



HARVARD

— — — — — AND — — — — —

**SLAVERY**

Seeking a Forgotten History

by Sven Beckert, Katherine Stevens and  
the students of the Harvard and Slavery Research Seminar

#### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Cover Image: “Memorial Hall”  
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## INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2007, four Harvard undergraduate students came together in a seminar room to solve a local but nonetheless significant historical mystery: to research the historical connections between Harvard University and slavery. Inspired by Ruth Simmon’s path-breaking work at Brown University, the seminar’s goal was to gain a better understanding of the history of the institution in which we were learning and teaching, and to bring closer to home one of the greatest issues of American history: slavery. But no one sitting in that room on that beautiful late summer day had any idea what we would find. With much of the literature on Harvard’s history silent on slavery, it was unclear whether Harvard had any links to slavery, and if so, what they were.

As the story that follows makes abundantly clear, the students’ curiosity in the face of the unknown and their impressive mastery of the arts of historical detection were rewarded with a treasure trove of findings, many of them disconcerting. The 32 students who participated in this initial and three subsequent seminars scoured Harvard’s archival records, drew countless published volumes from its library stacks, made careful inspections of our neighboring colonial graveyards, and carefully inspected Harvard’s oldest buildings. Much of what they found was

surprising: Harvard presidents who brought slaves to live with them on campus, significant endowments drawn from the exploitation of slave labor, Harvard’s administration and most of its faculty favoring the suppression of public debates on slavery. A quest that began with fears of finding nothing ended with a new question—how was it that the university had failed for so long to engage with this elephantine aspect of its history?

The following pages will summarize some of the findings of the students’ research. They show that the history of slavery is also local history: Harvard, like most institutions in the United States whose history stretches back to before 1865, had the labor, products, and profits of slavery woven into its very fabric. But perhaps the most important lesson we learned in the seminars was that there is yet so much more to find out. We only understand some small parts of the story, and it will be up to future generations of student researchers and others to explore this history.

Still, now is the moment to share some of our findings with the larger community. We want to inspire others to dig deeper into this history, but even more so we want to encourage a broader debate on what this history means for us today. While the students could not agree on what acts of memorialization, remembrance, or

restitution would be appropriate responses for Harvard, they all agreed that a broader community needs to be drawn into this discussion. It is the community as a whole that needs to decide what needs to be done.

I could not have embarked upon this project without the support of many people. First, I want to publicly thank the amazing group of Harvard students whose dedication and enthusiasm drove this project forward from start to finish. Teaching fellows Kathryn Boodry and Katherine Stevens, who are themselves writing important dissertations on the history of slavery, were the best possible colleagues: Engaged, opinionated, and ever giving of their time to help the students with their research. With enormous energy and dedication, co-author Katherine Stevens took an important role in conceptualizing, writing and producing this publication. Archivists and

librarians at Harvard and elsewhere went out of their way to help us trace obscure sources on a hidden history. Matthew Corcoran, Caitlin Hopkins, Jesse Halvorsen, and Erin Wells supported, in various ways, the publishing of the students' research. My colleague Evelyn Higginbotham has been a much-needed participant observer all along, and I thank her for her support. And, last but not least, a big "thank you" to Harvard President Drew Faust for sponsoring this publication, engaging with our efforts along the way, and encouraging yet deeper consideration of the implications of our students' research.



Sven Beckert  
Cambridge, September 2011

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Harvard University was the first institution of higher learning in colonial America. Founded in 1636 as a training ground for aspiring ministers, it capitalized on this early start and became during the nineteenth century the nation's most influential university, and by the middle of the twentieth century, arguably the world's. Not surprisingly, then, Harvard's four centuries long career is tightly connected to the history of New England, the United States and the Atlantic world on whose most dynamic eastern edge it was perched. Notwithstanding a deafening silence on the topic in most remembrances of this great university, Harvard's history entails a whole range of connections to slavery.

# HARVARD & SLAVERY

## *in the Colonial Era*

The story of Harvard and slavery begins in the era of its founding. By the mid-seventeenth century slaves were part of the fabric of everyday life in colonial Massachusetts. They lived and labored in the colony. Their owners were often political leaders and heads of prominent families. It should be no surprise that slaves followed the children of that elite onto campus, working in Harvard buildings, passing through Harvard's yard, laboring in the houses of Harvard's alumni, serving its faculty. Off campus, their toil contributed to many of the fortunes that funded the university.

Still, few imaginings of colonial Harvard, in prose or paint, include slaves among the scholars and students who paced its yards. Why should this be? For one, the numbers, occupations, and prevalence of slaves in Massachusetts do not match the common image of slavery that, in the United States, has come to be understood mostly through the lens of the nineteenth-century South. We picture slaves on cotton plantations in Mississippi or on rice plantations in coastal South Carolina. Slavery in the New World, however, had a much longer and deeper history, in which Harvard played its own part.

Not long after their first harsh winters, colonists in Massachusetts and all of New England

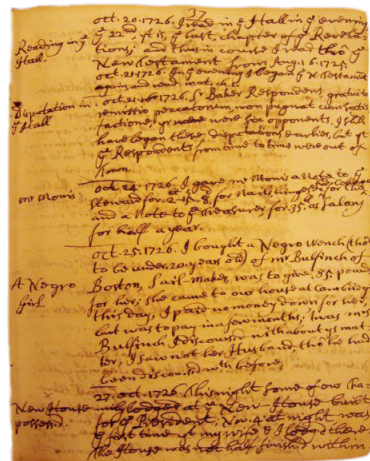
saw their main chance for success lay in trade connections to the vastly richer plantation colonies of the South and especially the Caribbean. Called the "West Indies" by British colonists, the islands of the Caribbean and the eastern coast of South America were the primary economic engines of the major European empires in the New World. On plantations in the West Indies, slaves labored in large numbers, mostly producing sugar; profits from selling sugar, molasses, and their byproducts enriched Europe and its New World intermediaries.<sup>1</sup> Though half an ocean away from the Caribbean, the Massachusetts economy was an important vertex of the complicated, vaguely triangular Atlantic trade. For the first 150 years of Harvard's history, slaves not only served Harvard leaders, slave labor played a vital role in the unprecedented appreciation of wealth by New England merchants that laid the foundation of Harvard's status as a world-class educational institution.

### SLAVES AT HARVARD

Slavery was legal in Massachusetts until the American Revolution. It should not surprise us, then, that during these same colonial years Harvard students were deeply entangled with slave-owning. They recited their lessons to

slave-owning professors like Judah Monis and obeyed the rules set out by slave-owning presidents like Increase Mather and Benjamin Wadsworth. They ate meals and slept in beds prepared by four generations of the Bordman family, the college stewards, whose many slaves likely did some or all of the actual cooking and cleaning. On Sundays they attended church at the First Church of Cambridge, where they listened to sermons by the slave-owning minister, William Brattle, himself a Harvard graduate of the class of 1680.<sup>2</sup>

“The diary of Harvard President Benjamin Wadsworth, recording his purchase of Venus, a ‘negro wench.’”  
COURTESY OF THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES



When they graduated, many Harvard students became slave owners themselves: Wait Still Winthrop (class of 1662 DNG) owned a slave named Mingo, alias Cocke Negro, who was executed in 1712; Cotton Mather (class of 1678) owned a slave named Onesimus, who explained the African practice of inoculation to his master during a smallpox epidemic in the 1720s; John Cuming (class of 1750) was an eminent physician in Concord, Massachusetts, whose slaves Brister and Jem underwrote with their labor his founding bequest to the Harvard Medical School; John Hancock (class of 1754) owned slaves named Molly, Agnes, Cato, Prince, and Hannibal, as well as Frank, who is buried at the foot of Hancock’s monument in the Granary Burying Ground in Boston.<sup>3</sup> Notably, Puritan divine and Harvard President Increase Mather wrote in his 1718 will that his slave called “Spaniard” should “not be sold after my Decease; but I do

then give Him his Liberty: Let him be esteemed a Free Negro.”<sup>4</sup>

Students in the Harvard and Slavery Seminars found only fragmentary evidence of slaves working at Harvard: in single lines in diary entries, in wills, in probate records, and sometimes on gravestones. In fact, a brief walk through the old Cambridge burial ground revealed the names of slaves who lived in Cambridge. Though but a shadow of the well-documented lives of their masters, such evidence nonetheless proves the presence of slaves at Harvard and suggests important ways that their conditions evolved in the century before emancipation. The mere fact that these fragments exist proves that slaves were part of daily life at Harvard. A little more searching through well-preserved manuscripts brings the lives of slaves and their connections to Harvard into much better focus.

Slavery in colonial Massachusetts was made possible by a particular web of human relations, legal supports, and shared customs, all of which evolved over time and across space. For example, laborers owned by colonists in the 1600s were not necessarily African. Forms of un-freedom in Massachusetts and throughout the New World included indentured servitude of Europeans, enslavement of captured or otherwise displaced Indians, and enslavement of Africans and their descendants.<sup>5</sup> Toward the end of the Pequot War of 1634–1638, for example, forty-eight Pequot captives were distributed as slaves in Massachusetts, while another seventeen were shipped off to slavery in the West Indies. The ship *Desire*, which carried fifteen Pequot boys and two women to Providence Island in 1637, returned with a cargo that included some of the first

African slaves to set foot in New England. If the slaves brought back on the *Desire* were the first to come to Massachusetts from the West Indies they would have been remarkable not for being slaves, but for being African.<sup>6</sup>

The first apparent mention of a slave on Harvard’s campus occurred not long after the *Desire*’s arrival. In 1639 the wife of Harvard’s first schoolmaster, Nathaniel Eaton, confessed to a committee that her husband had mismanaged the college. Among the offenses of his tenure was the time a person she called “the Moor” slept in student Samuel Hough’s “sheet and pillow-bier.” She also admitted that students complained about having to eat the same food as “the Moor.”<sup>7</sup> Drawn from the Spanish name for North Africans, “Moor” was a common term for African slaves. For example, Emmanuel Downing, a correspondent of colonial governor John Winthrop, suggested that the colony could not “thrive until we get a stock of slaves sufficient to do all our business.” “I suppose you know very well,” he advised Winthrop, “how we shall maintain 20 Moors cheaper than one English servant.”<sup>8</sup> If “the Moor” was indeed a slave, he was likely the first to be connected to Harvard. Many more followed.

