THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Compelling Friendship:
Analyzing the Causes and Experiences of De Facto Slavery's Persistence in Massachusetts in the Era of the American Revolution

By

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Introduction:

In November of 1817, an African man named Othello died in Harvard, Massachusetts.[1] He is the only recorded Black person buried in the center town cemetery, and his grave lays segregated, well more than twenty-five feet from any other, even though Harvard, MA before and since the town's secession from Lancaster and incorporation in 1732 has had many Black residents, enslaved and free.[2] Othello's memory carries on in the town due to the wealth, power,

[1] Othello's gravestone in the center cemetery in Harvard, MA dates his death to 1818, but his headstone was erected roughly thirty years after his death by Henry Bromfield's grandson, Henry Bromfield Pearson. In a letter Henry Bromfield wrote to his daughter Sarah Pearson, Henry Bromfield Pearson's mother, dated January 6th, 1818, he writes "I think it high time I answered your affectionate and dutiful letter of 2 Dec. in which time you notice having heard of poor Othelo death." The Bromfield family learned of Othello's death in the early months of 1818, but according to this letter Henry Bromfield dates Othello's death and funeral to November of 1817. Henry Bromfield. Letter to his daughter Sally (Sarah) Bromfield Pearson reflecting on the death, funeral, and briefly life of Othello, January 6th, 1818, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 20, 1816-19, Yale University and Archives, New Haven.

[2] Slavery was introduced into the area in the early 18th century, during resettlement after King Phillip's war, which had resulted in the removal of Indigenous nations, such as the Nipmuc's. Although enslaved people were a small part of town populations, Black people were an integral part of the economic and infrastructural development of towns in the interior of Massachusetts. Enslaved Black labor allowed white men freedom of movement, enslaved people were easily liquidable pieces of property for debts and credits, enslaved Black labor had been swapped out in place of free Indigenous labor making slavery and the slave trade an essential mechanism of settler colonialism, their labor negated the amount of domestic responsibility white men had in their homes allowing them to focus energies elsewhere, and enslaved labor upheld a social and cultural system of dependency reinforced through racial patriarchy. There are nineteen recorded enslaved people in the Harvard, Massachusetts formal town history by Henry Nourse. Formal statistics are extremely underrepresented and many Black residents of Harvard, MA were not recorded. A closer interrogation of will and probate records, censuses, and personal papers reveals more Black lives than have been formally recorded. For instance, the 1790 census reveals two households that are Black families (Dinah Wetherbee, 5, and Caesar Hamman, 6) that take the last names of white families in the town. Wetherbee is one of the original town families, and the white Hamman and Wetherbee families are recorded on the 1790 and later Harvard Censuses. The Hazard family is also a generational Black family of Harvard and Shirley dating back to the 1770s. Their family history can be read at the Harvard Historical Society. Also, a Black man named William Henry Hall, the son of Henry and Jerusha Smith Hall who were longtime residents in Harvard, has a commemorative marker in the town cemetery as he died during the civil war fighting for the union. Little is known of their family. Brigitte Lewis, "The Legend of Neptune: A Portrait of Enslavement and Emancipation in 18th-Century Worcester County, Massachusetts" (2021). Honors Theses. University of Mississippi, Oxford, 1851. https://egrove.olemiss.edu/hon_thesis/1851. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998. Kelly A. Ryan. *Regulating Passion: Sexuality and Patriarchal Rule in Massachusetts, 1700-1830*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. Henry Stedman Nourse. *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts: 1732-1893.* Harvard: W. Hapgood, 1894. History of the town of Harvard, Massachusetts, 1732-1893 : Nourse, Henry S. (Henry Stedman), 1831-1903 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive Marty Green, "What is early Harvard's Black history? Looking for answers in first census counts." The Harvard Press. February 25th, 2022. Online. 1790, 1800, 1810 United Censuses of Harvard, Massachusetts in Worcester County accessed online via ancestry.com database. Gloria McCahon Whiting. "Race, Slavery, and the Problem of Numbers in Early New England: A View from Probate Court." The William and Mary Quarterly 77, no. 3 (2020): 405–40. https://doi.org/10.5309/willmaryquar.77.3.0405.

influence, and investment his enslaver, Henry Bromfield, held in the community from 1765, when he bought his estate, until his death in 1820. Henry Bromfield enslaved Othello from about 1760 until his death.

For about thirty years, Othello's grave was left unmarked in the cemetery. This was a common occurrence when Black people were buried in white cemeteries in New England.[3] In the 1840s and 50s, Henry Bromfield's grandson, Henry Bromfield Pearson and his wife, Elizabeth, moved to his grandfather's estate in Harvard, MA.[4] He had become an anti-slavery reverend, giving an anti-slavery sermon at the first Congregational Church in Harvard in 1848, which was built in 1821 and sits about twenty feet North of Othello's grave.[5] Henry Bromfield Pearson

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See town Cemetery summary presented by the Harvard Historical Society presented here: Cemetery | Harvard Historical Society (harvardhistory.org)

[3] There is a current proposal to survey the old burying ground next to Harvard University in Cambridge, MA in order to understand how many Black people were buried in unmarked graves in order to give greater historical visibility. They are also hoping to resolve questions of what happened to certain Black New Englanders recorded in Cambridge histories and documents and Harvard University histories and to gage the level of segregation in the cemetery. Aja Lans. 2021. "Mapping Post-Mortem Segregation: A Proposal to Survey the Old Burying Ground in Cambridge." ArcGIS Story Maps. Esri. November 2, 2021. https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/00e1ec376fd74c92b75f3378ed7d0a28. In the conclusion of this paper, the evidence is presented that the area of the cemetery where Othello's gravestone rests could possibly be the Black area of the cemetery, due to the evidence that bodies have been moved, and many were buried unmarked, including Henry Bromfield's second wife Hannah Clarke Bromfield.

[4] Henry Bromfield had willed his estate away in equal portions to his three surviving children: Elizabeth Rogers (Boston), Sarah Pearson (Andover/Boston), and Henry Bromfield Junior (London). Henry Bromfield Junior and Elizabeth Rogers and her husband Daniel Denison Rogers would bequeath their portion to Sarah and her husband Eliphalet Pearson. Henry Bromfield Pearson and his wife Elizabeth would live there until the mansion burned in 1855. His sister, Margaret Blanchard Bromfield gave away in her will the Bromfield land, the newly constructed house, and a portion of the family fortune to the creation of a school. The school was meant to rival schools like the Groton School, Concord Academy, and Andover Academy where her father had taught. The school was also to be a tribute to her grandfather Henry Bromfield, who had loved reading and to the preservation of the Bromfield name. The school is now Harvard, MA's public school, the Bromfield School. The building that the current Harvard Public Library is housed in is the home that was built after the original mansion burned in 1855 and was where the first Bromfield School was housed. The current Bromfield school is a short two-minute walk from the library and sits in the middle of the public library and the center cemetery, where Othello is buried. Transcribed portion of letter from Henry Bromfield Junior in England to Daniel Dennison Rogers in Boston requesting they bequeath their portions of the Harvard estate to their sister Sarah (Sally) Bromfield Pearson. Folder 21, Box 1, Slade-Rogers Family Papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Newspaper Clippings in Folder 9, Box 9, of the Slade-Rogers Family Papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Newspaper clipping titled "The Bromfield Portraits" in Folder 24, Box 8, of the Slade-Rogers Family Papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Henry Stedman Nourse. *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts: 1732-1893,* 379-383, 425.

[5] Henry Bromfield Pearson. A discourse delivered in the First Congregational Church at Harvard, Worcester Co., Mass.: on the day of the annual fast, April 6, 1848. W.B. Fowle, Boston. discourse hb perason.pdf, Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity.* Grants from Harvard Historical Society and Harvard Cultural

wrote and erected Othello's headstone around 1850 and planted the sugar maple that towers to the left of his grave.[6] The headstone reads:

The faithful friend of Henry Bromfield
Came from Africa about 1760,
Died 1818. Aged about 72.

Henry Bromfield Pearson, the grandson, was born in 1795, and spent most of his time from 1800-1820 at Andover Academy, Yale University, and Harvard University. He did not spend much time with his grandfather Henry Bromfield at Harvard and did not know Othello well.[7] He erected this headstone not to correctly represent the relationship between Othello and Henry Bromfield but to memorialize and romanticize Othello's life and forced servitude to assuage his own white guilt. Henry Bromfield Pearson, in 1850, was attempting to resolve his cognitive dissonance between his family history of profiting off oppression and his own moral preaching's about the inherent evil of that oppression.[8] In fact, the Bromfield family throughout the 18th century were generational slave owners, profiting in a myriad of ways through enslaved labor.[9]

Council for publication, 2021, 29, 51. For a map of the town common in 1831 constructed by Carlene Phillips follow this link: A Commercial Village, 1780-1865 map of Harvard ma 1831.pdf

[6] D.D. (Daniel Dennison) Slade, *The Bromfields* Boston D. Clapp, 1872. https://archive.org/details/bromfields00slad/page/10/mode/2up, Click these links to view pictures of Othello's headstone and location: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15k5M_XA-zRR6Rl0Ukldvs-lZiYaCm7CQ?usp=sharing The sugar maple, based on calculations taken from the tree's circumference, is about 170 years old, dating it to 1852.

[7] Henry Bromfield Pearson's mother, Sarah (Sally) Pearson, the daughter of Henry Bromfield, grew up with Othello and would inquire about his death to her father. Henry Bromfield Pearson probably heard a few anecdotes about Othello's life with his grandfather from his mother. Information on Henry Bromfield Pearson's correspondence and activities from 1800-1875 are available in the Henry Bromfield Pearson Papers, MS 389, at Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Collection: Henry Bromfield Pearson papers | Archives at Yale

[8] For Henry Bromfield Pearson's views on slavery in the decade leading up to the civil war see: Henry Bromfield Pearson. A discourse delivered in the First Congregational Church at Harvard, discourse hb perason.pdf. The descendants of New England enslavers and how they effectively erased Black history and New England's history of slavery while promoting anti-slavery rhetoric has been studied in: Margot Minardi. *Making Slavery History: Abolitionism and the Politics of Memory in Massachusetts*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998.

[9] Edward Bromfield, Henry Bromfield's grandfather, bequeathed in his will to his wife Mary, Thomas, his enslaved man in 1727. Suffolk County, Massachusetts, Probate File Papers, 1635-1991, Last Will and Testament of Edward Bromfield, Will date December 13th, Probate date, December 30th, 1727; ancestry.com. Massachusetts, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1635-1991 - Ancestry.com Henry Bromfield married into slavery through his second wife

Othello is the most famous Black resident of Harvard's history due to this gravestone and it has ensured that he has been remembered.[10] Yet, the gravestone's epithet has obscured a factual remembering of Othello's life. The epithet "the faithful friend of Henry Bromfield" written roughly thirty years after both Othello and Henry Bromfield had died, by a family member who did not know either well and who had a personal agenda of obscuring the reality that his grandfather had dispossessed Othello of making his own life choices through roughly a fifty-eight year relationship that for thirty years had been legally permissible and defined as slavery, has unfortunately been used as evidence that Henry Bromfield granted Othello his freedom, when in fact, there is no record anywhere that Henry Bromfield offered Othello his emancipation or offered him the opportunity to actualize freedom.[11] The narrative that Othello,

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Hannah Clarke. Coming into possession of at least Nan/Nanny, who Richard Clarke had bought at two years old in 1746 and who died in Boston in 1783 from scarlet fever after nursing Henry and Hannah's only daughter Elizabeth back to health. Henry Bromfield. Letter to his daughter Abigail Bromfield Rogers, December 24th, 1783, 4 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 7, 1780-83, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Bill of Sale for Nan, a girl aged two years nine months, purchased by Richard Clarke of Boston from Samuel Hyde of Attleboro, December 9th, 1746, 3 pages; Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 4, Folder: 1, Wills, deeds, and other documents, 1682-1771, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry also sold an unnamed enslaved boy in 1775. Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 4.pdf, 17-18.

[10] The Hazard family come as close runner ups in notoriety. Thomas Hazard was born a free Black man in Connecticut and settled in Harvard, MA in the 1770s. The Hazard family owned land in Shirley and Harvard and Thomas's descendants also moved to other New England states like Vermont. Some of the Hazard family descendants still live in Harvard, MA today. Tower Hazard, a grandson of Thomas apparently ran an underground railroad stop in Harvard. Their family history can be read in manuscript format at the Harvard Historical Society in Harvard, Massachusetts, but the Black Hazard family of Harvard, MA and in Greater New England appears in no formal history I know of. Marty Green, "What is early Harvard's Black history? Looking for answers in first census counts." The Harvard Press. February 25th, 2022. Online. Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity*, 47. Henry Nourse cemented Othello as a town historical anecdote due to his relationship with Henry Bromfield in his *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts,* in which their relationship is depicted as oddly servile, homeo-platonic, riddled with power dynamics, and levels of dependency. See pages 132-36, 402-03, 489. Othell's gravestone is also in the official Harvard Historical Society Cemetery Tour, see: Cemetery | Harvard Historical Society (harvardhistory.org), cemetery_booklet.pdf - Google Drive

[11] There is no record, anywhere, besides through oral history recounted in Henry Nourse's *History of Harvard*, that Henry Bromfield ever offered Othello his legal emancipation. Othello in all primary sources (census records, letters) remains recorded as a dependent in Henry Bromfield's household until his death in 1818. Henry never recorded paying Othello a wage for his fifty plus years of forced and coerced service, and he never awarded Othello reparations for his years of forced labor. Henry kept meticulous records of his hired labor payments, and in bills for labor paid for the construction of his daughter Elizabeth's house in 1785-6 he was recorded paying many white men in the town, two unnamed women, Thomas Dunton's 'man' (implying servant, whose wages went to Thomas Dunton), and an unnamed 'negro' man for their labor. Othello, when he appears in Henry's papers is mentioned by

"being manumitted…chose to remain with the Bromfield family and became an almost inseparable attendant upon the colonel," although based in no archival evidence besides Othello's headstone epithet written thirty years post-mortem, fits nicely into the constructed narrative that slavery had ended in practice and law by 1790 in Massachusetts, and that Massachusetts slavery was somehow kinder because formerly legally enslaved people like Othello "chose" to stay in the same situation as they had under slavery, and that New England enslavers somehow changed their racist beliefs or willingly altered their investments in slavery in the post-revolution period.[12] But the archival record tells a different story.

The dominant interpretation of how slavery became illegal in Massachusetts has found a comfortable end date in 1790.[13] In the 1770s, most Black people in Suffolk County were able to negotiate with their enslavers for their freedom and by the 1780s, most wills and probates in

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first name, so the unnamed Black man Henry paid for labor was most likely not Othello and instead a free man. Even if Henry had offered Othello his emancipation verbally sometime in the 1780s, 90s, or early 1800s, Othello had no reparations or community/family outside of the Bromfield household. Othello was a 'faithful friend' of Henry Bromfield because he was compelled to be. Receipts for the parts, labor, and construction of Henry Bromfield Senior's building of a house on School Street for his daughter Elizabeth in which he lists out paying various persons who are listed by name when they are men, two unnamed women are listed as paid for labor and an unnamed "negro man", as well as Thomas Dunton's 'man', and it also includes a bill to Sam Dillaway, September 5th, 1785-January 4th, 1786, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September-December 1785, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. See Harvard, Massachusetts 1800, 1810, United States Federal Censuses via ancestry.com. None of the three people mentioned in primary sources who were enslaved by Henry Bromfield were offered their freedom. Nan and Othello died while enslaved by the Bromfield family, and Henry Bromfield sold an enslaved boy opposed to freeing him in 1775 for fast cash to pay back debts.

[12] This strain of New England and Massachusetts racism that sought to scrub clean and erase the history of slavery and Black New Englanders and how it contributed to continual racial inequality and the evolution of racist ideology in New England has been well documented, proven, and studied in the following works: Margot Minardi. *Making Slavery History: Abolitionism and the Politics of Memory in Massachusetts*. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860*. Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009. New England 19th century histories, such as Henry Nourse's *History of the Town of Harvard*, are particularly at fault for perpetuating and originating this narrative and are discussed in the above cited works.

[13] The dominant historical narrative of the end of slavery in Massachusetts finds comfortable dates in 1783 and 1790, due in large part to Arthur Zilversmit's authoritative legal history published in 1967 titled, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967. Zilversmit would argue from solely a legal perspective, using court cases as his main source material and analytical tool, that the end of slavery in Massachusetts and other northern colonies turned states had definitive dates. This interpretation is published in condensed format on the Massachusetts government website: Massachusetts Constitution and the Abolition of Slavery | Mass.gov

Suffolk County no longer included Black people. Thus, in Boston by 1780 legal, inheritable, life-long slavery had become culturally unacceptable.[14] In 1780, the state Constitution would also declare that "all men were born free and equal", delegitimizing the legality of slavery.[15] Other Black New Englanders, beginning in the 1760s, used the courts to file joint and individual petitions and freedom suites into the 1780s.[16] Elizabeth Freeman and Brom in Berkshire County and Quock Walker in Worcester County were two of the most notable freedom suites that won. Elizabeth Freeman and Brom's case set the precedent that these two individuals were not property and thus were owed financial damages due to the financial loss they suffered by someone else owning their labor. Quock Walker's case would be a series of appeals and rulings that would ultimately determine Quock to be free for a myriad of reasons, reflecting the host of post-revolutionary resources that Quock could use to prove his legal freedom.[17] These two cases

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[14] Gloria McCahon Whiting presents and proves this thesis with specificity to the Suffolk county area, mainly Boston and Cambridge, in "Emancipation without the Courts or Constitution: The Case of Revolutionary Massachusetts." *Slavery & Abolition*, no. 3: 458 (2020). https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsbl&AN=vdc.100119257743.0x000001&site=eds-live&scope=site One of the main ways Black men were able to negotiate freedom was through military service. Although interpersonal negotiations were one of the ways Black people actualized freedom, they also actively seized freedom whenever opportunities presented themselves, for instance when enslavers fled when they were loyalists, leaving behind enslaved people to make decisions for themselves, which was what happened to Richard Clarke and John Singleton Copley's holdings of enslaved people when they fled in 1775. Benjamin Quarles. *The Negro in the American Revolution*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1961. Judith L. Van Buskirk *Standing in Their Own Light: African American Patriots in the American Revolution*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017. Jane Kamensky. *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley*. United States: W. W. Norton, 2016.

[15] The 1778 Massachusetts State Constitution had been rejected due to its inclusion of stating that slavery was a legal institution in the state. Massachusetts Constitution and the Abolition of Slavery | Mass.gov

[16] Black New Englanders litigiousness has been well documented and studied: Chernoh S. Sesay.. "The Revolutionary Black Roots of Slavery's Abolition in Massachusetts." *The New England Quarterly* 87, no. 1 (2014): 99–131. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43285055. Daniel R. Mandell. "Petition of Prince Hall and Other African Americans to the Massachusetts General Court 1777." In *Milestone Documents in African American History*, edited by Grey House Publishing. 2nd ed. Salem Press, 2017. Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North*. Roy E. Finkenbine. "Belinda's Petition: Reparations for Slavery in Revolutionary Massachusetts." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (2007): 95–104. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4491599. Thomas J Davis. "Emancipation Rhetoric, Natural Rights, and Revolutionary New England: A Note on Four Black Petitions in Massachusetts, 1773-1777." *The New England Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (1989): 248–63. https://doi.org/10.2307/366422. Berry, Daina Ramey and Kali Nicole Gross. "Chapter Three: Belinda's Petition for Independence, 1760-1820." In *A Black Women's History of the United States*, 40-64. Boston: Beacon Press, 2020.

[17] For information on these court cases see: Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North*. Massachusetts Constitution and the Abolition of Slavery | Mass.gov. Robert M. Spector "The Quock

affirmed the precedent that enslaver's legal right to practice slavery would no longer be protected in court. Although overt, legal slavery—which entailed the law upholding that slavery was a lifelong, inheritable sentence, that Black people were property and could be treated as such in Massachusetts, and the condoning of racial physical violence—would become undefendable in court, racist ideology would persist and transform in insidious ways in Massachusetts.[18] Slavery being deemed illegal would also not dissolve the levels of dependency that social systems were predicated on, such as the town warning out system, town's having to provide financial and housing support to those deemed incapable, or gender inequality before the law.[19] In 1790, the first United States Federal census of Massachusetts recorded no enslaved people, formalizing that legal slavery no longer existed in the state and also indicating that the naming of slavery like relationships as such in formal documents had become culturally unacceptable.[20] Also, if Massachusetts enslavers listed enslaved people on the census, then they could be taxed and possibly prosecuted in their local Massachusetts courts.[21]

Walker Cases (1781-83)—Slavery, Its Abolition, and Negro Citizenship in Early Massachusetts," *Journal of Negro History* 53, No. 1 (1968): 12-32. Quock's journey to freedom included a series of suites. Quock would win legal recognition and validation for his freedom by appealing to the language in the state constitution, the promise of freedom from his former enslaver, who had left his wife a widow and whom the man who was attempting to enslave him had married, and because Quock had secured wage labor and was providing for himself, Caldwell, the man trying to re-enslave him, was tried for physical assault when he violently assaulted him in an attempt to re-enslave Quock and take his earned wages.

[18] The ways that racist ideology perpetuated and transformed in the wake of legal emancipation in Massachusetts has been of interest to many scholars: Margot Minardi. *Making Slavery History: Abolitionism and the Politics of Memory in Massachusetts*. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860*. But none of these interpretations take seriously the ways in which slavery's perpetuation in practice throughout the interior of the state post legal emancipation affected racial ideology but are more interested in the use/erasure of slavery's legacy.

[19] Jared Ross Hardesty. *Unfreedom: Slavery and Dependence in Eighteenth-Century Boston*. New York: New York University Press, 2016. Kelly A Ryan. *Regulating Passion: Sexuality and Patriarchal Rule in Massachusetts, 1700-1830*. On the Warning out system and town poor care: Ruth Wallis Herndon. *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001. John Wood Sweet. *Bodies Politic: Negotiating Race in the American North, 1730-1830*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.

[20] Gloria Whiting, "Emancipation without the Courts or Constitution: The Case of Revolutionary Massachusetts." Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North.*

[21] The arguments of Black Diaspora scholar Jennifer Morgan, and New England Slavery historian Gloria Whiting have demonstrated how accounting and bookkeeping practices were developed to obscure Black people while also profiting off them, thus an argument that relies only on numeracy is inherently flawed. Countless other scholars of

Yet, despite slavery by 1790 being illegal, the relationship of enslaver to enslaved that Othello and Henry Bromfield had before 1790 was practically identical to the relationship they had post 1790, although their relationship took on more intimate and co-dependent aspects as they aged. In 1785, Henry Bromfield's second wife, Hannah Clarke, died. As Henry aged into the 1800s his life at Harvard, MA grew more and more reclusive; consequently, he became increasingly physically dependent upon Othello due to continual bouts of gout that stopped him from walking and often suffered from different flus during the winter.[22] Before legal emancipation in 1790, Henry had legally enslaved Othello for thirty years, stripping him of family, community, freedom of movement, individual choice, and financial independence. Henry Bromfield kept meticulous records throughout his life and most of his receipts, which includes paying diverse sets of people for commissioned labor, survive, but there is no record of Henry paying Othello a wage for any of his labor post 1790 or financial restitution for his legally stolen labor before 1790.[23] In the few documents that survive from 1790 onward in which Henry

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the African Diaspora and Black Studies have exemplified the ways in which the archive was constructed to silence and erase others. The construction of federal census records is no exception. Gloria McCahon Whiting. "Race, Slavery, and the Problem of Numbers in Early New England: A View from Probate Court." The William and Mary Quarterly 77, no. 3 (2020): 405–40. https://doi.org/10.5309/willmaryquar.77.3.0405. : Marisa J Fuentes. *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. Jennifer L. Morgan *Reckoning with Slavery: Gender, Kinship, and Capitalism in the Early Black Atlantic*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2021.

[22] D.D. (Daniel Dennison) Slade, *The Bromfields.* Henry Stedman Nourse, *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts.* Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Memorandum book with accounts, 2/2/1770-01/15-1802, The Gilder Lehrman Collection, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New York, NY. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/brigi/Downloads/GLC01450.030.01%20(1).pdf Henry Bromfield. Letter to his brother Thomas Bromfield in London discussing retired life and how the winter weather will keep him from traveling until April, December 15th, 1804, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 16, 1803-1804, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield. Letter to his brother Thomas Bromfield in London discussing health remedies, December 10th, 1806, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 17, 1805-1809, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield. Letter to his daughter Sally (Sarah) Bromfield Pearson about the removal of a neighbor and lamenting his solitude, December 30th, 1806, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 17, 1805-1809, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Bromfield, Henry. Letter to his daughter Sally (Sarah) Bromfield Pearson reflecting on the death, funeral, and briefly life of Othello, January 6th, 1818, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 20, 1816-19, Yale University and Archives, New Haven.

[23] See footnote 11.

mentions Othello, he is often referred to as a perpetual child, dependent, or pet, described as an "ignorant man" who was never given anything more "than what was required of him."[24] Mirroring an enslaver to enslaved relationship, post 1790 Henry Bromfield bought Othello clothes, strings for his fiddle, gave him a place to sleep, and meals in exchange for his perpetual service to him and the perpetual right to choose how Othello's labor was used.[25] Henry Bromfield believed Othello's life-long labor in service to him did not entail him to financial reparation for his thirty years of legally enslaved labor and post 1790 did not believe Othello's labor to be worthy of a wage, as that would have given Othello the freedom to choose to create a new life. Henry Bromfield viewed Othello as racially inferior while he became increasingly physically dependent upon him. Othello was stripped of a myriad of resources that would have made it possible for him to actualize legal emancipation post 1790; it also did not help that Henry Bromfield was appointed Justice of the Peace of Worcester County for three, six year terms in 1799, 1806, and 1813, and that despite Henry Bromfield's love of reading, vast book collection, and investment in his male and female children's education, Othello did not know how to read.[26] Othello and Henry Bromfield's relationship is not the only example in the interior

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[24] Letter to his daughter Sally (Sarah) Bromfield Pearson reflecting on the death, funeral, and briefly life of Othello, January 6th, 1818, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 20, 1816-19, Yale University and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Esq. at Harvard where he mentions Othello and discusses George Washington's death, August 25th, 1800, 4 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 15, 1800-1802, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[25] Ibid. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard containing inventory list of shipped goods requested for household members including a waist coat pattern for Othello, March 3rd, 1790, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: March-April 1790, 10 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. U.S. Census Office, First Census, 1790, Worcester County, Harvard, Massachusetts, s.v. "Henry Bromfield Esquire," *Ancestry Library*, AncestryLibrary.com. U.S. Census Office, Second Census, 1800, Worcester County, Harvard, Massachusetts, "Hennery Bromfield," *Ancestry Library*, AncestryLibrary.com. U.S. Census Office, Third Census, 1810, Worcester County, Harvard, Massachusetts, "Henry Broomfield Esq.," *Ancestry Library*, AncestryLibrary.com.

[26] Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Two Documents assigning Henry Bromfield Esq. of Harvard to Justice of the Peace of Worcester County, July 3rd, 1799, 2 pages, and August 20th, 1813, 2 pages; Worcester County, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 4, Folder: 3, Wills, deeds, and other documents, 1791-1813, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Appointment of Henry Bromfield as Justice of the Peace of Worcester County, Signed by Caleb Strong, August 26th, 1806, Call #N-1939, Oversized Box, Bromfield and Clarke Family

of Massachusetts where slavery in practice, or de facto slavery, persisted post 1790, unchallenged by towns or communities, yet these people's stories and experiences have been under interrogated, reserved to historians footnotes, and dubbed anomalies.[27]

Slavery by 1790 in Massachusetts may have been illegal, meaning de jure slavery had come to an end and the courts were no longer willing to uphold white enslavers rights to human property, but this did not mean that all formerly legally enslaved people were able to escape relationships that mirrored slavery in practice, or de facto slavery, in Massachusetts such as Othello. Post-civil war historians have often studied this phenomenon of de facto slavery in the post-civil war South, most notably in literature on the institution of Black codes, sharecropping, mass incarceration, and the Jim Crow era, which has been dubbed "slavery by another name," which argues the perpetuation of racial inequality in new economic and interconnected social

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Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org). Henry Nourse Stedman, *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts.* Letter to his daughter Sally (Sarah) Bromfield Pearson reflecting on the death, funeral, and briefly life of Othello, January 6th, 1818, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 20, 1816-19, Yale University and Archives, New Haven. Daniel Denison Slade, *The Bromfields.* Eliza (Elizabeth, Betsey) Bromfield. Composition and Sentiment book containing poetry and other writings, 1777, Collection #: GLC01450.030.02, Gilder Lehrman Collection, Online. [Composition and sentiment book] | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History & GLC01450.030.02.pdf

[27] Although most Black New Englanders post 1790 were able to actualize legal emancipation in their everyday lives and relationships, either through creating family, getting jobs, starting businesses/careers, and fostering community in Massachusetts, or through the removal to other places in search of a more equal society due to white New Englanders perpetual racism, there are examples throughout the interior of Massachusetts in predominantly white small towns where people who had been legally enslaved remained in identical relationships post 1790. This was not the norm, but it was not uncommon, and it has lacked formal interrogation as it challenges the easy narrative that uses the 1790 benchmark date in Massachusetts. Henry Stedman Nourse, *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*, 132-36, 402-03, 489. Elise Lemire noted that formerly enslaved people in Concord often continued serving former legal enslavers because the other alternative was poverty. Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts*, 109-111. See Endnote 21 in Gloria Whiting for a full list of scholars who have noted the continuation of slavery in Massachusetts post 1790, where she cites the work of Robert Spector, Robert Cover, Elise Lemire, and Elaine MacEarcheren. Gloria Whiting, "Emancipation without the Courts or Constitution: The Case of Revolutionary Massachusetts.", 474. For information on Free Black New Englanders in the New nation see Joanne Pope Melish *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "Race" in New England, 1780-1860,* and James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton's *In Hope of Liberty: Culture Community and Protest Among Northern Free Black, 1700-1860.* Both of these histories span the entire New England area, and often include New York when focusing on the North. Joanne Pope Melish cites statistics of slavery's persistence in different New England states into the 19th century. This paper focuses on Worcester County, but there is evidence of persistence in many other counties.

systems mirrored and perpetuated many of the same lived experiences and systemic oppressions of slavery.[28] Massachusetts and New England's birth in the 1820s/30s as a hub of Black abolitionist and white anti-slavery activism has obscured historians from taking a similar analytical framework towards understanding the end of slavery in Massachusetts in the post-revolution period and its impact on Black New Englanders and the economic, ideological, political, and cultural growth of the state during the 19th century.

