designed and fabricated by the legendary Boston publisher David R. Godine.

The collection’s two paperbound volumes with heavy card covers are protected by a durable slipcase. These three elements bear different early American colors—Volume One is earthen red, Volume Two deep lime, and the case dark teal. The pages, cut from the finest stock, are two inches longer and wider than standard oblong tunebooks. While this size makes the volumes difficult for singers to handle and it is not clear that the covers can stand up to frequent use, the scale gives the scores a remarkable presence on the page. Cooke has added to the collection’s attractiveness by filling open space with wonderful images of manuscript sources, historic tunebook scores, composer portraits, and splendid gravestone photographs from the Farber Collection of the American Antiquarian Society.

In sum, *American Harmony* is the Rolls-Royce of contemporary tunebooks, a career-long labor of love by a leading scholar of early American psalmody, beautifully produced by the pre-eminent book arts publisher in New England. Its purpose is not to establish a new academic canon for American singing school music, but rather to present Nym Cooke’s considered choice of works from that tradition with the highest possible standards of scholarship, graphic design, and book production. The collection realizes all of these goals with elegance and excellence, but its achievement comes with an unfortunate consequence. Most of today’s revival singers cannot afford a Rolls.


This carefully researched study joins other recent archival work, such as the collection *Salem: Place, Myth, and Memory*, edited by
Dane Anthony Morrison and Nancy Lusignan Schultz (2004), and Elise A. Guyette’s *Discovering Black Vermont* (2010), that illuminate the shadowy history of slavery in early New England. Wall’s contribution adds to our growing knowledge of northern complicity in the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. *Lives of Consequence* refutes the popular notion that slavery in the Massachusetts Province of Maine involved a very few men of wealth who owned a small number of slaves. Undertakings of this sort are especially challenging because so little of the historical record of the lives of the enslaved remain. Still, Wall devotes herself to piecing together the “scattered bits upon bare bones” (13) she can find so readers can gain a better understanding of the black, mixed-race, and indigenous populations in southernmost Maine. She argues that additional research in other coastal towns would provide further evidence of slavery’s “prevalence and impact” (15).

Several settlements had sprung up along the Piscataqua River by the early eighteenth century, consisting of both blacks and whites. Working alongside one another, local residents had confronted and survived “storms that washed away mills, disease that devastated whole families, [and] terrifying Indian raids and massacres” (16). Enslaved blacks were denied the benefits whites enjoyed for their role in overcoming these threats to their communities’ survival. Wall’s research confirms the presence of at least 500 blacks during the period, most of whom were slaves. She has found evidence of 186 slave owners along with some fifty-seven whites who may also have been complicit in the slave trade. Though these may seem like small numbers, Wall contends that for such a small geographical area the institution of slavery had a much greater impact than has heretofore been recognized. In 1712, she records, the expanse contained an estimated 800 people in 180 households. In twenty-two to thirty-seven of these households, forty-three to sixty-four percent, contained enslaved Africans. Their presence undoubtedly had an impact on families and on the towns where these bondmen and women lived.

The biggest challenge of the project, Wall notes, was to provide such quantified estimates of slave populations. Still, what is certain is that these slaves, however modest their numbers, offered their owners a chance to free up their time, which enabled the owner class to progress from their place as part of a domestic market to participating in a larger business economy. Wall estimates that by 1771, there were between fifty and one hundred enslaved blacks living from Kittery Point to the outer reaches of the original Berwick, though she acknowledges that many blacks were unaccounted for. This is
especially true of women, since poll taxes only counted males, and records failed to include men over age forty or forty-five. Nor did they count children. Another problem in quantifying the enslaved population is the duplication of slave names. Wall points out that in moving from one document to the next it cannot be ascertained which “Phyllis” or “Caesar” is being referenced. Moreover, slaves might be named in some wills but in inventories years after one owner dies they may be listed as “a Negro girl” or “a mulatto man.” A further impediment to our knowledge of slavery’s extent is the common practice of using such generic group references as “all my Negroes” or “the rest of my Negroes.” Tax records only needed to record the numbers of slaves, not their identity.

Typically, numbers of slaves have been tallied as a function of Maine’s total population, an estimate of one or two percent depending on the time period. However, if slavery’s presence is viewed in terms of numbers per household, Wall maintains, there could be a significant difference. The impact of slave labor, she contends, needs to be judged not in terms of the general population but on how the labor, skills, and knowledge of hundreds of the enslaved affected households and businesses. “Viewed in that way,” Wall argues, “percentages are higher and significance more evident” (21). Seen this way, as much as thirty percent of the total 180 households in the region had slaves at one time. According to estimates in 1764, the numbers of slave owners could have been close to twenty percent. Since black people generally were counted instead of slaves, records document a total of 510 households containing 106 blacks who were sixteen years old or above. Wall reports that “The above compilation suggests a higher percentage but the complexity of the data defies proof” (22).

Unlike neighboring Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Kittery was slow to develop a central town. Instead, it contained a collection of small rural settlements along the shore of the Piscataqua River. With a scattered black population, there would have been fewer opportunities for slaves to socialize with other blacks or form like-minded communities, thereby demonstrating the impact of this geography. Wall adds that there may also have been a language barrier since slaves were brought from different countries in West Africa. Still, elements of African cultural practices, from culinary methods to knowledge of medicines and animal husbandry, as well as traditional skills of basketmaking and other crafts, must have been present.

In perhaps the most engaging section of *Lives of Consequence*, Wall provides a sketch of the lives of a number of the enslaved in
seventeenth-century Kittery, even as she reminds us that “we will never be able to shine a full spotlight” on “hundreds of other intriguing Black people in early Kittery and Berwick records” (34). One such figure was known as “Black Will,” who, in Upper Kittery in 1682, was among three men, one woman, and “one little Neager” (34) listed in the estate inventory of a Nicholas Shapleigh. Not long after Will was signed over to Nicholas’s widow, Alice, he began earning money farming and doing odd jobs for others in the area. A later deed reserved three acres for Will’s use. Over time and through various enterprises, Will accumulated “a significant amount of money” (35). In 1695, however, he was accused of fathering a child with a white woman. Perhaps because the mother, Alice, was later brought up on new charges of “bastardy” with another white man, there is no record of Will being punished. In fact, Alice and Black Will eventually lived together, and he saved enough money to buy a sizable piece of property. This is only one among several sketches Wall draws of enslaved blacks whose lives defy prevailing stereotypes. No doubt if the historical record permitted us to learn more, our knowledge of the actual lives of blacks in the Massachusetts Province of Maine would be still richer.

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The broad scope of essays from this very readable and insightful collection pays tribute to David Reynolds’s landmark Beneath the American Renaissance on the eve of its thirtieth anniversary. Edited by Harold K. Bush and Brian Yothers, this book illuminates the spiritual dimensions of the American Renaissance and extends Reynolds’s scholarship into new domains. Brian Yothers’s introduction demonstrates the “spiritual has been trending” (3) and looks back to a tradition of literary and religious scholarship to challenge the secularization thesis that posits a diminishment of religion as American literature embraced modernity.