

Wolves in Maine in the 1600s

by Tom Remington

I am just getting around to reading a book I bought a few weeks ago - Early Maine Wildlife - Historical Accounts of Canada lynx, Moose, Mountain Lion, White-Tailed Deer, Wolverine, Wolves, and Woodland Caribou, 1603 - 1930 - by William B. Krohn and Christopher L. Hoving.

The book appears to be a great research tool because the authors have done much of the legwork for those interested in research of the subjects listed, and the geographical region. The majority make up of the book contains excerpts from writings, logs, and journals that date back as early as 1603. These excerpts are provided the reader in chronological order.

Below are fragments of the whole entries given by the authors about wolves. Although the parts I have selected are only portions of the log provided by the authors, the pieces are not taken out of context. Also, bear in mind that the age of writings can present some challenges with spellings and use of words. I have presented them exactly as found in this book.

This particular presentation I have chosen, comes from work done by a W. Wood in 1977, New England Prospect. The writings were dated 1634. I believe the 1634 author was a Thomas Cotes of London.

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*They [deer] desire to be near the sea, so that they may swim to the island when they are chased by the wolves. It is not to be thought into what great multitudes they would increase were it not for the common devourer, the wolf.*

*The wolves be in some respect different from them in other countries. It was never known yet that a wolf set upon man or woman. Neither do they trouble horses or cows; but swine, goats and red calves, which they take for deer, be often destroyed by them, so that a red calf is cheaper than a black one in that regard in some places. In the time of autumn and in the beginning of spring, those ravenous rangers do most frequent our English habitations, following the deer which come down at that time to those parts. They be made much like a mongrel, being big boned, lank launched, deep breasted, having a thick neck and head, prick ears, and a long snout, with dangerous teeth, long-staring hair, and a great bush tale.*

*These be killed daily in some place or other, either by the English or Indian, who have a certain rate for every head. Yet is there little hope of their utter destruction, the country being so spacious and they so numerous, traveling in the swamps by kennels. Sometimes ten or twelve are of a company. Late at night and early in the morning they set up their howlings and call their companies together - at night to hunt, at morning to sleep. In a word they be the greatest inconveniency the country hath, both for the matter of damage to private men in particular, and the whole country in general.*

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If I may point out a few things that should help people to understand wolves, their habits and their ability to adjust their behavior to their surrounding circumstances.

The first paragraph should be analogous to accounts we are hearing on a daily basis in areas where wolves are prevalent in the U.S.. In this case, in 1634 Maine, the "deer" are being driven to the sea (Southern coast of Maine) and that these "deer" swim onto the islands to escape the wolves.

I have put "deer" in quotes in order to point out that in this writing, the author describes three kinds of deer - whitetail deer, moose and caribou, and these three species are generally referred to as "deer". Therefore, in the context of the entry, the description of the "deer" moving to the sea and onto the islands, we can assume means all three species.

In the second paragraph, take notice that the author describes the wolves he finds in Maine to be different from those he's familiar with in other countries. We know not specifically what "other countries" the author is speaking, but he notes that, to his knowledge, he knows of no incidences in Maine where any human has been attacked by wolves.

It may be reasonable to conclude that the author acknowledges there are wolf attacks on humans in other countries and probably numerous enough that it would give him reason to take notice of the differences.

Also described is the prey wolves seem to be more interested in at that time; swine, goats, calves, deer, etc., and yet points out they are not bothering the horses or cows. Again, can we conclude that the author assumes, from his own experiences that wolves regularly attack and kill horses and cows, "in other countries"?

What are the differences in the wolves that the author is noticing a distinct behavioral pattern from wolves of his past experiences? Size? Availability of prey? Availability of desired prey? From this entry we really can't answer that question.

In the final paragraph, the author describes the wolves as being "killed daily" and having a bounty of some amount as well, but points out there is little danger of their "utter destruction". Of interest to me was when the author tells that the wolves "*be the greatest inconveniency the country hath, to private men in particular, and the whole country in general.*" Also notice the author asks the question; "*what great multitudes they [deer] would increase were it not for the common devourer, the wolf.*"

In another portion of this book, a different writer describes Maine's wolves as being timid and leery of humans. This should not come as a surprise, as history has taught us that any wild animal that is harassed by humans becomes more distrustful of them, making them quick to escape and more difficult for humans to spot. From that same history, we have learned that when people have no means of protection, i.e. not allowed to have guns, and the animals are protected, large predators such as wolves soon learn there is little to fear from humans. This habituation can present serious problems for humans especially when wolf numbers continue to increase and the prey base vanishes. Hungry wolves need to eat.

