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## Puritan Acts and Monuments

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PART III

*Puritan Afterlives*

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## CHAPTER 10

*Puritan Acts and Monuments**Jonathan Beecher Field*

What can we learn about Puritanism by looking at monuments to Puritans? For a town with a reputation for ancestor worship, Boston has surprisingly few memorials to its Puritan Founders. There is a statue of John Winthrop in the Back Bay and a statue of John Endicott in the Fenway. However, noted Puritan antagonists Anne Hutchinson and Mary Dyer both enjoy large memorials in prime locations on the grounds of the Massachusetts State House – impressive for women exiled and executed, respectively, by the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Hutchinson's ally, Henry Vane, Jr., has a statue just inside the Boston Public Library. Thus, there are more statues of Antinomians in Boston than of their orthodox antagonists, as of this writing.

For scholars interested in American Puritanism, public statuary is not a popular resource. The majority of scholarship on these monuments in Boston appears in books and pamphlets surveying Boston statuary at large.<sup>1</sup> However, by considering these statues as a material archive, in Boston and elsewhere, we can see patterns of memory and forgetting that exist in tension with the printed historiographic archive. Indeed, statues of Puritans located well beyond New England's borders may have as much to tell us about the legacy of Puritanism in the United States as those located in the city founded by Puritans. Considering public monuments from the late Victorian era to the early Cold War years may seem like a perverse contribution to a volume concerned with the New Puritan Studies. However, this chapter aims to read this archive against a more familiar print archive to reveal ways that the narrative of this settlement has always been unsettled.

Variations of an iconic Puritan figure are prominently displayed in New York and in Philadelphia, and replicas of Saint-Gaudens's forbidding Puritan preacher are scattered across the United States. No such likenesses appear in an outdoor public place in Boston. With the exception of Dyer's 1959 monument, the statues that constitute this ironic contrast are part of

a broader national phenomenon of “statue mania.” As Erika Doss details, “statue mania erupted in the United States from the 1870s to the 1920s,” because public monuments offered a way for post-Civil War America to “reimagine what Benedict Anderson terms the ‘affective bonds of nationalism.’”<sup>2</sup> This post-Civil War period was not one receptive to the faith or words of the Puritans in Boston’s intellectual history, and Boston’s citizens found other figures to honor besides the founding generation of ministers. At the same time, on a national scale, the figure of the Puritan offered the fantasy of a single and coherent point of national origin. These statues of iconic Puritan figures offer a way to reimagine and perform the affective bonds of nationalism.

Statues can and do participate in this work of reimagination, but in complicated ways. As Doss points out, the monuments for 9/11 and Vietnam reflect and drive a consensus narrative around those traumatic events for the nation.<sup>3</sup> Statues do not offer any kind of definitive or authoritative narrative of the past, but they do have a powerful ability to shape those narratives. As we will see, public monuments honoring the first generation of English settlers in New England reflect local and national ambivalences about the value and meaning of these men and women to subsequent generations of Americans. A survey of these monuments reveals that there was a nineteenth- and twentieth-century historiographic conversation about seventeenth-century New England carried out in granite and bronze, and in presences and absences. This monumental conversation sometimes anticipates, sometimes complicates, sometimes contradicts, and sometimes echoes the conversations about this period carried out in ink and paper that are more familiar to scholars of New England Puritanism.

Figurative statues can seem to represent comfortable municipal values – quite often they represent important white men on horseback – but they also can represent dissensus, or at least social change. A statue is a monument to the person it represents, and it can represent a kind of secular canonization. But a statue is also a monument to the people who cause it to be built and dedicated. Many municipal statues can be read as markers of one group or another becoming powerful and legible, and thus able to be represented in the same medium as generals and presidents. A statue honoring an Irish patriot that sits on the Fenway in Boston honors that patriot and his struggle, but it also registers the power of the community who caused it to be built. The Hutchinson and Dyer statues exemplify this pattern. The Hutchinson statue was a register of the political and financial power of women’s clubs to place a monument to the most prominent women of the first generation of English settlement on the

State House lawn. It would be hard to claim the same kind of political agency for Quakers in the late 1950s, but it is notable that the statue's dedication coincides with the 300th anniversary of the martyrdom of Quakers at the hands of the Bay Colony. The most powerful aspect of statues may be their ability to create the illusion of historical consensus out of trauma and turmoil.

