

# MHS Miscellany

Number 113 / Fall 2017

## FAREWELL & WELCOME

IN LATE JUNE, the Trustees of the Massachusetts Historical Society announced that the Society's next president will be Catherine Allgor, Ph.D. The MHS staff and managers—many of whom have known Dr. Allgor for years or even decades—could not be more pleased with the selection. She enters this role as the Society's current president, Dennis A. Fiori, retires. The outgoing and incoming presidents offered some comments on this changing of the guard.

### *From Outgoing President Dennis Fiori*

When I arrived in 2006 the MHS had begun its transition to a more engaging and open institution, but it required 21st-century infrastructure to make this goal a reality. The MHS had rudimentary financial management capability, no functioning fundraising operation, and the most basic education and programming offerings. These needed to change, both because the Society desired to imbue the public with the value of history and because our endowment income no longer met the institution's needs. I am pleased to say that thanks to the efforts of the staff, Trustees, and Overseers, and the support of our Fellows and Members, the Society has made tremendous progress on these fronts. Challenges remain, especially the ever-looming gap between income and expense, as well as the need to find funding for much-needed staff, marketing, and innovation. It is a real balancing act to maintain our important traditional activities that serve researchers and the scholarly community while also embracing new audiences. This requires the fresh thinking and approaches I know Cat will bring to the president's position.

As I retire, I take great pride in our insightful and revealing schedule of exhibitions and public programs, as well as the recently established Center for the Teaching of History. It is vital that the MHS engage school-age audiences—it is critical to both our future as an institution and the future of the field. I am especially proud of the establishment of an endowed acquisition fund that has for the first time given us the means to purchase important material for our collection. Along with the ability to expand our holdings has come an enhanced approach to the maintenance and security of the collection—and that of our largest artifact, our building. Now fully funding depreciation means we will always have the ability to make sure they are well cared for.

Being president of the MHS is a privilege. It has been the high point of my career and has brought me stimulating challenges and great satisfaction, as I know it will Cat.

### *From Incoming President Catherine Allgor*

When I was a graduate student, working on the dissertation that became *Parlor Politics*, MHS gave me my first fellowship. I came in 1996, the proud recipient of an Andrew W. Mellon Dissertation Fellowship from the Society's Center for the Study of New England History. Under the watchful eye of the amazing team of Virginia Smith and Peter Drummey, I learned what it meant to be a scholar in an archive. I have been so pleased and proud to have been part of the Society's activities in the years since that first fellowship, culminating in my election to be a Fellow in 2012. I can truly say that I am the scholar that I am because of my work with the Society.

And what a time to be joining the oldest and most prestigious historical society in the United States! Never have opportunities to spread the Society's mission of research and education about our past seemed so bright. With rising attendance at museums and historical sites, more television and movie treatments of historical topics than ever before, not to mention the success of *Hamilton*—we know that U.S. citizens and people around the world are more eager than ever to learn American history. With our incomparable collections and a strong track record of outreach and creative programming, we at the MHS are ready to stand and serve. I am proud to join the strong and vibrant MHS team—staff, boards, and supporters of all kinds—to foster an appreciation and understanding of the American experience.



### *About Pres. Allgor*

Assuming the executive office of the MHS soon after its 225th anniversary, Dr. Allgor is the first woman to lead the institution, which has long benefited from stellar leadership from women at the managerial and staff-team levels. This is a timely and significant move for the Society.

Allgor, who holds a bachelor's degree in history from Mount Holyoke College and two master's degrees and a doctorate in history from Yale University, is known for her published work on Dolley Madison and Louisa Catherine Adams—the latter an important figure in the Society's holdings (see below for a list of Dr. Allgor's books). Upon the publication of each book, no matter where she was living at the time, she made it a point to give a book talk at the MHS, where she was all but guaranteed a lively, intelligent, and curious audience.

Most recently, Dr. Allgor was the Nadine and Robert A. Skotheim Director of Education and Volunteers at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, where she had served since 2013. Before that, she was a professor of history at the University of California, Riverside, where she was appointed UC Presidential Chair. She has also taught at Claremont McKenna College, Harvard University, and Simmons College. An accomplished teacher and lecturer, she is a leading historian known particularly for her expertise across several fields in American history, including political history, women's history, and the history of race and slavery.

Paul Sandman, Chair of the Board of Trustees, said, "In Catherine, the MHS has found a charismatic leader, an accomplished scholar, and a captivating spokeswoman. She will bring not only creativity and vision to fulfilling the Society's mission but also a track record of successful execution." He continued, "She is a perfect fit for the MHS and we are excited by her commitment to propelling the Society forward."

### *Catherine Allgor's Publications Include*

*Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government* (University of Virginia Press, 2002)

*A Perfect Union: Dolley Madison and the Creation of the American Nation* (Henry Holt, 2006) (finalist for the George Washington Book Prize)

*Dolley Madison: The Problem of National Unity* (Westview Press, 2012)

*The Queen of America: Mary Cutts's Life of Dolley Madison* (University of Virginia Press, 2012)

The Massachusetts Historical Society is a center of research and learning dedicated to a deeper understanding of the American experience. Through its collections, scholarly pursuits, and public programs, the Society seeks to nurture a greater appreciation for American history and for the ideas, values, successes, and failures that bind us together as a nation.

