

# MHS Miscellany

Number 112 / Spring 2017

## TEACHING HISTORY

“Programs of this kind are gravely needed.”

American culture struggles in the throes of divisive discourse. Underlying this problem are ignorance of and apathy toward history and civics. The solution is education.

The MHS, where history has revealed itself through evidence since the nation’s fledgling days, is committed to using its unique resources to improve and support the teaching of American history in all K-12 classrooms. To that end, the Society launched its Center for the Teaching of History at the Massachusetts Historical Society (CTH)

in January 2017. Recent events have cast into sharp relief the need for such a program: the importance of history and civic literacy has never been more apparent. Through the CTH, the MHS will continue to lead efforts to promote the central role of history in American culture with high-quality teacher workshops, student programs, and innovative online resources. In order to prepare our children to be informed and engaged citizens, teachers need access to reliable resources as well as opportunities to learn and collaborate with their peers. The Center aims to provide educators across the Commonwealth (and beyond) with these tools while promoting the importance of history education, civic literacy, and critical thinking.

Central to the Society’s education program are workshops that immerse educators in the work of historians and provide them with opportunities to engage with scholars, analyze primary sources, and work with colleagues on issues of pedagogy. As one recent workshop participant noted, “professional development is non-existent in my district. This workshop was my first chance at content-related PD in over 4 years . . . Programs of this kind are gravely needed.” The Center’s enhanced and newly

developed offerings will help teachers to energize the classroom experience, bringing history to life for their students.

The primary sources found in the Society’s collections provide the stories—and the evidence—that can help a student understand that American history is a wonderfully diverse

continuum of experiences that we all share. Observed another program participant, “teachers *need* to know about the resources that are available at the MHS and how they can be used in classrooms.” In a funding climate that prioritizes math, science, and English language arts education, the Center will play a vital role in fostering a belief in the relevance of history—and improving the understanding of the role of civics in public life.



Through its leading role as the state sponsor of Massachusetts History Day, an affiliate program of National History Day, the CTH will increase the Society's interaction with students. It aims to boost participation in the program among students all throughout the Commonwealth and continues to offer resources and workshops to encourage students to use MHS collections in their projects. More than 5,000 students took part in official History Day competitions in Massachusetts last year, and the Center will unveil additional programs this fall to encourage still more teachers and students to take part in the program.



Photograph by Carol Knauff.

In spring 2016, while planning for the Center, the Society held a series of focus groups. Over 90 percent of participants indicated that they found primary sources online through digital collections offered by sister institutions such as the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and the American Antiquarian Society. In order to better promote the Society's impressive digital repository to the K-12 community, the CTH will work with the MHS digital projects team to create a user-friendly portal that highlights digitized documents, primary-source-based lesson plans, and classroom resources that make use of the Society's collections. This portal will be used in workshops, immersing teachers in featured content and providing them with time to explore, process new information, and work together to create something to use with their students. "The MHS staff, Trustees, and Overseers see this as a watershed moment," said MHS President Dennis Fiori. "At the close of our 225th anniversary celebration, we look forward to playing a leading role as a respected voice for the importance of understanding our nation's past with the establishment of the Center for the Teaching of History." He continued, "Under the leadership of Director Kathleen Barker, the new Center will enable us to better serve the public, promote the relevance of history, and

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:

J. H. Beal, "Beal's Photographic View of Boston, from the Top of Grand Junction Elevator, East Boston," 1877.

All photographs by Laura Wulf / all images from MHS collections unless otherwise noted.

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[www.masshist.org](http://www.masshist.org)

##### Hours:

The MHS reading room is open to the public free of charge, 9 AM to 4:45 PM Monday through Friday and 9 AM to 4 PM on Saturday.

##### For more information:

Please call ahead or check the website for directions, information about collections, reading room policies, holiday hours, and special events.

improve the understanding of the role of civics in public life.” Through its programs, the Center will empower educators to speak knowledgeably about the importance of history and civics education in the classroom, create community-based opportunities for teachers to promote civic literacy, and collaborate with organizations to advocate for robust curriculum frameworks and funding models that promote the teaching of history. Learn more about the Center’s current offerings at [www.masshist.org/teaching-history](http://www.masshist.org/teaching-history).

