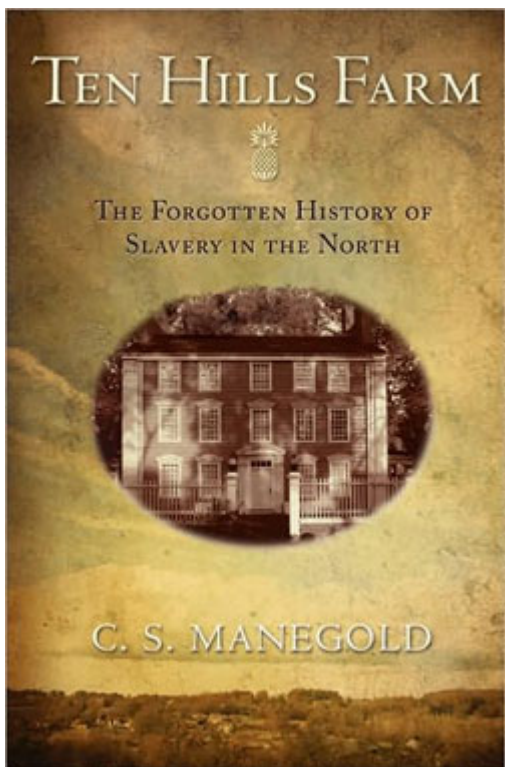
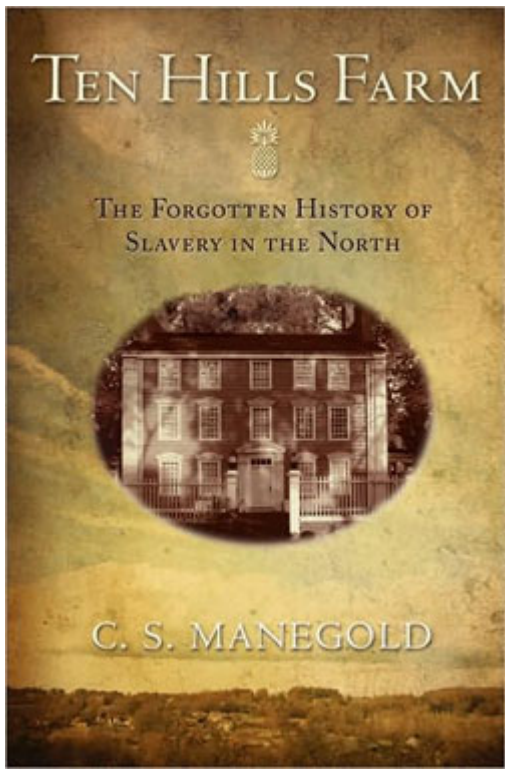


Unknown beginnings: Slavery in the North



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The African Burial Ground in New York City was the final resting place for both

free and enslaved African Americans from the 1690s to 1790s. Since the site's rediscovery in 1991, the American public has slowly started to question the assumption that slavery in the United States existed only below the Mason-Dixon Line. In *Ten Hills Farm*, C.S. Manegold elaborates on the "forgotten history" of Northern slavery and argues that Americans need to move faster to "close this gap" in their understandings of slavery. Manegold hopes her work will narrow this void and ensure that textbooks can no longer dismiss "references to slavery in the North with parenthetical acknowledgement" (269).

Manegold is not alone in studying this topic. The last twenty years have seen a significant push toward understanding the role of slavery in the North. Gary Nash, Jean Soderlund, Shane White, Joanne Pope Melish, Graham Hodges, Leslie Harris, Jill Lepore, Ira Berlin, and others have all sought to revive this forgotten history, one that New Englanders, as Joanne Pope Melish argues, rewrote in a fit of historical amnesia in the nineteenth century.

As an award-winning journalist, Manegold crafts a narrative not stuffed with jargon but filled with lively prose that not only links the reader to past events but illustrates their connection to modern-day issues. The book follows the story of Ten Hills Farm, a tract of land along the Mystic River near Medford, Massachusetts, from its first European owner, the famous John Winthrop, in 1631 up to the American Revolution. Although the farm plays a role in her narrative, Manegold is far more interested in the dynamic characters who owned, lived on, or otherwise came in contact with the property. Through an exploration of these people, Manegold argues that slavery in the North (though she solely focuses on New England) did not exist as a benign institution. Rather, those who supported slavery in Massachusetts had the same traits and values as those who supported it in the seemingly "harsher" Caribbean; they were one and the same.

Manegold divides her text chronologically into five parts. The first tells how John Winthrop came to Massachusetts, rose to power as governor, and purchased Ten Hills as a country retreat. Only three years after Winthrop acquired his estate, the Pequot War introduced slavery to New England in the form of Indian captives. While some remained as slaves in Massachusetts, the colonists also exported many to the Caribbean. This early link between New England and the Caribbean created an enduring connection that, as Manegold argues, allowed for the importation of the first African slaves to Massachusetts in 1638. This link serves as an important fixture (and rightly so) throughout her narrative (43).