“The Moor” and Increase Mather’s “Spaniard” were part of what historian Ira Berlin has called North America’s charter generation of slaves. This first generation was part of an Atlantic system that connected Africa, the West Indies and the colonies of North America. Most were at least bilingual, speaking both the language of their birth and that of the colony in which they were enslaved.<sup>9</sup> Increase Mather’s “Spaniard” may have been trilingual, as his name suggests

abilities gained in his passage through Spanish possessions.<sup>10</sup> Slaves of his generation might have labored on a plantation in Cuba or served on Spanish ships before being caught up in a New England-bound captain’s hold. In this early period emancipated slaves like Spaniard might have found a place, however humble, as free people within the social order in which they had once been slaves.

By the mid and late 1700s, the fluidity of these first decades of slave life in Massachusetts would harden. After Mather, at least two presidents and two stewards of Harvard owned slaves. For their generation hereditary African slavery was more firmly entrenched and emancipations were consequently much less common.<sup>11</sup> The second Harvard president known to have owned slaves was Benjamin Wadsworth, who served from 1725–1737. Unlike Mather, he lived at the college in a home built for his family in 1726. Wadsworth’s family owned one slave named Titus and, upon moving into the new house, purchased a female slave. Baptismal records from the First Church of Cambridge revealed that this slave was named Venus.<sup>12</sup> After Titus and Venus, more slaves worked in Wadsworth’s House, now occupied by his successor Edward Holyoke, who was appointed in 1737. The diaries of various members of the Holyoke family mention at least three different slaves: Juba, Cato and Bilhah. In the entries they appear running errands to Boston, sometime falling ill, and often being counted in yearly family weigh-ins.<sup>13</sup> Slaves like Venus, Titus, Juba, Cato and Bilhah were both part of colonial society and separate from it. They would have done important household labor like preparing meals, maintaining the house,

and tending animals.<sup>14</sup> As the Holyoke diaries attest, they frequently accompanied members of the family who were traveling into Boston. They would likely have known other slaves living in Cambridge. In 1747, for instance, Juba married

entering the college and associating with any of the students.<sup>18</sup>

In daily, uncountable, and often unnoticed ways these slaves supported life and learning on Harvard's campus. They left their mark in the

historical record because of the work they did, their roles in the larger community, and also, ironically, because of their value as property. Evidence of their presence survives to this day on

Cambridge's streets. Among the epitaphs in the old Cambridge burial ground is one for Jane, "a Negro Servnt. To Andrew Bordman Esq. Died March 11 1741 Aged 22 year & 3 Months."<sup>19</sup> Wadsworth House, where Titus, Venus, Juba, Cato, and Bilhah lived and worked, still opens its front door onto busy Massachusetts Avenue, and its back rooms onto Harvard's campus.

#### THE WEST INDIES TRADE

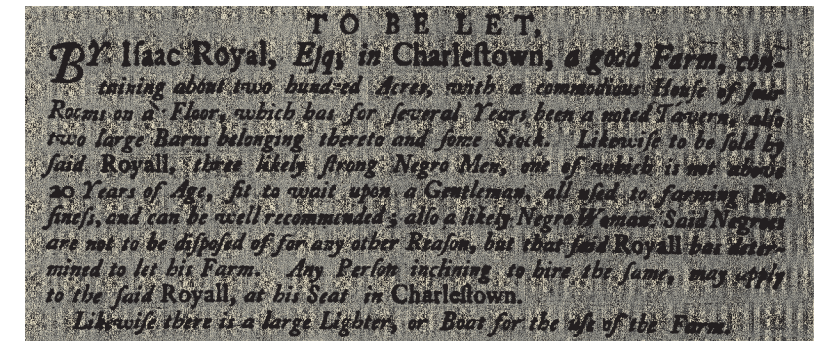
Slaves were part of everyday life at Harvard, but *slavery*, as the driving force of New World economies, touched Harvard in ways that were less immediate but no less profound. Massachusetts was part of a larger Atlantic economy centered on the trade of sugar, rum and slaves between the West Indies, New England, Europe and Africa. Like other New England colonies, Massachusetts also provisioned the West Indies, sending food, animals, lumber, ice and other necessities to plantations that grew only sugar. Even small artisans and farmers could make money in the provisioning trade by selling their goods or buying a share in a ship.<sup>20</sup> West Indian plantation owners and large-scale traders who

owned and outfitted many ships stood to gain the largest fortunes. It was through such men—as benefactors of the fledgling college—that Harvard had its strongest connection to the Atlantic World's slave economy.

Without slave-plantation agriculture, for example, Harvard patron Isaac Royall Jr. would not have been able to donate the lands whose sale endowed the college's first Professorship of Law. Before 1700 Isaac Jr.'s father, Isaac Royall Sr., had few prospects as the son of a carpenter in Boston. That year, however, he sailed to the West Indies. He arrived on the sugar-growing island of Antigua with little to his name but got a start in the provisioning and sugar trade as a part owner of a ship in Scituate, Massachusetts.<sup>21</sup> After twelve years in the trade and marriage into a prominent Antiguan family, Royall Sr. acquired his own sugar plantation. Doubtless, slaves worked the plantation. In 1707 the city where the Royalls lived, Popeshead, had only 22 white families, but 364 slaves.<sup>22</sup> Royall Sr. profited immensely from the labor of his slaves, a fortune he multiplied by trading slaves between Antigua and Boston.<sup>23</sup>

Into this prosperity Isaac Royall Jr. was born in 1719. Unlike his father, he would spend most of his adult life in Massachusetts. In 1737 the Royall family sailed for Massachusetts to resettle on a 540-acre farm they purchased in Medford, outside of Cambridge.<sup>24</sup> Isaac Royall Sr. died only two years after his family's relocation, and his son inherited much of his father's wealth, including the Medford estate, lands in New England and Antigua, and at least eighteen of the family's slaves.<sup>25</sup> Through marriage Isaac Jr. also gained the income of further plantations

in Surinam, land that would have been worthless without the slaves who worked it.<sup>26</sup> Throughout his life he continued to buy land and slaves, and upon leaving Massachusetts at the outset of the Revolutionary War, he bequeathed several



properties to Harvard. The college eventually sold them to establish the Royall Professorship of Law in 1816, a precursor to the creation of the Harvard Law School a year later.<sup>27</sup> In this quite direct manner, the labor of slaves underwrote the teaching of law in Cambridge.

Resettled planters like the Royalls were only a small subset of Massachusetts's colonists with ties to slavery in the West Indies. Harvard patrons also came from the class of merchants who, as ship owners and agents, organized the trade in slaves. The cargo lists from the ships of Harvard benefactor Israel Thorndike were typical of those who plied the West Indies trade. His ships took the staple products of Massachusetts—lumber from its forests, foodstuffs from its farms, whale oil from Nantucket or New Bedford, and animal by-products like candles and soap—to the West Indies. They returned with the slave-plantation commodities of sugar,

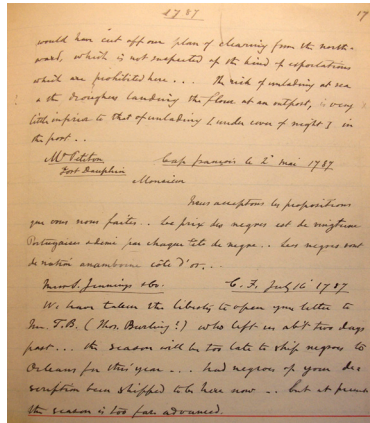
"Newspaper advertisement by Isaac Royall Jr. for the sale of two slaves." FROM THE BOSTON EVENING POST.

*"In their correspondence, the Perkins brothers did not ruminat upon the ethical implications of purchasing humans, but rather the practical realities. One letter admonishes a seller not to send any more unsalable infants..."*

—ROBERT G. MANN, "MONEY AND MEMORY," 11

Ciceely, a slave owned by Judah Monis, Harvard's professor of Hebrew.<sup>15</sup>

Though visible and allowed to sustain relationships (as in the case of Juba), slaves were at a fundamental level set apart from both the families that owned them and the free community of Cambridge. Venus, Titus and Cato, for example, were all given Roman instead of Christian names. Bilhah's was biblical, but referenced Jacob's concubine from the Book of Genesis. Not one of the slaves had a recorded surname. Unlike the early 1600s, in the eighteenth century emancipation and membership in society as a freeperson was rare for both adult slaves and their children. College steward Andrew Bordman, for example, kept Jane, the daughter of his slave Rose, until her death in 1741.<sup>16</sup> Perhaps due to growing numbers, slaves in late colonial Massachusetts increasingly had their mobility curtailed by city ordinances.<sup>17</sup> The faculty and administrators of Harvard created their own regulations to maintain clear lines between slaves and members of the college. In 1740 they barred a slave named Titus, possibly the same slave once owned by Benjamin Wadsworth, from



“Correspondence in the Perkins Brothers’ letter-book, accepting the importation of slaves from Africa.” COURTESY OF SCHLESINGER LIBRARY, RADCLIFFE INSTITUTE, HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

molasses and coffee. Occasionally, Thorndike’s ships also traded slaves between islands in the West Indies.<sup>28</sup> By 1803 Thorndike counted his wealth as “unencumbered property upward of \$400,000.” By the end of his life, he had amassed a fortune of almost \$1,500,000 in the currency of his time.<sup>29</sup> In his prosperous later years he donated to Harvard by

contributing to endowed professorships and gifting a valuable collection of rare books on American history.<sup>30</sup> For Harvard patrons James and Thomas Perkins, the West Indies trade and the shadowy business of slave smuggling paved the road to greater fortunes in more respectable trades. They began their careers as commission agents in the French colony of Saint-Domingue, the most productive sugar island in the Caribbean.<sup>31</sup> When James arrived on the island in 1782, it had a population of between 300,000 and 500,000 slaves.<sup>32</sup> There the Perkins brothers made money by matching buyers and sellers of slaves and slave-grown commodities. Perversely, they also benefited from attempts to curtail the slave trade and to exclude American ships. In the late 1780s and the early 1790s they became slave-smugglers, charging premium commission rates to dodge restrictive laws. By 1788 they owned their own ships and were bringing in slaves from the African port of Anomabu.<sup>33</sup>

