



# **Eminent Mainers: Succinct Biographies of Thousands of Amazing Mainers, Mostly Dead, and a Few People from Away...**

*Arthur Douglas Stover*

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Maine is a rural backwater? Meet Hiram Abrams, born in Portland in 1878 the son of a Russian immigrant real estate broker, attended public schools, left school at age sixteen, sold newspapers, bought a cow and started a dairy—and eventually became the founder and president of United Artists. Or Aurelia Gay Mace, born in 1835 in Strong, a Shaker from an early age, credited with the invention of the wire coat hanger. Aurelia achieved national fame in 1890 when she mistook Charles Lewis Tiffany for a tramp, gave him lemonade, brushed his clothes, insisted that he sit down for the noon meal, and sent him off with a box lunch. Tiffany responded by sending her a set of engraved silver. Meet Milton Bradley was born in Vienna (Maine) in 1836, educated at Harvard, worked as a mechanical engineer and patent solicitor, became interested in lithography, developed a board game, "The Checkered Game of Life," and founded the Milton Bradley Company. Or Louise Bogan, who was born in Livermore Falls in 1897, moved to Greenwich Village as a young woman, took up the bohemian life and occasionally drove the get-away car for a fur thief, and ended up as the poetry critic for The New Yorker magazine. Hiram Maxim was born in Sangerville in 1840, demonstrated remarkable ability at whittling at a very early age, and went on to invent the machine gun, cordite, a steam-powered airplane, a twin-rotor helicopter, and much more. And then there's Princess Salm-Salm, born Agnes Elisabeth Winona Leclerque Joy in 1840 in Madawaska, who first achieved notoriety as a circus performer on a galloping horse (while playing an accordion), but then served as a nurse during the Civil War, married a Prussian cavalry officer, journeyed to Mexico to plead for her husband's life after he was captured during the Battle of Querretare, and was later awarded the Prussian Iron Cross for her nursing work after the Franco-Prussian War. Maine—boring? Never!

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