

MHS Miscellany

Number 100 / Summer 2011

REMEMBERING THE CIVIL WAR

Over the course of little more than a week in April 1861, now almost exactly 150 years ago, one event after another seemed to tug the nation inevitably into war: South Carolina troops clashed with the federal forces in Fort Sumter, a newly inaugurated president declared a state of insurrection and called for a substantial increase in the country's armed forces, Southern states continued to secede from the Union, and the future commander of Confederate forces, Robert E. Lee, formally resigned from the U.S. Army. As spring and then summer unfolded, each side consolidated its political status and its military forces, and a war took hold that would convulse the land for four more years, until the spring of 1865.

The toll in lives, livelihood, and national well-being was tremendous, and its effects—positive and negative—reached far beyond the battlefields. Many consequences, revolutionary in their time, made the country that emerged fundamentally different from the one that had preceded the war: the combination of the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment put an end to slavery, and the Union itself remained whole. For many Americans—African Americans and new immigrants—it provided the first opportunity to serve their country, and Lincoln became the icon of national politics that we still invoke today. To remember this turning point in American history, commemorations will take place across the country, and Massachusetts will not be an exception.

At the Massachusetts Historical Society, we feel a particular sense of duty to create opportunities for our community to learn about the war, honor the memories of those who made sacrifices for a cause they believed in, and engage in discussions about what happened then and how these events are still with us today. Why? Because so many of the voices of that time are ensconced in archival folders in our stacks, as well as so many images of those men and women. The range of activities and initiatives will show off the diversity of Civil War materials that the MHS holds, such as letters, diaries, and other manuscript materials as well as non-manuscript materials such as maps, broadsides, pamphlets, and photo-



graphs. Also highlighted will be the spectrum of faces and voices in our collection: male and female, black and white, Northern and Southern, adult and child, and from all walks of life, including soldiers (officers and privates), nurses and physicians, laborers, politicians and political reformers, artists, and all the family members left behind by individuals who went to the front.

With such a wealth of historical materials—especially unique firsthand documentation of wartime experience—the MHS will be able to offer a range of programming and resources over the next four years. Indeed, our typically rich calendar of activities will continue, but all through it our audiences will find a pronounced Civil War emphasis: exhibitions and public events at our 1154 Boylston Street building; seminars, workshops, and other programs for specific audiences, such as researchers and teachers; highlights of related materials on the website, from facsimiles of photographs to classroom curricula; and additions to our list of both digital and traditional, print-based publications. Other important work will be going on behind the scenes, including processing and initial digitization of selected materials that will then become more easily accessed for study and research in the future.

Several of the in-house exhibitions scheduled for the next four years will feature Civil War materials. In fact, the nascent shows for this fall and the next will both contribute to commemoration activities. The first, with

the working title *The Nature of Sacrifice*, will illustrate the extraordinary level of service and loss suffered by the first families of Massachusetts during the Civil War. Carol Bundy, the author of a book by the same name and a regular visitor to our reading room, will serve as guest curator. The theme of loss on the battlefield will be emphasized by the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Ball's Bluff on October 21: that engagement inflicted the first heavy losses on Massachusetts troops, especially the 20th Massachusetts Infantry, also known as the "Harvard Regiment." A year later, an exhibition of mourning jewelry, primarily from the 18th and 19th centuries, will include a showcase of Civil War pieces. Boston-area jeweler Sarah Nehama, as guest curator, will help select examples of these poignant objects and interpret them with portraits, manuscripts, and other related materials. *Emancipation*, an exhibition planned for 2013, will be built around the Emancipation Proclamation (which went into effect on January 1, 1863) and the recruitment of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry, the first black regiment raised in the North.

Other MHS activities crafted to bring the Civil War to all of our audiences will appear throughout the annual calendar of events. Every fall and spring, a thread of Civil War author talks, conversations, brown bag lunch talks (usually focused on research in progress), and other events will work its way through the Society's slate of public presentations. Planning for the fall 2011 calendar

The Massachusetts Historical Society is an independent research library that collects, preserves, makes accessible, and communicates manuscripts and other materials that promote the study of the history of Massachusetts and the nation—a mission it has pursued since 1791.

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Masthead illustration:
"Plan & Elevation of the Tontine
Crescent, now erecting in Boston."
From the *Massachusetts Magazine*, 1794.
All images are from the MHS collections
unless otherwise credited. The MHS
occupied the Tontine Crescent from
1794 until 1833.

Front cover image: *Battle of Olustee, Fla.*
Feb. 26, 1864, chromolithograph by Wil-
liam Kurz and Alexander Allison, 1894.



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Hours:
The MHS reading room is open
to the public free of charge, 9 AM
to 4:45 PM Mondays, Tuesdays,
Wednesdays, and Fridays, 9 AM to
7:45 PM on Thursdays, and 9 AM
to 4 PM on Saturdays.

For more information:
Please call ahead or check the website
for directions, information about col-
lections, reading room policies,
holiday hours, and special events.



Sgt. Henry F. Steward. Handcolored ambrotype by unidentified photographer, 1863. From the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment photographs. Photo. 2.162.

includes a talk by Prof. Nina Silber, who has published extensively on gender and the war, including, most recently, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War*. Keep checking our fall and spring events calendars for new listings. The exhibitions described above will also entail gallery talks by the curators, and plans are underway to develop a tour of Civil War portraits at the MHS.

Embarking from the MHS will be tours visiting important sites in the city and the Commonwealth that are relevant to the war, including a walking tour of Civil War Boston. In conjunction with the Boston Harbor Islands National Park, which is developing a Civil War History series, we will cosponsor two public events at Fort Warren (Georges Island): on August 13, Christian Samito will discuss his book *Becoming American under Fire: Irish Americans, African Americans, and the Politics of Citizenship during the Civil War Era*, and on September 17, members of the MHS staff will do a tag-team lecture on Charles Francis Adams, Sr., and the Trent Affair. For 2012, we anticipate offering a weekend tour of lesser known sites in northern Virginia associated with Massachusetts regiments: Balls Bluff, Mt. Zion Church, Aldie Mill, and other locations in Loudoun and Fauquier counties.

As an integral part of this observance, the Society will hold a three-day scholarly conference in April 2013 that will bring researchers together to discuss, in-depth, Massachusetts and the Civil War. The program will afford an opportunity for presentations by a dozen or more of the scholars who have used our Civil War holdings over the years. Sessions will look at the substantial role that Massachusetts played in the developments that led to the war, life on the home front, and the consequences of the conflict for the Commonwealth. Registration for the conference will be open to all, and special efforts will be made to encourage attendance by secondary school teachers. Current plans ideas include a possible breakfast or lunch meeting addressing curriculum design or making sure conference attendees could earn PDP credits. The Education Department will announce the finalized plans as the conference date approaches.

