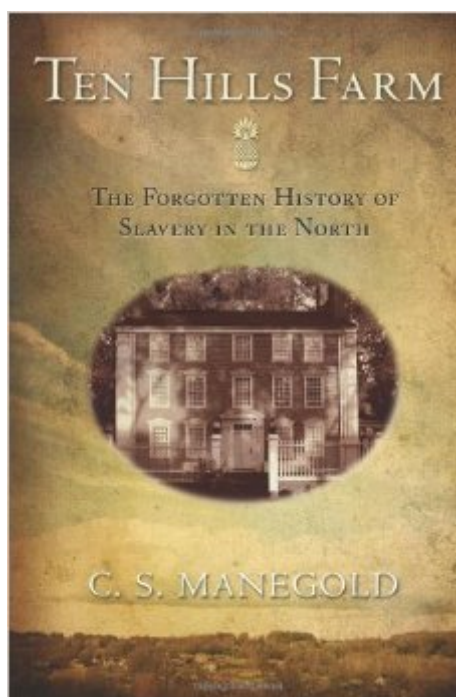


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Ten Hills Farm: The Forgotten History Of Slavery In The North



Synopsis

Ten Hills Farm tells the powerful saga of five generations of slave owners in colonial New England. Settled in 1630 by John Winthrop--who would later become governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony--Ten Hills Farm was a six-hundred-acre estate just north of Boston. Winthrop, famous for envisioning his 'city on the hill' and lauded as a paragon of justice, owned slaves on that ground and passed the first law in North America condoning slavery. In this mesmerizing narrative, C. S. Manegold exposes how the fates of the land and the families that lived on it were bound to America's most tragic and tainted legacy. Challenging received ideas about America and the Atlantic world, Ten Hills Farm digs deep to bring the story of slavery in the North full circle--from concealment to recovery. Manegold follows the compelling tale from the early seventeenth to the early twenty-first century, from New England, through the South, to the sprawling slave plantations of the Caribbean. John Winthrop, famous for envisioning his "city on the hill" and lauded as a paragon of justice, owned slaves on that ground and passed the first law in North America condoning slavery. Each successive owner of Ten Hills Farm--from John Usher, who was born into money, to Isaac Royall, who began as a humble carpenter's son and made his fortune in Antigua--would depend upon slavery's profits until the 1780s, when Massachusetts abolished the practice. In time, the land became a city, its questionable past discreetly buried, until now. Challenging received ideas about America and the Atlantic world, Ten Hills Farm digs deep to bring the story of slavery in the North full circle--from concealment to recovery.

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Customer Reviews

A couple years ago, reporters from the Hartford Courant published a book on slavery in Connecticut called *Complicity: How the North Promoted, Prolonged, and Profited from Slavery* and in my immature self-righteous belief that the North did little compared to the South, I refused to read it. I figured it was a white, liberal self-flagellation. Fast forward to a couple of weeks ago and I encountered the book this report focuses on, *Ten Hills Farm, The forgotten history of slavery in the North* by C. S. Manegold. This time I was ready to learn. And I did. Ms. Manegold smacks my northern arrogance around. She confronts it directly. "This matter of station has consistently and perhaps conveniently been confused with ideas about the supposedly "gentle" culture of slavery as it evolved in the North. Yet that assumption breaks down with even the scantiest analysis. The great shibboleth of northern slavery is that it was somehow "benign," softer than its southern cousin, even vaguely "familial" in some way, as though all could gather happily around a kitchen table, a master at the head. Yet the reality for these slaves could not have been more at odds with that fine fantasy. For them, the most fundamental truth was this: Whites who ruled their lives at Ten Hills Farm and in the big houses along Brattle Street were, in many cases, the very same men and women who had ruled their lives on warmer shores." p.180 There is nothing gentle and familial about the ownership of humans. Even worse was it was ongoing from nearly the founding of the colony of Massachusetts. At first Governor Winthrop, founder of Ten Hills Farm in modern day Medford, Mass. owned native American slaves.

The perception of most Americans about slavery is that it existed only in America south of the Mason Dixon line. Simply not true. The author therefore does all of us a great service to report that beginning in the 1630's and extending into the early days of the 1800's, there existed a lot of slavery in the North, which no doubt will astound most Americans. Unfortunately, with the plethora of books that are published, finding a good read on any subject becomes a bit like panning for gold, but with dust jacket kudos from distinguished Harvard professor, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. who says about the book, "A feat of historical excavation... ." and from Pulitzer Prize winning author ("A Nation Under Our Feet"), Steven Hahn, who says this book is "Riveting and wrenching... one of the best works of history I've read in a long time.", there surely is a great basis for going to your favorite purveyor to get a copy. Readers will find that, unlike the typical historical tome, this author's prose is highly readable and digestible. I still recall from my history classes from grade school through college that slavery was a Southern phenomenon only. Indeed, the North was populated entirely by people such as William Lloyd Garrison (December 13, 1805 - May 24, 1879), the prominent New England

Abolitionist, journalist and social reformer. He was best known as editor of The Liberator, a radical abolitionist newspaper. However, my history lessons did teach that President Lincoln was quite cagy, until his Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863 about his stance on slavery, focusing on his primary objective, keeping the Union together.

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