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

Back cover:  
Henry Adams and John Hay in Wyo-  
ming, August 1894. All photographs  
by Laura Wulf / all images from  
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Political commentator, author, and MHS Overseer Cokie Roberts expressed her enthusiasm for the Board's choice as well: "She is not only a first rate historian but she is a true public spokesperson for the institution she serves as well as for the profession of history." She continued, "In addition to her scholarship and public speaking abilities, Catherine is a prodigious fundraiser and an excellent teacher as her years at the Huntington have amply demonstrated. In short, I can't think of a better fit for the job of taking MHS into the future than Catherine Allgor."

## RESEARCH DEPARTMENT TRANSITIONS

Exciting changes extend from the executive offices to one of the Society's departments, Research Programs. Effective July 1 Conrad Edick Wright stepped down from his position as Worthington C. Ford Editor and Director of Research after 32 years to become Sibley Editor. In his new role, he will continue to edit volumes of *Sibley's Harvard Graduates*, an enduring resource for the study of colonial America. Succeeding him as Director of Research is Katheryn P. Viens, formerly the Society's Research Coordinator. Director of Publications Ondine Le Blanc assumed the title of Worthington C. Ford Editor.

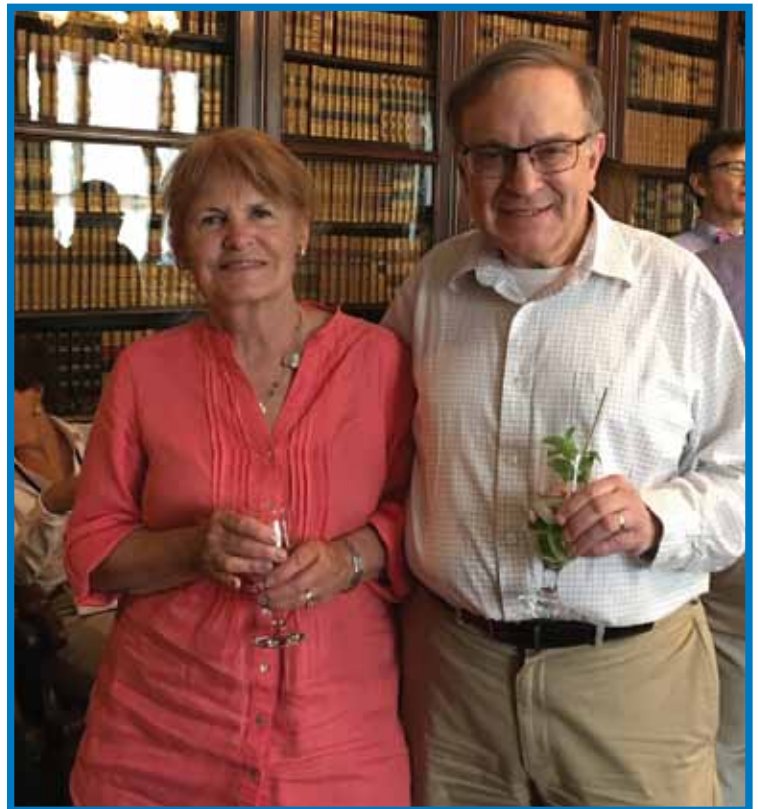
Although he is not retiring, it behooves us to consider the achievements of Wright and his team. When he arrived at the Society in 1984 to lead the Publications Department, the MHS had awarded a single \$3,000 research fellowship. The five seminar series that convene scholars with common interests and offer the chance to present works-in-progress did not exist. Today, the Society awards nearly 50 fellowships a year, half in conjunction with the 25-member New England Regional Fellowship Consortium, which Wright founded. He raised endowments and obtained NEH support for other awards. More than 20 MHS conferences have delivered new scholarship on a range of topics, from the American Revolution to post-1965 immigration. Wright has also written, edited, or otherwise taken responsibility for about 50 publications, including essay collections, monographs, and journal volumes.

The result is an institutional framework that allows the MHS to foster generations of historians by giving them the chance to receive research funding, to make connections, and to present and publish their work. Many "alumni" then move into new roles at the MHS as volunteer committee members and guest authors, educators, and curators. The Society's relationship with scholars and its programs and exhibitions might look quite different were it not for Research programs and the hard work of Conrad Edick Wright, a creative and energetic colleague.

## PAINE PAPERS A PLEASURE TO PERUSE

A year ago in these pages, we had the good fortune to announce a new era of work on the *Papers of Robert Treat Paine* documentary edition, thanks to a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the funding arm of the National Archives. Now we are happy to announce that a second grant from the NHPRC will allow us to extend the work through June 2018. We are also very excited to share news of progress on the edition so far, as well as some of the interesting tidbits the Paine team came across in the first year of NHPRC support.