As I wend my way through the book, *Early Maine Wildlife – Historical Accounts of Canada lynx, Moose, Mountain Lion, White-Tailed Deer, Wolverine, Wolves, and Woodland Caribou, 1603 – 1930* – by William B. Krohn and Christopher L. Hoving, I found some rather bizarre, yet fascinating writings that I would sooner categorize as tall tales and damned lies, than I would give much credence to actual historic events. However, I am willing to keep an open mind.

The original recordings were done in 1674 by a John Josselyn, found in *Colonial Traveler: A Critical Edition of Two Voyages to New England*. The authors of this book, *Early Maine Wildlife*, point out that Josselyn may have been confused by his use of terminology of the creatures he witnessed. For example, in the very first paragraph, Josselyn describes what he believes to be a "Jaccal" (jackal), which according to earlier European accounts and those of the American Indian, a jackal was commonly referred to as a coyote. So, this "Creature much like a *Fox, but smaller*", we might only guess - wolverine?, muskrat?, bobcat?

The authors also warn their readers that Josselyn's "*terminology sometimes is misleading and his descriptions frequently fantastic*"; or a kind way of saying the guy was mostly a damned liar and wild storyteller, as you will see in the below account.

Which brings us to his accounting of wolves he dealt with in his travels throughout Maine and probably parts of New England. As you will see, as you begin to read, the spelling is atrocious, the sentence structure abysmal and it all makes it difficult to comprehend and follow, but enough to realize how outlandish his story is. I did the best I could to present it exactly as it was presented in the book.

I'd call it tall tales and damned lies and laugh exceedingly over it as great entertainment.

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*Jaccals there be abundance, which is a Creature much like a "Fox", but smaller, they are very frequent in "Palestina", or the "Holy-land".*

*The "Wolf" seeketh to his mate and goes clicketing at the same season with "Foxes", and bring forth their whelps as they do, but their kennels are under thick bushes by great Trees in remote places by the swamps, he is to be hunted as the "Fox" from "Holy-rood" day till the "Annunciation". But there they have a quicker way to destroy them. See "New England's" rarities [footnote omitted]. They commonly go in routs, a rout of "Wolves" is 12 or more, sometimes by couples. In 1664, we found a "Wolf" asleep in a small dry swamp under an Oake, a great mastiff which we had with us seized upon him, and held him until we had a rope about his neck, by which we brought him home, and tying him to a stake we bated him with smaller "Doggs", and had excellent sport; but his hinder legg being broken, they knockt out his brains. Sometime before this we had an excellent course after a single "Wolf" upon the hard sands of the Sea-side at low water for a mile or two, at last we lost our doggs, it being (as the "Lancashire" people phrase it) twilight, that is almost dark, and went beyond them, for the mastiff-bitch had seized upon the "Wolf" being gotten into the Sea, and there held him until one went in and led him out, the bitch keeping her hold until they had tied his leggs, and so carried him home like a Calf upon a staff between two men; being brought into the house they unbound him and set him upon his leggs, he not offering in the lease to bite, or so much as to shew his teeth, but clapping his stern betwixt his leggs, and leering towards the door would willingly have had his liberty, but they served him as they did the other, knockt his brains out, for our doggs were not then in the condition to bait him; their eyes shine by night as a Lanthorn: the Fangs of a "Wolf" hung about children's necks keep them from frighting, and a very good to rub their gums with when they are breeding of Teeth, the gall of a "Wolf" is soveraign for swelling of the sinews; the fiants or dung of a "Wolf" drunk with white wine helpeth the Collick.*

I think the authors did a decent job of putting this information together; one, to make it readable, and, two, to give a reader a sense of the changes taking place across the lands over extended periods of time. I am glad they chose to list the entries in chronological order. Of course these changes come with no real explanations from the observers, often just recalling what it used to be like.

