

BOOK REVIEWS

***A Short History of Boston.* By Robert F. Allison. Beverly, MA: Commonwealth Books, 2004. 128 pages. \$14.95 (paperback).**

As the saying goes, “Good things come in small packages.” Robert F. Allison’s delightful book, *A Short History of Boston*, certainly follows this familiar adage as it concisely presents the story of Massachusetts’s capital city in just 111 pages of text packed with illustrations, maps, and photos. Whether Boston-born, long-time resident, short-time resident or weekend visitor, there is something of pleasure and learning here for all. Any reader is bound to pick up nuggets of information.

Allison, a Professor of History at Suffolk University in Boston who also teaches in the Harvard Extension School, is not only a master of Boston, Massachusetts and, indeed, American history, but also an exceptional writer. Readers will enjoy his pauses to look at Boston Harbor, the city’s skyline, or the many fascinating characters who have shaped Boston and have been shaped by it.

The book starts and ends with Boston Harbor, and all the way through we see a sensitive rendering of the individuals and groups of people living near the water. The native people, the Massachusetts, called the harbor Quonehassit, and Allison relates their interactions, positive and negative, with Europeans arriving in the 1600s. Not merely mentioning Samuel Maverick, who occupied Noddle’s Island (in today’s East Boston) and lent his name to Maverick Square, Allison informs us that one descendant of this early Bostonian died in the Boston Massacre “and another ventured out to Texas, where he chose not to brand his cattle, which marked them as not belonging to anyone else. Maverick still means one who does not fall in with the established orthodoxy, whether of cattle or religious doctrine” (12).

This kind of quick and interesting aside helps to place Boston in the larger picture of the American story. More often than not, we are reminded of the key role that Boston played in the nation’s history. For example, Allison writes of the search for witches in Boston as well as nearby Salem. He sheds light on how disease and wars affected the native people of New England. Readers see Puritanical intolerance, demonstrated by the exile and death of Anne Hutchinson as well as the execution of her friend Mary Dyer, a Quaker.

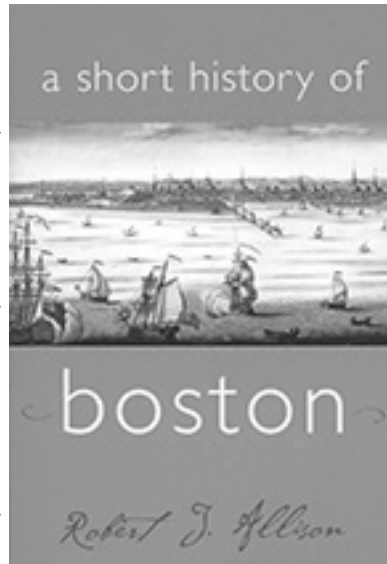
The well-known story of Bostonians leading the charge into the American Revolution is told quickly but well. This section, too, includes information that most readers will likely discover for the first time. How many know that in his 1756 visit to Boston, George Washington found inspiration for Mount

Vernon in the home of Massachusetts Governor William Shirley? Allison includes a picture of what is now known as the Shirley-Eustis House (36), which makes the point well and perhaps will lead readers in the twenty-first century to visit it as Washington did.

A chapter on the new nation connects the famous story of the U.S.S. Constitution, “Old Ironsides,” and a less familiar account of the 1813 battle of the U.S.S. Chesapeake just off Boston Light. In this battle the U.S. Navy found its motto, “Don’t give up the ship” (43). The way Boston and Massachusetts were shaped by the emergence of manufacturing and by Charles Bulfinch, Frederic Tudor and Donald McKay are key aspects of this fast-moving review of the nineteenth century. In addition, Allison adroitly weaves the stories of Catholics from Ireland and Jews from Germany, who also did much to shape the city and Commonwealth.

Allison relates much that is familiar and introduces intriguing detail that should stir his readers to think more of just what happened in the city and in the country. For example, the 1843 dedication of the Bunker Hill Monument provides the opportunity to point out that John Quincy Adams boycotted the ceremony because of his stance on slavery and his disgust at President “John Tyler and his Cabinet of slave-drivers” who were on the program (56). The role of Boston’s Irish and the Massachusetts 54th for black troops in the ensuing Civil War may also stimulate reflection on both the city’s history and that of the nation.

In a chapter titled “City Transformed,” Allison links physical changes in the Back Bay to cultural institutions such as the Museum of Fine Arts and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, as well as to political changes stemming from the influx of Irish and other immigrant groups. The reader is informed, entertained and maybe even inspired by the story of Mary Antin, a Russian Jewish immigrant, who found refuge in the Boston Public Library, and that of Joshua Bates, the library’s first benefactor (80). While Bates left Boston to become a great financial success in London, the most beautiful Bates Hall, in the library, continues to inspire and serve.



This weaving of individual stories to make larger points about the city is a hallmark of Allison's approach and continues through his consideration of early twentieth-century figures such as civil rights pioneer William Monroe Trotter, merchant Edward Filene and banker Joe Kennedy. Allison includes Italian immigrant Charles Ponzi and his famous fraud in the story of the 1920s and continues with James Michael Curley, the famous mayor, congressman, and governor whose style is immortalized in Edwin O'Connor's classic political novel, *The Last Hurrah*. O'Connor himself receives a whole page as a sort-of sidebar with personal information about the writer, his accomplishments and challenges. Throughout the book, similar sidebars give thumbnail sketches of such people as: Elizabeth Palmer Peabody (1804-1894); Josiah Quincy (1772-1864); Fannie Farmer (1857-1915); and late twentieth-century personalities: community activist, Mel King; politician, William Bulger; and Frederick P. Salvucci, "primary planner of the Big Dig project" (106).

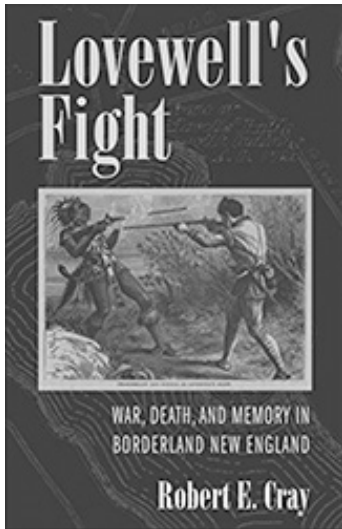
These last three were great figures in the story of the new Boston, an important era that emerged in the late 1900s. Allison expertly and deftly guides the reader through the physical, demographic, social and economic changes of the last half-century before returning to his starting point, the edge of Boston Harbor, "a vantage point from which to watch the continuing transformation of Boston" (111). Robert F. Allison offers a compelling, brief, and fascinating account of an ever-changing city. Eight pages of chronology and suggestions for further reading add to the value of this book.

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Lovewell's Fight: War, Death, and Memory in Borderland New England.
By Robert E. Cray. Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014. 213 pages. \$25.95 (paperback).

In 1725, a band of New England volunteers set off from Dunstable, Massachusetts to the Maine frontier in pursuit of the feared Native American leader Paugus and his Pigwacket warriors. With the colonial government of Massachusetts paying a substantial bounty for each scalp, this band of brothers was driven as much by money as the desire to rid the frontier of this hostile Native American presence. Arriving deep in the Maine woods, the experienced and usually cautious commander, Captain John Lovewell, committed a series of tactical blunders that led to a disastrous daylong battle

costing Lovewell his life and leaving a third of his troops dead or wounded. When the Native Americans withdrew, the survivors split up and made a hasty retreat, leaving their dead and wounded behind. A mixture of gross errors in judgment, great acts of heroism and courage, and base acts of cowardice, Lovewell's Fight is none-the-less the defining battle of Dummer's War.