Workshops and seminars designed for teachers will be offered throughout the four years of commemoration. This June, the MHS will work with Boston Public School teachers under a federal Teaching American History grant to offer a three-day workshop that explores changing meanings of freedom in the years prior to the Civil War. Using original documents and artifacts from our collection, workshop participants will discuss issues such as the court cases that ended slavery in Massachusetts, abolitionist activity, and the consequences for Boston of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. MHS staff will be joined by Mr. Samito, author of *Becoming American under Fire*, and Barbara Berenson, senior attorney at the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. This pilot workshop will be offered to educators from other districts throughout the four-year period of the sesquicentennial. Plans are also underway for a teacher workshop in collaboration with Boston Harbor Islands National Park.

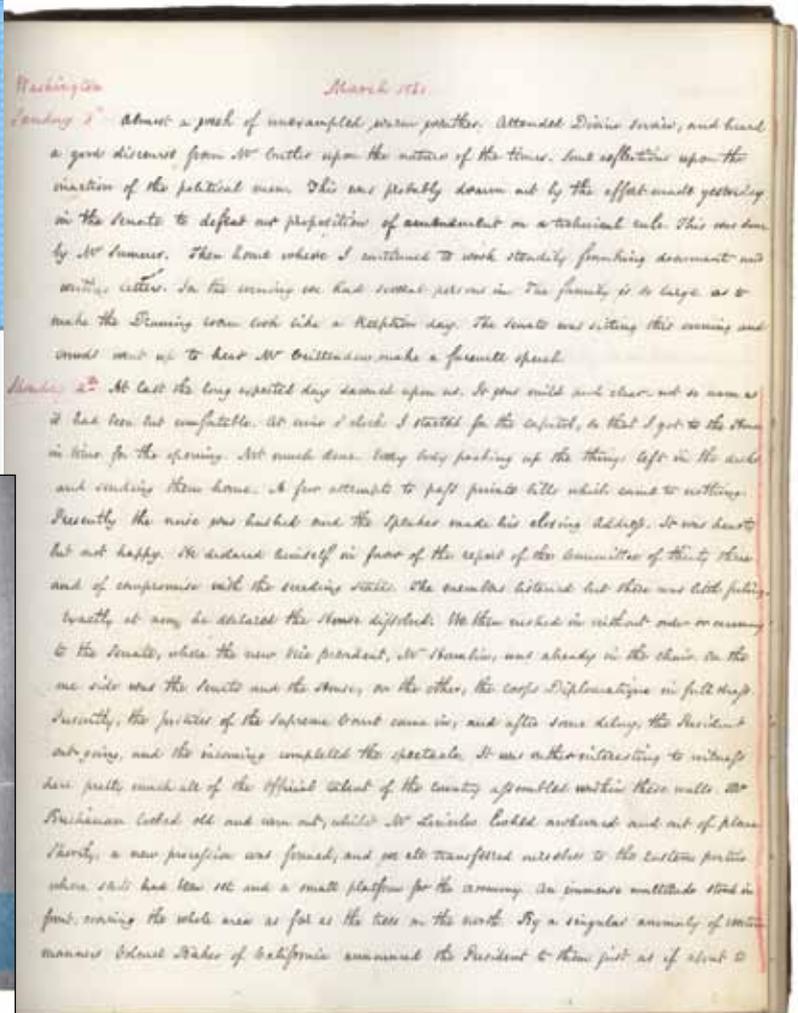
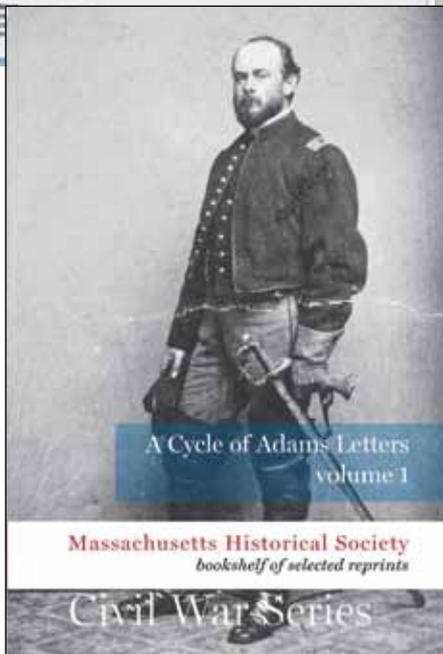
Over the last few years, several recipients of MHS teacher fellowships have successfully mined our Civil War-era holdings for their projects. These investigators include Jason Raia, now vice president of education at the Freedom Foundation at Valley Forge, who created a classroom unit devoted to Charles Francis Adams, Sr., and his work as minister to the Court of St. James's in London (see below for more on Adams); Duncan Wood, a history teacher at Newton North High School, who explored the participation of Massachusetts women in the war effort; and Rajeeve Martyn, the vice principal of Brook Farm Academy in Boston, who used the Society's collection to improve our understanding of military recruitment. The results of these research projects will soon appear at the Society's website as curricula that other educators can download for classroom use.

The Civil War content available to our web visitors will be so abundant that a special “landing page” is now available to inform people about online materials as well as events, print publications, and other goings-on for the next four years. Visit us at www.masshist.org/online/civilwar/ early and often, as new announcements and materials will be posted there over time.

One new venture already launched from this portal is “Looking at the Civil War: Massachusetts Finds Her Voice,” a monthly feature modeled on our ongoing Object of the Month series. The project—which started last January—will run for 52 months; for each of those months, a new document will appear online, with a full transcription and a contextual essay, highlighting an event that took place during that month 150 years earlier. Many of the items on view have been chosen to bring attention to some of our lesser known collections. By April 2015, the aggregation of monthly features will amount to a very substantial online gallery of resources that document Civil War events, and the full set of materials will remain online as a web exhibition

indefinitely. *The Case for Ending Slavery*, a Library of Congress–funded project that pairs documents from the MHS with LOC materials, will be expanded as an online project to include curricula developed around the documents.

The item featured in “Looking” for last March also overlaps with another sesquicentennial project: the digitization of Charles Francis Adams, Sr.’s diary entries for the Civil War years. Adams, fondly known in-house as CFA, was Lincoln’s minister to Great Britain, where he represented the Union throughout the war, assisted by his son Henry, the future writer and historian. There, CFA achieved the critical purpose of keeping the United Kingdom neutral. His diaries for these war years, never before transcribed for publication, encompass some 1,150 pages of three separate manuscript volumes. Based on his usual practices and the time period covered, we expect those pages to contain 1,400 to 1,500 entries. The transcriptions will be made available as “born digital” volumes in the 19th-century Adams papers on our website.



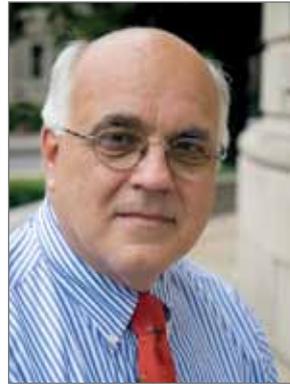
Some of the many Civil War initiatives under way: web portal; Charles Francis Adams Sr.’s diary entry for March 4, 1861, featured online; and the Civil War reprint series, with a cover image of CFA, Jr.