Public monuments thus suggest a compulsory municipal consensus history, and they offer an attractive way to rescript a national narrative. At the same time, statues offer a challenge to the familiar temporalities of written Puritan historiography. Recent scholarship in literary history has challenged the implicit dominance of linear chronology in literary history and in classroom teaching.<sup>4</sup> Scholars might construct a linear chronology and put Sacvan Bercovitch next to Perry Miller on a library shelf, and then add Lisa Gordis and Meredith Neuman, and so forth, but such revisionism is very hard to accomplish in granite or bronze. So, for instance, we have a statue of Anne Hutchinson, dedicated in 1922, and in 1937, a young Edmund Morgan writes "The Case Against Anne Hutchinson," rehearsing the reason for her exile as a criminal by the standards of the Bay Colony at the time. But Morgan's scholarship does not put a statue of John Cotton on the State House lawn.<sup>5</sup>

If historiography moves slowly, statues, as a rule, do not move at all. The process of creating a statue commemorating a given figure in a given place is different in every instance, but it involves, almost inevitably, a range of interactions among citizens, politicians, private donors, and others. When these entities succeed in dedicating a statue, we have what amounts to a lay narrative of a given moment in the past, a narrative articulated at the moment a new statue is dedicated. Statues persist as material forms of these moments in public landscapes of the present. Paradoxically, statues also occlude the contested circumstances that may have attended their origin. Statues thus represent not so much a consensus history as a consensus antiquarianism we encounter every day. Paying attention to this consensus, and its iterations over time, reveals a narrative of New England Puritanism in the streets of Boston and beyond that is messier and more contested than the evolving scholarly conversations concerning these figures.

### **John Winthrop**

The oldest of the Puritan statues in Boston is of the Bay Colony's first governor, John Winthrop. The bronze statue, by Richard Saltonstall

Greenough, is a bronze copy of a marble statue Greenough created for Statuary Hall in Washington, DC. The marble version was dedicated in 1876. The bronze version is dated 1873, but was not formally dedicated until 1880. The statue shows Winthrop in an elaborate Elizabethan collar, with a Bible in one hand and a rolled up copy of the Bay Colony's charter in the other. Statuary Hall offered an opportunity for each state of the Union to memorialize prominent figures from its history in the United States Capitol Building. According to the 1864 law, each state of the union was to furnish statues of no more than two distinguished residents.<sup>6</sup>

After much discussion, Winthrop and Samuel Adams emerged as the Bay Colony's two representatives. Some states have chosen to update their representative statues, either out of a sense of uneasiness with the figures originally chosen, or because other, more compelling figures later emerged. For instance, in 2009, Alabama replaced Jabez Lamar Monroe Curry with Helen Keller.<sup>7</sup> Marble Winthrop remains in the Hall of Columns in the Capitol in DC, but his bronze counterpart has had a more peripatetic life in Boston. The bronze was dedicated in 1880, and located in Scollay Square, the current location of Government Center. Its dedication was in honor of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. It stood on a tall pedestal in Scollay Square, at the heart of one of Boston's busiest intersections at that time.<sup>8</sup>

However, the statue was displaced from its original location in Scollay Square due to subway construction in the late 1890s, and it was eventually removed entirely. In 1903, the city of Boston offered the statue to First Church of Boston. Winthrop's statue was reinstalled on the grounds of the First Church in 1903. A fire destroyed the church building in 1968, and the statue was damaged by falling debris. An ambitious rebuilding program required relocating Winthrop again, and now, shorn of his plinth, he perches uneasily on a ledge of the new First Church Building erected in 1972. The statue sits near the entrance to a preschool operated by the First Church of Boston, which is now Unitarian-Universalist. An onlooker could get the impression that the Bay Colony's first governor has been put on time-out by the current leadership of the church he helped to found. This awkward juxtaposition of a memorial honoring Winthrop, a founding parishioner, standing outside a building that now houses a congregation that he would not have understood to be a church indicates the complicated texture produced by intersections of monumental, historical, and institutional narratives. The prevailing historiographic narrative for Massachusetts's churches is declension. The ideals of 1630 become the compromises of 1662, and soon enough we find ourselves with a Protestant

ethic instead of a religion. At the same time, the institution that was the First Church of Boston, celebrated by Edward Johnson and Cotton Mather, understandably sees this evolution in more positive terms:

First Church is a paradox . . . Yes, we are the oldest church in Boston, established in 1630. Yet after the great church fire of 1968, we built the newest and most innovative church structure in Boston in response. In this sense, we are a living symbol of Unitarian Universalism – sensitive to the past, but not bound by that past into narrow and lifeless creeds. We respect tradition, but we seek religious truth that reveals itself in the future, not the past.<sup>9</sup>