Out of the ashes of this ignominious defeat arose a tale of heroism and bravery that rivals the Alamo. Through sermon, chronicle, and song, Lovewell himself was made into a military martyr, and his men were held up as exemplary of the ideal soldier. Then, as memory began to fade, a new recollection of events emerged, one more sympathetic to the Native Americans and less deferential to the “skulking” warriors. What Lovewell's Fight was and how it came to be written into the folklore and culture of New England is the focus of Robert E. Cray's carefully researched and well-written book.

Cray begins his work with a definitive account of the battle itself, pushing beyond the extremes of praise heaped on the combatants by chroniclers of the time, as well as the condemnation leveled at Lovewell and his men by modern historians, who see the battle as just another despicable event in English-Native American relations. He raises the question of why Lovewell and his men were so revered at the time and later equally reviled. The keys to his inquiry, as the subtitle to his book indicates, are the matters of war, death, and memory. Since the conflict involved a seemingly scurrilous strategy (scalping) and motivation (money), Cray seeks a deeper understanding of the nature of “skulking warfare” (scalp hunting) and the financial incentives that drove men to risk life and limb for a substantial government payout. He does so by situating these tactics within the context of a colonial world constantly beset by frontier warfare, death, and dying. Cray uses the death of members of the scouting party to pry into Puritan burial practices and the unwritten rules of honor that demanded the retrieval and burial of those who died in combat. In colonial Massachusetts, death, in the form of famine, fire, disease, and war, was a constant menace. What mattered most to New Englanders was the manner in which one confronted death and the dignity and respect paid to the deceased. This is especially true for those who died in combat. The trauma of military

losses was compounded greatly when the retreating party left the dead, and sometimes the wounded, behind without a proper burial. The significance of this act is seen alongside the intentional desecration of the unburied bodies of one's enemy as a sign of contempt.

How the colony compensated the widows and the wounded for their losses is another concern for Cray. In a sparsely populated colony, the community response to the needs of the wounded and the families of those who died was exceedingly personal. Members of the committee overseeing distribution of relief funds knew the petitioners and the circumstances of the battle, and compensation was doled out accordingly. Examination of those negotiations, for often petitions of a questionable or sizeable nature were subjected to give and take between the petitioner and the provincial government, sheds light on the social conscience of the time.

In the last part of his book, Cray turns to the cultural significance of the battle. Within weeks of the battle, published accounts by Rev. Thomas Symmes, Samuel Penhallow, and Tom Law extolled the virtues of these soldiers, providing meaning to a seemingly senseless loss of life. Early interpretations of the Battle of Lovewell's Pond cast the conflict in Alamo like terms---a band of heroic men, facing superior numbers, fighting courageously to defeat the enemy and return home with honor---to salve the wounds and bolster the spirits of the besieged community. Over time, New Englanders began to question the battle's nobility. Authors such as Henry David Thoreau and Thomas Upham sided with Native Americans, while the dark muse, Nathaniel Hawthorne, used the incident to probe the depths of man's guilt and the subsequent moral consequences for the survivors who left their comrades behind. Only Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (mistakenly referred to as William Henry in a number of places), in search of a usable past, was able to muster a positive spin. Attempts in the late 1800s by Maine's and Massachusetts's cultural elite to enshrine the Battle of Lovewell Pond in New England memory as a matter of honorable and great military achievement came to naught. Despite their best efforts, little enthusiasm was mustered, even in Fryeburg, home of the conflict.

What makes Cray's work intriguing is the way that he is able to transform a minor historical event into a vehicle for exploring colonial life, culture, and memory. This study is a perfect example of how historical memory shifts and changes throughout the years based on the needs and outlook of each successive generation. For that reason, the book recommends itself to those interested in the social and cultural side New England's past as well as to those inclined toward military history.

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***For a Short Time Only: Itinerants and the Resurgence of Popular Culture in Early America.* By Peter Benes. Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016. 528 pages. \$49.95 (hardcover.)**

For a Short Time Only should be around for a long time. It is a major contribution to its field of popular culture and provides a better understanding of how a novel element of popular culture forms, disseminates, and either incorporates or fades with time and societal maturation. In this generously illustrated and impressively documented study of colonial popular culture in the Northeast between roughly 1740 and 1840 (with a brief context-setting exploration of the years 1675 to 1740), Peter Benes demonstrates an encyclopedic grasp of his topic. As he notes, the topic is quite narrow, limited in geography and time to but a small portion of the overall field. It excludes maritime, military, slavery and indenture, except as runaways practiced itinerant crafts, and the stable culture of the areas in which itinerants practiced. His small slice of popular culture studies turns into a volume of over five-hundred pages, almost eighty percent of which is text and over one-hundred illustrations. For those who want more than the generous serving provided by the book, additional information is available at http://scholarworks.umass.edu/umpress_short_time_only/.

To make the subject manageable, Benes divides his chronology into four sections- a background section that sets the scene, a larger section that develops the many sorts of itinerant occupations, and a third section that tracks the early nineteenth century incorporation of popular culture into the American mainstream. An afterword ties it all into a neat bundle with a brief recapitulation of the content of *For a Short Time Only* as well as suggestions about what it might all mean.

The first section has six chapters totaling just over 120 pages. This section sets the scene in New England after a century of settlement. Insular, isolated, dominated by the old families with emphasis on education and high culture, the area was deficient in many of the cultural trappings of Europe and England, the popular practices that got left behind when the immigrants struggled and established their society. It was a region characterized by skepticism and wariness of strangers, particularly those selling a bill of goods. Before popular culture could take hold in what was still a significant frontier with more serious priorities than frivolities and foreign refinements, the



itinerants had to convince the wary that their goods were the real thing and worth having.

Chapter one deals with the role of itinerants in reviving popular culture, chapter two discusses the patterns of itinerancy in a setting with scattered population centers, few facilities for travelers beyond taverns of highly variable quality, and rough roads and rivers leading from relatively civilized coastal areas to the still primitive outback. This chapter notes that the typical itinerant had a regular circuit in a relatively small geographic area, limited by travel time and the size of the potential market as much as anything;

itinerants had fixed durations for their stays in each community depending on the nature of the skills the itinerant offered and the size of the market, with novelty acts wearing thin relatively soon, the potential pool of students running quickly dry, and demands for medical services or potions limited.

Additional chapters deal with the ways that itinerants made themselves known and accepted by a populace wary of strangers and with limited resources, not only in attracting crowds to venues of various types but also in insinuating themselves into the social structure, albeit marginally and temporarily. Other elements of this section include the ways the itinerants acquired audiences, mastered skills of a wide range, and used visual aids to firm up their impact, commonly mixing one or more trades because of the limited market. Throughout he deals with the various types of itinerants well beyond the peddler with needles and samples, including not only those offering medical advice and treatment, but also tutors and teachers of language and social skills, and entertainers of a wide range of types, some more respectable than others, mostly appealing to the popular taste but also attracting a more respectable audience. Charlatans and tricksters worked the itinerant circuits along with semi-respectable professionals and all sorts in between, some switching from one to the other depending on circumstances.