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

As a modest-sized institution with great ambition, the MHS is constantly seeking ways to spread the gospel of history with limited resources. Toward this end, we have adopted a wholesale rather than a retail approach to reaching a student audience. We also want educational offerings that have lasting value beyond what comes from a “field trip.” Massachusetts History Day (MHD), teacher workshops, and online resources are the triumvirate that makes these goals possible. Our recently launched Center for the Teaching of History brings them together as the core of its activities.

MHD (an affiliate of National History Day) currently involves 5,000 middle and high school students from across the state in discovering creative and meaningful ways to present history. The CTH hopes to significantly increase the number of participants over the next few years. By annually training upwards of 700 teachers from across the country in workshops where primary documents are the focus, we influence the learning of over 35,000 students each year. These workshops are supported by online materials—contextual essays, documentary resources, and lesson plans—available to all teachers regardless of whether they participate in a workshop. Enriching the classroom experience brings history to life and stimulates storytelling that connects students to the actual lives and events that shaped our country.

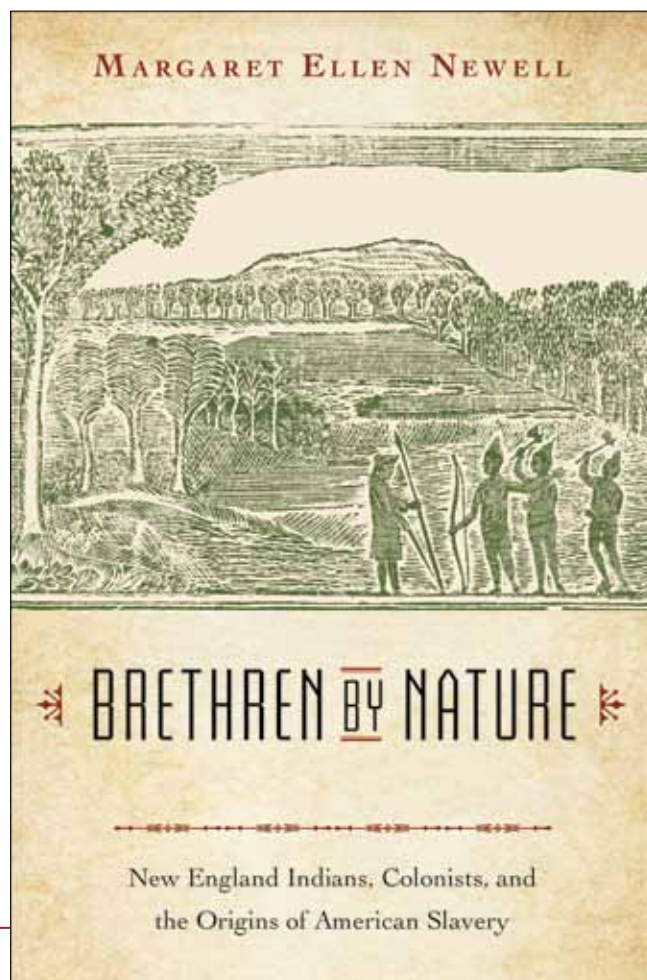
Our democratic society is strengthened by our knowledge of America’s past, the meaning of our founding documents, and the workings of our government. At the heart of the Society’s mission is the commitment to foster a deeper understanding of the American experience in order to forge a brighter future for all of our country’s citizens. The establishment of the Center for the Teaching of History is a major step toward achieving this vision.

*Margaret Ellen Newell’s book Brethren by Nature, winner of the 2016 Peter J. Gomes Memorial Book Prize.*

## AND THE GOMES PRIZE GOES TO . . .

It is the rare New Englander who connects Massachusetts with the roots of American slavery, but Margaret Ellen Newell wants to change the common wisdom. Newell, who received the Society’s second annual Peter J. Gomes Memorial Book Prize at a ceremony on January 31, tells a surprising story in her study *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery* (Cornell University Press). Contradicting two assumptions—that New Englanders enslaved Indians only infrequently and that they sold most of those they did subjugate to southern and Caribbean plantation owners—she shows that the region’s English settlers bound and retained thousands of natives. As a result, from as early as the 1630s, Indian slaves were a regular presence in many New England towns and households.

Newell reveals that many Indian slaves were prisoners of war, captured during such conflicts as the Pequot War (1637) and King Philip’s War (1675–1678), but that others were sentenced for crimes or even kidnapped. Her research has significant implications for our image of colonial New England society, because she shows that many communities were considerably more racially mixed than it is widely



assumed. Nor were the region's English settlers above practicing slavery, as their descendants have often believed.