Historians of Black New England have largely tracked how gendered racial capitalism shaped the emerging colonial economy of New England, sustained that economy until the Revolution, while also tracing how the Black Radical tradition evolved in New England alongside a distinct 18th century Black New England cultural identity.[29] The period of the American Revolution is where the history of Black New Englanders and slavery has had no interpretational resolution with histories that center the economic motivations, factors, and causes of the American Revolutionary war effort for colonial independence; this is because there is no singular historical consensus on how slavery and the American Revolution, resulting in the

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[28] Douglas Blackmon A. *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II*. New York: Doubleday, 2008. https://search-ebscohost-com.proxy.uchicago.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0001683173&site=eds-live&scope=site. W. E. B Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*. 1st Touchstone ed. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995. Reprint. Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. Tenth anniversary edition. New York: The New Press, 2020. Reprint. Documentary: Slavery by Another Name | PBS

[29]Kerri Greenidge and Holly Jackons. "Introduction On the Histories and Futures of Black New England Studies." *New England Quarterly* 95, no. 2 (June 2022): 107–14. doi:10.1162/tneq_a_00938. Works that "sustained that economy…": Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America.* United States: Liveright, 2016. Margaret Ellen Newell. *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015. Jared Ross Hardesty. "Creating an Unfree Hinterland: Merchant Capital, Bound Labor, and Market Production in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts." *Early American Studies* 15, no. 1 (2017): 37–63. https://www.jstor.org/stable/90000335. Jared Ross Hardesty. *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England*. Amherst: Bright Leaf, an imprint of University of Massachusetts Press, 2019. Works that trace "the Black Radical Tradition…and Culture": William Dillon Pierson. *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988. and James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton's *In Hope of Liberty: Culture Community and Protest Among Northern Free Black, 1700-1860.* Christopher Cameron. *To Plead Our Own Cause: African Americans in Massachusetts and the Making of the Antislavery Movement.* Chernoh S. Sesay.. "The Revolutionary Black Roots of Slavery's Abolition in Massachusetts." Berry, Daina Ramey and Kali Nicole Gross. "Chapter Three: Belinda's Petition for Independence, 1760-1820."

new nation, influence one another.[30] The history of Black people in Massachusetts post 1790 has been dominated by an interpretation, based solely on Suffolk County statistics, that the Black population of Massachusetts drastically decreased into 1820 due to death and relocation, allowing for an influx of fugitive enslaved people beginning in the 1830s which aided Boston in

[30] There are few historiographical camps. There is a strain of slavery studies scholars that argue the American Revolution was perpetuated to uphold slavery and/or the American Revolution for a myriad of reasons resulted in the nation upholding and generally investing in slavery and racial inequity in its institutions. These studies are large in scope and their discussion of slavery's perpetuation and protection is reserved to Southern states that were plantation colonies. Alfred W., and Ruth G. Blumrosen. *Slave Nation: How Slavery United the Colonies & Sparked the American Revolution*. Naperville, Ill.: Sourcebooks, 2005. Gerald Horne. *The Counter-revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America.* New York: New York University Press, 2014. Robert G. Parkinson. *The Common Cause: Creating Race and Nation in the American Revolution*. Chapel Hill: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, VA, by the University of North Carolina Press, 2016. There is another strain of economic interpretation of the American revolution that relates the American revolution to the advent of capitalism and the protection of economic liberties but offer no real way to conceptualize slavery within this: T. H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. There is another strain that discusses the American revolution as a revolution guided by enlightenment ideology and white activists in order to understand how slavery was successfully ended in New England David Brion Davis. *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975. Bernard Bailyn. *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution: Fiftieth Anniversary Edition*. Vol. Fiftieth anniversary edition. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2017. There is another strain that seeks to center Black experience in New England, but this does not offer interpretations to understand the entirety of the Revolution. These also focus on Black people's only allegiance being freedom and tend to be surveys of all Black experience (all loyalties) during the American Revolution: Benjamin Quarles. *The Negro in the American Revolution*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1961. Gary B Nash. *The Forgotten Fifth: African Americans in the Age of Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006. Glenn A Knoblock. *"Strong and Brave Fellows": New Hampshire's Black Soldiers and Sailors of the American Revolution, 1775-1784*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., Publishers, 2003. Then there is an even larger strain of American Revolution historiography that completely ignores slavery: Benjamin Woods Labaree. *The Boston Tea Party*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964. John W Tyler. *Smugglers & Patriots: Boston Merchants and the Advent of the American Revolution*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1986. Or they'll briefly mention them: Justin Du Rivage. *Revolution Against Empire: Taxes, Politics, and the Origins of American Independence*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017. There's another body of literature that focuses on the Black diaspora that the American Revolution caused due to its indecisiveness regarding slavery. Cassandra Pybus, and Ira Berlin --. *Epic Journeys of Freedom: Runaway Slaves of the American Revolution and Their Global Quest for Liberty*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2006. Simon Scharma. *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves, and the American Revolution.* 1st U.S. ed. New York: Ecco, 2006. A newer strain of historical interpretation from the past few years has pointed to highlighting the foundational involvement and influence Black people, enslaved and free, had over the American Revolution, but these are sprawling histories and do not focus or interrogate the specifcities and evolution of the New England landscape: Woody Holton. *Liberty Is Sweet: The Hidden History of the American Revolution*. First Simon & Schuster hardcover edition. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2021. Nikole Hannah Jones, "Our Democracy's Founding Ideals Were False When They Were Written. Black Americans Have Fought to Make them True," The 1619 Project. The New York Times. August 14, 2019America Wasn't a Democracy, Until Black Americans Made It One - The New York Times (nytimes.com). The entire issue can be accessed here: 1619 Project : The New York Times : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive For a good overview of the current historiography on the American Revolution See: Rosemarie Zagarri. "Scholarship on the American Revolution since *The Birth of the Republic 1763-89*." In *The Birth of the Republic, 1763-89*, Fourth Edition, 193-211. United States, University of Chicago Press, 2013.

rebranding as an abolitionist hub.[31] This argument does not interrogate the entire state's Black population or the evidence of Black communities throughout the interior of Massachusetts, such as Barre, MA, where Black people congregated in the wake of Quock Walker's legal victory to escape white benefaction to achieve financial independence.[32] It also obscures a legacy of Black New England thinkers, abolition, and freedom ideology that dates back to the colonial period within New England and spans throughout the 19th century, to W.E.B Du Bois, to present day.[33]

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[31] Jared Ross Hardesty. "Disappearing from Abolitionism's Heartland: The Legacy of Slavery and Emancipation in Boston." *International Review of Social History* 65, no. S28 (2020): 145-68. doi:10.1017/S0020859020000176. Most histories of Black New Englanders in the early republic are expansive histories, discussing experiences in the general North, including New York and Pennsylvania, or give sweeping histories that discuss all New England states, and are not specific to Massachusetts, but usually pull more examples from Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. See: Horton, *In Hope of Liberty;* Minardi, *Disowning Slavery: Graduation Emancipation and "Race" in New England;* Wood Sweet, *Bodies Politic.*

[32] Brigitte Lewis, "The Legend of Neptune: A Portrait of Enslavement and Emancipation in 18th-Century Worcester County, Massachusetts" (2021). Robert M. Spector "The Quock Walker Cases (1781-83)—Slavery, Its Abolition, and Negro Citizenship in Early Massachusetts." Other works that focus on the history of Black New Englanders during the early republic are: Christopher Cameron. *To Plead Our Own Cause: African Americans in Massachusetts and the Making of the Antislavery Movement*. Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2014. Margot Minardi. *Making Slavery History: Abolitionism and the Politics of Memory in Massachusetts*. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860*. John Wood Sweet. *Bodies Politic: Negotiating Race in the American North, 1730-1830*. James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton's *In Hope of Liberty: Culture Community and Protest Among Northern Free Black, 1700-1860.* Black life in the interior of Massachusetts during the era of the New Republic has been largely understudied. Only one text exists that is committed to interrogating rural Black life in the North during this period, but the case study focuses on New Jersey. See: J. V. Broberg *Slavery and Freedom in the Rural North: African Americans in Monmouth County, New Jersey, 1665-1865*. Madison, WI: Madison House, 1997.

[33] See this chapter by Mia Bay for a genealogy of the Black American Freedom Ideology: "'See Your Declaration Americans!!!' Abolitionism, Americanism, and the Revolutionary Tradition in Free Black Politics." In *Americanism: New Perspectives on the History of an Ideal*. Edited by Michael Kazin. 27-52. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). A research book by Christopher Cameron. *To Plead Our Own Cause: African Americans in Massachusetts and the Making of the Antislavery Movement*, presents evidence as to how abolitionism and anti-slavery activity in Massachusetts was created and sustained by Black New Englanders in the colonial, revolutionary, and early republic periods, and offering plentiful evidence about how Black communities in Massachusetts sustained and grew into the 19th century, setting down roots and not dying off, but his argument focuses on establishing Puritan and religious origins to Black abolitionism. There is plentiful of evidence throughout my primary sources that point towards incorporating a religious analytical lens but remains under interrogated in this work. In W.E.B. Du Bois's autobiography, he discusses his family history highlighting a family history that exemplifies an ancestral legacy of Black Freedom ideology. One of his ancestors participated in Shays Rebellion of the late 1780s and discusses his family's generational accumulation of wealth, industry, and education in Massachusetts. W.E.B. Du Bois comes from a long family of Black American Freedom thinkers that must have influenced his own work. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Autobiography of W.E.B. Du Bois: A Soliloquy on Viewing My Life from the Last Decade of Its First Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, 62-23 (pages taken from this free online source: The autobiography of W.E.B. DuBois : a soliloquy on viewing my life from the last decade of its first century : Du Bois, W. E. B. (William Edward Burghardt), 1868-1963 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive) Sidney Kaplan. "Blacks in Massachusetts and the Shays' Rebellion," Contributions in Black Studies: Vol. 8 , Article 2. Available at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cibs/vol8/iss1/2

Identifying how the American Revolution facilitated the abolition of slavery in Massachusetts while hindering in its design the lived reality of legal emancipation for some enables an outlining of the ways in which Black New Englanders seized emancipation and the resources they needed to protect their freedom in their everyday lives post-Revolution, while also highlighting the conditions under which slavery in practice was allowed and able to persist. The American Revolution was in actuality two codependent Revolutions: one for white British American political independence to restore their economic liberty in already existing gendered and racialized markets and institutions, and one led by everyone else, particularly Black New Englanders, who sought equality through the revolutionizing of gendered and racialized markets and institutions to restore economic liberty to all.[34] The first revolution's fulfillment would inherently impede and prolong the second's, facilitating a nation at large that would uphold gendered and racial social and structural inequality, slavery legally for the next one hundred years, and the displacement of Indigenous nations to continue settler colonialism practices, to create white dominated generational wealth and industry. The moral certainty of racial chattel slavery as an institution in the Revolutionary and Early Republic periods would be uncertain and remain continually challenged, but white seats of power, too personally economically invested in the multilayered and interconnected mechanisms of the already existing gendered and racialized marketplace, were not willing to challenge its necessity in generating profit for themselves.[35]

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[34] The "everyone else" was Indigenous people/nations, Black people (free and enslaved), and women. As this paper focuses on the institution of slavery and the experiences of the enslaved and Black New Englanders, a full encompassing prospective includes an Indigenous analytical framework is suspended here. A work that beautifully highlights the contributions and influences of everyone during the Revolution is: Woody Holton *Liberty Is Sweet: The Hidden History of the American Revolution*. First Simon & Schuster hardcover edition. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2021. In Holton's narrative he is able to situate the creation of the new nation within the contributions and influences of Black people, indigenous people, and women.

[35] The United States unwillingness to cut ties with the institution of slavery due to its economic profits is well documented and culminated in the Civil War in 1865. Challenges to slavery can be witnessed in histories of how the constitution was made, but the constitution, overall, protected slavery and was a pro-slavery document due to white

Thus, slavery in Massachusetts by 1790 may have been illegal in the state, but slavery's national legality was largely protected and because white New Englanders did not suddenly become less racist because of the law, slavery's persistence in practice under certain conditions in the state would go unchallenged.

What follows is a biographical case-study of Henry Bromfield and Othello's relationship in Massachusetts from the colonial, revolutionary, and early republic periods to interrogate how, why, and under what conditions slavery persisted, unchallenged by local communities, into the 19th century despite widespread recognized legal emancipation in the state and the largely actualized freedom of many formerly enslaved Black New Englanders.[36]

The first section spans the years from 1750-1770 and focuses on the beginnings of Othello's and Henry Bromfield's relationship and outlines the commercial and domestic worlds of Colonial Massachusetts they found themselves operating within. To understand slavery's role in the American Revolution in Massachusetts, it's legal dismantling by 1790, and conditional-persistence post 1790, it's important to outline how slavery was defined legally, socially,

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legislatures personal economic investments. The hypocrisy of Thomas Jefferson on slavery is a good example of this. Annette Gordon-Reed. *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family.* United Kingdom: W. W. Norton, 2009. Alfred W., and Ruth G. Blumrosen. *Slave Nation: How Slavery United the Colonies & Sparked the American Revolution*. Roger Wilkins. *Jefferson's Pillow: The Founding Fathers and the Dilemma of Black Patriotism*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2001. Derrick Bell. *Race, Racism, and American Law*. 2nd ed. Boston: Little, Brown, 1980, specifically Chapter 1: American Racism and the Uses of History. David Waldstreicher. *Slavery's Constitution: From Revolution to Ratification*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2009. A defense of argument and update was published in response to Sean Wiltenz in *The Atlantic:* Why the Constitution Was Indeed Pro-Slavery - The Atlantic

[36] This essay is grounded in an in depth and diverse reading of primary sources that were accessed through a variety of online databases and in person at the Massachusetts Historical Society, the New England Genealogical Historic Society, and the Yale University Manuscripts and Archives. The primary sources range from account books, to letters, to furniture, etc. The primary sources which biasedly privileges the Bromfield family, due to the challenges of archival construction discussed at length in some of these works: Marisa J Fuentes. *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016 and Wendy Warren. "'The Cause of Her Grief': The Rape of a Slave in Early New England," *Journal of American History* 93, No. 4 (Mar. 2007): 1031-1049, are complimented and challenged by a diverse set of secondary sources on the history of Black New Englanders, the advent of capitalism in Massachusetts in the long 18th century, and the American Revolution.

economically, and experientially in the Bay State, as well as identifying the ways white British American colonists facilitated and created the worlds in which slavery became essential.

Due to Henry's lifelong career as a trans-Atlantic merchant born and based in Boston, working with firms housed globally and his marrying for personal and economic motivations, his preserved archival materials are a treasure trove of information and observations on the ensuing America war for Independence. [37] The second section interrogates 1770-1790, and defines the motivations for Massachusetts colonists resort to armed revolt and declarations of independence, as the revolution was arguably originated in the state, while also contextualizing how slavery and a tradition of Black resistance informed white colonists ideals of liberty and freedom, which offered ways for Black New Englanders to employ a myriad of tactics during the 1770s and 80s to morally and legally challenge slavery.[38] Henry Bromfield would remain neutral in his political

[37] There is an intimacy within Henry Bromfield's archival materials, as although he is based in Boston, the goods he trades in range in origin from India to the West Indies and relies on enslaved labor; communication and social closeness are requirements in his business and create intimacy and thus trust in his business partnerships which rely on credit and debt; his business associates were often family somehow showing the intimacy within the home. Intimacy was a requirement for the advent of the workings of global capitalism, explored in Lisa Lowes: *The Intimacies of Four Continents*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015. Enslaved people were often stripped of having last names and forced to take the last name of their enslaver or no last name at all, signaling that Black men were robbed of paternal lineage. When Clarity permits, I will be referring to Henry Bromfield and other white historical actors by their first names. It is historical convention to refer to historical actors by their first and last names or last names, but Othello is not afforded this luxury due to one of the many violences of slavery. To present an equal right to historical memory, I have chosen, like other Black New England Scholars, to refer to historical actors by first name when clear. Nicole Saffold Maskiell. "'Here Lyes the Body of Cicely Negro': Enslaved Women in Colonial Cambridge and the Making of New England History." *New England Quarterly* 95, no. 2 (June 2022): 115–54. doi:10.1162/tneq_a_00939, footnote 5. Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts,* 14, "I refer to the author of *Walden* not as "Thoreau" but as "Henry: or where clarity requires it "Henry David Thoreau," so as not to continue to accord him more authority and respect than the men and women who preceded him on the shores of Walden Pond." Daniel Denison Slade and Denison Rogers Slade (descendants of Henry Bromfield and father and son) considered themselves family genealogists and "historians". Consequently, they transcribed parts of letters from the 18th century that they deemed were important and then destroyed the original letters. In *The Bromfields,* a family history written by Daniel Denison Slade, he cites letters that are not stored in any archival collection related to Henry Bromfield and his family. The collections donated by them were manicured to remove most overt references to slavery in the family historical materials.

[38] Although colonists in all British North American mainland colonies revolted, most histories have a general consensus that the American War for Independence begins with the events that unfolded in Massachusetts in the late 1760s and early 1770s (Occupation of Boston, Boston Massacre, Boston Tea Party, Battle of Bunker Hill, Lexington and Concord, etc.). All colonies were united by parliament acts that oppressed them, sanctions and violent confrontations with British troops/officials in Boston expedited independence and war efforts throughout the colonies, marking Massachusetts as one of the important ground zeros for the American Revolution.

opinions as long as it preserved his personal financial situation, and due to his diverse personal investments in Massachusetts and the colonies, he would briefly serve in the continental army and become a patriot. Henry's business would falter in the 1770s and he would face incredible amounts of debt in the coming decades. But the new nation and economic landscape offered Henry new business opportunities and he would utilize children and social connections to actualize these. He was not a Massachusetts anti-slavery patriot, and this section also focuses on the lives of three Black people—an eleven year old boy Henry sold in 1775 named Cato, Nan/ny who Henry gained through his second marriage and would die in 1783, and Othello, who moved with the Bromfield family to Harvard, MA in 1777—Henry enslaved and whom he did not emancipate, in order to understand how the revolution, while offering some pathways toward lived Black freedom, hindered the actualization of legal emancipation for many. Outlining the myriad of ways that Henry was able to recover financially from his business failures during the war years and how the perpetuation of enslaved labor facilitated his recovery offers a way to conceptualize the first revolution impeding the second in Massachusetts.

Identifying the ways in which newly emancipated Black New Englanders practiced freedom, with a focus on the importance of community, family, freedom of movement, the obtaining of reparation for stolen enslaved labor for achieving financial independence, allows for an identification of the ways in which enslavers hindered Black New Englanders from actualizing emancipation, thus being trapped by lack of options into relationships that were identical to ones under slavery. Henry and Othello's relationship from 1790 until 1817 when Othello died, offers stark insight into the dynamics that went into the perpetuation of enslavement post 1790 and their long-term residence in Harvard, MA offers insight into how communities left these relationships unchallenged. Othello and Henry had a homo-platonic,

intimate, long-term dependency and power dynamic riddled relationship that is explored in section three.

Henry's grandson had memorialized Othello as a "faithful friend," but his friendship had been bought, forced, and coerced. Othello's gravestone has ensured his remembrance in Harvard, MA, a town community that has not once challenged Othello's de facto enslavement post 1790 until his death, nor in the town memory since due to the legacy of his enslaver. Othello deserves an honest legacy. And Henry Bromfield is in dire need of one too.

Section I. Beginnings-1770

i. Companies, Merchants, and Colonization: The Advent of Colonial Massachusetts and Dependency

The British Crown issued three types of land grants to form colonies out of newly acquired land in the Americas during the 17th-18th centuries, which influenced the development of a colony's political economy, culture, and relationship with the British empire.[39] A charter colony was a land grant awarded to a company to settle and develop land; the deal was that the crown owned the land and thus was entitled to a portion of the profits the charter colony generated through its commercial enterprises and natural resource extraction, but the corporation retained rights in self-governance of business practices, settlement(s), and management as long

[39] The three types of colonies were charter, proprietary, and royal. Massachusetts would be settled as a series of charters, and then due to increasing economic and thus political power within the New England region amongst colonists and their investors the charters would be revoked and reinstituted with a royal agreement that awarded all of the same economic liberties the companies and their agents (i.e. the people who populated the New England settlements) had under their original charters, but the Royal Government had control over the Massachusetts Colonial government, the institution of its governor, and the overseeing/management of its political institutions. Alden Bradford. *History of Massachusetts for two hundred years: from the year 1620 to 1820*. Boston: Richardson and Lord, 1822. Richard L Bushman. *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts*. University of North Carolina Press, 1985. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5149/9781469600109_bushman, particularly chapters 1, 2, 3.

as they maintained allegiance to and remained in accordance with English law.[40] The idea of the company charter awarded by the crown was to establish "small outposts or "factories", staffed mostly by male employees who would trade with Indigenous peoples and engage in fishing, lumbering, and perhaps mining or other extractive industries," and the wealth generated from these outposts would intern enrich the British Crown and globally expanding empire. By consequence the merchants and investors that formed the companies obtaining charters would enrich themselves as well.[41]

In 1606, two sister companies, the Virginia Company (the Virginia Company of London) and the Plymouth Company (the Virginia Company of Plymouth), obtained charters to create outposts along the East-Coast of the Americas. In 1607, the Jamestown settlement was established in Virginia and the Sagadahoc (Popham) Colony was established at the base of the Kennebec River in Maine.[42] Both settlements failed, but the failure of Sagadahoc was never printed and in 1616, Captain John Smith, famed for his leadership of Jamestown and an employee of the Virginia Company, published his propaganda piece *A Description of New England,* where he presented New England as a premier place for mass colonial settlement and

[40] The Massachusetts Bay Colony for its first sixty years was a charter colony, controlling their self-governance and political economy; yet the charter entailed the company was financially dependent upon England. Richard L Bushman. *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts*, chapters 1, 2, 3. Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770." In *Engines of Enterprise: An Economic History of New England*, 11-69. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000, 53. James F Hrdlicka. "'The Attachment of the People': The Massachusetts Charter, the French and Indian War, and the Coming of the American Revolution." *The New England Quarterly* 89, no. 3 (2016): 384–420. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26405798, 390-91. Jonathan Barth. "Reconstructing a Mercantilist Empire, 1690s." In *The Currency of Empire: Money and Power in Seventeenth-Century English America*, 249–89. Cornell University Press, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctv310vm4m.12.

[41] Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 22. Along the African Coast, similar outposts (named comptoirs) were created, but the main commodity traded and shipped was African peoples. Jessica Marie Johnson. "Chapter 1. Tastemakers: Intimacy, Slavery, and Power in Senegambia," 16-51. *Wicked Flesh: Black Women, Intimacy, and Freedom in the Atlantic World*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020.

[42] Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 23. Alden Bradford. *History of Massachusetts for two hundred years: from the year 1620 to 1820*, 16-18.

English immigration. John Smith's would be the first propaganda piece promoting colonization of New England but by the 1620s firsthand verbal and written accounts abounded about the New England region in England, France, and the Netherlands.[43] The English pilgrims, while exiled in the Netherlands, were in search of a place to set down long terms roots and hearing the supposed prosperity of the New England region obtained royal permission and financing through the Virginia Company of London to sail to Massachusetts on the *Mayflower*. The Virginia Company of London dissolved the Plymouth Company, forming the Council for New England, which awarded the charter originally meant for the failed Sagadahoc settlement of 1607 to the pilgrims at Plymouth in 1620. Of the 101 original settlers at Plymouth and passengers on the *Mayflower*, only 35 were religious exiles and the remaining 64 were agents, employees, recruits, and servants of the company. All colonists who arrived on the *Mayflower* were expected to engage in some type of labor that would generate wealth for the company, as they had financed the voyage.[44] Part of this wealth generation was executing the charter granted by the crown which gave the agents of the company the right to self-governance to generate profit for the British empire. Colonization was the business model of the Plymouth Colony by the Virginia company of London and financing the passage of English religious exiles, who were already searching for somewhere to immigrate to formulate a new society for themselves with no designs to return to Europe, ensured that the colonists would put every effort towards the success of the charter

[43] John Smith would nickname this region of North America, populated by diverse Indigenous nations, New England, in homage to his assertions that the land could be settled and modeled after the homeland. By the 1620s, numerous tracks abounded about the favorability of New England, particularly tracks related to climate. See Anya Zilberstein. *A Temperate Empire: Making Climate Change in Early America*. New York, NY, United States of America: Oxford University Press, 2016. The French attempted to settle the coast of Massachusetts in 1606. Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 23-24. Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America.* United States: Liveright, 2016, introduction, Chapter 1.

[44] Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 23-24. Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America,* Introduction, Chapter 1, 2, 3.

colony, thus generating profit for the company and crown. Culture, political power, and economic profit were codependent variables. All colonists on the *Mayflower* entered a debt with the company becoming employees, creating a dependent relationship. The company was investing in colonization to enrich themselves and the crown but were dependent on the Crown's partnership and benefaction. Access to economic freedom was conditional and hierarchal in the design of Colonial Massachusetts.[45]

The company, and the merchants associated/comprising the company, despite setbacks at Plymouth, determined the colony a success and a series of other companies were awarded New England charters by the crown in the 1620s. Investors quickly realized that New England was not hospitable to sustaining a plantation cash crop economy, but learning from the example of Indigenous nations, they understood that the land and its cultivation and settlement could be extremely valuable.[46] A new business model emerged for the role of charter colonies in New England, who were overseen by various companies, based off of Plymouth, understood best as serial town formation.[47] Because New England would not generate vast plantation cash crops, throughout the 17th century the growth of the New England companies wealth, the Crown's wealth, and the colonists' ability to engage in Atlantic commerce would depend on the

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[45] For analyses of the culture of social, political, economic, and legal dependency in the 17th-18th centuries see: Margaret Ellen Newell. *From Dependency to Independence: Economic Revolution in Colonial New England*. Cornell University Press, 2015. Jared Hardesty. *Unfreedom: Slavery and Dependence in Eighteenth-Century Boston*. New York: New York University Press, 2016. Richard L Bushman, "Chapter 2: Dependence," *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts*. Kelly A. Ryan. *Regulating Passion: Sexuality and Patriarchal Rule in Massachusetts, 1700-1830*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.

[46] Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 28-43. Alden Bradford. *History of Massachusetts for two hundred years: from the year 1620 to 1820*, 16-23. Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America,* Chapter 3.

[47] Barry Levy. *Town Born: The Political Economy of New England from Its Founding to the Revolution*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009. David P Jaffee. *People of the Wachusett: Greater New England in History and Memory, 1630-1860.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2018. Serial town formation (the term comes from chapter 3 of David P Jaffee's book) to create a domestic economy was essential to the project of colonization, which slavery aided in institutionalizing. Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America.*

development of the domestic economy. This meant the institution of towns, with local bodies of government and churches that would create local political economies and social order. The labor and production of New England townships' political economy by the end of the 17th century "emulate[d] the mother country's path to economic success" and New England colonists "had settled into an economy where they shipped, processed, and marketed the staples of their fellow North American and Caribbean colonists, supplied them with provisions, and participated in a complex transatlantic exchange network" becoming both "customers and competitors of English merchants and manufacturers."[48] In 1629, The Massachusetts Bay Company was formed and awarded a charter by the crown that spanned the majority of present-day Massachusetts, nullifying and ignoring the network of Indigenous nations throughout the New England area. In 1630, John Winthrop and other British Colonists arrived colonizing what would become Boston and the Suffolk County area.[49] "The City on a Hill" Winthrop envisioned was funded by a corporation's economic vision; the social and political culture that would abound was shaped by the corporation's overseeing of the settlements' expansion (population and land wise) and economic diversification, successes, and failures.

Before the colonists' domestic economy in New England could grow, they first had to colonize, develop, and populate the land with white colonists and their servants/enslaved people. But there were obstacles, principally how to deal with Indigenous nations, whose land the British

[48] Aspects of 17th century economy: creation of potash and mill networks, manufacturing, fur trade, production for goods to export, one of the largest importers of English manufactures, etc. Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 15 (quote), 53-54, 43-58. Margaret Ellen Newell. *From Dependency to Independence: Economic Revolution in Colonial New England*, Introduction, Chapters 1, 4. A definition of political economy: "encompasses the interaction between political power and wealth creation and distribution, particularly how a labor system was formed and sustained." Massachusetts townships were chiefly "political economies and labor systems." Slavery was essential to the political economy of townships in a myriad of ways. Henry Bromfield would be essential in creating and maintaining the political economy of Harvard, MA. Barry Levy. *Town Born: The Political Economy of New England from Its Founding to the Revolution*, 11-13.

[49] Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 23-24. Alden Bradford. *History of Massachusetts for two hundred years: from the year 1620 to 1820*, 16-23.

colonists and their company benefactors sought to occupy. Although religious conversion and attempts at assimilation into British colonial culture were attempted by white missionaries, Indigenous people never stopped resisting.[50] The most successful tactics employed by colonists were war waging, removal, the introduction of slavery, legal disenfranchisement through unequal cultural interpretations of contract, exploiting rivalries between Indigenous nations for colonial gain, and the introduction of alcohol to Indigenous communities.[51] In 1637, the leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony led the war effort and rhetoric towards aggressive removal of the Pequot nation, who had resisted for a decade white colonization and enslavement on their land.[52] Pequot resistance proved an obstacle to the development of the colonial domestic economy, with the Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth colonies being the main aggressors.[53] Many Pequots were murdered; at one point the colonists massacred 700 men, women, and children in a surprise attack. Pequot women and girls were divided up as war captives amongst the colonists, who enslaved them, and the Indigenous allies.[54] The colonists sold most Pequot men and boys into

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[50] Indigenous New England nations continue the fight for recognition to this day. United American Indians of New England - UAINE, 38-2 We are still here: Tribes in New England Stand their Ground | Cultural Survival, Home - Tribal Government of the Nipmuc Nation, The Massachusett Tribe at Ponkapoag – Welcome To Our Tribal Website, Margaret Ellen Newell. *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015. Lisa Tanya Brooks. *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018.

[51] Brigitte Lewis, "The Legend of Neptune: A Portrait of Enslavement and Emancipation in 18th-Century Worcester County, Massachusetts," Chapter 2-Remembering Still River. Margaret Ellen Newell. *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery*, Chapter 4. Lisa Tanya Brooks. *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War.*

[52] The Pequot nation's land consisted of modern-day parts of Connecticut and southern Massachusetts, leading to the coast. A Map of Indigenous New England and its Nations.pdf (pg. 2 *Our Beloved Kin*)

[53] Margaret Ellen Newell. *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery*, 25.

[54] Margaret Ellen Newell. *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery*, Chapters 1, 3. In the Pequot war, Colonists allied with rival Indigenous nations, but at the wars close the colonists and Indigenous allies found extreme conflict in how they defined and understood slavery. Indigenous allies were against Pequots being sold into Caribbean slavery and were anti life-long, legal, chattel slavery. Indigenous peoples found Pequot women valuable because New England Indigenous nations were matrilineal societies and war captives eventually were absorbed into tribal society. Thus, if Pequot women were absorbed into new nations, those nations retained the rights to the land of the Pequot nation, not the colonists. Women were valued for the reproductive labor by both Indigenous people and colonists, but for Indigenous people it was to continue matrilineal lines of inheritance, whereas the colonists valued women's reproductive for personal enrichment and viewed

chattel slavery in Bermuda aboard the *Desire* in 1638, which had been constructed in Marblehead, MA two years prior. The *Desire* returned a few months later carrying a shipment of cotton, tobacco, and enslaved Black people.[55] The Pequot's—un-enslave-able in their own land—had been swapped out for enslaved Africans along the slave trade to aid in developing the Massachusetts domestic economy. Slavery and colonization were fundamental in facilitating economic development in New England.[56]

In 1644, the Massachusetts Bay Company/Colony entered into a covenant with the Indigenous people of the Nashaway.[57] Massachusetts leaders interpreted the covenant as Indigenous leaders signing over their rights to their homeland and allowing white colonization.[58] The Massachusetts Bay government then awarded the newly formed Nashaway company the rights to settle in the area that ten years later in 1653 became the town of Lancaster, in what would eventually become Worcester County where the Nipmuc Nation already had numerous

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enslaved Indigenous women within a patriarchal mindset, *Brethren by Nature,* 39-40. Some Pequot women were sold into Caribbean slavery, but they were in the minority; the same goes for Pequot men enslaved in New England. George H. Moore. *Notes on the History of Slavery in Massachusetts*. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1866; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1968, 3-7. Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America,* Chapter 3 "Un-planting and replanting."

[55] George H. Moore *Notes on the History of Slavery in Massachusetts*, 3-7. Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America*, Chapter 3 "Un-planting and replanting." The Enslaved people who arrived in New England, exchanged, on the *Desire* were not the first Africans to arrive in New England, but it was the first instance of an enslavement exchange to further colonization's economic development. See: Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America*, Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 3.

[56] Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America.*

[57] The area of the Nashaway would become Worcester County. Brigitte Lewis, "The Legend of Neptune: A Portrait of Enslavement and Emancipation in 18th-Century Worcester County, Massachusetts." Lisa Tanya Brooks. *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War.* Henry Stedman Nourse, *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts.*

[58] "The Indigenous peoples and leaders saw the covenant as a wampum agreement that solidified "a significant relationship of mutual exchange and protection with their new neighbors in Massachusett" with these new neighbors promising to protect them from attacks and encroachments on their lands." Brigitte Lewis, "The Legend of Neptune: A Portrait of Enslavement and Emancipation in 18th-Century Worcester County, Massachusetts," 13-14. Lisa Tanya Brooks. *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War*, 109.

Indigenous towns and developed planting fields.[59] In 1645, the brother-in-law of John Winthrop, who had economic aspirations in the Massachusetts frontier area wrote him,

> A war with the Narragansett[60] is very considerable to this plantation…if upon a just war the lord should deliver them into our hands, we might easily have men, women, and children enough to exchange for Moors, which will be more gainful pillage for us than we conceive, for I do not see how we can thrive until we get into a stock of slaves sufficient to do all our business.[61]

In 1641, Massachusetts was the first colony of the British Empire to pass a law formally legalizing slavery, stating that slavery was only legal if they "be lawful captives, taken in just wars, or such or shall willingly sell themselves, or are sold to us, and such shall have the

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[59] The Nipmuc nation's land consisted of much of central Massachusetts, with the population centered around modern day Wachusett and Worcester. Harvard, in 1723, was carved out of a portion of Lancaster. This is the area where Henry Bromfield would buy the Reverend Seccomb's mansion in 1765 and permanently remove to in 1776. Lancaster was also the first place attacked in king Phillips war. Brigitte Lewis, "The Legend of Neptune: A Portrait of Enslavement and Emancipation in 18th-Century Worcester County, Massachusetts." Lisa Tanya Brooks. *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War.* Henry Stedman Nourse, *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts.,* Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity.* David P Jaffee*. People of the Wachusett: Greater New England in History and Memory, 1630-1860,* chapters 1 and 4.

