

the CASTINE VISITOR

CASTINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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OF MISSIONS AND WEATHER

Wendy Knickerbocker

One of the very first Europeans to set foot on our shores was the French Jesuit priest Pierre Biard.

He came to Acadia in the early 17th century to bring Christianity to the native peoples who lived there. Father Biard was a man of deep faith and no little courage, but the success of his missionary efforts was equally affected by a quintessential element of coastal Maine life: fog.

Pierre Biard was born in 1567 or 1568 in Grenoble, France. He was ordained a priest of the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits, in 1599. The Jesuits were rigorously trained Catholic missionaries dedicated to providing Christian education and Catholic rites to all the peoples of the world. Biard was teaching theology at a college in Lyon when he was called to go to Port Royal, in Acadia (now Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia).

At the time, the native peoples of the part of New France called Acadia were allied in groups led by

sagamores, who were head chiefs among chiefs, influential leaders who ruled with understood

authority over the tribal bands in their regions. The largest alliance was a political confederation called Mawooshen that comprised two groups. The western group included Wabanaki corn-growing villages between the Kennebec River and what is now Saco, Maine. The eastern group brought together migratory Penobscot and Passamaquoddy bands (called Etchemins by the French) who lived in seasonal settlements between the Kennebec and Narraguagus Rivers. The sagamore of Mawooshen was Bashaba, whose principal village was Kadesquit (now Bangor); he also had a seasonal settlement at Pentagoet (now Castine). Bashaba had met Samuel de Champlain in Kadesquit in 1604, and the

Penobscot sagamore had told the French explorer that his people were welcome to live in Mawooshen.



“A Jesuit Preaching to the Indians,” by C.W. Jefferys (1869-1951)

The natives in this drawing were probably not Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, or Mi'kmaq, judging from their hair and clothing styles, but the sketch was meant to depict the natives of New France in the early 17th century. The black robe of the Jesuit priest was distinctive, and contemporary accounts describe many of the natives as being keenly interested in the Jesuits' preaching. *(From the collections of Library and Archives Canada)*

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2015-2016**

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**The Castine Historical
Society gratefully
acknowledges
contributions received**

In Memory of:

Willard "Nick" Emery, Jr.

Laura Gray Hatch

Janet Ten Broeck Pierce

**The Castine Historical
Society welcomes these
new members:**

Elaine Bertrand

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Anni Castine

Daniel and Catherine Coit

Claire and John Curtin III

Jeanmarie Reed

Dottie Sherling

**Thank you
to the following for their
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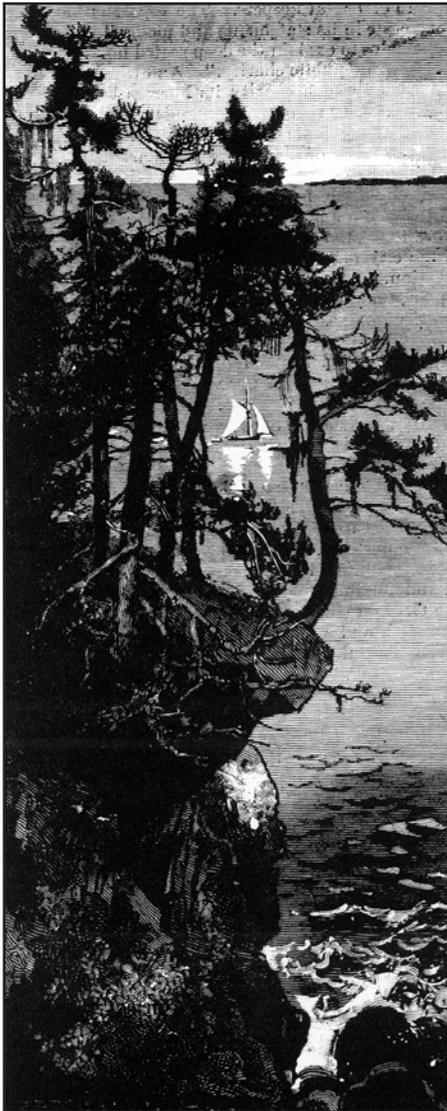
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Editor's Note: Please feel free to pass along your ideas or requests for articles, along with your comments and suggestions. Contact Wendy Knickerbocker by phone at 326-8205 or email: wknick@myfairpoint.net

For breaking news from the Castine Historical Society, visit our website at www.castinehistoricalsociety.org



The mission of the Castine Historical Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is to collect, preserve, protect, and make available a variety of materials that illuminate the historical development of the Castine-Bagaduce River Area from its beginnings to the present.