First, a bit of history regarding the edition: publication of a planned five-volume edition began in 1992 with the printing of volumes 1 and 2, prepared by Stephen T. Riley, then director of the Society, and Edward W. Hanson, then an editor in the Publications Department. Dr. (and now Rev.) Hanson brought volume 3 to print in 2005 and continued preparation of material for volumes 4 and 5. With the infusion of new support from the NHPRC last year, the edition (and the Publications Department) received an energizing boost with the addition of Robert Treat Paine Papers Assistant Editor Christina Carrick—and the goal of the project has also expanded to include digitization of the complete edition.



Conrad Edick Wright with his wife, Mary Bowen Wright, at a party in the Dowse Library to mark this new chapter of his career.

- As of the time that this newsletter went to press,
- volume 4 is typeset;
- transcriptions of the historical documents selected for volume 5, which ends with Paine’s final diary entry before his death, have been verified; and
- the digitized contents of volumes 1–3 are available at [www.masshist.org/publications/rtp](http://www.masshist.org/publications/rtp), free for all users.

Interested in taking a short tour through the latter? For a sense of Paine’s somewhat odder side, try searching on the word *brains*—or even the term *brain refining*. If that isn’t your style, you can delve into the documents from volume 3, encompassing Paine’s tenure in the Continental Congress (try searching on *cannon*).

By 1778, the year that begins soon-to-be-printed volume 4, Paine was the first attorney general of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and he had turned away from flights of fancy for the serious task of enforcing the law in a society at war. He displaced the youthful creativity with a by-the-book legal stance as he prosecuted crimes ranging from treason to arson, from counterfeiting to murder. The volume opens with the famous Bathsheba Spooner murder trial—see his trial notes for unsavory details—and closes in 1787 with Paine prosecuting the first of many treason trials with the culmination of Shays’s Rebellion.

While Paine seemingly abandoned his earlier sense of humor, his wife, Sally Cobb Paine, kept the family light-hearted as she snarkily chid her husband for the court circuit journeys that kept him from home: “The report is here that you have got a house in Boston I tell them if you have I Suppose you mean to have two Wifes one for Boston the other for taunton.” The book can be ordered through our distributor, the University of Virginia Press, through their website at [www.upress.virginia.edu](http://www.upress.virginia.edu), and copies are also available for purchase in person at 1154 Boylston Street.

## ADAMS FAMILY CORRESPONDENCE

### *Volume 13: May 1798–September 1799*

The Adams Papers Editorial Project has published the 13th volume of *Adams Family Correspondence*. The almost 300 letters presented in this volume illuminate the family’s lives during 17 tumultuous months of John Adams’s presidency. Consumed with his executive duties, John depended on surrogates for much of his correspondence with family members. An ailing Abigail Adams remained in Quincy for much of the period, writing frequent letters to Philadelphia and receiving lively responses from son Thomas Boylston and others. The letters chronicle the aftermath of the XYZ Affair, the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts, and

John’s unilateral decision to order a second peace mission to France to negotiate a settlement of the Quasi-War. Just as vibrantly displayed are the domestic lives of the Adamses. John and Abigail lamented another absence from each other and worried about their children. Thomas Boylston established himself as a Philadelphia lawyer and offered thoughtful commentary on political life in the capital. From his post in Prussia, John Quincy provided detailed updates on developments in Europe, including Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt. Once again, the correspondence of one of the nation’s founding families does not disappoint.

## FUTURE OF HISTORY PUBLICATION NOW AVAILABLE

The Society is pleased to announce the publication of a volume that we anticipate will make a lasting contribution to the historical profession and benefit all others who wish to reflect on the role of history in America today: *The Future of History: Historians, Historical Organizations, and the Prospects for the Field*, edited by Conrad Edick Wright and Kathryn P. Viens. Direct-mailed to all MHS members and Fellows in June, it is available online free of charge and represents the Society’s first-ever publication formatted for e-readers, in EPUB, MOBI, and PDF formats.

This collection of 14 essays, introduction, and afterword follows from the workshop that the MHS hosted in September 2016 entitled “The Future of History,” which more than 50 leaders in the field attended. This program was a signal achievement of the Society’s 225th anniversary, and the new volume continues the important conversation it engendered. One goal of the workshop was explicitly to break down the barriers between academic and public historians, be they administrators, educators, or editors. The published collection represents many of the most provocative ideas they discussed regarding historical truth, where the public obtains information, the spaces that nurture historical engagement, the role of professional historians, and the resources (or lack thereof) that support their work.

With a keen sense that these concepts should be offered for public discourse as quickly as possible, the editors moved swiftly to identify participants who would author “thought pieces” and meet an aggressive spring deadline. As a result, the 164-page volume, designed by Ondine Le Blanc with the technical support of Jim Connolly, moved through production faster than most other MHS publications of the last two centuries! Together, a stellar roster of academics, museum leaders, and other public historians from a variety of disciplines frame questions, offer new perspectives, and posit solutions in relation to the challenges posed on the internet, in K-12 and college classrooms, and in museum spaces, from small towns to urban boroughs.