The MHS established the Gomes Prize in 2014 and awarded it for the first time the next year in memory of Rev. Peter Gomes (1942–2011), a longtime and much beloved member of the Society who was the Plummer Professor of Christian Morals at Harvard where he was also the Pusey Minister in the university's Memorial Church. This year's Gomes Prize recipient, Margaret Newell, is a professor of history at The Ohio State University, where she has taught since 1991. A winner of multiple MHS research grants, she is also an elected Fellow of the Society.

An outside panel of distinguished judges, tasked with selecting a work of exemplary scholarship, chose Newell's book from a large and strong pool of candidates. *Brethren by Nature* is a significant contribution to the history of Massachusetts and New England, upending long-held assumptions about Indian slavery in the region as well as situating captive natives in the broader context of the slave trade.

## SELECTED PRESIDENTIAL CONTENT NOW FEATURED IN GOOGLE ARTS & CULTURE

This February, in honor of President's Day, Google Arts & Culture launched its American Democracy collection, a trove of online content about the history of the U.S. presi-

dency from the time of George Washington to the present day. The MHS is pleased to have collaborated on this project, providing items relating to some of our favorite (best represented) presidents, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and John Quincy Adams. Google Arts & Culture, a web system administered by the Google Cultural Institute, features content from over 1,200 museums and archives from 60 countries. The goal is "to bring the world's cultural heritage online" and "to showcase and share [heritage institutions'] gems, making them more widely accessible to a global audience."

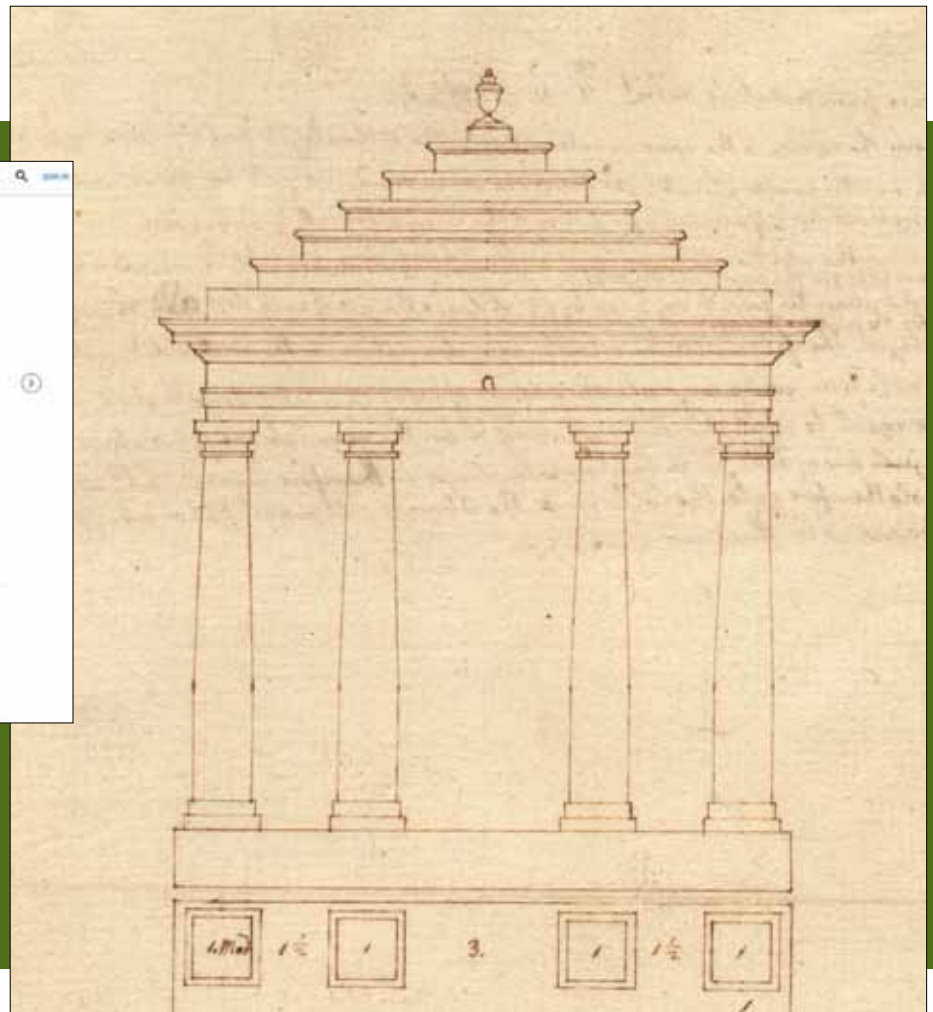
Over the summer, a coordinator at the Google Cultural Institute reached out to MHS staff, inviting the Society to become a contributing partner and share selected items from our presidential collections. It was an interdepartmental effort: members of the Collections, Adams Papers, and Development and Membership departments selected important items from the Adams Family Papers and the Coolidge Collection of Thomas Jefferson Manuscripts for inclusion in Google's American Democracy project, developed the exhibitions and loaded the content into Google's online delivery system.