Finally, for those individuals who appreciate the opportunity to carry the content away with them in a physical form, the Society has several related publishing ventures in the works. A selection of MHS publications that are now difficult to find in their original editions will be made available as a series of reprints in affordable paperback volumes that can be ordered online. The Civil War Series of the Society's new Bookshelf of Selected Reprints initiative will re-present almost a half-dozen volumes first published in the early decades of the 20th century, as the nation began to lose the generation that had lived through the war. Comprised primarily of firsthand accounts drawn from letters and diaries, and sometimes selected and put in context by the veteran himself, these memoirs became landmark texts in early studies of the history of the war: *A Cycle of Adams Letters, 1861–1865*, volumes 1 and 2, edited by Worthington Chauncey Ford (published in 1920); *Mead's Headquarters, 1863–1865: Letters of Theodore Lyman from the Wilderness to Appomattox*, edited by George R. Agassiz (1922); *War Diary and Letters of Stephen Minot Weld, 1861–1865*, by Stephen Minot Weld (1912; 2d ed., 1979); and *War Letters, 1862–1865, of John Chipman Gray and John Codman Ropes*, originally selected by John Chipman Gray and edited by Ford (1927). Regular readers of the *Massachusetts Historical Review* will know that the journal often includes an essay presenting original research on the topic, usually based on a scholar's work using MHS collections. For example, the fall 2011 volume will feature the essay "Leadership Class: College-Educated New Englanders in the Civil War," by Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai.

One rich source of previously unpublished Civil War content will also become available in print during this period: the second volume of the *Selected Journals of Caroline Healey Dall*, scheduled for release in 2013, covers the period from 1855 to 1866. Dall was a 19th-century reformer who was particularly prominent in the antislavery and women's rights movements. She gave her extensive diaries, which provide much detail on her social, political, and emotional life, to the MHS; volume 1 was published in 2006. Finally, the Society is also preparing a proposal for a full-color, large-format book showcasing highlights from the Civil War-related collections. This book will be geared towards a popular audience, and like all the Society's activities commemorating the war, it will use MHS documents to illustrate the experience of the war through many eyes, including soldiers, both black and white; physicians and nurses; and family at the home front.

* * *

FROM THE PRESIDENT



If you've come to the MHS since the first week in April—or even just walked by—you have no doubt seen the radical change at our address: a bronze kiosk, roughly seven feet high by three feet wide, that entices and informs passers-by with two brightly lit signs. On one side, a colorful poster invites the public to visit the current exhibition; on the other, another poster provides information about our hours, reading room access, and public programs.

What has come over us, you ask? What has precipitated this bold self-promotion? Quite simply, the belief that a large audience—significantly larger than the one we have traditionally attracted—deserves to appreciate, enjoy, and support the mission of this institution. But to do so, of course, they must know we are here. That same idea was underscored throughout the Strategic Plan, and implementing the plan's goals has led recently to a number of such bold promotional steps: not just the "big sign" but also new approaches to exhibition design and more aggressive marketing efforts.

now on display

HISTORY DRAWN WITH LIGHT

Early Photographs from the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society

In the Gallery of Portraits
you will find portraits of 18th- and 19th-century Bostonians, including the earliest known likenesses of John and Abigail Adams. Works by American masters such as Copley, Sargent, and Stuart are also on view.

The Dowse Library
is a 19th-century, gentleman's library preserved as it was in the benefactor's Cambridge home. The collection of 4,665 volumes includes rare editions and many fine examples of the bookbinder's craft.

Free & open to the public

Main exhibition on view to June 3

Monday through Saturday 1 to 4 PM

Exhibitions are a primary vehicle for bringing our collections to the public's attention. The opportunity to exchange gazes with a face looking out from the past, in a photograph or a painting, leads to an "aha" moment for many people. As does the ability to examine the words inked on a sheet of paper from the 18th century. Our latest experiments in exhibition design, described below ("New Exhibition Plans"), have been pursued in order to optimize a visitor's discovery process—and thus truly understand why a good repository is so important. If you haven't already, you can still walk through the first implementation of our enhanced exhibition design in our spring exhibition, *History Drawn with Light: Early Photographs from the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, which will be on view until June 3.

Of course, new initiatives pursued in our building are only as useful as the public's awareness of them. Hence, the importance of that sign. Its impact is already quantifiable through the survey cards that visitors to the exhibition can fill out: a recent reading of 10 showed that 4 of those respondents came in because of the sign. Other promotional efforts reach much further out into the community, finding new audience members through online and print calendar listings, radio announcements, and even updates on our Facebook page. I guarantee we surprised you with our underwriting of programs on WBUR and WGBH. And increased coverage in reviews and articles in the *Boston Globe* and other local publications suggests that the investment is working.

Such promotion is a part of increased marketing and fundraising efforts made over the past few years and that now appear to be hitting their stride, judging by the turnout for recent events and the current exhibition. And we expect to see a related increase in our Annual Fund donations and membership numbers this year. Which means that more people are grasping what is so important about preserving historical records and making them accessible for research and general appreciation. Locally and nationally, we all benefit from seeing today's challenges through a prism of the past, since we find better solutions when we know the history of a problem. Because that perspective is only possible so long as we have the documents that allow us to understand the history, the work the MHS does—such as collecting, preserving, processing, editing, and digitizing—must be kept going. To make that happen, the Society needs the support a broader constituency will bring. The more people there are who care about our financial well-being, the more secure our future will be. The efforts described throughout this *Miscellany* are only the beginning of a more open, inclusive, and stimulating history resource.

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NEW EXHIBITION PLANS

With the unveiling of its spring exhibition in March, the MHS also unveiled an entirely updated—and we hope very welcoming—approach to its exhibition design. Last winter, as planning went ahead for *History Drawn with Light*, a showcase of early photographs from the Society's extensive photograph collection, the decision was made to improve the experience of our displays. The quality and significance of the materials on view have never been an issue, of course, but we wished to make certain that visitors would be able to fully appreciate the items as they pass through the galleries.

The new venture started by bringing a consultant into the process: Will Twombly, of Spokeshave Design, who has done exhibition design and installation for nonprofit organizations for several decades. Mr. Twombly and his staff worked closely with the exhibition planners, Stephen T. Riley Librarian Peter Drummey and Curator of Art Anne Bentley, to craft the viewer's experience: signs and panels direct each visitor on a path through the items on display, producing the feeling of "discovering" each image and making the learning process natural and engaging.

The 70-plus photographs in the show are arranged in an introduction and four topical areas that reflect turning points in the technology and subject matter of photography as it evolved from 1840 to the end of the 19th century. The introduction touts the Society's early appreciation for this new form of documentation: in 1840, a year after Louis Daguerre made his invention public, the Society hosted a demonstration of the process and also collected its first daguerreotype, which shows the Old Feather Store, then the oldest standing building in Boston.

