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Charity for a City in Crisis: Boston, 1740 to 1775*

Peter R. Virgadamo

While historians often study charity and the humanitarian impulse which swept eighteenth-century England, few have noted a similar spirit across the Atlantic. From 1740 to 1775 charity in Boston matched developments in the mother country both in large donations for emergencies and in the steady work of small benevolent societies. Moreover, charity developed a significance beyond pounds and pence to the poor. As the colonials gradually became Americans, charity helped break down the barriers of localism and was an unexpected spur to national unity.

Since it is such a vague term, charity presents certain problems of definition in colonial history. Few of the specialists in the field include it as a part of their research and even fewer agree on a satisfactory definition. Traditionally it has meant a wide range of values from benevolent feelings for the poor to large philanthropic projects for public works. For the purposes of this paper, a middle road is adopted with charity defined as gifts of money or kind given to the poor through a church, a benevolent society, or a special relief committee. With that description of charity, one can easily distinguish it from public poor relief which the selectmen of Boston called the "Poor's Tax."¹ Public relief was derived from compulsory taxes, restricted by residential requirements, and often subject to the political winds of the day. Charity operated without such constraints. In this period it grew beyond political and geographical boundaries that fostered such constraints. Indeed, after 1740, charity acted as a new bond among the colonials on the local, provincial, and national level. Nowhere was that development more visible than in New England's foremost city.

Boston is ideal for the study of charity due to the seaport's extraordinary problems with poverty and the abundance of records. It was an age of crisis for the urban center as various indices of economic health pointed to a lack of growth in a period when other colonial cities doubled their population and trade. Boston was an unfortunate exception as it suffered from decades of war, trade dislocation, heavy taxation, inflation and then deflation. This combination of problems eroded the seaport's long eminence as the maritime center of the English colonies.² Petitions from the troubled city to the General Court lamented their "once Cherish'd now Depress'd, once Flourishing now sinking

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Town of Boston." For over a century it had prided itself as a busy port and one stark reminder of its decline was grimly evident in 1744 when a resident noted one day "There was but 2 Ships in Boston Harbor."³ For half a century, prosperity eluded the inhabitants with the unfortunate consequence of a marked increase in the poor.

While historians are familiar with the efforts of public relief to help the poor, less familiar is the impact of charity from the private sector. Such charity responded in grand fashion to periodic emergencies such as the severe winter of 1740-41, the smallpox epidemic of 1752, the fire of 1760, and the port closure of 1774. While that kind of benevolence was quite visible, the steady aid from small charity organizations was a remarkable counterpoint to the more publicized efforts. Both forms of charity were quite important in the long economic crisis and each had a significance that was first visible when bitter weather struck late in 1740.

For nearly sixty years, Deacon John Tudor kept a diary in Boston and he always recalled the winter of 1740-41 as "the Coldest the Old People ever remember'd." It had the "depest Snow . . . for 25 years" and the blizzards continued through the middle of April.⁴ Harsh weather intensified the misery of Boston's poor and that bitter winter caught the city unprepared for their sudden increase in numbers and their additional needs. Food and firewood were especially scarce. In response to the emergency, city authorities extended the hours of the public granary and allocated £700 to store extra firewood for the poor. Yet the city still lacked sufficient funds to feed and warm its destitute people. As a result, Boston's officials appealed to the churches for charity.⁵ When the Select Men and Overseers of the Poor asked for aid from the churches, their request came at a difficult moment for the various faiths. It was at the Great Awakening when divisive debates and itinerant preachers tore apart the tenuous harmony of Boston's churches. But they set aside their differences to collect for "the poor & Needy." On two successive Sundays, people donated to the emergency fund and although our information is meager on specifics, we know the various denominations gave £1,240 in charity. It was an extraordinary benevolence in a bitter winter which "had very much distressed Our Inhabitants and had it not been for the extended Charity of Able & well disposed persons amongst Us a great number must have Suffered exceedingly & some did Notwithstanding all the Care to prevent it. . . ."⁶

It marked the first time that "extended Charity," that is, benevolence from all of Boston's churches, was collected for the city's poor. Traditionally, each church reserved its Sabbath collection for its poor. In 1740-41 they transcended their differences and donated their collections for a common cause within the city. Such behavior was more typical of English philanthropy which had a long history of charity on a cooperative basis.⁷ Boston's charity, until that bitter winter, was fragmented by rivalries among the Congregational churches and by clashes with the Anglican faith. It was an important step to break down such barriers of localism and it reflected a new humanitarian spirit.

