

Change Has Come to America

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Boston, an area of land that juts into the Atlantic Ocean in the northeastern United States, was founded by English Puritans for political and religious reasons.¹ Wishing to separate themselves from the Church of England these first settlers established a self-governing settlement during the early seventeenth century.² The port of Boston was among the largest of the New World and Boston's early colonists turned to the sea for a livelihood and became shipbuilders, merchants, seamen, and fishermen.³ Most manufacturing took place in individual households and many lived and worked on farms where men and women worked together.⁴ By the 1790s, however, signs of an emerging manufacturing economy appeared.⁵ Key individuals helped spark the early changes. Samuel Slater, a wealthy merchant of Rhode Island, constructed the first American machine for spinning cotton thread and launched his Steam Cotton Manufacturing Company in nearby Pawtucket.⁶ In 1793, Massachusetts-born Eli Whitney, invented the cotton gin.⁷ This machine gave a tremendous boost to both the southern plantation

¹ "Boston," Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010, available from <http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-9106092>; Internet; accessed 25 March 2010.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Linda Brannon, *Gender: Psychological Perspectives* (New York: Pearson Education, Inc., 2008), 49.

⁵ Jacqueline Jones et al., eds., *Created Equal: A History of the United States* (New York: Pearson Education, Inc., 2009), 267.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

economy and the fledgling northern industrial system.⁸ The result was a national economy and the movement of development and reform that would usher in the modern United States.⁹

Driven by improvements in transportation, increasing commercialization, and the rise of factories, powerful economic changes affected ordinary Americans and their everyday routines at home and on the job.¹⁰ The great augmentation of business in the nineteenth century was accompanied by the growth of an advertising industry; it was this century, primarily in the United States, that saw the establishment of advertising agencies.¹¹ In Boston, businesses like Kendall's, the West-End Printing Office, J.E. Farwell & Co's, and Rockwell & Rollins produced a variety of paper products including cards, books, circulars, and pamphlets.¹² A collection of eight advertisements produced by these companies during the 1860s offer valuable insight into the Industrial Revolution in America and reveal the scientific, educational, and humanitarian undertakings that flourished in the years after the American Revolution.¹³ The language, graphics, and manner of these eight advertisements prove that in Boston, Massachusetts, urbanization was in full effect and as a result of business stimulated economic security the city saw an

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid, 401-402.

¹⁰ Ibid, 313-318.

¹¹ "advertising," Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010, available from <http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-9003817>; Internet; accessed 3 March 2010.

¹² "[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860]," An American Time Capsule: Three Centuries of Broad­sides and Other Printed Ephemera, The Library of American Congress, 2010, available from <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbpe:@field%28DOCID+@lit%28rbpe06603900%29%29>; Internet; accessed 7 March 2010; although labeled as six advertisements, there are actually eight in the collection.

¹³ Jones, Created Equal, 234.

expansion of political interest and awareness, formal schooling, leisure activities, and technological progress during the nineteenth century.

The region stretching from New England to New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania had all the ingredients for an American Industrial Revolution: water power from rushing rivers, capital from successful merchants, and a dense population offering both workers and consumers.¹⁴ By the 1790s the acceleration of trade in the west, combined with the disruption in trade from Europe, had stimulated the emergence of manufacturing.¹⁵ In Boston, increasing commercialization and the rise of factories diminished the family operated businesses that had previously dominated the colonial economy.¹⁶ This shift is evident in the eight advertisements of Kendall's, the West-End Printing Office, J.E. Farwell & Co's, and Rockwell & Rollins as they repeatedly feature the words "job" and "business" while not once eluding to small shops, farming, or fishing.¹⁷ Now that wage earning had become the norm, workers under the supervision of a boss replaced apprentices and journeymen who had formerly labored alongside a master artisan.¹⁸ These workers performed a single task many times a day instead of using their specialized skills to see a production process through to completion.¹⁹ While skilled tradesmen were alarmed at the prospect of being reduced to mere "hands" tending machines, the sons and daughters of many New England farmers eagerly took new jobs in the mills.²⁰ They appreciated the opportunity to escape close family supervision, to live

¹⁴ Ibid, 267.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ "Boston."