This statement from the First Church about itself on its web page is an artifact somewhere between print historiography (as a brief narrative of the church's history) and the inscription on a sculpture (we might consider this "about" statement as a caption for the building itself). The storyline communicates a simultaneous embrace and disavowal of any Puritan legacy: it retains the name of "First Church," which inevitably invokes this founding generation, even as it dismisses the faith of the people who founded this church as "narrow and lifeless." Winthrop's statue, which found its way to this church by happenstance, mediates between these two narratives. The speech dedicating the marble version of the statue gives a sense of what Winthrop was intended to represent on behalf of Massachusetts, and also possibly why the statue has been treated with less than total veneration in the ensuing years. At its dedication, George F. Hoar elaborates on Winthrop's mode of leadership: "No legions flushed with foreign conquest demanded that he should lead them across the Rubicon to found an empire on the ruins of his country. No milk of the she-wolf mingling with the streams of his blood made him the fit founder of an asylum for a clan of banditti." For Hoar, Winthrop is the most complete embodiment of the Puritan ethos, even as "No other American so nearly resembles Washington."<sup>10</sup> Such a man is an understandable object of veneration by an establishment Yankee politician like Hoar writing in 1876, but given the changing ethnic makeup of the city of Boston in the late nineteenth century, and especially the political ascendancy of Irish Catholics, it is not surprising that Winthrop moved from a location of municipal prominence to one of ecclesiastical obscurity.

### **John Endecott**

Joining Winthrop among orthodox Founders commemorated in stone or bronze is John Endecott. If one were making a pantheon of first-generation



New England settlers, John Endecott would be significant, but not prominent. He was an early settler, part of a small group that settled at Salem before Winthrop's party arrived on the ship *Arbella*. He is perhaps most notable as the inspiration for Hawthorne's short story, "Endecott and the King's Cross," which describes how Endecott mutilated the English flag by removing Saint George's Cross from it, on the grounds that it was a Popish relic. He was active early in his career against Thomas Morton's Merrymount settlement and late in his career against the Quakers. He also allowed the regicides Edward Whaley and William Goffe to escape, in spite of orders from Charles II to apprehend them. It is a solid career for an early Bay Colony Puritan, but hard to rank among theologians such as Cotton, Eliot, and Shepard in terms of historical influence. However, Endecott has a statue, and these other men do not, for a very simple reason: one of Endecott's relatives donated the money for the statue. As the inscription indicates, the statue is a "BEQUEST OF GEORGE AUGUSTUS PEABODY, ESQUIRE, OF DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS."

The timing of the statue is suggestive. Peabody died in 1929, or not long after the Hutchinson statue was dedicated, and just before the Massachusetts Bay Colony tercentenary in 1930. From nearly a hundred years later, it appears as if public opinion was divided between those reluctant to honor the anniversary of a settlement populated by people whose Puritan faith had become a byword for grim, repressive, and joyless tendencies in American culture, and those who felt that even if the Puritans were, indeed, puritanical, their settlement still warranted respect and recognition. H. L. Mencken's repeated use of the word "puritan" to characterize all that was mirthless and prudish in American culture bolstered one camp, while local Yankee civic pride nurtured the other.<sup>11</sup> We see this conflict in a 1930 review essay Samuel Eliot Morison published in the *New England Quarterly* lamenting that while he faces the task of reviewing the three separate biographies of Anne Hutchinson appearing that year, it is

typical of New England celebrations that in this tercentennial year there should be not a single new life of sainted Founders such as Winthrop, Dudley, Endecott, Wilson, Cotton, Eliot and Shepard – all of whom want modern biographies badly – and three of the lady whom all the sainted Founders excepting Cotton, regarded as an unmitigated nuisance and dangerous serpent in their Puritan Canaan.<sup>12</sup>

While it remains something of a speculation, it seems as if Peabody may have intended the statue of his forebear as a granite rejoinder to the bronze statue of the unmitigated nuisance Hutchinson, dedicated in 1922.