The sections that follow elucidate the early portraiture achieved with the daguerreotype in Boston, the role of photography in the Civil War, the extensive record of the Boston cityscape achieved in the 1870s and later, and the blossoming of a generation of so-called amateur photographers at the end of the century. The Society's collections include some remarkable images in each of these areas, including portraits of prominent Bostonians from leading studios, such as a Southworth & Hawes portrait of Daniel Webster; the much-loved images of the soldiers from the 54th Massachusetts Infantry, the first black regiment raised in the North; a 10-foot panorama of the Boston waterfront in 1877; and some products of Francis Blake's experiments in high-speed photography. Blake, who invented a transmitter that became standard in early telephones, pursued photography as a "hobby"; nonetheless, his remarkable images

have been compared with the now iconic stop-action shots made by Eadweard Muybridge.

Because the objects themselves are sometimes quite small, and therefore maybe a little difficult for some of us to examine, full-color enlargements bring a number of the images into scale for easy viewing. While small images can be difficult to see, a full understanding of the social and technological context that made the images possible is entirely invisible to the naked eye—and overcoming that limitation is one of the key challenges of exhibition design. Consequently, the team for *History* worked hard to strike a balance between the plethora of rich information available and the relatively small space in which it had to fit. The panels that resulted are concise yet substantial—and also quite beautifully designed. In his review in the *Boston Globe*, Mark Feeney noted how well the installation wove together the salient historical threads: “Photography uniquely stood at the intersection of art (which it created), history (which it recorded), and technology (which it utilized). All three aspects of the medium are on display in *History Drawn with Light*.”

So far, the new approach to exhibition installation, improved publicity, and the photographs themselves appear to have won approval. Turnout for the opening weekend in March exceeded total attendance for previous exhibitions, and some 400 visitors came during the first two weeks. Comments gathered from an exit survey many of our visitors chose to complete convey

not only their appreciation of the new exhibition design but also their varied interests in the subject of photography. One guest found the show “beautifully curated and organized,” while another described the set-up as “user-friendly and tastefully displayed.” While many guests enjoy the wide range of images on display, the favorites so far have been the large panorama of the Boston waterfront and the display of Civil War photographs. One respondent wrote that “the photographs of the fire are spectacular; the box camera of Blake gives a lesson in itself; and I was delighted to learn how to use shadow to wake up a daguerreotype.”

The MHS is looking forward to building on this foundation with its future exhibitions, repeating those elements that have pleased people so much but also seeking to improve wherever we can. Our planning schedule for upcoming exhibitions includes plenty of opportunities to practice: *The Nature of Sacrifice* will highlight the strength of the Society’s holdings on the Civil War, an exhibition of mourning jewelry will introduce visitors to beautiful examples of this once-common but remarkable form of memorial, and—looking several years into the future—a major show of Thomas Jefferson materials will finally showcase the treasure trove that is the Coolidge Collection of Jefferson Papers. These special shows will be complemented by improved permanent displays of selected portraits and other highlights from the MHS collections.

* * *



Top row, right: MHS Fellow John Sears sits for a “daguerreotype” portrait in the “studio.” Bottom row, left to right: Andrew Ley examines Francis Blake’s photographic equipment; Pamela Fox compares the 1877 Boston cityscape with a recent view shot from the same location; William Abernathy and a friend enjoy some old-time media technology—stereoscope views of Boston after the fire of 1872.

EYEWITNESS TO HISTORY

As historians often say, “No documents, no history.” Collecting letters, diaries, and reminiscences of individuals and families from Massachusetts has been the bread and butter of the MHS since its founding 220 years ago. Several recently acquired manuscript collections add to this “stuff of history” through personal eyewitness accounts.

In a letter written to a friend in August 1776, Elizabeth Murray (1726–1785) described her reaction to the reading of the Declaration of Independence in church, including a touch of irony that underscores her Loyalist perspective:

I went to Church yesterday afternoon & had the satisfaction of seeing Mr. Parker stand up at head of the Middle Isle to read the Declaration of Independence. Happily it was not till the service was over so those that chose it came out of Church, of which number I was one.

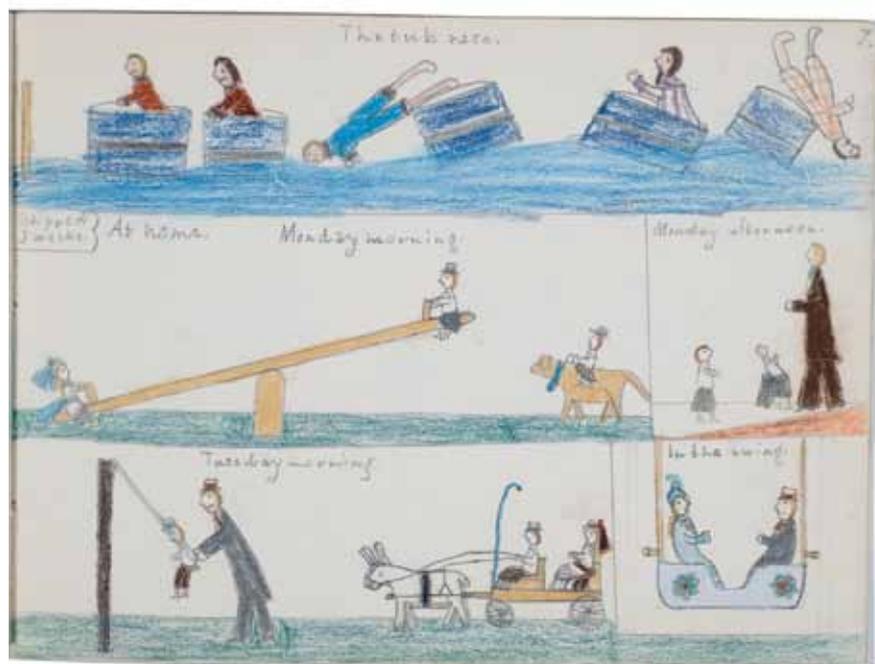
A prominent merchant in Boston since she had opened a shop in the city in her 20s, Elizabeth remained in the Boston area during and after the Revolutionary War. She maintained her business interests and also cared for and mentored the children of her brother, James Murray, also a Loyalist, who fled to Halifax, N.S., and to North Carolina. This letter is one of many exchanged among Elizabeth, James, and other family members in a new collection of Murray-Robbins papers, donated by Margaret Ewing, that add substantially to the Society’s already significant holdings on this important family.

