



# Maine

## State History

~ In a Nutshell ~

Written & designed by  
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Maine State History In a Nutshell  
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### **What is the "In a Nutshell" series?**

This is a series of concise, easy to understand information on many popular topics. You will find that many of products in this series can also be found as part of larger publications and/or curriculum on the publisher's website. At the end of each book, you will find a list of questions that may be used to help you review the material.

# Maine State History Lapbook Journal Study Guide



The Great Seal of Maine

Welcome to the great state of Maine! From the pristine wilderness of the conifer and hardwood forests to the magnificent rocky coastline of the north, to the long sandy beaches of the south, Maine is truly a scenic wonder. Picturesque lighthouses and quaint fishing villages add to the natural splendor of the coastline. Majestic homes of 19th century sea captains, many with their original widow's walks, grace the seaside towns.

Maine isn't just about beautiful scenery and wilderness. Maine's history and economy have been linked to vast timber reserves and to the sea; in this case, the Atlantic Ocean. The abundance of timber served the state well as Maine became noted for its shipbuilding in colonial times. The first ship built and launched in western hemisphere was the *Virginia*, launched in 1607. Shipbuilding continued to flourish in Maine as the manufacture of wooden ships gave way to iron and steel. The first atomic submarine, the *Swordfish* was built in Maine. On the other end of the scale, Maine produces more canoes than any other state in the union.

Though the wooden shipbuilding industry disappeared long ago, Maine forests continue to provide the raw resources for its most important manufactured products; cardboard boxes, paper bags, wood pulp, and paper.

Maine's blueberry harvest is the largest in the nation, yielding almost all the low bush blueberries grown in the United States. Potatoes are a major product of Maine, growing well in the cool north. And the state is famous for delicious shellfish, too, especially clams and the famous Maine lobster. Maine's yearly lobster catch is larger than any other state.

It is really not known how the name for this state originated. One theory suggests that the state was named by French colonists after the French province of Mayne. Another theory mentions that "Main" was a common term to describe a mainland.

People who live in or come from Maine are called Mainers. Variants of this are Maine Staters and State of Mainers.

In days gone by, people who lived in the area now defined as Maine may also have been referred to by a number of other nicknames:

- Foxes - Mainers were sometimes referred to as Foxes because of the abundance of foxes roaming the pine forests in which Mainers often worked.
- Lumberjacks/Lumbermen - Because of the vast timber resources of Maine, one of the chief occupations of Mainers was lumbering.
- Pine Trees - Somewhat funny to think about, but residents of the Pine Tree State were sometimes referred to as pine trees themselves.



Map of Maine – Capital, Major Cities, Lakes and Rivers

## STATEHOOD

On March 15, 1820, Maine became the 23<sup>rd</sup> state to be admitted into the Union.

## STATE CONSTITUTION

William King may have authored the largest part of the Maine Constitution – he was the president of the Constitutional Convention and later elected Maine's first Governor. Other authors of the constitution were Thomas Jefferson, John Chandler, Albion K. Parris, William Pitt Preble, and John Holmes. Thomas Jefferson authored the section of Article VIII on education.

The Maine Constitution was unanimously approved by the 210 delegates to the Maine Constitutional Convention in October 1819. It was then ratified by Congress on March 4, 1820,

as part of the Missouri Compromise, in which free northern states approved the statehood of Missouri as a slave state in exchange for the statehood of Maine as a free one. In this manner, northern representation remained in balance with southern pro-slavery influence in the Senate.

Maine gained its statehood from Massachusetts on March 15, 1820, with William King as the state's first Governor. The Maine Constitution is the fourth-oldest operating state constitution in the country.

*Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maine\\_Constitution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maine_Constitution)*

**PREAMBLE:** *We the people of Maine, in order to establish justice, insure tranquility, provide for our mutual defense, promote our common welfare, and secure to ourselves and our posterity the blessings of liberty, acknowledging with grateful hearts the goodness of the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe in affording us an opportunity, so favorable to the design; and, imploring God's aid and direction in its accomplishment, do agree to form ourselves into a free and independent State, by the style and title of the State of Maine and do ordain and establish the following Constitution for the government of the same.*

## **STATE GOVERNMENT**

The Maine State Constitution states that the governing body of Maine shall consist of three co-equal branches - Executive, Legislative and Judicial.