Evading laws against slave trading was lucrative for the Perkins brothers, but it was also risky—no more so than in 1791, when slaves

on Saint-Domingue began their thirteen-year-long revolution, forcing the brothers to flee the island.<sup>34</sup> Looking for new opportunities to further enlarge their slavery-related profits, they invested in other businesses, particularly fur trading and the trade with China. They also became early investors in the industries that would drive the Massachusetts economy in the 1800s, railroads and textile manufacturing. Having risen from seaport smugglers serving the slave economy of the Caribbean to wealthy and respected investors, they funded numerous Boston cultural institutions at the end of their careers, including Harvard.<sup>35</sup>

#### SLAVERY AND LAW

Looking through the eyes of traders like the Perkins or even slave-owners like Benjamin Wadsworth, it is easy to see slavery as unexceptional, as just another business opportunity, or as simply a way of life. That perspective misses how slavery was challenged and questioned throughout the colonial era, not least by slaves. Public debates, private doubts, and resistance on the part of slaves meant that slavery had to be actively supported by law and social custom.<sup>36</sup> Perhaps caught up in the Revolutionary spirit of the time, in 1773 Harvard held a public academic debate on “The Legality of Enslaving Africans.”<sup>37</sup> Before this event on the eve of independence, however, Harvard’s chief accomplishment was the training of colonial leaders whose stout legal institutions and cultural dominance ensured that slave disobedience never seriously threatened the social order. Whatever private doubts they might have had, throughout the mid-1700s, colonial leaders responded to the instability of

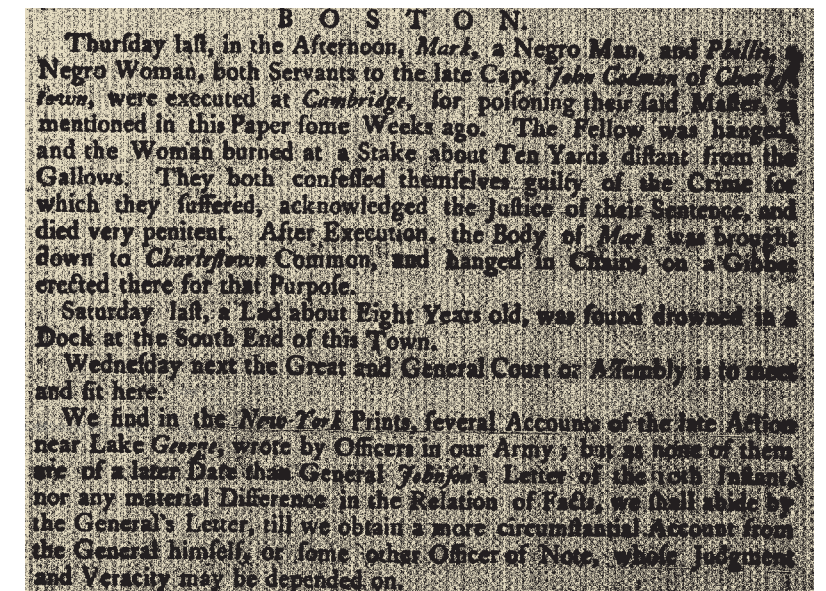
slavery not with debate but with restrictions, punishment and violence.

Between 1730 and 1755 the African-descended population in Massachusetts doubled to a total of around 4,500, or 2.2 percent of the colony’s population, and was an ever more visible, active part of society.<sup>38</sup> As the presence of people of African descent, many of them slaves, grew throughout the 1700s, so did restrictions on their lives. In 1723, for example, the city of Boston decreed that “no Negro should be in the Street after nine in the Evening without a ticket from his master; and if any were so found they should be had to the House of Correction and whipt 6. or 7. lashes.”<sup>39</sup> A few years later slaves were prohibited from trading in markets and eventually in 1748 from owning valuable animals like pigs.<sup>40</sup> Few examples, however, better illustrate this tightening grip on slave life than an incident that took place on Harvard’s doorstep in 1755.

That year, Harvard and Cambridge witnessed the execution of two slaves. In September slaves Mark and Phillis were convicted of poisoning their owner John Codman of nearby Charleston, Massachusetts. They were then carried through the streets of Cambridge, past the college, and executed half a mile from Cambridge Common on “Gallow’s Lot” in what is now the Avon Hill neighborhood. A professor at Harvard described the scene as “[a] terrible spectacle in Cambridge. 2 negros belonging to Capt. Codman of Charleston executed for petit treason, for murder their sd master by poison.”<sup>41</sup> Mark was hanged and Phillis burned to death. After the executions, Mark’s body was displayed in Charleston to send a threatening message to the town’s slaves. Harvard’s connection to the executions of Mark

and Phillis went well beyond the smoke from the stake wafting over the Yard. Three of the four justices who oversaw the case, as well as the prosecuting attorney, were Harvard graduates.<sup>42</sup> Today, Harvard trains national leaders. In the colonial era, Harvard fulfilled much the same role within the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In the 1600s it trained the Puritan ministers who served as spiritual and moral authorities in the early colony. In the 1700s, Harvard graduates increasingly used their accreditation to pursue law.<sup>43</sup> The three justices and prosecuting attorney in the trial of Mark and Phillis exemplified this type. Harvard was their stepping-stone into the leadership class of the colony. As members of Massachusetts Superior Court, justices Stephen Sewall, Benjamin Lynde Jr., Chambers Russell, and Attorney General Edmund Trowbridge had reached the highest echelons of colonial government. They brought down the fullest force of

“A newspaper report of the trial and punishment of slaves Mark and Phillis in Cambridge, Massachusetts.” FROM THE BOSTON EVENING POST





this power on Mark and Phillis, using extreme public violence to discourage threats to the social order. Interestingly, Mark and Phillis were not tried for murder. They were accused of the more severe crime of “petit treason,” the murder of a superior by a subordinate.<sup>44</sup> The justices chose to closely follow the letter of the law during sentencing. Men convicted of petty treason were

gained traction during the Revolutionary era as they merged with notions of universal rights and the social upheavals of removing colonial rule.<sup>45</sup> Even still, the new Massachusetts Constitution of 1780 did not explicitly outlaw slavery. Ending slavery in Massachusetts took the efforts of slaves and the assent of juries and justices. The definitive judicial interpretation of the new

Constitution came from Harvard-educated Chief Justice William Cushing in the 1783 case of Quock Walker. Walker, whose owner beat him when he tried to leave, both sued for his freedom and charged his owner with

assault. In the criminal assault case Cushing instructed the jury that slavery was incompatible with the ideals of the state constitution and that “there can be no such thing as perpetual servitude of a rational Creature.”<sup>46</sup> After Cushing’s ruling and similar ones by other judges, self-emancipated slaves in Massachusetts could finally enjoy the protection of law.

to be hanged and women burned, the exact fates Mark and Phillis faced on Gallows Lot.

Ideas about social order, however, could also shift. Almost thirty years after the execution of Mark and Phillis, a similarly Harvard-trained judiciary would be instrumental in ending slavery in Massachusetts as part of the American revolutionary struggle. Anti-slavery ideas had

*“On the afternoon of Thursday, September 18, 1755, Cambridge witnessed a spectacle usually associated with the horrors of mob violence or Southern plantation slavery: the burning of a slave at the stake.”*

—JIM HENLE, “HARVARD AND THE JUSTICE OF SLAVERY,” 1

## HARVARD & SLAVERY in Antebellum America

While some of its luminaries may have embraced emancipation, the end of slavery in Massachusetts did not sever Harvard’s ties to slavery. In the 1780s, slavery continued to exist in the Americas in places as close to Boston as New York City and as far away as New Orleans, Cuba and Brazil. Through donations, investments, and financial management, Harvard continued to have ties to places where slavery was legal and to benefit from the labor of slaves. In fact, most of the donations made to the university by West Indian merchants and even plantation owners like Isaac Royall Jr. happened after slavery was made illegal in Massachusetts.

By the nineteenth century, Harvard had also developed relationships with patrons whose businesses depended on cotton from slave plantations. Much as slave-produced sugar had been the crux of the economy in the colonial-era British Atlantic, slave-produced cotton drove manufacturing, trade and finance in the pre-Civil War decades. As with the West Indies trade, the history of the cotton trade in the antebellum era was one of mutual dependence. British and New England textile mills drew on cotton that was grown, picked, ginned and baled through the work of enslaved men and women in the United States South. In fact, by the late

1850s, the Southern states accounted for nearly 100 percent of the 374 million pounds of cotton consumed in the United States, a full 77 percent of the 800 million pounds consumed in Britain, 90 percent of the 192 million pounds used in France, 60 percent of the 115 million pounds spun in German Zollverein and as much as 92 percent of the 102 million pounds manufactured in Russia.<sup>47</sup> In turn, cotton plantation owners depended on credit to purchase slaves and supplies, much of which came from banks with agents in cities like Boston. Though not slaveholders themselves, New England owners of textile mills and agents of British banks were indispensable to the cotton-plantation economy. And, in turn, their donations and services transformed Harvard from a precocious but peripheral colonial academy to a major university of global influence.

The history of Harvard and slavery, however, is not only about following money. It is about people, politics and ideas. In custom, culture and intellectual climate, as much as in finance, Harvard was connected to slavery. In the 1800s, for example, many prosperous Southern families sent their sons and dollars to Harvard. Alongside young men from Massachusetts, Southern students became campus leaders and members of

Harvard's most exclusive clubs. Though we rightfully think of Massachusetts as the seed-bed of abolitionism, individuals who took open and active positions against slavery were the exception rather than the rule in the state and, perhaps more so, at Harvard. It took until the 1850s for anti-slavery activists to see more widespread and visible support; and even then, they faced opposition from local and national leadership.<sup>48</sup> It was not that certain members of Harvard's community did not have their own private doubts about the morality of slavery. Harvard's president in the 1830s, Josiah Quincy, had well-documented anti-slavery leanings. Yet he and other Harvard leaders discouraged faculty and students who wanted to publicly question the institution of slavery and who advocated a politics of abolition.