The Winslow “Family Memorial,” a gift of Dr. Robert Newsom, is a nearly 1,000-page, handwritten manuscript comprised of autobiographical and family reminiscences. Isaac Winslow (1774–1856) of Boston began the work in 1842 and continued writing and compiling the material until his death in 1856, when his daughter, Margaret Catherine (1816–1899?), continued the project. She drew on her own diary, commonplace book, and reminiscences, dating from 1856 to 1873, and also made extensive use of family letters and diaries. The completed memorial tells the Winslow story as it dates back to the founding of Plymouth Colony. Among the many topics of interest—too numerous to list—are the experiences of Winslow’s father (also Isaac, 1743–1793), another Boston merchant and Loyalist who (like James Murray) fled to Halifax and New York, as well as a leader of the Sandemanian sect until his scandalous suicide in 1793. If it happened during the 250-year period covered by the memorial, odds are the Winslows had something to say about it. A guide to the memorial, as well as Dr. Newsom’s full transcription of the manuscript, are available

at www.masshist.org/findingaids/doc.cfm?fa=fa0337.

Among other recent acquisitions are a small collection of papers of John Brooks, Revolutionary War general and later governor of Massachusetts, and letters written in 1854 to Benjamin Seaver, a former mayor of Boston, by his children. The new Brooks items include a letter that John J. Spooner sent the general in December 1786 providing a detailed account of the suppression of Shays’s Rebellion in the western part of the state. The papers came to the MHS as a gift from Bradford Mudge. The Seaver letters, 37 all together, kept Benjamin apprised of news from home while he traveled in Europe. The documents consequently comprise a striking record of the Missouri Compromise, the Fugitive Slave Law, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and the Anthony Burns case, as well as some Seaver family opinions about these developments in national politics. The MHS purchased these letters, and one has already appeared on our website as the Object of the Month for September 2010.

Another collection recently purchased is the work of Bertha Louise Cogswell (1868–1962) of Cambridge,



Mass. These seven drawing books contain 155 pages of crayon and pencil drawings that the young artist made from circa 1876 to 1880; captioned in pencil, they depict Bertha’s childhood experiences and imagine her life as an adult.

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A MOST SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIP

For the past nine years, the MHS has awarded between one and three Long-term Fellowships annually through the generosity of the National Endowment for the Humanities. These are substantial awards worth more

than \$57,000 in 2011–2012, with the bulk (\$50,400) funded by the NEH. The MHS subsidizes each award with a match of up to \$6,750 annually.

Why should the NEH and the MHS provide this support? Simply put, Long-term Fellows greatly help the MHS to fulfill its mission of public service, have a solid track record of making major contributions to scholarship, and increase historical understanding in the classroom and among the general public. Like the NEH itself, each fellowship “strengthens our Republic by promoting excellence in the humanities and conveying the lessons of history to all Americans.”

Organizations that receive funding to award NEH fellowships are accorded a prestigious honor. Moreover, NEH scholars enrich the intellectual life of the Society as they interact with staff and other researchers. Their research has the capacity to broaden, deepen, and even fundamentally alter our vision of the past.

Current MHS-NEH Fellow Linford Fisher exemplifies this value. Lin is using MHS sources to deepen our understanding of long-term cultural and religious changes that occurred among New England Indians in the 18th century. Specifically, he is documenting how Native American engagement with Christianity in the colonial period was a contested, multi-generational process that had at its core an interest in education and was framed by concerns for the ongoing loss of land and a slowly eroding sense of cultural autonomy.

Lin began his project at Harvard University, where he received his doctorate in 2008. He continued to work on it at Indiana University in South Bend, where he was an assistant professor. Now a newly minted faculty member in the history department at Brown University, he received a year’s leave in order to accept the fellowship, which will allow him to complete the research and the manuscript for his first book.

For Lin, the NEH funding, the rich collections of the MHS, and a separate research space away from Brown have all played a critical part in allowing him to reach this goal. “The MHS-NEH fellowship came at just the right time,” Lin explains. “I had several months’ worth of research to do in the MHS collections, but then I also needed several months of dedicated time away from teaching to make the final revisions on the entire manuscript before sending it off to the publisher. The MHS-NEH fellowship generously provided both.”

At the MHS, Lin delved into several manuscript collections, including the papers of Boston minister Benjamin Colman; the records of the Society for Propagating the Gospel Among the Indians and Others in North America; and correspondence, petitions, and other documents related to Connecticut governor Jonathan Trum-

bull (1710–1785). Lin found it moving to page through a second edition (1685) of the “Eliot Bible,” missionary John Eliot’s famous translation into the Massachusetts Indian language and the first Bible printed anywhere in the Americas. In those pages, he was able to examine the marginalia—in the Massachusetts language—written by the Native American Christians who owned the volume. Research in these collections made it possible for him to add a final chapter to the manuscript and invigorated several other chapters with new anecdotes of Native life that he had not seen cited elsewhere.

Lin began his career at Brown with more than a dozen fellowships and awards, two published articles, two invited book chapters, and a half dozen book reviews to his credit. Transfixed by the complexities and puzzles of the past, he seeks to inspire a generation of students to think differently about history. He also hopes through his research and writing to spur both academic and general reading audiences to reflect on the past as a source of inspiration for present issues and problems.

For its part, the MHS is proud to draw together the resources—the funding, the space, and our nationally significant collections—to help Lin and other MHS-NEH Fellows achieve such important goals.

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IMMIGRATION CONFERENCE DRAWS A WIDE AUDIENCE

The MHS was pleased to welcome more than 100 scholars, students, immigrant advocates, and teachers on April 7, 8, and 9 for the conference *What’s New about the New Immigration to the U.S.? Traditions and Transformations since 1965*.

The proceedings commenced on Thursday evening with a keynote address by Prof. Maria Cristina Garcia of Cornell University, the author of *Seeking Refuge: Central American Immigration to Mexico, the United States, and Canada* (2006). Prof. Garcia put into perspective the challenges that the United States faces in crafting a compassionate refugee policy while simultaneously addressing national security concerns in the post–Cold War, post–9/11 era.

On Friday and Saturday, scholars from as far as Texas and Minnesota gathered to explore themes of religion, politics, geography, gender, and the family. The participants also came from a range of disciplines—and walks of life—and that variety promoted lively discussions about the frameworks for studying recent immigration. Sociologists including Nancy Foner of Hunter College, CUNY, the author of *In a New Land: A Comparative View of Immigration* (2005), engaged with the historians in the audience to enhance communication among the

disciplines. Historians had the opportunity to explore models of behavior among immigrant groups, while sociologists considered the value of placing the relatively recent past into historical perspective by delineating historical periods. The conference also brought together emerging scholars such as Veronica Savory McComb of Boston University, who discussed religion among Nigerian immigrant communities, with seasoned colleagues such as Nigerian-born Prof. Jacob Olupona of Harvard University.

The importance of taking a transnational perspective was also a recurring theme. When, for example, Prof. Xiao-huang Yin of Michigan State University described the new nature of Chinese immigration, he explained how greater access to visas now allows more frequent travel between the U.S. and the People's Republic during various stages of one's life.