The second section is shorter, containing three chapters. Each deals with a specific type of performer. One chapter discusses performers on the street while two explore those whose venue was the tavern. One of the tavern chapters discusses magic lanternists while the other examines conjuring, rope-dancing, and puppetry. Illustrations and examples abound, and the

reader comes away with a good feel for the nature of performance in a long-gone time of long-forgotten skills.

The third section moves beyond entertainment of the lower sort to deal with itinerants as cultural improvers. Psalmody (a formal method of singing that replaced the traditional “joyful noise”) and musical instruments, dancing, pantomimes (somewhat odd in placement), and professional disciplines feature in the five chapters of this section. Parts two and three are chronologically a unit, one following the other in developing the same elements over time.

Section four discusses the flowering of popular culture from the American Revolution through the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Waxwork museums, painters, portraitists and physiotracers precede automatons and penmanship schools as areas that thrived during the early national period. As clarification for those whose memories do not reach back to the heyday of the physiotracer, the concept was a mechanical device that would trace the outline of a stationary person and translate the lines onto a smaller surface suitable for creating a profile or cameo. It was a lower-cost alternative to sitting for a portrait, something initially reserved for the wealthier populace.

After an exhaustive review of life in general and popular culture in particular during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Benes comes at last to the end of his story, the fading or transformation of the itinerants' wares and the conclusion of the work. First the carnival begins to fade as itinerancy adjusts to a growing and more sophisticated population: the touring itinerants either disappear or put down roots in larger and financially more stable communities, and novelties become staples of American culture. After all that, as a finish to the volume, Benes summarizes the legacy of the itinerant phenomenon.

Throughout Benes deals with the influence of English and European itinerants in America. Although a handful of specialties were dominated by Americans, much of the carnival activity and technically advanced performance came belatedly from overseas. Punch and Judy entered the American itinerant circuits after it had begun to fade in England and Europe, and the same circumstance prevailed for magic lantern shows and plays, commonly arriving in the colonies decades or longer after their heyday across the Atlantic. In addition, different nationalities dominated even a given specialty among the European itinerants. The French dancing master, whether actually French or an Englishman posing as such, was preferred to the native. And there was the family influence as well, with several generations of an Italian or even American family holding dominance in a given field.

Benes is director of the Historical Deerfield-affiliated Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife and author of the award-winning *Meetinghouses of Early New England* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2012), so his qualifications are indisputable. Perhaps his strongest and most durable contribution to the area is not the text and illustrations, no matter how thorough and compelling, but rather the introductory discussion of the literature, especially the gaps that Benes has identified and seeks to fill. He deals with the nature of popular culture, theories of transmission from one culture to another, and other matters of interest to scholars. Even in this section, where some authors succumb to the temptation to show off their erudition to the point of baffling the reader through obscurantism, Benes maintains a comfortably accessible prose style that should lead even the casual reader into a deeper understanding of New England popular culture's unanswered questions, something that might otherwise be lost in the massive amount of material that might delude the unwary reader into believing that everything is resolved for good and all.

In sum, *For a Short Time Only* is not the sort of work that one would take to the beach for casual summer reading. It is, however, not a book doomed to gather dust on a high shelf in the dark recesses of the local university library. Readability, illustrations, and a profusion of examples keep the book by the easy chair for those times when the television remote cannot provide access to other than mediocre fare.

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***Tyrannicide: Forging an American Law of Slavery in Revolutionary South Carolina and Massachusetts.* By Emily Blanck. Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 2014. 240 pages. \$49.95 (hardcover).**

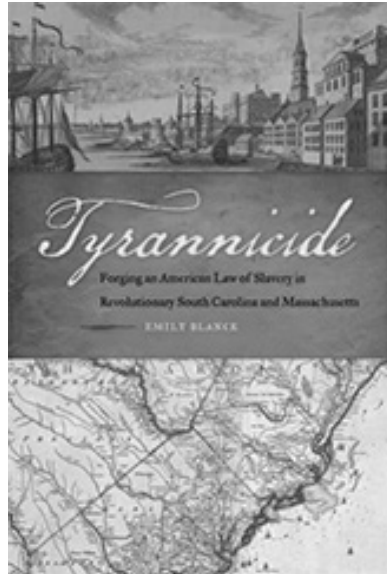
By 1860, the states of South Carolina and Massachusetts had come to represent the opposing sides of a looming civil war. South Carolina was the avatar of secession and embodied the pro-slavery ideology of its most famous native son, John C. Calhoun; in contrast, Massachusetts, represented in the United States Senate by prominent abolitionists Charles Sumner and Henry Wilson, was home to William Lloyd Garrison's fiercely abolitionist *Liberator* and, it would soon be revealed, four of the Secret Six's members, the group recently implicated in financing John Brown's Harper's Ferry raid. Contemporaries believed that no two states offered starker contrasts

in governance, politics, economies, or zeitgeists. Soon enough the children of both states, white and black, would fill the ranks of armies engaged in historic slaughter.

But as Emily Blanck reminds us in *Tyrannicide*, Massachusetts and South Carolina were not always so far apart. Slavery's roots ran deep into each colony's earliest settlements. Massachusetts's own "peculiar institution" began with the enslavement of Native Americans who were captured during Puritan wars of expansion. Bay State merchants were quick to spot an opportunity. By the mid-seventeenth century, they were trading enslaved New England Indians for enslaved Africans from parts south.

Thus, in 1639, did the first African slaves arrive in Massachusetts Bay Colony, and by 1641 the Great and General Court had enacted North America's first slave code (12). Meanwhile, in South Carolina after Anglo-Barbadians (whose island economy already included plantation slavery) had established the first permanent settlements in the late 1660s, war against Native tribes commenced almost immediately. As in Massachusetts, white Carolinians enslaved Native Americans while inter-tribal conflicts produced more human property as warring bands exchanged captives for English goods (19). While Native slavery ended after 1715, enslaved Africans were brought to work the plantations multiplying in South Carolina's fertile Low Country. In 1690, the colony's first slave code was enacted, modeled on its Barbadian counterpart (21).

In a book best understood in three parts, Blanck first summarizes slavery's history in each colony from early settlement through the American Revolution. She probes how and why, by the Revolution's end, Massachusetts verged on abolishing slavery while South Carolina moved in the opposite direction. She touches, perhaps too briefly, on the dissimilarities between each colony's agriculture, domestic slavery, and demographic disparities; unlike Massachusetts, whose population included a miniscule percentage of free blacks and slaves, South Carolina had more blacks than whites throughout most of the eighteenth century, thus heightening the latter's anxieties in



trying to control this enslaved population. These factors, while indispensable to her story, are also familiar to historians.

Blanck's account freshens considerably as she explores other dissimilarities not often mentioned in earlier histories: the cultural factors unique to each colony that produced different conceptions of slaves and slavery. Massachusetts's slaves had a degree of legal autonomy unthinkable in South Carolina. Bay State slaves could enter into contracts and bring suits; indeed, it was the latter that would prove decisive in Massachusetts's abolition of slavery. In explaining differences between the two colonies, Blanck offers a crucial insight: Puritan scriptural literalism produced a version of slavery patterned after the system of slavery described in the Hebrew Bible, which shared features of chattel slavery but also conferred on slaves certain rights (12-13). As Massachusetts's African Americans later shouldered muskets in the fight for independence, they also listened carefully as whites invoked the antipodal rhetoric of slavery-freedom to characterize relations between Britain and America. Blanck tells the story of how black Bay Staters employed the same rhetoric to agitate in courtrooms and the public square for their own freedom.