At the same time, it's worth bearing in mind that in this case as well as others, a single person was able to take private funds and use them to create public art on public land. In the intervening years, the process has become more formal. Now the purview of the Boston Art Commission, the process for creating and locating statues involves multiple layers of proposals, a review board, aerial photographs, and comments from abutters. The document outlining the guidelines for simply proposing a new public artwork in Boston runs to eight pages. Even as scholars such as Mike Davis lamented the privatization of public space in the United States during the late twentieth century, privately funded public art has a much longer history.<sup>13</sup>

### Henry Vane

Winthrop's rival Henry Vane, Jr., was the next Bostonian of the founding generation to be honored with a statue. It is in the entrance of the Boston Public Library. The statue was funded by Dr. Charles Goddard Weld (1857–1911), a collector of art and a major benefactor of both the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Peabody Essex Museum. The main focus of his collecting was Japanese art, but he provided the funds to purchase the statue of Vane for the library. Library trustee James Freeman Clarke (1810–1888), a Unitarian minister, “admired Vane as a defender of civil liberty and toleration.”<sup>14</sup> In the absence of any other date associated with the Vane statue in the Boston Public Library's own *Handbook to the Art and Architecture of the Boston Public Library*, it appears that the Vane statue was part of the library when the McKim building opened in 1895.

Vane enjoys a prominent spot in the entrance of the Boston Public Library. This prominence is magnified by the remarkable absence of other figures from seventeenth-century Boston represented in the library. Vane, an Englishman who spent less than two years in New England, is better known as a regicide who signed Charles I's death warrant. Vane himself was beheaded after the Restoration. He is the only figure from the first wave of English settlement visually represented in the art and architecture of the Boston Public Library building. Winthrop and Eliot are among the hundreds of names of distinguished writers, scientists and statesmen (the names are overwhelmingly male), but it is Vane who gets pride of place. In spite of an institutional connection from these settlers embraced by the nearby Unitarian First Church of Boston, Clarke, the Unitarian minister, favored Vane as a symbol of the resistance to Puritan theocracy embodied by men like Winthrop and Eliot. At the same time, and in keeping with the overwhelmingly male composition of the people recognized in and on the McKim building, Clarke lobbied for

Vane, and not Hutchinson or Dyer. The inscription on Vane's statue does point to an interesting connection to Dyer's memorial. It reads:

SIR HENRY VANE  
GOVERNOR OF THE  
COLONY OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BAY 1636  
BORN 1612 BEHEADED 1662  
AND ARDENT DEFENDER OF CIVIL LIBERTY AND  
ADVOCATE OF FREE THOUGHT IN RELIGION  
HE MAINTAINED THAT GOD, LAW, AND PARLIAMENT ARE  
SUPERIOR TO KING

In smaller lettering, the inscription continues:

THIS STATUE WAS PLACED HERE AT THE REQUEST OF  
JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE, DD AN HONORED CITIZEN  
OF BOSTON WHO NOBLY LABORED FOR THE ABOLITION  
OF SLAVERY IN AMERICA

There is no evident connection between Vane and abolition, but the statue of Mary Dyer was also funded by a donor with strong anti-slavery instincts. The connection between Antinomians and abolitionists seems more intuitive than historical – slavery was not a significant part of the economy of the Bay Colony in the 1630s, and Samuel Sewall's 1700 *Selling of Joseph* (a pamphlet response to pro-slavery pamphlets by John Saffin and Cotton Mather) marks the first prominent intervention by a Puritan on the question of slavery. However, Vane and Dyer's adherence to progressive movements of their day, not to mention their shared martyrdom, make them compelling to later generations of Boston progressives.

### **Anne Hutchinson**

Vane's associate Anne Hutchinson was the next Puritan settler commemorated in Boston. Anne Hutchinson's statue has enjoyed the stability that her antagonist Winthrop enjoyed in life. The living Anne Hutchinson was harassed and exiled and then re-exiled herself even as Winthrop remained ensconced in Boston, but their memorials show a reversal of fortune. Hutchinson's statue is on the State House lawn, facing Beacon Street, across and slightly down Beacon Street from Saint-Gaudens's Shaw Memorial, the most famous statue in Boston, thanks to Robert Lowell and Matthew Broderick.