[60] The Wampanoag, Narragansett, Nipmuc, and Wabanaki Nations were all interconnected through marriage and land, and in the post Pequot War period, many Nations had fundamental population re-shifting and distribution. Warfare amongst indigenous nations also facilitated the absorption of other nations citizens as war captives, who would eventually win full citizenship rights in the new nation. The lands that eventually consisted of Worcester County were mainly Nipmuc lands, particularly planting lands. In the summers, after planting season, many Nipmuc people would remove to the lands of family members from other nations to fish. The Nipmuc's and Narragansetts' also boarded each other. Narragansett people, alongside the Nipmuc's, were recorded attacking Lancaster in the first confrontation of King Philip's war in 1675. Often, colonists would use the term Narragansett broadly applying to all Indigenous peoples and nations along the 'frontier' or uncolonized interior areas of Massachusetts. Emanuel Downing, who wrote this letter had settled in Salem, MA, which was north of the formal Narragansett nation, and was thus referring to Nipmuc and Narragansett land/the Massachusetts Frontier. Lisa Tanya Brooks. *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War,* 11. Margaret Ellen Newell. *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery.* Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America,* chapter 3 and 7. See this pdf map of the New England Indigenous Nations produced by Lisa Tanya Brooks: A Map of Indigenous New England and its Nations.pdf

[61] Quotation transcribed from the primary source's printing in George H. Moore *Notes on the History of Slavery in Massachusetts*, 10. Letter continues saying: "for our children's children will hardly see this great Continent filled with people, for that our servants will still desire freedom to plant for themselves and stay but for very great wages. And I suppose you know very well how we shall maintain 20 moors cheaper than one English servant." The same mentality to the economic profitability of racial chattel slavery was also a driving force for its institution in new England as land needed to be developed, this was the same mentality and reasoning for how slavery eventually became foundational to Virginia and other cash crop plantation economies, see: Karen E., and Barbara Jeanne Fields. *Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life*. London; New York: Verso, 2012, Chapter 4. Edmund S. Morgan. *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia*. New York: Norton, 1975.

liberties, and Christian usage…provided this exempts none from servitude."[62] Christian conversion by law did not nullify a person's enslavement, which allowed the enslavement of converted Indigenous peoples and Africans. The law was ambiguous enough to imply the enslave-ability of Indigenous peoples, people of various complexions and ethnicities who were already being sold in the Atlantic slave trade world, and Africans.[63] The law was passed three years after the *Desire* had exchanged enslaved Indigenous war captives for enslaved Africans and was created to institutionalize and formally legalize a practice that already existed; thus, the existence of slavery in practice created the law to manage a new subset of the political, social, cultural, and economic colonial order and population. Tensions between Indigenous towns in the Nashaway and other parts of the larger Narragansett with white colonists mounted in the following two decades, eventually culminating in King Phillip's war of 1675, where Lancaster was one of the first English townships attacked. King Phillip's war exemplified that co-existence with Indigenous nations was antithetical to the business model of New England charter colonies and the development of the colonial domestic economy, its mechanism of settler colonialism, and that slavery was a foundational tool for settler colonialism in New England. At the war's

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[62] George H. Moore *Notes on the History of Slavery in Massachusetts*, 15. Other texts where this law is discussed: Margaret Ellen Newell. *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery.* Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America.* Lorenzo J. Greene. *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620-1776*. New York, London: Columbia University Press; P.S. King & Staples, Ltd., 1942. Jared Hardesty. *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England*. Amherst: Bright Leaf, an imprint of University of Massachusetts Press, 2019. Jared Ross Hardesty. "An Ambiguous Institution: Slavery, the State, and the Law in Colonial Massachusetts." *Journal of Early American History* 3, no. 2/3 (April 2013): 154–80. doi:10.1163/18770703-00301002.

[63] Without naming specific races in the slavery law the Massachusetts law was able to imply that anyone who wasn't clearly European and white, could be enslaved. By naming the specific conditions of being a war captive, it automatically included Indigenous peoples and Africans, and any children of mixed ethnicity and/or race. By including conversion to Christianity did not annul enslavement, it also legitimized enslaving Indigenous and African Christian converts.

close, Indigenous people from Massachusetts were once again sold into Caribbean slavery and exchanged for Africans, fulfilling Winthrop's brother-in-law's strong suggestions from 1645.[64]

Post King Phillip's War, English immigration to New England picked up, and in the latter half of the 17th century, New Englanders established 209 formal townships recognized by colonial governments from New York to Maine.[65] Edward Bromfield, Henry Bromfield's grandfather, was a part of this immigration wave, and was a second son and merchant by trade looking to create an enduring legacy for himself, including wealth and a profession to pass onto his children.[66] The pursuance of this legacy by the Bromfield family would create white generational reliance on Black lives and labor, and the systemic generational obscuration of those Black lives.[67] Finding economic opportunity in Boston, he became a part of the network of

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[64] Lancaster was where Mary Rowlandson had been taken captive from. Lisa Tanya Brooks. *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War.* Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America.*, Chapters 3 and 6.

[65] Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 54.

[66] The colonies were seen "as objects of exploitation" where "younger sons, underemployed workers, religious dissidents, and criminals" were sent to develop "the staging ground for economic experiments." Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 11. Yet, these people, exiles and considered 'surpluses' to English society, immigrated to New England colonies with visions of creating new enduring societies, families, industries, and legacies. The social surplus nature of New England English colonists made them that much more committed to the economic prosperity of the colonial venture. Yet when that prosperity came in competition with England instead of subordination, colonist and English interests butted heads. The legacies white colonists would create (through creation of generational wealth, contributing to political, cultural, and religious infrastructure, landscape infrastructure, marriage, etc.) would act as currency for New England descendants. Francesca Morgan. "Lineage as Capital: Genealogy in Antebellum New England." *The New England Quarterly* 83, no. 2 (2010): 250–82. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20752693. Colonists commitment to economic prosperity is best understood as provincial ambition, or better put, the original manifest destiny (more land, more slaves, more money, more power—Henry Bromfield pursued this mentality for his entire life in his business practices): T. A. Milford. *The Gardiners of Massachusetts: Provincial Ambition and the British-American Career*. Durham, N.H.: Hanover, N.H.: University of New Hampshire Press; Published by University Press of New England, 2005.

[67] Edward Bromfield (grandfather) enslaved a Black man named Thomas, whom he willed to Henry's grandmother, Mary (Danforth-she was the daughter of Reverend Danforth of Roxbury. See: *The Bromfields*) in his will dated 1728 (modified in 1732 and brought to probate in 1734). Edward Bromfield (GF), Edward Bromfield (F), and Henry Bromfield all relied on enslaved labor in the southern and Caribbean colonies to produce commodities they imported and exported such as rum, sugar, molasses, cotton, etc. It's unclear if Edward Bromfield (the father) had enslaved people in his house. Henry Bromfield enslaved multiple people throughout his life. Although Henry Bromfield Pearson attempted to honor Othello with a gravestone, he obscured the actual relationship of slavery and inequality perpetuated by his Henry Bromfield, his grandfather. Daniel Denison Slade and Denison Rogers Slade, the descendants who donated much of Henry Bromfield's archival materials, tried to only donate materials that did not reference slavery and enslaved people. In *The Bromfields* published by Daniel Denison Slade, he cites a 1785 letter

Boston merchants that developed the commercial economy, mainly importing rum, sugar, and molasses.[68] Merchants were the lifeblood of colonial economic development after settlement had been assured. Thus, New England merchants engagement with and creation of the emerging global and local colonial markets and networks created a new and distinct commercial culture and identity in Massachusetts that led towards supporting the pursuit of white political independence to break colonial white economic dependence with England a century later during the American Revolution.[69] The culture merchants in the 17th and 18th century fostered in Massachusetts was predicated in the perpetuation of racial patriarchy in everyday social hierarchies and interactions that delineated natural systems of economic and thus political dependency in colonial social relations.[70] The diversification of white male colonists' business pursuits facilitated the development of new concepts of individual choice and freedom of self-

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that mentions Othello but this letter is not preserved in any archives. When Black people are mentioned in Bromfield archival materials that are often mentioned as passing thoughts in mountains of papers.

[68] See account books: Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Account book from 1751-1764 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, Call #MSS-664, Box 1, Folder: Vol. 9, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Account book from 1744-48 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, Call #MSS-664, Box 1, Folder: Vol. 7, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. Also see: Unsigned and unfinished petition by the British Sugar Planters and others against the Massachusetts Bay Colony merchants, "charging the Northern Colonies with being the agents of France and other Nations, carrying on Commerce in Europe and America for their benefit, and against the interest of their mother country; and suggest there is danger of their becoming by this means independent of it; and therefore they pray that the northern colonies may be prohibited from taking any Sugar, Rum or Molasses from the foreign Colonies." Estimated 1731, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1731-1770, 11 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. The 1730s were when the British government passed a series of sugar acts, one of the many navigation acts passed to try and tame New England economic growth.

[69] T. H. Breen. "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776." *Journal of British Studies* 25, no. 4 (1986): 467–99. http://www.jstor.org/stable/175565. T. H. Breen. "'Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century." *Past & Present*, no. 119 (1988): 73–104. http://www.jstor.org/stable/651021. T.H. Breen. *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

[70] Kelly A. Ryan. *Regulating Passion: Sexuality and Patriarchal Rule in Massachusetts, 1700-1830*. Jared Hardesty. *Unfreedom: Slavery and Dependence in Eighteenth-Century Boston*. Jared Hardesty. *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England*, 52. Richard L Bushman. *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts*, 25. Dependency was a natural hierarchal order, that put the king on top; dependency was enforced in social castes through economic disenfranchisement and violence. The social caste in the colonies saw enslaved people (Africans at the bottom), and white wealthy men at the top. Wives and children were dependent on their fathers and husbands, above slaves, but not above other free men. Indentured servants were below everyone in the home, but still above Indigenous peoples and Black people. Landed and financially free men were above men who subsisted on wage labor, etc.

governance and action for white men predicated within gendered and racialized markets and institutions.[71] These concepts were reinforced by a culture of goods and dependency that conceptualized white economic freedom within the natural subjugation of Black and Indigenous lives.[72] Edward Bromfield also developed physical and political infrastructure in Boston and relied on enslaved labor at home and abroad during the late 17th and early 18th centuries, practices he passed down to his son Edward Bromfield Junior and grandson, Henry Bromfield.[73]

With increased immigration, the economic power of the New England charter colonies only grew, and retaining rights to control all levels of self-governance, the New England colonies were beginning to threaten the colonial policy of subordination and imperial framework of dependency.[74] The English viewed the colonies in the empire "as objects of exploitation." Yet, the economic experiment of New England as a reflection of England was a success, and by the late 17th century and early 18th century New England colonies assumed "prominence in a global

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[71] T.H. Breen. *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. William H. Sewell Jr. *Capitalism and the Emergence of Civic Equality in Eighteenth-century France*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2021.

[72] Richard L Bushman. *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts*, 25, defining colonial dependence. Jared Hardesty. *Unfreedom: Slavery and Dependence in Eighteenth-Century Boston*. Jared Hardesty. *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England*, 52. T. H. Breen. "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776." Sweet, John Wood. *Bodies Politic: Negotiating Race in the American North, 1730-1830*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006, particularly Chapter 2: Negotiating Slavery, 63. Margaret Ellen Newell. *From Dependency to Independence: Economic Revolution in Colonial New England*.

[73] From 1700-1730, Edward Bromfield was elected justice of the peace, representative, and overseer of the poor in Boston. He also built a home in Boston; Henry's father, also Edward Bromfield, built a home in Boston too, and there is a street in Boston named *Bromfield Street* after the Bromfield family. Edward (father) would also be overseer of the poor, and he and Henry would be elected as representatives, and Henry was chosen multiple times as justice of the peace of Worcester county, following in his grandfather's footsteps. D.D. (Daniel Dennison) Slade, *The Bromfields* Boston D. Clapp, 1872. https://archive.org/details/bromfields00slad/page/10/mode/2up, 4-15. Reference to original will of Edward Bromfield, Henry Bromfield's (1727-1820) grandfather willing away Thomas, an enslaved Black man to Henry's grandmother, can be accessed on ancestry.com in the probate records of Suffolk County, 1734, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder 29 Genealogical Papers, 1 page, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield, Henry (1727-1820). Account papers for the Voyage of Elnathan Jones hired by Henry Bromfield in 1761 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, Call #MSS-664, Box 2, Folder: Vol. 24, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. –in these account papers hiring out enslaved people from their enslavers are listed out as expenses in the Caribbean and the goods secured were made with enslaved labor (indigo, cotton, sugar, etc.).

[74] Margaret Ellen Newell. *From Dependency to Independence: Economic Revolution in Colonial New England*. Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770."

British mercantile system" as provisioners for "more valuable but less self-sufficient colonies in Newfoundland and the Caribbean," a market for British manufactures, a supplier of household manufacturers, a place of experimentation with banks, money, and other systems of credit and industry diversification, such as the grading system implemented in the fish industry, and a colony with a growing domestic economy due to serial town formation and the development of local political economies.[75] The commercial economy of New England colonies placed colonists "in direct competition with" England, challenging their role as the exploited. This led to the New England colonies business charters being revoked in 1684. In 1691, after a few failed attempts by the British government to strip and consolidate the New England colonies political power, in 1691 a new colonial government and constitution was issued, creating the Province of Massachusetts bay.[76] This new royal charter, opposed to multiple business or company charters, consolidated the number of colonies in New England and consolidated political power back to the British empire to re-instill a relationship of dependence through exacting more rigid control over development of New England commerce and to uphold a monopoly for England in "key industries, trades, and financial services."[77] Massachusetts became a royal colony instead of a charter colony; the new royal charter "once again gave powers of government to the colony…but reserved to the king the right to appoint the governor, to veto laws, and to select the provincial Council from nominees of the House of Representatives."[78]

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[75] Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 11-12, 43-58. Barry Levy. *Town Born: The Political Economy of New England from Its Founding to the Revolution*. David P Jaffee. *People of the Wachusett: Greater New England in History and Memory, 1630-1860.*

[76] The Massachusetts Bay Colony consisted of much of New England, including Maine, Plymouth, Massachusetts. Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 53. Richard L Bushman. *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts*, Chapter 1. . Jonathan Barth. "Reconstructing a Mercantilist Empire, 1690s." In *The Currency of Empire: Money and Power in Seventeenth-Century English America*, 249–89.

[77] Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770," 11-12. Richard L Bushman. *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts*, Chapter 1.

[78] Richard L Bushman. *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts*,11.

In addition to the crown asserting new political control over the Massachusetts Bay Colony to regulate the realization of an independent political economy, the British parliament would enact, every few decades as Massachusetts and other New England and North American continent colonies became too self-sufficient, series of navigation acts throughout the 17th and 18th century that attempted to curb illegal Atlantic commerce with companies associated with nations outside of the British empire, or smuggling. The Navigation acts were passed because the "Norther colonies" were charged "with being the agents of France and other Nations, carrying on commerce in Europe and America for their benefit, and against interest of their mother country; and suggest there is danger of there becoming by this means independent of it."[79] England's fear of New England's independence only grew from 1731-1770, where additional legislation and taxes was passed to restrict "specific types of manufactures," radically curtail the ability to "form banks and issue currency," and affect "New England's European and Caribbean trade in ways that were unprecedented, and in the colonists eyes, damaging."[80] From 1750-57, the British Empire funded the colonists war against the French and their Indigenous allies where they reclaimed extensive land territory.[81] The New England economy abounded in the wake of the

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[79] Unsigned and unfinished petition by the British Sugar Planters and others against the Massachusetts Bay Colony, "charging the Northern Colonies with being the agents of…prohibited from taking any Sugar, Rum or Molasses from the foreign Colonies." Estimated 1731, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1731-1770, 11 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston

[80] Margaret Ellen Newell. "The Birth of New England in the Atlantic Economy: From its Beginning to 1770,"67-68. "While authoritarian reformers advocated stronger imperial government, they also sought to change how colonies were governed at the local level. Taxation was at the heart of these efforts, and it led to fierce debates. In 1754, the Massachusetts assembly…" Justin Du Rivage. *Revolution Against Empire: Taxes, Politics, and the Origins of American Independence*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017, 57.

[81] The war also resulted in "the decisive defeat of one belligerent and a dramatic rearrangement of the balance of power, in Europe and North America alike…" taken from Fred Anderson. *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766*. United States: Vintage Books, 2000, xvi. This is the most in depth history of the Seven Years war and clearly posits how the war was just as important as the Townshend, Tea, and Stamp acts of the 1760s leading to the American Revolution stating, "in the larger narrative o the period as I understand it, even the later crises precipitated by the Townshend Acts and the Tea Act did not reflect a movement towards revolution so much as an effort to define the nature of the imperial relationship…the outbreak of fighting at Lexington and Concord…1775, was less a moment in which the birth of a nation can be glimpsed than the traumatic dissolution of a once affectionate relationship between Britain and the colonies," xxi. It's also important to note that empires are best understood as ""negotiated systems," created by the interactions of peoples

war, but England assumed a decent amount of debt, which they expected the New England colonists to pay off in additional taxes. Colonists, having had their domestic and commercial economies stunted by English taxes and legislations for a century, and having assumed their own debt during the war to avoid taxation, found this absurd, and these combined with the Townshend, Stamp, and Tea acts of the 1760s were viewed by white male colonists as limiting their economic freedom and liberty of choice, reducing them to the subjugated position of those in their societies and households, like enslaved people, wives, and children whose subjugation facilitated white men's dominance in the global political economy—the same as their subjugation in the colonial order facilitated the British empire's dominance in the global political economy.[82]

ii. Slavery and Enslaved People in Colonial Massachusetts

Although the New England economy would not be based in a plantation regime or the development of crash crops, enslaved labor would still be vital to the economy.[83] African chattel slavery was introduced into New England to replace Indigenous peoples as an enslaved labor force for land development and cultivation whose land white colonists had disposed.[84] Because the goal of the Massachusetts business model was enduring white town settlement, enslaved

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who "who could shape, challenge, and resist colonialism in many ways,"" xix, which included Indigenous peoples, Africans, and Europeans.

[82] Fred Anderson. *Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766*. Justin Du Rivage. *Revolution Against Empire: Taxes, Politics, and the Origins of American Independence*. Fred Anderson and Institute of Early American History and Culture. *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War*. Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Va., by the University of North Carolina Press, 1984. Hrdlicka, James F. "'The Attachment of the People': The Massachusetts Charter, the French and Indian War, and the Coming of the American Revolution." *The New England Quarterly* 89, no. 3 (2016): 384–420. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26405798. – "Thus, when Parliament overstepped its authority, colonists who wished to safeguard their natural and constitutional rights took actions to uphold their colonies' corporate rights." Or their economic rights, 390.

[83] There did exist a minority of plantation like homes in Massachusetts, but this was less than 1% of slave owners. Catherine S. Manegold. *Ten Hills Farm: The Forgotten History of Slavery in the North*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009.

[84] Margaret Ellen Newell. *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery*. Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America.*

Black labor was re-invigorated in moments when white wealth was scarce and in the act of creation. African slavery was introduced in the 17th century during times of low white populations and immigration leading to a reduced labor force. Because white colonists did not design to create interracial societies but still relied on enslaved labor, the population of enslaved Africans remained in the minority and a constant concern for white officials, but still influential in the cultural, economic, political, and ideological development of the colony. As enslaved Black people became a part of the cultural and economic fabric of colonial Massachusetts, Massachusetts legislation related to slavery also increased.[85]

Enslaved Africans served an essential ideological purpose since the advent of Massachusetts. Patriarchal order in the home upheld that patriarch's held social, political, and economic power over their dependents, which reinforced a system of dependency with the crown.[86] Racial patriarchy was a social order in Massachusetts adopted to incorporate enslaved people into this existing social caste. The institution of slavery "limited African Americans freedom of mobility and sociability, the right to their own labor, control over their sexual and familial arrangements," and reduced them to inheritable, liquidable, and sellable property.[87] Racial patriarchy categorized

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[85] Because enslaved labor would be economically, ideologically, and in the social hierarchy beneficial for the elite of Massachusetts society, slavery would remain unchallenged, especially because New England's commercial economy and global prominence relied on plantation regimes and cash crop economies that could not exist with racial chattel slavery. Because white New Englanders did not want to create interracial societies, fear of Black people would fuel the constant yo-yoing of white ideologues over being pro or anti-slavery throughout the 17th-18th centuries. Lorenzo J Greene. *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620-1776*, Chapter 5: Machinery of Control. Emily Blanck. *Tyrannicide: Forging an American Law of Slavery in Revolutionary South Carolina and Massachusetts,* Chapter 1 Slavery, Rhetoric, and Reality before the War, 1764–1774.

[86] Dependents order: Wife, Child, Indentured Servant (wage laborer), Slave. Racial patriarchy also helped in instilling the naturality of class division. Women in patriarchal societies, such as in English common-law, were governed by coverture: the legal practice of women having no legal ownership of their person and being property of their husbands thus being 'covered' or une femme couverte. Jane Kamensky. *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley*. United States: W. W. Norton, 2016, 164. Kelly A. Ryan. *Regulating Passion: Sexuality and Patriarchal Rule in Massachusetts, 1700-1830*. Richard L Bushman. *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts*, Chapter 2, Dependence.

[87] Kelly A. Ryan. *Regulating Passion: Sexuality and Patriarchal Rule in Massachusetts, 1700-1830*, 68-69. Emily Blanck. *Tyrannicide: Forging an American Law of Slavery in Revolutionary South Carolina and Massachusetts,* Chapter 1 Slavery, Rhetoric, and Reality before the War, 1764–1774. Other texts that present definitions of slavery and the history of slavery in Massachusetts: Catherine Adams and Elizabeth H. (Elizabeth Hafkin) Pleck. *Love of*

enslaved people as dependents in patriarch's households, which also stripped them of the right to their children who were born into slavery as they became dependents and property of their enslavers. Racialized Patriarchy also didn't allow for enslaved Black people "to gain independence with age and limited autonomy for their entire lives."[88] Massachusetts followed the Virginia law of 1662 that dictated that the condition of the mother would follow the child in relation to slavery and slave breeding was common in colonial Massachusetts as enslavers sought to increase liquidable wealth in the absence of formal currency systems.[89] The Massachusetts colony would go a step further and also outlaw interracial sex.[90] "Patriarchal tenets of reciprocity" applied to racial patriarchy in colonial Massachusetts and enslavers were expected to "educate slaves about Christianity and morality, as well as instill proper work ethic," and provide subsistence.[91] This did not make slavery any less violent, as dependency cultures were upheld through the use of physical violence, and Massachusetts enslavers could be and at times were as brutal as enslavers in plantation regimes, as violence against enslaved Africans by white colonists was always undergirded by racial hatred.[92]

Freedom: Black Women in Colonial and Revolutionary New England. George H. Moore. *Notes on the History of Slavery in Massachusetts*. Nicole Saffold Maskiell. "'Here Lyes the Body of Cicely Negro': Enslaved Women in Colonial Cambridge and the Making of New England History." Vincent Brown. "Social Death and Political Life in the Study of Slavery." *The American Historical Review* 114, no. 5 (December 1, 2009): 1231–49.

[88] Kelly A. Ryan. *Regulating Passion: Sexuality and Patriarchal Rule in Massachusetts, 1700-1830*, Chapter 3: Racialized Patriarchy, quotes from 68-69.

[89] Jennifer L. Morgan. *Reckoning with Slavery: Gender, Kinship, and Capitalism in the Early Black Atlantic*. Wendy Warren. "'The Cause of Her Grief': The Rape of a Slave in Early New England." *The Journal of American History* 93, no. 4 (2007): 1031–49. https://doi.org/10.2307/25094595.

[90] Kelly A. Ryan. *Regulating Passion: Sexuality and Patriarchal Rule in Massachusetts, 1700-1830*, Chapter 3: Racialized Patriarchy, Lorenzo Greene. *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620-1776.* George H. Moore. *Notes on the History of Slavery in Massachusetts*.

[91] Kelly A. Ryan. *Regulating Passion: Sexuality and Patriarchal Rule in Massachusetts, 1700-1830*, Chapter 3: Racialized Patriarchy, 68-69 quote.

[92] Jared Hardesty. *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England*, 52-55.

Enslaved people originally arrived in mass to New England as exchanges for New England Indigenous peoples as a labor force to cultivate land.[93] By the 18th century, enslaved people within the household and family structure became essential to facilitating white men's business pursuits outside of the home, as well as cultivating infrastructure.[94] Enslaved people by the turn of the 18th century were often requested by businessmen for use as extended labor in the home, arriving in ships that often had traversed the middle passage from the African coast, to a series of Caribbean islands, and/or to southern colonial ports that also carried cash crops from those colonies. Other enslaved people arrived in Massachusetts ports as refuse cargo aboard these same ships. 'Refuse cargo' were enslaved people regarded as unprofitable commodities in plantation crop economies.[95] But because enslaved labor "undergirded entrepreneurship and increasing market participation amongst New England enslavers" in the cultivation of colonial Massachusetts's domestic and commercial economy, enslaved labor was diversified far beyond the back breaking labor required of the plantation system, and African's deemed refuse elsewhere were not necessarily in Massachusetts.[96] Enslaved men, women, and children were laborers, cooks, nurses/maids/waiting ladies, artisans, assistants to tavern keepers, butlers, etc.[97] Black peoples' stolen, coerced, and enslaved labor facilitated the running of homes and the development of the domestic economy within Massachusetts, which allowed colonial

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[93] By mid-18th century, merchants were utilizing enslaved labor to develop the interior of Massachusetts domestic economy, land, and infrastructure. Jared Ross Hardesty. "Creating an Unfree Hinterland: Merchant Capital, Bound Labor, and Market Production in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts." *Early American Studies* 15, no. 1 (2017): 37–63. https://www.jstor.org/stable/90000335. T. A. Milford *The Gardiners of Massachusetts: Provincial Ambition and the British-American Career*.

[94] Wendy Warren. *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America.* Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860*, 8.

[95] Jared Hardesty. *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England*, chapters 1 and 2.

[96] Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860,* 20-21.

[97] Jared Ross Hardesty. *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England*, chapter 5. Jared Ross Hardesty. The Negro at the Gate': Enslaved Labor in Eighteenth-Century Boston." *The New England Quarterly* 87, no. 1 (2014): 72–98. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43285054.

Massachusetts businessmen, particularly merchants, to leave the home, if needed for extended periods of time, to diversify and expand the commercial economy, which also relied on enslaved people's labor and them as commodities, to generate generational white wealth for their families.

Because slavery in New England did not follow a strict plantation regime, race relations were negotiated from individual to individual, and because of the racialized patriarchal social order in the home overall decision-making power over dependents—wives, children, indentured servants (wage laborers), enslaved people—was reserved to the patriarch before it became an issue for the state. This resulted in a legally ambiguous status of slavery in Massachusetts, as the law was always created in reaction to materially experiences of slavery that needed to be regulated, or "that positive law had to enforce and define the institution." Colonial Massachusetts passed a fugitive enslaved people's law in reaction to runaways, and runaway ads appeared in Massachusetts into the 1780s.[98] This created a dual reality in Massachusetts where enslaved Black Bay Staters could be viewed as people and property before the court, which was unique to Massachusetts.[99] Thus,

> as opposed to strict slave codes in the Southern colonies, the legally ambiguous status of slavery in Massachusetts allowed slaves to make use of a legal system that granted them the right to a fair trial and full legal recourse. By using the courts, then, African Americans created an innovative and effective path to freedom by the late colonial period.[100]

Since the advent of racial chattel slavery, Black people throughout the African diaspora developed ideologies around freedom and put them into practice; this is known as the Black

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[98] Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860.* Lorenzo Greene. *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620-1776.*

[99] Emily Blanck. *Tyrannicide: Forging an American Law of Slavery in Revolutionary South Carolina and Massachusetts,* Chapter 1 Slavery, Rhetoric, and Reality before the War, 1764–1774. Jared Ross Hardesty. "An Ambiguous Institution: Slavery, the State, and the Law in Colonial Massachusetts." *Journal of Early American History* 3, no. 2/3 (April 2013): 154–80. doi:10.1163/18770703-00301002, 157-58.

[100] Jared Ross Hardesty. "An Ambiguous Institution: Slavery, the State, and the Law in Colonial Massachusetts."

Radical Tradition.[101] The courts since colonial Massachusetts had been a place where Black people often found their human rights to be protected, or at least recognized to a degree, and during the 1760s, 1770s, and 1780s, Black freedom suits and petitions increased and become largely successful due to this legacy. During this period, the development of freedom as being defined in white patriots' revolutionary sentiments as economic independence, also offered Black New Englanders new rhetorical appeals towards securing freedom; they often highlighted how slavery had robbed them of wages and personal industry for the benefit of their enslaver and their family, which was the basic argument of white colonists crying for independence from the British empire.[102] Military service in Massachusetts, and its constant revocation and reinstitution, would become a cultural and historical legacy for enslaved Black men in New England. Often Black soldiers would be reallowed in military service when white populations were depleted, and defense was needed; revocation would come when white fears of Black insurrection arose.[103] Military service throughout the colonial period by Black men in Massachusetts opened a pathway towards military service granting legal emancipation, financial independence, and citizenship for Black men.[104] During the colonial period enslaved Black Bay Staters also

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[101] Cedric J. Robinson. *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition.* Aline Helg, and Lara Vergnaud. *Slave No More: Self-liberation Before Abolitionism in the Americas.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

[102] Roy E. Finkenbine "Belinda's Petition: Reparations for Slavery in Revolutionary Massachusetts."

[103] These fears came from slave insurrections that occurred throughout the Atlantic World in the 17th-18th centuries. New England colonists were in constant communication with their southern and Caribbean counterparts and often heard stores of enslaved people's revolts. The Age of Revolutions can also be rightly thought of as the age of Enslaved People's Revolutions. Vincent Brown. *Tacky's Revolt: The Story of an Atlantic Slave War*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2020. Lievin Kambamba Mboma. *African Descendants in Colonial America: Impact on the Preservation of Peace, Security, and Safety in New England, 1638-1783*.

[104] Lievin Kambamba Mboma. *African Descendants in Colonial America: Impact on the Preservation of Peace, Security, and Safety in New England, 1638-1783*. Judith L. Van Buskirk. *Standing in Their Own Light: African American Patriots in the American Revolution*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017.

developed musical cultural practices such as fiddling, their own religious practices, and created their own forms of Black government, electing Black Kings and Governors.[105]

iii. The Bromfield Family, The Domestic Sphere, and Racial Patriarchy in the Pre-Revolution Decade

Henry Bromfield was born in 1727 to Edward Bromfield Junior and Abigail Coney in Boston and was their second son. Henry's father, like his father Edward Bromfield Senior, contributed to Boston's physical, social, and political infrastructure; he became an "eminent merchant" and assumed offices such as overseer of the poor, selectman, and representative in the Massachusetts house until his death in 1756. Like Edward Bromfield Senior, Henry's father made his fortune through engaging in Atlantic commerce, particularly the importation of sugar, rum, molasses, and cotton and the exportation of potash.[106] A year after Henry's birth, his grandfather created his will, where he willed away Thomas, an enslaved Black man, to his grandmother, Mary.[107] Six years later in June of 1734, Edward senior died. He had added a clause to his will in 1732, but it did not impact the fate of Thomas. In October of 1734, Mary, Henry's grandmother also died, but her will (if she created one) does not survive. It is unclear what happened to Thomas, but Henry's father Edward, being their oldest surviving son most likely handled his mother's assets, including Thomas. Thomas appears in no other records, but it's most likely that Thomas, after

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[105] In Nourse's *The History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts* he discusses multiple enslaved Black fiddlers in Harvard's history. Black musical practices in New England are a practically unexplored area. Othello was a fiddler and apparently extremely good. William D. Piersen. *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England*. Antonio T. Bly. "Pretty, Sassy, Cool: Slave Resistance, Agency, and Culture in Eighteenth- Century New England."