*The Future of History* has already attracted interest. It has been adopted for use in several college courses, and we have received orders for additional printed copies (a limited number remain available while supplies last, at a cost of \$4 shipping and handling per book). Nearly 400 copies were downloaded in the first month that the digital versions were available. History, and *The Future of History*, remain vibrant in their many forms to foster additional productive conversations in the years ahead.

## REVOLUTIONARY-ERA ART & ARTIFACTS ONLINE & IN USE

Visual materials offer rich opportunities for observation, study, and learning. The MHS recently completed the digitization of 115 Revolutionary-era portraits and artifacts. Paintings, clothing, watches, jewelry, housewares, swords, pistols, powder horns, mementos, and relics are now available and accessible on a new website. These resources were quickly pressed into service as the focus of a workshop for teachers held over the summer.

The 67 portraits featured on the website present formal images of notable men and women who lived during the time of the American Revolution but had many different experiences and perspectives. Included in the portraits are patriots John Adams, Rev. Samuel Cooper, and Caleb Strong; military figures such as George Washington, the Marquis de Lafayette, and John Thomas; and Loyalists Charles Paxton and Thomas Hutchinson. The website features a comparison tool that allows users to examine selected portraits side-by-side—for example, the companion portraits of Paul and Rachel Revere painted by Chester Harding around 1823 (after Gilbert Stuart's portraits painted in 1813), which depict a distinguished couple at a time of their lives when they had many stories to tell (surely more than a few about the Revolution).

The site presents 48 artifacts that provide a tangible, physical connection to the past. Some of the military artifacts include John Paul Jones's pistol, Gen. Artemas Ward's sword, and a sword that is said to have belonged to Gen. Joseph Warren. Other featured objects relate to aspects of domestic life, such as Abigail Adams's pocket and two teaspoons that belonged to Relief Ellery of Charlestown. The story of the teaspoons is remarkable: when the British began firing on her town on June 17, 1775, Miss Ellery put the spoons in her pocket during her hectic escape. By day's end, the spoons were among her family's few remaining possessions, their house having been destroyed during the Battle of Bunker Hill.

During a two-day workshop hosted by Society's Center for the Teaching of History, a sold-out crowd of educators used items featured on the website to discuss methods for



*Detail of the side-by-side comparison tool in the new Revolutionary portrait feature on the MHS website.*

helping students “read” pieces of material culture and use objects and images as starting points for historical inquiry. In several sessions (some held at MHS and some at the Museum of Fine Arts), participants also considered how the Revolution is represented in popular culture today, in particular through musicals like *Hamilton* and comic books.

Visit the Revolutionary-Era Art and Artifacts website ([www.masshist.org/features/revolutionary-era](http://www.masshist.org/features/revolutionary-era)), where you can explore the newly available visual resources by topic, by portrait subject, and by type of artifact. The MHS is grateful to the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati for supporting both the digitization project and the teacher workshop.

## #JQA250 TRANSCRIBE-A-THON

In other Adams news, on July 15th, the MHS hosted its first Transcribe-a-thon. Adams Papers editors organized the event to celebrate John Quincy Adams's 250th birthday (visit [www.gofundme.com/JQA250](http://www.gofundme.com/JQA250) for more information). The day was a resounding success; 29 volunteers transcribed a remarkable 79 pages of JQA's diary!





# THE SWORD THAT LED THE 54TH



Robert Gould Shaw's sword—whereabouts unknown for over a century—now resides at the MHS. It is the sword that Col. Shaw held at Fort Wagner on July 18, 1863, when he was fatally shot as he led the brave 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment—the first black regiment raised in the North—in a running charge. The MHS recently acquired the sword as part of a significant collection of Shaw and Minturn family papers, photographs, art, and artifacts, including 13 letters written by the colonel himself, a generous gift from the Minturn family.

Though the July 18 attack on Fort Wagner was unsuccessful, it was there and then, amidst real danger and heavy losses, that the 54th Regiment tested their mettle and shone. As MHS Curator of Art and Artifacts Anne Bentley told CBS News, “What they did was they proved, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that they were as courageous and steadfast and honorable as any white regiment.”