In 1860, J.G. Rich writes in the Bethel Courier about his hunts for caribou. He also explains that he has shot and killed two caribou in the previous 6 years and then states, *"many hunters from different parts of the State have told me that the species [caribou] are almost extinct in Maine"*. Obviously Rich wasn't into conservation of wildlife, which most of us know came a bit later on after it was decided something needed to be done.

Henry David Thoreau relates the reports he got from lumbermen and hunters in the mid-1800s through the late-1800s. In 1858 he writes, *"The lumberers told me that there were many moose thereabouts, but no caribou or deer."*

It was in 1860 when M.R. Keep told the tale of when the French first settled in the Madawaska area in Northern Maine, along the St. John River, the Indians got angry because the French were killing their moose and caribou. The story goes that the Indians, out of spite, slaughtered all the moose, and, *"For twenty years or more, not a moose was seen or heard from in all Northern Maine or the adjoining borders of New Brunswick[.]"*

However, wolves were still an often talked about species. Thoreau often spent time "listening" throughout his travels in Maine to hear the wolves howl. While people howled about the threats and utter destruction the animal caused.

It was in 1855 that C. Hardy wrote about what he knew of the grey wolf.

*"The gray wolf (Canis lupus) has but lately made its appearance in Nova Scotia, not as in other provinces, however, in company with his prey, the Canadian deer (Cervus virginianus). The gray wolf is a large, fierce, and powerful animal. In Maine and New Brunswick, several instances have been known of his attacking singly and destroying a human being. This animal sometimes grows to the length of six feet. The hair is long, fine, and of a silver grey. A broad band of black, here and there, showing shiny silvery hairs, extend from the head down the back. The tail is long and bushy, as the brush of a fox. A wolf skin forms a frequent decoration for the back of a sleigh."*

This is the first I have read in this book (although I am barely past page 100 of 500) of reports of

wolves attacking and killing people. I should point out that in reading accounts of wolves beginning in the very early 1600s, most descriptions of wolves up to this point related that they were wary of humans and for the most part steered clear. While there were also reports of some savagery of wolves on livestock, the number of those reports paled in comparison to the accounts of how the wolves feed on available wild prey, such as deer, moose, rodents, etc.

At this juncture, it appears that we may be actually seeing a pattern take place. As the reports from observers seem to be passing on the reduction of game animals and in some cases the lack thereof, i.e. the extinction of the caribou, incidents of livestock kill and now reports of attacks on humans are on the increase.

In 1842, Z. Thompson, in his "History of Vermont", writes about "The Common Wolf".

*"For some years after the settlement of this state was commenced, wolves were so numerous and made such havoc of the flocks of the sheep, that the keeping of sheep was a very precarious business. At some seasons particularly in the winter they would prowl through the settlements at night and large companies, destroying whole flocks in their way, and, after drinking their blood and perhaps eating a small portion of the choicest and tenderest parts, would leave the carcasses scattered about the enclosure and go in quest of new victims. Slaughter and instruction seemed their chief delight; and while marauding the country they kept up such horrid and prolonged howlings as were calculated, not only to thrill terror through their timorous victims, but to appall the hearts of the inhabitants of the neighborhood. Though sheep seems to be their favorite victim, wolves sometimes destroyed calves, dogs, and other domestic animals; and in the forest they prey upon deer, foxes, hares and other such animals as they can take. Impelled by hunger they have been known in this state to attack persons."*

Here is another account of attacks on people. And also notice that the indicator in the statement about attacks on people is, "Impelled by hunger". If the accounts being recorded have much accuracy at all, we see that for what may be multiple reasons, the prey base for wolves is diminishing. This increases the incidents of livestock depredation and attacks on humans. I believe it only correct to make that assumption, knowing what we do about wolf behavior.

In addition, this account of Thompson's, gives us our first glimpse into surplus killing or sport killing that protectors of predators such as the wolf and coyote so readily deny. Thompson describes the wolves' actions as being nothing but savage and pointless. Why has it been 150 years before these kinds of reports are showing up?