**It is understood that the late James Perkins, Esq who made the liberal donation of 20 000 dollars last year to the Boston Athenæum, has bequeathed 25,000 to Harvard University. We are astonished that capitalists, in their liberal moments never think of Yale College.—Cambridge, before, had so much money that they hardly knew what to do with it—while modest and unassuming Yale,—one of the oldest and most respectable literary institutions in America,—is left to struggle along by its own merits solely, and comparatively without funds.**  
*(Tom Adu)*  
**[The remark about Yale will apply with still greater force to Dartmouth College.]**

“Private donations put Harvard ahead of other colleges in the 1800s.”  
 FROM THE  
 NEWBURYPORT  
 HERALD

#### HARVARD'S RISE IN THE 1800S

Today Harvard is a private university with formidable resources, but it was not always that way. The early 1800s marked a shift for Harvard in the balance of public and private funds; the dramatic increase in private donations is what drove Harvard ahead of all other colleges in the United States. By 1850 Harvard's total assets were three times those of Yale and five times those of Amherst and Williams combined. In the first half of the nineteenth-century, Harvard grew into its place as a leading national university. Between 1800 and 1850 its total assets went from around \$250,000 to \$1,250,000. Over the same period the portion of contributions from private sources rose to 92 percent.<sup>49</sup>

As we have already noted, many of Harvard's major private donors during this period of growth had prospered in the slave-based economies of sugar and cotton. Merchants Israel Thorndike and James Perkins both donated to Harvard in the 1810s and 1820s. Later they were joined by others who had made fortunes in the West Indies trade, like Benjamin Bussey, a ship-owner and trader of sugar, cotton and coffee. Peter C. Brooks, another major donor, became one of the wealthiest men in Massachusetts by insuring ships like those owned by Thorndike and Bussey.<sup>50</sup> Beginning in the 1840s textile traders and factory owners became another source of donations for Harvard. Abbot Lawrence, for example, benefited from both the production and distribution sides of the textile industry. He owned and operated cotton textile factories in Massachusetts, along with a trading firm that sold the products of his mills.<sup>51</sup> In 1847 and 1849 he donated \$100,000 to establish a scientific school at Harvard.<sup>52</sup>

These five men—Thorndike, Perkins, Brooks, Bussey and Lawrence—were only a sampling of the twenty-five individuals who made major personal donations to Harvard between 1800 and 1850.<sup>53</sup> Yet their combined contribution of \$497,400 accounted for 50 percent of the total of all major individual donations in the period.<sup>54</sup> Harvard honored many of these donors by naming buildings, professorships and schools after them. College officials dutifully attended their funerals.<sup>55</sup> Their legacies remain in some of Harvard's most well-known institutions. Lawrence's gift started the Lawrence Scientific School, a precursor to Harvard's School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. Bussey's envisioned agricultural school struggled to find a place at the university, eventually merging with other schools in the biological sciences. His estate in Jamaica Plain, however, became part of Harvard's research Arboretum. Visited by Bostonians year-round, one of the Arboretum's most loved vistas is Bussey Hill—named after the man who made his fortune in the trade of slave-grown agricultural commodities.<sup>56</sup>

In addition to accepting donations, Harvard also made money by providing loans drawn from its endowment to merchants. These merchants used the money to speculate in foreign trade. For example, merchant Elisha Hathaway, who traded in slave-produced coffee among other things, built a new ship called the *Roman* in 1829; that same year Harvard loaned Hathaway \$5,800. Hathaway's records of the loan did not survive, making it unclear how he used Harvard's particular loan. He may have needed it to complete

payment on the ship or to purchase its trade cargo in the Caribbean. To whatever end Hathaway used the money, he was a good investment for Harvard. In 1834 he paid back the loan with interest and took out a second loan of \$7,000.<sup>57</sup>

*“Private donations, in part earned in the slave-economy, helped offset declining public interest and provided new resources.”*

—MEIKE SCHALLERT, “FORGING A UNIVERSITY,” 4

While we do not know what the *Roman* traded on its first voyages, we do know that by 1836 it was traveling to Rio de Janeiro to purchase coffee, a slave-grown commodity, with borrowed money.<sup>58</sup> How much of Harvard's portfolio was made up of loans to merchants like Hathaway who could have used them to purchase slave-produced commodities is not known. Loans and mortgages, however, were a key part of Harvard's endowment, making up 55 percent of it in 1840.<sup>59</sup>

Beyond money, Harvard also benefited from the financial skills of men who succeeded in the cotton trade. In 1826 John Davis resigned as treasurer of the university after some “irregularities” and “errors” led Harvard into debt during his tenure.<sup>60</sup> Four years later, Harvard acquired the services of Thomas Wren Ward to right and re-orient the university's finances. While Ward served as Treasurer of Harvard, he was also employed as the head of the American branch of Baring Brothers. Baring Brothers, one of the world's most important financial houses, was a major trader in cotton and provided substantial amounts of capital to the planters of the U.S. South, who used it to acquire ever more slaves for growing cotton.

Slave-plantations ran on debt. Planters purchased everything—cotton seed, provisions, tools, and often slaves—on credit, planning to sell their cotton at the season’s end to make back the difference and then some. Slave-owning planters were connected to their lifeline of credit through a chain of agents that stretched up to cities like Boston and New York and eventually to British investment houses like Baring Brothers. Ward was recognized for expanding Baring’s business in the United States, particularly by increasing its number of cotton consignments.<sup>61</sup> Ward was similarly important for stabilizing and improving finances at Harvard, using the lessons learned in managing the slavery-based global cotton economy. He tried a number of times to resign from his position as Harvard’s treasurer, citing his need to focus on other work. Unlike Davis, Ward was entreated to stay. He continued to give his services to the university until 1842, and left \$5,000 for Harvard in his will.<sup>62</sup>

#### THE POLITICS OF SLAVERY AT HARVARD

Today many historians divide the antebellum United States between slave and free, but few people at the time, with the exception of slaves, lived their lives within these boundaries. New England beaches were a summertime destination for the wealthiest plantation families of South Carolina, and Harvard was where many hoped to send their sons.<sup>63</sup> We might expect the presence of students from slaveholding families to have caused a stir at the college, but if anything, the opposite was true. More often than not Harvard’s leadership and student body either accepted slaveholding or at least did not publicly oppose it. We know best the stories of Harvard

graduates who went on to become abolitionist leaders, such as Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Theodore Parker, or Charles Sumner; we know less about the students who came to Harvard as slaveholders and embarked upon a career of mastering slaves upon graduation.

Just like elite families in Boston, many of South Carolina’s first families sent their sons to Harvard. If Southern students were criticized or shunned because their families owned slaves, they rarely wrote about it.<sup>64</sup> More records show students from slaveholding and non-slaveholding families coalescing into one Harvard student body, voluntarily sharing meals and housing.<sup>65</sup> Only for a brief period in the contentious 1830s did students seem to form a special Southern club.<sup>66</sup> Otherwise, they were remarkable not for being Southerners but for their successes in Harvard’s social scene. Each year two or more of the eight to ten students selected to be part of Harvard’s most exclusive social club, the Porcellian, came from Southern families. Between 1791 and 1845, thirty-nine Porcellians hailed from Charleston, South Carolina, the long-standing cultural capital of the slaveholding South.<sup>67</sup> Other Southern students were acclaimed by the broader student body. North Carolinian, James Benjamin Clark, for example, was elected Class Orator by his fellow students in 1855.<sup>68</sup> Six years later, he would fight in the Confederate Army.

Southern students’ successes did not make Harvard as an institution an advocate for slavery. Rather, their popularity revealed that slaveholding was not taboo. For many students, even those from Northern families, slaveholding was not a reason to cut off friendships, eat at separate tables, or join separate clubs. Slave owners were

part of the nation’s elite, and, for members of that elite, the ownership of human property was unexceptional. Harvard, moreover, was hardly unique for accepting slaveholders.

In contrast, anti-slavery activists, especially those who called for immediate abolition, were outcasts for most of the antebellum era. In 1835, for example, city leaders (including the mayor of Boston) attended anti-abolitionist meetings.<sup>69</sup> Earlier that year a crowd gathered in the city to prevent British abolitionist George Thompson from speaking at a meeting of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society. To the *Boston Gazette*, the women in attendance were merely a group of thirty or forty “deluded females.”<sup>70</sup> Only by the late 1850s did anti-slavery actions become more acceptable in the mainstream, and even then, calls from Harvard’s campus for either the immediate or gradual emancipation of slaves remained rare.

At Harvard, as in Boston, to be an active abolitionist was to be an outsider. The Harvard professors who chose to join anti-slavery organizations put their jobs and their statuses in jeopardy. Professors Henry Ware Jr. and Charles Follen were both founding members of the Cambridge Anti-Slavery Society and attendees of other anti-slavery societies in the area. John Ware, Henry’s brother, described the reaction to Henry’s actions by friends and colleagues. “Many of his warmest friends, and friends of the University,” wrote Ware, “remonstrated with him very earnestly.”<sup>71</sup> Professor Ware was apparently told to “avoid any such entanglements with the exciting movements of the day.” John Ware was a sympathetic biographer of his brother, but newspaper articles confirm his account of the popular reaction. “It

is to be regretted,” wrote the *Boston Gazette*, “that any portion of the Professors at Harvard College should countenance the wild and mischievous schemes of the anti-slavery agitators, who are imprudently meddling with property of the planters and others of the southern states.” The *Gazette* went on to single out “foreigners” like Professor Charles Follen, who had fled political persecution in Germany. Members of the clergy like Ware, the paper suggested, “should be severely rebuked for their impertinence and folly.”<sup>72</sup>

Thus pressured, Henry Ware Jr. left the Cambridge Anti-Slavery Society—and kept his position at Harvard. Charles Follen, in contrast, stuck to his beliefs and left college when his professorship was not renewed in 1835. In later correspondence Harvard’s president at the time, Josiah Quincy, maintained that neither professor had his job threatened on account of anti-slavery activities.<sup>73</sup> It is possible that neither Quincy nor the Harvard Corporation gave either professor an ultimatum. It is harder to imagine, however, that Ware and Follen made their decisions entirely independently of the backlash against them.