Charity touched new dimensions in 1752 when a smallpox epidemic severely strained the resources of Boston's public relief system. Smallpox usually struck the seaport once a generation and with each visitation it stopped commerce, created an exodus of frightened inhabitants, and starkly increased the poor's visibility. They lacked the resources to relocate outside the city and with the shutdown of trade they often lost their meager sources of income. In response, the Select Men asked for charity from Boston's churches and also from churches throughout the colony.⁸ It was a bold step to ask rural communities to overcome their traditional mistrust of the urban capitol. Politically the city and the country had clashed on every issue for over a century; the latter had always harbored suspicions of Boston's money and morality.

Again the goal of charity enabled people to transcend traditional barriers. Even the General Court, which for years had denied Boston's petitions for help and which was dominated by votes from the rural towns, granted £600 in aid to the stricken city. And for nearly a year contributions from the rural churches trickled into the hands of Boston's Overseers of the Poor. Thomas Hubbard, an overseer for twenty years, recorded the donations "from Country Ch.^s for the Poor." By August of 1753, the fund exceeded £435 and ranged in size from the £6 given by Sudbury to the £47 donated by Medford's congregation. While few figures survive on the charity collected by Boston's churches except for the £75 from the First Church, their contributions probably exceeded the benevolence of the rural congregations.⁹ More important than the statistics was the achievement of cooperation between the city and country. Again it was charity that eroded localism and acted as a new bond.

Carl Bridenbaugh, one of the few historians to realize the extent of colonial charity, wrote that the mid-eighteenth century was an "age of emerging humanitarianism in the Western World."¹⁰ Historians often overlook the charity in Boston that reflected the same spirit. That spirit manifested itself both in large scale relief and in the quiet work of small benevolent associations like the Scots Charitable Society. Their charity reflected an intense humanitarian response to a city in crisis. In 1740, the excellent records of the Society pointed to a sudden increase of poor transients in Boston. These were not the familiar poor who regularly appeared on the Society's ledger.¹¹ Now it was destitute strangers like David Melvil who in the harsh winter of 1740-41 was given £2 "in consideration of the Severity of the Season." As the transience of the poor increased, notations in the margins of the ledgers frequently failed to even record the names of the desperately destitute. They remained anonymous as a "poor Scots Highland Man," a "poor Scots mans Daughter," and "2 poor Scots women." Impoverished and not members of the Society, their needs could not await the quarterly distribution of charity. Such poor had to suffer or bypass the petition process for the Society's charity. By 1747 the desperation of the new poor forced the organization to make allowances for their poverty with the notation of "paid Sundry poor people as p.^r. Margent."¹²

For the city in crisis the charity of the Scots reflected the nature of poverty in Boston. As already noted, the bitter winter of 1740-41 provoked the Scots into

additional charity as did the smallpox epidemic of 1752. Eunice Nicholls received £6 "on Account of Small Pox" and at the height of scourge, members voted "a large Sume to each of the petitioners this quarter." More typical of their charity was the relief given to the human flotsam of the colonial wars. Soldiers and dependents continually asked for aid in that period like the "poor Scots man Lame (and) dismissed from ye Army" or the widow of Angus Baylie after her husband "went on ye Expedition Against Cap Breton where he died." Sometimes quite generous, the Society gave James Younger £5 after he was captured at Louisbourg and then released by the French "in want & Distress."¹³

In the years of peace after 1748, the seaport continued to suffer from harsh economic conditions that exacerbated the plight of marginal people. Again the records of the Scots Charitable Society pinpointed the various sources of trouble for the city's poor. Press gangs from the Royal Navy often roamed the harbor in search of men for their ships. Such activity frightened away colonial shipmasters and hurt the seaport's commerce. Moreover, deprived of a man's income through impressment, the family was immediately thrown into poverty. Anne Ross's husband was "pressed on board ye Mermaid Man of Warr" and in desperation she sought aid from the Society. Other problems associated with the hazards of maritime life struck the inhabitants and compelled them to seek charity. John Brough, a "Lame Sailor," needed help as did the widow of John Stewart after her husband was swept overboard in the Atlantic. John McFarlin was "Shipwrecked from the Bay (of) Hondoras" and escaped only with his life. John Smith suffered similar misfortune when he was "Cast away and hast lost what he had." When a ship went down with all hands, every social rank in the seaport felt the impact, even people of the comfortable middle sort like Mrs. Elizabeth Erwins. Her husband, Captain Henry Erwins, "drowned in his passage from W(est) Indies" and the newly bereaved woman needed the Society's charity.¹⁴ Ship disasters, a familiar aspect of maritime life, would not have had such an adverse impact on the community if Boston had enjoyed some prosperity.