I am curious as to whether readers are surprised to learn of these incidences by wolves in Maine - their savagery of livestock and attacks on humans? I would guess they are, as they have been indoctrinated to believe that there has never been an attack on a human by wolves in the lower 48 states. These early observers and recorders of wildlife from the early 1600s, seem to have a differing set of facts.

"Early Maine Wildlife" – Historical Accounts of Canada lynx, Moose, Mountain Lion, White-Tailed Deer, Wolverine, Wolves, and Woodland Caribou, 1603 – 1930 – by William B. Krohn and Christopher L. Hoving can tell us many things about how wildlife was perceived, treated, abused and misunderstood. From the early 1600s, it should really come as no surprise that settlers and commercial trappers and game harvesters thought of wildlife as an endless resource. We learned that was not true and it resulted in the formulation of a wildlife management scheme that has proven immensely successful over the past century.

Wolves in Maine, much the same as in many spots across the U.S., were seen as a useless animal, one that competed directly with the hunters and gatherers and as we learned earlier, when available prey for the wolf diminished, attacks on humans and livestock became more common. As a result, demands from people grew to get rid of the wolf.

In most all of the previous parts of this serial examination, seldom was anything good about the wolf reported, other than perhaps their pelts made for good decoration and available cover to go on the back of the seat in a sleigh.

Our repeated history and education in this country has mostly been centered on the notion that it were hunters and trappers that bore the responsibility for the extirpation of the wolf countrywide. History has shown us this is not entirely true. In addition, those whose interests lie in the over-protection of the wolf are unrelenting in their talking points that humans were unjustifiably frightened of the wolf, embellished through made-up scary tales, and that people simply misunderstood the animal.

I don't believe any of that to be true at all. World history clearly shows that in those regions of the world where wolves were allowed to flourish, hundreds and even thousands of people were killed by wolves. I don't know about you but if I lost a family member to a large animal predator, it would only seem normal to develop a fear, or at least a healthy level of respect for the beast, and would more than likely promote the idea to get rid of the darn things. This isn't fairy tale stuff as some might believe.

People saw little or no real value in wolves and why should they have. They competed directly for the very same resources man wanted and needed to survive, they threatened livestock, which for many was their life line, carried and spread disease and became a real threat to the health and safety of humans. As such, efforts to rid the landscape of the varmints became entire community efforts.

In "Early Maine Wildlife", the authors reference the writings of E.E. Bourne, in 1875. Bourne's work is the telling of the history of the Wells and Kennebunk area of Maine. Bourne recalls this area as early as the early 1600s, when the people were obviously still under the rule of England. In 1640, wolves appeared to be most everywhere along the seacoast of Maine and settlers were anxious for the King to offer some financial assistance to the communities to rid the countryside of wolves. Here's what Bourne wrote:

*"The new Government, Gorges' general court, being legislative as well as judicial in its action, did not confine itself to the moral improvement of the people only, but at the same time looked carefully to their physical economy. It may seem a small matter to have made any enactments in regard to wolves. But to settlers it was much more important that they should be extirpated than it has been at any time since that of salmon, shad, and alewives should be preserved from destruction, or that the agriculture of the country should be protected from the ravages of the crow. Wolves then [~1640] abounded along the coast.....Every settler was interested in their extermination, and at this court it was "ordered that every family between Piscataqua and Kennebunk River should pay twelve pence for every wolf that should be killed." This, it will be seen, was in the whole a large bounty.*

*"In 1730, five pounds were paid; a few years afterward, eight pounds. In 1747, it was voted that eight pounds should be paid to every person who should kill one; if he killed two, he should have twelve pounds each; if three, sixteen pounds each..... The action of the town for the destruction of wolves continued till about 1770, after which the municipal war against them was abandoned."*

It's important to note here that it appears from what is written that the people were a bit frustrated because efforts had been made to preserve the salmon, shad and alewives population, along with efforts to protect crops from crows, while nothing was being done to get rid of the wolf, a problem that obviously the communities saw as large enough to demand something be done to help.

So from what appears to be around 1640 until 1770, bounties were put together as an incentive for more people to kill wolves. Those bounties grew to be quite handsome. But mind you this was



an entire community that was taxed in order that bounties be paid to rid the area of wolves. It must have been important to them in every way.