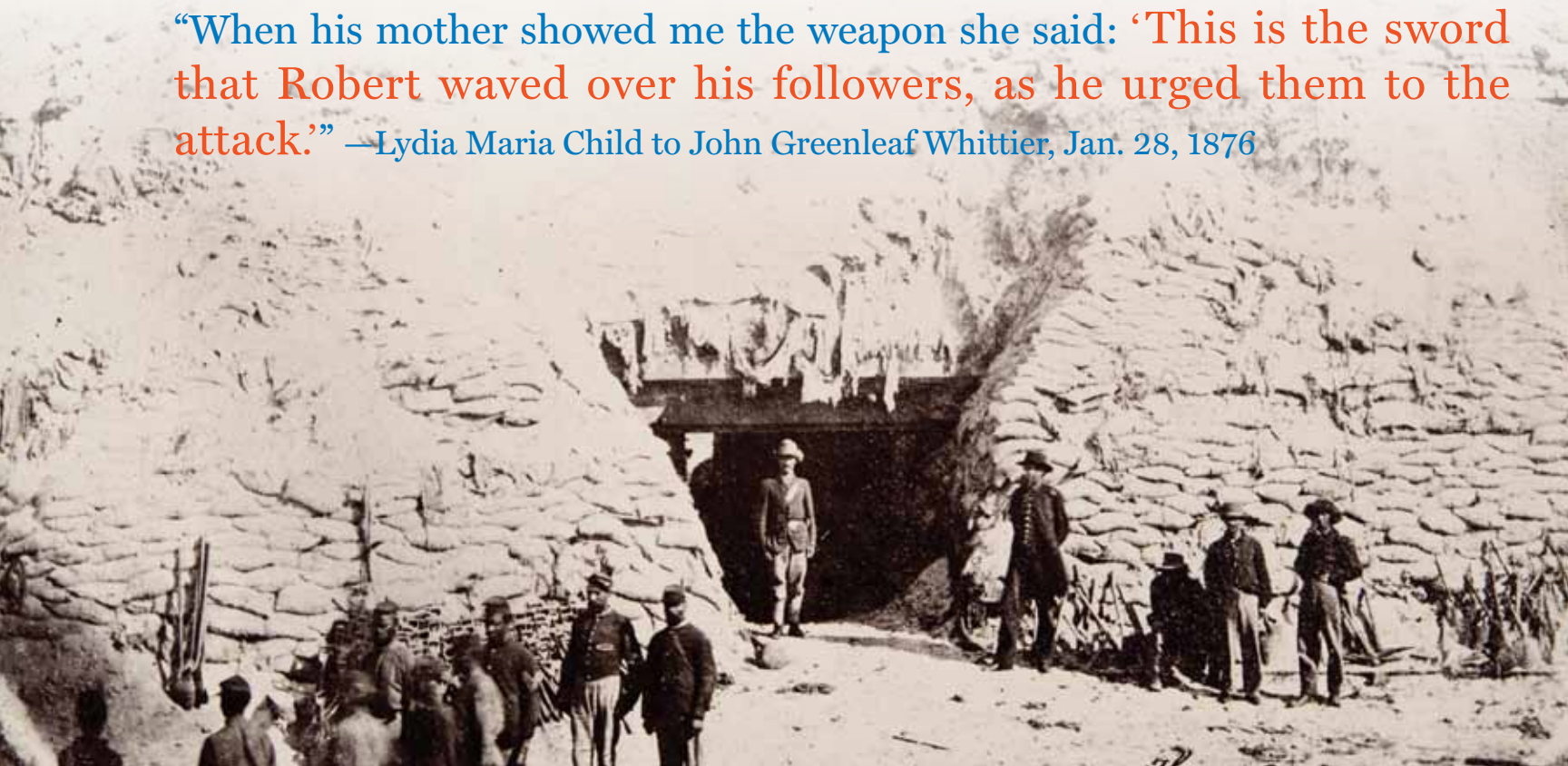
The night Col. Shaw fell, his body was stripped of personal effects and arms. Capt. Luis F. Emilio, who commanded

the regiment's Company E and survived the attack at Fort Wagner, later described Shaw carrying a sword with his initials on it. He spent his life trying to locate Shaw's belongings. You may be familiar with Capt. Emilio's work—his book, *A Brave Black Regiment* (1894), was adapted into the 1989 film *Glory*, which brought Col. Shaw and the 54th once again to the forefront of the United States' imagination.

The sword was retrieved near Goldsboro, North Carolina, by U.S. Colored Troops under the direction of Gen. Charles Jackson Paine. It was returned to the Shaw family in 1865 by Capt. Solon A. Carter, who received this acknowledgment from Shaw's father: “So far as such words may be applied to an inanimate thing it is the weapon which has done most for our colored people in this war, and it is to me likewise as well as to you a source of great satisfaction that it was recovered and restored by officers of colored troops.” And while Col. Shaw's sword never struck down an enemy in the brief time of its use, it served and continues to serve as a powerful symbol for the fight for racial equality.



“When his mother showed me the weapon she said: ‘This is the sword that Robert waved over his followers, as he urged them to the attack.’” —Lydia Maria Child to John Greenleaf Whittier, Jan. 28, 1876







### *The Gift*

Since Col. Shaw, 25 at the time of his death, had no children, his effects, including his sword, went to his parents, who in turn left them to his sister, Susanna Shaw Minturn. She seems to have given the sword to her young grandson. In 2017, his children discovered it in the attic as they cleared out the family home. Familiar with Capt. Emilio's description, they realized at once what they had found and generously added it to their previous gifts to the MHS. The Society is most grateful to the Minturn family for donating such treasures of American history. Their donation also included a portrait of Susanna Shaw Minturn, pictured above.