If the Winthrop statue suggests an enactment of a familiar founding narrative, Hutchinson's statue tells quite a different story. The statue was sculpted in 1915 and dedicated in 1922, and funded by gifts from the Anne Hutchinson Memorial Association and the State Federation of Women's Clubs. Hutchinson's statue honors the memory of this Antinomian dissident, but it also serves as a kind of monument to a new political agency some women were embracing in the early years of the twentieth century. Anne Hutchinson combines a compelling story of courage with relatively few known details, so her story is one that has been co-opted by her posthumous admirers, claiming her variously as a Quaker, or Transcendentalist, or suffragette avant la lettre. In this vein, women's clubs claimed Anne Hutchinson as "America's First Clubwoman." A 1912 *New York Times* article celebrating early American women introduces her this way: "Even in New England there soon arose a woman who was prepared to defy the whole board of Puritan ministers. Ann Hutchinson was the first club woman in America, and she stirred Boston to its foundations." As the article explains, summarizing the recently published "Pioneer Mothers of America," Hutchinson was "intelligent, kindly, charitable, as well as courageous and outspoken[,] . . . with a power of sarcasm and of logical reasoning that picked flaws in the phariseism, the sanctimonious pretense and hypocrisy that were more or less unconsciously fostered by the theology that these austere, self-justifying men had fashioned from the teachings of the lowly Nazarene." Thus, this narrative explains, "When the club of women began to meet twice a week at Hutchinson's house, the ministers felt it was time to take violent measures."<sup>15</sup> To refer to Hutchinson's conventicles, which did include men, as a "club," involves doing some violence to the definition of the word, but there are salient echoes. Notably, the club movement of the early twentieth century created a space for women to exercise political agency outside of an individual domestic sphere.<sup>16</sup> By virtue of her discussions of sermons, or, more precisely, the objections to her meetings, she was thrust into the public and political conversations of the colony. Hutchinson thus makes a far better forerunner for the twentieth-century clubwoman than other women of her generation. The Hutchinson statue memorializes the emerging political leadership of early twentieth-century women as much as it celebrates women's religious leadership in the seventeenth century.

### **Founders Memorial and Others**

The more generic Founders Memorial offers a more upbeat version of early Massachusetts history than Hutchinson's statue, albeit in a less

prominent location. The Founders Memorial is a relief in the same style as Augustus Saint-Gaudens's famous Robert Gould Shaw-Massachusetts 54th. Memorial. The Shaw Memorial faces the Hutchinson memorial from the other side of Beacon Street, while the Founders Memorial is few hundred yards down Beacon Street, and facing toward the Boston Common. It is an allegorical panel, depicting William Blackstone, one of Boston's first English residents, welcoming John Winthrop's party to the New World. Native Americans, in a crouched position, are situated behind Blackstone. One of the challenges of sculpting figures from the seventeenth century is that often there are no surviving images of the person to be represented. Thus, the "Independent Man" on the dome of the Rhode Island State House represents Roger Williams, but in spirit only. The sculptor of the John Harvard statue in Harvard Yard faced the same challenge. Blackstone was a rather obscure figure, and, as with most people of his day, there is no image that survives. In the absence of a model for Blackstone, the sculptor modeled his features on James Michael Curley, the mayor of Boston. Curley was a legendary – indeed notorious – figure in twentieth century urban politics, an archetype of the city machine politico with a mastery of patronage. He was also a powerful symbol of the political ascendancy of Irish Catholics in the Boston politics.

In effect, the Founders Memorial seems to represent a synthesis of the ethnic pride and the establishment narrative that are manifested in Boston statues like those of Christopher Columbus, Leif Eriksson, and Tadeusz (Thaddeus) Kosciuszko. The obverse of the monument features quotations from the famous Massachusetts leaders John Winthrop, William Bradford, and James Michael Curley himself. The integration of Winthrop and Bradford manifests a longstanding tension in historical memory between Plymouth, the first major English settlement, and Massachusetts, the larger settlement that eventually absorbed Plymouth. Curley's inclusion – or, rather, his insertion of himself into this narrative – reflects the shifting balance of power in Boston politics from Protestant Yankees to Irish Catholics, who dominated Boston political offices in the first half of the twentieth century. A generation earlier, in 1890, the John Boyle O'Reilly Memorial Committee raised funds to honor this Irish patriot who settled in Boston after being exiled from his native country. The impulse of that memorial was to honor O'Reilly, obviously, but also to claim urban space for an Irish American political narrative. Here, instead of demanding space for an Irish legacy, Curley claims his city's founding narrative for himself, and by extension, other Irish Americans.

At the same time, Curley's presence in the Founders Memorial reflects how malleable the Puritan past could be in any future present. There is nothing that could be more overtly ancestor-worshipping than a Founders Memorial, and yet the memorial affirms the stature of a twentieth Irish American politician whose ancestors immigrated from Galway. Curley's ancestors, had they encountered compatriots of the Puritan Founders of Boston, would likely have been at home in Galway when the region was besieged in 1651 to 1652 by Puritans sent there by Oliver Cromwell. Curley's engagement with Boston's Puritan legacy points to the surprisingly complicated ethnic politics of remembering Puritan Boston. If we read statues like those to O'Reilly or Columbus or Kosciuszko as reflections of the pride of one or another group of ethnic Americans, we can read the popularity of Puritan memorials far beyond Boston as a reflection of a different kind of ethnic pride, or an effort to instantiate Puritan Boston as the foundational settlement of a normatively deracinated America.