During that 130-year period of time, read here what happens to the deer population.

Bourne writes: *"Until about the commencement of the Revolutionary war, deer were very abundant in Wells. Herds of them, from ten to twenty, were very frequently seen. They were in the habit of visiting the marshes in great numbers....."*

*"As late as the year 1770, a deer was started by a dog, and in chase he ran into the parlor of Joseph Storer in Kennebunk, and went out through the window."*

Does any of this relate to modern times?

But I don't believe it was simply the efforts of communities and governments to pay bounties and put out poison that led to the extirpation of the wolf. Even utilizing all of those and other tools to achieve that goal, it is still a daunting task to actually completely rid a state or country of a species. I would also suppose that disease, along with changes in the prey base for the wolves and changes in climate, population growth and destruction of habitat all played a factor.

When studying and reading through, "Early Maine Wildlife" – Historical Accounts of Canada lynx, Moose, Mountain Lion, White-Tailed Deer, Wolverine, Wolves, and Woodland Caribou, 1603 – 1930 – by William B. Krohn and Christopher L. Hoving, it becomes clear that there was not always agreements about wildlife. This particular book chronicles the "observations" of hunters, trappers, outdoor writers and historians. Not always do the observations of one person agree with the observations of another. This is the same thing we see today in that people jump to conclusions based on brief and not necessarily scientific observations or at least those based upon sound and thorough data. And at times, the observations of the very seasoned hunter or trapper were scoffed at. More on this in a moment.

In previous parts I have shared information I had found about human encounters with wolves. For decades in this country we have had it drummed into our heads that it were hunters and trappers mainly responsible for the extermination of wolves and also that there has never been any wolf attacks on humans in the Lower 48 States. Those who read their history, know both of these claims are not entirely true.

In 1884, in a February issue of "Forest and Stream", a writer tells of what it was like living in

Maine and dealing with wolves. He writes: *"Some fifty years ago these animals [wolves] were numerous and terribly ravenous in the many sparsely settled districts of New England, and the farmers found it impossible to raise sheep, and even calves and pigs were frequently destroyed. Instances were numerous where strong men were attacked and overpowered by packs of wolves."*

This is yet another report and confirmation of regular and frequent attacks on humans by wolves.

But disagreements began to mount as to the validity of two events concerning wolves - when they went "extinct" in Maine and what caused that "extinction". (I put the word "extinction" in quotes because it has never been determined if the wolf in Maine was effectually exterminated or even what exactly defines extermination.)

Some writers believed that by around the 1880s the wolf that roamed the Maine landscape had disappeared and there seems to have been just as many who disagreed with that assessment.

In another article that appeared in "Forest and Stream" in 1883, a writer recounts the encounter with wolves on the Mattawamkeag River. The author tells of the "blood-curdling" howl of the wolf that frightens all but the very experienced of outdoorsmen. He also tells that on only three occasions in his life did he witness a wolf bark and he says that in each of those events the bark was directed at a human. He describes the bark this way, *"The tone is very deep, delivered slowly and deliberately, and each time in exactly the same key, and is in a strange contrast to the rapid, rasping yelp of the coyote."*

On the Mattawamkeag River, a member of the lumber camp had spotted a deer laying dead on the ice of the river. On the opposite shore, was a wolf and it was "barking" at this man, evidently in the fashion described above. The man returned to camp and it was decided to use a bottle of strychnine and poison the meat of the deer in hopes to kill the wolves.

When the man returned to the bait site the next morning, he was quite surprised in what he discovered: *"On returning alone to the post, early the next morning, I found that the two wolves had called to the feast the largest pack known in that vicinity. Not a vestige of the deer remained but the hair, and that was so scattered and trampled upon as to be almost indistinguishable.....They had gone up the river, and an old hunter who camped about five miles above told me afterward that he counted the tracks of forty-two where they had spread out on a big meadow, that they ate all the poisoned bait that he had out..."*

Reports at this time were contrary and confusing. As I said, some were stating the wolves were all

dead and yet we find accounts as those described above.