But the times were not normal and harsh economic conditions within the seaport pushed into poverty people who otherwise might have subsisted with some success. Fortunately, it was a humanitarian age and the Society responded with a remarkable benevolence for Scots who failed to sustain themselves in the hard times. Quite a number of the immigrants simply gave up and wanted to return home but were too poor to be able to afford the voyage back to Scotland. Elizabeth Brown asked the Society to pay for her "passage to North Brittain" and Mrs. Robertson only needed to reach Portsmouth, New Hampshire to begin a new life. Mrs. Davis, an impoverished widow, simply wanted to leave Boston and was given two shillings to "gett her out of Town." Men in trouble needed just as much help like a man named Morton who asked for £3 in charity for his "relees out of Gaol." Several pitiful cases came to the attention of the Society and illustrated the depth of early American poverty. John Akin, a vagrant child who was "fathierless & motheirless," received £2 and Constant Gordon languished "at ye Almshouse" yet needed charity to bolster her meager poor relief.¹⁵

Humanitarianism is a two way street which concerns the donor and the recipient. At this point it is helpful to study the Scots who made such charity possible. Artisans and tradesmen constituted the bulk of the membership and by 1757, at the Society's centenary, the roster listed 105 active members. It was a unique organization that touched all levels of society in urban Boston. Merchants and professional men dominated the offices of the Society, ship captains and prosperous tradesmen represented Boston's middle rank, and the lower sort were visible in the poor that petitioned for charity. Each member paid quarterly dues of five shillings and when first joining the Society each new member donated a sum to the treasury. Very few were as generous as Captain David Little John of Edinburgh who gave £18; most of the entry gifts ranged from eight shillings to £2.¹⁶ Other men, not members of the organization, contributed such as the firm of Wheeler & Page in Boston which donated £4·10s as "Good Will" in 1752. Since they were not eligible to be members, women rarely gave to the Scots although once in a while a widow would donate to the treasury. Elizabeth Wilson, in a humanitarian spirit, bequeathed "what she had" to the Society and after the sale of her property, the gift was £111. More common was the legacy of £32 from the estate of Angus Bailey or George Murdoch's bequest of £50. Quarterly dues and entry gifts rarely exceeded £30 and it was an extraordinary moment for charity when a quarter's donation in 1748 was £98. Records for their annual charity are not as precise as one would like, but they do list £196 in "Cash paid (for) Charities" in 1749-1750.¹⁷

It was a steady kind of charity, less spectacular than the benevolence collected for Boston's emergencies, and quietly guided by Dr. William Douglass, the Society's president since 1736. He is well known to historians for his vociferous resistance to smallpox inoculation in 1721 and for his stormy relations with colonial officials. But to the poor Scots of the seaport, Douglass symbolized the best of a humanitarian age. For that interpretation one must look closely at the records of the Society to discover his compassionate work.¹⁸ Douglass was quite lenient with the Society's charity procedures as well as generous with its treasury. To aid indigent Scots he frequently overruled the tedious petition process, as often noted in the margins of the Society's ledgers. Repeatedly the doctor authorized charity on cases previously rejected by the Society or if a petition was, as in the case of Anne Hay, "misaid or Omitted." For example, Jonathan Cuming pleaded that in 1751 he was "Sick, & in Low Circumstances." He did not qualify and received aid only after the intervention of Douglass who ordered that £2 be given "by Consent of the President." When small pox struck Boston a year later, he authorized additional sums of charity for the "feverd poor." Unfortunately, it marked one of his last acts on behalf of Boston's destitute Scots. He died in October and the Society deeply mourned the man who had been so generous in "his Charity & benevolence to the poor."¹⁹

