

SLAVERY & FREEDOM in BROOKLINE & MASS.:

Some Recommended Books

Children's & Young Adult books which include people who made daring escapes from slavery and who came to Brookline to speak for abolition:

1. 5000 Miles to Freedom: Ellen & William Craft's Flight to Freedom, Dennis & Judith Fradin [middle school].
2. Two Tickets to Freedom, Dennis Fradin, [on Ellen & Wm Craft] [middle school].
3. Bound for the North Star: true stories, D. Fradin [includes Ellen Craft & Henry "Box" Brown—both w/ Brookline connections: Ellen Craft stopped here on URR, while Henry "Box" Brown spoke in Brookline about his escape].
4. Escape from Slavery: Five Journeys to Freedom, D. Rapaport [includes Ellen Craft & Henry "Box" Brown], [upper elementary/middle school].
5. Henry's Freedom Box Ellen Levine, [picture book] .
6. The Daring Escape of Ellen Craft C. Moore [elementary]

Other children's & Young Adult books on slavery in Mass

1. The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing M.T. Anderson, 2 vol. [YA historical fiction]
2. Prince Estabrook, Slave and Soldier, Alice Hinkle [YA, biography of enslaved Lexington resident who fought at Lexington & won his freedom, NCSS selection]
3. Fortune's Bones: the manumission requiem, Marilyn Nelson [YA] [a CT story/requiem in poetry of a true story of 2 families—1 enslaved & the other slave-owning in CT]
4. Anthony Burns: the defeat & triumph of a fugitive slave, V. Hamilton [YA; biography]
5. Mumbet: The Life & Times of Elizabeth Freeman [biog]
6. Mumbet: The Story of Elizabeth Freeman [biog]

Children's & YA Books on the Underground RR:

1. Freedom Roads: Searching for the Underground Railroad, Joyce Hansen et al [YA; an excellent introduction to the tools & methods of archeological & historical research into this topic]
2. Following Freedom's Star, James Haskins & K Benson [middle school]
3. The Underground Railroad, R. Bial [upper elementary]
4. If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad, Ellen Levine [elementary]
5. Almost to Freedom, V. Nelson et al [elementary] [hist. fiction]

Adult Histories of Slavery & its aftermath in Mass &/or New England:

1. Black Walden, Elise Lemire
2. Black Yankees, William Piersen

3. Slavery in the Age of Reason: archeology at a New England farm, Alexandra Chan
4. The Negro in Colonial New England, Lorenzo Greene
5. Mr. And Mrs. Prince: how a family moved out of slavery & into legend, Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina
6. Disowning Slavery, Joanne Pope Melish
7. Ten Hills Farm, The Forgotten History of Slavery in the North, C. S. Manegold
8. Complicity: How the North, Promoted, Prolonged and Profited from Slavery, Anne Farrow et al
9. Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom; or, the Escape of William and Ellen Craft from Slavery. William Craft [Autobiography/Memoir]
10. Prince Estabrook, Slave and Soldier, Alice Hinkle [biography]
11. Great Slave Narratives ed by Arna Bontemps (include excerpt from William Craft's above memoir)
12. Generations of Captivity, Ira Berlin

TWENTY DOLLARS REWARD

Ran-away from the subscriber on 18th of November last, a Negro man named PRINCE, about 27 years of age, 5 feet 2 inches high, had men's clothes on when he Ran-away.

All Masters of Vessels and others, are cautioned against harbouring or concealing said Negro, as they would avoid the Penalty of the Law.

N.B. It is supposed said Negro is gone to Salem, in order to go Privateering.

Brooklyne, Nov. 30
JOSHUA BOYLSTON

Continental Journal, 1779

will & property of "Goodman" Edward Devotion 1668-1744
of Brookline, MA

In the name of God, amen.

I Edward Devotion of Brooklyn . . being aged and infirm do make and order this my last will and testament. . .

In case my estate prove to be sufficient to pay my just debts and legacies . . .then my will is and I hereby authorize to the Town of Brooklyn toward building or maintaining a school as near the center of the said town as shall be agreed upon by the town.

Property inventory at death:

15 acres	L 310
7 acres	L 105
1 Negrow	L 30
1 cow	L 14
household goods	L 105

* household goods include “waring apparel, beds and bedding, tables, chairs, puter, iron, brass, iron bar”

Edward Devotion was by no means one of the wealthy men of Brookline [Note he was called “Goodman” rather than “Esquire”, because he was not high ranking. Esquire in colonial days was a title, not a reference to being a lawyer.] Yet he made the largest individual bequest to the Town in the 18th c.