By 1884 there was a "Commission of Fisheries and Game" in Maine. It appears from the accounts in this book that even the commissioners believed the wolves were all gone as a report by the Commissioner of Fisheries and Game scoffingly wrote, *"To the poachers' cry of wolf, the Commissioners have responded by the offer of a double bounty for every wolf scalp. No claims have been presented."*

In a report filed by M. Chamberlain, he writes, *"[Wolf] Was common from about 1840 until about 1860; since then, it has entirely disappeared."*

Perhaps the clearest indication of the disagreements between those living in the area about the existence of wolves, comes from an "anonymous" writer, I assume an editorial, in 1884 in the "Forest and Stream". In this, the writer, again in a scoffing manner, speaks of how the Commission called on what they believed to be false claims that wolves were still killing game and livestock. This is when the Commission doubled the bounty. This editorial is rebutted which I'll get to in a moment.

Of interest in this piece is that the author speaks of what he believes to be the facts that wolves are now all gone in Maine. But why are they gone? He writes, *"Curiously enough there are old settlers in Maine who retain the theory that wolves follow deer. They claim that there were no deer at the time of the wolves - 'the wolves killed them all off' - but that since the extermination of the wolves the deer have gone on increasing."*

In this editorial the writer clearly blames the hunters for killing off all the deer and not the wolves.

In the rebuttal I spoke about earlier, the author, an experienced hunter and trapper, says he can prove his facts that the deer are all gone and it was the wolf that killed them and that it was not the hunters that made the wolves disappear. He writes, *"In 1853 wolves were very plenty, and for the next five years were not scarce, plenty could be found within sixteen miles of Bangor in 1857 and 1858. They seemed to leave quite suddenly, the last I know of positively being taken was killed by Frank Fairbanks in 1860 in Munsengun. I know the wolves were not exterminated, as from the time they were quite plenty till the time they disappeared, very few skins were brought in. They left of their own accord, just as the caribou left us."*

Little has changed over the years, I would guess, when it comes to dealing with wolves. 130 years ago the wolf was vehemently hated and yet there existed those who wanted to blame man for

everything wrong with wildlife.

In the book "Early Maine Wildlife" – Historical Accounts of Canada lynx, Moose, Mountain Lion, White-Tailed Deer, Wolverine, Wolves, and Woodland Caribou, 1603 – 1930 – by William B. Krohn and Christopher L. Hoving, as the reader progresses through the chronological order in which the book was laid out, a few things become clear in the debate about game animals and predators during this time frame.

For instance, in recent times I have heard information being passed about by biologists within the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and others, that whitetail deer never were abundant in the northern part of the state and that moose and deer did not and could not survive together. In this claim some have said that when the deer moved north, the moose disappeared and/or when the moose were plentiful through the state, the deer were not. Accounts recorded in this book do not show that to be the case at all in my opinion when considering all written accounts. In actuality all three species of moose, deer and woodland caribou existed throughout the state together, at times very plentiful and other times not.

What does become apparent is that the proclivity of more or less game animals, i.e. caribou, moose and deer, was all dependent on the presence of wolves. What remains unsettled is when, if ever, did wolves leave the state of Maine and what was the reason for their exodus?

Most accounts in this book seem to agree that widespread and numerous packs of wolves in Maine had disappeared by the 1860s - 1870s, even though there are accounts of wolf encounters by people into the early 1900s. As is typical even to this day, hunters and trappers reported seeing wolf tracks many times and yet the continuing presence of wolves would not be acknowledged unless someone killed one and brought it out of the woods.

As an example, appearing in the Maine Sportsman, of an account in 1899, an anonymous writer says, *"Thaddeus Coffron of Grand Lake Stream, claims to have seen two large gray wolves not long since on Big Lake near the mouth of Little Musquash stream. He walked up within a few yards of them, being armed only with an axe. Their tracks had been frequently seen in the vicinity previously."*

But as appears in "Forest and Stream", we read this, *"Again there are reports of wolves in Maine with their tracks followed by old wolf hunters, who 'could not be mistaken.' They do not bring out the trophies, however, and until they do the ordinary individual is inclined to regard their stories in the same light as that of the well-read fable."*

According to the editor of Shooting and Fishing in 1920 the last officially recorded wolf kill happened in Andover. *"The report of the State Treasurer of Maine for 1895 shows that there was one wolf killed in the state during that year, for which a bounty was paid. This single specimen was killed in Andover, and is said to be the only wolf killed in Maine for many years."*

The editor further accounts that even though there may be a stray wolf killed sometime into the future, his "trustworthy sources" believe the wolf is "practically extinct" in New England.