The second part describes the transfer of Ten Hills from an indebted John Winthrop to his son, John Winthrop Jr. Manegold constantly reminds the reader in this section that all actions in New England took place with slavery as a backdrop. For example, John Jr.'s rise to the governorship of Connecticut occurred at the same time he held at least one African slave at Ten Hills. In this section, Manegold also introduces William Ryall who immigrated to Massachusetts in 1629 and eventually settled with his family along the Maine coast. Ryall becomes increasingly important as his grandson Isaac Royall

altered the spelling of the family name and bought Ten Hills in 1732.

In the third part, Isaac Royall, like many other New Englanders, established trade links with the larger Atlantic world and in 1700 left Massachusetts for Antigua, where he created a successful sugar plantation. While in Antigua, Royall continued to maintain familial and trade connections in New England and eventually purchased Ten Hills with the intent to become, like most other Antigua sugar planters, an absentee landlord. Royall brought twenty-seven of his slaves from the island to Massachusetts when he and his family finally left Antigua in 1738.

The most powerful link between slavery and Ten Hills Farm came during the years of Isaac Royall Jr.'s ownership. As Manegold argues, Isaac Jr. participated in the slave trade and expanded his land holdings throughout New England. Isaac Jr. sought to replicate his childhood home in the Caribbean and built his fortune on the backs of his slaves in the same way that his family had done in Antigua. At his height, Royall owned as many as 138 slaves on his combined New England holdings (192), which he used to partially endow the Royall Professorship of Law at Harvard Law School.

The penultimate part of Manegold's narrative begins in the years after the French and Indian War when colonists began to protest the "slavery" the British imposed through such regulations as the Stamp Act. Manegold argues that slaves in Massachusetts picked up on the colonists' rhetorical use of slavery and freedom and used this revolutionary ideology to question their own enslavement. She retells the story of Crispus Attucks as well as the dozens of slaves who filed freedom suits in Massachusetts courts.

While blacks petitioned for freedom in the years before the American Revolution, Isaac Royall Jr. wanted nothing to do with war. By 1775 he had decided to leave Massachusetts and return to Antigua. Before he could leave, the war began and he and his family escaped to Canada and eventually England, where he died in 1781. After the war had displaced the Royalls, Ten Hills Farm became a military camp which hosted New Hampshire troops led by John Stark, George Washington, and others. Although Manegold cannot accurately track the disposition of many of the slaves who worked for Isaac Jr., she does discuss perhaps his most remembered slave, Belinda. An elderly slave manumitted by Royall and promised support in her old age, she successfully forced the state to guarantee that pension from the profits of the confiscated Royall estate.

The final part of Manegold's work, called "The Legacy," describes how the Daughters of the American Revolution acquired Ten Hills Farm in 1898, and its eventual transfer to the Royall House Association in 1907. More importantly, Manegold argues that in the future, Americans should remember that Winthrop's "City Upon a Hill" was built with slave labor. Just as she hopes to do throughout her book, she argues that Americans must recognize the importance of slavery to colonial New England. Some have begun to do this, such as the current holder of the Royall Professorship at Harvard, Janet Halley, who read

all of the names of the Royall's slaves as part of her acceptance speech to acknowledge this part of New England's past.

Manegold sets out to show the relationship New England had with slavery and in doing so readily admits that she is not a historian and will "leave the more pointillist detailing to scholars with more training in the field than I, and perhaps more patience for the minutiae upon which the finest scholarship is built" (xv). Although one does not need to be a historian to accomplish this task, Manegold's lack of engagement with the larger historiography of race and slavery leaves what could be an even more powerful book flat in many places.

For example, she attributes the solidification of slavery in New England to an interest in trade, wealth, and an engagement with the larger Atlantic slave economy. While this is of course true, Manegold's explanation largely ignores the larger racialized struggles over land, community, and power that whites and Indians fought over for the first eighty years of settlement, which directly related to slavery. While she does acknowledge that Indians became the first New England slaves, her discussion of Indians showcases not a negotiated relationship which evolved over time but one where whites victimized the unsuspecting Indians. Even when she does show Indians as actors in their own right, for instance in King Philip's War, she portrays a stereotypical portrait of them with "faces painted (and) bodies greased" where they aimed to impose "suffering and chaos" upon the whites in retribution for years of persecution (91). The intertwined and often volatile relationship whites and Indians formed could have been more powerfully developed, allowing the reader to truly understand why both African and Indian slavery became a part of New England life (45-48).

Manegold's work could have also dealt far more with New England slaves instead of those who owned them. Indeed, the first serious mention of slaves does not appear until page forty-one with the preceding pages devoted almost solely to John Winthrop. Although Manegold runs into some serious source issues in determining how the slaves functioned at Ten Hills, the slaves themselves seemed largely overshadowed by the lives of the white men and women who lived alongside them. Just as the Royall House Association recently received a grant to incorporate more of the African American story into their interpretative mission, it would have served Manegold's argument well to have tried to more centrally incorporate the slave's story. In the fourth part of her work, where she does accomplish this to a greater extent, her narrative becomes both more powerful and more applicable to the study of slavery.

In the end, Manegold produces a vivid and compelling case which highlights the need for both academics and the general public to understand not only the role slavery played in the North but its relationship to other American colonies as well as the larger Atlantic world.