The most recent statue commemorating a figure from seventeenth-century New England is of Mary Dyer. This statue was dedicated in 1959, and was sculpted by Sylvia Shaw Judson, herself a Quaker. This statue is the most prominently situated of any of the statues mentioned here, and it is certainly the most striking from a contemporary aesthetic perspective. Where the earlier statues are more strictly realist, the Dyer statue is quite stylized. The Dyer statue also shows the beginnings of a more formal review process for public statuary in Boston: there was a competition among sculptors to select the winning design under the auspices of the State Art Commission. The earlier statues under review do not seem to have undergone such a formal juried process.

Beyond being a Quaker, Judson was one of the more prominent sculptors represented in Boston statuary. Her "Spirit of Electricity" statue in Chicago is something of a modernist icon, and she is also responsible for the "Bird Girl" statue in Savannah, Georgia. The Dyer statue was made possible by a \$12,000 bequest from Zenos Ellis, a non-Quaker who was a descendant of Mary Dyer.<sup>17</sup> Ellis was the son of a prominent Vermont abolitionist, and so we see the same affinity between abolition and Antinomianism evident in the commissioning of Vane's statue. As in the case of Endicott, we also see that monumental commemoration can be a question of having descendants with the means and inclination to do so. As the saying goes, (printed) history is written by the winners. In the case of monumental history, it is written by those with the money and the inclination to build statues.

Dyer also joins Sir Henry Vane as one of the two death-penalty victims memorialized with a Boston statue. Vane, however, died in England at the hands of a restored Stuart monarchy. The worst the Massachusetts Bay Colony did to him was bring him to tears, as legend has it. His statue resides in a nook of the public library. However, Mary Dyer was condemned to death – twice – by the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Her statue stands on the lawn of the building that houses the direct institutional descendant of the body that condemned her to death: the Great and General Court of Massachusetts.

The location of the statue on State House grounds suggests an effort to right a wrong – or at least to apologize for it. The commemoration of a death-sentence victim for something (religious belief) that most reasonable people now find shockingly unjust has strong resonance in mid-twentieth-century Boston. The bequest for the statue dates back to 1944, so Dyer's statue echoes the 1927 executions of Sacco and Vanzetti, enacted by the same court that delivered Dyer's death sentence. The statue's inscription reads:

MARY DYER  
 QUAKER  
 WITNESS FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM  
 HANGED ON BOSTON COMMON 1660  
 "MY LIFE NOT AVAILETH ME  
 IN COMPARISON TO THE  
 LIBERTY OF THE TRUTH".

As of this writing, these are the monuments to members of the founding generation extant in Boston proper. There are monuments to John Harvard in Charlestown and Cambridge, but Winthrop, Endicott, Vane, Hutchinson, and Dyer are the individually honored figures from this era, as well as a general monument to the Founders collectively. As we have seen, any number of historic, geographic, or genealogical factors can impinge on the creation or survival of a particular statue, but, taken in sum, it seems as if Boston is wary of celebrating the values of its Founders. Endicott and Winthrop, the two orthodox Founders so honored, were both magistrates; John Cotton, Thomas Shepard, John Wilson, and their ministerial brethren have yet to be thus recognized. Conversely, all three of the monumentalized dissidents of the founding generation are prominent in a New England context because of their religious commitments. If Boston's municipal self-image involves ideas such as freedom and

revolution, it is difficult to square that image with censorious men in big black hats.

### **Beyond Boston**

Ironically, the places to find iconic memorials to an ur-Puritan figure are far from Boston. Just as the absence of these figures in Boston is a function of historical context, so, too, is their presence elsewhere. Close to home, any individual Puritan might carry too much historical baggage, while on a national stage, the Puritans' unimpeachable firstness outweighs these factors. This firstness is both spurious and racist. It is, however, a popular notion outside of Boston and in academic debates about national-origins narratives.