Some of the most stimulating conversations, which occurred both during and outside of the sessions, were prompted by audience members who were neither immigration scholars nor graduate students. Among its distinguished guests, the MHS welcomed Richard Chacon, executive director of the Massachusetts Office of Refugees and Immigrants, as well as Sister Helena Deevy, executive director of the Irish International Immigrant Center.

In particular, the group discussed educating the next generation about the significance of the recent immigration experience. One of the high school teachers who attended the program for the purpose of professional development prompted the panelists to think about how the scholarship presented at the conference would find its way into high school textbooks. Likewise, Prof. Carolyn Wong of Carleton College described her experience sharing academic scholarship that describes their Asian cultural heritage with Hmong students.

This informed, lively, and substantive program drew on the talents of a broad cross section of the MHS staff and our colleagues in the scholarly community. The conference steering committee included immigration scholars Christopher Capozzola of MIT, Marilyn Halter of Boston University, Marilynn Johnson of Boston College, and Reed Ueda of Tufts University. The MHS is especially grateful for the generous support of the Lowell Institute, which underwrote the conference keynote address.

Without a doubt, the conversations that took place at *What's New about the New Immigration to the U.S.?* will continue in the coming months, in particular during programs of the Boston Immigration and Urban History Seminar, which meets most months during the academic year. A new seminar schedule for 2011–2012

will be announced soon, and all are welcome to attend. For more information, please visit <http://www.masshist.org/events/bsiuh.cfm>.

* * *

IN MEMORIAM

Over two centuries, the MHS has not lacked for good compatriots who also have ties to Harvard University. Without diminishing the significance of any of those connections, we wish to note the recent loss of two long-standing and distinguished Harvard-affiliated friends: the Rev. Peter J. Gomes and Prof. C. Conrad Wright.

The death of Rev. Gomes on February 28 received considerable media attention, due to the high public profile of his position—as the minister of Harvard's Memorial Church—but also to the affection and respect he inspired across the country and across communities. Born in Plymouth, Mass., in 1942, Rev. Gomes remained devoted to his hometown and its history all of his life. His love of history also guided his first bachelor's degree, from Bates College, which he followed with a degree in theology from Harvard Divinity School in 1968. In the ensuing decades, a variety of institutions conferred on him several dozen honorary degrees.

His career in higher education began in 1968 with a sojourn to Alabama, where he taught history at the Tuskegee Institute for two years before returning to Harvard as assistant minister of Memorial Church. By 1974, he was Plummer Professor of Christian Morals and minister of Memorial Church, and he established himself as the university's leading voice on spiritual matters. He continued as preacher to the university until his death, while he also served as a faculty member in both the Divinity School and the School of Arts and Sciences.

In the 1970s, his public profile quickly attained national breadth. In 1979, *Time* magazine called Rev. Gomes “one of the seven most distinguished preachers in America,” and he twice participated in presidential inaugurations. Preaching and lecturing engagements regularly took him across the country and overseas. He was also an active scholar of history and theology—one whose best-known publications spoke to a broad public audience, such as his 1996 title, *The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Mind and Heart*.

At the MHS, Rev. Gomes was just as inspiring of mien and generous with his gifts as he was with any of his other communities. Made a Fellow (then termed Member) in 1976, he accepted a turn on the Council (now the Board of Trustees) soon after. The MHS benefitted from his talents as a scholar and an orator. He made frequent contributions to the *Proceedings*, supplying the forerunner of today's *Massachusetts Historical Review*

and *Annual Report* with memoirs and scholarly essays. Rev. Gomes was among the speakers at the Bicentennial Banquet in May 1991, and in 1984 he officiated at another singular event: the only wedding ever held at 1154 Boylston Street. In 2003, he led a group of MHS Members and Fellows on a tour of his beloved Plymouth, including Pilgrim Hall and Plimoth Plantation. Many new Fellows joined the Society thanks to Rev. Gomes's sponsorship, and he served over five years on the Meetings Committee. Most recently, he had agreed to join the newly formed Council of Overseers—a prospect that greatly pleased the staff and Trustees of the Society. As MHS Trustee the Hon. Levin H. Campbell noted following news of his death, “As so many others can say, Peter was a good friend—one of the most remarkable men I have ever met. Something very good was lost forever with his death.”

Less than two weeks before Rev. Gomes's passing, the MHS and Harvard also lost Prof. C. Conrad Wright, an emeritus faculty member of the Harvard Divinity School. In his career and retirement, Prof. Wright had not strayed from his home: he was born in Cambridge in 1917 and graduated from Harvard College in 1937. He also earned both his master's (1942) and doctoral degrees (1946) from Harvard.

After service in the Second World War, Prof. Wright returned to Boston to teach at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he remained for eight years before taking a teaching position at Harvard in 1954. In 1955, he published his first book, *The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America*, which initiated his recognition as an authority on American religious history. Prof. Wright was also closely engaged with the Unitarian Historical Society, serving as its president in the 1960s and as the editor of its annual *Proceedings*. At Harvard, he was the John Bartlett Lecturer on New England Church History and Professor of Church History; his teaching career encompassed, formally, more than three decades, during which time he published extensively.

At the MHS, Prof. Wright made critical and extensive use of the Society's holdings, which he knew to contain some of the best sources for understanding Unitarian history—and his publications helped spread that awareness. He of course also directed many of his students to undertake research at the MHS. After becoming a Fellow (then Member) in 1985, Prof. Wright participated in three of the Society's scholarly conferences, published a major essay in a collection derived from one of those conferences, and contributed work to the *MHS Proceedings*. Of course, among his contributions to the MHS we must also count Worthington C. Ford Editor and Director of Research Conrad E. Wright, his son and a

fellow historian of Harvard and Unitarianism. Through Prof. Wright's direction, generations of researchers in religious history have discovered the importance of the Society's collections, and his value as a mentor clearly lives on. In the words of one MHS staff member, “he was one of the most admired and beloved of teachers I have ever known.”

Finally, we would be remiss if we did not also note the passing of a second member of the MHS Council of Overseers, Steven B. Swensrud, on February 6, 2011, after a long battle with cancer. Mr. Swensrud, a businessman and private investor, was introduced to the Society through his former classmate, MHS Fellow and Pulitzer Prize-winning author David McCullough.

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, and Pittsburgh, Pa., Mr. Swensrud earned his undergraduate degree in history from Princeton University. Following two years of service with the U.S. Army Finance Corps and a degree from the Harvard Business School, he spent a year on the HBS staff.

The business career that grew out of these beginnings was largely involved in finance, with an emphasis on venture capital and investment management. At the Boston Capital Corporation, a venture capital organization, Mr. Swensrud was vice president from 1961 to 1967. He went on to serve as a director of many venture-funded enterprises for the remainder of his life. Actively involved in investment management, Mr. Swensrud was a co-founder of Batterymarch Financial Management Corporation, a founder of Fernwood Advisors, and a director of mutual funds sponsored by Merrill Lynch and Eaton Vance Corporation.