As of mid February, more than 80 treasures from MHS's collections and two online exhibitions are now part of Google's extensive online collections. Our content is in good company; it is browseable and searchable along with items from important museums, archives, and special collections. Google has planned promotional efforts focusing on Ameri-



*Google Arts & Culture web display of Thomas Jefferson, architectural drawings (elevation and plan) for a pigeon house at Monticello, probably 1778, Coolidge Collection of Thomas Jefferson Manuscripts, MHS.*

*Right: Detail from the same drawings.*



can Democracy, and we are hopeful that our selections will inform and delight a wide audience.

One of the two online exhibitions, “The Private Jefferson,” is based on the publication *The Private Jefferson: Perspectives from the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, the companion to the recent MHS exhibition of a similar name. It features a selection of Thomas Jefferson’s letters as well as pages from his Farm and Garden Books, architectural drawings and sketches, published documents, and engravings.

The second online exhibition, “From Diplomats to Presidents: John Adams and John Quincy Adams,” is an overview of the impressive public careers of our second and sixth presidents. Curated by staff from the Adams Papers Editorial Project, whose expertise meant they could efficiently select items and quotations from the extensive Adams Family Papers collection, this exhibition is an excellent illustrated narrative about these two men to whom public service was life.

Fire up the device of your choice and explore Google Arts & Culture’s new American Democracy project by visiting [www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/project/american-democracy](http://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/project/american-democracy), or start by browsing MHS’s contributions at [www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/partner/massachusetts-historical-society](http://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/partner/massachusetts-historical-society).

## ONE MAN’S BEST FRIEND

When Lt. Robert A. Payne befriended a stray dog outside a pub in the English countryside in 1943, the two became inseparable, and so began a touching story of a man and his dog that would capture the public’s attention.

An Air Force pilot from Holyoke, Mass., Payne joined the 548th Squadron of the 385th Bomb Group in Great Ashfield, England, in June 1943. He named his new canine friend Thunderbolt after the Republic P-47 Thunderbolt fighter-bomber. Each day, when his squadron returned to the airfield from a successful mission, Thunderbolt was there to greet him. But one day the following November, Payne’s B-17 did not return to base, having been brought down over Germany. Undeterred, Thunderbolt returned to the airfield day after day, awaiting his master’s return. Payne and the other surviving members of his crew were captured and sent to the Stalag Luft I prison camp, the destination for many of America’s military pilots, where he would remain until he and his fellow prisoners were liberated by Russian troops in May 1945.

The MHS recently purchased a remarkable collection of Payne’s papers and artifacts that illuminate the heartwarm-



o — Somewhere in England — o  
Measuring a 20 mm Nazi  
shell along Thunderbolt's nose.  
It had my name on it but not  
the serial number. It came in  
the right side of the office window  
high. Looking for a home. This  
housing shortage —  
Raid on Stuttgart Germany  
6 September 1943  
D 12

*Lt. Robert A. Payne, with Thunderbolt, holding a German round that passed through the cockpit of his B-17 but did not explode. He is comparing the size of the round with the dog's nose.*

# A GREAT PILOT'S WIFE RECEIVES THE DEVOTED MASCOT WHO SURVIVED WITH HIS MASTER



HOW THE FAITHFUL DOG THUNDERBOLT WAITED TWO YEARS FOR A DOWNED FLIER BEFORE BEING WELCOMED HOME

THUNDERBOLT, MASCOT OF AAF CAPT. ROBERT PAYNE OF HOLYOKE, MASS., REACHES NEW YORK ABOARD THE QUEEN MARY.