In a less ambiguous case, President Quincy intervened directly a few years later to quell a discussion of abolition on campus. In May of 1838, he learned that the Harvard Divinity School’s Philanthropic Society was going to debate abolition at one of its meetings. The day of the meeting, Quincy sent a letter to Divinity School faculty members requesting that they reconsider the “wisdom and prudence” of the proposed discussion. At issue for Quincy was the debate’s public nature. As it did for most meetings, the Philanthropic Society had sent invitations to people

in the community who were not from Harvard. In a second letter to the group, Quincy forbade the proposed meeting on the grounds that it was open to the public. He requested that the faculty “prohibit until you hear from me further, on the

enslavement; and only in the nineteenth-century did race come to be seen as a biological category marking people of African descent as inherently inferior to and fundamentally different from people perceived to be white. Both slaveholders

and non-slaveholders alike held beliefs about black inferiority. In the 1850s, these beliefs and impressions were stamped into the leading fields of natural science by a

coterie of scientists. Prominent among them was Harvard Professor Louis Agassiz.

Agassiz was not a pro-slavery partisan himself, but slaveholders embraced his theories of race. In 1850 Agassiz published an article entitled “The Diversity of Origin of the Human Races.” Its central argument solved a religious problem that had dogged racial theories of black inferiority for a long time. Slaveholders catalogued the differences they perceived between themselves and their slaves, but they struggled to square them with dominant Christian beliefs. “If black people were inferior to, and fundamentally different, from white people,” they were asked, “how could both races be descended from Adam?” Agassiz argued that the story of Adam applied to only white people and that God had created other races to fit different climates, regions, and ecosystems in the world.<sup>76</sup> Agassiz’s theory was known as polygenesis, referring to these many origins of the human race. It derived its strength not only from its preservation of Christian tenets, but also from its association with Agassiz’s renowned work on the origins of animal species. Agassiz applied his views of animal taxonomy to humans. “We must acknowledge that the

diversity among animals is a fact determined by the will of the Creator,” Agassiz wrote, “and their geographic distribution part of one great organic conception: whence it follows that what are called human races...are distinct primordial forms of the type of man.”<sup>77</sup>

Racial theories, however, were never solely about physical difference. As practiced by Agassiz, his peers, and later his students, race science turned personality traits, aptitude, and morality into biological characteristics of “race.” Agassiz, for example, stretched his physical analysis to include conclusions on “negro disposition.” “Human affairs with reference to the colored races,” wrote Agassiz, should be “guided by a full consciousness of the real difference existing between us and them...rather than by treating them with equality.”<sup>78</sup> Among those differences were an African “pliability...a proneness to imitate those among who he lives,” and a “peculiar apathy, a peculiar indifference to the advantages afforded by civilized society.”<sup>79</sup>

The relationship between Agassiz and Harvard was symbiotic. Through Harvard, Agassiz (who was originally from Switzerland) met patrons of science among the Boston elite. Through Agassiz, Harvard got support for its expanding science schools. All told, Agassiz’s funding from Harvard equaled over \$80,000, or roughly \$2.1 million in today’s dollars. The support included funds for a natural history collection, zoological trips for his students, a loan for his house and a \$1,500 annual salary.<sup>80</sup> Without a doubt the biggest boon for the university came when Agassiz received \$100,000 from the Massachusetts legislature for what became the Museum of Comparative Zoology. A separate board initially

governed the museum, though it was housed in a university space. In 1876 it officially became part of Harvard.<sup>81</sup> Its collection of specimens was and is the university’s primary resource for natural science research.

Agassiz’s ideas about natural history, particularly his theories of black difference, remained influential for almost a century after his death and set the tone at Harvard for decades after the abolition of slavery throughout the entire United States. In 1869 Agassiz’s student Nathaniel Shaler became a professor at Harvard and continued his mentor’s research on the differences between “African and European races.”<sup>82</sup> Like Agassiz, Shaler popularized his science, writing articles for magazines like *Atlantic Monthly*. In one 1890 article, Shaler argued against interracial marriage.<sup>83</sup> In another piece he cautioned against reformers who considered black people to be equal. “They are charmed by their admirable and appealing qualities, and so make haste to assume that he is in all respects like themselves,” but, Shaler warned, as black children entered adulthood, their “animal nature” emerged.<sup>84</sup> Shaler did not advocate the return of slavery, to be sure, but his writings came during a moment when many of the rights extended to black people after the Civil War were being taken away. No isolated intellectual, Shaler counted among his devotees a young Theodore Roosevelt, who remained friends with the professor after graduating.<sup>85</sup> Like the funds bequeathed



“Harvard Professor Louis Agassiz.” COURTESY OF THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

*“Agassiz’s theories lived on in the work of his students, magnifying their impact and extending the lifetime of their acceptance in the mainstream.”*

—ZOE WEINBERG, “THE INCALCULABLE LEGACY, 13

subject, any meeting of the society, within the walls of Divinity College other than those, at which students of that school alone and exclusively be permitted to attend.” Quincy feared disruption and agitation on the campus. In his own words, he felt it was not prudent to debate abolition in “a seminary of learning, composed of young men from every quarter of the country; among whom are many whose prejudices, passions and interests are deeply implicated...”<sup>74</sup>

#### RACE SCIENCE AT HARVARD

While Harvard’s administration worked to quell debates on slavery, not least to accommodate the large population of student slave-owners on campus, some of its professors diligently labored on an intellectual apparatus that might justify slavery. In the United States that justification came to be based almost entirely on the idea of black inferiority. Initially, the first Africans enslaved in the New World were considered “heathens” and “war captives.” Their enslavement was based on culture and religion, and many were freed upon converting to Christianity.<sup>75</sup> Only later, as Africans became the majority slave population, did “blackness” become the basis for

to Harvard by merchants in the slave economy, the legacy of Agassiz and his ideas extended far beyond his own time.

#### EMANCIPATION AND THE LEGACY OF SLAVERY

In 1865, after the Civil War, slavery was made illegal throughout the United States. Emancipation was a world-altering change, but the legacy of slavery was also enduring. Slavery's broad and deep impact often bequeathed advantages to those who had benefited from slavery and continued adversity to those who had been enslaved. After emancipation, freed men and women in the United States had the right to move in search of family or better pay, though the hardships and dangers of such migrations should not be understated. Freed people had little else to start with but the labor they could perform. They owned no land and were given little means to purchase any. Slaveholders, for their part, lost all the capital they had owned in their slaves but in contrast to their former slaves, most were given back their land; and in other instances, northern investors bought up plantations.

Though freed men and women were now paid wages, they wound up having little choice but to work in ways that could resemble in some aspects their lives as slaves.<sup>86</sup> For example, Henry Lee Higginson, a merchant whose firm and family borrowed from Harvard's endowment, decided to purchase a Georgia plantation called "Cottonham" in the fall of 1865.<sup>87</sup> Higginson wrote to his wife about employing the former slaves, stating "labor we can get as much as we want.... these people are beginning to see that work or starvation is before them." The freed slaves, he hoped, would "fall in."<sup>88</sup> Though no longer slaves, they were all but forced to work at Cottonham and remained vulnerable to the caprices of the plantation's new owner. Emancipation might have ended slavery, but its all-encompassing legacy continued to shape peoples' lives. Beyond Cottonham, the racial theories of intellectuals like Harvard's Agassiz and Shaller provided justifications for new efforts to legally segregate and then disenfranchise Americans of African descent.

## HARVARD & SLAVERY *in Memory*



Like the nation, Harvard continued to bear the stamp of slavery long after its abolition. When in October of 1903, for example, Harvard botanist Oakes Ames arrived at the former Cuban slave plantation Soledad, only fifteen years had passed since that country's slaves had gained their freedom.<sup>89</sup> Now, the plantation was owned by Harvard University benefactor Edwin F. Atkins, and the 900-acre estate was about to become a biological research station for the university. In future years, scholars and students would test different varieties of sugar cane on the property and try to eradicate plant diseases that destroyed canfields.<sup>90</sup> One evening in 1903, however, Professor Oakes Ames was inspired to

reflect on this plantation's past. While gazing at the sunset, Ames heard the plantation bell toll in "one single, musical but dull note..." Ames felt a disquiet steal over him as he imagined how the bell would have sounded to a plantation slave, calling him to "the awful reality of his existence." What upset Ames, of course, was the unsettling incongruity between the beauty of the plantation, its new scientific future, and the undeniable injustice that had cleared its lands and secured its owner's fortune. In a letter to his wife, Ames eased his burden by scolding past "atrocities of holding in bondage one's fellow man...aided by the stinging lash, which injures one far deeper than bronze or steel."<sup>91</sup>

"A view of Soledad Plantation in Cuba, home of the Harvard Botanical Station"  
COURTESY OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This essay has been an effort to hold Harvard, and all of us who enjoy its unparalleled intellectual resources, in the uneasy moment of the bell, and not slip too quickly into the calming righteousness of moral hindsight. What we



“Elmwood House, built by Antiguan plantation owner Thomas Oliver, has been the residence for Harvard Presidents since 1971.”

PHOTOGRAPH BY JESSE RONALD HALVORSEN

remember of the past—no matter if it is discovered in the toll of a bell or through painstaking archival reconstruction—shades how we experience the present. “The past is never dead,” as Faulkner once said, “it is not even past.” How we see, remember, and are prompted to remember the presence of the past is memory. Harvard’s campus is replete with conscious memorials to its Puritan founders, its Revolutionary glories, and its sorrowful losses during the Civil War, but seekers of the story of its supporting cast of slaves will find only the vaguest of public markers.