Tyrannicide's second section relates an important although now largely forgotten event: the *Tyrannicide* affair, the tale of an unnamed British privateer that had raided South Carolina's Waccamaw Peninsula and seized thirty-four black slaves. This privateer was soon captured by the Spanish ship *Victoria*, which in turn was taken by a British privateer, the *Byron*. As the *Byron* sailed for British-occupied New York, it was seized by the Massachusetts's brigs *Hazard* and *Tyrannicide*; thus, within sixty days, the fortunes of war had subjected thirty-four human beings to four different owners and an unknown but constantly shifting future.

Blanck develops her third theme with the *Tyrannicide's* return to Boston in June, 1779. Foreshadowing the fugitive slave cases of later generations, the captives' arrival confronted Massachusetts's authorities with a question: were these Afro-Carolinians mere cargo, to be sold off as captured booty, or were they autonomous persons with legal rights? Blanck notes that by this time "slavery [in Massachusetts] was dying" (98), partly reflecting the Revolution's influence on attitudes about slavery's morality. Massachusetts's authorities did not recognize the Waccamaw captives as booty but instead gave them the choice of remaining in Massachusetts or returning to South Carolina and bondage. Because Blanck's tale is about individual human beings as well as laws and institutions, endings are contingent and sometimes unexpected; but of greater importance to readers is the background against which unfold the

choices of white judges, lawyers, legislators, politicians, and free and enslaved blacks.

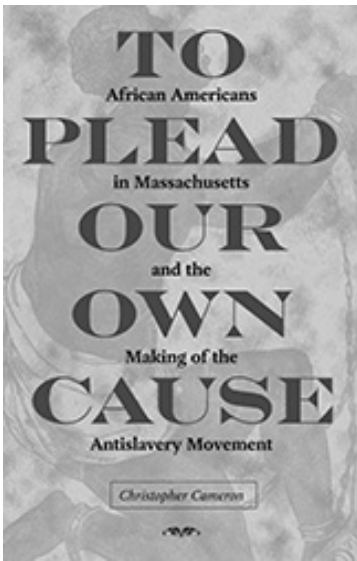
Tyrannicide narrates the fascinating story of how the decisions of these men and women played out in an era when Massachusetts was writing a new state constitution (1780) and finally (in 1783) abolishing slavery altogether; eventually, the fate of some of the Waccamaw slaves became a matter of contention between the governors of South Carolina and Massachusetts, whose letters eerily foreshadow later arguments about state rights and slavery, in which are also heard threats of disunion, charges of northern domination, and even accusations (which would become louder in the ensuing decades) that Massachusetts was attempting to impose a moral “puritanism” on the South. Meanwhile, Massachusetts sidestepped Carolinian appeals (132) to the fugitive slave clause of the failing Articles of Confederation. And it is here that Blanck considers the *Tyrannicide*’s real significance: the impact that the Waccamaw slaves might have had on the new Constitution, the writing of which would commence in 1787.

Here Blanck confronts the chief limitation of her study—the absence of direct evidence connecting the *Tyrannicide* episode to the Constitutional Convention’s debates over the fugitive slave clause, embodied in Article IV, Section 2. However, as Blanck argues, the fugitive slave clause “reflects the insights and the experiences of Massachusetts and South Carolina with slavery before 1787” (147), and it is no great inferential leap to assume that the *Tyrannicide* was part of that experience; thus, *Tyrannicide* is not just the study of a fascinating episode, it is important as a work of historical context. Blanck has written a handy primer on colonial slavery in two important states and goes further still, connecting the roots of American slavery with the poisonous fruit that, cultivated by the Constitution, finally dropped from the tree with South Carolina’s December 1860 secession. Readers familiar with the four years that followed understand just how toxic that fruit had become.

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***To Plead Our Own Cause: African Americans in Massachusetts and the Making of the Anti-Slavery Movement.* By Christopher Cameron. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2014. 172 pages. \$45.00 (hardcover).**

In this book, Christopher Cameron attempts to uncover the significant role played by African Americans in the Massachusetts area in the anti-slavery movement. Cameron argues that organized abolitionist activity in America started in the Massachusetts area and preceded the 1831 movement. In other words, the works of abolitionist activists in the Bay area laid the foundation for anti-slavery activity in the post-1831 era in America.



According to Cameron, certain factors made the Massachusetts area conducive for abolitionist activities. These include: first, the small (less than 5%) slave population and the lack of major slave rebellions, which created the room for slaves to enjoy some liberties; second, the particular form of Christian ideology in the Bay state known as “Puritanism,” which encouraged the conversion of slaves and adhered to an Old Testament belief that slaves should have specified rights, such as the right to petition their master and government and bring cases to court; third, the role of Massachusetts in the politics of the Revolutionary era, which provided ample opportunity for African Americans to draw from the political

arguments of colonialists fighting for freedom from British rule, to argue for their own freedom from slavery. Cameron argues that the ideological root of the abolitionist struggle in the Massachusetts area was rooted in the Puritan teachings of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, which expressly states that slaves “shall have all the liberties and Christian usages which the law of God established in Israel.” In other words, slaves were human beings before the law and not mere property and must enjoy liberties, which included freedom from arbitrary punishment.

Therefore, utilizing this liberal religious atmosphere prevalent in the Massachusetts area, African Americans began organizing abolitionist activities, starting around 1773. They employed such tactics and strategies as religious rhetoric, petitioning, writing and publishing essays, newsletters, and poems, instituting court cases and creating abolitionist institutions such

as the African Masonic Lodges to press home their demand for freedom. Cameron successfully establishes a connection between Puritanism, the institution of slavery, and the rise of the abolitionist movement.

The issue of Black emigration in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries also receives some considerable attention from Cameron. In an effort to end slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, several African American leaders and white abolitionists had proposed a “return to Africa” emigration program. However, the effort was aborted, especially after the Africans realized that part of the plan of some of the slaveholders was to still retain them as bondmen in the colonies of Haiti and Sierra Leone. In spite of this failed effort, Cameron argued that emigration “served the practical purpose of connecting black leaders across the North and providing the cooperation between white and black abolitionists throughout the Atlantic World” (3).

Cameron’s book provides greater insight into the role and place of Massachusetts in the abolitionist struggle and the global anti-slavery movement. It also provides a vivid connection between the Puritan reformed theology, slavery as an institution and the abolitionist movement, and sheds more light on why emigration (back to Africa policy) failed. In *To Plead Our Own Cause*, Cameron has greatly enriched our knowledge and understanding of both Massachusetts history and the history of America in general.

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***Horace Holley: Transylvania University and the Making of Liberal Education in the Early American Republic.* By James P. Cousins. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2016. 308 pages. \$50.00 (paperback).**

Today, Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky, is a small liberal arts college of about a thousand students. But in the 1810s and 1820s, it was one of America’s largest universities, located in a western city that held ambitions of rivaling Boston, New York, and other East Coast cities as a center for learning and culture. Horace Holley, a transplanted New Englander, was largely responsible for Transylvania’s post-War of 1812 efflorescence. Historian James P. Cousins has crafted a meticulously researched and clearly written biography of Holley that does a fine job of illustrating his impact on nineteenth-century American higher education.