As he focused much of his energetic philanthropic activities on Boston, his adopted home, Mr. Swensrud has been a trustee and/or officer of many area academic, educational, and medical institutions, including the Park School, the Museum of Science, Children's Hospital Medical Center, and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Nationally, he was a trustee of the Federation for American Immigration Reform in Washington, D.C.

At the MHS, Mr. Swensrud was elected a Fellow in 2003 and an Overseer in 2010 as a result of his keen interest in American history and generous support of the Society's education program. Through the Sidney A. Swensrud Foundation, he and his niece Nancy Anthony, who is also an MHS Trustee, established an eponymous teacher fellowship that is awarded annually. Known for his lifelong love of travel, Mr. Swensrud and his wife, Patricia, participated in a number of MHS tours throughout the past decade. Mr. Swensrud's dedication, good humor, and generosity will be sorely missed.



The Society's inaugural signature fundraising event, Cocktails with Clio, was a great success and raised \$60,000 for MHS outreach efforts. One hundred seventy guests filled the rooms of 1154 Boylston Street to enjoy a cocktail buffet and jazz trio from the Boston Conservatory. The evening continued at the Boston Conservatory Theater with an engaging conversation between National Book Award-winning author and MHS Overseer Nathaniel Philbrick and MHS Pres. Dennis Fiori.



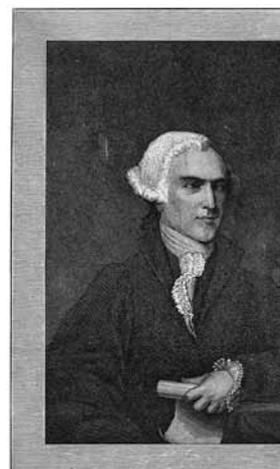
Left, top to bottom: Event Committee Member Julia Pfannenstiehl and MHS Trustee Fred Pfannenstiehl enjoy the festivities with Meade Fasciano and Allys and Chris Spilios; MHS Overseer Byron Rushing and Frieda Garcia make their entrance.

EXHIBITION OPENING & SPECIAL RECEPTION



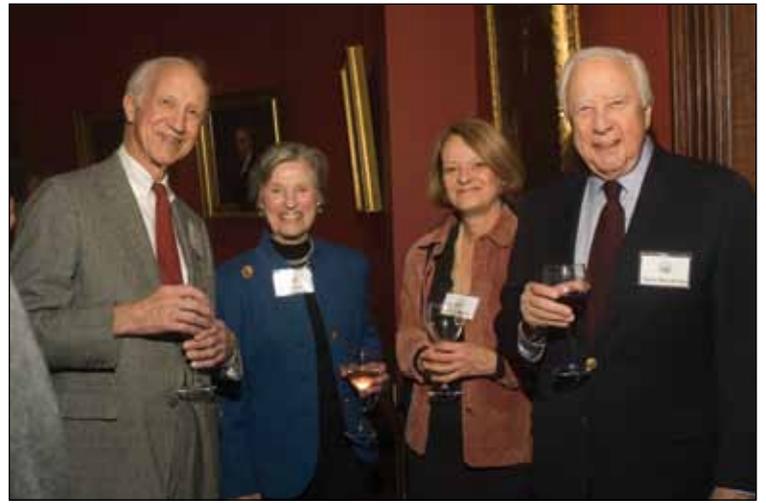
On October 20, 2010, the Society welcomed 115 guests to the opening of its fall exhibition, *Josiah Quincy: A Lost Hero of the Revolution*, showcasing manuscripts related to the final two volumes of *Portrait of a Patriot: The Major Political and Legal Papers of Josiah Quincy Junior*, recently published by the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. Series Editor and MHS Overseer Daniel R. Coquillette delighted guests with his methods in bringing to light the major legal and political writings of Josiah Quincy Jr.

Guest speaker and MHS Overseer Daniel Coquillette and Stephen T. Riley Librarian Peter Drummey head into the exhibition.





FELLOWS & MEMBERS
HOLIDAY PARTY



The Back Bay Ringers handbell quartet filled the MHS with festive carols at the annual Holiday Party. Almost 150 MHS Fellows, Members, and staff gathered to celebrate the holidays, enjoy refreshments, and view a selection of seasonal items from the Society's collections, including several New Year's Day greetings engraved by Rudolph Ruzicka as annual keepsakes for the Merrymount Press.

Above: Pres. Dennis Fiori interviews author and MHS Overseer Nathaniel Philbrick about how he became a writer of history. Photographs by Bill Brett.



Left: MHS Fellow Katherine Kottaridis and Tony Vrame examine the Quincy family tree in the exhibition. Below: MHS Trustee Judith Wittenberg, MHS Overseer Paul Sandman, Mary Beth Sandman, and Jack Wittenberg catch up during the reception.



From the top: MHS Life Trustee Henry Lee, Rosalee McCullough, and MHS Fellows Celeste Walker and David McCullough celebrate the season; MHS Members Kathryn Palmer and Barbara Perry, and Susan Mellen enjoy themselves at the reception; MHS Member Laury Edwards and Anthea Brigham catch up while enjoying refreshments. Photographs to left and above by Laura Wulf.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Exhibition

It was as controversial then as it is now—the Constitution of the United States. The Society's summer exhibition, "*We the People*": *Massachusetts Debates the Constitution, 1787-1788*, will focus on the struggle to ratify this founding document within the Commonwealth from the points of view of those involved in the debates during one key winter. Look for more information on this exhibition and programming around it at www.masshist.org when it opens in late June.

Support Federal Humanities Funding

As you may be aware, federal funding for the humanities is under severe pressure; the MHS is likely to suffer if Congress does not sustain support for three federal grant programs in particular, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), and Teaching American History (TAH). The Society depends on the backing of these federal programs to pursue its mission. Since 2000, the MHS has received outright and matching grants totaling almost \$4 million from the NEH alone to support collection security, preservation, and digitization as well as research fellowships, teacher workshops, educational materials development, website development, and the editing of the Adams Papers.

These agencies have already suffered cutbacks in the 2011 budget deal negotiated in April, but there is still time to try to restore funding for 2012. To help the MHS and many other worthy humanities organizations that rely on this support, we encourage our Fellows, Members, and friends to reach out to their elected officials and urge them to restore funding for the NEH, NHPRC, and TAH grant programs to 2010 levels in the ongoing federal budget negotiations for 2012. To identify your senators and congressperson and find their contact information, go to Congress.org, a nonpartisan news and information website.

Today's News Is Tomorrow's History

Around the country, politicians on both sides of the aisle look to the Founding Fathers to justify their positions on a myriad of important issues. Abroad, protests throughout the Middle East and North Africa have drawn comparisons to our own struggle for freedom in 1776 as well as to the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. Current events do not occur in a vacuum. They are connected to what came before.