The Executive Branch is responsible for execution of the laws created by the legislature. This branch is headed by the Governor, whose powers include the ability to call the Senate and House of Representatives into session and to either approve or veto any bills that may be passed by these two branches of the legislature. The Governor is elected every four years, and no individual may serve more than two consecutive terms in this office.

The Legislative Branch has the power to make laws. Maine's Legislature is a bi-cameral Legislature made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate has 35 members who are elected every 2 years, and the House has 151 members who are also elected every two years. In Maine, no Senator or Representative may serve more than four consecutive terms. For a Bill to become a law, it must pass through four steps in both the House of Representatives and the Senate; 1st reading, 2nd reading, engrossment and then enactment. If the House members vote to enact a bill, it is sent to the Senate for enactment and then to the Governor to sign into law. The Governor may either approve or veto any law. The Legislature however, can override a veto by a two-thirds majority vote by members of both the Senate and the House.

The Judicial Branch has the power to interpret Maine laws. The Courts of Maine are headed by the Supreme Judicial Court. This branch must also answer any requests by either the Governor or the Legislature to issue an opinion on current laws or pending bills. All judicial officers are appointed by the Governor and serve a term of 7 years.

The State of Maine has three Constitutional Officers and one Statutory Officer. The three Constitutional Officers are the Secretary of State, the State Treasurer, and State Attorney General. The Officer created by Maine Statute is the State Auditor.

The Secretary of State is responsible for keeping and preserving the records of all official acts and proceedings of the Governor, the Senate, and the House of Representatives. Among other duties, Maine's Secretary of State is also charged with safeguarding the Electoral process and protecting the motoring public by promoting the safe use of Maine roadways. The Secretary of State is elected by joint ballot of the Senators and Representatives in a convention and serves for two years. The Secretary of State may not serve for more than 4 consecutive terms.

The State Treasurer is responsible for recording, collecting and investing all of the state's money. The treasurer is elected by joint ballot of the Senators and Representatives in a convention and serves for two years. The State Treasurer may not serve for more than 4 consecutive terms.

The State Attorney General is the chief lawyer for the state. The Attorney General represents the State of Maine and its many agencies in court cases. Some of the areas investigated by the Attorney General are consumer fraud, suspicious deaths, and other major crimes. The Attorney General is elected by joint ballot of the Senators and Representatives in a convention and serves for two years. The Attorney General may not serve for more than 4 consecutive terms.

The State Auditor is the chief officer charged with examining all of the State's financial records and reporting the findings to the Legislature each year. The State Auditor is elected by joint ballot of the Senators and Representatives in a convention and serves for four years. The State Auditor may not serve for more than 2 consecutive terms.

## **TRIBAL GOVERNMENT**

Tribal Government operates separately from Maine State Government. For more information, visit: <http://www.doi.gov/governments/tribalgovernments.cfm>

## **U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION**

The legislative branch of the United States government makes laws for our nation and raises and distributes money to run the United States government. The most evident part of the legislative branch is the United States Congress. Congress is divided into two parts, called houses. The two parts are the Senate and the House of Representatives. Congress is referred to as a bicameral body because it is made up of two houses. The Latin roots of the word bicameral, "bi" and "cameral," mean two chambers or rooms.

Members of the Senate are called Senators and members of the House of Representatives are called Representatives. Senators and representatives serving in these two bodies are sometimes referred to as congressmen, or women, and sometimes as legislators because their business is to legislate or make laws. The role of the legislative branch is defined in the United States Constitution.

Each state elects people to represent them in the United States Congress in Washington, DC. The citizens of each state elect two senators to represent them in the Senate. They also elect representatives to represent them in the House of Representatives. The number of representatives each state sends to the House of Representatives is not a specific number like the Senate, but is based on the population of the state. The people, that are elected to represent the state's citizens in the United States Congress, are referred to as the Congressional Delegation.