#### MEMORIAL HALL AND ELMWOOD

Memorials and monuments do more than mark pieces of ground. They tell stories and attach meaning to the events they recall.<sup>92</sup> People searching in vain for a monument connecting Harvard and slavery might understandably look to Memorial Hall, the immense High Victorian building with a multicolored tile roof at the intersection of three Cambridge arteries. Memorial Hall was built in the 1870s to honor Harvard students who fought for the Union Army during the Civil War. For the states that seceded from the Union, the Civil War was at its core about slavery. It was a preemptive prevention of federal intervention into their “institutions,” slavery chief among them. For non-slave states, especially for ones like Massachusetts whose economies had been so interwoven with those of slave states, the purpose of the Civil War was more complicated. Black Northerners and slaves who sought freedom behind Union lines forced the issue of emancipation into the public perception of the war, but many enlistees fought to preserve the Union, not necessarily to end slavery.<sup>93</sup> Harvard’s Civil War monument embodied that ambiguity.

Slavery, though it was the underlying cause of the Civil War, was not part of its memorialization at Harvard. As a Civil War monument, Memorial Hall focused on the Union and law. Indeed, when Harvard President James Walker first proposed creating a simple monument for Harvard’s Union soldiers, he made sure to leave slavery out of the discussion by reminding his audience that Union soldiers fought not for “schemes of reform”—implying abolition—but “to preserve the integrity of a nation and maintain the supremacy of laws.”<sup>94</sup>

The committee that created Memorial Hall did not follow Walker’s plans for a simple monument, but they did carry out his interpretation of the war. None of the original inscriptions in Memorial Hall recall slavery as the cause of secession;

none mentions emancipation as a result of the war. After the Civil War, at Harvard and

across the country, the importance of emancipation and African Americans’ rights was stepped over in favor of an amicable reunion between North and South.<sup>95</sup> As a site of memory, Memorial Hall reminds visitors of Union soldiers’ sacrifices. Its silences, more than its inscriptions, speak to Harvard’s and Massachusetts’ complicity in slavery.

Part of the difficulty of remembering slavery on Harvard’s campus is that Cambridge’s historic buildings provide few public clues to their complete history. Elmwood House, for example, is one of the oldest buildings belonging to Harvard. It has emerged as a powerful symbol of the community’s long history and today provides shelter to Harvard’s presidents. It was built in 1767 by Harvard graduate and Antiguan plantation owner Thomas Oliver, and every owner of the home has been affiliated with Harvard as an alumnus, professor, spouse, or dean. Elmwood is known for housing soldiers during the Revolutionary War and for being the home of well-known politicians, poets, and professors after Oliver’s departure.<sup>96</sup> Harvard made preserving this history and restoring the

building’s original Colonial style a commitment when it acquired Elmwood in 1963. A *Harvard Crimson* article from that year assured readers that the house would be restored to its “original elegance.” The same article suggested that

*“Recognizing Elmwood as standing at the intersection of Harvard and slavery fundamentally changes the way we understand it as both a resource and a symbol for Harvard University.”*

—KAITLIN TERRY, “ELMWOOD AND SLAVERY,” 3

readers should experience the “splendid history of the old house” by imagining scenes from its past.<sup>97</sup> Visitors today are reminded of Elmwood’s history by a blue Cambridge Historical Society sign that reads “built in 1767 by Thomas Oliver, was the residence of politician Elbridge Gerry and poet James Russell Lowell.”

Though history and historical authenticity are emphasized at Elmwood, nothing at the site visibly links Elmwood to slavery. But a little independent research reveals, to those who seek such uncomfortable remembrances, that Thomas Oliver and his family were part of the West Indian planter-class that often resettled in New England after establishing sugar plantations in the Caribbean. Oliver’s father, like the father of Law School benefactor Isaac Royall Jr., moved his family and an untold number of slaves to Massachusetts in 1737. When Oliver came of age, he inherited plantations in Antigua and built Elmwood for his own family.<sup>98</sup> Slaves likely lived and worked for Oliver in Elmwood, and though Elmwood was not a plantation itself, the money Oliver used to build the home came from plantations where many more slaves labored.

Every morning when Harvard's President looks out onto the lawn, she might well be looking at grounds that once housed slaves.

#### HISTORY IN THE PRESENT

By interpreting these traces of history we find in our everyday lives, our communities, and our world, we can add depth and context to our perception of the present. The combined findings of four semesters of research on Harvard and slavery opens up dozens of spaces on campus and beyond to new meanings and significance. We can look upon Elmwood's elegant proportions with some of the same concern as Oakes Ames did when he contemplated the fate of slaves on Harvard's Soledad plantation. While watching locals, students, and visitors line up for the bus outside of Wadsworth House on Massa-

chusetts Avenue, we can also imagine the lives of Titus, Venus and the other slaves who worked for members of the university and knew its students. In addition to the historic buildings, we can reconsider the landmarks and professorships with titles recalling benefactors who prospered in the slave-based economies of sugar, coffee, cotton, and sometimes even the slave trade itself. To be able to see any of these things, of course, requires doing detective work in

manuscripts, newspapers, and publications. Students in the Harvard and Slavery Research Seminar unearthed a great deal of hidden history, forgotten or suppressed, and connected these notes and passing references into fresh, telling stories that take us deeper into the making of this great institution. For every find, however, there is something still to be found. Did the Bordman family's slaves do daily upkeep for the university for the four generations that their owners were stewards of the college? What more can we learn about Belinda, a slave of Isaac Royall Jr. who petitioned the Massachusetts legislature for a pension after Royall fled to Nova Scotia with his wealth, "a part whereof," her petition read, "hath been accumulated by her own industry, and the whole augmented by her servitude."<sup>99</sup> From students' work we now know a good deal about

private donations to the university, but we still know only a little about the history of Harvard's endowment, a topic with both historical and contemporary resonance. If this review recommends one action, it is university support for further research

and an effort to make these findings part of a public conversation. What we do with the knowledge uncovered by this group of highly motivated and dedicated Harvard students is a topic beyond the ambit of this review. Many of the student-researchers did, however, make their own suggestions. Student Shelley Thomas wrote, "erecting a memorial at Wadsworth House and including slaves like Venus, Titus, and Juba in the commentary on the

building will be a sign of respect for all of the men and women who were forced into slavery..." Her classmate Kaitlin Terry thought Harvard should "host a formal discussion on the grounds of Elmwood, symbolically reinforcing the acknowledgment of Elmwood as a place where Harvard and slavery intersect."<sup>100</sup> These responses are just two of many. Without doubt, Shelley and Kaitlin's findings and those of their classmates should start a discussion, whether formally at Elmwood or informally in the university's hallways and classrooms. As Shelly Thomas pointed out, what shocks us about slavery is the lack of respect for human lives that it entailed and the damage it did first and foremost to the men and women denied their full humanity. Recapturing the full history of Harvard is not to discredit or diminish its achievements, but to hold us in tension between the future we will make at Harvard and its full, flawed, but no less remarkable past.

*"Erecting a memorial at Wadsworth House and including slaves like Venus, Titus, and Juba in the commentary on the building will be a sign of respect for all of the men and women who were forced into slavery and for all of the individuals who would die never having known freedom."*

—SHELLEY THOMAS, "CHAINS IN THE YARD," 20

## ENDNOTES

1 Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492–1800* (London: Verso, 1997). To credit the work of the student researchers these endnotes indicate when general topic or particular source was drawn from a student essay by giving a short citation of the essay’s author and title. A list of student essays is printed at the end of the notes.

2 Judah Monis’s slave Cicely is mentioned in *Vital Records of Cambridge Massachusetts, to the Year 1850* (Wright and Potter Print Co., 1914), 441. Records of the Bordmans’ slaves can be found throughout the *Papers of the Bordman Family*, HUG 1228, Harvard University Archives; for background on Onesimus see Kenneth Silverman, *The Life and Times of Cotton Mather* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 264, 399. William Brattle’s slave Cicely grave is visible in the old Cambridge burial ground. William Harris ed., *Epitaphs from the old burying-ground in Cambridge: With Notes* (Cambridge: J. Owen, 1845), 48.

3 For Mingo’s trial and execution, see *The Diary of Samuel Sewall* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1878), entries 1/29/1712, 1/30/1712, 2/15/1712. For more on Squire John Cuming, Brister, Jem, and the other slaves of Concord, see Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and its Aftermath in Concord, MA*. For the Hancock family slaves, see the will of Thomas Hancock, 1764. Frank’s gravestone (1771) is still visible at the Granary Burying Ground.

4 Increase Mather, “Last Will and Testament,” *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, 54 (1851), 445-447; Thomas, “Chains in the Yard,” 9.

5 Lorenzo Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942), 15-20; Seth Rockman, “The Unfree Origins of American Capitalism” in Cathy

Matson, ed. *The Economy of Early America*, (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 335-362.

6 John Winthrop, *The Journal of John Winthrop* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 128; Almon Lauber, *Indian Slavery in Colonial Times Within the Present Limits of the United States* (New York: Columbia University, 1913), 122-126.

7 Emory J. West, “Harvard and the Black Man, 1636–1850,” *Varieties of Black Experience at Harvard* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1986), 1; Benjamin Pierce, “Appendix,” *A History of Harvard University...* (Cambridge, MA: Brown, Shattuck and Company, 1833), 31-33. Thomas, “Chains in the Yard,” 6-7.

8 Emmanuel Downing to John Winthrop, c. August 1645, in *Winthrop Papers* v. 5, Malcolm Freiberg ed. (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society), 38.

9 Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1998), 17-28.

10 In some later transcriptions of Mather’s will “Spaniard” was rendered “Speedgood,” but at least two other documents confirm the name “Spaniard.” See, for example, Edmund M. Barton, “Report of the Librarian,” *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, 1887* (Worcester, MA: Charles Hamilton, 1888), 419.

11 Ira Berlin, *Generations of Captivity: A History of African-American Slaves* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003) 53-55, 81-88.

12 Papers of Benjamin Wadsworth, 1696–1736, UAI 15.868, Harvard University Archives; Records of Church of Christ at Cambridge in New England, 1632–1830, 109. Thomas, “Chains in the Yard,” 11.



13 Holyoke family, “Holyoke Family Diaries,” HUM 46, Harvard University Archives; The Holyoke Diaries are also readable online: <http://www.archive.org/details/holyokediariesoodowg>; Thomas, “Chains in the Yard.” Cato was not owned by the Holyokes and there is a small possibility that he was a free black servant. Evidence in the diaries, however, points to the likelihood that he was a slave. For example, on December 14, 1781, during the years of Massachusetts emancipation, Mary Vial Holyoke wrote, “Cato left us to live in Boston.”