William Douglass was the most conspicuous figure in a small band of men whose humanitarian work continued as Boston entered the Revolutionary era of the 1760s. For the most part, the charity of the years before independence

duplicated the prosaic details of their earlier benevolence. Charity from the Scots, since most of it came from men of Boston's middle ranks, lacked the factors so evident in social control of the poor. Their small sums represented a simple altruism — unlike the large bequests by the wealthy which sought to alter the poor's behavior through institutions like the work house.²⁰ While they rarely articulated the impulses that led to their charity, again and again, one can see the small deeds that were examples of a desire to help their fellow Scots in a new environment. They aided sufferers of the last colonial war like Malcolm McIntosh, "lately come from Quebec on foot wt his Wife & Child." Maritime men still needed charity in the hard times, like Robert Craig, "a Sick Scots Sailor." William Sterling, disgusted with his failures in the New World, asked the Society for £4 to pay "his passage to Scotland."²¹

Peace in 1763 did not bring prosperity to Boston. Instead it precipitated a post-war depression which intensified the seaport's economic problems. In addition, imperial trade restrictions and new taxes further postponed Boston's recovery. One social consequence was the need for more charity and the Society's members responded with greater benevolence. In 1767 they collected £100 in one quarter; that exceeded their previous record for donations. They also retained the flexibility of Dr. Douglass's system of lenient charity with the new notation of "Petitioner Extraordinary" in the ledger. John Cochran benefitted from that leniency in 1771 when the Society gave him £5 to "Subsist himself & family."²²

In 1766 the Scots went a step further in their charity when the members voted to consider a "Hospitile for the poor and Indigent Scots Persons." It was an innovative idea which reflected their deep humanitarian spirit even if it failed to materialize. At that date Boston lacked a hospital and city officials did not even know the numbers of the poor or their conditions. But the Scots knew who were the poor in their midst. As early as 1762 they made surveys of destitute Scots and their "Committee of visitation" graphically recorded the misery of the poor in Revolutionary Boston. While James Otis eloquently spoke against the writs of assistance, Sarah Christie lived alone in "a Gerret all exposed to ye weather, (and) has no support but from ye Scots." Two years later she petitioned the Society for more charity in a hand written document that survives in the Massachusetts Historical Society. In an awkward, pitiful script she wrote of the "Rheumatism" that had crippled her but she was now "able to Crawl about." Joanna Servis lived in similar conditions at the age of seventy-six and qualified as a "very great Object of Charity" as did old, blind Elizabeth Duncan.²³

When Boston joyfully celebrated the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766 a second survey of the Society's poor provided another glimpse of life among the city's lowest ranks. Sarah Christie continued to struggle with the afflictions of old age while the widow Elizabeth Cromartee sought to survive with the burdens of "five small Children." Ann Chandler, fortunately, had only two children but she herself was "in a languishing way. . . in great distress." In 1773 as Boston prepared to resist the Tea Act, Sarah Christie had lost her sight and

was now "confin'd mostly to her Bed."²⁴ Other Scots suffered nearly as much and only the charity of a small benevolent society enabled them to survive with some dignity. An intensive look at the Society's records reveals a grim poverty in colonial Boston and a splendid humanitarian spirit among a small band of immigrant Scots.

Their charity, mostly confined to the Scots in the North End of Boston, was too local to reflect the nascent nationalism evident in the charity for emergencies like the fire of 1760. It was the worst fire in colonial American history and utterly devastated the city after it had already endured two decades of economic crisis. Contemporary accounts of the "Great Fire" struggled to convey the sense of loss. One diarist finally admitted that it was "impossible to express the Distress of the unhappy Sufferers by the grevos Judgment." More than 200 families lost their homes and the conflagration destroyed 175 shops that had provided work for scores of tradesmen. It reduced a "great number . . . to extreme poverty" remembered one Boston inhabitant and the statistics confirmed that impression. Claims for compensation were filed by 365 people and the city classified 214 of them as poor.²⁵