There are 100 senators in the U.S. Senate. Each is elected to a term, in the Senate, of six years. There are 435 representatives in the U.S. House of Representatives. Each is elected to a term, in the "House," of two years.

The citizens of Maine elect two people, like every other state, to represent them in the Senate and two people, based on Maine's current population in the most recent federal census, to represent them in the House of Representatives.

## STATE SEAL

The official state seal of Maine was adopted in 1820. The farmer is a symbol of pride in Maine's agricultural roots. The sailor represents Maine's strong ties to the sea.

Symbols of the natural richness of the state are pictured on the center shield - a pine tree, a moose (Maine's official state animal), sea, and sky. The seal design also appears on Maine's state flag.

Above the coat of arms shines the North star and Maine's motto: *DIRIGO* (I Lead, or I Direct), below is the word *MAINE* in capital letters.



The North star (Polaris) also appears on the state flag of Alaska. Polaris is not merely a *symbol* of guidance - travelers have depended on it for many centuries to find their way (it always marks due north).

## STATE CAPITAL (Augusta)

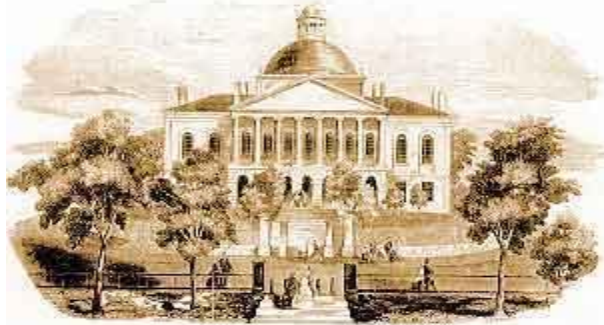
When Maine separated from Massachusetts and became a state on March 15, 1820, Portland became the temporary capitol city. The first State House was a modest two-story Federal style building at the corner of Congress and Myrtle Streets. It served as Maine's State House until 1832 and was eventually destroyed in the Great Fire of 1866.

Though the temporary capitol of Portland was the largest city in the state many thought a permanent capitol should be more centrally located. A number of cities and towns sought the honor of becoming the state capitol and site of the new State House. The principal aspirants were Portland, Brunswick, Hallowell, Waterville, Belfast, Wiscasset and Augusta. The Legislature finally selected the City of Augusta, and Governor Enoch Lincoln signed the bill establishing Augusta as the official capitol on February 24, 1827.



A 34 acre site for the Capitol was selected on “Weston Hill”, on the western side of the Kennebec River. The piece of land was deeded to the State in 1827 by a group of patriotic Augusta owners for a sum of ten dollars. New England architect, Charles Bulfinch was enlisted to design plans for the new building. He had also designed the Massachusetts State House and the United States Capitol Building in Washington.

For the design of the Maine capitol Bulfinch chose the basic outline of the Massachusetts capitol building but aimed for a Greek Revival simplicity which could be executed well using local



The State House from an engraving in the November 19, 1853 issue of Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion.

granite material. About one hundred and fifty feet in length, including the central portion with columns and cupola and two wings extending north and south, the building's cornerstone was laid on the 4th of July, 1829, amid impressive Masonic ceremonies. Granite was hauled from Hallowell to Augusta by oxen and blocks for the second story were hauled up a runway into the building. Construction was completed in January of 1832. Maine boasted one the nation's most beautiful and modern

capitol buildings, although complaints ensued of a leaky roof and faulty heating system, the latter causing the building to catch fire on more than one occasion.

The Maine Legislature held its first session in the new State Capitol on January 4, 1832. At that time all of state government was housed in the State House. As state government grew, expansion and remodeling projects became necessary. The interior of the Capitol was remodeled in 1852 and again in 1860 to provide additional room for state departments. In 1890-1891, a large three-story wing, designed by Boston architect Calvin Spoffard, was added to the rear of the building. The new wing would accommodate the State Library and provide more office space for departments

The city of Portland made repeated attempts over the course of eight decades to regain the honor of being Maine's capitol, but was ultimately unsuccessful.