¹⁷ "[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860]."

¹⁸ Jones, Created Equal, 401-402.

¹⁹ Ibid, 313-318.

²⁰ Ibid.

on their own, and to earn cash wages.²¹ Some farm hands and manual laborers considered factory work, no matter how grueling and ill paid, preferable to plowing fields, digging ditches, and hauling lumber.²²

The dominance of the factory system in Boston is demonstrated by the second advertisement of the collection as it begins “It is a well established fact that those who succeed the best in any Department of Business, Advertise Liberally.”²³ As advertising is deemed a necessity, this statement indicates the presence of a widely varied market that featured many different businesses for the consumer to choose from. Further insight is provided by the eighth advertisement of the collection, which informs readers to “LOOK OUT FOR THE BUSINESS ADVERTISER. 2000 COPIES PER WEEK Distributed Gratis Through The City.”²⁴ A publication involving business had reached a level of prevalence that allowed it to attract an audience of approximately two thousand people each week. It is clear that Boston had rapidly become a center of mechanized textile production in the United States.²⁵

References throughout the eight advertisements of Kendall’s, the West-End Printing Office, J.E. Farwell & Co’s, and Rockwell & Rollins to political leaders, political ideologies, and institutions reveal the developing nationalism in Boston. After the Revolutionary War, many Americans set out to build a national culture and a shared identity.²⁶ They began with names. Everywhere, people christened new towns, counties,

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ “[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860].”

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Jones, *Created Equal*, 313-318.

²⁶ Jones, *Created Equal*, 239.

streets, and schools and renamed old ones.²⁷ Of all the new names, those honoring individual war heroes, like George Washington, became the most popular.²⁸ Throughout the advertisements of the collection “Washington Street” was mentioned over ten times which shows the importance of this particular road in Boston.²⁹ This main street was likely named in honor of George Washington, the “Father of Our Country,” which indicates the level of popularity that he had achieved in Boston. George Washington had been an American general and commander in chief of the colonial armies in the American Revolution and subsequently the first president of the United States in 1789.³⁰

The growing patriotism in Boston is further illustrated through the popular political ideologies during the nineteenth century. The fifth advertisement of the collection, for Rockwell & Rollins, Steam Power Printers & Stereotypers, claims “Especial attention to fine Color Printing.”³¹ Consideration of the particular word “Color” in this advertisement leads to an interesting conclusion. In 1783, Noah Webster, an American schoolteacher, published his *American Spelling Book*.³² Noah Webster believed that “as an independent nation, our honor requires [the members of the United States] to have a system of our own, in language as well as government.”³³ Rejecting conventions from England that appeared to be affections, words such as *colour* and

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ “[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860].”

³⁰ “Washington, George,” Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010, available from <http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-9108779>; Internet; accessed 7 March 2010.

³¹ “[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860].”

³² Jones, *Created Equal*, 239.

³³ Ibid.

labour lost their silent *u*, *theatre* became *theater*, and *plough* was shortened to *plow*.³⁴

This seemingly simple act by Noah Webster is symbolic of the newly claimed independence of the United States and the pride that came with it. The third advertisement is another example of the devotion of American citizens to their country. The West-End Printing Office features a drawing of an eagle clutching a banner in its talons that contains the words “E. Pluribus Unum,” which in Latin means one out of many.³⁵ Because the advertisement of the West-End Printing Office was aimed at the public of Boston it is likely that the beliefs of the owners of the business were not uncommon. The phrase, used on the Great Seal of the United States and various coins, offered a strong statement of the American determination to form a single nation from a collection of states.³⁶ Over the years, “E. Pluribus Unum” had also served as a reminder of America’s bold attempt to make one unified nation of people from many different backgrounds and beliefs.³⁷

In the fourth advertisement of the collection the steam job printing office of J.E. Farwell & Co’s boasts that “In this Branch WE do Defy ALL Competition!!!”³⁸ While in the context of the advertisement the word branch probably referred to a local segment of J.E. Farwell & Co’s, the word has more significance when analyzed on a national scale. In May of 1787, just years before the advertisements of the collection were produced, a gathering had been called in Philadelphia to consider commercial matters and to propose

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ “[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860].”