[106] Potash was made from wood when New England lands were cleared and was a major export of New England/Massachusetts. Genealogy Chart Listing the Children of Edward (1695) and Abigail (1700) Bromfield with birth dates in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1731-1770, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston**.** Bromfield Family Genealogical Chart, Archives and Manuscripts at Yale University Library, New Haven, CT. mssa_ms_0599_genealogical_chart (yale.edu)

[107] She was a reverend's daughter from Roxbury and religion was extremely important in the Bromfield Household generationally, but religion did not present a moral quandary to the practice of slavery in household because of the social caste structure of racial patriarchy.

October in 1734, was enslaved in Henry's childhood home during the 1730s.[108] Henry had grown up within a household where Black enslaved men served in butler, or 'manservant', positions in the household, allowing for Henry's father and grandfather to diversify their business and community endeavors to generate wealth and legacy for their family. Since his childhood, enslaved people were a natural part of the household structure.

Henry's older brother was also Edward Bromfield and was considered the family genius. Edward, four years older, entered Harvard College in 1738 and earned two degrees in the 1740s;[109] in 1745 he died on Beacon street, the second Bromfield home constructed in Boston. Education was extremely valued in the Bromfield household, especially religious education. The Family would have enduring ties with Harvard University into the 19th century.[110] Although

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[108] Daniel Dennison Slade, *The Bromfields.* Reference to original will of Edward Bromfield, Henry Bromfield's (1727-1820) grandfather willing away Thomas, an enslaved Black man to Henry's grandmother, can be accessed on ancestry.com in the probate records of Suffolk County, 1734, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder 29 Genealogical Papers, 1 page, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. : Unsigned and unfinished petition by the British Sugar Planters and others against the Massachusetts Bay Colony merchants, Estimated 1731, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1731-1770, 11 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[109] He is famed for his invention of a microscope. Daniel Dennison Slade, *The Bromfields;* screw-barrel simple microscope | Objects | The Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments (harvard.edu); Franklin and His Friends: Portraying the Man of Science in Eighteenth-Century America" (si.edu)

[110] This would not be the only enduring connection between the Bromfield family and the University. Henry's older sister, Abigail (1726-1775/77) married William Phillips, instituting a branch of the Bromfield family in Andover, MA, and her oldest daughter, Henry's niece, also Abigail (1745-1798), went on to marry Josiah Quincy (1744-1775) who served as co-council to John Adams during the Boston Massacre trial. Josiah was a distant blood cousin of John's wife, Abigail Smith Adams, through her mother. Because of this connection, Henry's daughters, Abigail Bromfield Rogers, daughter of Margaret Fayerweather, and Elizabeth Bromfield Rogers, daughter of Hannah Clarke, would create enduring friendships with Abigail Adams (the daughter) in the 1780s and 90s. Abigail (Bromfield Phillips II) and Josiah Quincy had a son, Honorable Josiah Quincy (1772-1864) who was a Harvard graduate, President of Harvard College for more than a decade, mayor of Boston in the 1820s, and was dubbed "the great mayor." Sarah, Henry's second daughter by Margaret Fayerweather interchangeably (1757-1831) married Reverend/Professor Eliphalet Pearson, who served as the first principal of Andover Academy, becoming the Hancock Professor of Hebrew and other Oriental Languages at Harvard University from 1786-1806, serving the last two years as interim president of the university—Sarah's children would be Henry B. Pearson, who would become an anti-slavery minister in the 1840s/50s and create and erect Othello's gravestone in 1848 after 30 years of neglect and Margaret Pearson Blanchard who would will Henry Bromfield Senior's home and land to the creation of a school, which is now Harvard, MA's public high school, the Bromfield School. Daniel Dennison Slade, *The Bromfields.* Bromfield Family Genealogical Chart, Archives and Manuscripts at Yale University Library, New Haven, CT. Biography descriptions in the Quincy, Wendell, Holmes, Upham Family Papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society, Quincy, Wendell, Holmes, and Upham Family Papers, 1633-1910 (masshist.org). Biography descriptions in the Quincy Family Papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society, Quincy Family Papers, 1639-1930 (masshist.org). Henry Bromfield. Letter to his daughter Abigail Bromfield Rogers in London mentioning the

Henry would not receive an education at Harvard College, it is extremely clear that he received a large and enviable education in his youth; he was an avid reader for pleasure, read newspapers, had great penmanship, vocabulary, and spelling, and from his account books, was well versed in arithmetic. As his brother was pursuing education at Harvard, Henry followed in the footsteps of his grandfather and father and became a merchant in Boston. During the 1740s, he was a teenager, and his business practices were confined towards developing a network of consumers within Massachusetts he could disseminate and request goods for. In the 1740s, he was not commissioning vessels, but selling products to a growing dissemination network within Massachusetts that he would place requests for on other merchants commissioned vessels. In his early career, he traded mainly in gallons of imported molasses.[111]

Marriage was an important way to secure enduring business connections and partnerships. It also formally instituted the business into the personal.[112] The domestic sphere was a place for the larger imperial framework of dependency to be enacted. In 1749 Henry married Margaret Fayerweather,[113] the daughter of John Fayerweather and Jerusha Grose and sister to Thomas

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imminent arrival of Mrs. Adams and her daughter, June 6th, 1784, 4 pages; Harvard, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 8, 1784, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. "Daniel Denison Rogers to Abigail Adams, 2 June 1794," *Founders Online,* National Archives. [Original source: *The Adams Papers*, Adams Family Correspondence, vol. 10, *January 1794–June 1795*.]

[111] Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Account book from 1744-48 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, Call #MSS-664, Box 1, Folder: Vol. 7, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston.

[112] White women's education was also vital because they were used as business pawns by their male family members. See: Sara T. Damiano "Writing Women's History Through the Revolution: Family Finances, Letter Writing, and Conceptions of Marriage." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 74, no. 4 (2017): 697-728. muse.jhu.edu/article/675317. Lucy Clarke. Letter to her brother Isaac Winslow Clarke in Newfoundland discussing business and personal interests for her father because her letter is less likely to be intercepted and read, May 1770, 3 pages; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 3, 1770, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[113] John Greenwood painted a portrait of Margaret Fayerweather in 1749, the year that her and Henry were married. It was probably a wedding gift. It is currently on display at the Museum of fine arts in Boston. John Greenwood (American, 1727-1792). *Mrs. Henry Bromfield (Margaret Fayerweather)*. About 1749. Oil on canvas, 92.39 x 65.72 cm (36 3/8 x 25 7/8 in.). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Boston, Massachusetts, USA; Emily L. Ainsley Fund; 62.173; http://www.mfa.org/. https://jstor.org/stable/community.15632067. According to Margaret Blanchard Bromfield, her grandfather, Henry Bromfield, never framed the portrait or displayed it at the Bromfield Mansion in Harvard or in their homes in Boston. Margaret Blanchard Bromfield found the painting indecent, due to the amount of cleavage that Margaret, her grandmother, is depicted with. Sarah Bromfield Pearson, Margaret's second daughter

Fayerweather, who was a merchant who fled to England during the American Revolution.[114] His marriage to Margaret dawned a new era for Henry's business prospects and practices: in 1750 he went into business partnership with his cousin, also Henry Bromfield, who lived in England.[115] They created a trans-Atlantic firm together, where Henry (cousin, England) managed and found investors/creditors, British manufacturers and chartered the ships to Boston and other ports; Henry (American) oversaw the dissemination of the ship's goods, handled colonial customers, updated creditors and investors across the Atlantic, as well as making occasional voyages to London when needed. At this point the commodities Henry was trading in began to diversify and logs for tobacco, cotton, textiles, foodstuffs (limes, pepper, etc.), potash, books,[116] and furniture, amongst others. The ships he and his business partner and investors commissioned often stopped

framed the painting after her father Henry's death. Daniel Rogers Slade. Letter about the series of Bromfield portraits, discussing Margaret Fayerweather's portrait and how Henry Bromfield never framed it and claimed not to like it, February 27th, 1899, Boston, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 5, folder 29 Family Correspondence Sep 1897-Apr 1899, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[114] See Massachusetts Historical Society Fayerweather Family Papers: Fayerweather Family Papers, 1718-1976 (masshist.org) Henry Bromfield. Letter to Mr. Fayerweather, his first father-in-law, thanking him for presents sent to his new wife, Hannah, September 29th, 1767, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Thomas Fayerweather. Letter to Henry Bromfield in Boston discussing family and Thomas Fayerweather's move to Oxford, May 20th, 1775, 2 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Thomas Fayerweather. Letter to Henry Bromfield in Boston, May 26th, 1775, 1 page; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[115] Daniel Dennison Slade, *The Bromfields.* Henry Bromfield (Cousin from London of Henry Bromfield, 1727-1820). Letter to his cousin Henry Bromfield in Boston congratulating him on the birth of his first daughter, March 8th, 1750, 3 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 1, 1711-51, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield (Cousin from London of Henry Bromfield, 1727-1820). Letter to his cousin Henry Bromfield in Boston, August 1751, 2 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 1, 1711-51, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[116] Henry would become a bookseller as well and have a decades long relationship with Edward and Charles Dilly, who were extremely famous and respective book dealers. Henry Bromfield delivered books from the Dilly brothers to James Otis, John Adams, and countless others. Henry Bromfield. Letter to Edward and Charles Dilly concerning trade and remarking he had safely delivered a letter from 'celebrated historian' Mrs. Macauley to Mr. Otis and mentioning how he agrees completely with Mrs. Macauley's political views, January 29th, 1770, 4 pages; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 3, 1770, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. See letter books from 1771-75 for series of correspondence written to Edward and Charles Dilly regarding trade.

in the Caribbean, Virginia, and South Carolina.[117] In 1764, Henry's cousin and business partner died in London. Henry's younger brother Thomas had recently moved to London and around then, they established the Bromfield and Bromfield firm, striking up the same business partnership Henry had had with his cousin.[118] During the 1760s, Henry would not only take business trips to London, but also to France and obtained goods from French ports in the Caribbean and had French investors/creditors.[119]

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[117] Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Account book from 1752-54 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, Call #MSS-664, Box 2, Folder: Vol. II, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Cash book, 1750-1756 (inclusive). Mss:766 1750-1756 B868, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Cambridge. https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:hbs.baker.gen:26541101-2016?n=7 Samuel Abbott (1732-1812). Business papers, 1754-1819 (inclusive): Financial records, 1754-1819 "Samuel Abbot's Legger [sic] Began 30th of July 1754, N.", 1754-1769. Mss:761 1754-1819 A122, v. 5A, Baker Library Historical Collections, Harvard Business School, Cambridge. https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:hbs.baker.gen:29407210-2016 Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Bill of Lading book, 1750-1764. Call #: N-1939, Volume 1, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org) Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Account book from 1751-1764 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, Call #MSS-664, Box 1, Folder: Vol. 9, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston.

[118] Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Memorandum book with accounts, 2/2/1770-01/15-1802, The Gilder Lehrman Collection, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New York, NY. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/brigi/Downloads/GLC01450.030.01%20(1).pdf Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Bill of Lading book, 1750-1764. Call #: N-1939, Volume 1, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org) Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Account book from 1751-1764 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, Call #MSS-664, Box 1, Folder: Vol. 9, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. Samuel Abbot, (1732-1812). Business papers, 1754-1819 (inclusive). Foreign letters, Thomas, and Henry Bromfield 1767-69. Mss:761 1754-1819 A122, Box 48, Folder 14, Baker Library Special Collections, Harvard Business School, Cambridge. https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:hbs.baker.gen:40848656-2019 Samuel Abbot, (1732-1812). Business papers, 1754-1819 (inclusive). Foreign accounts, 1768-1774. Mss:761 1754-1819 A122, Box 51a, Folder 1, Baker Library Special Collections, Harvard Business School, Cambridge. https://nrs.lib.harvard.edu/urn-3:hbs.baker.gen:40554209-2019 Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Account book from 1752-74 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, Call #MSS-664, Box 2, Folder: Vol. 12, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. Thomas Bromfield. Letter to his Brother Henry Bromfield in Boston, November 21st, 1766, 5 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[119] Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Memorandum book with accounts, 2/2/1770-01/15-1802, The Gilder Lehrman Collection, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New York, NY. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/brigi/Downloads/GLC01450.030.01%20(1).pdf, pg. 28, a memorandum of seeing a beheading in Paris. Henry Bromfield(1727-1820). Account papers for the Voyage of Elnathan Jones hired by Henry Bromfield in 1761 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, Call #MSS-664, Box 2, Folder: Vol. 24, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. Henry (1727-1820). Account papers for the Voyage of Elnathan Jones hired by Henry Bromfield in 1761 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, Call #MSS-664, Box 2, Folder: Vol. 24, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. –voyage was to Port Louis in Mauritius, which at the time was a French colony. Sam Gardner Letter Mr. Bromfield at the New England Coffee House regarding Parisian physicians, 1765, 2 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

Margaret bore Henry five children from 1750 until 1760. Margaret, their first born, died at fifteen in 1765. Their youngest, Edward, died in infancy in 1760, a year before Margaret, Henry's wife, passed away from smallpox in 1761 in Brookfield, Massachusetts, while Henry was away in London on a business trip.[120] A year later, in 1762, he married Hannah Clarke, who was the daughter of Richard Clarke, a prominent merchant in Boston and agent of the British East India Company.[121] Henry had done minor business with Richard in the 1740s and 50s, so they crossed paths as Henry made a name for himself in the commercial world. Richard Clarke was also a prominent and well-known slave owner, and often advertised enslaved people for sale in the Boston Newspapers.[122] The dowery Richard Clarke provided when his daughter's wed included enslaved people.[123] Father's favored moveable property, like enslaved people, because women in English law were considered legal extensions of their husbands and fathers, known as coverture, and were barred from owning any property themselves. Including enslaved people in white women's marriage doweries tore apart Black families for the creation of white ones. Bringing enslaved labor to the marriage also offset the amount of household labor the wife would have to perform, promised futurity to the marriage as enslaved people could have children which enhanced their enslavers wealth, and secured that women brought their social statuses under their fathers to their marriage with their husbands. Married women bringing their own

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[120] Daniel Dennison Slade, *The Bromfields.* J Moorhead. Brief note to Mr. Bromfield overseas requesting he call officers to remove a group of women who are tenants in one of his buildings, August 28th, 1761, 1 page; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[121] Henry Bromfield. Letter to Mr. Fayerweather, his first father-in-law, thanking him for presents sent to his new wife, Hannah, September 29th, 1767, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[122] Jane Kamensky. *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley*, 163.

[123] He included at least two enslaved people in his youngest daughter Sukie's marriage to John Singleton Copley, the famous painter, in 1769: Lucy and (a different) Cato. Jane Kamensky. *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley*, 165.

enslaved people to the marriage presented, "in an age long before feminism, a distinctive vision of [white] female independence acknowledged by the gift of a slave of one's own."[124]

Hannah Clarke brought at least one enslaved woman to her marriage with Henry Bromfield in 1762, a woman named Nan.[125] Nan was bought by Richard Clarke at two years old in 1746, so when she entered the Bromfield household, with Henry and his three children by Margaret, she was only eighteen, whereas Hannah was twenty-eight years old, and Henry was thirty-five.[126] During their marriage, Hannah bore Henry only one child, Elizabeth born in 1763.[127] Nan's role in the household was most likely child care and whatever household duties Hannah did not want to perform herself. It is unclear if Othello entered the Bromfield household through marriage or if Henry purchased Othello. Either way, around 1760, Henry came into ownership of Othello's person.

In the *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*, Nourse writes that Othello was "born in the interior of African, he was bought in England and brought to American about 1760."[128] Unfortunately, there is no citation for this information and was a piece of local common knowledge/oral history in the town that Nourse recorded; nowhere in the Bromfield family collections exists information on how Othello arrived in Boston. Henry was in London in 1761 when his first wife Margaret passed and could have purchased Othello during this period in London anticipating that he would need aid in the household with his children when he returned. Henry, in 1761, also commissioned a voyage to Port Louis, Mauritius, which was a French colony at the time, with the ship captain Elnathan Jones to secure molasses and other

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[124] Jane Kamensky. *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley*, 163-4.
[125] Sometimes referred to as Nanny.
[126] Bill of Sale for Nan, a girl aged two years nine months, purchased by Richard Clarke of Boston from Samuel Hyde of Attleboro, December 9th, 1746, 3 pages; Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 4, Folder: 1, Wills, deeds, and other documents, 1682-1771, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.
[127] Daniel Dennison Slade, *The Bromfields.*
[128] Henry Stedman Nourse. *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*, 402

commodities. In the logs, some of the trip expenses were the paying of white enslavers for Black enslaved labor. It is possible that Othello was purchased in Port Louis in 1761. What is known is that Othello was an African, had memories of his childhood in Africa, and survived the middle passage. In 1761 he would have been around seventeen years old.[129]

During the 1760s, there were at least three enslaved people in the Bromfield household.[130] In 1775, Henry sold an 11-year-old enslaved boy named Cato, due to mounting debt and financial crisis due to the impending revolution. Cato was not bought but born into the Bromfield

[129] Othello died in 1817 at around 72 years old, which roughly places his birth in 1745. It's unclear where Othello obtained his name from. He could have been ironically and cruelly named this if he was sold in London and renamed by English men. Or Henry Bromfield could have renamed him, especially if he had come from a French colony. Henry Bromfield had an extensive Shakespeare collection in his personal library at his mansion at Harvard and most likely read Othello or saw the play at some point in his life, most likely during one of his trips to London. *Othello,* the play, is a tragedy for many reasons. The plot boils down to the fact that Othello has married a venetian white noble woman and people are appalled by their interracial relationship. Iago, Othello's white attendant who is in love with Desdemona, hatches an elaborate plan to drive Othello mad and sabotage their relationship. The first act of the play reads like an 1890s lynching, where Black men were extralegally persecuted for the fear of interracial sex (in actuality, Black men who financially stable or posed threats were murdered). In colonial Massachusetts interracial sex was a continual white fear. Kelly A. Ryan. *Regulating Passion: Sexuality and Patriarchal Rule in Massachusetts, 1700-1830*. J Moorhead. Brief note to Mr. Bromfield overseas requesting he call officers to remove a group of women who are tenants in one of his buildings, August 28th, 1761, 1 page; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Account papers for the Voyage of Elnathan Jones hired by Henry Bromfield in 1761 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, Call #MSS-664, Box 2, Folder: Vol. 24, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. For more information on *Othello* see: William Shakespeare. *Othello*. United Kingdom: N.S.W. Department of Education Division of Guidance & Special Education., 1788. Philip C. Kolin --, et al. *Othello: New Critical Essays*. New York: Routledge, 2002. Camille Wells Slights. "Slaves and Subjects in Othello." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 48, no. 4 (1997): 377–90. https://doi.org/10.2307/2871250.Emily Weissbourd. "'I Have Done the State Some Service': Reading Slavery in 'Othello' through 'Juan Latino.'" *Comparative Drama* 47, no. 4 (2013): 529–51. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24615301.Harold Bloom and Inc NetLibrary. *William Shakespeare's Othello*. New York: Chelsea House, 1996. Genealogical narrative of Henry Bromfield Pearson living in the original Bromfield Mansion reading all of the many Shakespeare editions that were in his grandfather's library, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder 29 Genealogical Papers, 5 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[130] The Bromfield household was also a perfect example of the increased consumer goods available to people: T. H. Breen "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776." T. H. Breen. "'Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century." Bromfield Family Queen Anne Walnut Compass-Seat Side Chair, 1745-Boston. Chadds Ford Collection. Lot 35 – Bromfield Family Queen Anne walnut (freemansauction.com) John Potwine. Teapot, 1740-Boston, Collection #1106. The Chitra Collection, London. Teapot | (chitracollection.com) & (#683) AN AMERICAN SILVER TEAPOT, JOHN POTWINE, BOSTON, CIRCA 1740 (sothebys.com) Milo M Naeve. "John Glinn's Clock Case Of 1750 For Henry Bromfield Of Boston, Massachusetts." *Furniture History* 28 (1992): 22–34. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23407163. John Goddard (American, 1723–1785), Card table, 1760-85-Newport, RI. ID #: RIF774, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Friends of the American Wing Fund, 1967 (67.114.1), New York. https://library.artstor.org/asset/32056563

household around 1764. Nan and Othello were about the same age and enslaved in the Bromfield household together. Cato was most likely their child.[131] Enslaved people in Henry's home increased his personal wealth and fulfilled labor within his household so that he could be out of the house to develop his business and take business trips to London, Philadelphia, New York, Virginia, and South Carolina, which he sometimes brought his son, Henry Junior, on to educate him on what would one day be his profession.[132] Education was highly valued in the Bromfield home, but only for Henry's white children, not the people he enslaved.[133] By 1770, being a merchant, had, in many ways, been raised to a calling for Henry, which was why he had such an intimate business relationship with his father-in-law, Richard Clarke.[134]

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[131] Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his sister Sally staying in Newbury discussing family and travels mentioning Cato being sick, October 25th, 1773, 4 pages; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 4, 1771-73, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Esq. in which he writes to his father "my uncle Phillips I supposed will be desirous to know what is become of Cato, which please to inform me of", May 30th, 1775, 2 pages; Charlotte Ferry, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 4.pdf, 17-18.

[132] Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his Aunt Miss Elizabeth Bromfield in Boston during his first time abroad in London, May 27th, 1769, 2 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield. Letter to Mr. Clarke in Boston about his safe arrival in London, April 22nd, 1768, 2 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[133] Othello was illiterate his entire life. Henry Bromfield. Letter to his daughter Sally (Sarah) Bromfield Pearson reflecting on the death, funeral, and briefly life of Othello, January 6th, 1818, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 20, 1816-19, Yale University and Archives, New Haven. . Eliza (Elizabeth, Betsey) Bromfield. Composition and Sentiment book containing poetry and other writings, 1777, Collection #: GLC01450.030.02, Gilder Lehrman Collection, Online. [Composition and sentiment book] | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History & GLC01450.030.02.pdf Discussing women's literacy: Cathy N. Davidson. "The Novel as Subversive Activity: Women Reading, Women Writing." In *Beyond the American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism*, 283-317. DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993.

[134] Jane Kamensky. *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley*, 150; Henry Bromfield. Series of letters to Mr. Richard Clarke in Boston during his stay in London regarding business listed as follows by date and page length: October 16th, 1768, 4 pages; November 18th, 1768, 4 pages; February 3rd, 1769, 4 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. They kept in contact up until his death and Henry was named in his will. Richard Clarke. Copy of his will in which he names Henry Bromfield and other relevant relatives bequeathing money, December 11th, 1794, 4 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 4, Folder: 3, Wills, deeds, and other documents, 1791-1813, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Eliza Bromfield. Composition and Sentiment book containing poetry and other writings, 1777, Collection #: GLC01450.030.02, Gilder Lehrman Collection, Online. [Composition and sentiment book] | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History & GLC01450.030.02.pdf

The natural next step for merchants and Massachusetts businessmen like Henry Bromfield was to expand their personal real estate holdings and business networks into the interior of Massachusetts. This is known as provincial ambition, or the original manifest destiny.[135] In 1765, Henry purchased the Seccomb mansion in Harvard, MA. For a brief period from 1766-67, as revolutionary tensions escalated in Boston, Henry removed with his family to Harvard.[136] During the occupation of Boston in 1768, Henry was in London on a business trip, and it appears he had his family—most likely including Nan, Othello, and Cato—remain at Harvard during this time. The family returned to their home in Boston by 1770, but the ensuing revolutionary fervor by 1775 made Boston an unstable home. Although the 1760s was a time of extreme tension in the lead up to British-American colonists declaring independence, Henry's business practices remained scarcely affected until 1770. He kept smuggling, kept traveling, and kept trading.[137] Although it was clear that Henry did not agree with the parliamentary acts imposed in Massachusetts and the other colonies throughout the 1760s, he did hope, like many British-American colonists, that British parliament would come to their senses and revoke acts of aggression that colonists perceived as unfair legislation. While in London in 1768, he wrote his father-in-law Richard Clarke, about how the British populace appeared in full support of the

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[135] T.A. Milford *The Gardiners of Massachusetts: Provincial Ambition and the British-American Career*. Jared Ross Hardesty. "Creating an Unfree Hinterland: Merchant Capital, Bound Labor, and Market Production in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts."

[136] Henry Stedman Nourse. *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*, 133.

[137] On how merchants and smuggling created conditions of the revolution see: John W. Tyler. *Smugglers & Patriots: Boston Merchants and the Advent of the American Revolution*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1986. The practices of these merchants aided in shaping the birth of Capitalism, see these sources: Edward Countryman. ""To Secure the Blessings of Liberty"": Language, the Revolution, and American Capitalism." In *Beyond the American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism*, 123-149. DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993.Allan Kulikoff. "The American Revolution, Capitalism, and the Formation of the Yeoman Classes." In *Beyond the American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism*, 80-123. DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993. Winifred Barr Rothenberg. "The Invention of American Capitalism: The Economy of New England in the Federal Period." In *Engines of Enterprise: An Economic History of New England*, 69-109. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.

colonists and not the parliament and his hopes that English subjects favor of the colonists' plight would bring parliament to their senses.[138]

Section II. 1770-90

i. Defining White British American Liberty, Freedom, and Revolution in Massachusetts, 1770-75

From 1770-75, Henry's business began to decline as New Englanders and other colonists mobilized to form consumer boycotts of British manufactures due to Parliament's attempts though taxes and other restrictive economic legislation to reassert a dependent economic relationship with the mother country.[139] Henry kept selling and importing up until independence was declared in 1775, but this would not come without obstacles.[140] From 1770-75, Henry did not stop traveling for business and would often go to London, Virginia, South Carolina, and

[138] Henry Bromfield. Series of letters to Mr. Richard Clarke in Boston during his stay in London regarding business listed as follows by date and page length: October 16th, 1768, 4 pages where he mentions dining with Benjamin Franklin and Mr. Hancock assuring their Business in Boston; November 18th, 1768, 4 pages, discusses advices of Benjamin Franklin and asks about the state of Boston and if the reports of Otis and three others being seized is true, also talks about how the colonies have general English support; February 3rd, 1769, 4 pages, discusses the English support of the colonies since the start of troop deployment to occupy Boston; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield. Letter to Mr. Clarke in Boston about his safe arrival in London, April 22nd, 1768, 2 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his Aunt Miss Elizabeth Bromfield in Boston during his first time abroad in London, May 27th, 1769, 2 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Thomas Hutchinson Junior. Letter Mr. Henry Bromfield, merchant, about not releasing private conversations about politics and his brief apprehensions regarding the people, August 1st, 1768, 2 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 2, 1761-69, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[139] T. H. Breen. *The Marketplace of Revolution.*

[140] Thomas and Henry Bromfield. Account ledger of voyages with Joseph Coolidge from 1772-1775, Account Cleared on October 30th, 1783, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1782, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston**.** William Bartlett. Letter asking Henry Bromfield about goods he has for sale in the newspaper, May 14th, 1774, 1 page; Newburyport, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 5, 1774, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield. List of Debts and Credits taken June 30th, 1774, 3 pages; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 4, Folder: 8, Accounts and Business Papers 1774-97, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. William Gould. Letters pertaining to settling accounts with Henry Bromfield accrued during the 1770s, Spring 1774, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: March-April 1784, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Philadelphia.[141] During the early 1770s, Henry made significant investments in Virginian Tobacco as it became increasingly more difficult to supply goods through his trans-Atlantic partnership with his brother Thomas in London.[142]

Tensions between Massachusetts colonists and British authorities escalated through the 1770s after the British occupation of Boston in 1768. The 1760s had been a time of tumult and anger for Bay Staters, due to the passage of the sugar act in 1764, the stamp act in 1765, the declaratory act in 1766, the Townshend acts of 1767, the British military occupation of Boston in 1768, the Boston massacre of 1770, the tea act of 1773 and the subsequent protest of it the same year in the event of the Boston tea party, the coercive acts, Boston port acts, Massachusetts government act, administration of justice act, quartering act, and Quebec act of 1774.[143] These attempts to limit the economic practices of Massachusetts resulted in the first outbreaks of war during the Battle of Lexington and Concord and the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775.[144] Most of these acts and acts of aggression on the part of the British, such as occupation, were targeted towards Massachusetts as Bay Staters most aggressively challenged the framework of imperial

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[141] Jonathan Clarke. Letter to Henry Bromfield, just arrived in London with his son, discussing the trials in Boston, December 18th, 1770, 1 page; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 3, 1770, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Hurd, John Hurd. Personal letter to Henry Bromfield and mentions his return from England, November 7th, 1771, 1 page; Portsmouth, NH, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 4, 1771-73, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1772-73 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, 1729-1825, Call #: MSS-664, Box 1, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. letterbook 72-73 1.pdf, 13-14.

[142] Thomas Bromfield. Letter to his brother Henry Bromfield Esq. discussing putting on hold their tobacco business in Virginia, in Boston, April 4th, 1778, 3 pages; Williamsburg, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[143] The Quebec act created new formal government in Quebec that gave no representative assembly to its colonists and special privileges to the Roman Catholic Church and extended the colonies territory down the Mississippi Valley and as far south as the Ohio River. Colonists who wanted to settle there were barred now because of the totalitarian government scheme. Quebec was also a place where goods were being smuggled into the colonies by New England Merchants. There were also cries of possible independence and unity with the 13 colonies from Quebec, recorded in Henry's letters from the 1770s. Henry smuggled goods in through Quebec, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia with the help of his brother-in-law's Jonathan and Isaac Clarke. Edmund S. Morgan. *The Birth of the Republic 1763-89*, 60, 118.

[144] Edmund S. Morgan. *The Birth of the Republic,* 211-15. Benjamin Woods Labaree. *The Boston Tea Party*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964. Richard Archer. *As If an Enemy's Country: The British Occupation of Boston and the Origins of Revolution*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

economic dependency and continually protested it; so the British sought to make an example of Massachusetts.[145] When parliament was attempting to limit business practices in Massachusetts, they were limiting the development of a self-sufficient capitalistic economy that New Englanders were creating through diversified business practices in their domestic and commercial economies, which slavery undergirded, and rivaled the economic prosperity of England, the center of the empire.[146] By 1775, when independence was declared, American colonists were determined to break from empire and to create their own version, characterized by unbridled capitalistic practices and access for white people.[147]

In 1770, Henry wrote to his cousin Charles in London that "as a dependent on trade," he was hopeful the British parliament would begin revoking the series of legislation that hindered business practices in Massachusetts.[148] Although Henry was able to find ways to conduct trade up until 1775, his business prosperity was reliant on his colonial consumer networks and as colonial consumers had their choices in the marketplace constrained by Parliamentary

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[145] [145] Edmund S. Morgan. *The Birth of the Republic.*

[146] Countryman, Edward Countryman. ""To Secure the Blessings of Liberty"": Language, the Revolution, and American Capitalism." In *Beyond the American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism*, 123-149. DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993. Allan Kulikoff. "The American Revolution, Capitalism, and the Formation of the Yeoman Classes." In *Beyond the American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism*, 80-123. DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993. Winifred Barr Rothenberg. "The Invention of American Capitalism: The Economy of New England in the Federal Period." In *Engines of Enterprise: An Economic History of New England*, 69-109. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000. Staughton Lynd, and David Waldstreicher. "Free Trade, Sovereignty, and Slavery: Toward an Economic Interpretation of American Independence." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 68, no. 4 (2011): 597–630. https://doi.org/10.5309/willmaryquar.68.4.0597. Margaret Ellen Newell. *From Dependency to Independence: Economic Revolution in Colonial New England*.

[147] Justin Du Rivage. *Revolution Against Empire: Taxes, Politics, and the Origins of American Independence*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017. Winifred Barr Rothenberg. "The Invention of American Capitalism: The Economy of New England in the Federal Period." In *Engines of Enterprise: An Economic History of New England*, 69-109.