Horace Holley was born in Salisbury, Connecticut, in 1781, to Sarah and Luther Holley, a successful merchant. Horace attended Williams College

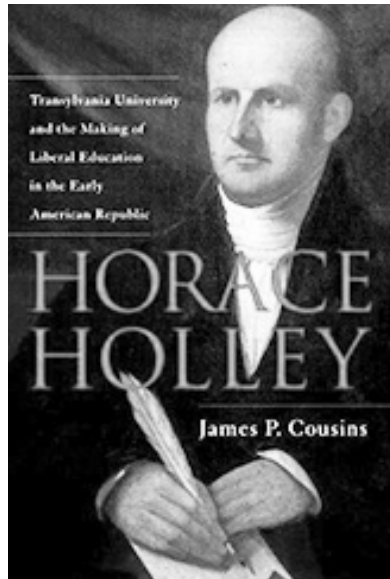
before transferring to Yale College in 1799. In New Haven, Holley's mentor was the influential Calvinist preacher and collegian Timothy Dwight. After graduation, Holley studied law in New York, but he soon gave up that ambition and chose to prepare for the ministry instead. His first congregation was in Fairfield, Connecticut, from 1804 to 1808. In 1805 Holley married Mary Austin, a cousin of future Texas empresario Stephen F. Austin. By 1808, the growing Holley family relocated to Boston, where Horace served as minister of the Hollis Street Church from 1809 to 1818. Initially, Holley followed in Dwight's footsteps as a strict Calvinist, but over time he adjusted his theology to his urbane Boston congregation by embracing Unitarianism.

Although the family enjoyed Boston, Horace Holley was ambitious. By the mid-1810s, Transylvania began trying to entice the Yale-trained clergyman to move west and assume its presidency. In February 1818, Holley embarked on a "tour of inquiry" (81), heading to Lexington by way of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati. Along the way, he observed the state of higher education at Columbia, Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania, and other institutions. In the nation's capital, he met Henry Clay, a Transylvania trustee. Holley frequently wrote letters home, thus documenting a sojourn that echoed the travels of other nineteenth-century scholars and university leaders. Although Mary Holley was less than enthusiastic about the prospect of relocating to Kentucky—and implored her husband not to take the position—Holley could hardly say no. He was inaugurated as Transylvania's president in 1818.

Horace Holley worked to enhance Transylvania's profile, especially through its medical and legal departments. He engaged Charles Caldwell, an antagonist of famed Philadelphia physician Benjamin Rush, to lead the medical school. Holley was less successful in keeping the law school staffed, so he frequently delivered legal instruction himself. In an era when college presidents were teachers more than administrators, Holley offered courses in moral philosophy for senior-level students. The university was also a center for scientific discovery. Perhaps the most fascinating and cosmopolitan character associated with Transylvania was the eccentric Romanian scientist Constantine Rafinesque, who frequently disappeared for weeks or months at a time as he explored the western wilds, seeking new species to categorize.

Holley built Transylvania into an institution of national repute. Although many students were from Kentucky, the university was known for attracting pupils from all over America, especially other southern and western states. But trouble was looming by the early 1820s. Holley was known for entertaining, and he frequently hosted parties that cost too much money and attracted negative press. He apparently had a tendency to admire women's physical

attributes, and unproven accusations of marital infidelity arose. Perhaps even worse, Holley found himself stuck in the middle of theological and political disputes. His Calvinist-turned-Unitarian theology did not fit well in Great Awakening-era Kentucky, and his New England Federalist leanings made enemies in a time and place where Federalism was dead and Jacksonian-style democracy was emerging. Holley believed education should be reserved for the wealthy and well-born, an idea that was decidedly unpopular on the frontier. Yet Holley was not entirely immune to local custom: he purchased his first slave in 1825 and stated that henceforth he “intend[ed] to own all [his] servants” (189).



By December 1825 Holley submitted his resignation, although he continued on as president for another year. There were persistent rumors that Holley would return to Boston for another pastorate, but by this time he had made his name in western higher education and there was no turning back. Holley moved to New Orleans with the intent of leading educational trips to Europe or perhaps reviving a defunct college in that city. But not long after arriving in Louisiana, he contracted yellow fever. The Holley family chose to travel to Boston, hoping that “fresh sea breezes” and “time among old friends . . . could restore him to full health” (207). But it was for naught; Horace Holley died on July 31, 1827, and was buried at sea near Florida.

This is a strong book based on very thorough research. Cousins has mined archival sources at the Massachusetts and Connecticut Historical Societies, as well as Williams College, the University of Louisville, and Transylvania University. The author seems to have left no stone unturned. The result is a pleasure to read, and it illustrates an important chapter in the history of America’s western migration: the transplanting of New England-style education to the frontier. Indeed, Cousins notes that Holley’s work at Transylvania influenced the development of several other western universities, including Miami University of Ohio and Thomas Jefferson’s University of Virginia. Admittedly, readers who are not specialists in early-nineteenth-century frontier politics and spirituality may need stronger contextualization

of the aforementioned disputes in 1820s Kentucky. Nevertheless, this is a strong book that will be especially useful for historians of antebellum higher education. Although the book's major focus is Holley's time in Kentucky, scholars interested in the colleges and religion of New England—and their influence on the early American west—will also find this a valuable study.

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***Nathaniel Bowditch and the Power of Numbers: How a Nineteenth-Century Man of Business, Science, and the Sea Changed American Life.* By Tamara Plakins Thornton. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016. 416 pages. \$35.00 (hardcover).**

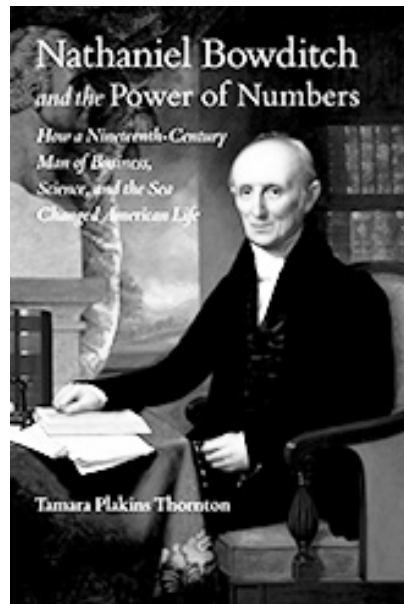
During his life, Nathaniel Bowditch needed no introduction. “From the dawn of the nineteenth century to his death in 1838,” Tamara Plakins Thornton comments, “he was America’s foremost astronomer and mathematician” (1). His *New American Practical Navigator* became an indispensable guide for commercial and naval vessels and won him enduring fame. In this impressive biography, Thornton discusses Bowditch’s scientific endeavors as well as the often-overlooked impact he had on practical affairs.

Bowditch was born in Salem, Massachusetts. He worked with his father as a cooper for several years and then became an apprentice clerk in a ship chandlery. This might not seem an appropriate apprenticeship “for a boy destined to become one of the early republic’s outstanding mathematicians” (21). However, he had few alternatives. An education at Harvard would not have provided advanced mathematical training because Harvard’s curriculum focused on classics. Therefore, he continued to study numbers as he voyaged throughout the world to transact business. Bowditch’s success during these commercial enterprises made him part of “Salem’s solidly prosperous and socially prominent citizens” (53). He worshipped in a Unitarian meetinghouse and belonged to the Federalist Party, but his first allegiance was to the Republic of Letters. He corresponded with European mathematicians, kept abreast of their work, and began translating and annotating Pierre-Simon Laplace’s *Traité de Mécanique Céleste*, “the Newtonian era’s magisterial synthesis of the workings of the solar system” (2).