³⁶ “U.S. Treasury – FAQs: Portraits&Designs of Coins,” United States Department of the Treasury, May 2008, available from <http://www.treas.gov/education/faq/coins/portraits.shtml#q7>; Internet; accessed 13 March 2010.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ “[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860].”

improvements to the Articles of Confederation.³⁹ The private meeting soon became a full-fledged Constitutional Convention, to design and propose an entirely new structure for governing the United States.⁴⁰ In 1788, the text was ratified binding the thirteen states and into a national government that consists of executive, legislative, and judicial branches that are designed to ensure that no one branch of government is able to subordinate the other two branches.⁴¹ The small word “Branch,” and the previous references show an emerging interest in federal government solidified by the unity and shared values amongst the varying people of the United States.

An increase in available reading materials in Boston due to the lower cost of printing and paper led to a higher literacy rate and a greater emphasis on education during the nineteenth century. The fourth advertisement of collection, for J.E. Farwell & Co’s, illustrates this point as it states, “... any amount of reading which can conveniently be put upon this size, we will print for 90 Cts. PER THOUSAND!!! And all other JOB PRINTING at equally Low Rates!”⁴² On a basic level, the fact that J.E. Farwell & Co’s advertised through printed word in lieu of oral methods supports the idea that the general public in Boston was literate. The company’s ability to sell products cheaply implies that there is a high demand for printed products and that related and competing printing businesses exist. In fact, by 1760 the British colonies had more presses per capita than in any country in Europe.⁴³ A total of twenty-nine printing establishments squeezed out

³⁹ Jones, *Created Equal*, 251-261.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² “[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860].”

⁴³ Jones, *Created Equal*, 155.

eighteen weekly newspapers and countless public notices.⁴⁴ Industrial technology lowered the cost of printing and paper, while making much larger press runs possible, thus allowing a designer's work to reach a wider audience than ever before.⁴⁵ High literacy rates among the population created a new community of readers, a far-flung audience for periodicals as well as for a new, uniquely American literature.⁴⁶

In addition, the existence of educational institutions in Boston during the 1860s is revealed through the same advertisement, which makes a reference to "School Street."⁴⁷ As Washington Irving, the author of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," confirmed in 1820, "Over no nation does the press hold a more absolute control than over the people of America, for the universal education of the poorest classes makes every individual a reader."⁴⁸ The great increase in reading matter had spread education to the middle classes, especially to women.⁴⁹ Members of the growing middle class wanted to provide their children with schooling beyond basic literacy instruction and some Americans believed that a growing nation needed new forms of tax-supported schooling.⁵⁰ Harvard University was founded in 1636 to provide Boston with religious scholars and ministers and though it retained the most prestigious position throughout the century, a host of other major institutions of higher learning were founded as well.⁵¹ Boston assumed a

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ "graphic design," Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010, available from <http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-242766>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2010.

⁴⁶ Jones, *Created Equal*, 352-355.

⁴⁷ "[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860]."

⁴⁸ Jones, *Created Equal*, 352-355.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 380-381.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ "Boston."

focal point in the religious and educational life of the United States and became synonymous nationally with scholarship refinement.⁵²