Boston's dilemma and the tragedy of the fire provoked the greatest expression of charity in the colonies. Both the city and the country responded to the disaster with commendable speed. They convened an emergency session of the town meeting, which drew more ballots than any session in the next decade of Revolutionary conflict, and quickly appointed a committee to supervise aid. At that point the city officials were still unsure of the response and advised the committee to "receive the Moneys that *might* be Collected for the Sufferers by the late great Fire." In reality the charity that flowed into Boston surpassed their hopes. Boston's churches easily surpassed their donations of 1740-41. Trinity Church proudly recorded its contribution of £1,040, yet charity from the Reverend Samuel Cooper's congregation more than tripled that figure. Altogether, the seventeen congregations in Boston gave the princely sum of £13,559 to those impoverished by the fire.²⁶ That was not the only source and one resident wrote in astonishment that "Donations . . . are continually coming in from all Quarters." Throughout the colonies the call for charity touched a new feeling on the national level. Contributions from outside of Massachusetts totalled £3,000 and gifts from five legislatures added £3,400 to the national response. In all, the people collected £22,107 for the poor of the devastated city.²⁷

Charity for Boston in 1760 reflected the nascent nationalism that gradually unfolded in the road to the Revolution. Historians generally credit political events like the Stamp Act with the rise of a national spirit. But years before 1765 charity stirred a social spirit of solidarity. It was the first endeavor on a national scale and although it lacked the strident calls for colonial unity, nonetheless it reflected a new bond among colonials. As in 1740-41 and 1752, charity in 1760 crossed new geographical barriers. It transcended several intercolonial conflicts of long duration. New York's legislature set aside its bitter border dispute with Massachusetts to vote £1,875 for the capitol city.

Quakers, who still vividly remembered the executions of their forefathers in seventeenth-century Boston, magnanimously donated to its impoverished inhabitants in 1760.²⁸ Indeed, Quaker benevolence in 1774 would be a significant part of charity in the next emergency to strike the city.

When Parliament closed the port of Boston in 1774 as punishment for the Tea Party, the response from the city and the colonies was rather unsure. In May, Sam Adams wrote to a committee of correspondence in Virginia and asked for “your own Sentiments” on the emergency. He probably expected a strident political statement; instead he received nearly 800 bushels of wheat. It was a humanitarian reply to what one Boston diarist called “that inhuman act of the British parlement.” Boston’s plight awakened colonials and to the dismay of an English visitor in the south, “Nothing (was) talked of but the Blockade of Boston Harbour.”²⁹ Even in early June the city’s people wondered how they would cope with the port’s closure and one man noted in his journal that “We have reason to expect that in a little time, this devoted Capitol will be reduced to the utmost distress. God send us speedy Relief.”³⁰

The familiar story of how people from throughout the colonies sent “speedy Relief” to the poor of Boston is usually told as a chapter in our political development towards independence. At the same time, that relief was the last episode in charity’s contribution to the national bond. Like the 1760 fire, the port closure provided colonial Americans with an opportunity to express their unity through charity. It was a uniquely rural response as farmers in every colony sent foodstuffs to Boston. Unlike the charity of 1760 when colonials sent pounds and pence to the poor, in 1774 it was the produce of the farms that was sent to the beleaguered city. Farmers seemed intent to make Boston the “granary of America.” By early summer one astonished resident exclaimed that “Every part of this extensive Continent appears to be deeply interested in the Fate of this *unhappy Town*.”³¹

Startled at the immense response, the city struggled to cope with the inundation of charity that marked, in Bridenbaugh’s words, the “greatest relief problem in colonial history.” While the overall relief operation is of interest in the massive amounts donated to the city, countless small acts revealed the deep bond of charity among Americans. Residents of Berwick explained that “We are poor here, cash and provisions (are) scarce with us.” Nonetheless they sent six oxen and two dozen sheep for the poor of Boston. Inhabitants of Windham also sent sheep with the apologetic note that the flock was “not so good as we could wish, but are the best we had.”³² Their sacrifices were repeated dozens of times in testimony of the spirit of national charity.