While he sailed the seas, Bowditch spent a significant amount of time working on what would become the *New American Practical Navigator*. This volume “made it possible for any man with enough ambition and three

dollars in his pocket to track the open ocean” (57). Interestingly, this was not the first such manual. In fact, his was a revised and expanded version of John Hamilton Moore’s *New Practical Navigator*. Bowditch found and corrected innumerable errors in the Englishman’s volume. Although his manual was not original, it possessed great authority because of the power of his numbers and accurate calculations. After his voyages, he became president of the Essex Fire and Marine Insurance Company in Salem. Bowditch favored blank forms, which were rarely used in business, because they “systematized the gathering of information and standardized the information collected, depersonalizing the entire process” (93). In sum, he began designing standardized and impersonal systems.

Throughout the book, Thornton argues that Bowditch had an important impact on practical affairs: “When he brought his mathematician’s sensibility to America’s business, academic, and cultural institutions, he transformed the world of practical affairs. Insistent on order and exactitude, he instituted new systems to organize information and manage office work. Stirred by the unerring regularity of the physical universe, he put forward a vision of the corporation as a clockwork mechanism” (1). In other words, Bowditch designed corporations that would function like Laplace’s universe. In the 1820s, he moved to Boston to run the Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance



Company and “led Bostonians into a new kind of capitalist institution, one that folded an impersonal bureaucracy into an enterprise dedicated to serving the interests of a self-consciously interconnected community” (162). He regularized business documents, took particular care organizing them, enforced a strict bookkeeping regimen, and demanded prompt payment from the western Massachusetts farmers who received mortgage loans from the Company. Bowditch did not, it should be noted, insist on prompt payment because of concern for the company’s bottom line. Rather, he wanted the company to function as did the universe: governed by inflexible laws. Bowditch made sure elite Bostonians understood they too were subject to the rules he developed. This, Thornton observes, was “a new model of business

operations: all matters should adhere to fixed rules, regardless of the persons involved” (181).

In addition to the Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance Company, Bowditch attempted to remake other institutions. He organized the Boston Athenaeum’s library and spent tens of thousands of dollars expanding its holdings. In 1826, he became a member of the Harvard Corporation, the powerful seven-member board that governed the institution. Bowditch and his allies objected to the failure to run Harvard in a businesslike manner, forced the resignation of the treasurer and the president, and put the university’s financial affairs in order. The Boston elite did not like this manifestation of his attitudes about corporations because his “insistence on keeping tidy books and following corporate bylaws to the letter seemed to belong more to the world of maximizing profits than grooming young gentlemen” (210). After becoming president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he organized the library and expanded the academy’s range of activities. Although they were not always pleased with the ways he went about his work, “elite Bostonians needed Bowditch’s take-no-prisoners approach to putting affairs in order” because “a more ‘delicate’ man might have been less effective” (216). In the end, Thornton observes, “it is precisely where Bowditch is least remembered—as a man of science and of practical affairs—that he exerted the most transformative and enduring influence on American life” (243).

This is a well-written and thoroughly-researched biography of a man who deserves to be ranked among the people who transformed the U.S. Thornton might have spent a bit more time analyzing politics during Bowditch’s Boston years. As stated above, she notes that Bowditch considered himself a Federalist. However, during the Era of Good Feelings, he began cooperating “with a new bipartisan coalition of movers and shakers, for the old divisions no longer correlated to the economic realities of postwar New England” (136). How did Bowditch fit into the Second Party System? The reader gets a hint when Jacksonian farmers growl about Bowditch’s “death office,” but little from Bowditch himself. Did the Republic of Letters still trump politics for the mathematician? Interestingly, Edward Everett, one of his friends, was both a proud member of the Republic of Letters and a fervent Whig. At a time when politics seemed to enter into everything and played an important role in people’s lives and identities, Bowditch’s curious lack of attention to politics merits additional analysis. However, this is a small quibble. This volume would work well in upper-division undergraduate classes and graduate seminars on the Early Republic, the history of science,

and the history of capitalism. Scholars will find much in this text to engage their interest.

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***John Quincy Adams: Militant Spirit.* By James Traub. New York: Basic Books, 2016. 620 pages. \$35.00 (hardcover).**

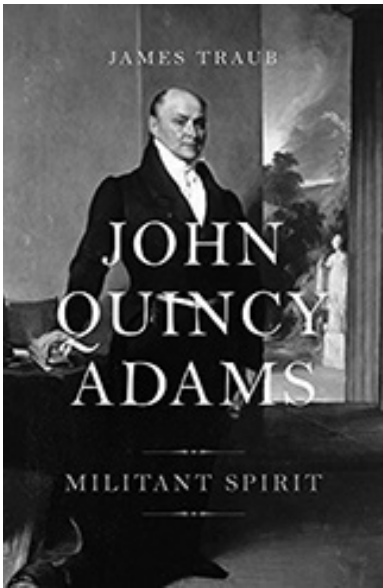
The presidency of John Quincy Adams is largely forgotten and overlooked, ranked as a one-term caretaker administration with few accomplishments and little to remember. Because of this, the man himself is largely disregarded, remembered only as the son of another one term president, and placed in a class with Millard Fillmore and Franklin Pierce. This is a terrible historical shame, since John Quincy Adams lived a fabulously interesting and influential life. Fortunately, this fascinating book helps to resurrect his reputation to the high place that it deserves in the history of our nation.

The accomplishments and influence of Adams began when he was a mere boy acting as an assistant to his father on his diplomatic journeys to France and the Netherlands. They ended dramatically on the floor of the House, where he argued passionately (the only way he knew how) for what he believed. His list of diplomatic achievements places him in the ranks of the most powerful and influential diplomats in history, on a par with Bismark and Tallyrand, though he was not quite as ruthless as either man.

No less a person than George Washington considered Adams the most valuable diplomat in America. He appointed him to be minister to the Netherlands, then to Portugal, and recommended that his father appoint him as minister to Prussia, which of course he did.

On his return from Europe, Adams was elected as a Senator from Massachusetts, where he cemented his reputation for independence and cantankerousness by supporting some of the policies of President Jefferson over the objections of his own Federalist party. The party moved to replace him; he resigned early and switched parties to become a Republican.

President James Madison appointed him the first ever U.S. envoy to Russia, where he served with distinction, and from where he declined a post on the Supreme Court. Subsequently he was appointed as chief negotiator for the Treaty of Ghent which ended the War of 1812. From there it was only natural that he stay on as Minister to the Court of St. James.



All of this activity was mere prelude to Adams' stint as arguably the greatest Secretary of State in our history, under President James Monroe. His hard bargaining with a weakened Spain gained Florida for the U.S. at a bargain price. His deft diplomacy with Britain helped solve the Oregon border dispute without a war, which was a very real possibility. And his advocacy and creation of the Monroe Doctrine (which by rights should be called the Adams doctrine, much as the Marshall Plan is not called the Truman Plan) vaulted him into the ranks of our most influential statesmen. Monroe often appears vacillating and irresolute, deferring to Adams's judgment for many foreign policy decisions, which in itself is

a mark of Monroe's greatness. He had the self-confidence and intelligence to hire someone with more knowledge and experience than himself, and to take his advice and guidance where appropriate.

The presidency of John Quincy Adams was ill-fated from the start. A five-way race did not produce the required electoral-college majority for any one candidate, throwing the election into the House of Representatives. Henry Clay cast his considerable support to Adams, tipping the election to him and leaving a dangerous opponent furious. Andrew Jackson had won pluralities in the popular and electoral votes, and he fully expected to become president. When Adams subsequently appointed Clay Secretary of State, Jackson and his supporters raised a cry of "corrupt bargain," which they literally maintained for the four years of Adams's presidency. The opposition did everything in its power to successfully obstruct almost every measure that Adams advocated throughout his entire presidency, regardless of the merits, showing us that history does repeat itself, as with President Barack Obama.