The Castine Visitor is published three times a year by the Society for its members and friends.

Wendy Knickerbocker.....Editor

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www.castinehistoricalsociety.org

**Castine
Historical Society**

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

As I write this note, the summer is winding down in Castine. And what a summer it was! The meticulously restored Samuel P. Grindle House was formally opened as the first important addition to the Castine Historical Society's campus. The Grindle House represents a lovely new addition to CHS's permanent exhibits. In addition, the state-of-the-art, environmentally controlled vault in the Grindle House will house our valued collections and allow us to enhance those collections in the future.

The completion of a project of the size and complexity of the Grindle House would normally be enough to highlight any year for CHS and Castine. Not this year! For on the afternoon of July 14th (Bastille Day), ghosting out of the afternoon fog on Penobscot Bay, slowly materialized the beautiful 18th-century French frigate *Hermione*. The replica of the *Hermione* was visiting Castine as her last U.S. port of call, after spending the preceding six weeks visiting American ports to celebrate Franco-American friendship and French support of the American Revolution. The French aid to revolutionary America was critical to American success in its struggle with Britain.

In Castine, *Hermione's* visit was marked by days of celebration, including music, theater, lectures and of course French food and libations. CHS was the official host of *Hermione* and many, many volunteers helped make this great event occur. It is estimated that 14,000 people visited Castine during the days surrounding *Hermione's* visit. CHS and all of Castine graciously welcomed our visitors and it is fair to say that *Hermione's* visit was accomplished without any significant problems. Who knows what events, large or small, can be carried out in the future by CHS and the Castine community?

On a personal note, the annual CHS meeting on August 26th marked the end of my two-year term as CHS President. It has been a busy and exciting time. I am grateful to all the members of the CHS Board of Directors and to the members of the Castine community in general for all their patience and support during the last twenty-four months.

I also want to extend my congratulations and best wishes to Brooke Tenney, who is the new CHS President. Brooke has been CHS Vice President for the last two years. I have no doubt that my presidency benefited enormously from Brooke's intelligence, talent and work ethic. She will be a great CHS President.

John S. Macdonald

To the east of Mawooshen, Membertou was the sagamore of the Mi'kmaq (called Souriquois by the French), who lived in the lower reaches of the St. Croix and St. John Rivers and on the peninsula now called Nova Scotia.

In 1607, the French nobleman Jean de Poutrincourt received a grant from the King for the colony of Port Royal. Poutrincourt had established Port Royal a year or two earlier, but financial difficulties and court politics had strangled the venture. Most of the colonists had returned to France, and Poutrincourt wanted to try again to settle Port Royal. The King agreed, partly because Poutrincourt offered to bring Christianity to the natives, and the King's personal priest, a Jesuit, recruited Father Biard for the mission. Biard went to Bordeaux in the fall of 1608 to prepare.

Poutrincourt was wary of the Jesuits' influence, and during the year that it took him to secure financial backing for the voyage, he arranged for a non-Jesuit priest to accompany him. Poutrincourt, his son Charles de Biencourt, and the colonists and priest sailed for Port Royal in February of 1610, leaving Biard in France. He went on to Poitiers to await his chance to sail.

Poutrincourt's entourage reached Port Royal in May of 1610. They found that their settlement had been guarded by the local sagamore Membertou, who had befriended Poutrincourt earlier. Poutrincourt renewed his bond with Membertou, and he instructed the priest to introduce the natives to Christianity. On June 24, the priest baptized Membertou, along with the chief's family and some of his followers. Membertou regarded his baptism as a sacred pledge of friendship with the French, and he offered to wage war with any natives who would not accept Christianity. The priest

declined that offer, but Poutrincourt accepted the strengthened alliance.

A month or so later, Poutrincourt learned that his benefactor the King had died. He sent his son Biencourt back to France, to secure the commission for Port Royal. In Paris, Biencourt met a wealthy and influential widow who was a patron of the Jesuits. She offered Biencourt financial and material support for the colony if he would take Jesuit priests back with him. In September, she sent Father Enemond Massé to Dieppe, and he was joined there by Father Biard. On January 26, 1611, the two priests sailed for Port Royal, along with Biencourt, several new colonists, and a load of food and supplies. After a difficult voyage, the ship arrived at Port Royal on May 22.