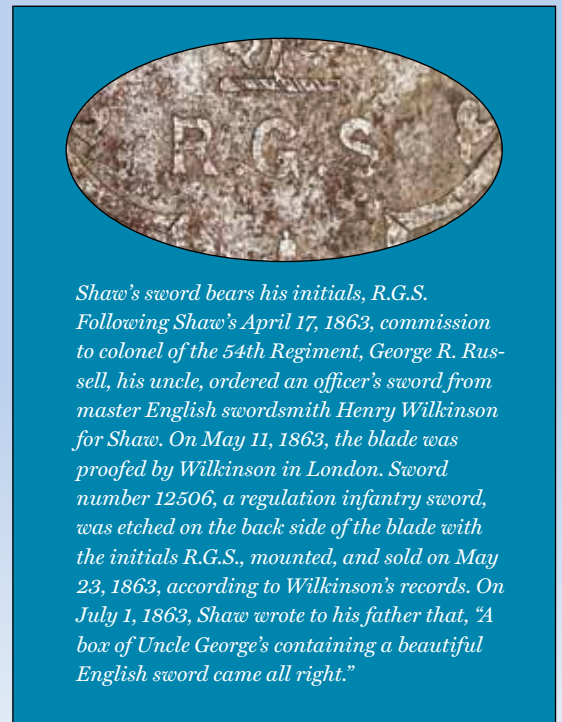
*MHS Curator of Art and Artifacts Anne E. Bentley speaks at the unveiling of the long-lost sword. Right: Visitors admire Shaw's sword and other 54th Regiment materials. Opposite: The 54th Regiment at Fort Wagner after taking the fort in a second action.*



### *Authenticating the Sword*

When they set out to authenticate the Shaw sword, MHS Senior Cataloger Mary Yacovone and Curator of Art and Artifacts Anne Bentley began with two knowns: it had to be of English make and have his initials on it. Mary researched Shaw's correspondence and located his letters about this specific sword while Anne described the sword and tracked down its manufacture through its Wilkinson serial number. Both avenues provided excellent details within the proper timeframe. Mary's important discovery of an address printed in *Civil War Papers* (1900) provided a name that Anne was able to independently confirm as having reclaimed Shaw's sword in 1865. A former colleague pointed them to a letter by Lydia Maria Child in 1876 that absolutely confirmed this as *the* sword carried by Shaw the night he fell at Fort Wagner.

The work that went into authenticating the sword is emblematic of the kind of research and scholarship that happens at the MHS every day. Visit the Society's blog, *The Beehive*, for a detailed timeline drawn from Anne and Mary's research: [www.masshist.org/blog/1517](http://www.masshist.org/blog/1517).



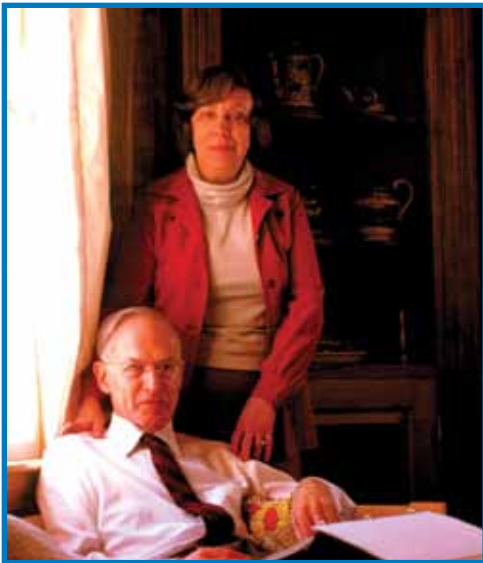
*Shaw's sword bears his initials, R.G.S. Following Shaw's April 17, 1863, commission to colonel of the 54th Regiment, George R. Russell, his uncle, ordered an officer's sword from master English swordsmith Henry Wilkinson for Shaw. On May 11, 1863, the blade was proofed by Wilkinson in London. Sword number 12506, a regulation infantry sword, was etched on the back side of the blade with the initials R.G.S., mounted, and sold on May 23, 1863, according to Wilkinson's records. On July 1, 1863, Shaw wrote to his father that, "A box of Uncle George's containing a beautiful English sword came all right."*

## THE C. CONRAD & ELIZABETH H. WRIGHT FELLOWSHIP

In 2018, the MHS will offer about 50 research fellowships, alone and in collaboration with sister institutions. Since 1984, more than \$3.2 million has been made available to fund over 800 fellowships through endowments and donations to the MHS as well as our participation in the New England Regional Fellowship Consortium. And the numbers keep growing, because next year the Society will welcome its very first C. Conrad and Elizabeth H. Wright Fellow into the community of researchers at the MHS.

This fellowship is endowed through the generosity of the Wrights' son Conrad E. and his wife Mary Bowen Wright. Conrad is the Sibley Editor and former Worthington C. Ford Editor and Director of Research at the MHS. The fellowship supports research in the Society's holdings on any aspect of American religious history. When asked what prompted the gift, Conrad explained, "Mary and I wanted to recognize my parents for instilling in me a love of history. What better way to do so than with an endowed fellowship in American religious history, my father's own field of scholarship?"

C. Conrad Wright was renowned in this area. Many of his works, such as *The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America* and *Congregational Polity: A Historical Survey of Unitarian Universalist Practice*,



remain indispensable for scholars. He was a professor at the Harvard Divinity School for 28 years and concurrently president of the Unitarian Historical Society for 16 years. The dedication to scholarship and history that Professor and Mrs. Wright evinced was manifest not only within their family but also among Professor Wright's students and in the wider community.