In many ways Adams' own personality contributed to his ineffectiveness as president. His obstinacy, inability to compromise, and downright cussedness (all qualities he inherited from his father) contributed to his ineptitude as chief executive. Often our strengths, when carried too far, become our weaknesses, and John Quincy Adams is a textbook example of that principle. The qualities which helped to make him a superior diplomat and later a

renowned Representative helped to doom him to a one-term presidency with few accomplishments.

Defeated for a second term by Jackson, he declined to attend his inaugural (just as his father had avoided Jefferson's). Refusing to retire, he embarked on a new phase of a career already packed with more excitement and achievement than many mortals will ever know. His election to the House of Representatives for Massachusetts started him on a crusade against slavery and in particular against the "gag rule" which prevented petitions against slavery from being presented in the House. It is here where his personality traits served him in good stead in the vicious interplay regarding the "peculiar institution". His perseverance rarely was able to defeat the entrenched power of the Southern block, which was buttressed by the Three-Fifths Rule. However, his advocacy was a constant irritant to the slavocracy, and a continual reminder of the immorality of their cause.

While in the House, he represented the slaves in the celebrated Amistad case before the Supreme Court, winning their freedom. As mentioned before, Adams was stricken by a massive cerebral hemorrhage on the house floor while arguing against honoring the Mexican-American War, another cause which he opposed. He died two days later.

Adams was a man of strong convictions and contradictions. He imposed the same high standards on his family that he imposed on himself, a burden that crushed the weaker members (two sons were alcoholics who died young, his wife was perpetually unhappy) and propelled the stronger son to a life of achievement and purpose. His legacy lives on through his many achievements, even if they are largely forgotten by the average nonhistorian. This book does an excellent job of recounting these achievements in a very readable and fascinating manner, and hopefully will help to redress the relative obscurity that Adams has endured. Who knows, maybe a TV mini-series based on his life? (again, just like his father).

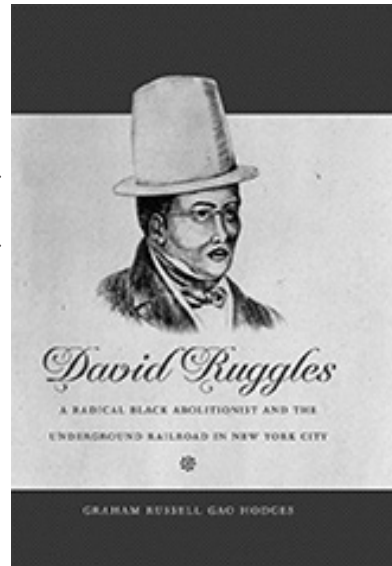
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***David Ruggles: A Radical Black Abolitionist and the Underground Railroad in New York City.* By Graham Russell Gao Hodges. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010. 280 pages. \$30.00 (paperback).**

Graham Russell Gao Hodges provides in this book a much needed and timely biography of the antebellum abolitionist David Ruggles (1810-1849). Chronicling the life and work of Ruggles, Hodges argues the New York abolitionist was a vital member of New England's larger anti-slavery movement, bridging the circles of its upper class abolitionist organizations, the more radical groups who took part in street demonstrations and direct actions, and Northern society's larger African American literate society. Hodges argues that as a writer, activist, and public speaker, Ruggles provided an important link between the more visible and public abolitionist movement, and the more radical and directly involved militants of the Underground Railroad: "Ruggles was a tireless, fiery, pioneering journalist, penning hundreds of letters to abolitionist newspapers, authoring and publishing five pamphlets, and editing the first African magazine, the *Mirror of Liberty*," Hodges writes. "He opened the first black bookstore and reading room in New York City and published his own pamphlet in 1834, the first time a black New Yorker had his own imprint . . . Ruggles built upon these firsts with a burst of anti-slavery activism that captured the enthusiasm of his peers . . . Ruggles operated at a time when his words sparked anger and dangerous reactions in a society still devoted to slavery" (3).

Hodges also contends that Ruggles had a profound impact on other key African American abolitionists of the era, including such historic figures as Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglass. Writing years later in his autobiography, Douglass discussed how Ruggles was one of the first free African Americans he met once he manumitted himself from the South. "In his 1845 autobiography, Douglass recalled Ruggles's 'vigilance, kindness, and perseverance,'" Hodges explains. "[Douglass] had learned that Ruggles was a man of action as well as words and feeling. During the days that Ruggles sheltered Douglass, Ruggles was beaten and thrown into jail for his part in... a highly complex slave rescue. Upon his release, Ruggles quickly resumed his antislavery activism...Ruggles was the kind of black man that Douglass wanted to emulate" (2). Hodges maintains it was witnessing this commitment to direct action, as well as writing and public activities, that did much to inform Douglass as he began contemplating his own role in the anti-slavery movement.

Likewise, Ruggles met Sojourner Truth (then still known as Isabella Van Wagenen) in the early 1830s when both were living in New York City. Truth's continuing health problems gave them another reason to have met outside of politics, however, because besides writing about and promoting the cause of abolitionism, Ruggles was also active in the field of medical treatments. Hodges argues that Ruggles saved Sojourner Truth from several major ailments when she underwent a version of hydrotherapy that he promoted: "When she entered Ruggles's clinic in 1845, Truth, who was already gaining a major reputation as an orator," Hodges writes, "was seriously ill and close to becoming an invalid. Ruggles



treated her for stomach and bowel problems, swollen and abscessed legs, and joint and muscle ailments. Truth was initially skeptical of the water cure and dismissed it as humbug. Gradually, Ruggles's treatments cured her first of dyspepsia. Constant wet-sheet packing and cold baths slowly provided relief from her leg problems" (178). This intervention of Ruggles, both for Truth's health and Douglass's liberation, demonstrates the central argument of Hodges that Ruggles was a vital figure in New England's broader anti-slavery movement.

Yet, far from being just a figure who assisted currently well-known African American abolitionist figures, Hodges argues that Ruggles's own actions and writings did much to further the cause of ending slavery in the United States. One can see this by Ruggles's direct involvement in incidents to forcibly stop the slave trade. Hodges writes how in 1836 Ruggles interfered with the Portuguese slave ship *Brillante* captained by I.C.A. de Souza. Convincing a number of different newspapers to publish that de Souza was holding recently captured African slaves in his ship, Ruggles proceeded to build outrage over the slave ship's presence.

"Ruggles had de Souza arrested," Hodges explains, "and the slaves were taken into custody. On Friday, December 16, the case came before the U.S. District Court . . . Eventually, de Souza was discharged, but the slaves remained in jail. Ruggles demanded their release but was rebuffed . . . Ruggles was not allowed to testify in the case. Eventually, the police escorted

the slaves to the ship to prepare for departure” (97). The event was far from over, however. Angered by the information Ruggles was providing about the ship and the court case, several of New York’s African Americans made a desperate attempt to free the enslaved people: “As the New York newspapers reported the incident, on December 24, ‘a gang of negroes, some of who were armed,’ went aboard the ship, assaulted the crew, and took away ‘two of the five slaves who were in the crew’” (97). What ensued was a series of fights where a handful of New York’s anti-slavery militants battled it out with the crew to try and liberate the slaves aboard. Ruggles denied knowledge or participation in the action, but applauded it and said it was part of a broader effort at self-defense.