Major remodeling of the Capitol during 1909-1910 established the present-day appearance of the building. It was enlarged according to designs by G. Henri Desmond, and executed by Charles Hichborn of Augusta. This remodeling necessitated the demolition of almost all the old building save the portico and front and rear walls. The length of the building was doubled to three hundred feet by extending the north and south wings. The low Saucer dome of Bulfinch's design was replaced by the current 150-foot copper-covered one and surmounted by a statue depicting the female figure of Wisdom, designed by sculptor W. Clark Noble of Gardiner.





Construction in the 1950's of the state office building, and completion in 1971 of the Cultural Building, resulted in the removal of many of the agency offices from the State House. The glass partition separating lobbyists and guests from the House chamber was added at that time. The State Museum and State Library moved to the new Cultural Building in 1971, although the latter's legal collection remained in the State House as part of the newly-created Maine State Law and Legislative Reference Library. The Governor and his staff moved in to the renovated West wing late in 1972. The House Chamber was repainted, re-carpeted and had falling ceiling tiles replaced in 1979.

As the State House reached its 150-year mark, still dogged by grumblings of poor ventilation, cracked floor tiles, insufficient quarters, poor public access and general drabness unbecoming the state's most public building, a new movement to spruce up the Capitol building gained momentum.

In 1984, the Senate chamber was refurbished. In 1985 the long-restricted Senate gallery was strengthened and re-opened to the public. Utility poles around the capitol were removed and electrical wires buried in 1986. The pockmarked and peeling dome was stripped and repainted in 1988. The front steps were crumbling and deemed unsafe and closed off in 1991 until a temporary patch job was completed by an inmate crew.

In 1991 the possible presence of the building's original time capsule was discovered by a local sleuth with a metal detector. A rectangular metal object was detected embedded in the cornerstone found beside the fifth step of the original seven-step stairway to the main entrance. Considering the bleak financial picture at the time, a decision was made to let the capsule rest until a more momentous occasion or future anniversary. Though there's no way of knowing what is actually in the cornerstone, a history of Augusta says that a copy of the state Constitution, some currency of the day, publications and a special plate were placed there at the time of dedication. In 1989, in a ceremony commemorating the building's 160th anniversary, a stainless steel time capsule was buried near the front wall of the State House. It is to be opened in 2029.

A new phase of renovations to the long-neglected State House and its grounds began in the mid-1990's, with the improvement of the state's economy. One of the first tasks was the complete reconstruction and renovation of the crumbling granite retaining wall and cast-iron fencing encircling the Capitol. It had not been repaired since the 1910-1911 renovations. The dome was rewired and illuminated at night once again, after being in darkness since 1987. The inside of the dome was also restored and visible from inside the State House.

By 1996 a master plan for restoring and modernizing the entire building was developed by Bath architects, Weinrich and Burt and implemented by Granger Northern in phases over a span of five years. Changes included improved public and handicapped access, structural reinforcement, health and safety improvements, technological upgrades, and esthetic refurbishing of the building and landscaping. The dismal and leaky underground tunnel connecting the State House with the Cross Office Building was completely rebuilt to include a large skylight, the Klir Beck dioramas and a granite mural, by artist Evan Haynes, of text written in English, French, Passamaquoddy, Penobscot and Abenaki languages. The east-facing granite steps were re-set on a new foundation and a new public entrance was created in the west wing.

*Source: <http://www.maine.gov/legis/lawlib/sthousehistory.htm>*

## STATE MOTTO

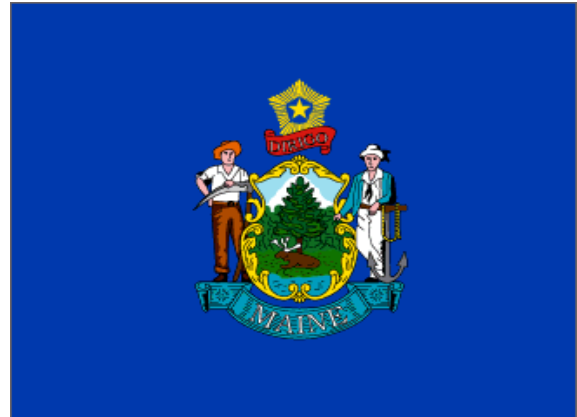
“Dirigo”

The state motto of Maine is *Dirigo* (Latin for "I Direct" or "I Lead"). It appears both on the state seal and Maine's state flag.