YOU'R MRS PAYNE, AREN'T YOU?  
YES. I'M WAITING FOR MY HUSBAND'S DOG. ITS BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE THEY WERE TOGETHER.



CAPT. PAYNE, A FLYING FORTRESS PILOT IN ENGLAND IN 1943, ADOPTED A BRINDLE MONGREL AS HIS MASCOT.



HE SURE TAKES TO YOU. WHATTA YOU CALL HIM?

THUNDERBOLT, SAME AS THE FIGHTER ESCORTS



NO BOY, YOU CAN'T COME, YOU WAIT HERE FOR ME.

Among the press coverage of the reunion of Robert Payne and his beloved dog Thunderbolt was a three-page comic in the April 1946 issue (vol. 1, no. 4) of Picture News In Color and Action. The rare comic book, which featured factual stories, only lasted for 10 issues.

ing story of the pilot and Thunderbolt. Bob Lipsett, a friend and fellow pilot, eventually coaxed the dog away from the airfield and cared for him for the remainder of the war. Soldiers were not permitted to write to prisoners of war directly, so Lipsett and Payne communicated about Thunderbolt through correspondence with Payne's wife, Rosamond. In a letter to her of December 18, 1943, Lipsett asks that she share news of the dog with her husband: "I also have Bob's dog 'Thunderbolt.' He left instructions to get him home to you in some way or other. The dog takes it pretty hard and makes two or three trips to the hard stand daily looking for Bob." These letters, as well as Payne's own home to his wife, are among the papers in the collection, which also contains his pilot's log, photographs, newspaper clippings, and printed ephemera. Payne's "Wartime Log," a blank volume issued to prisoners by the YMCA, contains jokes, the signatures and addresses of his fellow prisoners, artwork, and photographs, including an image of Lipsett and Thunderbolt that his friend sent to him from France after D-Day as evidence of the dog's well-being. The collection also contains three-dimensional artifacts that provoke a tangible connection to Payne and his experience as a prisoner of war; among his personal items are the shoes he wore in camp, dog tags, and a cigarette case made from metal strips cut from food containers.

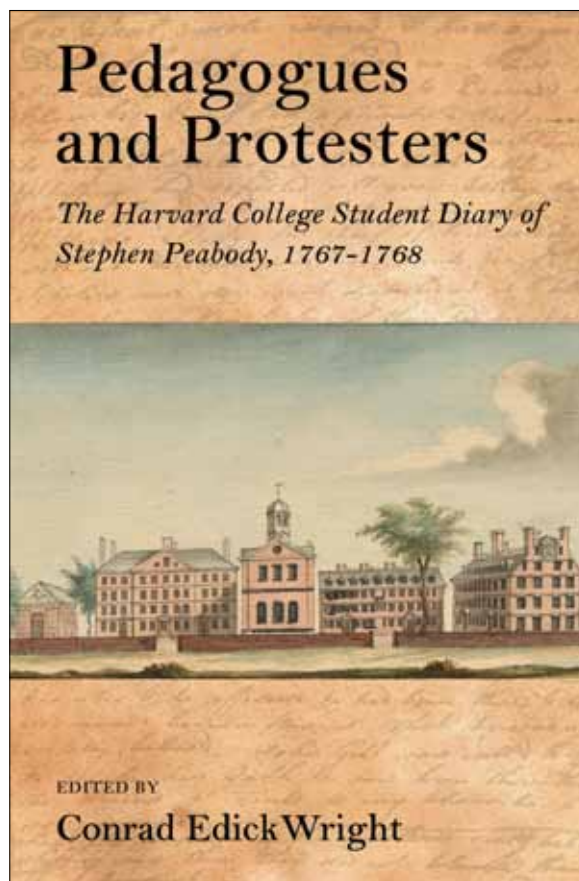
The story of the pilot and his loyal companion caught the attention of the public here and abroad, beginning with a story published in the London edition of *Stars and Stripes* in January 1944 titled "Thunderbolt Misses His Master's Voice." The press followed the story for the remainder of the war, and reporters were present in New York in the fall of 1945 when Thunderbolt disembarked from the *Queen Mary*. Bob Lipsett was not permitted to bring the dog back with him, but he persuaded the Red Cross field director, Dr. James Eagan, to escort the dog back to New York where he was greeted by Rosamond. Robert Payne eventually made it home to Holyoke, where he was reunited with his faithful friend. He remained on active duty during the Korean War and served intermittently with the Air Force Reserves until his retirement in 1976.