Due in large part to the work of scholars such as Professor Wright, religion remains a vibrant topic in the study of American history, from research on enslaved and free evangelicals to studies of recent immigration and laws that affect large areas of daily life, including medical care and citizenship. The MHS is fortunate to have supporters such as Conrad and Mary Wright and honored to offer a fellowship that will help to inspire a love of American religious history in generations to come.

## REVOLUTION 250

If you're downtown and you see a boat on the Common, remember John Hancock.

Resentment of the Townshend Acts was already roiling on May 9, 1768, when Hancock's sloop *Liberty* sailed into the port of Boston. The wealthy merchant had recently had difficulties with the customs officials who sought to illegally search another of his vessels. This time, however, the record showed that the unloading of merchandise had gone off without a hitch; Hancock paid the customs on 25 cases of Madeira. That would seem to be that.

But a week later, the HMS *Romney*, a 50-gun ship of the line, sailed into Boston Harbor to enforce the Townshend Acts and quell smuggling, and soon the customs official who had boarded the *Liberty* told a new story. There had indeed been a hitch. He now reported that he had not been allowed peaceably to collect the duty but was offered a bribe and, when he refused, was threatened and locked in a hold while three-quarters of the ship's cargo was unloaded, never to be claimed (25 cases of Madeira was a suspiciously small cargo given the size of the ship—about one-quarter of *Liberty's* capacity). With this new information, Joseph Harrison, the official collector of customs, and comptroller Benjamin Hallowell seized the *Liberty*.

Word spread quickly and a mob of 3,000 people gathered and searched the city for Harrison and Hallowell. Unable to find them, they shattered the windows of Harrison's house and went to the harbor where he kept a boat for personal use. Repaying him in kind, the crowd pulled the boat out of the harbor, through the streets of Boston, and to the edge of the Common, where they burned it to the ground.

Next year marks the 250th anniversary of this incident—one of many anniversaries that quickly approach. A coalition of organizations called Revolution 250 has formed to plan the exploration of this history, and the MHS has taken a leading role as the fiscal sponsor for the group. Working with traditional nonprofit partners as well as governmental, quasi-governmental, and for-profit businesses, the coalition is gaining momentum, reaching across the Commonwealth, to neighboring states, and even across the Atlantic.

Revolution 250 is planning events, public art, restoration projects, educational initiatives, and resources that will leave a lasting legacy in our communities. The coalition includes over 30 partners, including the Society of the Cincinnati, the American Antiquarian Society, the National Park Service, and the Colonial Society, as well as the Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Downtown Boston Business Improvement District, and Boston Duck Tours. So keep an eye out for Revolution 250's many manifestations—and for any out-of-place boats.



## NEW VIEWS OF BROOK FARM

Brook Farm is one of the most famous Utopian experiments in American history. The community in West Roxbury, founded by George and Sophia Ripley upon Transcendentalist values, was active between 1841 and 1847. Visual representations of Brook Farm are extremely scarce: until recently, there were two images available for research, both in the Society's collections. Through the recent purchase of a small volume of watercolor paintings of flowers, plants, and birds, the MHS has doubled the number of contemporary views. Both front and back covers are decorated with watercolors of the buildings at the heart of the community.

The MHS holds an important collection of the manuscript records of the Brook Farm Association (later the Brook Farm Phalanx) and contemporary accounts written by members and visitors. Despite this bevy of information, much of what we know about the structures and landscape has been gleaned from the Society's two iconic paintings by Josiah Wolcott, an active participant in the association.

The new views by an anonymous artist show (on the front cover) the "Eyrie" built at the highest point on the site. The flat-roofed Eyrie was the home of George and Sophia Ripley and contained a library, music room, and housing for students who attended the Association's school. The cottage in the foreground, where, according to tradition, Margaret Fuller stayed on her frequent visits, was the last surviving building from the Utopian period and later photographs verify the accuracy of the newly acquired illustration of it. On the back cover is the "Hive," the original farmhouse that became the center of life at Brook Farm, which served as a dormitory, a dining hall, and the setting for lectures, parties, and dances.

Now the detective work begins: who is the unknown artist who created the album? The paintings of flowers and plants are arranged by season, from May to September, and the volume is dated "Nov. 1845." During this period, the population of Brook Farm fluctuated from month to month, but we seem to have the work of a person (perhaps a student) who was present for an extended period. And luck-



ily, the paintings inside the volume have brief captions. Will comparison with the handwriting in a letter or manuscript record reveal the artist? We also know nothing of the provenance of the volume except that it was in the collection of Dr. Ivan Gilbert of Columbus, Ohio, who brought it to the attention of Sterling F. Delano, a professor of English at Villanova University, about 20 years ago. In 2004, Delano used the Brook Farm images as dust jacket decorations for his *Brook Farm: The Dark Side of Utopia*. Research on the artist and provenance are underway. In the meantime, the views make a most welcome addition to the MHS collections, where they reside alongside the only other known contemporary images of Brook Farm.