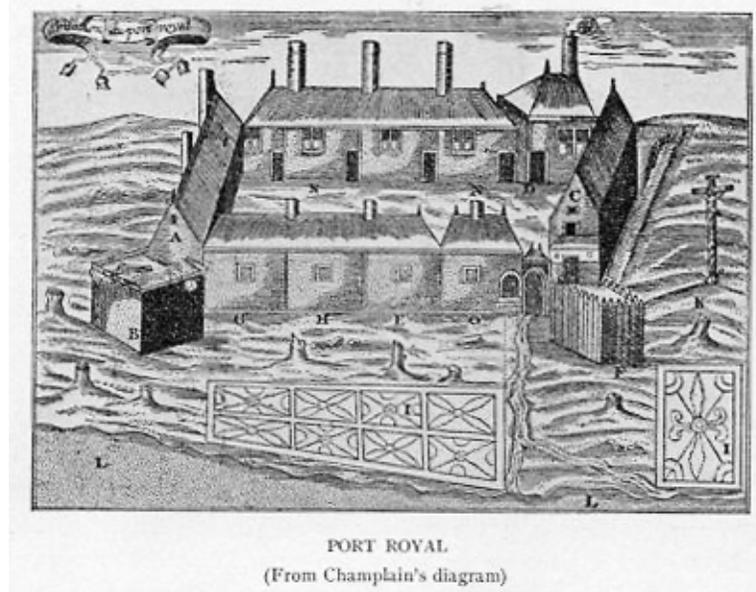
Shortly after Biencourt's return, Poutrincourt sailed for France, hoping to secure more investments and supplies for Port Royal. He left his son in charge. Meanwhile, Biard and Massé provided Catholic services for the colonists, and they went to work evangelizing the natives.

At the end of the summer, Membertou was mortally ill and came to the settlement. Biard and Massé nursed him in their cabin. Membertou and Biard grew close, and the priest heard the sagamore's confession and performed Catholic rites for him.

Membertou said he wanted to be buried with his ancestors, which upset Biard. After long discussion, Membertou changed his mind and announced that he wanted a Christian burial. He died on September 18.

After Membertou's death, Biard and Massé refused to baptize any more adult natives. They had been concerned all along about their inability to provide appropriate religious instruction using interpreters; even Membertou,

baptized and devout, had apparently not fully understood Christian doctrines. The moratorium on baptisms worried Biencourt, since converting natives



This sketch of the French colony in Acadia (now Nova Scotia) was taken from drawings prepared by Samuel de Champlain, about 1612. (From *Canada, the Empire of the North: Being the Romantic Story of the New Dominion's Growth From Colony to Kingdom*, by Agnes C. Laut, Boston: Ginn, 1909, p. 42)

to Christianity was one of the conditions of his father's commission, but the priests were stubborn and sincere. They began earnestly interrogating the natives on vocabulary and word usage.

On October 3, Biencourt took Biard with him on a trip up the St. John River to visit a French fur trader who lived in a native village. Biard held a Catholic Mass there, and he and Biencourt returned to Port Royal about ten days later. A few days after their return, Biencourt and Biard left for western Mawooshen. They were headed for a native trading village near the Kennebec River, hoping to get corn to supplement Port Royal's winter provisions. They arrived on October 28, and Biard held some religious services while Biencourt was occupied with the trade negotiations.

In early November, Biencourt and Biard set out for Port Royal, stopping at Pentagoet on the way. Pentagoet was a lively rendezvous and trading spot, and the sagamore Bashaba was in residence. The Frenchmen saw eighty canoes; a shallop (an open workboat used by Europeans for sailing in shallow waters); eighteen large wigwams; and about 300 natives. They were greeted by an evening of singing, dancing, and speech-making. The next day, Biard went to visit in the camp, and he was brought to several sick natives. He ministered to them, offering prayers and blessings, and he gave each one a cross to wear around his/her neck.

After they left Pentagoet, Biencourt and Biard went to the island of St. Croix and received some barrels of food from a French captain there. At that point Biard wanted to go on to the St. John River to see the French trader there. He hoped the trader, who was known to be fluent in the natives' language, would enable him to spend the winter in the village. Biencourt refused the request, and the two men returned to Port Royal. There they and the few colonists endured the unusually long, hard winter of 1611-1612.