## DIARY REPORTS COLONIAL AMERICA'S LARGEST STUDENT STRIKE

Monday, April 4, 1768, dawned cold in Cambridge. In Harvard Yard, clusters of angry undergraduates assembled for a meeting that eventually attracted most of the student body. A faculty member entered the gathering to try to calm those present, but when the college bell ran to signal morning prayers, most of the members of the lower three classes

stayed away. At the end of the devotions, more than 100 undergraduates, over half the total, lined up to meet with Pres. Edward Holyoke and leave the school. By the end of the morning, Harvard College was in chaos.

An account of the student strike in the spring of 1768 is the dramatic climax of the diary of Stephen Peabody, a



member of the class of 1769, which the University of Massachusetts Press published in January in association with the MHS. Conrad Edick Wright, our Ford Editor and Director of Research, edited the journal, the manuscript of which is in the Society's collection.

More than an account of a single event, however, Peabody's diary is a remarkable record of a year's activities, beginning on May 24, 1767, and ending the following May 23. Clifford K. Shipton, the distinguished historian of Harvard College and its students, called the journal "the most revealing document relating to colonial education which has come down to us," but even this description understates the breadth and significance of the volume. Through Peabody's eyes the reader sees not only the daily affairs of Harvard shortly before the American Revolution, the best surviving account of life in a colonial college, but also events on the Peabody family farm in Andover, travels through parts of Middlesex and Essex Counties as well as eastern New Hampshire and southern Maine, and Stephen's own

strongly orthodox assessment of religious controversies in late colonial Massachusetts. Wright has complemented Peabody's daily entries with an extended introduction and extensive annotation as well as maps, diagrams, and contemporary illustrations.

What was the reason for the strike? It was, anticlimactically, that the students objected to a new faculty measure designed to force them to prepare for recitations. Stephen called the regulation, which simply required undergraduates who were not ready to participate to inform the instructor before class, "really sickish," a judgment that captured the views of most of his schoolmates. Minor though the provocation was, Peabody's account of the event and, more broadly, of life in Massachusetts in the late 1760s offers rare insight into a familiar place at a bygone time.

*Pedagogues and Protesters: The Harvard College Student Diary of Stephen Peabody, 1767-1768*, edited by Conrad Edick Wright, is available from the University of Massachusetts Press for \$27.95 (paper) or \$90.00 (hardbound). It can be found online at [www.umass.edu/umpress/title/pedagogues-and-protesters](http://www.umass.edu/umpress/title/pedagogues-and-protesters).

## NEW SITE FOR PAINE

Now at the MHS website is a new site for the NHPRC-funded Robert Treat Paine papers project. At present, you can find information about Paine—a signer of the Declaration of Independence and the first attorney general of Massachusetts—and his family. You can also get more details about the project, which will complete and digitize the five-volume edition of this understudied Founder's papers. This same site is already loaded with the infrastructure to deliver the digital edition—for which stay tuned! Digital volumes 1 and 2 of *The Papers of Robert Treat Paine* will be up and running later this year.

Visit [www.masshist.org/publications/rtp](http://www.masshist.org/publications/rtp) to explore RTP's new home on the Web, and while you're there you might find yourself enticed to follow @RTPaine\_MHS, whose lively Twitter timeline appears on the right.



## THE IRISH ATLANTIC

### *A Story of Famine, Migration, and Opportunity*

How did Boston, once almost solely dominated by Yankees, become the town of, for example, the St. Patrick's Day Breakfast and Parade and the Celtics? The Irish in Boston have a long and complex history, from humble beginnings to considerable power. Visit the Society's current exhibition, *The Irish Atlantic: A Story of Famine, Migration, and Opportunity*, to learn about how Irish Americans built community to overcome strident discrimination and become a major political force. The exhibition presents documents, images, and objects that illuminate this history—from the founding of the Irish Charitable Society through Potato Famine relief efforts and on to the political ascendancy—as well as video commentary by scholars and public figures including Boston's own mayor, Martin J. Walsh.

*The Irish Atlantic* is co-sponsored by the Forbes House Museum in Milton and made possible by a generous grant from the Sullivan Family Foundation. It is on display, here at the Society's 1154 Boylston Street building, until September 22, 2017.

