

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**America's tumultuous early history comes to life in Harvard Library's latest digital project**

*Foundational ideas and questions that America still grapples with are shared with the world through the comprehensive Colonial North America digitization project*

**Key Points:**

- 300,000 newly digitized pages from colonial era North American life available for the first time
- Free and available to the public at <http://colonialnorthamerica.library.harvard.edu/>

CAMBRIDGE, MA— [Colonial North America at Harvard Library](#)

brings unique aspects of early America's tumultuous history to life through the voices of people who lived it. By providing web access to remarkable digitized materials—such as ships' logs, lawyer's daybooks, military accounts, medical notebooks, correspondence, and personal diaries—students and scholars across the world can experience a more complete picture of 17th- and 18th-century life.

Over 300,000 pages to date are included in the digital collection that includes diaries, journals, notebooks and other rare documents. The website will be periodically updated with new materials and is available to view free of charge.



Students, scholars, and other researchers will discover letters by George Washington, Samuel and John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson. Users will find:

- a 1624 Mexican legal genealogical inquest
- a 1708 letter from Queen Anne of Great Britain
- a 1727 Massachusetts' midwife's testimony
- a 1716 deed of sale for "a Negro man named Cuffe"
- missionaries' journals of their work among Native American tribes
- John Hancock's handwritten letters, including one-of-a-kind correspondence from his teenage years

These unique materials from both notable historical figures and ordinary people, from businesses and nascent institutions, add to our understanding of their time.

Beyond life in New England, the collection illustrates the beginnings of an interconnected world. It extends beyond Colonial America's boundaries to Canada, North and South America, to Atlantic islands

and across the Atlantic Ocean to Great Britain, continental Europe, and parts of Africa. Hand-drawn maps, scientific calculations, and brightly colored drawings of New England can be found alongside diary entries, letters to family, and last will and testaments.

*Colonial North America at Harvard Library* is a multiyear effort and significant undertaking to digitize and share images of all known archival and manuscript materials found across fourteen libraries and archives of the Harvard Library that relate to 17th and 18th century North America.

Major support for this multi-year project, still underway, is generously provided by Arcadia, The Polonsky Foundation, James B. Adler through the Adler Preservation Fund, and Peter H. Darrow and William O. Nutting through a fund for the Colonial North America ("CNA") Digitization Project at the Harvard Library.

### **About Harvard Library**

Harvard Library is a world-class academic library, an unparalleled resource for learning and research. By creating flexible spaces and innovative services, Harvard Library inspires collaboration, reflection, experimentation, and discovery. Serving as an information hub, the Library connects users to related disciplines and to University-wide teaching resources.

Engaging users through curated discovery, digital collections, reimagined physical space, and specialized research support, Harvard Library delivers exceptional experiences to its user communities. Today, Harvard Library's holdings range from traditional print collections to rapidly expanding access to digital resources. It is the work of the Harvard Library to provide the University's faculty, students, and researchers—now and in the future—with comprehensive access to these materials.

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