Men gave charity as best they could and in a variety of ways which reflected the imagination of the benevolent. Carters from Marblehead charged half the usual rates, shipowners brought in cargoes for free, warehouses stored produce “without a farthing’s charge,” and merchants expedited shipments without a commission. Colonials gave with grand gestures like Colonel Israel Putnam’s march into Boston with a “large drove of Sheep for the poor”; within

a year he would march in with soldiers. They also gave anonymously in the tradition of donors who sought no recognition for their charitable deed. Boston's relief committee frequently received donations from "Unknown hands" or "from a lady unknown" or from "A Gent unknown." Charity flowed into the city from all conceivable sources — from Indians in Barnstable to Quakers in Philadelphia.³³

In 1774, charity from the Quakers posed a theological dilemma that did not exist in the fire of 1760. They wanted to be benevolent and yet avoid steps that might contribute in the road to war. It was a conflict of two traditional Quaker values, charity and pacifism. In the end they resolved the issue in favor of human need and contributed £3,910 in charity.³⁴ As the contributions rolled into Boston, the relief committee strained its vocabulary for ways to express the city's appreciation. Whether they used the term benevolence, charity, generosity, liberality or munificence in their letters of thanks, it was all the same and reflected the remarkable humanitarian impulse of the colonial people. It is no wonder that as Ben Franklin in London read of the response by his fellow colonials, "tears trickled down his cheeks."³⁵

Charity continued to pour into Boston as winter followed the long summer. Colonials changed the nature of their gifts from farm produce to clothes and cash like the donation from Concord in January of 1775. After the minister preached a sermon on charity they "Collected for the poor in Boston £50 & £20 of Grain." People gave charity through their church, through the local relief committee and as individuals like the father and son from Westmont who took an "opportunity to send in our mite by the post." Donations never ceased and by March of 1775 the value exceeded £13,000. Fortunately a mild winter eased the stress often associated with the cold season. Indeed, the moderate weather was a noteworthy event that Deacon Tudor often recorded in his diary. As spring approached he frequently commented on the fine days that blessed the beleaguered city. But on April 19 his diary read "fine Weather, but terable news from Lexington. . ."³⁶ His entry quietly noted the onset of war and of course that signalled the end of the peaceful drive for charity. What was once a call for charity became a call for arms.

In retrospect, the long road from 1740 to 1775 can be viewed in several ways and traditionally scholars have focused on the political highlights. This paper suggests that a unique social force, charity, played an important role in the development of national bonds. In 1740, charity helped unite a city divided by religious strife and in 1752 it brought together two traditional adversaries, the city and the country. In 1760 colonial Americans first contributed to a national cause and again in 1774 but with the overtones of patriotism. As charity grew from a local concern to a national spirit, it gradually transcended barriers that often impeded the growth of political or geographical unity. Less visible yet equally important to Boston's poor was the development of the same humanitarian spirit in a small charity society. In the long decades of the seaport's economic decline, the benevolence of the Scots Charitable Society was a remarkable testimony to the bonds of an immigrant people. Charity for

a city in crisis reflected both the humanitarianism and the bonds that kept the colonials together as they neared independence.

NOTES

1. W.H. Whitmore, et al, eds., *Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston*, 39 vols (Boston, 1885), XIV, 222 (Hereafter cited as *Boston Town Records*).
2. On Boston's economic problems the standard works are Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness: The First Century of Urban Life in America 1625-1742* (paperback, New York, 1964) and *Cities in Revolt: Urban Life in America 1743-1776* (paperback, New York and London, 1971); G.B. Warden, *Boston 1689-1776* (Boston, 1970) and Gary B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge and London, 1979).
3. Whitmore, *Boston Town Records*, XIV, 84-85; William Tudor, ed., *Deacon Tudor's Diary* (Boston, 1896), 3.
4. Tudor, *Diary*, 2.
5. Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness*, 312, Whitmore, *Boston Town Records*, XII, 262; XIV, 2, 13.
6. Trinity Church Records, Mss B, I, 34, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston; Edwin S. Gaustad, *The Great Awakening in New England* (New York, 1957), *passim*; Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness*, 394; Whitmore, *Boston Town Records*, XIV, 13.
7. On English charity see the pioneer work of W.K. Jordan, *Philanthropy in England 1480-1660* (London, 1959) and the more recent work of David Edward Owen, *English Philanthropy, 1660-1960* (Cambridge, 1964).
8. Bridenbaugh, *Cities in Revolt*, 126; Richard D. Pierce, ed., *The Records of the First Church in Boston, 1630-1868*, 3 vols (Boston, The Colonial Society of Massachusetts, *Publications*, 1961), XXXIX, 207 (Hereafter cited as *First Church Records*).
9. Whitmore, *Boston Town Records*, XIV, 234; Account Books of Thomas Hubbard, I, 139, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston.
10. Bridenbaugh, *Cities in Revolt*, 126-127.
11. Manuscript volumes of the Scots Charitable Society, in the collections of the New England Historic Genealogical Society in Boston. I have followed the order of the volumes as written on their covers: Volume IV — Book No. 1, V — Entry Book No. 2, VI — Journal, VIII — Ledger, IX — Waste Book. For the marginalia of the 1740s see the Scots Charitable Society Manuscripts, IV, 279 (Hereafter cited as SCS Mss); on the new transience of the poor in Massachusetts in this period see Douglas Lamar Jones, "Geographic Mobility in Eighteenth-Century Essex County, Massachusetts" (Ph. D. thesis, Brandeis University, 1975), 3, 5, 202-205.
12. SCS Mss, I, 280; IV, 296 (margin): V, 3 (margin), 15, 28 (margin).