At the MHS, we are committed to the idea that knowledge of our nation's past is vital to its future. The MHS collects and preserves the primary sources of our past so scholars and history enthusiasts, teachers and students, Supreme Court Justices and citizens, can examine them, interpret them, and reach their own conclusions about how our history informs the challenges we face today as a nation. If you, too, believe that history is not just a series of events that happened to individuals long ago but an essential part of our daily lives, then help us continue to promote the study of American history by supporting the MHS Annual Fund at www.masshist.org/support before our fiscal year ends on June 30. Your contribution will make a difference.

EVENTS FOR LATE SPRING AND SUMMER

Lectures & Brown Bag Talks

THURS, MAY 26, 5:30 ANNUAL JEFFERSON LECTURE

[Founding Gardeners: How the Revolutionary Generation Created an American Eden](#)

Andrea Wulf

Cosponsored by the Arnold Arboretum.

TUES, MAY 31, NOON MINI-COURSE

[What Does Massachusetts Have to Do with . . . Photographs of World War I Battlefields?](#)

Presented by the MHS Publications staff.

WED, JUNE 1, NOON

[Drops of Grace & Mercy: How Women Cultivated Personal Change through Conversion Processes](#)

Rachel Cope, Brigham Young University

WED, JUNE 8, NOON

[“A Higher Place in the Scale of Being”: The Maternal Body in America, 1750–1850](#)

Nora Doyle, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

TUES, JUNE 14, NOON

[The Clamorgans: One Family’s History of Race in America](#)
Julie Winch, University of Massachusetts, Boston

THURS, JUNE 16, 6 PM (reception at 5:30)

[The Whites of Their Eyes: Bunker Hill, the First American Army, & the Emergence of George Washington](#)

Paul Lockhart, Wright State University

SAT, AUGUST 13, 2 PM

[Citizenship through Civil War Service](#)

Christian Samito, Boston College and Boston University School of Law

Part of the Boston Harbor Islands Civil War History Series. This event will take place on Georges Island, part of the Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area.



Detail from page of Bertha Louise Cogswell drawing book (see page 8 for more information).

Massachusetts Public History Conference

MON, JUNE 6, 9 AM to 4 PM

[Telling Lives of People Hidden in Plain Sight: A Conference for Massachusetts History Organizations](#)

Hogan Campus Center, College of Holy Cross, Worcester. Co-sponsored by Mass Humanities, The University of Massachusetts Amherst Program in Public History, and the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the Joseph P. Healey Library at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Program and registration available at www.masshumanities.org.

Workshops Open to the Public

JULY 12, 13, & 14, 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM

[Three Days, Three Viewpoints: The Worlds of Thomas Hutchinson](#)

Investigate the case of a man caught up in turbulent times.

Fee of \$125 (\$100 for all teachers and for Members of the MHS and the Forbes House Museum). Takes place in Boston and Milton.

AUGUST 9 & 11, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM

[Ratification! The People Debate the Constitution, 1787–1788](#)

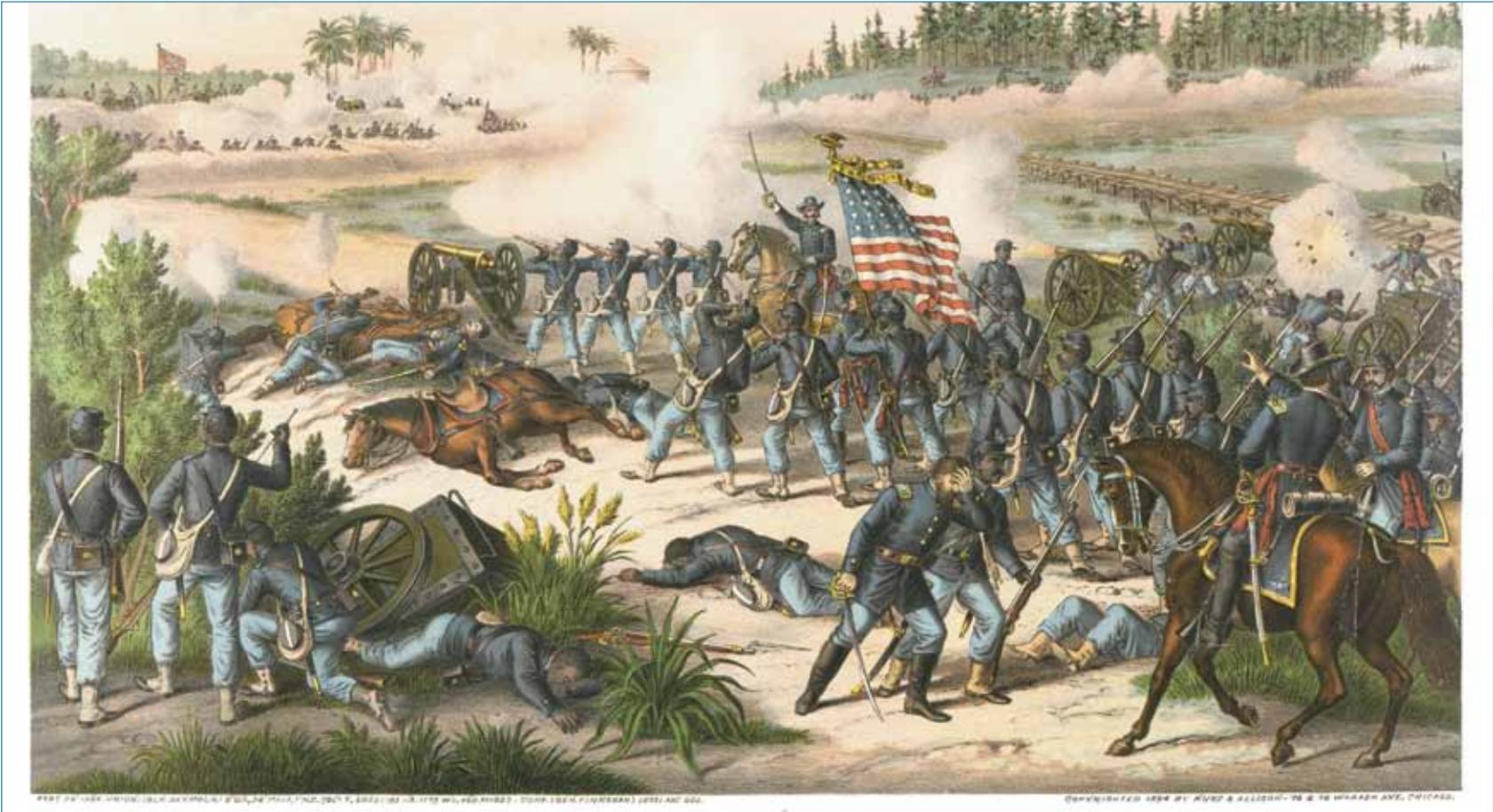
Teacher Workshop open to all educators in Massachusetts and Maine

Featuring a guest lecture by Pauline Maier, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Co-sponsored by the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Historical Society
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Join us at the MHS for commemoration activities,
in-house, online, and outdoors. More information inside.

Civil War Sesquicentennial