



## Editorial

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**M**Y first experience with the *QUARTERLY* was a formative one. In 2009, fresh from graduate school, I submitted an essay on the Maine writer Sarah Orne Jewett and “race suicide” anxieties in fin-de-siècle New England. I was pleased to pass muster with the peer reviewers, but the real work began when Lynn Rhoads led me through multiple rounds of revision, challenging me to clarify each sentence as well as the idea behind it. Her rigor and engagement remain unmatched in my experience of scholarly editors to date. She not only improved my writing at a pivotal time, but also provided a crucial model for me these many years later, instilling in me a high regard for the journal and for the editor’s office more broadly. It has been an honor to correspond with her in recent weeks in my new position as Bernard Bailyn Editor of the *QUARTERLY*. Indeed, I have been bolstered by a warm welcome from so many in the community that this publication represents, including Emeritus Editor Bill Fowler; Nick Lindsay and his team at MIT Press; and Bob Allison and the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. I would like to thank the members the Board of Directors of NEQ, Inc. for entrusting me with this position and for their guidance, especially Dick Brown, Chris Jedrey, Megan Marshall, and Mark Peterson. Betsy Klimasmith, my colleague of ten years at UMass Boston, has thankfully retained her post as Associate Editor; I have long benefitted from her mentorship and am delighted by this new chapter of our collaboration. I’m grateful as well to our brilliant Reviews Editor, Sara Georgini, for her galvanizing thoughts on new directions in New England studies and the journal’s role in them. Our intrepid and meticulous graduate assistants, Amy Lin and Grace Wargovich, have

*The New England Quarterly*, vol. XCVI, no. 2 (June 2023). © 2023 by The New England Quarterly. All rights reserved. [https://doi.org/10.1162/tneq\\_e\\_00950](https://doi.org/10.1162/tneq_e_00950).

provided steadying continuity in these first months and remain critical to the QUARTERLY's operation. Finally, I thank my predecessor, Jonathan Chu, who first invited me to the editorial staff five years ago. We wish him all the best in his retirement, though he has graciously remained at work for the journal during this transitional period, which I am tempted to extend indefinitely if only to keep him nearby.

We announce some changes to the Board of Editors as well. First, we gratefully acknowledge the years of service of four members who have completed their terms: Virginia De-John Anderson, Daniel R. Coquillette, Andrew Delbanco, and Mary Loeffelholz. Secondly, I'm delighted to announce two new members, Cornelia Dayton (Professor of History, University of Connecticut) and Robert Levine (Distinguished University Professor of English, University of Maryland). I look forward to convening this group in the coming months and drawing on their expertise and wisdom to shape the journal's next chapter.

In evaluating our charge, I return to the Editorial Announcement of January 1928, in the first number of the first volume of the QUARTERLY. In it, the founding editors note that although the early periods of New England history were by no means "exhausted" as fields of study, they would "need fertilizing." They explain, "History is continually broadening, bringing new aspects of human endeavor within its scope, and each generation must rewrite history from its own point of view." In this, the journal's ninety-sixth year, we renew our commitment to serving as the venue for the best scholarly writing on New England history and literature, both in the areas that have traditionally organized our fields of study and also in those emerging ones that will help us see New England anew. We are eager to welcome the rising generation into the long conversation in these pages as they reckon with history from their own point of view, aiming to bring new aspects of human endeavor within our scope, as the journal's founders hopefully anticipated.

In this number, we are pleased to present two major essays and a newly discovered document with memorandum. In our lead essay, G. Patrick O'Brien traces the life of Flora Lee, a

woman enslaved in Revolutionary-era Massachusetts, meditating in particular on the difficulties presented by incomplete and biased archives. Also in this issue, Cory Higdon explores the conflicts arising from religious liberty in the Providence Plantations, teasing out the formative tensions between freedom of conscience and sociopolitical unity. Finally, Alexander Jordan introduces a previously unknown letter from Thomas Carlyle to Charles Stearns Wheeler, who played a crucial role, alongside Ralph Waldo Emerson, in disseminating Carlyle's work in the United States. Jordan offers an engaging account of these relationships and their significance, along with a transcription of the letter and a scanned image of the manuscript, courtesy of the Berlin State Library.

On behalf of the editorial team, thank you for reading. We look forward to the work ahead.

—Holly Jackson