Following in the manner of European models, the enjoyment of free time through social interaction and entertainment were budding in Boston. The second advertisement of the collection notifies readers that “Particular attention [will be] given to Printing VISITING & FRIENDSHIP CARDS.”⁵³ The composition of the advertisement expresses the popularity of these accessories—first, the advertisement draws the reader’s eyes to the stanza with a graphic and then it places an emphasis on its production of visiting and friendship cards through the use of capitalized letters. Ladies, gentlemen, and even young children used visiting cards.⁵⁴ The principal use of a visiting card, at least the one for which it was originally invented, was to be left as an evidence of one person’s presence at the house of another.⁵⁵ The taste for these elegancies was undoubtedly borrowed from Paris; we find there a whole generation of designers, who devoted their tools entirely to cards and addresses for the fashionable world, theatre and concert tickets, and programmes.⁵⁶

The third advertisement of the collection, for the West-End Printing Office, makes a brief note of programmes, which nonetheless reveals the presence of amusement and diversions at that time. By the end of the eighteenth century, professional theater was well established and such groups as the American Company were giving regular

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ “[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860].”

⁵⁴ Emily Post, “Etiquette: Cards and Visits,” Great Books Online, 2010, available from <http://www.bartleby.com/95/10.html>; Internet; accessed 4 April 2010.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Robert Chambers, “Visiting Cards of the 18th Century,” Hillman’s Hyperlinked and Searchable Chambers’ Book of Days; available from <http://www.thebookofdays.com/months/june/5.htm>; Internet; accessed 5 April 2010.

seasons.⁵⁷ Although there was no lack of enthusiasm for developing an indigenous American theater at the end of the eighteenth century, the plays written and produced during that period proved lifeless and derivative, often little more than adaptations of the English successes.⁵⁸ Other diversions had begun to develop as well. Even before the Civil War, the game of baseball had been taken over by urban workers such as the volunteer firemen who organized the New York Mutuals in 1857.⁵⁹ Enthusiasts of baseball denied its origins in British children's games and concocted the myth of Abner Doubleday, who allegedly invented the game in 1839 in Cooperstown, New York.⁶⁰ Concurrent to these developments was the establishment of the Philharmonic Society of New York in 1842, the oldest major symphony orchestra in the United States.⁶¹ In addition to performing the standard central European repertoire, The Philharmonic championed contemporary music and its success paved the way for future orchestras like the Boston Symphony in 1881.⁶²

Advancements in technology during the nineteenth century improved the efficiency of communication and transportation facilitating the movement of goods, people, and ideas from the East to the West.⁶³ Printing is mentioned countless times within the eight advertisements of Kendall's, the West-End Printing Office, J.E. Farwell & Co's, and Rockwell & Rollins and as a selling point company owners often advertised

⁵⁷ "theatre, Western," Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010, available from <http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-274702>; Internet; accessed 13 April 2010.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ "sports," Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010, available from <http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-253556>; Internet; accessed 13 April 2010.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ "musical performance," Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010, available from <http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-64488>; Internet; accessed 5 April 2010.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Jones, *Created Equal*, 314.

the speed at which a large quantity of pamphlets and other items could be executed. For example, the second advertisement reads “*We will promptly execute all kinds of Cards, Circulars, Bill Heads &c., which you may be pleased to order*” while the fourth advertisement boasts “we will print for 90 Cts. PER THOUSAND!!!”⁶⁴ The importance of quickness and substantial numbers reveal the progress of technology at the time. In the United States, improvements in the printing press, which permitted the publication of penny newspapers, and the development of the telegraph system broke through the barriers of intellectual provincialism and made everybody almost instantaneously aware of what was going on throughout the country.⁶⁵ Using the printed word, opinion-makers spread new ideas and values across regional boundaries.⁶⁶

Road and water transport were developed out of a need to improve the circulation of goods and people.⁶⁷ The third advertisement of the collection mentions “LEVERET STREET, BOSTON.”⁶⁸ The word street hints at the developing frequency of travel in Boston. By 1810, several thousand corporations were building roads up and down the East coast.⁶⁹ Traveling by stagecoach, wagon, boat, and horseback, Americans seemed to be on the move constantly.⁷⁰ New Englanders, especially, pushed west in search of new opportunities.⁷¹ Further down the page, the third advertisement of the collection lists the

⁶⁴ “[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860].”