*Pamphlet, 1905, from the Lomasney ephemera within the Martin M. Lomasney scrapbooks, depicting John F. Fitzgerald, Boston's first U.S.-born, Irish Catholic mayor.*





## COCKTAILS WITH CLIO

*June 1, 2017, 6 PM*

Join us as we sip, feast, and celebrate history at the seventh Cocktails with Clio on June 1 at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. Following a cocktail reception and seated dinner, Robin Young of *Here & Now* on 90.9 WBUR and NPR will lead a discussion with historian, professor, and author Jill Lepore. Named for the muse of history, this festive evening celebrates the importance of American history and civic literacy in all of our lives. Tickets are \$300 per person and proceeds support the newly established Center for the Teaching of History at the MHS. Visit [www.masshist.org/clio](http://www.masshist.org/clio) for more information and to purchase tickets.

### Give to the MHS Fund Today

History is happening every day at the MHS because of the generosity of individuals like you. Gifts to the MHS Fund provide the unrestricted operating support that is used every day to move our top priorities forward. Your contributions help us to better serve the public, highlight the relevance of history, and improve the understanding of the role of civics in public life. Give to the MHS Fund today so we can continue to lead the efforts to promote the central role of history in American culture through a variety of programs, exhibitions, high-quality teacher workshops, and innovative online resources.

### What Will Your Legacy Be?

A planned gift reflects your values and communicates your legacy; it tells a story of what you hold most important in your life and community. The MHS offers a range of planned giving options including charitable remainder trusts, charitable lead trusts, gifts of real estate or tangible personal property, and gifts from retirement plans or life insurance policies.

Those who have included the MHS in their long-term plans through bequests, life-income gifts, or other deferred-giving arrangements are part of the Society's legacy giving group, the James Sullivan Society. Named for the MHS's founding president, first recorded donor, and early legator through a significant bequest of important historical documents and artifacts, the Sullivan Society continues the tradition of giving through the extraordinary generosity of its members.

To learn more about the many planned giving opportunities that can help donors realize their own philanthropic goals and ensure the future of the MHS, contact the Development Department at 617-646-0543 or [development@masshist.org](mailto:development@masshist.org).



## MORE TURNING POINTS: DOCUMENTS & ARTIFACTS THAT DIDN'T MAKE THE CUT

As part of the Society's 225th anniversary celebration and to kick off the fall social season, on September 15 more than 70 MHS Fellows and Members gathered for a special program, reception, and chance to view *Turning Points in American History*. In his remarks, Stephen T. Riley Librarian Peter Drummey highlighted some of the turning points that did not make it into the exhibition.



*From left: Guests take the opportunity to explore items on display. Docent and Member Tom DiGangi and Sally Dane take a close look at Elbridge Gerry's annotated copy of the U.S. Constitution.*

## DEMOCRACY IN CRISIS: FOUR ELECTIONS



As an unprecedented presidential election approached, the Society welcomed 113 Fellows and Members to a panel discussion that explored the legacies of four previous presidential elections and questioned what this history suggests for our country's future. Panelists Carol Bundy, Michael A. Cohen, Lisa McGirr, and Ted Widmer kept the audience on the edge of its collective seat with lively debate and examples of times of turmoil past.



*Clockwise from top left: Panelists Carol Bundy, Lisa McGirr, and Michael Cohen take questions from the audience. Members Bill and Sally Coughlin at the reception with John Clarkeson. Guests filled Ellis Hall for the panel discussion.*



## REVOLUTIONARY PORTRAITS FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE MHS

On November 17, the Society hosted a small group of Fellows, Members, and friends for a special event to highlight portraits of Revolutionary-era figures from the Society's collections. Following a convivial reception, guests viewed artwork on display—including a newly acquired portrait of Alexander Hamilton—and learned about the artists and the people they portrayed through presentations by Erica Hirshler, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and David Dearinger, Boston Athenæum.



*From left: David Dearinger speaks with guests during the reception. Fellow Kitty Lastavica and Ronald Bourgeault pose for a photo during the reception. Erica Hirshler answers questions after the presentations.*

## MHS FELLOWS & MEMBERS HOLIDAY PARTY

Holiday cheer and festive music performed by the Figgy Puddin' Carollers—decked out in Victorian-style attire—filled the building on December 7 as 118 Fellows, Members, and guests gathered at the MHS for the annual holiday party. Along with good food and festive tidings, guests were amused by Stephen T. Riley Librarian Peter Drummey's annual reading of the anti-Christmas laws.