What we don't know for certain is why the wolf became "extinct" or "practically extinct" in Maine and New England. We have been led for decades to believe that the wolves were all shot, trapped or poisoned by man. Accounts in the book don't seem to readily agree with this hypothesis nor does it that the caribou were killed off due to uncontrolled hunting.

As was recorded in the Maine Sportsman for the year 1900, a man who worked as a log scaler in the Penobscot region and traveled by foot as far away as 60 miles between lumber camps tells of his observations. *"During the whole winter we saw no deer and but few moose, the entire absence of deer being due to the wolves with which the woods were overrun. Caribou we saw everywhere and I plainly remember that one day, coming out upon them trailing along in single file was a herd of 17 caribou."*

However, the scaler's recall of what was once is soon become reality as he wonders where the caribou went. According to several writings in this book, deer, moose and caribou had once been reduced drastically, probably from a combination of predators and uncontrolled hunting. When the wolves disappeared, the deer and moose recovered and caribou for a time, before it is believed, for whatever reasons, they just migrated out of the state. Perhaps they were simply tired of being harassed by predators, including man.

F. E. Keay writes in 1901 that wolves were the "most dreaded" of wild animals and that by their nature were found to be "ferocious and cunning" and did "incalculable" damage to livestock. In dealing with these large predators, Keay describes the effort this way: *"They traveled in companies, sometimes of ten or twenty, and were caught or killed only with great difficulty."*

As I have pointed out in other parts of this review of wolves in Maine, the majority of reports all seem to agree that wolves were quite prevalent in Maine until around the year 1860, in which most also agree the wolf simply left the state with the exception of pockets of areas where some packs remained. While it is inarguable that the efforts of hunters and trappers, in conjunction with

bounties being paid over 130 years and more, a sizable dent was put in Maine's wolf population but evidence from these accounts can support the notion that this was not the cause of the final "extinction" of wolves in Maine.

While some accounts in this book of "Early Maine Wildlife" say that wolves for the most part left on their own, coinciding with a time in which many accounts tell of very little game, i.e. moose, deer and caribou, this would support the theory that large predators, like the wolf, will move into an area and essentially devoid it of prey and then move on. We seem to see that here, although several wolves and packs remained behind until the late 1800s when "trustworthy sources" declared the wolf "practically extinct".

In having a better grasp of more recent coyote/wolf history in Maine, we discovered that it was not long after the wolf had become "practically extinct" that what was called the eastern coyote began populating the region. I recall in the 1960s seeing a stuffed eastern coyote that had been killed in Maine. This version of coyote was approximately 30 pounds in weight. This is a far cry from the more abundant sizes of coyotes now present in Maine, commonly reaching 50 -70 pounds in size.

It has been determined that what roams today's forests in Maine and are commonly referred to as coyotes, are actually some concocted conglomeration of mixed breeds of wolf, coyotes, and domestic dog. It became common knowledge after the influx of eastern coyote into Maine that this varmint, perhaps because of a very small migrating population, interbred with "wild" dogs or domesticated dogs left to run unrestrained. No one is sure of how the wolf mix got into these animals.

It has been theorized that what was once called the gray wolf in Eastern Quebec, Canada, began migrating or random scatterings of these wolves, entered northern Maine and as such resulted in the inbreeding of the already inbred coyote/dog.

Considering the evidence provided in "Early Maine Wildlife" one has to honestly consider that given the relatively short period of time from when "trustworthy sources" declared the wolf in Maine "practically extinct", that some of those earlier wolves remained behind and began breeding with the migrating coyotes.

It would be intellectually dishonest not to consider all the facts in educating ourselves to the changes of wildlife, including predators and large game animals and use them to better be able to effectively manage these species. It is reasonable to consider that man's efforts to eradicate, -

and make no bones about it, that was their intent - was not wholly what drove wolves out of Maine. If this is the case, then it would be beneficial to gain facts and knowledge to understand what events, all total, caused this to happen.