## STATE FLAG

On March 21, 1901 the Maine State Legislature passed "An Act to Establish a State Flag." The flag was to include a Pine Tree centered on a buff colored field. Equidistant from the hoist and upper border of the flag a blue polar star was to be displayed.

Interestingly, on February 23, 1909, the State Legislature adopted a new standard, describing the state flag as a display of the Maine coat of arms on a blue field. This is the flag in use today, more or less.



The Maine State Flag is blue, the same blue color displayed by the flag of the United States. The size of the flag is designated as four feet, four inches by five feet, six inches. In the center of the flag, embroidered in silk, is the Maine State coat of arms. The flag is edged with a knotted fringe of yellow silk two and one-half inches wide.

The Maine State coat of arms displays upon a shield, a pine tree, a moose, land and sea. Flanking the shield, a seaman rests on an anchor and a farmer rests on a scythe. Above the shield the Maine state motto, "Dirigo" (I lead), is displayed in small upper case letters on a banner beneath the North Star. Below the shield, on a blue banner, is the name of the state, "MAINE"

## STATE NICKNAMES

### *The Pine Tree State*

This common nickname for Maine is given because of the extensive pine forests that have covered the state. The White Pine is considered to be the largest conifer in the northeastern United States and some of the tallest trees in eastern North America grew in Maine. The White Pine has played an important part in the history of Maine and has been afforded appropriate recognition. In the early days of colonization, the tall White Pines of Maine were valued for ship's masts.

### *The Lumber State*

Maine has been a leading producer of lumber products. Because of this and the large number of people involved in the lumber industry, Maine has been called "The Lumber State." Today, almost 89% of the state is forested. Maine is currently the home of many of the largest paper producing mills in the country. Many forms of Maine paper products are used in schools and offices throughout the country. (Maine's paper mills are some of the few that make the shiny paper found in catalogs and magazines.)

### *The Border State*

This nickname was given to Maine because its northern border is with Canada.

### *The Old Dirigo State*

This nickname, refers to Maine's state motto, *Dirigo*, meaning "I direct" or "I guide."

### *The Switzerland of America*

Maine is another state that was designated "The Switzerland of America" because of its mountains and snowfall

### *The Polar Star State*

Maine has been called "The Polar Star State" because of its position as one of the northernmost states and because of the North Star on its Coat of Arms.

## **STATE BIRD**

Maine designated the black-capped chickadee as the official state bird in 1927.

A minuscule, cheerfully sociable bird, the energetic (in fact, acrobatic) black-capped chickadee does not migrate - allowing us to enjoy them all year long. The black-capped chickadee (*Poecile atricapillus*) is a member of the titmouse family (also known as the *titmouse*, *tomtit*, and the *dickybird*).

The unique call of the chickadee is one of the most complex in the animal kingdom - very slight variations in the "*chick-a-dee*" can act as an alarm call, a contact call, or can be used to relay information when they recognize another flock.



A common backyard bird, black-capped chickadees inhabit the northern two thirds of the United States and much of Canada (also the state bird of Massachusetts). They are found deep in the

**Below, you will find 15 general questions to help review what you have learned. Use the following page(s) for documenting your answers. Older students may choose to write a State Report as well.**

**Review Questions:**

1. List the states and/or bodies of water that border this state.
2. What was the date of statehood?
3. What is the state capital?
4. What is the state motto?
5. Name at least one state nickname.
6. Describe the state flag.
7. What is the state bird?
8. What is the state flower?
9. List at least 5 other state symbols.
10. Describe this state's government.
11. Name the major imports and exports for this state.
12. Describe the weather and climate in this state.
13. List at least 5 famous people from this state.
14. Describe at least 5 significant events in this state's history.
15. What other interesting information have you learned about this state?

## **Answers to Review Questions:**