The Case of Smallpox in Boston

Smallpox has been one of the deadliest diseases known to humankind. Populations have been decimated and worse. In 16th c. New England, over 50% of Native peoples died. In the 20th c., smallpox killed 300 million people—more than died in all of that century's wars. In 1979, the World Health Organization declared the disease eradicated. S

Smallpox entered a community through the arrival of an infected person and stayed until most people had been infected—and lived or died. Until vaccination, immunity only came to those who had suffered through the disease. In early 18th c. Boston, the Reverend Cotton Mather, Puritan leader and scholar, searched for a means to stop smallpox which had already ravaged Boston several times during Mather's life: 1678, 1690, 1702-03. In 1678, roughly 700 out of Boston's population of 4000 died. In the 1678 epidemic, Mather himself lived through what he termed the "fiery furnace of the smallpox".

Wanting to know the risks to members of his household when smallpox returned, as Mather believed it would, he asked his enslaved man, Onesimus, whether he'd had smallpox, to which Onesimus answered 'yes' and 'no'. Onesimus explained that in Africa yes, his mother had pricked his arm with a tiny amount of smallpox so that no, he did not and could not get the full disease. Surprised, Dr. Mather sought out other first generation Africans, some of whom confirmed the story. A few years later, Mather read a British report that Turks were using inoculation effectively. Rev. Mather shared his discoveries with his friend and colleague, Dr. Zabdiel Boylston.

In 1721 smallpox broke out in Boston. Dr. Boylston immediately began experimenting with inoculation: he gave a small dose of the disease simultaneously to 3 people: his slave Jack, Jack's 2-year-old son Jackey, and Dr. Boylston's own son Thomas, whom Dr. Boylston described as "about six". These inoculations were successful—the 3 sickened, with mild cases of smallpox, and survived. Dr. Boylston began inoculating others. A great outcry arose in opposition to his work, especially among other clergy. By the time the epidemic had waned, Dr. Boylston had inoculated 274, of whom 6 died—less than 2%. Out of the general Boston population, of those who caught the disease, 15% died.

Dr. Boylston's experiment's had succeeded and led to the spread of inoculation. In 1722, Dr.

Boylston published a lengthy medical article on his experiments, titled *An historical account of the small-pox inoculated in New England: upon all sorts of persons, whites,*

1 *Diary of Cotton Mather, 1:451.*

2 For more information on Onesimus.

<http://dubois.fas.harvard.edu/onesimus-fl-1706-1717-slave-and-medical-pioneer-was-born>

3 While Rev Mather wrote about Onesimus and other Africans' knowledge, Dr. Boylston makes no mention of them in his own records.

4 Boylston, Zabdiel, *An Historical Account of the Small-pox Inoculated in New England upon all sorts of persons, whites, blacks and of all ages and constitutions; With some account of the nature of the infection in the natural and inoculated way, and their different effects on human bodies*

Printed for S. Chandler, at the Cross-Keys in the Poultry, London, 1726.

blacks and of all ages and constitutions; With some account of the nature of the infection in the natural and inoculated way, and their different effects on human bodies.⁵

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A Revolutionary in the Smallpox War,”

Boston Globe: May 11, 2003

“When doctors have Dale Boylston introduced smallpox inoculation in Boston nearly 300 years ago, he was denounced by the medical and political establishment. Today, with the threat of smallpox again center stage, he is considered a hero...

Born in 1679, Zabdiel Boylston was trained in medicine by his father and another local physician, Timothy Cutler. He learned by apprenticeship, not at Harvard College or at the European universities, unlike some of his physician colleagues, who disdained his lack of education. In April 1771, a ship from Barbados arrived in Boston Harbor bearing several passengers and crew who were infected with smallpox. Although Gov. Samuel Shute ordered the ship quarantined at Spectacle Island, crew members had already come ashore, and the infection spread.

It was Cotton Mather, the eminent minister, who brought the practice of inoculation against smallpox to Boylston’s attention. After the start of the outbreak, Mather found two letters in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of England, from 1713 and 1716, in which Drs. Emmanuel Timonius and Jacobus Pylarinum, respectively, reported that smallpox inoculation was employed successfully in Turkey. Thinking that this might be used to quash the incipient

epidemic in Boston, Mather wrote a letter about the Royal Society articles to local doctors. Only Boylston was interested . . . ”

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Inscription on Dr. Zabdiel's Boylston's tomb in Brookline MA:

Sacred to the memory of Zabdiel Boylston Esq. Physician and F.R.S. who first introduced the practice of Inoculation into America. Thro' a life of extensive Beneficence, He was always faithful to his word, just in his Dealings affable in his manners, and after a long Sickness in which he was exemplary for his Patience and Resignation to his maker he quitted this mortal Life, in a just Expectation of a happy Immortality.

