating to maintaining public schools were of course applicable to the towns existing in the district of Maine.

The towns of Kittery and York received in 1673 "presentments" from the grand jury "for not providing a schoole and schoolmaster for ye aedification of youth according to law." It is inferred from other presentments that schools had been established in several other towns before that date.<sup>a</sup> But as the records of most of the towns in York County, the earliest settled in the State, were destroyed during the frequent conflicts with the Indians no reliable history of the establishment of schools prior to 1700 can be obtained. The town records of York mention the hiring of Nathaniel Freeman in 1701 "to Ceep a free scool for all the Inhabitants of our Town of York." They also mention the vote of the town March 9, 1724-25, "yt a School House shall be built at ye Lower end of ye Town on ye ministerial land this year at ye Town Cost and charges," which must have been the first schoolhouse built in Maine. These records further show that the town maintained not only schools to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic, but also maintained a grammar school, as it was then called, down to 1785. In that year formal mention is made of school districts and their limits defined. A school committee of nine was chosen April 1, 1779.

The town of Wells furnishes the next earliest record concerning schools. It is the vote of the town, March 20, 1715, "that the selectmen use their endeavour to procure a school master for the town at the town's charge, not exceeding twenty pounds per annum and his diate." It was not until 1716, however, that a schoolmaster, Mr. Richard Martyn, a graduate of Harvard, was induced to accept this salary and "diate." The historian of Wells, writing of these times, says:

During the short breathing time between Queen Anne's and Lovell's war, the great subject of schools seems first to have suggested itself to the attention of the

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<sup>a</sup> Sixth report of the State board of education, 1852, Hon. E. M. Thurston, secretary; report for 1876 of the State superintendent of schools, Hon. W. J. Corthell.

people. Even the lowest grade of instruction had not yet been provided for. During the perils of the wars, children could not have been trusted to attend school at any considerable distance from their homes, and, in fact, no school could have been safely kept. There is good reason for the belief that, down to this period, no school of any kind had been maintained.<sup>a</sup>

The interest awakened in Wells did not die out. In 1731 the first schoolhouse in town was built, followed in 1734 by two others. In Kennebunk, which was a part of Wells, the first record relating to schools is in 1757, when it was voted to hire a schoolmaster for one year. The first schoolhouse in the town is thus described by Bourne:

It was built of large round logs notched at the ends so as to let into each other. The walls were about 6 feet high, with a roof over the top, though the gable ends were entirely open. There were no windows, the light coming in freely from the ends. The only way of entering, both for master and scholars, was by climbing up on a stile at the end and jumping down into the house.

The parish had at least partial control of the schools until 1805, when the town assumed entire control. The first woman teacher was Polly Hovey, who taught at Kennebunk Port in 1792 and was paid \$1.50 per week.

The earliest record of schools in Portland is in 1729, when the selectmen were requested "to look out for a schoolmaster, to prevent the town's being presented." The first notice of the actual employment of a teacher is in 1733, when Robert Bayley was hired at a salary of £50. In 1736 the first "grammar school" was established, in which more extensive culture was provided, as a preparation for the university. In 1745 Stephen Longfellow, at the instance of Rev. Thomas Smith, transferred his grammar school from York to Portland, where he soon found 50 pupils at 8 shillings per quarter.<sup>b</sup>

Schools existed at Buxton in 1761, at New Gloucester in 1764, and at Machias in 1774. Mrs. John White opened the first school in Canaan in 1778, where Samuel Weston in 1778 had a class of married men, and in 1796 Isaiah Wood, "besides his classes in the Psalter and Dilworth's Spelling Book, introduced a class in the newspaper, which proved a very interesting document to the young." Josiah Spaulding, in 1779, kept a school at Norridgewock in the house of Mr. Laughton, the principal scholars being from the Spaulding and Laughton families, however. This town was divided into five school districts in 1790, when it was voted that "Grain and Corn of any kind, beans, peas, flax, sheep's wool, Pork, and Beef be rece'd in payment for the School and Minister's Rates." In 1791 Norridgewock raised £30 for schools, which amount was to be expended in "Each class their Equil proportion in schooling, according as the majer part of Said class shall agree." It was also one of the earliest towns to prescribe

<sup>a</sup> E. E. Bourne, *History of Wells and Kennebunk*, pp. 307, 439.

<sup>b</sup> William Willis, *History of Portland, 1692-1864*, pp. 365-367.