13. SCS Mss, V, 46, 47; V, Alphabet #2, Letter B: IX, 146, 150.
14. For the impact of the Royal Navy's press gangs see Joel A. Shufro, "The Impressment of Seamen and the Economic Decline of Boston, 1740 to 1760" (M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1968); SCS Mss, V, 35, 69, 70, 77; VI, 102, 116.
15. SCS Mss, IV, 279; V, 41; VI, 41 (margin), 115, 116; IX, 149.
16. On the origins of the Scots Charitable Society in 1657 see Charles E. Banks, "Scotch Prisoners deported to New England by Cromwell, 1651-52," *Massachusetts Historical Society, Proceedings*, 61 (1927-1928), 4-29; SCS Mss, V Alphabet #2, Letters P-Q: V, 2, 24.
17. SCS Mss, V, 25, 73; VIII, folio 64 (left side); IX, 111, 139, 148.
18. For the traditional interpretation of Douglass as a contentious Scotsman see George H. Weaver, "Life and Writings of William Douglass, M.D.," *Society of Medical History of Chicago, Bulletin*, 11 (1921), 244, 255; a more recent statement is in Eric Howard Christianson, "Individuals in the Healing Arts and the Emergence of a Medical Community in Massachusetts, 1700-1792: A Collective Biography" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Southern California, 1976), 158, 194, note 7. Neither Weaver nor Christianson, in their evaluations of his behavior, knew of the material on Douglass in the SCS Mss.
19. SCS Mss, V, 29 (margin), 41 (margin); VIII, folio 72 (left side); IX, 116.
20. On the institutions built by contributions of Boston's elite see Christine Heyrman, "A Model of Christian Charity: The Rich and the Poor in New England, 1630-1730" (Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1977) and Stephen Wiberly, "Four Cities: Public Relief in Urban America, 1700-1775" (Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1975).
21. SCS Mss, V, 99, 107; IX, 172.
22. SCS Mss, V, 127, 161; Bridenbaugh, *Cities in Revolt*, 215, 220, 228, 250-252.
23. SCS Mss, V, 101, 117, 147; Lemuel Shaw Papers, Reel 1, no pagination — her petition is listed among the documents for 1764, *Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts*.
24. SCS Mss, V, 120-121, 171.
25. Bridenbaugh, *Cities in Revolt*, 18, 108; Trinity Church Records, I, 93; Tudor, *Diary*, 10; Warden, *Boston*, 149; Thomas Pemberton, "Topographical and Historical Description of Boston, 1794," *Massachusetts Historical Society, Collections, First Series, III (1794)*, 270; William Pencak, "The Social Structure of Revolutionary Boston: Evidence from the Great Fire Records of 1760," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, X (Autumn 1979), 267-268.
26. Robert J. Dinkin, "Provincial Massachusetts: A Deferential or a Democratic Society?" (Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 1968), 44; Tudor, *Diary*, 10-11; Whitmore, *Boston Town Records*, XIX, 129-130 (italics mine); Collections from great fire in Boston, Manuscripts Large, *Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Massachusetts*; Trinity Church Records, I, 93.
27. John Boyle, "Journal of Occurrences in Boston, 1759-1778," *New England Historic Genealogical Register*, LXXXIV (1930), 154; Warden, *Boston*, 150; Caleb H. Snow, *A History of Boston*, 2nd ed (Boston, 1828), 245.
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