14 Berlin, *Generations of Captivity*, 87-88; Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 321.

15 *Vital Records of Cambridge Massachusetts, to the Year 1850* (Wright and Potter Print Co., 1914), 441. Also readable online at <http://www.archive.org/stream/vitalrecordsofcaicamb#page/n5/mode/2up>.

16 Harris, *Epitaphs from the old burying-ground in Cambridge*, 90.

17 Berlin, *Generations of Captivity*, 84.

18 Harvard University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, “Early Faculty minutes, 1725–1806,” UAI 5.5, Harvard University Archives; Thomas, “Chains in the Yard,” 11.

19 Harris, *Epitaphs from the old burying-ground in*, 90.

20 Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 361; Richard Pares, *Yankees and Creoles: The Trade Between North America and the West Indies Before the American Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956), 1-37. James and Thomas Perkins’ grandfather Edward was a carpenter by trade but also made money occasionally selling horses, fish, and slaves. Carl Seaburg, Stanley Paterson, and Alfred D. Chandler, *Merchant Prince of Boston, Colonel T. H. Perkins, 1764–1854* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 18.

21 David Barry Gaspar, *Bondmen and Rebels: A Study of Master-Slave Relations in Antigua* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985), 112.

22 Vere Langford Oliver, *The History of the Island of Antigua, one of the Leeward Caribbees in the West Indies, from the First Settlement in 1635 to the Present Time*, vol. III (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1894), xxxvi; Pelissier, “Harvard’s Royall Legacy,” 5-7.

23 Alexandra A. Chan, *Slavery in the Age of Reason: Archaeology at a New England Farm* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 2007), 50.

24 Chan, *Slavery in the Age of Reason*, 56. In the 1720s and 30s Royall Sr. began accumulating land in New England. How long he had been planning to leave Antigua is unknown, but the 1720s and 30s had been rife with trouble for planters, even those as prosperous as Royall Sr. They faced environmental problems in the form of droughts and threats to their authority from large slave revolts. In 1736, for example, 400 slaves, one of them the Royall’s driver, attacked Popeshead. Gaspar, *Bondmen and Rebels*, 30, 226.

25 Public Records of the Royall Family are available at <http://royallhouse.org/documents.php>. For a good history of the Royall family and others like them in Massachusetts see C. S. Manegold, *Ten Hills Farm: The Forgotten History of Slavery in the North* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

26 “Will of Isaac Royall, Jr.,” Item 12, in Records of gifts and donations, Box 4, Volume 1, Harvard University Archives, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

27 “Statutes of the Professorship of Law in Harvard University,” in *Proposals looking to the founding of the Harvard Law School*, Harvard Law School Special Collections, Root Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 1; Letter from Asahel Stearns to President Kirkland, 11 July 1817, Memorandum, also in *Proposals looking to the founding of the Harvard Law School*.

28 Invoices, *Thorndike Collection*, Harvard Baker Library Historical Collections; *Thorndike Collection*, Harvard Baker Library Historical Collections, cited by John D. Forbes, *Israel Thorndike: Federalist Financier* (New York: Exposition Press, 1953), 29. Schallert, “Forging a University,” 10-11.

29 Edwin M. Stone, *History of Beverly, civil and ecclesiastical: from its settlement in 1630 to 1842* (Boston: J. Munroe, 1843), 131.

30 Josiah Quincy, *The History of Harvard University* v. 2 (Cambridge: John Owen, 1840), 441.

31 Thomas Greaves Cary, *Memoir of Thomas Handasyd Perkins* (Boston: Little and Brown, 1856), 9-10.

32 In 1776 the island’s slave population was 290,000; in 1783 it was 500,000. Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*,

44; C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 55.

33 James Elliot Cabot, “Extracts from Letter-books of Perkins, Burling, Perkins & Co. and other partnerships of Thomas Handasyd Perkins and James Perkins, 1786–1840” (Boston), Schlesinger Library, Harvard University, 25; Nathaniel Cutting, March 14, 1790, “Cutting Journal and Letterbooks, 1786–1798,” Massachusetts Historical Society; Mann, “Money and Memory,” 6.

34 Cabot, “Extracts from Letter-books,” 100. Mann, “Money and Memory,” 11-12.

35 Harvard University, *Gifts and Bequests, 1638–1870*, compiled by A. T. Gibbs, 1877, Harvard University Archives.

36 Early court cases reveal some doubts by New Englanders about the legality of African slavery. In a 1645 New Hampshire court case a slave was ordered to be returned to Africa because he had been unlawfully taken captive. Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 18. In addition, Harvard graduate Samuel Sewall published “The Selling of Joseph” in 1700, one of the first anti-slavery tracts of the American colonies.

37 “A Forensic Debate On The Legality of Enslaving The Africans, Held At The Public Commencement in Cambridge, New England (Boston 1773)” in Werner Sollors ed., *Blacks at Harvard: A Documentary History of African American Experience at Harvard and Radcliffe* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 11-19.

38 Greene, *Negro in Colonial New England*, 81.

39 Benjamin Coleman to Robert Wodrow, Boston, June 11, 1723, in *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings* 77 (1965): 131.

40 Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England*, 140-141.

41 Abner Cheney Goodell Jr., *The Trial and Execution for Petit Treason of Mark and Phillis, Slaves of Capt. John Codman* (Cambridge: John Wilson and Son, 1883), 27-28; Henle, “Harvard and the Justice of Slavery,” 1.

42 Harvard University, *Harvard University Quinquennial Catalogue of the Officers and Graduates, 1636–1930* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1930); Henle, “Harvard and the Justice of Slavery,” 3-4.

43 From 1642–1720 the number of Harvard graduates to enter the legal profession grew fivefold, while the number to enter the clergy fell from half of all graduates to one third. See Charles R. McKirdy, “The Lawyer as Apprentice: Legal Education in Eighteenth Century Massachusetts,” *Suffolk University Law Review* 11 (1976): 125.

44 Goodell, *Trial and Execution*, 27-28.

45 For a nuanced discussion of this alliance see Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and “Race” in New England 1780–1860* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

46 “The Commonwealth v. Nathaniel Jennison” in *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 13 (1874): 294.

47 Sven Beckert, “Emancipation and Empire: Reconstructing the Worldwide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War,” *American Historical Review* 109 (December 2004), 1408.

48 Carla Bosco, “When Harvard University Came to Support the Abolitionist Cause,” *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 54 (2006). A number of fugitive slave cases in Boston built support for anti-slavery advocates in the city, though the population remained divided. See Gary Collison, *Shadrach Minkins: From Fugitive Slave to Citizen* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); Albert J. Von Frank, *The Trials of Anthony Burns: Freedom and Slavery in Emerson’s Boston* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

49 Ronald Story, *The Forging of an Aristocracy: Harvard and the Boston Upper Class, 1800–1870* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1980), 24-26.

50 Brooks did, in fact, insure some of Thorndike’s ships. One such policy read: “By this Policy of Assurance, Underwritten in the Office kept by Peter Chardon Brooks, Israel Thorndike, Esq. of Beverly doth make insurance, and cause himself to be insured, lost or not lost, the sum of four thousand dollars, on the Brig Pilgrim and Cargo, one half on each, from the Isle of France to Boston, or both.” See *Thorndike Collection*, Harvard Baker Library Historical Collections; Schallert, “Forging a University,” 11.

51 “The Merrimack River Group and the Lawrence Manufacturing Company,” Manuscript, *Lawrence Manufacturing Company*, Harvard Baker Library Historical Collections.

52 “The Late Abbott Lawrence,” *Daily National Intelligencer*, Issue 13, 257, August 23, 1855.

53 Major donations are those above \$5,000.

54 The value of total major individual donations comes from Samuel A. Eliot, *A Sketch of the History of Harvard College: And of its Present State* (Boston: C. C. Little and J. Brown, 1848); Harvard University, *Gifts and Bequests*, 1638–1870 (Compiled by A. T. Gibbs, 1877, Harvard University Archives). Schallert, “Forging a University,” 7, 32.

55 See, for example, the obituary for James Perkins, “James Perkins, Esq.,” *Boston Daily Advertiser*, August 5, 1822.

56 Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, *General Information by and about the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences*, Harvard University Archives; Mary Jane McClintock Wilson, *Master of Woodland Hill: Benjamin Bussey of Boston (1757–1842)* (Boston: Archives of the Arnold Arboretum, 2006), 11.

57 Treasurer’s Ledger, UAI 50.15.56 Box 11, Harvard University Archives; Staudt, “Slavery and the Early Investment Strategies,” 16–19.

58 For this voyage Hathaway took out a loan from Baring Bros. A record of the loan wound up in Theron Metcalf, *Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts* Vol. IX (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1853) 380.

59 Harvard’s investments with West Indian merchants is one of the least researched aspects of the financial story. It may also be the piece of the story with the most contemporary resonance.

60 Quincy, *History of Harvard*, 363–364.

61 For Baring Bros.’ history of providing credit to plantation owners and merchant traders, and Ward’s work for the firm, see Ralph W. Hidy, *The House of Baring in American Trade and Finance: English Merchant Bankers at Work 1763–1861* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949) 184–188.

62 Harvard University, *Gifts and Bequests*.

63 Edward Ball, *Slaves in the Family* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998), 256. South Carolinian and Harvard student Jacob Rhett Motte wrote, “The sight of the word vacation always reminds me of N. London” in Diary of Jacob

Rhett Motte, May–September 1831. HUD 831.56.2 Harvard University Archives. Entry May 17, 1831; May, “True Southern Gentleman,” 17–18.

64 No student researcher matched every southern Harvard student with US Census records to determine how many slaves his family owned. Since sending a child to Harvard was costly, it is unlikely that any of the families were not slave-owners. Doing genealogical research for each student would be a significant undertaking. When, for example, James Benjamin Clark was born in North Carolina, his family owned at least six slaves and likely as many as 60. The confusion comes from the fact that the Census lists two William Clarks for Pitt County North Carolina in 1830; further research would be needed to determine which Clark was James’ father.