*Clockwise from left: MHS Board Chair Paul Sandman chats with Overseer Tom Paine and Michael Greco. Members David Herder, Betsy Munzer, and John Reidy at the party. The Figgy Puddin' Carollers sing a repertoire of holiday favorites.*



Massachusetts Historical Society  
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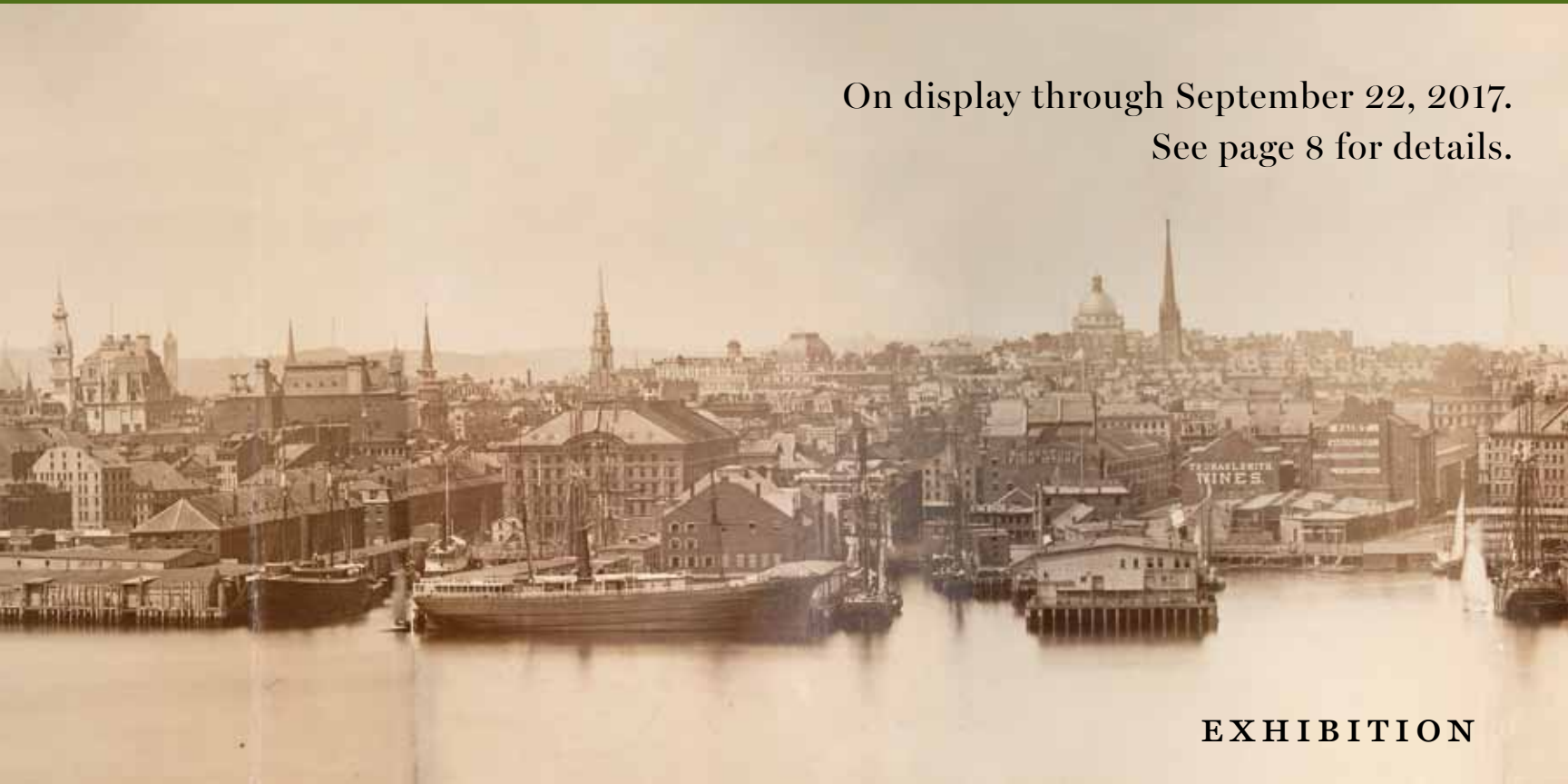
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# The Irish Atlantic

## A Story of Famine, Migration, & Opportunity

On display through September 22, 2017.  
See page 8 for details.



EXHIBITION