Biencourt and Biard had been at odds for quite some time, each accusing the other of ignoring

the needs of the colony to further his own ends. In France, Poutrincourt made matters worse by getting embroiled in court politics and anti-Jesuit intrigues. In the spring, Membertou's son agreed to take one of the Jesuits to live with him for a while. The two priests agreed that the younger Massé was better suited to go, and he left Port Royal. Biard was without his colleague and friend until the end of the summer. The winter of 1612-1613 was less severe than the previous year, but the strained relationship between the priests and the leader of the colony made it harsh.

Meanwhile, in France, the influential marquise who had first sent Biard and Massé to Port Royal heard about their

troubles there. She decided to start another settlement in Acadia, and she appointed René Le Coq the leader of the new colony. She fitted out a large ship with food, livestock, supplies, colonists, and two more Jesuit priests. Le Coq sailed from France in mid-March of 1613.

His orders were to stop at Port Royal and pick up Biard and Massé, along with all of their belongings and religious materials. He was then to proceed to Kadesquit and find a suitable site for the new colony. Le Coq arrived in Port Royal on May 12 and gathered up the two priests; the expedition set sail a few days later. In the waters off Grand Manan, they encountered dense fog, and the ship drifted for two days and nights.

When the fog lifted, the Frenchmen realized they were near Pemetiq (now Mount Desert Island). The captain took refuge in a harbor on the eastern side of the island (perhaps Newport Cove, at Sand Beach), and everyone gratefully disembarked. Soon a group of natives approached the Frenchmen. Some of them recognized Biard from the gathering at Pentagoet two years earlier, and the priest greeted them. He told them he wanted to settle at Kadesquit and asked for the best route there. The natives responded by telling Biard that their village was a much better place and he should settle near there. When Biard was unmoved, the natives then said that their chief, Asticou, was deathly ill. They told Biard



Membertou, Mi'kmaq chief and the first native to be baptized in New France (From the collections of Library and Archives Canada)

that Asticou did not want to die unbaptized, and they implored the priest to go to him.

That argument worked, and Biard, an interpreter, and a few others went in the natives' canoe to the mouth of what is now Somes Sound. Asticou's village was on the eastern side of the sound, near present-day Northeast Harbor. Biard found Asticou quite sick, but only from a bad cold. After reassuring everyone that the chief would recover, Biard and the others explored the shores of the sound. They were favorably impressed with the harbors, the land, and the plentiful fresh water.

Biard's group returned to their ship and persuaded the rest of the colonists and crew to see the wonderful place they found. The ship sailed off, and when its passengers landed on the western side of the entrance to the sound, they all agreed that it was an excellent spot. Biard erected a cross on a hillside and named the new settlement St. Sauveur. While scholars disagree on the exact location of St. Sauveur, most accept the site as Fernald Point, near present-day Southwest Harbor.

St. Sauveur's new settlers marked places for buildings and dug out the areas for foundations. The ship's crew started work on the buildings, while Le Coq and most of the colonists began clearing and tilling fields for planting. Since there were not many men in either group, neither made much progress. All the settlers lived together in four large tents that had been brought from France.

Meanwhile, English ships from Jamestown, Virginia, were fishing in the waters off Monhegan Island, as they had done in previous summers. In early June Samuel Argall, commissioned by the Virginia Company to expel the French from any territory claimed by England, joined them and scouted the area. In July, Argall's ship was stuck in a fog bank and drifting northeast. When the weather cleared, Argall found himself near Pemetiq. Some passing natives hailed the ship, mistakenly thinking Argall's ship was French, and they told the captain where another ship was anchored, at St. Sauveur. Taking advantage of the situation, Argall sailed into St. Sauveur with guns blazing and easily captured the French ship.

Argall went ashore and captured the French settlers. He took down the French cross and replaced it with an English one, and he confiscated the colony's supplies and armaments. Argall allowed Le Coq to take a shallop with as many men as would fit and sail away. Massé was aboard Le Coq's ship, which

eventually made its way back to France. Biard was one of several French prisoners that Argall took back to Jamestown.

At Jamestown, Argall was ordered to return and destroy any other French settlements. With Biard still on board, Argall returned to St. Sauveur and destroyed what little remained of the settlement. Next he sailed to St. Croix and burned all the buildings there; then he sailed across to Port Royal. The colony was nearly empty, since most of the inhabitants were away trading for or gathering food. Argall burned the settlement, destroyed its crops, and captured the livestock.