[148] Henry Bromfield. Letter to Charles Bromfield concerning the people of Massachusetts refusal of troops and to be quartered, as well as the mounting political crisis and the effects on trade, where he writes "as a dependent on trade", March 24th, 1770, 2 pages; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 3, 1770, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

legislation, they began to boycott and politicize the goods he sold.[149] In his letters to creditors and suppliers in England he would catalogue colonists unified boycotts of non-importation and non-consumption, which were dropped and readopted from 1769-1774, and how they impacted his ability to move their goods and pay his credits.[150] Because of Parliamentary legislation, he would also tell his London based brother and business partner Thomas as well as suppliers and creditors how, by 1774, "every one of our customers are complaining for want of their account."[151] The impending war was hurting many people's wallets and in desperation would request account fulfillment in payment or goods immediately, no longer being able to wait on a timetable.[152] As clients in the colonies began demanding goods and payment, Thomas in London was not fulfilling his duties. Not paying suppliers and creditors, he had sent little goods and was accruing the wrath of Henry at a new level in each letter. On October 16th, 1774, he wrote to Thomas, after Thomas had failed to send articles for his son Henry Junior and his friends,

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[149] T.H. Breen. *The Marketplace of Revolution.* T.H. Breen. *American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People*. T. H. Breen*. The Will of the People: The Revolutionary Birth of America. Cambridge, Massachusetts:* The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019.

[150] For instance, Henry tells the book sellers Edward and Charles Dilly, "…and will exert myself to make sale of the books that remain, but fear I shall not be able to quit of many of them, as politicks is the only think that seems at present to be regarded by the people here." Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 3.pdf, 15. He would tell another supplier that he couldn't sell the glasses he had been sent because the people, due to the nonconsumption and nonimportation colonial acts were only buying necessities. Ibid, 19-20. In the vein of how politicization of goods dictated what would sell, Henry would lament to suppliers and creditors Flight and Halliday for sending him so many highly priced painted linens as he had cautioned against them due to the colonists fervor to protect their liberties. Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 4.pdf, 6.

[151]Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 3.pdf, 9.

[152] Legal documents pertaining to the recovery of debts issued in London by Joseph Flight against Merchants in Boston naming Henry Bromfield as his acting attorney in Boston, 1772-1773, London, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1773, 5 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org) Hughes and Whitelock. Letter to Henry Bromfield in Boston discussing the impending military occupation of Boston and recuperating Boston debts on their behalf, April 6th, 1774, 1 page; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 5, 1774, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

"nothing disgusts people more and especially those who take care to forward their orders in reason as our friends did." In this letter, Henry also passed along other customer complaints towards Thomas's side of the business and chastised him telling him that no one would do business with him if he conducted himself this way.[153] On January 25th, 1775, Henry recounted to Flight and Halliday how,

> Several of my customers have lately failed in their payments who are from of the best …we have people of large property and have always been very punctual. The reason is they cannot get their assets owing to the confused state the country is in half the peoples time in the country is take up in learning the exercise. I am determined not to let any of the goods you sent me last go out of my hand without the money.[154]

The exercise he is referring to is militia and gun practice. Henry would profit from this gun craze in the lead up to war by importing guns and gunpowder, evidenced throughout his letter books and account books from the period. He points out that his most reputable and wealthy customers were faltering to exemplify that Parliament's restrictive legislation was crippling the wealth and prospects of even its most wealthy colonists, who often were the most loyal, and to highlight that his lack of credit repayment was due to extenuating circumstances created by the British government.[155]

Although non-importation, non-consumption, consumer boycotts, and colonial consumers actions drastically curbed his business, Henry believed his financial hardship to be the fault of the British government, writing to Hughes and Whitelock on June 8th, 1774, "I am much obliged for the favor of bundles of newspapers, which you have been so kind as to send me. My time will not admit of writing politicks and can only say that I think the late acts of parliament upon this

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[153] Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 3.pdf, 16-18, 22-23.
[154] Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 4.pdf, 16-17.
[155] T.H. Breen. *American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People.*

province are vastly severe and cruel."[156] The same year, Henry wrote to his friend and business associate Peter Whitelock,

> We are anxiously waiting to know the determination of the new parliament concerning us and trust they will evince their attachment to the English constitution and regard for the true interest of the nation by repealing the acts of the last respecting this province…for I am of the opinion the people therefore will not submit to them unless reduced by force of arms and then no longer than by which they may be subdued is kept among them and even this forced submission cannot be very lasting as the natural increase of this country in number and wealth will soon place it above the control of any power in whatever judge therefore whether it most for the interest of great Britain to cherish its love and good will or excite its utmost hatred and ill will and falter.[157]

Henry Bromfield in this letter clearly pronounces his belief in the emerging political economy of the colonies as a unified body and implies that the colonies independence will naturally occur even if Great Britain temporally uses force to stop them. When he says "the natural increase of this country in number and wealth will soon place it above the control of any power" he cites that the American practice of settling colonialism, increasing their population, and continual wealth accumulation through the continual and unstoppable drives of the emerging capitalistic marketplace will make the colonies a force to be reckoned with politically whether or not they are a part of Great Britain. Thus, economic power, freedom, and independence were what defined the American revolution in Henry Bromfield's world.

White British American colonists in Massachusetts, exemplified in the observations that populate Henry's letters, clearly defined their ideas of limited freedoms and liberties within material experiences of economic deprivation and forced economic dependence. Freedom was understood as being facilitated by white colonists having unrestricted choices within gendered

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[156]Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Brom Letterbook 1773-75 2.pdf, 17.

[157] Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 4.pdf, 19.

and racialized markets so that white colonists had multiple ways to achieve financial independence, or freedom. Liberty was understood as an individual's unrestricted free will of action in these markets. Colonists had no designs of transforming and revolutionizing those gendered and racialized markets, which would mean giving full political and social equality to enslaved people, Indigenous people, and women, in their pursuit of economic independence.

In 1775, Lord Dunmore, the governor of Virginia, urged by the enslaved people who had shown up on his doorstep proclaiming their allegiance and fighting power to the crown if they granted them emancipation, issued a proclamation stating that any person enslaved by the American colonists who fought for the British, would win their freedom.[158] After this, Virginians and other southern colonists who made their livings in plantation societies/economies and the labor of enslaved people, were invigorated toward the patriot cause that had begun in Massachusetts. Some historians have argued that the American Revolution was waged to protect the institution of slavery as the British in the 1770s began emancipating enslaved people in England, most notably due to the Somerset Decision of 1773.[159] But, because racial chattel slavery in the colonies was an economic system, the British's attempt to constrain the institution during the revolution should be placed alongside understandings of the British parliament's attempt to force economic subordination and dependence on white colonists through the Stamp, Tea, Sugar, Townshend, and other acts attempted to. The British, by presenting that they could free colonists' enslaved people, were constraining colonists' freedom of choice. Thus, the American Revolution wasn't fought to protect slavery, but instead to protect white colonists' economic choice to engage with it. It's easy to say the American Revolution was about taxes. Or it was about slavery. But it was about all of this. It was about resisting parliament/the British

[158] Woody Holton. *Liberty Is Sweet: The Hidden History of the American Revolution*.
[159] Gerald Horne. *The Counter-revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America.*

empire's right to exact economic and thus political control and choice over the white colonists without their input. Attacks on slavery were equally important to the stamp or Townsend or tea acts.

Slavery was often used as a metaphor by white colonists, and even Henry in a letter to his creditors and supplies Flight and Halliday would remark in regard to the American's pursuit of freedom that "the Americans are determined not to be made slaves of."[160] By saying they were not to be reduced to slaves or to the state of slavery, white colonists were invoking that slavery was a natural part of the social, political, and economic order, but not for them. By rhetorically invoking that they had been reduced to slaves, they attempted to show the absurdity in the British Government's treatment of white colonial subjects in their economic practices.[161] Colonists did not invoke the metaphor to highlight the immorality of the institution, even if this was the effect in some cases,[162] but to highlight that British American colonists' subjugation was unnatural through the naturalization of Black inferiority. The American Revolution, or American war for Independence, was originally conceptualized as white economic freedom being predicated in Black subordination.[163]

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[160] Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 3.pdf, 24.

[161] This was the same as the colonies being likened to rebelling children; it did not mean to challenge the dependent structure of child-parent relations, but instead show the absurdity of one sides action's.

[162] David Brion Davis. *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975.

[163] Nikole Hannah Jones, "Our Democracy's Founding Ideals Were False When They Were Written. Black Americans Have Fought to Make them True," The 1619 Project. The New York Times. August 14, 2019America Wasn't a Democracy, Until Black Americans Made It One - The New York Times (nytimes.com). The entire issue can be accessed here: 1619 Project : The New York Times : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive. François Furstenberg. "Beyond Freedom and Slavery: Autonomy, Virtue, and Resistance in Early American Political Discourse." *The Journal of American History* 89, no. 4 (2003): 1295–1330. https://doi.org/10.2307/3092544. George A. Levesque and Nikola A. Baumgarten, ""A Monstrous Inconsistency": Slavery, Ideology and Politics in the Age of the American Revolution," Contributions in Black Studies: Vol. 8 , Article 4. Available at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cibs/vol8/iss1/4 Bernard Bailyn. *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution: Fiftieth Anniversary Edition*. Vol. Fiftieth anniversary edition. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2017. David Waldstreicher. "Women's Politics, Antislavery Politics, and Phillis

In 1774, Henry wrote to one of his business associates regarding the current political climate that, "the congress seems determined to support this province in their opposition to the cruel acts of parliament and the people are determined to defend their privileges at the hazard of loss of life itself."[164] White colonists were not the only people who were ready to die to procure personal liberty and freedom. Enslaved people throughout the Atlantic world had been putting into practice freedom ideology and sacrificing their lives for freedom since the advent of racial chattel slavery and the slave trade.[165] Black freedom ideology was born out of the visceral experiences of enslavement, the same as white colonists' concepts of economic independence and thus white freedom were born out of the enslavement and racial subjugation of those of African descent. Because Black people had challenged racial capitalism since its advent, slavery was an easy metaphor for white colonists to use when discussing how English legislation had impacted their economic liberties (action) and freedom (choice). The rhetorical appeals of white colonists to describe their experience of economic choice and action being circumvented presented new ways for Black New Englanders to frame the pursuance of legal emancipation and lived freedom. Yet, the overall design of the war for American Independence was to achieve white freedom at the expense of Black and Indigenous lives.

ii. Slavery as a Metaphor and Slavery in the Literal: Black Abolitionism in a Patriot context, 1770-90

Enslaved people understood that the colonists' independence movement was rooted in the desire to break an economically dependent relationship with the British Empire and that colonists

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Wheatley's American Revolution." In *Women in the American Revolution: Gender, Politics, and the Domestic World*, 148-9.

[164] Bromfield, Henry (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. *Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 1.pdf ; Brom Letterbook 1773-75 2.pdf ; Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 3.pdf ; Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 4.pdf; pg. 20, pdf 3.

[165] Aline Helg, and Lara Vergnaud. *Slave No More: Self-liberation Before Abolitionism in the Americas.*

defined freedom as economic independence. As enslaved people in Massachusetts heard their white enslavers cry out to not be reduced to slavery, they understood their pleas to be couched within a definition of freedom as economic independence, and thus the deprivation of economic opportunity, choice, action, and self-ownership to be a state of slavery.[166] Enslaved people understood themselves as commodities, economic actors, and commanding valuable labor power, especially in New England where enslaved labor had been diversified and many were allowed to become skilled workers in specific fields as diverse talents reaped enslavers greater profit returns on their investment in human property.[167] Military service and Black litigiousness in New England took on economic components towards achieving legal emancipation during the revolutionary era; enslaved people in cities such as Boston and Cambridge were able to achieve freedom through personal negotiation and circumstance. Although in Massachusetts throughout the 18th century white anti-slavery advocates had published treatises condemning slavery and Black New Englanders had been advocating for legal emancipation since the advent of their enslavement in New England, white colonists war from 1775-83 to break economic dependence with England offered fruitful pathways for Black New Englanders to assert through the legal system and military service that under racial chattel slavery they too had been forced, against

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[166] "Just as John Jack had worked to earn his freedom, so soon after his death the people of Concord were preparing to fight for their freedom. It, too, was a freedom from servitude, but this was the slavery imposed by the British rule and English laws upon the settlers. The settlers wanted the right to rule themselves, to form their own government, write their own laws, worship as they please, and levy their own taxes. Men began to prepare for revolution. In April 1775, Concord men gathered for the local militia and Philip Barrett, a Black man, joined. He is not listed in the records of Concord, only in the roll call of the first militia." Elliott, Barbara K., and Janet W. Jones. *Concord: It's Black History, 1636-1860.* Concord, Mass.: Concord Public School System, 1976, 23-24; John Jack's story is very interesting, and Elise Lemire discusses him a bit, but her account in Black Walden of John Jack is very confusing. David Waldstreicher. "Women's Politics, Antislavery Politics, and Phillis Wheatley's American Revolution." In *Women in the American Revolution: Gender, Politics, and the Domestic World*, 148-9. In 1703 "Massachusetts requires every master who liberates a slave to pay a bond of 50 pounds or more in case the freedman becomes a public charge." Slavery and the Making of America . Timeline | PBS (thirteen.org), Ruth Wallis Herndon. *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England*.

[167] Jared Ross Hardesty. *Unfreedom: Slavery and Dependence in Eighteenth-Century Boston*. Jared Ross Hardesty. *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England*.

their will, into economic dependence. The war years and rhetoric of the revolution, and efforts of Black New Englanders, set a precedent by 1790 that formal slavery and categorizing Black people as property was legally and socially unacceptable in the state, although no formal law appeared abolishing it, just the interpretation and knowledge of freedom suites and a liberal reading of the new state constitution of 1780.

> In 1961, Benjamin Quarles wrote that Black peoples'
>
> role in the Revolution can best be understood by realizing that his major loyalty was not to a place nor to a people, but to a principle. Insofar as he had freedom of choice, he was likely to join the side that made him the quickest and best offer in terms of those "unalienable rights" of which Mr. Jefferson had spoken.[168]

Because of Lord Dunmore's proclamation of 1775 and the British's commitment to their promises of emancipation which resulted in the evacuation of more than three thousand Black people from New York in 1783,[169] it appears puzzling that Black Bay Staters mainly sided with the patriots. But, in Massachusetts during the 1760s and 70s loyalists were the targets of extreme crowd violence, such as tar and feathering.[170] Enslaved people were already targets of racial violence in Massachusetts and their enslavement made white violence against them socially acceptable; in 1755 Mark, an enslaved man who had been charged, alongside four other enslaved people, for killing their master was murdered, his body tarred, and hanged in a gibbet above Charlestown Neck. When Paul Revere in 1775, "rode westward to warn local militias of the impending arrival of British regulars, Mark's corpse was still hanging in Charlestown Neck," as

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[168] Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution,* xxvii. Gary B. Nash. *The Forgotten Fifth: African Americans in the Age of Revolution.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.
[169] Maya Jasanoff. *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World*.
[170] The terms lynch and lynching, which in the 19th century have been applied to extralegal white mob violence against Black people that resulted in brutal and public spectacle murders, comes from Charles Lynch, who headed an extralegal court to punish loyalists. Holger Hoock. *Scars of Independence: America's Violent Birth*. First edition. New York: Crown Publishing, 2017. Mob Attacks on Loyalists in Massachusetts 1774 – Massachusetts Society (massar.org)

a warning to other enslaved people.[171] Other's saw Massachusetts as their home and believed they had an equal right to it as white colonists, which spurred military service for some, as Black men had been integral in the violent confrontations and battles with the British from the Boston Massacre, to Lexington and Concord, to Bunker Hill.[172] Some enslaved Black men did not have a choice to not serve for the patriots. In Massachusetts, enslavers sometimes offered their enslaved people as soldiers in their place, or they hired out their enslaved people's labor to the colony. Others sent their enslaved people to serve alongside their sons as their attendants. This was how Neptune Frost, who was enslaved in Cambridge, less than five miles from where Othello was enslaved in Boston, ended up serving. Both men voyaged into the Worcester County area during the American Revolution, but Othello was confined and isolated at Henry's estate in Harvard, while Neptune moved with different regiments from New York to Lexington.[173] However enslaved men ended up serving in the continental army in Massachusetts in New England, the result was still the same: enslaved men won their freedom through service, and usually after their wages had been paid out to their enslaver for their 'price' as a way to buy freedom, were then allowed wages for their service in the army. Black New Englanders post revolution who fought in the continental army would fight for decades to be recipients of pension

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[171] Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts,* 55-59.

[172] Black New Englanders had cultivated the land, had enduring institutions and traditions, history, and culture in Massachusetts. Elliott, Barbara K., and Janet W. Jones. *Concord: It's Black History, 1636-1860.* William D. Piersen. *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England*. Judith L. Van Buskirk. *Standing in Their Own Light: African American Patriots in the American Revolution*. George Quintal, and Mass.) Boston National Historical Park (Boston. *Patriots of Color: "a Peculiar Beauty and Merit": African Americans and Native Americans At Battle Road & Bunker Hill*. Boston, Mass.: [Washington, D.C.: Division of Cultural Resources, Boston National Historical Park; For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O.,], 2004. Lievin Kambamba Mboma. *African Descendants in Colonial America: Impact on the Preservation of Peace, Security, and Safety in New England, 1638-1783*.

[173] Neptune Frost. *Massachusetts U.S., Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolutionary War,* Volume 6. [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004, 121. Stephen Frost. *Massachusetts U.S., Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolutionary War,* Volume 6. [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004, 125-6. Jonathan Hill. *Primary Source Research on the Burial Location of Neptune Frost*. Cambridge, MA: Lesley University, 2017. Neptune Frost Research (Final) by Jonathan Hill.pdf

funds and wages.[174] Black American military service, beginning in the revolutionary war, has become a distinctive way throughout American history that Black men have practiced a strain of the Black American freedom ideology to achieve economic independence, citizenship rights, and equality.[175]

From the 1760s to 1790s in Massachusetts, enslaved people filed individual and joint freedom suits as well as petitions for reparations repeatedly. Although Black litigiousness had a long history in Massachusetts and was one of the few colonies enslaved people had some rights before the court, freedom suits in Massachusetts had not taken on an economic framework before the revolutionary era but had instead often appealed to moral sentiments, although this remained the central rhetorical tool.[176] In a 1773 petition, enslaved people exclaimed,[177] "We have no Property! We have no Wives! No Children! We have no City! No Country—."[178] The plea begins with property because it was the easiest means towards creating subsistence and thus economic independence; without financial independence a family and citizenship rights were out

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[174] Judith L. Van Buskirk. *Standing in Their Own Light: African American Patriots in the American Revolution*, chapters 5 and 6.

[175] This argument is in line with the one proposed by Mia Bay that in the American Revolution a Black American Revolutionary Ideological tradition began that defined a set of ways to access citizenship rights such as: Black litigiousness, use of the press, community organization, interracial allies, cooptation of white rhetoric, and military service. See: Mia Bay, "'See Your Declaration Americans!!!' Abolitionism, Americanism, and the Revolutionary Tradition in Free Black Politics." In *Americanism: New Perspectives on the History of an Ideal*. Edited by Michael Kazin. 27-52. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). William C. Nell used Black revolutionary military service as evidence of how Black people were Americans and deserved equality, freedom, and citizenship. William C. Nell, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution: With Sketches of Several Distinguished Colored Persons*.

[176] Roy E. Finkenbine "Belinda's Petition: Reparations for Slavery in Revolutionary Massachusetts." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (2007): 95–104. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4491599. Daniel R. Mandell "Petition of Prince Hall and Other African Americans to the Massachusetts General Court 1777." In *Milestone Documents in African American History*, edited by Grey House Publishing. 2nd ed. Salem Press, 2017. Chernoh M Sesay. "The Revolutionary Black Roots of Slavery's Abolition in Massachusetts." *The New England Quarterly* 87, no. 1 (2014): 99–131. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43285055.Emily Blanck. *Tyrannicide: Forging an American Law of Slavery in Revolutionary South Carolina and Massachusetts*

[177] White anti-slavery advocates helped with some petition efforts during this period, but the majority were written by Black people.

[178] Thomas J. Davis "Emancipation Rhetoric, Natural Rights, and Revolutionary New England: A Note on Four Black Petitions in Massachusetts, 1773-1777.", 252.

of grasp.[179] With mounting opposition in the 1770s in densely populated areas like Cambridge and Boston towards slavery, from both white colonists who were becoming morally uneasy with the institution and due to Black people's continual challenges, slavery became less and less common in urban areas, although fugitive enslaved peoples ads and sale ads for enslaved people still appeared in Boston and Cambridge into the 1790s.[180]

By 1780 in Suffolk County, where Boston and Cambridge are, enslaved people were no longer being counted in probates and legal documents as property. Personal negotiations in urban areas appeared to be more fruitful in the securing of emancipation as enslaved people had networks and allies, Black and white, to fall back on and greater means to obtain employment.[181] The involvement of many Black men in the Continental army and the storm of petitions that appeared in Boston and other areas of Massachusetts, only supported these negotiations on the interpersonal level. In addition, as loyalists fled Boston for England, like Henry Bromfield's father-in-law Richard Clarke and two of his brother-in-law's did, they left behind their enslaved people as the Somerset decision of 1773 in England had outlawed slavery in the country.[182]

Despite Black New Englanders limited successes in Massachusetts, the American war for independence nationally upheld slavery because the revolution's goal was not to revolutionize

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[179] Enslaved people in Worcester and Bristol filed a joint petition for freedom in 1767, but the Worcester Convention would not resolve to "abhor" slavery until 1775. Although they would declare that they "abhor the enslaving of any of the human race" Worcester County is where slavery persisted unchallenged, and the county where Henry Bromfield, who enslaved Othello, was elected Justice of the Peace of three times in a row. The convention might have publicly declared their distaste of slavery, but their actions spoke differently. Bernard Bailyn, et al. *Major Problems in the Era of the American Revolution, 1760-1791: Documents and Essays,* 258. Chernoh M Sesay. "The Revolutionary Black Roots of Slavery's Abolition in Massachusetts.", 115-116.

[180] Gloria McCahon Whiting. "Emancipation without the Courts or Constitution: The Case of Revolutionary Massachusetts," 474 endnote 21.

[181] Gloria McCahon Whiting. "Emancipation without the Courts or Constitution: The Case of Revolutionary Massachusetts."

[182] . Jane Kamensky. *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley*. Thomas Fayerweather. Letter to Henry Bromfield in Boston discussing family and Thomas Fayerweather's move to Oxford, May 20th, 1775, 2 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

gendered and racialized markets, which would entail abolishing slavery and racial patriarchal social orders, but instead was fought for white Americans unbridled right of choice and action within the pre-existing gendered and racialized economic markets to secure white economic independence. Slavery was one of the markets white Americans were able to choose to uphold through the consolidation of political power, and the institution would only spread deeper into the country as more land was acquired.[183] Enslaved New Englanders had opened an ideological pathway towards actualizing the abolition of slavery during the American Revolution by presenting slavery as the deprivation of economic independence through stolen labor; Black New Englanders successfully secured reparations, won freedom suits, and secured wages through military service using this argument. Because slavery was nationally upheld in the American Revolution, slavery in practice would persist in Massachusetts post legal emancipation and the conditions of its persistence have roots in the opportunities (or lack thereof) that enslaved New Englanders were offered through their experience during the war years. The lives of Othello, Nan, and Cato in the Bromfield household shed light on this.

iii. Enslaved People, The Bromfield Family, War, and Recovery, 1775-90

A few days after Henry recounted to Flight and Halliday on January 25th, 1775, about how many of his most respected and wealthy clients were not able to pay on their accounts,[184] accruing debt due to the ensuing war, a moment arises in his letter books where he too had to liquidate assets for fast cash. Henry was in debt due to his brother Thomas's mishandling of their business by 1775. Enslaved people, because they were highly liquidable moveable property,

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[183] Alfred W., and Ruth G. Blumrosen. *Slave Nation: How Slavery United the Colonies & Sparked the American Revolution*. Naperville, Ill.: Sourcebooks, 2005.

[184] Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 4.pdf, 16-17.

were often used as collateral and sold at times of distress when money was needed quickly.[185] On February 1st, 1775, he wrote to Martin Brimmer that,

> by Captain Scott, who sailed from hence some time past for South Carolina, I sent a negro boy, whom he has sent back as far as Newport, consigned to the care of Mr. Peter Mumford of that place. The reason Captain Scott of signs for returning him is that the fellow told who appeared to buy him that he was confined half the years with the rheumatism, which is an absolute falsehood, as I don't remember he ever had any complains of that sort during eleven years I have had him. We never had occasion for the doctor to him more than once—this is to request the favor of you to apply to Mr. Mumford for the boy and to dispose of him for the most he will fetch be it what it may. Should you meet him on the road be so kind as to take him back with you to Providence or where you please so that he does not come here—wishing you an agreeable journey—[186]

The "negro boy" Henry refers to is Cato, who was most likely Nan and possibly Othello's child born in 1764.[187] Henry was selling Cato, and not Othello and Nan, because of his gender (male) and age (eleven) would have commanded a high price in a plantation economy slave market and Henry was in a financial bind, needing money quickly, and thus utilized a Black child who he had stripped of financial independence to abolish his own financial dependency. In 1775, Othello and Nan were around thirty years old. Their labor within the Bromfield household as caretakers for Henry's white children, as helping hands to Hannah, and as the caretakers of the domestic sphere had become vital to the Bromfield family, as they had labored and lived with the Bromfield family for over a decade. Cato was only eleven years old and commanded a higher value to the Bromfield family in his market price over his productive labor. Henry tore a part a Black family within his household to facilitate his white family's economic stability. It can only be imagined the emotional toll this took on Nan, who had been a main caretaker for Henry's

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[185] Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom*. The many panics of 1838

[186] Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 4.pdf, 17-18.

[187] If Cato was not their child, it is safe to assume they had a relationship of fictive kin the household, with Nan and Othello acting as parental figures to Cato. Joined together in their enslavement by the Bromfield family, they would have relied on one another for community and companionship.

young children by Margaret and Hannah's only daughter Elizabeth upon her marriage to Henry. Othello and Henry's relationship must have never been the same again.[188]

Although Cato was eventually sold somewhere in Rhode Island, either in Newport or Providence as long as he was kept out of Massachusetts, what appears in this letter is an example of the Black Radical Tradition, a moment of self-advocacy, and resistance of sale through the damage of one's commodity value.[189] Cato understanding that sale in South Carolina would mean sale into a plantation economy household—information Othello or Nan could have passed on to him—which was harsher in material conditions than New England slavery due to the difference in required labor, attempted to stop his sale by telling the man who was going to purchase him that he had been repeatedly ill. This depreciated his commodity value because if he were continually and repeatedly sick with rheumatism, he could not produce the level of goods or equivalent labor to generate a profit that made the cost of subsisting his life worth the original investment.[190] By stating this, no one wanted to buy him. So, Cato was deemed refuse cargo to be sent back to Henry because Henry was not at the slave market to vouch for him. Henry's anger seeps through the letter above, especially through his pronouncement wishing Cato would not end up back in Massachusetts or in his home, implying malice in his sale. He also appears frustrated by his lost earnings due to the Cato's "falsehood" when he says, "dispose of him for

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[188] Cato's sale was obviously talked about extensively as a few months later, Henry Junior would write to his father that "my uncle Phillips I supposed will be desirous to know what is become of Cato, which please to inform me of." Henry's family stayed with William Phillips and his sister Abigail often in Andover, and most likely brought Cato with them on visits. William Phillips obviously grew attached to Cato. Henry Junior Bromfield. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Esq. in which he writes to his father "my uncle Phillips I supposed will be desirous to know what is become of Cato, which please to inform me of", May 30th, 1775, 2 pages; Charlotte Ferry, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[189] Jennifer Morgan, *Reckoning with Slavery.* Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition.* Vincent Brown, *Tacky's Revolt: The Story of an Atlantic Slave War.*

[190] Karl Marx, "The Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret," "The Sale and Purchase of Labour-Power," in *Capital: Volume 1*, 1867, 81-96, 185-196.

the most he will fetch be it what it may." Henry's anger at Cato's act of free will and resistance of sale resulted in Henry wanting Cato disposed of even if he did not reap a profit from it.

There is another way to read this letter as well. On October 25th, 1773, Henry Junior wrote to his sister Sarah from their family home in Boston, who was staying in Newbury, that Cato was extremely ill and had been for some time.[191] This is most likely the one occasion Henry references in his letter that they sent a doctor for Cato. Henry may have only paid for a doctor to see Cato once, when he realized that Cato was too ill to complete his designated work. This does not mean, though, that Cato did not continually suffer from bouts of sickness; Henry may have only found it necessary to call the doctor for his enslaved people when they were near death and expected them to continue on and not complain if they had other pain, or simply did not believe it. Othello and Nan most likely cared for Cato and aided him in his work when he was sick. The racist belief that Black people do not feel pain, has resulted in a long and persistent history—that continues into the United States healthcare system today—of Black people being denied and discriminated against in obtaining basic health care.[192]

Historians have often claimed that New England enslavers sold enslaved people during the American Revolution in the 1770s because they "saw the writing on the wall" that slavery in New England was about to be abolished, and seeking to protect their fortunes and investments, sold enslaved people during the revolution.[193] Yet, during the 19th century enslaved people were used as collateral and liquidable property in many moments of financial crisis in the United

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[191] Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his sister Sally staying in Newbury discussing family and travels mentioning Cato being sick, October 25th, 1773, 4 pages; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 4, 1771-73, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[192] With a history of abuse in American medicine, Black patients struggle for equal access | PBS NewsHour; Segregated Health Care - The Atlantic; Deirdre Benia Cooper-Owen. *Medical Bondage: Race, Gender, and the Origins of American Gynecology*. Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2017.

[193] Jared Ross Hardesty. "Disappearing from Abolitionism's Heartland: The Legacy of Slavery and Emancipation in Boston." Jared Hardesty. *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England*, 147. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860*, 76.

States by enslavers, and the American Revolution was an extreme financial crisis.[194] Enslavers in New England did not sell enslaved people because they thought they were going to lose their legal right to their financial investment without reparation. In fact, when the British empire did abolish slavery in its colonies, it paid reparations not to enslaved people, but white enslavers.[195] Massachusetts enslavers sold enslaved people because the outbreak of war with England resulted in immediate financial burden for many colonists. Currency and valid exchangeable money was in flux as the colonies did not have one uniform mode of money, and due to varying amounts of credit and debt often did not have the physical cash anyways. Enslaved people, for the same reason they were often given as part of women's doweries, were liquidable property that could be sold for fast cash in most markets. Henry Bromfield did not sell all of his enslaved people and he did not offer any of them freedom. He sold Cato in 1775 as his business was mounting towards a financial crisis, and Cato was the perfect age and gender to command a high sale price in plantation economy markets. Henry did not sell Cato because of impending emancipation for enslaved people but did so to make a quick buck. Henry's actions demonstrate that he did not believe that his choice to practice slavery would actually be diminished by the American revolution or the patriot cause.

In 1775, at the outbreak of independence, many of Henry's family members would abandon their Massachusetts assets for England, but Henry, a third generation born American and one at heart who was deeply invested in the political economy of Massachusetts and the other thirteen colonies, became a patriot.[196] In 1775, due to his close relationship with loyalists

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[194] Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom*. Jessica M. Lepler. *The Many Panics of 1837: People, Politics, and the Creation of a Transatlantic Financial Crisis*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

[195] Britain's colonial shame: Slave-owners given huge payouts after abolition (reparationscomm.org)

[196] Thomas Fayerweather. Letter to Henry Bromfield in Boston discussing family and Thomas Fayerweather's move to Oxford, May 20th, 1775, 2 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Thomas Fayerweather. Letter to Henry Bromfield in

like his father-in-law Richard Clarke, who had become the enemy in Massachusetts since his tea had been sunk in Boston Harbor in December of 1773, Henry knew Boston was not a safe place for his family, and sent them to Andover where his sister Abigail and her husband William Phillips, a respected patriot, and parents to the wife of Josiah Quincy, lived and would make sure they were safe.[197] Henry, having had close ties with many wealthy loyalists in Boston and remained steadily neutral in his politics in order to continue trading up until independence, knew that his service in the continental army would be required as a sign of good faith in his loyalty to the patriot cause, and in 1776 was commissioned a Colonel in a Boston regiment. A year later, though, Henry petitioned to be discharged, which was granted by the legislature. He did not send any enslaved people in his place. Henry Junior, Henry's son who was twenty-five in 1776, had also become a merchant, groomed by his father as he had often accompanied him on his business trips to England. Henry Junior in 1776 also joined the continental army, but in an independent company formed at Boston.[198] As Henry Junior traveled the colonies with his regiment from 1776-78, he wrote letters keeping his sister Sarah and his father Henry updated about the

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Boston, May 26th, 1775, 1 page; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Memorandum book with accounts, 2/2/1770-01/15-1802, The Gilder Lehrman Collection, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New York, NY. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/brigi/Downloads/GLC01450.030.01%20(1).pdf Jane Kamensky. *A Revolution in Color: The World of John Singleton Copley*.