On the First day of March A.D. 1766, Ætat. 87. With him lies here buried Jerusha, his wife, who died the Fifteenth day of April A.D. 1764. Ætat. 85.

Notes:

Cemetery records from Brookline's Old Burying Grounds state that his enslaved man, named Boston, was buried with him. Years later, other Boylston descendants were buried in the tomb.

FRS is a Fellow of the Royal Society, an organization established to recognize the most eminent scientists in Britain, who are selected by their peers.

5 Ibid.

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“Inoculation”

Cotton Mather studied smallpox for a while,
instead of sin. Boston was rife with it.
Not being ill himself, thank Providence,
But one day asking his slave, Onesimus
If he'd ever had the pox. To which Onesimus replied,
“Yes and No.” Not insubordinate
or anything of the kind, but playful, or perhaps
musing, as one saying to another:

“Consider how a man
can take inside all manner of disease
and still survive.”

Then, graciously, when Mather asked again:

*My mother bore me in the southern wild.
She scratched my skin and I got sick, but lived
To come here, free of smallpox, as your slave.*

Susan Donnelly
New Yorker, August 4, 2003

Questions to consider:

1. How many places in the world contributed knowledge to Dr. Boylston's first experiment?
2. Looking at the title of Dr. Boylston's article on his smallpox experiments, what kinds of people did he

inoculate? Then consider why he chose these 3 particular people to all be inoculated from the same

dose at the same time.

3. Why did most Boston clergy oppose Dr. Boylston's experiment?
4. Analyze the opening narrative ("The Case of Smallpox" with the article from the Boston Globe

Magazine in terms of the actors in the smallpox inoculation effort.

5. What does the tomb's inscription tell us about who is buried there?
6. What can you surmise from the name "Boston," the name of the enslaved man?
7. If you had lived in Boston in 1721 and heard about the first three people inoculated—that they came

down with mild cases of smallpox and that they survived--would you choose to be inoculated? Or

would you choose to take your chances and hope to be one of those who did not come down with

the disease at all?

8. Note that the poem which appeared in the same year as the Boston Globe Magazine article.

Think of

other instances when different sources of American history contain different information which in turn

affects our views of our past.

NAMES OF ENSLAVED BROOKLINERS:

- | | |
|------------|--------------------|
| 1. Dinah | 31. Hagar |
| 2. Venus | 32. Jane |
| 3. Violet | 33. George |
| 4. Bung | 34. William |
| 5. Warwick | 35. Hawkins |
| 6. Pompey | 36. Great David |
| 7. Prince | 37. Reube |
| 8. Boston | 38. John Indian |
| 9. Boston | 39. Tounnaguin |
| 10. Jackie | 40. Coff |
| 11. Moll | 41. Kate |
| 12. Flora | 42. Cuff |
| 13. Dinah | 43. Katherine Cuff |
| 14. Sambo | 44. Jethro |

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| 15. Ackey | 45. Lemon |
| 16. Margaret | 46. Jeremy |
| 17. Adam | 47. Primus |
| 18. Phillis | 48. Peter |
| 19. Cuff | 49. Quaco |
| 20. Kate | 50. Primus |
| 21. Primus | 51. Dinah |
| 22. Ben Boston | 52. Tobey |
| 23. Dinah | 53. Phillis |
| 24. Rose | 54. Dido |
| 25. Peter | 55. Exeter |
| 26. Felix | 56. Seco |
| 27. Kate | 57. Caesar |
| 28. Kent | 58. Jack |
| 29. Venus | 59. Primus |
| 30. Charles | 60. Jenny |

Naming: Owners gave people
them simply as “negro”
their names, generally choosing:

1. place names (e.g., Boston);
2. classical names (e.g., Caesar—to elevate the owners’ status);
3. slave names from the Bible (e.g., Dinah);
(number currently known, 6/2011)
4. diminutive English names (e.g., Jackie)

+ 7 whose owners listed

67 enslaved people

Brown in multiply primary ^

*Research by Barbara B.

some 2ndary sources

Boylston-Prince Slave Ad

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