Argall left Port Royal in early November, with his crew, his prisoners, and his spoils divided among three ships. They hit a violent storm on their second day out, and the smallest ship was lost. Argall's ship made it back to Jamestown, but with difficulty. The third ship, with Biard on board, weathered the storm and after two weeks was on course to Jamestown, where the Jesuit faced probable death. When the ship was a day or two from port, another storm came up that blew it hundreds of miles to the east. The English captain, by then tired of the New World, decided that the Azores were closer than Virginia and sailed there.

After taking on supplies, the ship sailed first to Wales and then to Dover, England. Biard, after being a prisoner for over nine months, was released and sent to Calais, France. In the end, New World weather had both sacked Biard's mission and saved his life. Fog had landed him on Mount Desert Island, where a French settlement was more vulnerable to English attack than it might have been near Bangor. For good measure, fog also brought an avenging Englishman to Mount Desert Island. Then, when Biard expected to be executed in Jamestown, a New World storm drove him toward Europe and freedom.

Back in France, Biard's troubles were not entirely over. He was accused of aiding the English in the destruction of Port Royal, but he was eventually vindicated. He went on to be a missionary to the Huguenots (French Protestants) in southern France. After that he served as a military chaplain until his death in Avignon on November 17, 1622.

NOTE: I have rendered French names following the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, and Indian names and terms following the usage of the Abbe Museum in Bar Harbor. --WK

BASTILLE DAY 2015



The 216-foot-long replica of the 18th-century French frigate *Hermione* sits at the Castine town dock, behind the 70-foot-long papier-mâché replica that paraded down Main Street to meet her.

SAVE THE DATE!

(Bastille Day 2016)

July 14, 10:00 to 4:00 – Castine House and Garden Tour

It's not too soon to be thinking about next year's celebration!

IN MEMORIAM LAURA HATCH

The Castine Historical Society has been fortunate this year in being able to celebrate its maturity with remarkably successful activities, including the *Hermione* visit and the opening of the Grindle House.

There is no question that CHS has become a successful and vibrant regional historical society. This was not always so. Someone, at some point, had to take the initiative and start the Society on the path that ultimately led to *Hermione* and the Grindle House.

Laura Hatch, a key person in making CHS what it is today, passed away this year at the age of 94. In the 1980s, Ms. Hatch, along with a small group of like-minded residents, shared the vision that Castine was a community with a rich and varied history and deserved a historical society to both honor its history and make that history available to its community. Laura started the momentum for CHS, and we honor her for her foresight and effort. We trust she would be happy with the vibrant organization CHS has become. —JSM



A portrait of Thomas Hale (1782-1821) presides over the Reading Room in the Samuel P. Grindle House (c. 1851)

Curator's Corner

Recent Research in CHS Collections

Paige Lilly

The CHS collections are open to the public for research year-round. For nearly twenty years, people have been coming in to use the files and documents in the Abbott School. For longer than that, volunteers, and now staff, have been responding to dozens of requests for information via phone and correspondence each year. In the Grindle House we now have an inviting, ground-level space for researchers to work, and all year CHS welcomes visitors whose level of interest ranges from passing curiosity to family history to scholarly studies.

The questions cover a wide chronological and topical range of Castine-area history. Here's a description of some of the requests.

Fitz Henry Lane Online

A researcher from the Cape Ann Museum in Gloucester, MA, contacted CHS and visited Castine for an ambitious project identifying places in Lane's paintings and placing his work in the context of the town. According to their website, the project will produce "a state-of-the-art web-based resource that will combine a free public catalog of Lane's paintings and drawings with research into the history of the 19th-century coastal life he portrayed in his work. Original documents . . . will be linked to Lane's paintings and drawings to offer a fuller understanding of the history of fishing, maritime activity and life along the New England coast."

We were able to help with maps, photographs, and explanations about life in Castine in the 1850s when Lane visited his friends in the Stevens family. To learn more about the project, visit <http://www.capeannmuseum.org/fitz-henry-lane-online/>

Genealogy

At the Grindle House this summer, we had many visitors working on family history, and six of these

were descendents of the Baron de St. Castin and Chief Madockawondo's daughter. We've also answered dozens of queries about family history, again with several wanting information about the Baron. This research always includes basic vital records and heritage lines (often not easy to track!) and frequently extends to questions about what ships were owned by a great-great-grandfather and when did a great-great aunt attend the Eastern State Normal School.

Buildings and Boats

People frequently visit, call or e-mail about the history of buildings. The fun part of this is offering them postcards, photographs, maps, and documents to help them find the answers themselves. This year the focus has been on hotels and schools as well as private homes.