The evidence for a version of this enduringly coherent national origin emerges in monumental form outside of Boston, and even outside the New England states settled by the Puritans. This narrative is visible in the peculiar career of the statue of Deacon Samuel Chapin, a relatively obscure figure who lived and died in the Puritan outpost of Springfield, Massachusetts. A commission executed by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, the statue was dedicated in Springfield in 1887.<sup>18</sup> After repeated incidents of vandalism, the statue was moved from a busy and crowded spot in the heart of Springfield to a more remote location near the city's new art museum. In this much of the story, there are echoes of the career of Winthrop's statue: A more or less iconic Puritan figure is moved from a position of prominence to relative obscurity. In both of these cases, we might read the displacements of Winthrop and Chapin as evidence of a sense of the declining relevance of men like these to the lives and experiences of an ever more heterogeneous Massachusetts public in the late nineteenth century.

At the same time, however, and as another response to a more heterogeneous United States, we see Saint-Gaudens's statue enjoy another life, beyond New England. In the process of executing the commission, Saint-Gaudens elected to fashion his sculpture of Chapin as an embodiment of a typical Puritan, even shading into parody.<sup>19</sup> Seventeenth-century New England is a visually impoverished era, and writing from more than a hundred years later, it is tautology to assert that an icon is iconic, but *The Puritan*, as the statue came to be known, has all of the familiar features of a stock Puritan figure: broadbrimmed hat with a buckle, a cloak, walking stick and giant Bible. In a similar gesture a few years earlier, in 1885 the New England Society of New York unveiled *The Pilgrim*, a statue by John



Quincy Adams Ward similar in conception to Saint-Gaudens's. It is in Central Park, on the east side of the park between 72nd and 73rd Streets. The statue shares a hat and walking stick with Saint-Gaudens's but omits the cloak and Bible. The inscription on a statue on the Upper East Side of Manhattan reads: "TO COMMEMORATE THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS ON PLYMOUTH ROCK, DECEMBER 21, 1620."

Ironically, Saint-Gaudens's irreverence in producing an almost cartoonish figure rendered it a commercial success. The New England Society of Philadelphia commissioned a slightly reworked version of the Chapin statue in 1903, and placed it in front of Philadelphia's City Hall in 1905. In this iteration, it is titled *The Pilgrim*, and bears a simple inscription:

PILGRIM  
PRESENTED TO THE  
CITY OF  
PHILADELPHIA  
BY THE NEW ENGLAND  
SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
1905

The outline of this statue became the de facto logo of most chapters of the New England Society in the early twentieth century.<sup>20</sup> Of more immediate interest to Saint-Gaudens, the bronze statuettes of this sculpture proved popular and lucrative. A 31-inch version sold for between \$350 and \$500 at outlets that included Tiffany and Company, and today there are also full size plaster copies at the Art Institute of Chicago and Boston's Museum of Fine Arts.<sup>21</sup> In 1920, *The Pilgrim* was relocated to East Fairmount Park, northwest of central Philadelphia.

These iterations aside, there are statues of orthodox Bay Colony Founders in Philadelphia and New York more prominently situated than in Boston itself. In Boston, statues representing opponents of this orthodoxy hold pride of place. This paradox suggests something about the complicated legacy of the Puritan past. On a national scale, the Puritans matter because they were here first (more or less) and represent a coherent, deracinated beginning where a normative white Anglo-Saxon Protestant identity can transcend the ebbs and flows of subsequent waves of immigration. In New York or Philadelphia or Chicago, nuances and details of Antinomian Controversies and Half-Way Covenants are subsumed into a forbidding looking man in a big hat who represents a putative communal past.

### Statues as Archives

This brief survey of Boston's public commemorations of the city's early inhabitants of Boston indicates that the process of historic memorialization is both political and capricious. Statues of figures from the past address the desires of people in a subsequent present, to the bemusement of people in a subsequent future. As an ironic coda, the most recent monumental intervention in the history of seventeenth-century Boston comes in the form of a statue not of a seventeenth-century minister or magistrate, but of a twentieth-century historian who worked hard to preserve the memory of the founding generation. Samuel Eliot Morison's statue was dedicated in 1982, on the Commonwealth Avenue Mall, at the Exeter Street intersection. It bears the legend SAILOR HISTORIAN. It was funded by the Henderson Foundation, a private philanthropic organization describing itself as "[s]olely devoted to the enhancement of the physical appearance of the city of Boston and immensely contribut[ing] to an effort of preserving the local cultural and historic values."<sup>22</sup> Consistent with this desire to "preserve the local cultural and historic values," Morison wrote from a very conservative perspective, even by the standards of his day. Wilson, Cotton, and the others might never get their own memorials in bronze or granite, but their historiographic champion has.