[197] Daniel Denison Slade, *The Bromfields.* Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Esq., August 16th, 1775, 4 pages; Andover, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Esq. in Boston in which he mentions the death of Miss Lucy Clarke, September 25th, 1775, 3 pages; Andover, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[198] Henry Bromfield. *Massachusetts U.S., Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolutionary War,* Volume 2. [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004, 562.—Henry Junior's listing is recorded below his father. "Letter From George Washington to Henry Bromfield and Commodore John Manley, 24 June 1776," *Founders Online,* National Archives, [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 5, *16 June 1776–12 August 1776*, ed. Philander D. Chase. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993, pp. 83–84.] https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-05-02-0053. In 1776, Henry was requested to deal with the cargo aboard the captured British ship the *Nancy.*

business climate in the places he was visiting with his regiment such as Philadelphia, Fish kill, Charlestown, and Yorktown.[199]

In 1777 when Henry was discharged, he permanently removed his family and enslaved people to his mansion and one hundred and twenty acres of land in Harvard, MA that he had purchased in 1765, and occasionally used as a summer home for the past decade. In December of 1777, Henry Junior wrote his father from York town telling him to give his best "to the servants."[200] Servants implies that at the very least, Henry brought Nan and Othello against their will to Harvard, if not more enslaved people whose record in the Bromfield home has not been preserved. Harvard is about thirty-five miles from Boston in Worcester County, and during the revolution was a small, agricultural town, that boasted less than fifteen hundred residents, with its main industry being taverns with liquor licenses, mills, a slate quarry, a tannery, and an iron

[199]Sally Bromfield. Letter to her brother Henry Bromfield, March 11th, 1777, Collection #: GLC01450.803.02, Gilder Lehrman Collection, Online. to Henry Bromfield | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History & GLC01450.803.02.pdf. Sally Bromfield. Letter to her brother Henry Bromfield, April 19th, 1777, Boston, Collection #:GLC01450.803.04, Gilder Lehrman Collection, Online. to Henry Bromfield | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History &GLC01450.803.04.pdf Sally Bromfield. Letter to her brother Henry Bromfield, May 14th, 1777, Boston, Collection #: GLC01450.803.03, Gilder Lehrman Collection, Online. to Henry Bromfield | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History & GLC01450.803.03.pdf Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his sister Sally Bromfield, 1776, 4 pages; no location, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Substantial letter to his father Henry Bromfield in Boston, April 11th, 1777, 4 pages; Philadelphia, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his sister Sally Bromfield, April 17th, 1777, 4 pages; Philadelphia, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his mother Hannah Bromfield in Harvard, November 3rd, 1777, 2 pages; Fish Kill, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Esq. in Harvard, November 13th, 1777, 4 pages; Fish Kill Landing, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his sister Sally Bromfield, January 28th, 1778, 4 pages; Charlestown, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Esq. in which he also signs to give his best to "the servants", December 8th, 1777, 2 pages; York Town, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[200] Daniel Denison Slade, *The Bromfields.* Henry Stedman Nourse. *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts.* Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Esq. in which he also signs to give his best to "the servants", December 8th, 1777, 2 pages; York Town, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

house.[201] The road to the mansion was shaded by elms and sat in the middle of the town, about a half mile from the town church and cemetery. A few months after his discharge and once Henry had secured his family in Harvard, Henry took a trip to Virginia to check on his tobacco investments but found them untenable and would resolve with his brother and business partner Thomas, to put a hold on their Virginian Tobacco business.[202] Henry, frustrated by the War's tampering with his business pursuits, wrote to his friend Josiah Willard Gibbs in Hartford, who advised Henry that the patriot military success would alter their public affairs and their business and therefore no business plans could be made in advance of the present time.[203] Henry thus, in the late 1770s, began investing in the infrastructural improvement of his mansion in Harvard to pass the time.[204] There are no records that exist detailing how Othello and Nan adjusted or

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[201]Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity,* 20. Robert C. Anderson. *Directions of a Town: a History of Harvard, Massachusetts.*

[202] Multiple Authors. Letters in the Adams Family Papers Digital Edition from 1770-94 make mention or reference to members of the Bromfield family, notably Henry Bromfield (Esq. and Jr.), Daniel Dennison Rogers, and Abigail Bromfield Rogers. 1770-94. The Adams Papers Digital Edition, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Adams Papers Digital Edition - Massachusetts Historical Society (masshist.org)—letter from Abigail Adams to John Adams, 1777, Adams Papers Digital Edition - Massachusetts Historical Society (masshist.org) Thomas Bromfield. Letter to his brother Henry Bromfield Esq. discussing putting on hold their tobacco business in Virginia, in Boston, April 4th, 1778, 3 pages; Williamsburg, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[203] Josiah Willard Gibbs. Letter to Henry Bromfield discussing how patriot military success will alter their public affairs and their business and how no business plans can be made in advance now, October 6th, 1777; Harford, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 6, 1775-79, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[204] Bill charging Henry Bromfield for services performed on his house by Richard Hunewell, 1785- 86, Harvard, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August 1786, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bill of services rendered that Henry Bromfield paid John Daley for, Harvard, February 19th, 1779, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1771-81, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.Bill of services rendered that Henry Bromfield paid John Daley for, Harvard, October 8th, 1779, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1771-81, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bill of services rendered that Henry Bromfield paid John Daley for, Harvard, March 31st, 1780, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1771-81, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bill selling wood and others to Sam Dillaway by Henry Bromfield, June 5th, 1786, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August 1786, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.Photograph of the Bromfield Mansion in Harvard, MA, ca. 1850-1854, visible image is 9 x 12 cm, collodion on glass in brass mat and preserver, Call #: Photo.2.018, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Series of Bills charging Henry Bromfield for services rendered by Thomas Green, 1786, Harvard, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August 1786, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. James Tucker. Henry Bromfield's Bill for Ironwork, 1785-76, Harvard, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-May 1786, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. James Tucker. Henry

labored in Harvard, but now extremely isolated and tasked with facilitating a smooth transition for the Bromfield family into rural life during a time of war must have been excessively taxing, especially in the wake of Cato's sale. As enslaved people in Boston and Cambridge were winning legal emancipation through petitions and military service, Othello and Nan were isolated in the Bromfield mansion, stripped of opportunities and movement that metropolis offered.

The American Revolution doomed Henry's business firm with his brother Thomas in London, the Bromfield and Bromfield firm. For the remainder of Henry and Thomas's lives they held debt from the company, mainly stemming from Thomas's mishandling of his side of the business. Many of their accounts from the 1770s took decades to be paid off; and the debts Henry and Thomas accrued mainly stemmed from not paying back creditors who had supported their chartering of goods and vessels to Boston.[205] Their quarrels over debt only escalated into

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Bromfield's Bill for Ironwork, July 27th and August 11th, 1786, Harvard,Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August1786, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[205] Of note are discussions of the 1776 flaxseed shipment headed by his brother John Bromfield in Newburyport that spelled financial ruin for Henry's younger brother: Josiah Quincy. *Memoir of John Bromfield*. Cambridge: Metcalf and Company, printers to the University, 1850. Memoir of John Bromfield : Quincy, Josiah, 1772-1864 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive There are also discussions of debts from the tea that was thrown over during the Boston Tea Party; the events of the Boston tea party are discussed in Henry's letter book at the Massachusetts Historical Society ranging from the dates 1773-75. Account summary from 1770-1774 of Henry and Thomas Bromfield with Tim Newell paid closed on November 13th, 1784, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: October-December 1784, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Henry Bromfield Senior. Letter to Mr. Enoch Husley about debts owed by his brother Thomas from their failed business firm in America and England that he has become responsible for, August 3rd, 1784, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August 1784, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Henry Bromfield Senior. Receipts paying off debts from the failed Thomas and Henry Bromfield Firm, August 1784, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August 1784, 5 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Henry Bromfield Senior. Receipts of paid debts to former ship captains including Job Prince, Nathanial Carter, and William Mackay on behalf of Thomas and Henry Bromfield, 1784, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September 1784, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Henry Bromfield Senior. Memorandum of Certificates burdened, estimated 1789, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-July 1789, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Henry Bromfield Senior. Copy of a letter to his son Henry Bromfield Junior in London concerning his brother John Bromfield's 1776 flaxseed account, July 15th, 1789, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-July 1789, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Thomas Bromfield. Letter to his brother Henry Bromfield at Harvard mentioning accounts during the 1770s, March 7th, 1786, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-May 1786, 9 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Thomas

the 1780s but dissolved into the 1790s as Henry was able to economically rebound through a variety of tactics.

Sarah Bromfield wrote to her brother regarding their father's debts and business troubles:

> our parents present situation is indeed a very sad one—but there is hope existing in my mind that it will be better—a very sad thing to be so fond of perishable riches—to add a quotation—"they take things and fly off away"—much easier to preach than practice – acted he. It is a source of many evils—it hardens the mind against the loud call of humanity—and shuts the ear of reason from the suffering innocent—I wish my father had to deal with people whose minds were not hindered by the said paper.[206]

Bromfield. Letter to Waddell Cunningham in Belfast concerning a shipment of Flaxseed sent from Newburyport in partnership with his brothers Henry and John in 1774, 1789, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-July 1789, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Thomas and Henry Bromfield. Account ledger of voyages with Joseph Coolidge from 1772-1775, Account Cleared on October 30th, 1783, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1782, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston**.** Henry and Thomas Bromfield. Account statement with John Brown Esq. from 1768-1773 of ship cargo resolved in 1784, April 15th, 1784, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: March-April 1784, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Chester, John Chester. Letter to Henry Bromfield Esq. concerning an account from 1766, September 24th, 1795, Wethersfield, Harvard Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1794-95, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.Court order issued in Boston by Mr. Hubbard charging Thomas Bromfield in London with debts, October 28th, 1789, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: August-October 1789, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. John Bromfield's account statements from 1775-1776 with Waddell Cunningham particularly regarding a 1776 shipment of Flaxseed to Massachusetts, January 29th, 1789, Belfast, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-July 1789, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. John Brown Esq. account records with Henry Bromfield from 1768-1773, added in before John Brown is 'estate of' and after is shorthand for 'deceased', account close July 31st, 1789, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-July 1789, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.Warrant issued to the Sherriff of Worcester County, Massachusetts from New York City on behalf of John Rogers Merchant obtaining debts from Henry Bromfield, 1784, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September 1784, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Henry Bromfield. Letter to his brother Thomas in England lecturing him about how his bad money dealings and debt have affected him, his family, and son, and discussing the correct conduct of a merchant, July 3rd, 1783, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 7, 1780-83, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield. Letter to his son Henry Bromfield Junior in London discussing his business in debt, September 17th, 1784, 8 pages; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 8, 1784, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield and Isaac Clarke. Series of letters about recovering tea debts from 1772-74, 1790, 8 pages; Harvard, MA and Montreal, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 11, 1790-96, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard about business and settling business accounts, April 26th, 1784, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: March-April 1784, 5 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[206] Sally Bromfield. Letter to her brother Henry Bromfield Junior in London discussing her opinions on her parents and other personal matters, February 17th, 1784, 4 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Records: Eulogies and Letters, Call # MSS C 4266, 1 folder, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. "White supremacy does not demand deep conviction. Ruthless self-interest, not sincere belief, is the signature feature of the doctrine. It finds its greatest expression, and most devastating effect, in the determination to state, live by, and act on the basis of ideas one knows are untrue when doing so will yield important benefits and privileges that one does not care to relinquish." Annette Gordon Reed. *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family*, 119.

Sarah found her father's preoccupation with generating wealth troublesome. When she says it "it hardens the mind against the loud call of humanity—and shut the ear of reason from the suffering innocent" appears to be in reference to her father's continual holding of Othello and Nan in enslavement. Othello and Nan's enslaved, unpaid, and forced labor became more vital in the Bromfield household as Henry dealt with his increasing revolutionary debt, as they no longer had disposable income to spend on white wage labor for domestic duties. Sarah's hope in her parent's bettering their economic condition was well placed, as Henry was able to rebound by taking his father-in-law Richard Clarke's advice that no matter how dire Henry's prospects were, he always had his family to fall back on.[207] Family became essential for Henry's recuperation of his wealth and enslaved labor allowed the Bromfield household to function at its former social status despite money troubles.

Henry hatched a scheme, and it involved his two oldest children: Henry Junior and Abigail. First, having trained Henry Junior as a merchant for the past two decades, he sent Henry Junior in 1781 on a European tour to renew his relationships with his old trade contacts. Henry knew that he could not, due to the amount of debt he had to assume from his failed firm with Thomas, create a new firm with a new partner, but his son could.[208] Then he married his daughter

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[207] Richard Clarke. Letter to Henry Bromfield Esq. in Boston discussing his thoughts on Henry's hardships and implying the use of marriage connections to brighten his prospects, March 5th, 1783, 5 pages; Leicester, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 7, 1780-83, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Richard Clarke. Letter to his son in law Henry Bromfield in Harvard discussing how he will aid Henry Bromfield Junior and asking him favors, July 1783; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 7, 1780-83, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[208] Henry Bromfield Junior. Copy of a letter sent to his father Henry Bromfield Esquire in Harvard, June 5th, 1781, Amsterdam, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1771-81, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Henry Bromfield (Junior: 1751-1837). Letter to his sister Sally, March 30th, 1782, Amsterdam, Netherlands, Collection #: GLC01450.803.06, Gilder Lehrman Collection, Online. to Sally Bromfield | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History & GLC01450.803.06.pdf Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his Sister Sally Bromfield March 30th, 1782, 4 pages; Amsterdam, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 7, 1780-83, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield. Letter to his sister Sally Bromfield in Harvard, November 30th, 1782, 3 pages; Amsterdam, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 7, 1780-83, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his

Abigail to Daniel Denison Rogers in 1781, an up-and-coming Boston merchant whom Henry respected and due to his enduring relationship with Daniel most likely saw as a kindred spirit.[209] Daniel and Abigail then embarked on a European honeymoon, which then turned into a ten year settlement in London.[210] Daniel and Henry Junior formed the Bromfield and Rogers firm in 1783. Henry Junior permanently removed to London in 1787 to marry an English woman and for his new business with Daniel. Daniel acted as liaison between London and Boston for the next three decades, and after 1791 made Boston his permanent home.[211] Their business arrangement mirrored the one Henry and Thomas had had before the revolution, but this time it was successful. Henry then became an agent of the Bromfield and Rogers firm, acting as their attorney and disseminating their goods throughout the interior of Massachusetts as he was now

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brother-in-law Daniel Denison Rogers, May 16th, 1783, 3 pages; Bordeaux, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 7, 1780-83, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield Junior. Copies of letters sent to his father Henry Bromfield Esquire in Harvard listed with date, location, page length: October 14th, 1782, Amsterdam, 8 pages; March 7th, 1783, Bordeaux, 4 pages; Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1782, 8 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston**.** Henry Bromfield Junior. Two duplicate letters to Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard from his son, April 7th and 12th, 1784, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: March-April 1784, 6 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard, November 19th, 1785, New York, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September-December 1785, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield in Harvard, November 12th, 1788, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1787- 88, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[209] Two Newspaper clippings: one reporting on the burning of the Bromfield Mansion in 1855, the second details Daniel Denison Slade's speech "A Boston Merchant of 1791" on Daniel Denison Rogers at the Bostonian Society, in 1891, Boston, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 9, folder 9 Printed Material, No Date, page, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[210] Henry Bromfield. Letter to his son-in-law Daniel Dennison Rogers in Amsterdam, October 2nd, 1782, 4 pages; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 7, 1780-83, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Abigail Bromfield Rogers. Letter to her sisters Sally and Elizabeth in Harvard, MA, November 9th, 1782, 4 pages; Brussels, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 7, 1780-83, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield. Letter to his daughter Abigail Bromfield Rogers in London, February 8th, 1791, 2 pages; Harvard, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 11, 1790-96, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Abigail had her portrait painted by her father's brother-in-law, John Singleton Copley, in 1784: John Singelton Copley (American). *Abigael Bromfield Rogers (Mrs. Daniel Denison Rogers) (1753-1791),* 1784, England. Object number: 1977.179, Harvard Art Museum's collections, Cambridge, Massachusetts. https://hvrd.art/o/227926.

[211] Daniel Denison Slade, *The Bromfields.*

based in Harvard in Worcester county.[212] Henry had found a way to return to his original roots of local sales. Henry also reinvested in Virginian tobacco in the 1780s and in 1785 Daniel Denison Rogers, through his extended family, came into an investment opportunity to be a settlement financier of Belleville, Virginia, mirroring the original business model of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Henry Bromfield also invested alongside Daniel.[213] Hannah, Henry's wife, wrote to Daniel a few months after she had lamented to her stepdaughter, and his wife, Abigail, that "as to Mr. Bromfield's affairs they remain at a stand. The subject is so disagreeable that I must refer

[212] Henry Bromfield Senior. Series of receipts charging Benjamin Kimball for goods, particularly liquor, May 1788-August 1789, Harvard, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: August-October 1789, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.Henry Bromfield Esq. Account with Rogers and Bromfield, 1783-1786, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-May 1786, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Inventory listing out Henry Bromfield's account with Rogers and Bromfield, a merchant firm run by his son and son-in-law, November 15th, 1786, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September-December 1786, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Rogers and Bromfield. Account statement from 1783-84 for Henry Bromfield Esq. with his son and son and law's business Rogers and Bromfield, 1783-1784, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: March-April 1784, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Multiple Creators/Signers. Legal document granting power of attorney to Henry Bromfield Senior to procure debts in New England for the firm Rogers and Bromfield ran and granted by Daniel Dennison Rogers and Henry Bromfield Junior, London 1784, in Miscellaneous Papers from 1694-1792, Call #: N-1939, 7 pages, Box 2, One Folder, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

[213] Henry Bromfield Senior. Letter to William Carr Esq. in Dumfries, Virginia concerning his account and the selling of goods, particularly Virginian tobacco, July 26th, 1784, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August 1784, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.Daniel Dennison Rogers. Papers relating to his investment in the Belleville, Virginia settlement, January 7th, 1802, 1 page; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 4, Folder: 3, Wills, deeds, and other documents, 1791-1813, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Daniel Dennison Rogers. Papers relating to his investment in the Belleville, Virginia settlement and articles of agreement with Belleville Settlers, February 2, June 18th, November 9th, 1785, 24 pages; Virginia, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 4, Folder: 2, Wills, deeds, and other documents, 1772-1785, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Daniel Denison Rogers and Thomas Gilman. Series of documents related to Daniel Denison Rogers investment in the Belleville Virginia Settlement, 1799, 21 pages; Belleville, Marietta, Philadelphia, Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder: 14, 1799, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Daniel Denison Rogers and Thomas Gilman. Series of documents related to Daniel Denison Rogers investment in the Belleville Virginia Settlement, 1800-1802; Belleville, Marrietta, New York, New London, 21 pages; Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 15, 1800-1802, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Thomas Gilman. Series of documents/letters addressed to Daniel Denison Rogers concerning the Belleville Settlement, 1798, 28 pages; Belleville and Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 13, 1798, Yale University Manuscripts, New Haven. George Dilbeare Avery. Letter to Daniel Denison Rogers about his investment in the Belleville, Virginia settlement, September 29th, 1797, 4 pages; Belleville, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 12, 1797, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.Archives, New Haven.

you to your papa's letter to Mr. Rogers for particulars."[214] A few months after she wrote this to Abigail in her letter to Daniel, Hannah wanted to express her gratitude in his aiding in their financial recovery, as Hannah had grown up wealthy and came to the marriage with enslaved people, she most likely expected certain financial comforts from her husband: "accept dear sir my acknowledgements for the part you have so generously taken in Mr. Bromfield's affairs by his great exertions they are now brought so near a close that we feel our selves again restored to tranquility and this believe me is the most this life can give."[215] Henry had been able to use his grown children to regain financial independence and escape creditors, preserving the status and way of life he had created in the pre-revolution era. Selling Cato had been an essential piece of the early puzzle, and it effectively robbed Othello and Nan from actualizing these same opportunities of futurity and preservation through their children. Nan had spent much of her life carrying and raising Henry's children alongside Hannah but was unable to reap any of those benefits. The revolution exposed the uncertainty of the newly emerging global capitalism, but Henry's recovery exemplified the implicit inequalities of racial capitalism that the war for independence ultimately upheld and protected.

In 1783, as Quock Walker won his freedom in Worcester County, Nan died. Elizabeth, Henry and Hannah's only child, was twenty and entering society. Nan, who had most likely been Elizabeth's nurse and nanny since her birth, and having entered the Bromfield family through

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[214]The letter Hannah refers to that was sent by Henry to Daniel is not preserved in any archives. Hannah Clarke Bromfield. Letter to her stepdaughter Abigail Bromfield Rogers addressed by her nickname Nabby while on her honeymoon in Europe and discussing how her father's business debts are stressing him a lot, September 26th, 1783, Harvard, Rogers-Mason-Cabot Family Papers, 1773-1940, Call # Ms. N-76, box 1, folder 1, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[215] Hannah Clarke Bromfield. Letter to her son in law Daniel Denison Rogers, October 31st, 1784, Harvard, Rogers-Mason-Cabot Family Papers, 1773-1940, Call # Ms. N-76, box 1, folder 1, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston

Hannah Clarke, was charged with accompanying Elizabeth to Boston. Henry wrote Abigail on Christmas Eve,

> your sister Betsey[216] went to Boston about 7 or 8 weeks past on a visit designing to stay at your aunt Bromfield for about a month, but after being there ten days she was seized very suddenly with the scarlet fever. Who has proved very mortal, but thro' the great goodness of god her life was spared to us—when a young woman who Mrs. Bromfield brought up—by the name of Nanny who you must remember—who landed your sister thro' her illness, from perfect health was seized with this fever and died in three days—what reason for thankfulness your dear sister was spared us, your aunt Bromfield's children have been ill with fever but are recovered.[217]

After ten days in Boston, Elizabeth succumbed to scarlet fever, and it was Nan's jobs to nurse her back to health. Everyone else in the household most likely kept their distance, but due to Nan's most likely vigilant and kind care was near Elizabeth's bedside often, attending to her every need. It is no surprise that Nan succumbed to scarlet fever as well. Nan was most likely exhausted from her constant care of Elizabeth and whatever household tasks were thrust upon her. At thirty-nine years old, Nan died enslaved by the Bromfield family. How little Henry regarded the enslaved people whose labor he relied on is evident in his mainly accounting for Betsey's recovery by the grace of God, and then acting surprised that Nan died while caring for her. From the progression of events he describes, scarlet fever was extremely contagious. Henry by saying, "when a young woman who Mrs. Bromfield brought up—by the name of Nanny who you must remember—" attempts to obscure the relationship of slavery, where Nan was bought, not 'brought up.' She was not raised as a family member; she was raised to serve the family. Hannah was twelve when her father Richard bought Nan at age two in 1746, but Hannah did not

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[216] All of the Bromfield girls were referred to as shorthand versions of their names before their marriages: Elizabeth was Betsey, Sarah was Sally, Abigail was Nabby.

[217] Henry Bromfield. Letter to his daughter Abigail Bromfield Rogers in which he recounts how Nanny (Nan), an enslaved woman, nursed his youngest daughter Elizabeth back to health from scarlet fever to die three days later of it, December 24th, 1783, 4 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 7, 1780-83, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

raise Nan, Nan was raised by the other enslaved women that Richard owned and trained to be an enslaved waiting lady to Hannah and accompanied her into her marriage with Hannah for the same function. Her name being Nan, most likely evolved into Nanny during Hannah's marriage to Henry as her labor role in the house took on that of a Nanny. Abigail, without a doubt, remembered Nan.

Nan's death was not the only casualty in the Bromfield household during the 1780s. In August of 1785, Hannah Clarke Bromfield also died after fighting an unnamed 'choleric' for about five or six months.[218] Towards the end of her death, it was summer, and she was bed ridden, could not move, continually shaking, and sweating in hot/cold flashes repeatedly. Towards the end, she mainly subsisted on strawberries alone. Harvard was and is an area plentiful of wild raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, and blackberries. In her last month, Mrs. Warren, a relative, brought her enslaved woman Polly to aid in caring for Hannah, as Nan, whom Hannah had relied on, die two years earlier. Elizabeth, in a letter detailing the last few months of Hannah's life, wrote to Abigail that,

> Polly was with us the whole time the last month, she made a most excellent as well as faithful nurse; mama was extremely attached to her. May she be rewarded by that being who ever looks with complacency upon the acts of benevolence and goodness—she desired me to return you many thanks for the kind token of your remembrance.[219]

Henry was defeated by Hannah's death and so were all of his children. She had been an exemplary mother according to Abigail.[220] It had been Hannah's desire toward the end "that papa

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[218] The Eulogy of Hannah Clarke Bromfield, August 25th, 1785, various local publications, Rogers-Mason-Cabot Family Papers, 1773-1940, Call # Ms. N-76, box 1, folder 2, 7 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
[219] Elizabeth Bromfield. Letter to her sister Abigail Bromfield Rogers on her honeymoon in Europe recounting their mother, Hannah Clarke Bromfield's, death and last months including her funeral in Harvard, December 14th, 1785, Andover, Rogers-Mason-Cabot Family Papers, 1773-1940, Call # Ms. N-76, box 1, folder 2, 6 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
[220] Abigail (Bromfield) Rogers. Letter to her sister Sally Bromfield in Harvard while on her honeymoon discussing family, October 2nd, 1785, 4 pages; London, Bromfield Family Records: Eulogies and Letters, Call # MSS C 4266, 1 folder, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston.

would move to Boston before winter, knowing it would be extremely dull for him and Betsey to remain at Harvard."[221] Betsey did not remain at Harvard but went to Boston and then Andover to stay with their middle sister, Sarah, who had recently married the Reverend Eliphat Pearson, who was the headmaster at Andover Academy, during her stepmother's sickness. Henry built a house on School street in Boston for Elizabeth in 1786, who was now twenty-three years old and unmarried.[222] But Henry had designed to retire in Harvard, and although he would write of boredom and the want of his family into the 19th century in letters to his brother and children, Harvard had become his and Othello's home after the revolution. In the same letter he told his daughter he had desired to retire in Harvard, and how dearly he missed Hannah, he also discussed how he would be selling the sundries Daniel, Abigail's husband, had sent him.[223] Hannah was also buried in the town center cemetery, as she had died in August, and due to the extreme heat, they had to bury her body the same day before it began to gruesomely decompose. Because of this, none of their Boston friends or family attended the funeral, but the entire town of Harvard followed Hannah's coffin and the Bromfield's down the walk of hooded elms towards the center cemetery.[224] No headstone for Hannah exists in the cemetery in Harvard,

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[221] Ibid.

[222] Receipt for Henry Bromfield paying Thomas Dunton for the labor/work performed by individuals broken down by week and number of days worked from 1785-86, individuals are only listed by their first names, August 1788, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1787-88, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Receipts for the parts, labor, and construction of Henry Bromfield Senior's building of a house on School Street for his daughter Elizabeth in which he lists out paying various persons who are listed by name when they are men, two unnamed women are listed as paid for labor and an unnamed "negro man", as well as Thomas Dunton's 'man', and it also includes a bill to Sam Dillaway, September 5th, 1785-January 4th, 1786, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September-December 1785, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Receipt of items used for construction for Henry Bromfield bought from Sam & Step Salisbury for 1785-1786, June 5th, 1787, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1787-88, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[223]Henry Bromfield. Letter to his daughter Abigail Bromfield Rogers in London recounting his wife's death, why he has chosen to live in Harvard and not Boston, March 12th, 1786, 4 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 1, Folder: 9, 1785-86, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[224] Elizabeth Bromfield. Letter to her sister Abigail Bromfield Rogers on her honeymoon in Europe recounting their mother, Hannah Clarke Bromfield's, death and last months including her funeral in Harvard, December 14th, 1785, Andover, Rogers-Mason-Cabot Family Papers, 1773-1940, Call # Ms. N-76, box 1, folder 2, 6 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

despite her body being buried there. Henry seemed to have had a deeper emotional attachment to his second wife, although Margaret had borne him most of his children. Henry probably saw Harvard as his true home because Hannah was buried there.

By 1785, Othello and Henry had both experienced extreme losses. In the winter of 1785, the time of year Henry was devoid of visitors due to weather, he wrote to his brother Thomas, who he had begun to patch things up with, "I am now solus here, except a negro man."[225] Here, he is referring to Othello.

Section III. 1780-1820

i. Defining and Practicing Black Freedom in Massachusetts, 1780-1820

Legal emancipation in Massachusetts did not in its design guarantee the actualization of lived social and political freedom or the dissolution of dependent financial relationships with white people or institutions for all Black New Englanders in Massachusetts post 1790.[226] The

[225] The actual letter that this quotation is taken from is not preserved in any archive. It appears that after Daniel Denison Slade cited the letter in his genealogical history of his family *The Bromfields* that he either destroyed the letter, or he purposely never donated it and the letter is sitting in some descendants attic or basement.

[226] This was a consequence of the fact that American political independence that resulted in the creation of the United States of America in 1783, upheld slavery as an institution nationally and legislated access to government in accordance with racial patriarchy. This is exemplified in the case study of the Bromfield family's business schemes and recovery presented at the end of the second section: "Freedom did not suddenly confer citizenship on the Negro. Emancipation, although enthusiastically welcomed by the northern slave, had its limitations. Until the post-Civil War era, in fact, most northern whites would maintain a careful distinction between granting Negroes legal protection - a theoretical right to life, liberty, and property - and political and social equality. No statute or court decision could immediately erase from the public mind, North or South, that long and firmly held conviction that the African race was inferior and therefore incapable of being assimilated politically, socially, and most certainly physically with the dominant and superior white society." For instance, legal emancipation did not guarantee voting rights to Black men in Massachusetts (no women won voting rights post revolution, except for white unmarried women in New Jersey for only a decade, before it was repealed). Voting rights in Massachusetts were defined legally by age, gender, and class, but did not formally include race. Black men were often "designedly omitted from the tax lists and thus blocked from voting" and white "voters drive them from the polls at an election, and scorn and spit on them." It would not be until the 1840s that Black men began to be counted in elections in Massachusetts, not until 1850 that Black men would serve as jurors (in Worcester County, which was due to the large Black community there and the Quock Walker victory of 1783), and not until 1860 that the state, along with four others in New England, formally granted Black men's voting rights. Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961, 15-16, 91-92, 94, 103-104. Massachusetts put back

American Revolution had not resulted in the dissolution of racial patriarchy and it's dependent structures, as the design of American independence protected white American's freedom of choice, access, and activity within already existing gendered and racialized domestic and global markets.[227] Local Black victories in Massachusetts were conditional and specific to the, now state's, culture that had been developing over the last two centuries.[228] To actualize lived freedoms, Black New Englanders first had to achieve financial independence which was not

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into effect in 1800 an interracial marriage ban that was a law in colonial Massachusetts. Increased laws in Massachusetts post 1790 and into the 19th century increased formal, white imposed, legal segregation on Black people, usually stemming out of white fear and racism. Vagrancy laws and 'disturbing the public peace' laws were also passed to jail Black people and keep them out of the local populace. A study in 1826 "revealed that Massachusetts Negroes comprised on seventy-fourth of the population but contributed one-sixth of the state's prisoners." (Leon F. Litwack *North of Slavery,* 95.) Black people's mass incarceration in this country also has a history in Massachusetts, not just in the post-civil war south. Jared Hardesty. *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England*, epilogue: The Problems of Emancipation, 134. "Boston's African School was established in the late 1780s but did not receive public funding until 1820." Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860*, 188, 107, 122, 190.

[227] The United States Constitution largely protected slavery, and into the 19th century many more slave states would be admitted into the union and increasingly after the admission of Maine in 1819 to preserve the equal numbers of free and slave states, "every state that came in the Union before the end of the Civil War confined the suffrage to whites." Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*, 31-32. Derrick Bell. *Race, Racism, and American Law*. 2nd ed. Boston: Little, Brown, 1980, specifically Chapter 1: American Racism and the Uses of History. David Waldstreicher. *Slavery's Constitution: From Revolution to Ratification*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2009. In most Northern states, gradual emancipation laws were enacted that kept Black people in bondage in the North up until 1865; Massachusetts did not adopt gradual emancipation, but did adopt many other restrictive laws to curb Black immigration to the state (such as the 1788 law that required Black immigrants to Massachusetts to provide paperwork proving their freedom and citizenship to another state, which was nearly impossible) and ways to disenfranchise Black people economically and politically: Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860*. Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*, 70. John Wood Sweet. *Bodies Politic: Negotiating Race in the American North, 1730-1830*, 304, 313-315, 344. James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton's *In Hope of Liberty: Culture Community and Protest Among Northern Free Black, 1700-1860,* 83.