Hermione, being the focus of the 2015 exhibit, was the "boat" that received the most attention in requests! Because of the extensive research done by CHS volunteers and staff using resources from England and France, we were able to field questions about the original frigate's construction, crew, voyages, battles, and mission to Penobscot Bay. We also had a fair number of questions about the modern replica, in particular: "How can I get tickets to go on board?" and "How long will she be in town?"—which we were happy to answer!

Organizations

One researcher this year had found photographs of Eastern State Normal School graduates at a yard sale and visited to spend several hours learning more about the school and the women in the pictures. Also, the Castine Garden Club is gathering as many of its records as it can and found a few facts at CHS to help tell the story of that 20th-century organization.

Literary

Robert Lowell, Mary McCarthy, Katharine Butler Hathaway and Philip Booth were researched by several scholars recently. These questions usually cover life in Castine, homes, writings and relationships. Two years ago, psychiatrist and author Kay Redfield Jamison visited during the research phase for her new book, *Robert Lowell: A Darkness Altogether Lived*, which will be on the market soon.

While this CHS activity—providing access to the collections—is a core part of the mission and provides a service to the community, it also ends up

helping us to learn what we don't know and in what areas to acquire more material. The researchers who contact us with questions frequently add as much information to our files as we give them. It's a rewarding and productive part of what we're doing here on School Street.

If you would like to research a topic, or simply become more familiar with the collections, please contact us at curator@castinehistoricalsociety.org or 207-326-4118. In the near future, CHS plans to add more details about its archival collections to the "Research" section of the CHS website.

'Tis the Gift-Giving Season

Do you know someone who would enjoy being a member of the Castine Historical Society? You can give that person a gift membership, and/or renew/begin your own membership as well. Copy at will the form below.

Each gift, renewal, or new membership conveys all the privileges of being a CHS member, including a subscription to *The Castine Visitor*, published three times a year. The support of our members, near and far, is what makes the CHS an active part of the Castine community.



_____ Please send a gift membership to:

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Clip and mail with your check to Castine Historical Society, P.O. Box 238, Castine, ME 04421, or to pay by credit card contact the CHS Administrator at 207-326-4118 or admin@castinehistoricalsociety.org

Thank you for joining the Castine Historical Society, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

Shopping at the Abbott School Gift Shop

The Castine Historical Society Gift Shop is open by appointment (326-4118 or admin@castinehistoricalsociety.org) on weekdays throughout the winter holiday season. CHS members receive a 10% discount on all Gift Shop purchases. Can't be in Castine this time of year? We will gladly ship your selections to you or to a gift recipient. Shipping charges will apply, as will 5.5% Maine sales tax for purchases shipped to a Maine address. ***Don't see what you want? Please call!***

Hermione tote bags (made from recycled sail cloth, rope handles)
 Large (color map of *Hermione's* itinerary) \$300 _____
 Small (Lafayette's motto, wrist handle) \$30 _____

CHS logo baseball cap (one size) \$18 _____

Redcoats at Castine, by Arthur W. Patterson (book) \$10 _____

Silk scarf, long, with color images of *Hermione* and Castine Class sloops on either end \$130 _____

Castine artist Ned Coombs limited edition prints
 Waterfront Village \$30 _____
 Fisherman's Bend \$30 _____

Ship to: _____

Total of items: \$ _____

Address: _____

(Less 10%): -\$ _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Shipping: \$ _____
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Send check with this form to: CHS, PO Box 238, Castine, ME 04421

5.5% sales tax \$ _____
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To pay by credit card, call 207-326-4118
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TOTAL DUE: \$ _____



A Brick in Every Stocking!

This holiday season, give a commemorative brick to that someone special!

Join the hundreds of CHS supporters who have remembered their parents, children, friends, and even pets by purchasing a personalized brick for the Abbott School walkway. This is the perfect gift for the holidays, a great way to support the Society, and a lasting remembrance for future generations.

Please indicate below how you want the brick to look, using up to 12 letters, numbers, and spaces on each of 3 lines.

Line 1 _____

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The tax-deductible price for each brick is \$50.00. Make checks payable to Castine Historical Society and mail to P.O. Box 238, Castine, ME 04421. To pay by credit card, call 207-326-4118 or email admin@castinehistoricalsociety.org

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Hermione in port at Castine, July 14-15, 2015