Reading statues as an archive against a traditional archive of primary sources and historiography may well be an exercise in reading antiquarianism against history. History, as some historians will tell you, is a question of change over time. A statue is a question of stasis over time. However, these two different relations to temporality suggest that the tension between them can offer new insights. If Boston statues and New England print culture demonstrate different versions of squeamish and uneasy efforts to come to terms with a Puritan heritage on a local level, national representations of this same culture in the form of monuments offer the comfort of a presumably coherent national narrative. It is only appropriate that statues of English expatriates should fare better once they are themselves expatriated from their adopted home.

### Notes

1. Allan Forbes and Ralph M. Eastman, *Some Statues of Boston: Reproductions of Some of the Statues for which Boston is Famous, with Information Concerning the Personalities and Events So Memorialized* (Boston, MA: State Street Trust, 1946); Allan Forbes and Ralph M. Eastman, *Other Statues of Boston: Reproductions of Other Statues of Boston as a Sequel to our Brochure of 1946 Entitled "Some Statues of Boston"* (Boston, MA: State Street Trust, 1947); Walter Muir Whitehill, *Boston Statues* (Barre, MA: Barre Publishers, 1970).

2. Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling In America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 20.
3. Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 127–131; 143–147.
4. See Jordan Alexander Stein, “American Literary History and Queer Temporalities,” *American Literary History* 24 (2013), 855–869.
5. Edmund Morgan, “The Case against Anne Hutchinson,” *New England Quarterly* 10 (1937), 635–649.
6. The Architect of the Capitol, “About the National Statuary Hall Collection” (last updated October, 10, 2012): [www.aoc.gov/capitol-hill/national-statuary-hall-collection/about-national-statuary-hall-collection](http://www.aoc.gov/capitol-hill/national-statuary-hall-collection/about-national-statuary-hall-collection). Accessed January 24, 2015.
7. The Architect of the Capitol, “The National Statuary Hall Collection”: [www.aoc.gov/the-national-statuary-hall-collection](http://www.aoc.gov/the-national-statuary-hall-collection). Accessed April 1, 2015.
8. Boston Art Commission, “Governor John Winthrop”: [www.publicartboston.com/content/governor-john-winthrop](http://www.publicartboston.com/content/governor-john-winthrop). Accessed January 24, 2015.
9. First Church Boston, “About”: [www.firstchurchboston.org/about](http://www.firstchurchboston.org/about). Accessed Jan 25, 2015.
10. George F. Hoar, *Presentation of Statues of John Winthrop and Samuel Adams: Speech of Hon. George F. Hoar, of Massachusetts, in the House of Representatives, December 19, 1876* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1876), 6–7.
11. For instance, H.L. Mencken, in his essay “Puritanism as a Literary Force,” opines “The Puritan’s utter lack of aesthetic sense, his distrust of all romantic emotion, his unmatchable intolerance of opposition, his unbreakable belief in his own bleak and narrow views, his savage cruelty of attack, his lust for relentless and barbarous persecution— these things have put an almost unbearable burden up on the exchange of ideas in the United States, and particularly in that form of it that involves playing with them for mere game’s sake.” H. L. Mencken, “Puritanism as Literary Force,” in *A Book of Prefaces* (New York: Knopf, 1917), 201–202.
12. Samuel Eliot Morison, untitled review essay, *New England Quarterly* 3 (1930), 358.
13. Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New York: Vintage, 1992).
14. Forbes and Eastman, *Other Statues of Boston*, 83.
15. “Splendid Record of Daring among American Women,” *New York Times* (July 7, 1912), 53.
16. Kristen Marie Delagard, *Battling Miss Bolshevik: The Origins of Female Conservatism in the United States* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), usefully discussed the culture of women’s clubs in the United States during the early twentieth century.
17. George A. Selleck, “New Mary Dyer Statue Unveiled in Boston,” *Friends Journal* 5, xxviii (August 8, 1959), 445.
18. Erika Doss, “Augustus Saint-Gaudens’s The Puritan: Founders’ Statues, Indian Wars, Contested Public Spaces, and Anger’s Memory in Springfield, Massachusetts,” *Winterthur Portfolio*, 46, iv (Winter 2013), 238.

19. Doss, "*The Puritan*," 249.
20. Doss, "*The Puritan*," 245.
21. Doss, "The Puritan," 246.
22. The George B. Henderson Foundation, "Logo": <http://thehendersonfoundation.com/images/logo.gif>. Accessed January 26, 2015.

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