⁶⁵ “United States,” Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010, available from <http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-9111233>; Internet; accessed 4 April 2010.

⁶⁶ Jones, *Created Equal*, 352-355.

⁶⁷ “city,” Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010, available from <http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-9106247>; Internet; accessed 18 March 2010.

⁶⁸ “[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860].”

⁶⁹ Jones, *Created Equal*, 314.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

printed products available for sale at the West-End Printing Office: "... Labels, Tax Bills, Circulars, Programmes, Railroad Tickets."⁷² The reference to railroad tickets suggests new methods of transportation and at long last, a link to distant lands. The American railroad came into existence because the location of the largest colonial ports denied the easy access to the interior that seemed essential for growth as the country spread inward.⁷³ Boston's role came through investment in distant and detached railroads.⁷⁴ The merchants who were interested in extending Boston's trade inland had invested actively in the 1830s, and by the 1840s they had connected all of New England to their port.⁷⁵

As the eight advertisements of Kendall's, the West-End Printing Office, J.E. Farwell & Co's, and Rockwell & Rollins suggest, Boston quickly became what may be the most diversified combination of educational, cultural, and scientific activities amid the bustling commercialism that characterized much of the United States in the nineteenth century.⁷⁶ The city became the Mecca for persons, from abroad or from the "less civilized" parts of the country outside of New England, who sought opportunity.⁷⁷ While the collection of advertisements chiefly points to the astonishing expansion of Boston, Massachusetts, the collection simultaneously acts as a reflection of the success of the American experiment in self-government. Founders of the United States like George Washington, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton were inspired by the ideals of English philosophers like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau who

⁷² "[6 advertisements of Boston printing, 1860]."

⁷³ "railroad," Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica Online, 2010, available from <http://www.search.eb.com/eb/article-9110739>; Internet; accessed 20 March 2010.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ "Boston."

⁷⁷ Ibid.

argued the value of popular government and claimed that government is simply the instrument for carrying out the people's will.⁷⁸ In his *Second Treatise on Civil Government*, John Locke claimed that all individuals have certain natural rights including those of life, liberty, and property.⁷⁹ These ideas sparked the American Revolution in 1776 during which Thomas Paine, the most influential American pamphleteer, wrote, "We have the power to begin the world over again."⁸⁰ The writing of the Constitution formalized the basic principle of these theories and allowed Americans the freedom to grow with their new nation and the ability to create positive societal reform. In Boston, the collective identity of the people, increased importance of education, development of entertainment, and advancements in technology that developed during the nineteenth century are all examples of the success of this new democratic, constitutional, and capitalist American system.

In present day society, the ideals that founded the United States have evolved into the deep-seated beliefs of American citizens. The Declaration of Independence rings with the proclamation that people are entitled to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."⁸¹ The preamble to the Constitution declares that the government of the United States was founded to secure "the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."⁸² If government fails to protect these rights, Americans believe that the people can overthrow it and form a new government. This transformation came November 4, 2008 with the election of the United States' 44th president, Barack Obama. A nation once rooted in

⁷⁸ Thomas Patterson, *We the People: A Concise Introduction to American Politics* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2009), 17.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 356.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 647.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 651.

slavery had chosen an African American as its leader. Against the backdrop of an economic crisis, expensive wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and a bitter national divide over abortion, religion and other social issues, Obama spoke, “If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible, who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time, who still question the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer.”⁸³ The ascendancy of an African American to the office of president was inconceivable to many just a generation ago. Decades before Martin Luther King Jr. spoke of a day when the country would judge a man not by the color of his skin but by the content of his character. To many Americans, Barack Obama’s victory in the 2008 presidential campaign was the embodiment of this dream. Obama took to the Grant Park stage in Chicago the night of November 4, proclaiming “A new dawn of leadership is at hand.”⁸⁴

⁸³ Carla Marinucci et al., eds., “Change and Hope,” San Francisco Chronicle, 5 Nov. 2008, Sec. A3, p.1.

⁸⁴ Ibid.