[228] "Massachusetts abolitionists- Negro and white - set out to convince an apathetic and frequently hostile public that a consistent stand against southern slavery involved the full recognition of the rights of local Negroes…Although the Negro made substantial gains in Massachusetts and scored sporadic successes elsewhere, his general political and social position remained unaltered." White ally-ship in Massachusetts was usually conditional, and many abolitionists did not believe in full equality (see example in *North of Slavery* of white abolitionist schools treating Black students in a segregated and unequal manner, 151) White anti-slavery advocates pushed respectability politics in order to control Black populations and communities within white cultural standards. When this did meet white standards, many white anti-slavery activists began to push for deportation and colonization claiming that Black people could never truly integrate and presented an obstacle to white wage labor. Slavery had devalued the wage of labor of free Black people in New England due to racist prejudices, which naturalized wage inequality in the emerging capitalist industrial economy in Massachusetts. Most Black New Englanders pushed back against colonization efforts and by 1831, most white anti-slavery advocates were anti-colonization. Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*, 18-19, 28, 105, 112, 151. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860*, 188, 121, 190. Jared Hardesty. *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England*, epilogue: The Problems of Emancipation.

guaranteed in emancipation.[229] Persistent social and thus economic inequalities posed barriers to the actualization of financial independence for many Black Bay Staters, and many Black people in Massachusetts were caught up in the warning-out-system, placed in poor houses, or de facto slavery relationships.[230] Thus, Black Bay Staters, who were not able to immigrate or did not want to immigrate, set about developing ways in which to achieve lived freedoms away from white benefaction.[231] Identifying these methods of practicing Black New England freedom ideology also shed light on the various ways in which former legal enslavers, like Henry Bromfield, perpetuated de facto slavery in rural areas of Massachusetts.

If enslaved people could not financially provide for themselves and families, they could fall back into dependent relationships with their towns, governments, white community members, or former enslavers.[232] Because of the not-so distant past of slavery, that relationship could result in the performance of unpaid labor for subsistence.[233] This was why reparations

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[229] This was why in most freedom suits Black litigants were also suing for reparations for their stolen labor while enslaved, which the court often granted, but this was done on a case by case, individual by individual basis. See: Roy E. Finkenbine "Belinda's Petition: Reparations for Slavery in Revolutionary Massachusetts." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (2007): 95–104. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4491599. William Dillon Pierson. *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England*

[230] Ruth Wallis Herndon. *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001. James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton's *In Hope of Liberty: Culture Community and Protest Among Northern Free Black, 1700-1860,* 101. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England.* Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts.*

[231] Black New Englanders did not want to immigrate for a variety of reasons. Many had been born in Massachusetts and/or the colonies and viewed them as the only home they'd known and had family and history there. Many Black people in Massachusetts were enlivened by the abolition of slavery in Massachusetts and other victories towards equality and wanted to stay because they had fought hard to call it home during the revolutionary era and did not want to give up. Also, although overcoming racist interpersonal interactions would take centuries, many Black New Englanders saw hope in their legal and constitutional wins within Massachusetts and felt their citizenship would be protected. Others simply did not want to travel, as the known was safer than the unknown. Other's may have had traumatic memories of the middle passage. James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton's *In Hope of Liberty: Culture Community and Protest Among Northern Free Black, 1700-1860.* Nell, William C. (William Cooper), and Harriet Beecher Stowe. *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution: With Sketches of Several Distinguished Colored Persons.* Boston: R.F. Wallcut, 1855. Revolutionary war service would be used as evidence of Black people's inherent Americanness and right to equality and full citizenship in the nation.

[232] Ruth Wallis Herndon. *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England*. Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts.*

[233] Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts.*

were crucial, and Black New Englanders continually sued for damages against former enslavers in their freedom suites of the 1770s-90s. Formerly enslaved people knew that the labor that slavery had stolen from them had also stolen the creation of their wealth, and they were entailed to those earnings if they were to become full members of society.[234] The most famous case for reparations that won in Massachusetts was by Belinda in 1783. Belinda had been enslaved by Isaac Royall, the largest and most wealthy slave owner in Massachusetts, who operated a plantation in Medford. Isaac was a royalist and fled in 1775 and his property was confiscated by the state, but the enslaved people he left behind were left to their own devices and released from bondage. Isaac Royall died in England and Belinda knew Isaac had written in his will that upon his death she would receive her freedom and a pension from his estate. Belinda "aged, poor, and living on the margins of society while also caring for an invalid daughter, Prine, who had accompanied her to Boston," needed money and was unable to make a living due to her age and had been left with no financial restitution for all her years of labor, so she applied for a yearly pension of thirty dollars as reparation. In her petition she presented her case as she was owed financial reparation from the Royall estate because her labor and life had been stolen from Africa in order to generate their wealth. The court awarded Belinda her pension, but she was back in court in 1787 as the estate stopped paying.[235] The freedom suits of Quock Walker (1781-1783) in Worcester County and Brom and Mumbet (Elizabeth Freeman) in Berkshire county also ended in a small award of financial damages to Quock, Brom, and Mumbet. The court set the precedent

[234] Reparations, and the forcible paying from an enslaver's estate can be categorized as 'dependency', but reparations were viewed in the court as suing for personal damages, which in the legal system is not seen as a state of dependency but a granting of justice. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England*, 99.

[235] Roy E. Finkenbine "Belinda's Petition: Reparations for Slavery in Revolutionary Massachusetts." (quotation from page 1) Catherine Manegold. *Ten Hills Farm: The Forgotten History of Slavery in the North*, chapter 18.).Daina Ramey Berry and Kali Nicole Gross. "Chapter Three: Belinda's Petition for Independence, 1760-1820." In *A Black Women's History of the United States*, 40-64. Boston: Beacon Press, 2020.

that if applied, formerly enslaved people were entitled to financial restitution. But damages were and would only be awarded on a case by case, freedom suit by freedom suit basis.[236] Even when the amount of reparation was small, it still gave Black people something to begin with.

Freedom suits were not the only Black petitions in Massachusetts that exemplified Black New Englanders understood that actualizing freedom and citizenship in the new nation meant securing financial independence. In Dartmouth Massachusetts in 1780 Paul Cuffee, and six other Black disenfranchised taxpayers, filed a petition to exempt them from paying taxes. These Black Bay staters stated that "they had "no voice or influence in the election of those who tax us"" and they also "emphasized the economic challenges they faced, having been deprived by long bondage of the "Advantage of inheriting Estates of our Parents."" The petitioners by pointing out they could not inherit wealth, were rhetorically pointing to the fact that on their backs their former enslavers descendants inherited financial security, yet they had been deprived of the fruits of their labors. And they highlighted how the legacies of slavery had made an inherently uneven playing field for Black vs. white Bay staters: ""We poor distressed miserable Black people…have not an equal chance with the white people neither by sea nor by land."" Paul Cuffee and the other Black residents filed subsequent petitions, but each was rejected, and Paul was eventually jailed for his dissent for a brief time. [237]

The uncertainty of financial independence and employment made finding and creating Black community and family that much more important for formerly enslaved people. Neptune Frost, who had been enslaved within five miles of Othello during the 1760s and early 1770s in

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[236] Massachusetts is one of the only places many Black people received reparations post slavery. The British empire paid British enslavers reparations in the colonies when they outlawed slavery, but not to enslaved people. Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North*. *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*.

[237] *Bodies Politic: Negotiating Race in the American North, 1730-1830*, 329. It appears that Henry Thoreau did not only get his subscience information from Black people, but also his ideology around refusing to pay taxes as a form of political and social protest. Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts.*

Cambridge, had earned his freedom serving in the continental army alongside his enslaver's son, Stephen Frost. His pay had been paid "in a bounty" during his service to his enslaver's family and was only allowed wages for the last few months of his service in 1783; the bounty paid to his enslaver secured Neptune his legal emancipation, which then made him eligible to receive pay for the last few months.[238] Neptune met Bathsheba Locke, a Black woman from Lexington, Massachusetts during his service.[239] Bathsheba and Neptune married on March 22nd, 1787, and they then moved back to Cambridge, where Neptune had lived most of his life while in Massachusetts. In 1790, they had their first child, who died two years later on February 23rd of unrecorded causes.[240] Although Bathsheba and Neptune have no other recorded children in Cambridge vital records, this does not mean that they did not have others. Formal population counts are usually unrepresentative of how many people of color were actually present in colonial Massachusetts and the state during the era of the early republic.[241] In the 1790 census and 1800 census for Neptune Frost, three "free colored persons" are listed in both censuses. It

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[238] Stephen and Neptune were the same age when they began serving in 1775: 28 years old. Neptune Frost. *Massachusetts U.S., Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolutionary War,* Volume 6. [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004, 121. Stephen Frost. *Massachusetts U.S., Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolutionary War,* Volume 6. [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004, 125-6.

[239] For more information on the lives of Black women in New England during this period see: Nancy Prince. *A Narrative of the Life and Travels of Mrs. Nancy Prince*. Boston [Mass.]: The author, 1850. — (early life described in book).Daina Ramey Berry and Kali Nicole Gross. "Chapter Three: Belinda's Petition for Independence, 1760-1820." In *A Black Women's History of the United States*, 40-64. Catherine Adams and Elizabeth H. (Elizabeth Hafkin) Pleck. *Love of Freedom: Black Women in Colonial and Revolutionary New England*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. David Waldstreicher. "Women's Politics, Antislavery Politics, and Phillis Wheatley's American Revolution." In *Women in the American Revolution: Gender, Politics, and the Domestic World*, 147-171. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2019.

[240] Black women's infant mortality has always been higher than white women in the US. Daina Ramey Berry and Kali Nicole Gross. *A Black Women's History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2020. Bathsheba Locke and Neptune Frost. Marriage record, March 22nd 1787, Lexington, MA. Original data: Vital Records of Lexington, MA, pg. 129. Accessed through Massachusetts, U.S. Town and Vital Records 1620-1988, ancestry.com, online. Massachusetts, U.S., Town and Vital Records, 1620-1988 - Ancestry.com *Vital Records of Cambridge, Massachusetts to the year 1850, Volume 2.* Wright & Potter Print Co. Boston, MA, 1914-15, pg. 562-563, 153, 245. Vital records of Cambridge, Massachusetts, to the year 1850 : Cambridge (Mass.) : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

[241] Gloria McCahon Whiting. "Race, Slavery, and the Problem of Numbers in Early New England: A View from Probate Court." Jennifer L. Morgan. *Reckoning with Slavery: Gender, Kinship, and Capitalism in the Early Black Atlantic*.

appears that after their first child died, Bathsheba and Neptune had one other surviving child. In 1808 on June 6th at forty-two years old, Bathsheba died in Cambridge. Neptune is not recorded in the 1810 census, but in 1813 he died in Cambridge. It is unclear what happened to their surviving child, but in the 1790 and 1800 census, nine other Black families were recorded living in the vicinity, which indicates that there were more Black people in the neighborhood: the households of Imboy Brown, Caleb Garnett, Mary Bethan, Anthony Vassall, William Watson, Peter Waters, Dominium Masonsell, Prince Rand, and Jethro Gardner.[242] Anthony Vassall, Neptune's neighbor, had in 1781 petitioned for a piece of his former enslaver's land and was instead awarded a yearly pension of 12 pounds instead as reparations, like Belinda.[243]

By 1800, Massachusetts was issuing laws to target the "disorderly" conduct of Black people. This meant the greater policing of Black people because they began to marry, move close to one another, and to save money, boarded together. Black neighborhoods and communities became a threat to the social order of racial patriarchy and dependency.[244] Black people adopted fictive kin readily and many families would live together or take in children when their parents had died as their own.[245] Black communities offered spaces where Black people could generate wealth for themselves, invest in their own education as white New Englanders barred them from school largely up until mid-19th century or if allowed in were extremely hostile.[246] Boarding

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[242] U.S. Census Office, First Census, 1790, Middlesex County, Cambridge, Massachusetts, "Neptune Frost," *Ancestry Library*, AncestryLibrary.com. U.S. Census Office, Second Census, 1800, Middlesex County, Cambridge, Massachusetts, "Nepton Frost," *Ancestry Library*, AncestryLibrary.com. *Vital Records of Cambridge, Massachusetts to the year 1850, Volume 2.* Wright & Potter Print Co. Boston, MA, 1914-15, pg. 562-563, 153, 245. Jonathan Hill. *Primary Source Research on the Burial Location of Neptune Frost*. Cambridge, MA: Lesley University, 2017. Neptune Frost Research (Final) by Jonathan Hill.pdf

[243] They'd both been enslaved at Medford together by the Vassall/Royal family. [243] Roy E. Finkenbine "Belinda's Petition: Reparations for Slavery in Revolutionary Massachusetts," 101.

[244] Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England,* 129-132.

[245] James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton's *In Hope of Liberty: Culture Community and Protest Among Northern Free Black, 1700-1860,* 83-84, 96.

[246] Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*, 151. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England,* 188.

together also offered Black people a way to save their usually meager earnings, meager because slavery had devalued the wage labor of free Black people in New England due to racist prejudices, which naturalized wage inequality in the emerging capitalist industrial economy in Massachusetts. Out of Black communities came enduring Black businesses and Black professionals abounded. Black communities sprung up throughout the interior of Massachusetts, such as in Great Barrington in Berkshire County, where W.E.B. Du Bois's family was from, and Barre in Worcester County where Black people congregated due to Quock Walker's legal victories in 1783, as well as Black Neighborhoods in cities such as Boston and Cambridge. Many Black people left their former enslavers homes and moved ten to twenty miles or a whole state away to form community with other Black people, due to Black people being a minority of the Massachusetts population.[247] White Bay Staters feared Black communities growth during the era of the New Republic and in reaction passed a law in 1788 that any Black immigrants to the state had to show legal paperwork they were free and a citizen of another state in the union.[248]Age,[249] freedom of movement, relationship to former enslaver,[250] and marriage/formation of Black community were essential to the gaining of financial independence for Black people. Once Black communities began to thrive economically, they were able to demonstrate that they deserved full

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[247] James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton's *In Hope of Liberty: Culture Community and Protest Among Northern Free Black, 1700-1860,* 116, 121, 129. . W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Autobiography of W.E.B. Du Bois: A Soliloquy on Viewing My Life from the Last Decade of Its First Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, 62-23.
[248] James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton's *In Hope of Liberty: Culture Community and Protest Among Northern Free Black, 1700-1860,* 101. [248] Brigitte Lewis, "The Legend of Neptune: A Portrait of Enslavement and Emancipation in 18th-Century Worcester County, Massachusetts."
[249] Some people were at an advanced age with no existing support system outside of their enslaver's house post 1790. Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts.* Roy E. Finkenbine "Belinda's Petition: Reparations for Slavery in Revolutionary Massachusetts."
[250] Some enslaved people had relationships with their enslavers and enslaver's families that considered a vital part of the household and thus had to the ability to strip Black people of these resources while enslaved, making it more difficult to actualize community and economic opportunity outside of an enslaver's household post revolution, such as Othello. Other enslavers sold enslaved people, were swayed by morality, or abandoned enslaved people during the American Revolution. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England.* Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts.* Catherine Manegold. *Ten Hills Farm: The Forgotten History of Slavery in the North*, chapter 18.

citizenship rights and social equality, which aided the formation of Black New England abolitionist organizations that opposed racial chattel slavery in the southern and western United States in the 19th century.[251]

Although some Black New Englanders were able to set down roots and form enduring communities in rural areas of Massachusetts the social and political barriers towards achieving financial independence and lived equality posed too great for many in Massachusetts. Black population rates dipped drastically in urban areas, due to larger access to emigration opportunities into the 19th century.[252] Yet, the enduring legacy of Black abolitionism in Massachusetts—preserved in the variety of legal victories protecting the abolition of slavery, various legal cases that showed the courts would uphold Black people's basic human rights, enclaves of Black thriving communities and families throughout the interior Massachusetts that had created industry and professions, and a legacy of Black military service and cultural development—would make it a destination throughout the 19th century for fugitive enslaved people throughout the Americas, in addition to the support offered by white Massachusetts allies.[253] Those that were not able to achieve financial independence, find and/or create Black community, and did not have the opportunities—such as more work opportunities, freedom of

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[251] Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*, 105, 112. Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England,* 132. James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton's *In Hope of Liberty: Culture Community and Protest Among Northern Free Black, 1700-1860,* 127.

[252] Black men in Boston would especially have opportunities for emigration with opportunities to serve on ships in Atlantic sea ports. Jared Ross Hardesty. "Disappearing from Abolitionism's Heartland: The Legacy of Slavery and Emancipation in Boston." Gary B. Nash. "Forging Freedom: The Emancipation Experience in the Northern Seaport Cities, 1775-1820." In *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the American Revolution,* 3-49. Charlottesville: Published for the United States Capitol Historical Society by the University Press of Virginia, 1983. Cassandra Pybus, and Ira Berlin --. *Epic Journeys of Freedom: Runaway Slaves of the American Revolution and Their Global Quest for Liberty*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2006.

[253] Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North*. *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*. James Oliver Horton and Louis E. Horton's *In Hope of Liberty: Culture Community and Protest Among Northern Free Black, 1700-1860.* William Dillon Pierson. *Black Yankees: The Development of an Afro-American Subculture in Eighteenth-Century New England.* Lievin Kambamba Mboma. *African Descendants in Colonial America: Impact on the Preservation of Peace, Security, and Safety in New England, 1638-1783*.

movement, and access to Black communities—granted by urban areas like Boston or Cambridge in the wake of legal emancipation in Massachusetts post 1790, would find themselves trapped in unbreakable dependent relationships with their former legal enslavers, like Othello.

ii. The How, Why, and Conditions of De Facto Slavery in Massachusetts: Othello and Henry

In the 1790 first federal Census of the United States for the newly formed state of Massachusetts, no enslaved people were formally counted. 19th century historians, and subsequent discussants of slavery's end in Harvard, Massachusetts have used this piece of evidence to assert that Othello "chose" to stay in unpaid service to Henry, mimicking his labor and social role while he was formally enslaved in the Bromfield household, after Henry supposedly offered him his legal emancipation verbally to make sense of his presence in Henry's house until his death in 1817.[254] There is no evidence whatsoever that Henry ever offered Othello his emancipation, and it is most likely that he never communicated to Othello that he was legally free post 1790. Those that have perpetrated the narrative proposed by Henry Stedman Nourse in his *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts* that Othello chose to remain in a slavery like role after granted legal emancipation has been utilized to resolve the cognitive dissonance that slavery had been made illegal in the state, but that in rural towns throughout the interior of Massachusetts, such as Harvard, Black people were robbed of the resources to actualize legal emancipation in their lives, falling into de facto slavery relationships and that their local communities, like Harvard, holding racist prejudices and electing former legal enslavers to positions of power in their communities did not challenge this persistence.

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[254] Henry Stedman Nourse. *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*. Carlene Phillips, "Harvard and the Road to Black Freedom." The Harvard Press. January 14th, 2016. Reprinted February 18th, 2022. Online. Margaret Kusner, "Harvard's Center Cemetery: A Hidden Treasure." The Harvard Press. May 27th, 2021. Online.

In 1703, the colonial Massachusetts legislature had passed a law that enslavers, if they wished to free their enslaved people, were required to pay a fifty-pound bond to their local government to ensure the community against assuming additional financial responsibility if the freed Black person was unable to provide for themselves once legally free.[255] White New Englanders had feared since the introduction of slavery into Massachusetts that Black people would end up a burden to the white communities that had deprived them of their basic human rights and self-ownership; this was fueled by racist prejudices of Black people's docility and inferiority and also was an expression of how the system of dependency and racial patriarchy were interwoven: if the patriarch, or enslaver, abandoned his role, it then became the government and communities role to act as provider/punisher/policer, whether or not Black people were in need of it.[256] In 1783, when Quock Walker won his freedom after a series of three different suits, his enslaver, Nathaniel Jennison filed a petition in regard to the twelve other Black people whom he currently enslaved. He argued that if the state constitution had made enslaved people free, as they had claimed,[257] then he should no longer be required to provide for their subsistence or pay the local government a bond for their freedom, per the 1703 colonial law. The Worcester County court filed in favor of the enslaver, nullifying these twelve Black people's right to reparation for stolen labor as they were aged and some disabled at that point and not able to secure wage labor like Quock; the court deemed the act of enslavers providing subsistence and not wages to

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[255] George H. Moore *Notes on the History of Slavery in Massachusetts,* 217-220.
[256] Kelly A. Ryan. *Regulating Passion: Sexuality and Patriarchal Rule in Massachusetts, 1700-1830*. Ruth Wallis Herndon. *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England*.
[257] Quock Walker won his freedom through a series of freedom suits that included suing Nathaniel Jennison on the grounds of the new state constitution, the word of his original and deceased owner (Nathaniel Jennison's wife's first husband) that he was free upon his death, that Nathaniel had deprived him of his wages once he had secured wage labor and subsistence for himself by trying to drag him back to slavery limiting his freedoms, and on the grounds of physical assault which Quock was awarded financial damages for. . Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North*. *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*. Robert M. Spector "The Quock Walker Cases (1781-83)—Slavery, Its Abolition, and Negro Citizenship in Early Massachusetts."

enslaved people as "a species of slavery also inconsistent with the bill of rights."[258] Yet, legal emancipation without reparation resulted in some form of unfreedom for most Black Bay Staters, and many were reduced to poverty since they were emancipated once they had reached old age and could no longer obtain wage labor to subsist themselves as their prime years of labor for wealth accumulation had instead aided their white enslaver's, resulting in many Black people falling into dependent relationships with their local governments.[259] Henry Bromfield would have known about this ruling, as he was a voracious reader and became involved in the local politics and legal system of Harvard and Worcester County in the 1780s and 90s.

This decision set the precedent in Worcester County that if Henry had to free Othello, he did not have to pay him anything. Henry, also due to his debts and racial prejudice, probably convinced himself that he could not and did not owe Othello financial reparation as he had been a 'good' patriarch and had provided adequate subsistence. In Suffolk county where Boston and Cambridge are and where Belinda won reparations and others like her, this was not the precedent. Although slavery may have been "illegal" in Massachusetts, the courts were not at all prepared to define or understand the intricacies of what that meant or prepared to grant social and political equality.[260] If Bromfield did not pay Othello any reparations for his enslavement but freed him and then Othello was unable to provide for himself, Othello would have been caught up in the warning out system and the town's dependency structure of becoming the patriarchs of the poor and infirm.[261] In 1768 in Harvard, a Black man named Cyprian, who was colloquially

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[258] George H. Moore *Notes on the History of Slavery in Massachusetts,* 218-19 ; Worcester county adopted in 1775 that they would do everything in their power to oppose slavery; that idea did not mean the granting of justice or equality to enslaved people. . Bernard Bailyn, et al. *Major Problems in the Era of the American Revolution, 1760-1791: Documents and Essays,* 258.
[259] Ruth Wallis Herndon. *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England*.
[260] Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*. Gloria Whiting, "Emancipation without the Courts or Constitution: The Case of Revolutionary Massachusetts."
[261] Ruth Wallis Herndon. *Unwelcome Americans: Living on the Margin in Early New England*. Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity.*

referred to as 'Sip, was caught up in this very system. He had been enslaved by Ephraim Robbins, a wealthy citizen, and once 'Sip had past the point of usefulness in Ephraim's eyes, he did not want to care for him anymore and granted him his freedom. In 1768, 'Sip had grown unable to provide for himself—he lived in the woods out of a "half cellar, half hut, in a lonely hollow in Shabikin, still referred to in deeds as "Sip's hole"—and the town was charged with caring for him. The town demanded Ephraim pay for 'Sip's subsistence in his old age, and when he didn't, the town called for Ephraim to be expelled. 'Sip died in Harvard in 1784 at around ninety years old, a year after Nan died in Boston, and a year before Hannah died in Harvard. He was a fiddler, like Othello, and upon his death tore apart his instrument and declared "there should be no quarreling over my estate after I am gone." 'Sip may have experienced during his enslavement white relatives fighting over the relics of a family members estate, including enslaved people.[262] The Bromfield Family, including Othello, were in Harvard during these events, and Henry, if not Othello, would have known about the town's precedent of upholding dependent relations.

Appearances were very important to Henry Bromfield and denotated to him, one's place in the social order.[263] Henry had relied on Othello's unpaid and enslaved labor during the 1780s

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[262] Henry Stedman Nourse *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*, 402-03.

[263]"Mr. Bromfield and his surroundings vividly reminded Mrs. Quincy of Addison's description of Sir Roger de Coverley in the "Spectator." It seemed to her, that she must be on a visit to that worthy knight, especially on Sunday, when, equipped with a red cloak, and a wig surmounted by a cocked hat, and attended by his negro servant Othello, he escorted her under the ancient avenue of elms and through the graveyard to the village church. Profound deference and respect marked the passing salutations he received; and, at the conclusion of the service, the whole congregation remained standing in their pews, until Mr. Bromfield and his guests had walked down the broad aisle." Eliza Susan Morton Quincy and Eliza Susan Quincy. *Memoir of the Life of Eliza S.M. Quincy*. [Printed by J. Wilson and Son], 1861. Memoir of the life of Eliza S.M. Quincy : Quincy, Eliza Susan Morton, 1773-1850 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive, 94. Henry would be known for his red cloak and wig, which have been preserved at the Massachusetts historical society: Red Cloak belonging to Henry Bromfield, 1790-1810- Boston. Men's clothing 009. Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, online. MHS Collections Online: Cloak belonging to Henry Bromfield (masshist.org) Wig made of human hair and other accessories belonging to Henry Bromfield. England 18th century. Hair 0.001. Massachusetts Historical Society, online. MHS Collections Online: Wig belonging to Henry Bromfield (masshist.org) Daniel Denison Slade, *The Bromfields.*

as he was recovering from crippling revolutionary war debt—without the presence of Othello, Henry would have been unable to uphold his appearance of gentility and prosperity that he had cultivated pre-revolution, which had resulted in his vast wealth. Othello's service as an unpaid laborer serving in a butler role also supported the image Henry's wealth, family history, and community standing made him a gentleman; Henry's granddaughter, Margaret Blanchard Bromfield described him as "a perfect specimen of a gentleman of the old school, courteous and dignified in his manner and respected and beloved by the townspeople."[264] In 1790, when the Massachusetts state census counted no enslaved people, Henry did not include Othello on his census listing, although he counted him in his 1800 and 1810 ones.[265] But, it is clear that Othello was still residing in Henry's house in 1790; in a letter wrote to Henry from his son Henry Junior in London, Henry Junior included an inventory list of items he had shipped to his father that he'd requested for his household, included in this list is a waist coat pattern for Othello.[266] Othello had to look the part of a gentleman's butler. These pieces of clothing and other means of subsistence negated Henry from paying Othello a wage.[267] As Othello had been enslaved by Henry for about

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[264] Carlene Phillips *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity,* 12.

[265] He is recorded in the free persons of color category, but this did not mean he experienced or lived freedom. Gloria Whiting, "Emancipation without the Courts or Constitution: The Case of Revolutionary Massachusetts," endnote 21.
U.S. Census Office, First Census, 1790, Worcester County, Harvard, Massachusetts, s.v. "Henry Bromfield Esquire," *Ancestry Library*, AncestryLibrary.com. U.S. Census Office, Second Census, 1800, Worcester County, Harvard, Massachusetts, "Hennery Bromfield," *Ancestry Library*, AncestryLibrary.com. U.S. Census Office, Third Census, 1810, Worcester County, Harvard, Massachusetts, "Henry Broomfield Esq.," *Ancestry Library*, AncestryLibrary.com. Elise Lemire, *Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts*, 109.

[266] Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard containing inventory list of shipped goods requested for household members including a waist coat pattern for Othello, March 3rd, 1790, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: March-April 1790, 10 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[267] Henry paid wages to people when he needed their labor during the 1780s and 90s and kept records of it, but nowhere exists wages paid to Othello. Receipt for Henry Bromfield paying Thomas Dunton for the labor/work performed by individuals broken down by week and number of days worked from 1785-86, individuals are only listed by their first names, August 1788, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1787-88, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Receipts for the parts, labor, and construction of Henry Bromfield Senior's building of a house on School Street for his daughter Elizabeth in which he lists out paying various persons who are listed by name when they are men, two unnamed women are listed as paid for labor and an unnamed "negro man", as well as Thomas Dunton's 'man', and it also includes a bill to Sam Dillaway,

thirty years by 1790 and both had permanently lived in Harvard since 1777, the town most likely would have held Henry responsible for Othello if he could not subsist for himself with his freedom, which would have tarnished Henry's good standing in the community.

By 1790, Othello had been enslaved by Henry for about thirty years—all of his adult life and was forty-five years old; Henry was eighteen years older than Othello and was sixty-three in 1790. During these thirty years, Henry had stripped Othello of the ability to obtain wages from his labor. Henry had sold Cato, who was most likely Othello's son. Othello's companion Nan had died while nursing Henry's daughter back to health, a daughter who had many children.[268] Henry tore apart Othello's Black community within his household and moved Othello from Boston to Harvard, effectively isolating him at his large estate in Harvard for over a decade while other Black New Englanders won emancipation. He had never allowed Othello the opportunity to read, despite the vast book collection and library that was in the Bromfield home.[269] Henry had taken away Othello's ability to be his own person, create his own life, and find his own sense of purpose and community and through deprivation and isolation instilled in Othello that he had nowhere else to go except Henry's home. Henry had been the master of

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September 5th, 1785-January 4th, 1786, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September-December 1785, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Receipts and Account listings written to Benjamin Kimball from Henry Bromfield for goods and services performed, 1789-1803, Harvard, 7 pages, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1799-1803 Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[268] Daniel Denison Slade, *The Bromfields.*

[269] Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity.* Henry Bromfield. Letter to his daughter Sally (Sarah) Bromfield Pearson reflecting on the death, funeral, and briefly life of Othello, January 6th, 1818, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 20, 1816-19, Yale University and Archives, New Haven. Genealogical narrative of Henry Bromfield Pearson living in the original Bromfield Mansion reading all of the many Shakespeare editions that were in his grandfather's library, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder 29 Genealogical Papers, 5 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. "I beg you will keep this matter…secret, both for our own sakes as well as a Mr. Storer's as whatever you write will be kept a profound secret—Mrs. Leonard Thankful Hubbard that was, your old acquittance, died last week of consumption. There is a great reason to think she made a happy exchange. Enclosed you have a poem made by a negro girl on her death. This girl is a very surprising genius—" This quotation was taken from: Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Letter book from 1772-73 contained in the Bromfield Family Collection, 1729-1825, Call #: MSS-664, Box 1, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston. letterbook 72-73 4.pdf, 82-84. The "negro girl" he is referring to is Phyllis Wheatly. Henry was surprised not because of her gender, but because of her race.

Othello's world and stripped him of logistical resources that would have enabled him to actualize legal emancipation; Othello did not just become free because the courts or constitution had said so; these court decisions were often little circulated as well outside of their immediate communities.[270] Henry's world was the only world Othello knew in 1790; and Henry provided for him. He fed him and gave him shelter. But Othello did not live in the Bromfield Mansion. The Bromfield Mansion contained subterranean passages that led from the house to the barns and stables on the estate—Othello most likely lived in part of the stables/barn or had a small dwelling there that he lived in and would enter the Bromfield house underground, so as not to be seen.[271]

It is important to remember that people, especially Othello, "lived, instead, in the day-to-day interactions with the people around them, the values they formed in the context of their surrounding society, and their sense of the best way to make the most of their lives before they died."[272] Systemically robbed of resources by Henry for thirty years, if Henry had given Othello the option to leave and pursue an unsure and tenuous freedom with no money or to stay in the same position and continue on as he had lived with Henry, it would make sense that Othello would choose the comforts and known evils of Henry's benefaction over the uncertainty and unknowns of freedom. Thus, it is no surprise that Henry Junior wrote his father Henry in 1800 that, "I do not forget Othello, am grateful in hearing he is so well and so faithful—his fiddle strings shall be sent in the Diana that sails in a few days."[273] The term "faithful" implies the lack of compensation and wages for labor, as it implies that Othello served out of devotion, when in actuality it was out of necessity.