Top: Front and back covers of a newly acquired volume of watercolors, circa 1845, depicting Brook Farm.

Bottom: Brook Farm, circa 1846, and Brook Farm with rainbow, 1845, by Josiah Wolcott.

Opposite: C. Conrad and Elizabeth H. Wright.

The Society's Fellows, the governing body of the MHS, convened on June 21, 2017, for the Annual Meeting, welcoming new Trustee Robert G. Ripley, Jr., and returning Trustee Frederick G. Pfannenstiehl, along with new Overseers Edward B. Baldini, Paul Kuenstner, Amy de Rham, Kristin L. Servison, and Michael Shea. The Fellows recognized retired Board Chair Charles C. Ames, electing him as Trustee Emeritus, and thanked retiring Trustees Frederick D. Ballou and Amalie M. Kass for their years of service to the Society.

Ms. Kass, long one of the Society's greatest friends and champions, was elected to be a Life Trustee and received special tribute for her many contributions. A historian, author, and teacher, she was elected to the MHS in 1995; she became a Trustee in 1996 and served as President (now Chair) from 2002 to 2010. Current Chair of the Board Paul Sandman announced that in recognition of the generosity Ms. Kass has bestowed on the Society over the years and the drive with which she has pursued its mission, the MHS will dedicate the room used to register and orient researchers to the library as The Kass Room.



*Former Chair and new Life Trustee Amalie M. Kass (center) poses with (left to right) Chair Paul Sandman and former Chairs Charlie Ames, Bill Clendaniel, Lee Campbell, and Henry Lee at last year's MHS Annual Meeting.*

## COCKTAILS WITH CLIO | JUNE 1, 2017

[Click here to view Jill Lepore's conversation with Robin Young.](#)



*Jill Lepore and Robin Young took to the stage for an engaging conversation. [Click here to view on YouTube.](#)*

Arriving at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum on June 1, 2017, Cocktails with Clio guests were greeted with a bright blue sky and beautiful views across the harbor. The evening celebrated the importance of American history and civic literacy in all of our lives and proceeds from the event supported the Center for the Teaching of History at the MHS. Following a cocktail reception and dinner, Robin Young of *Here & Now* on 90.9 WBUR and NPR led a fascinating discussion with historian, professor, and author Jill Lepore.



*Guests socialized during the reception and took in scenic views across the harbor. Before the program began, dinner was served in Smith Hall.*







MHS Fellows and Members heard remarks by guest curator William M. Fowler, Jr., followed by the exhibition preview and reception for *The Irish Atlantic*. Co-sponsored by the MHS and the Forbes House Museum in Milton, the exhibition explored the impact of generations of Irish in Boston. The documents and artifacts on view shed light on famine relief efforts, mass migration, community and institution building, and a rise in political power.

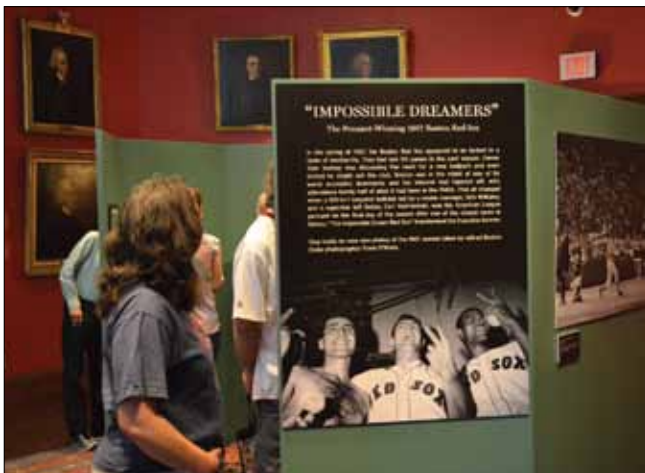


*Clockwise from top:*  
 Stephen T. Riley Librarian  
 Peter Drummey talks to guests  
 during the reception.  
 Guest curator William M.  
 Fowler, Jr., and MHS Trustee  
 Ted Widmer. [Click here to  
 watch Dr. Fowler's remarks.](#)  
 Guests take a closer look at the  
 exhibition.

“IMPOSSIBLE DREAMERS” | JUNE 24, 2017



Visitors to the MHS were treated to a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to explore the 1967 Red Sox season that changed it all. Rare photos of the 1967 season taken by retired *Boston Globe* photographer Frank O'Brien as well as a collection of 1967 artifacts were on exhibit at the MHS from June 24 to July 8. A panel discussion on June 24, led by Red Sox historian Gordon Edes, featured authors Herb Crehan, Bill Nowlin, and Tom Whalen. As a special feature that day, visitors viewed the 2004 World Series trophy.



*Fans—of all ages—enjoyed the exhibition on the 1967 Red Sox.  
 Photos by Carol Knauff.*

*Panelists regaled a full house with stories from the 1967 season.  
[Click here to watch the panel discussion.](#)*

on exhibit at the MHS

# Yankees in the West

October 6, 2017,  
through April 6, 2018  
Monday-Saturday 10 AM-4 PM