65 See for example James Clark, *An Undergraduate’s Diary*, reprinted in *Harvard Graduates’ Magazine* (March and June, 1913), 641; Chuchul, “Camaraderie and Complicity,” 19.

66 Thomas P. Rutledge, “A Short History of the A.E.O.C.,” with an introduction by James P. Beckwith, Jr., *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 77 no.2 (Apr. 1976); Speroni, “Harvard’s Atticus,” 13.

67 *Catalogue of the Honorary and Immediate Members of the Porcellian Club, Harvard University, Cambridge: Instituted in 1791*. (Cambridge, MA: Hilliard, Metcalf, & Co., 1828). 18–19. May, “True Southern Gentleman,” 11–12. Southern students typically made up around ten percent of the population at Harvard, meaning they were slightly over-represented, at twenty to thirty percent, in the Porcellian. See the university population for 1855–1861 in W.A. Laurence, “List of Southern Students Admitted to Harvard between 1846 and 1865,” Harvard University Archives.

68 *Class Book*, 1857, Harvard University Archives, 43. For an overview of Clark’s experience see William A. Braverman, “James Benjamin Clark and the Southern Experience at Harvard College in the Civil War Era,” *Harvard College Library Bulletin* (1986), 397.

69 Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Life and Letters of Harrison Gray Otis, Federalist, 1765–1848*, Volume 2 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913), 271.

70 *Boston Gazette*, “The Abolition Question” excerpted in *Gloucester Telegraph*, 23 October 1835.

71 John Ware, *Memoir of the Life of Henry Ware, Jr.*, Volume II (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1846), 147–48; Gill, “Harvard and its Abolitionists,” 16.

72 *Boston Gazette* excerpted in *Gloucester Telegraph*, 3 July 1834.

73 Quincy is quoted in Samuel Eliot Morison, *Three Centuries of Harvard: 1636–1936* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986), 255; For an article that gives Quincy the benefit of the doubt, see Douglas C. Stange, “The Making of an Abolitionist Martyr: Harvard Professor Charles Theodore Christian Follen (1796–1840),” *Harvard Library Bulletin*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Jan 1976).

74 Josiah Quincy to John G. Palfrey, 25 May 1838, Papers of Josiah Quincy 1825–1863 and undated, Box 2, 15.882, Harvard University Archives. Lockhart, “Apprehensions of the President,” 7, 11.

75 Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 11.

76 Louis Agassiz, “Diversity of Origin of the Human Races,” in *Christian Examiner and Religious Miscellany* 49:2 (1850), 138.

77 Louis Agassiz, “Natural Provinces of the Animal World and Their Relation to the Different Types of Man,” in Josiah Nott, *Types of Mankind, Or Ethnological Researches...* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and Co., 1855) lxxvi.

78 Agassiz, “Diversity of Origin,” 144.

79 Louis Agassiz to Samuel G. Howe, 9 August 1863, in Agassiz and Elizabeth Cabot Cary Agassiz, *Louis Agassiz: His Life and Correspondence* (London: Macmillan, 1885), 597–598; Weinberg, “The Incalculable Legacy,” 10–11.

80 Edward Lurie, *Louis Agassiz: A Life in Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

81 George Russell Agassiz, “History of the M. C. Z.” in *Notes Concerning the History and Contents of the Museum of Comparative Zoology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard College, 1936), 16–19.

82 *Harvard Gazette*, May 18, 1906, Volume I, No. 12.

83 Nathaniel Southgate Shaler, “Science and the African Problem,” *Atlantic Monthly* (1890): 37

84 Nathaniel Southgate Shaler, “The Negro Problem,” *Atlantic Monthly*, November (1884): 698; Weinberg, “The Incalculable Legacy,” 16.

85 “Last Tributes Paid,” Newspaper Unknown, 1906, Nathaniel Southgate Shaler Biographical Folder, Harvard University Archives.

86 W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1935); Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: American’s Unfinished Revolution* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); Stephen Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2003).

87 Henry Lee Higginson, along with his father (who oversaw Harvard’s Treasury Accounts), was a partner in Lee, Higginson & Co., which took multiple loans from Harvard in the 1850s and 1860s. See “Treasurer’s Ledgers,” 1836–1868, UAI 50.15.66 Box 10, Harvard University Archives. Staudt, “Slavery and the Early Investment Strategies,” 16–19.

88 Henry Lee Higginson, *Life and letters of Henry Lee Higginson* vol. 1, ed. Bliss Perry (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1921), 247–252.

89 Rebecca Scott, “A Cuban Connection: Edwin F. Atkins, Charles Francis Adams, Jr., and Former Slaves of Soledad Plantation,” *Massachusetts Historical Review* 9 (2007).

90 The gift of the plantation is recorded in “Treasurer’s statement 1926–1927 Gifts for Immediate Use,” Annual Reports of President/Treasure of Harvard University (1826–1995), Harvard University Archives online, <http://hul.harvard.edu/huarc/refshelf/AnnualReports.htm>; on cane disease see Mrs. Edwin F. Atkins, letter to Tom Barbour, Botanic Garden in Cuba Directors Correspondence (1898–1946), Harvard University Archives. Rhaman, “Harvard Botanical Station,” 16–18.

91 Oakes Ames to Blanche Adams, 11 January 1903, Papers of Oakes Ames, Letters to his Family and Autobiographical Writing (MSS) (1902–1949), Harvard University Archives; Rhaman, “Harvard Botanical Station,” 1, 18.

92 See David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2001).

93 Ira Berlin, Barbara Fields et al., *Slaves No More: Three Essays on Emancipation and the Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

94 James Walker, *An Address Delivered before the Alumni of Harvard College* (Cambridge, MA, 1863); Anderson, “Memorial Hall,” 2.

95 Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 99-139. It is noteworthy, however, that Memorial Hall has never included graduates of Harvard who fought for the Confederacy. This has been a perennial source of controversy. See for example, Laila Weston, “Generous Instincts: Remembering Harvard’s Confederate Alumni” (Thesis, Harvard College, 1994); Thompson, “Legacy of Slavery,” 11-15.

96 Vere Langford Oliver, *The History of the Island of Antigua, One of the Leeward Caribbees in the West Indies, From the First Settlement in 1635 to the Present Time*, (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1894), 347-348.

97 Andrew T. Weil, “Fords Occupy Restored Elmwood,” *The Harvard Crimson*, September 23, 1963; Terry, “Elmwood and Slavery,” 13-14.

98 Oliver, *History of Antigua*, 322, 346.

99 Roy E. Finkenbine, “Belinda’s Petition: Reparations for Slavery in Revolutionary Massachusetts” unpublished manuscript cited in Brown University, *Slavery and Justice: Report of the Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice* (Providence: Brown University, 2007), 67-68; see also Vincent Carretta, ed., *Unchained Voices: An Anthology of Black Authors in the English-Speaking World of the Eighteenth Century* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1996), 142-144.

100 Thomas, “Chains in the Yard,” 20; Terry, “Elmwood and Slavery,” 21.

## STUDENT ESSAYS

### *from the Harvard and Slaver Research Seminar*

Eric Anderson, “History, Memory, Memorial: Memorial Hall at Harvard University.”

Matthew Chuchul, “Camaraderie and Complicity: The Role of Harvard in Forging Bonds of Friendship between Northern and Southern Harvard Students in the Decade before the Civil War.”

Jennifer Dowdell, “The Legacy of Peter Chardon Brooks.”

Balraj Gill, “Harvard and Its Abolitionists: How Debates on Slavery and the Emergence of Radical Abolitionism Shaped Policy and the University in the 1830s.”

Malcolm Glenn, “Presidential Power: Harvard and the Leadership that Shaped the Slave Debate During America’s Most Divisive Decades.”

Jesse Halvorson, “A Dark and Sticky Trade: Revisiting the Story of the New England Merchant”

Justin Harbour, “Slavery, not Enslavement: The Uses of Slavery by Harvard Affiliates Between 1773 and 1820.”

Jim Henle, “Harvard and the Justice of Slavery: The Executions of Mark and Phillis, 1755.”

John Kennebeck, “Harvard Presidents: Slavery and Politics in the Decade Before the Civil War: 1850–1860.”

Learah Lockhart, “The Apprehensions of the President: President Josiah Quincy’s Interference in a Debate on Abolition in Harvard’s Divinity School.”

Robert G. Mann, “Money and Memory: The Perkins Family Legacy.”

Hilary May, “A True Southern Gentleman: Charlestonians at Harvard in the Antebellum Period.”

Mona McKindley, “In Ignorance of Their Own Power: Slave Owners, Slave Merchants, and Abolitionists At Harvard College, 1636–1790.”

Gary Pelissier, “Harvard’s Royall Legacy: Slavery and the Origins of the Harvard Law School.”

Alexandra Rahman, “‘A very plain business man’: Edwin Farnsworth Atkins and the Birth of the Harvard Botanical Station on the Former Slave Plantation Soledad.”

Meike Schallert, “The Forging of a University: How Harvard Benefited from the Slave-Economy, 1800–1850.”

Liane Speroni, “Harvard’s Atticus: Robert Wickliffe Jr., Plants the Fountain of Knowledge in the Kentucky Blue Grass.”

Gary Staudt, “Slavery and the Early Investment Strategies of Harvard University’s Endowment.”

Kaitlin Terry, “Elmwood and Slavery: Confronting Harvard’s Hidden History with Full Authenticity.”

Shelley Thomas, “Chains in the Yard: A Discussion of Slave Owners and Slave Life on Harvard’s Campus Between 1636 and 1780.”

Kylie Thompson, “The Legacy of Slavery at Harvard University: Contemporary Implications of Harvard’s Slave Ties and the Emerging Challenges of Claiming Institutional Slave History.”

Brandi Waters, "Interstitial Memory: Exploring the Underground Railroad in Harvard's Warren House."

Zoe Weinberg, "The Incalculable Legacy: Race Science at Harvard in the 19th and 20th Centuries."

Matthew Whittaker, "From Mournful Past to Happy Present: The Lewis and Harriet Hayden Scholarship at Harvard University."

Avery Williamson, "Slavery's Legacy at Harvard."