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[270] Gloria Whiting, "Emancipation without the Courts or Constitution: The Case of Revolutionary Massachusetts."
[271] Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity,* 47.
[272] Annette Gordon Reed. *The Hemingses of Monticello,* 121.
[273] In the original letter that Henry Junior references by Henry Senior is not preserved in any archive. Henry Bromfield Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Esq. at Harvard where he mentions Othello and discusses George Washington's death, August 25th, 1800, 4 pages; London, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 15, 1800-1802, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

Henry had written his daughter Abigail in 1785 that he designed to retire at his mansion in Harvard, and post Hannah's death in 1785 that is exactly what he did. Retirement did not mean being idle for Henry. After Hannah died in 1785, Henry became convinced that there was silver in Oak Hill in Harvard and formed and headed a mining operation for about five years, but it was dissolved by 1790.[274] Henry became essential to the town and county's infrastructural development in other ways as well: in 1796 he sold part of his land in Harvard to a few men to form the Harvard Aqueduct Company, which laid the foundations for the towns modern plumbing system; Henry Bromfield's house was one of the first of Harvard residents to receive plumbing through this venture.[275] In 1804, Henry gathered a group of twenty investors and formed the Union Turnpike Corporation to build a road that linked the "Cambridge and Concord turnpike to the east and the fifth Massachusetts turnpike, beginning in Leominster, to the west" and the goal of the road was for it to be "easier for transporting goods," thus aiding in the economic development of the town. The road was opened a year later in 1805.[276] Henry also kept busy in local politics and institutions as well. In 1788, 1792, and 1796 votes were cast by Harvard residents for Henry for different political offices.[277] Henry was consequently selected as Justice of the Peace of Worcester County, which were six-year terms, in 1799, 1806, and 1813.[278] Henry was also a loyal member of the church, bidding one hundred dollars on first

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[274] Robert C. Anderson. *Directions of a Town: A History of Harvard, Massachusetts,* 81.

[275] Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity,* 27. William Emerson. Bill of sale for land to Henry Bromfield from William Emerson in Harvard for the expansion of his household piping system, 1796, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 4, Folder: 3, Wills, deeds, and other documents, 1791-1813, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[276] Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity,* 28. Henry Bromfield Senior. Document in which he describes the plans for Union Turnpike Road in Worcester County and those responsible within the corporation for paying for its construction in installments including listing his own ten shares, May 15th, 1804, Harvard, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1804, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[277] Henry Stedman Nourse *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*, 443-45.

[278] Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Two Documents assigning Henry Bromfield Esq. of Harvard to Justice of the Peace of Worcester County, July 3rd, 1799, 2 pages, and August 20th, 1813, 2 pages; Worcester County, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 4, Folder: 3, Wills, deeds, and other documents, 1791-1813, Yale University

choice at pew seating.[279] With Henry's social standing, legal and thus political power, and wealth, no local residents would challenge how he ran his home and whether or not de facto slavery persisted in his household. Two years after no enslaved people were counted in the 1790 Massachusetts Census, Henry was ironically awarded acceptance to the Humane Society of Boston, as he carried on in a de facto slavery relationship with Othello.[280] Henry was essential to the political economy of Harvard as it developed in the era of the New Republic and its contributions to New England's emerging capitalistic economy, but this would not have been possible without Othello's domestic labor in Henry's household.[281] Henry's new business ventures being concentrated to the development of Harvard and Worcester County meant that Henry spent much more time at home and due to his advancing age, as he was seventy-three in 1800 to Othello's fifty-five, needed more daily care.

Nineteenth century memoirs and histories record Othello following Henry "like a shadow" in his later years.[282] It's an eerie image, and often the language people use when describing a loyal pet or doting child. Contrary to Henry's granddaughter's—Margaret Blanchard Bromfield's—[283]assertions that Henry was in "good health all his life," it appears that Henry grew more and more dependent on Othello's services as an assistant, butler, and caretaker as he aged—and Othello aged alongside him—due to continual bouts of sickness, including gout

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Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Appointment of Henry Bromfield as Justice of the Peace of Worcester County, Signed by Caleb Strong, August 26th, 1806, Call #N-1939, Oversized Box, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

[279] Henry Stedman Nourse *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*, 216.

[280] Henry Bromfield's acceptance to the Humane Society Instituted 1785, March 5th, 1792, 1 page; Boston, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #: MS. 599, Box 4, Folder: 3, Wills, deeds, and other documents, 1791-1813, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[281] Joanne Pope Melish. *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "race" in New England, 1780-1860*.

[282] Henry Stedman Nourse *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*, 133.

[283] Margaret Blanchard Bromfield would donate her grandfather's land and the mansion built in place of the original that burnt in 1855 to construct a school, which is still the town's only high school, named the Bromfield School. Henry Stedman Nourse *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*.

which stopped Henry from walking at weeks on end and pneumonia, which is what Henry died of in 1820.[284] In the winter's, especially, Henry was susceptible to colds. Henry, after Othello had passed in 1817, was often remembered as calling out for Othello, forgetting that he had died and expecting him to show up to fulfill his wants.[285] This exemplifies how dependent for daily care Henry had become on Othello by 1800 and for the last seventeen years of Othello's life. By 1786, Henry's wife had died, and his daughter's had married and or moved, thus leaving him devoid of dependents who fulfilled domestic and caretaker household roles;[286] Othello most likely filled their shoes.

Henry supposedly filled his days in retirement, "happily in solitude, content with his books and the management of his farm, garden, and choice fruit trees."[287] Henry was not alone, but heavily relied on Othello. It is most likely that Othello assisted or did the majority of the manual labor required for the tending of Henry's various growing endeavors on his property, or that the gardens and growing of various fruits and vegetables were actually Othello's design and Henry reaped the benefits. Othello was eighteen years younger than Henry and it was the relationship of de facto slavery that allowed Henry to reap the privileges and benefits of Othello's hard work. Othello, most likely, spent his time when not employed in Henry's company or in tasks for Henry practicing his fiddle.[288] Although there were Black families in the

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[284] A portrait of Henry in his old age: Samuel Finley Breese Morse (American, 1791-1872), *Portrait of Henry Bromfield (1727-1820),* 1819. Object #: MA170210, Catalog of American Portraits, National Portrait Gallery at the Smithsonian Institute, Washington D.C. https://npg.si.edu/object/npg_MA170210 Lists multiple series of cures for different ailments including whooping cough: Henry Bromfield (1727-1820). Memorandum book with accounts, 2/2/1770-01/15-1802, The Gilder Lehrman Collection, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New York, NY. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/brigi/Downloads/GLC01450.030.01%20(1).pdf Carlene Phillips 12.
[285] Henry Stedman Nourse *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*, 133.
[286] Daniel Denison Slade, *The Bromfields.*
[287] Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity,* 11.
[288] The history of Black New Englanders music/musical tradition and Black New Englanders as musicians is a wholly under interrogated history.

Harvard area, it's unclear if Othello had any opportunities to create community outside of the Bromfield estate.[289]

Henry in retirement wrote often to his family. He wrote to his brother discussing his different maladies, exchanging world politics—particularly about Napoleon—, and lamented his desire to be surrounded by family in his old age, which was a privilege Henry had robbed Othello of.[290] In 1791, Henry's daughter Abigail died in London childless.[291] Henry's youngest daughter Elizabeth was still unmarried, and in 1796, at thirty-three, she married Daniel Denison Rogers, her deceased older half sister's husband. Daniel had gone into partnership with Henry Junior and had an intimate friendship with Henry; he had obviously invested heavily in the family and saw an opportunity in Elizabeth. Elizabeth and Daniel had four children and Sarah and Eliphat did as well.[292] Henry's home in Harvard became a frequent vacation destination for his friends and family, and he often entertained local elites at his house, but these visits were usually reserved to the spring and summer when the weather was more pleasant.[293] In the off

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[289] U.S. Federal Censuses of Harvard, Massachusetts: 1790, 1800, 1810. *Ancestry Library,* Ancestrylibrary.com. Brigitte Lewis, "The Legend of Neptune: A Portrait of Enslavement and Emancipation in 18th-Century Worcester County, Massachusetts"

[290] Henry Bromfield. Letter to his brother Thomas Bromfield in London discussing his retired life, business, and the desire to be around family, April 24th, 1804, 4 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 16, 1803-1804, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield. Letter to his brother Thomas Bromfield in London discussing retired life and how the winter weather will keep him from traveling until April, December 15th, 1804, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 16, 1803-1804, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven. Henry Bromfield. Letter to his brother Thomas Bromfield in London discussing retirement, September 20th, 1805, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 17, 1805-1809, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[291] "Daniel Denison Rogers to Abigail Adams, 2 June 1794," *Founders Online,* National Archives, https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/04-10-02-0126. [Original source: *The Adams Papers*, Adams Family Correspondence, vol. 10, *January 1794–June 1795*, ed. Margaret A. Hogan, C. James Taylor, Sara Martin, Hobson Woodward, Sara B. Sikes, Gregg L. Lint, and Sara Georgini. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011, pp. 200–201.]

[292] Daniel Denison Slade, *The Bromfields.* Two Newspaper clippings: one reporting on the burning of the Bromfield Mansion in 1855, the second details Daniel Denison Slade's speech "A Boston Merchant of 1791" on Daniel Denison Rogers at the Bostonian Society, in 1891, Boston, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 9, folder 9 Printed Material, No Date, page, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[293] Henry Stedman Nourse *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*. Eliza Susan Morton Quincy and Eliza Susan Quincy. *Memoir of the Life of Eliza S.M. Quincy*. Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of*

seasons, Henry lamented in his retirement to his children for the want of their company and his grandchildren.[294] When Henry's grandchildren did come to visit, Othello took on the role of entertainer and joy spreader. In a letter to his nephew, Daniel Denison Slade, Henry Bromfield Rogers, a grandson of Henry's by his daughter Elizabeth and Daniel, wrote, "my grandpapa had an old Black servant and we used all to go into the kitchen and dance before a large fire and he would play on the fiddle to us. We made a great noise I assure you."[295] The greatest source of joy in Othello's life was music. Othello was well known as a fiddler and Henry supported Othello's hobby. Othello was the town musician at festivities and served as "major-domo, the factotum of the picnics and fishing parties, and master of revels at night when with voice and violin he ruled the dance."[296] Othello was party planner, entertainer, organizer, and overall in charge of making sure Henry's guests had an enjoyable time. What is also of note in the remembrance of Henry's grandson, Henry Bromfield Rogers, is that they had to gather in the kitchen to enjoy Othello's fiddle playing, meaning that Othello was not allowed in the main area of the house, at least, when guests were in the house. The Bromfield mansion was grand, and the only house in town with furnished rugs, fine China and other valuables such as paintings from Europe and family portraits, as well as being extremely large with at least four rooms on the ground floor, which

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Harvard's Identity. Among Henry's friends that he entertained was William Emerson, Ralph Waldo Emerson's father who was briefly a minister in Harvard during the 1790s. The Emerson family and Henry Bromfield's grandchildren and children would have enduring relationships. William Emerson also played the fiddle (or bass viol) and possibly played with Othello.

[294] Henry Bromfield. Letter to his daughter Sally (Sarah) Bromfield Pearson about the removal of a neighbor and lamenting his solitude, December 30th, 1806, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 17, 1805-1809, Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven.

[295] Henry Bromfield Rogers. Letter to his nephew Daniel Denison Rogers in which he recounts "grandpapa had a Black Servant", referencing Othello, who played the fiddle for them in the Kitchen when they visited facilitating a dance party, December 21st, 1831, Boston, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 2, folder 5 Family Correspondence Aug-Dec 1831, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[296] Henry Stedman Nourse *History of the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts*, 134.

would have been much more conducive to dance parties. But because Othello was Black, the parties were confined to the kitchen.[297]

In November of 1817, Othello died. Henry in a letter dated January 6th, 1818, would write to his daughter Sarah Bromfield Pearson, who had inquired about Othello after hearing a rumor of his death in Boston, that:

> I think it high time I answered your affectionate and dutiful letter of December 2nd in which time you notice having heard of poor Othello's death. A very grievous loss I shall miss him for a long period—he having lived with me many years I can't get out of my mind he was a poor ignorant man but of good feelings and a honest man. Nothing more will be required of him than was given him. We must leave him in the hands of the infinite goodness. His illness was such the doctor says his departure was best for him as well as for the family, so he could not have continued much longer but to have suffered extremely and to have been grievous to the family. Therefore, his decease was wisely ordered by infinite goodness which ought to quiet our minds in his removal. The attendance of his funeral was equal to most I have seen here. He was much regarded by our neighbors and those acquainted with him. Some of respectable neighbors were his bearers even deacons. This separation from my dear children and the decease of Othello is too painful to think of but such is my unhappy lot. But we must hope thro infinite grace to meet in a better state.[298]

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[297] Carlene Phillips. *A Common History: The Story of Harvard's Identity,* 11-12. Bromfield Family Queen Anne Walnut Compass-Seat Side Chair, 1745-Boston. Chadds Ford Collection. Lot 35 - Bromfield Family Queen Anne walnut (freemansauction.com) John Goddard (American, 1723–1785), Card table, 1760-85-Newport, RI. ID #: RIF774, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Friends of the American Wing Fund, 1967 (67.114.1), New York. https://library.artstor.org/asset/32056563 John Greenwood (American, 1727-1792). *Mrs. Henry Bromfield (Margaret Fayerweather)*. about 1749. Oil on canvas, 92.39 x 65.72 cm (36 3/8 x 25 7/8 in.). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Boston, Massachusetts, USA; Emily L. Ainsley Fund; 62.173; http://www.mfa.org/. https://jstor.org/stable/community.15632067. John Potwine. Teapot, 1740-Boston, Collection #1106. The Chitra Collection, London. Teapot | (chitracollection.com) & (#683) AN AMERICAN SILVER TEAPOT, JOHN POTWINE, BOSTON, CIRCA 1740 (sothebys.com) Two Newspaper clippings: one reporting on the burning of the Bromfield Mansion in 1855, the second details Daniel Denison Slade's speech "A Boston Merchant of 1791" on Daniel Denison Rogers at the Bostonian Society, in 1891, Boston, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 9, folder 9 Printed Material, No Date, page, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Slade, Daniel D. Notes describing the layout of the original Bromfield Mansion, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder 6 Daniel D. Slade Writings, 7 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[298] Henry Bromfield. Letter to his daughter Sally (Sarah) Bromfield Pearson reflecting on the death, funeral, and briefly life of Othello, January 6th, 1818, 2 pages; Harvard, MA, Bromfield Family Papers, Call #MS. 599, Box 2, Folder 20, 1816-19, Yale University and Archives, New Haven.

Although Othello's body was buried segregated in the center cemetery, he was well liked and obviously held in high esteem by the people of Harvard; and if they did not show up for Othello, they at least showed him the respect he deserved as the enslaved person of Henry Bromfield. It's clear from this letter that Henry viewed Othello as a dependent and did truly lament the loss of Othello, having grown extremely attached to him in his old age. Their relationship had become deeply intimate, inherently unequal, codependent, fused with history. Henry's inability to "can't get out of my mind" thoughts of Othello possibly stemmed from his guilt at robbing Othello from having a free life and family as Henry had.

Conclusion:

The persistence of de facto Slavery in Massachusetts into the 19th century, such as in the case of Othello's life, had clear origins in the experiences and designs of the American Revolution. Despite some Black Bay Staters being able to actualize legal emancipation during the years of the revolution, these wins would be conditional and Black people in Massachusetts would be left fighting for social equality and political citizenship rights up until the Civil War. Actualizing legal emancipation in Massachusetts was dependent on a series of factors such as rural vs. urban geography, access to Black communities and social networks, age, literacy, trade, social position of enslaver and relationship with enslaver, and ability to obtain reparation. The American Revolution did not dismantle gendered and racialized markets, which would have granted everyone equality and equal access to pursue economic independence, and instead largely upheld systems of dependency and racial patriarchy. White Americans, too invested economically and socially in the subjugation of Black people, would continually limit access to political power and economic freedom, as well as leave de facto slavery relationships in Massachusetts unchallenged.

Compelling Friendship Primary and Secondary Source Bibliographies[299]

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Bromfield, Henry Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard listed as follows by date and page length: February 20th, 1795, 2 pages; March 30th, 1796, 4 pages; May 18th, 1796, 2 pages; October 15th, 1796, 3 pages; November 14th, 1796 (has attached copy of October 15th), 8 pages; London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1796, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard listed as follows by date and page length: August 23rd, 1803, 2 pages; October 22nd, 1803, 5 pages; London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1799-1803 Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard listed as follows by date and page length: March 20th, 1804, 7 pages; November 12th, 1804, 5 pages; London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1804, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard listed as follows by date and page length: May 10th, 1805, 4 pages; August 1805, 4 pages; September 14th, 1805, 4 pages; November 4th, 1805, 4 pages; April 9th, 1806, 4 pages; September 2nd, 1806, 4 pages; London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1806, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard, July 14th, 1815, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1810-1815, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry Junior. Letter to his father Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard, June 8th, 1816, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1816-1818, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry (junior). Letters to his father Henry Bromfield in Harvard (senior), 1795, Historical Family/Individual Records Collected for Research, MS. N-1156, Box 2, Folder 12, Henry Herbert Edes Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Henry Herbert Edes Collection, 1648-1917 (masshist.org)

Bromfield, M. Letter to Henry Bromfield Senior in Harvard from his daughter in law, wife of his son Henry Bromfield Junior, August 9th, 1806, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1806, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry (1727-1820). Account records with Richard Clarke and Sons, February 13th, 1772, Call #: Misc. Bd. 1772 February 13, In Miscellaneous Bound Manuscripts, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry (1727-1820). Agreement with Benjamin Kimball and Timothy Goldsmith, January 30th, 1792, Call #: Misc. Bd. 1792 January 30, Miscellaneous Bound Manuscripts, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry (1727-1820). Bill of Lading book, 1750-1764. Call #: N-1939, Volume 1, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Bromfield, Henry (1727-1820). Letter book from 1773-75 contained in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830 Collection, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. *Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 1.pdf ; Brom Letterbook 1773-75 2.pdf ; Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 3.pdf ; Bromfield Letterbook 1773-75 4.pdf

Bromfield, Henry (1727-1820). Letter from Henry and Thomas Bromfield to Richard Clarke, February 28th, 1771, Call #: Misc. Bd. 1771 February 28, Miscellaneous Bound Manuscripts, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry (1727-1820). Letter to Isaac W. Clarke, January 16th, 1769, Call #: Misc. Bd. 1769 January 16, Miscellaneous Bound Manuscripts, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry Esq. Receipt from Bouglu of Bowles and Carver their map and print warehouse for a Bowles's Universal Atlas, February 20th, 1804, London, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1804, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
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Bromfield, Henry Senior. Letter to William Carr Esq. in Dumfries, Virginia concerning his account and the selling of goods, particularly Virginian tobacco, July 26th, 1784, Boston,

Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August 1784, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry Senior. Letter to Mr. Enoch Husley about debts owed by his brother Thomas from their failed business firm in America and England that he has become responsible for, August 3rd, 1784, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August 1784, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry Senior. Receipts paying off debts from the failed Thomas and Henry Bromfield Firm, August 1784, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August 1784, 5 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry Senior. Receipts of paid debts to former ship captains including Job Prince, Nathanial Carter, and William Mackay on behalf of Thomas and Henry Bromfield, 1784, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September 1784, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

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Bromfield, Henry Senior. Series of receipts charging Benjamin Kimball for goods, particularly liquor, May 1788- August 1789, Harvard, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: August-October 1789, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry Senior. Document in which he describes the plans for Union Turnpike Road in Worcester County and those responsible within the corporation for paying for its construction in installments including listing his own ten shares, May 15th, 1804, Harvard, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1804, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Thomas. Letter to his brother Henry Bromfield at Harvard mentioning accounts during the 1770s, March 7th, 1786, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-May 1786, 9 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Thomas. Letter to his brother Henry Bromfield in Harvard, September 30th, 1785, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September-December 1785, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Thomas. Letter to Waddell Cunningham in Belfast concerning a shipment of Flaxseed sent from Newburyport in partnership with his brothers Henry and John in 1774, 1789, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-July 1789, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Thomas. Letter to his brother Henry Bromfield in Harvard, July 29th, 1790, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: July-September 1790, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

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Bromfield, Thomas. Letter to his brother Henry Bromfield in Harvard, May 19th, 1792, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1792, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Thomas. Letter to his brother Henry Bromfield in Harvard, March 9th, 1812, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1810-15, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Thomas and Henry. Account ledger of voyages with Joseph Coolidge from 1772-1775, Account Cleared on October 30th, 1783, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1782, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Bromfield, Henry and Thomas. Account statement with John Brown Esq. from 1768-1773 of ship cargo resolved in 1784, April 15th, 1784, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: March-April 1784, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Chester, John. Letter to Henry Bromfield Esq. concerning an account from 1766, September 24th, 1795, Wethersfield, Harvard Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1794-95, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Clarke, Richard (1711-1795). Account Ledger, 1760-1879, Call #: Ms. N-2487 (Tall), 1 volume in a case, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Clarke, Richard. Letter to the Gentleman of the Merchant Committee, August 11th, 1769, Boston, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1769-70, 2 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Clarke, Richard (1711-1795). Letter to Henry Bromfield, May 9th, 1774, Call #: Misc. Bd. 1774 May 9, Miscellaneous Bound Manuscripts, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

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Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Clarke, Richard. Letter to Henry Bromfield Esq., July 25th, 1788, George Street Hanover Square, London, in Miscellaneous Papers from 1694-1792, Call #: N-1939, Box 2, One Folder, 4 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Clarke, Richard. Letter to Henry Bromfield Esq., September 21st, 1791, London, in Miscellaneous Papers from 1694-1792, Call #: N-1939, Box 2, One Folder, 4 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Copley, John Singleton (1738-1815). Letter to Henry Bromfield, February 20th, 1792, Call #: Misc. Bd. 1792 February 20, Miscellaneous Bound Manuscripts, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Copy of a letter written by John Adams to J. Warren president of the Provincial Congress sent in confidence. Philadelphia, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1774-77, 2 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Copy of a letter written by John Adams to Abigail Adams sent in confidence. Philadelphia, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1774-77, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Copy of a letter by John Burgoyne Esq. to Robert Kingston. June 23rd, 1777, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1774-77, 2 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Court order issued in Boston by Mr. Hubbard charging Thomas Bromfield in London with debts, October 28th, 1789, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: August-October 1789, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Daughter Miss Elizabeth Bromfield's, now Mrs. Rogers, account with her father Henry Bromfield, June 1st, 1795, Harvard Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1794-95, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Excerpt from *the Boston Chronicle*, Volume 1, Number 17, April 4th, 1768, Boston, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1767-68, 4 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Excerpt from the *Boston Weekly Newsletter*, Number 3427, June 8th, 1769, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1769-1770, 3 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

French, Reverend Mr. Letter to Henry Bromfield Esq. in Harvard, April 2nd, 1794, Andover, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1794-95, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Genealogy Chart Listing the Children of Edward (1695) and Abigail (1700) Bromfield with birth dates in the Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1731-1770, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Gould, William. Letters pertaining to settling accounts with Henry Bromfield accrued during the 1770s, Spring 1774, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: March-April 1784, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Griswold, Roger. Letter to Henry Bromfield Esq. in Harvard, April 4th, 1795, Norwich, CT, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1794-95, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Henry Bromfield's Account with Daniel D. Rogers, 1817-1818, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1816-1818, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Henry Bromfield's Account with William Dublois from 1789-1790, April 22nd, 1790, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: March-April 1790, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Henry Bromfield Esq. Account with Rogers and Bromfield, 1783-1786, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-May 1786, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

John Bromfield's account statements from 1775-1776 with Waddell Cunningham particularly regarding a 1776 shipment of Flaxseed to Massachusetts, January 29th, 1789, Belfast, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-July 1789, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Inventory listing out Henry Bromfield's account with Rogers and Bromfield, a merchant firm run by his son and son-in-law, November 15th, 1786, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September-December 1786, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Inventory of Henry and Thomas Bromfield's earnings from the estate of Mr. Henderson Inches (either decreed or deceased-handwriting unclear), January 1775-January 1776, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1771-81, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

John Brown Esq. account records with Henry Bromfield from 1768-1773, added in before John Brown is 'estate of' and after is shorthand for 'deceased', account close July 31st, 1789, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-July 1789, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Legal documents pertaining to the recovery of debts issued in London by Joseph Flight against Merchants in Boston naming Henry Bromfield as his acting attorney in Boston, 1772-1773, London, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1773, 5 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Lloyd, James. Bill of Exchange for twenty-six pounds sterling signed over to Henry Bromfield. May 6th, 1768, Boston and London, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1767-68, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Lott, Andrew. Letter to his father Abraham Lott telling him to make the acquittance of a few men including Richard Clarke in Boston, August 28th, 1773, New York, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder:1773, 2 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Multiple authors. Group of merchants petitioning the Governor for their cargo seized by George Watson Esq. for not being lawfully registered, May 1773, Province of Massachusetts Bay, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder; 1773, 4 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Multiple Creators/Signers. Legal document granting power of attorney to Henry Bromfield Senior to procure debts in New England for the firm Rogers and Bromfield ran and

granted by Daniel Dennison Rogers and Henry Bromfield Junior, London 1784, in Miscellaneous Papers from 1694-1792, Call #: N-1939, 7 pages, Box 2, One Folder, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Photograph of the Bromfield Mansion in Harvard, MA, ca. 1850-1854, visible image is 9 x 12 cm, collodion on glass in brass mat and preserver, Call #: Photo.2.018, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Prince, Job. Letter to Edward Clarke, son of Richard Clarke, merchant in Boston about shipments of sugar, and account statements/lists of the same shipment, Monti Christi, 1761, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1760-61, 7 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Receipts and Account listings written to Benjamin Kimball from Henry Bromfield for goods and services performed, 1789-1803, Harvard, 7 pages, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1799-1803 Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Receipt for Henry Bromfield paying Thomas Dunton for the labor/work performed by individuals broken down by week and number of days worked from 1785-86, individuals are only listed by their first names, August 1788, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1787-88, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Receipts for the parts, labor, and construction of Henry Bromfield Senior's building of a house on School Street for his daughter Elizabeth in which he lists out paying various persons who are listed by name when they are men, two unnamed women are listed as paid for labor and an unnamed "negro man", as well as Thomas Dunton's 'man', and it also includes a bill to Sam Dillaway, September 5th, 1785-January 4th, 1786, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September-December 1785, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Receipt of items used for construction for Henry Bromfield bought from Sam & Step Salisbury for 1785-1786, June 5th, 1787, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1787-88, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Rogers and Bromfield. Account statement from 1783-84 for Henry Bromfield Esq. with his son and son and law's business Rogers and Bromfield, 1783-1784, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: March-April 1784, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Rogers, Daniel Dennison. Letter to Henry Bromfield Esq. in Harvard, July 5th, 1785, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-August 1785, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Rogers, Daniel Dennison. Letter to Henry Bromfield Esq in Harvard, September 17th, 1816, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1816-1818, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Series of Bills charging Henry Bromfield for services rendered by Thomas Green, 1786, Harvard, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August 1786, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Thayer, Nathaniel (1769-1840; Minister of Lancaster). "The good man": a Sermon Delivered at Harvard, February 16th, 1820, at the funeral of Henry Bromfield, Esq. who died Feb. 9, 1820, Call #: Box 1820, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
The Good Sermon Bromfield.pdf

Tucker, James. Henry Bromfield's Bill for Ironwork, 1785-76, Harvard, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: January-May 1786, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Tucker, James. Henry Bromfield's Bill for Ironwork, July 27th and August 11th, 1786, Harvard, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: June-August 1786, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Unknown author's 17 pages torn out of bound notebook containing estimates of the maintenance of dependents, estimates of material needs calculated against family composition, conversions for new US money and coins, no date, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: No Date, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston. Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Unsigned and unfinished petition by the British Sugar Planters and others against the Massachusetts Bay Colony, "charging the Northern Colonies with being the agents of France and other Nations, carrying on Commerce in Europe and America for their benefit, and against the interest of their mother country; and suggest there is danger of there becoming by this means independent of it; and therefore they pray that the northern colonies may be prohibited from taking any Sugar, Rum or Molasses from the foreign Colonies." Estimated 1731, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1731-1770, 11 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston

Walker, L. F. Letter to Henry Bromfield Esq. in London, also addressed to Liverpool, April 17th, 1804, Harvard, Massachusetts, Call #: N-1939, Box 1, Folder: 1804, 2 pages, Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.
Bromfield and Clarke Family Papers, 1672-1947 (masshist.org)

Warrant issued to the Sherriff of Worcester County, Massachusetts from New York City on behalf of John Rogers Merchant obtaining debts from Henry Bromfield, 1784, Boston, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: September 1784, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Welch Rogers & Co. Letter to Mr. Henderson Inches with bill from 1775 listed on the back naming funds payable to Henry and Thomas Bromfield, April 2nd, 1777, London, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1771-81, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Winslow, --. Dinner invitation to Mr. and Mrs. Bromfield, January 6th, 1770, Roxbury, MA, Henry Bromfield Papers, 1731-1830, Call #: MS. N-1938, 1 box, Folder: 1731-1770, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Online:

Extract of a letter from one of the Council of Boston, in New-England, to a merchant in London. Article from page 2 of *The Massachusetts Gazette and Boston-Newsletter*, number 3143, 17 May 1764. Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, online. MHS Collections Online: Extract of a letter from one of the council of Boston, in New-England, to a merchant in London. (masshist.org)

Letter from John Bromfield to Jeremiah Powell, 21 June 1775. From the Miscellaneous Bound Manuscripts. Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, online. MHS Collections Online: Letter from John Bromfield to Jeremiah Powell, 21 June 1775 (masshist.org)

Massachusetts Historical Society Collections Accessed while Fulfilling 2022-23 African American Studies Fellowship:

Accessed in-person (made digital copies of):

Bromfield. Henry Junior. Letter to Daniel Denison Rogers bequeathing his inheritance of the Harvard estate and discussing Henry Bromfield's estate, debts, and in heritance, letter is not original but transcribed by donator of collection, April 13th, 1820, London, 9 pages, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 1, folder 21, page, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Rogers, Daniel Denison. Memorandum of Effects belonging to Estate of Henry Bromfield Esq, May 1st, 1820, Boston, 2 pages, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder: 9, 2 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Rogers, Henry Bromfield. Narrative of his sister's life, Elizabeth Bromfield Rogers (born 1797 to Elizabeth Bromfield and Daniel Denison Rogers), for her children after her death,

November 1827, Boston, 20 pages, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder: 19, page, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

"The Bromfield Portraits", a newspaper article clipping, and "To The Editor" regarding Henry Bromfield's portrait, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder 24 Genealogical Papers 1910-1923, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Miscellaneous genealogical materials related to Margaret Fayerweather and the door of the Bromfield Mansion being preserved, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder 28 Genealogical Papers No Date, 3 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Reference to original will of Edward Bromfield, Henry Bromfield's (1727-1820) grandfather willing away Thomas, an enslaved Black man to Henry's grandmother, can be accessed on ancestry.com in the probate records of Suffolk County, 1734, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder 29 Genealogical Papers, 1 page, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Genealogical narrative of Henry Bromfield Pearson living in the original Bromfield Mansion reading all of the many Shakespeare editions that were in his grandfather's library, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder 29 Genealogical Papers, 5 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

List of account debts from former business firms of Henry Bromfield Esq. from the 1780s-90s, 1820, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder 10 Legal and Financial Papers Sept 1820-30, 1 page, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Series of autographs cut out from original 1700s letters of Henry Bromfield and others exemplifying collection donators curation of original letters, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 9, folder 1 Autographs (1 of 3), Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

"The Tea Cup" Newspaper extract reminiscing the Boston Tea Party and with a two-page ad for the Oriental Tea company Following, December 1873, Vol. VI. No. 12, Boston, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 9, folder 6 Printed Material, January 1853-August 1879, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Two Newspaper clippings: one reporting on the burning of the Bromfield Mansion in 1855, the second details Daniel Denison Slade's speech "A Boston Merchant of 1791" on Daniel Denison Rogers at the Bostonian Society, in 1891, Boston, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 9, folder 9 Printed Material, No Date, page, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Slade, Daniel D. Notes describing the layout of the original Bromfield Mansion, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 8, folder 6 Daniel D. Slade Writings, 7 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

Rogers, Henry Bromfield. Letter to his nephew Daniel Denison Rogers in which he recounts "grandpapa had a Black Servant", referencing Othello, who played the fiddle for them in the Kitchen when they visited facilitating a dance party, December 21st, 1831, Boston, Slade Rogers Family Papers, 1672-1933, Call #: Ms. N-2393, box 2, folder 5 Family Correspondence Aug-Dec 1831, 4 pages, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

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