Ruggles would eventually be arrested, and attempts followed to have him sold into slavery, yet he used the case to get press for the anti-slavery movement, and specifically the militant group he was a member of, the Committee of Vigilance: a biracial radical group that directly aided and abetted escaping slaves. Such militant actions, combined with Ruggles’s work as a writer and intellectual, lead Hodges to argue that he should be viewed in the early tradition of the radical black intellectual, communicating to upper society via print culture the ideas of human liberation, while also taking part in the direct actions to make that ideal a reality. A frequent critic throughout his life of the American Colonization Society, and their efforts to remove African Americans back to Africa, Ruggles provided an early example of how blacks took their liberation into their own hands, arguing for a specific conception of human dignity while thwarting attempts of some reformers, often white, to negotiate the level of humanity African Americans were to have in society.

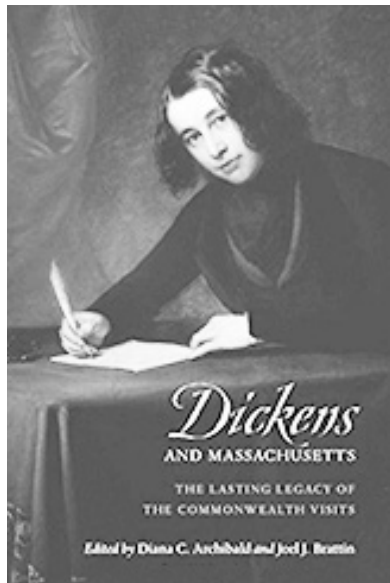
As Hodges argues: “Ruggles played a major role in creating a connection between abolitionism and the Underground Railroad, a link historians have overlooked . . . the loose connections with the abolitionist movement have given historians pause about crediting the Underground Railroad with much importance. Ruggles’s life, however, not only illuminates his lifelong commitment to helping enslaved freedom seekers but also broadens our understanding of what William M. Mitchell, the first historian of the Underground Railroad, called the abolition community” (4-5). Well researched and written, Hodges’s new book is an important addition to the field of early American history and African American Studies. Relying on the biography of one individual, Hodges creates a broader understanding of how various circles of the abolitionist movement worked together in a common

cause in the first few decades of the nineteenth century to achieve universal emancipation for the country's African American population.

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***Dickens and Massachusetts: The Lasting Legacy of the Commonwealth Visits.* By Diane C. Archibald and Joel J. Brattin. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015. 224 pages. \$28.95 (paperback).**

English author Charles Dickens (1812-1870) traveled to North America twice: from January-June 1842; and then 25 years later, from November 1867-April 1868. During both trips, he toured specific sites and met key people, especially in Massachusetts. These journeys supplied Dickens with a unique set of opportunities. He witnessed life here both before and after the Civil War, for worse and for better. Because he was judgmental of his overall experience in his travel narrative, *American Notes for General Circulation* (1842), Dickens' interactions have been underestimated or even dismissed by past biographers and critics, yet he wove salient tidbits from his visits into pieces of his writing from 1842



forward. Some Bay State residents even remained friends and correspondents with him for life. The bottom line is that Massachusetts mattered to “Boz.” Hence the need for this crucial volume, which grew from the exhibition, “Dickens and Massachusetts: a Tale of Power and Transformation,” held at the Lowell National Historical Park in 2012.

The book consists of two parts. First comes the complete narrative from the exhibition, as written by Diana C. Archibald and Joel J. Brattin. Included are black-and-white reproductions of the 65 accompanying illustrations: portraits, memorabilia, newspaper announcements, correspondence, and other items, all related to Dickens' visits to Massachusetts. These are followed by seven independent essays that provide fresh interpretations of relevant stories, including Dickens' relationship with American poet and

educator Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, as well as close details about his visits to Springfield, Massachusetts, and his views on slavery. His American experiences are also compared and contrasted with those of fellow traveler and documentarian Harriet Martineau, who looked upon some of the same sights and interpreted them with different eyes. Each chapter lends another level of context to the history.

The 1842 trip was a fact-finding mission for the twenty-nine-year-old accomplished author. Dickens had five books under his belt, including *The Pickwick Papers* and *The Adventures of Oliver Twist*. Now he intended to write a traditional travel narrative based upon his adventures, and he expected to come away with a favorable view of the country. He arrived in Boston to a celebrity's welcome.

Over the course of a few weeks, he met such influential men as publisher James T. Fields, Unitarian minister William Ellery Channing, and future Harvard president Cornelius Conway Felton. At the Perkins School for the Blind, he met Laura Bridgeman, the deaf and blind student who became literate through the work of the school's skilled teachers. He sat for a portrait by artist Frances Alexander and for a sculptured bust by Henry Dexter. He had his skull examined by a phrenologist in Worcester. He toured the textile mills at Lowell and met some of the girls who worked in them. The cleanliness of the factories and the intelligence of their workers so impressed him that he claimed the day was "the happiest he had passed" since he had stepped on American soil. Dickens also found – even while spending his 30th birthday on this side of the pond – that he was the continual target of clamoring fans and reporters. Everyone wanted to see and to talk with him, even to the point of rudeness. He grew to consider these acts to be intrusions upon his personal time and space.

His tour led him as far south as Richmond, Virginia. The quick change in the country's atmosphere and the slavery seen across the Mason-Dixon line dismayed him. On March 22, he famously wrote to friend William Macready from Baltimore, "I am disappointed. This is not the Republic I came to see. This is not the Republic of my imagination" (2). He would eventually campaign against slavery in *American Notes*, which earned him negative reviews of the book in the press. Even two years later, the memory of the differences between North and South remained vivid for him. When Dickens wrote to Macready on January 3, 1844, he said, "Boston is what I would have the whole United States to be" (2). His favorite people and places were in Massachusetts.

By contrast, Dickens' trip of 1867-68 was a six-month reading tour that began and ended in Boston. Now at 55, Dickens' own health was in decline;

but his manager assured him that this trip would be a financial success. He spoke in the major cities of the Northeast: from Buffalo to Philadelphia and north to Portland, Maine, reading and performing scenes from some of his newer books, including *A Christmas Carol* and *David Copperfield*. He met with some of his old friends, yet turned down other social offers, as his own condition and the severe winter weather interfered. He took time out to umpire The Great International Walking Match between American publisher James Osgood and Dickens' own British manager, George Dolby, as they raced from Boston to Newton and back. By the end of the tour in April 1868, Dickens was exhausted, but he was twenty thousand pounds richer. And once he left Boston Harbor, he would never see his Massachusetts friends again. Charles Dickens died of complications from a stroke just two years later.

By enhancing the full exhibition narration with illustrations and the themed essays, this book offers a richer approach than a typical catalogue would. Here are two very different times of American life, as well as two very different times of life for the outside observer from England. The only omissions are chronologies and maps of Dickens' two itineraries and routes. With these, the treatment would make a complete package.

Nevertheless, *Dickens and Massachusetts* serves as a vital contextual companion to *American Notes* as well as to any analysis of Dickens' post-1842 writing process. It should be found in most academic and large public libraries, regardless of location. Additionally, a virtual rendering of the 2012 Lowell exhibition and relevant resources can be found online at <http://library.uml.edu/dickens>.

Corinne H. Smith is a long-time librarian, now working at the Stevens Memorial Library in Ashburnham, Massachusetts.