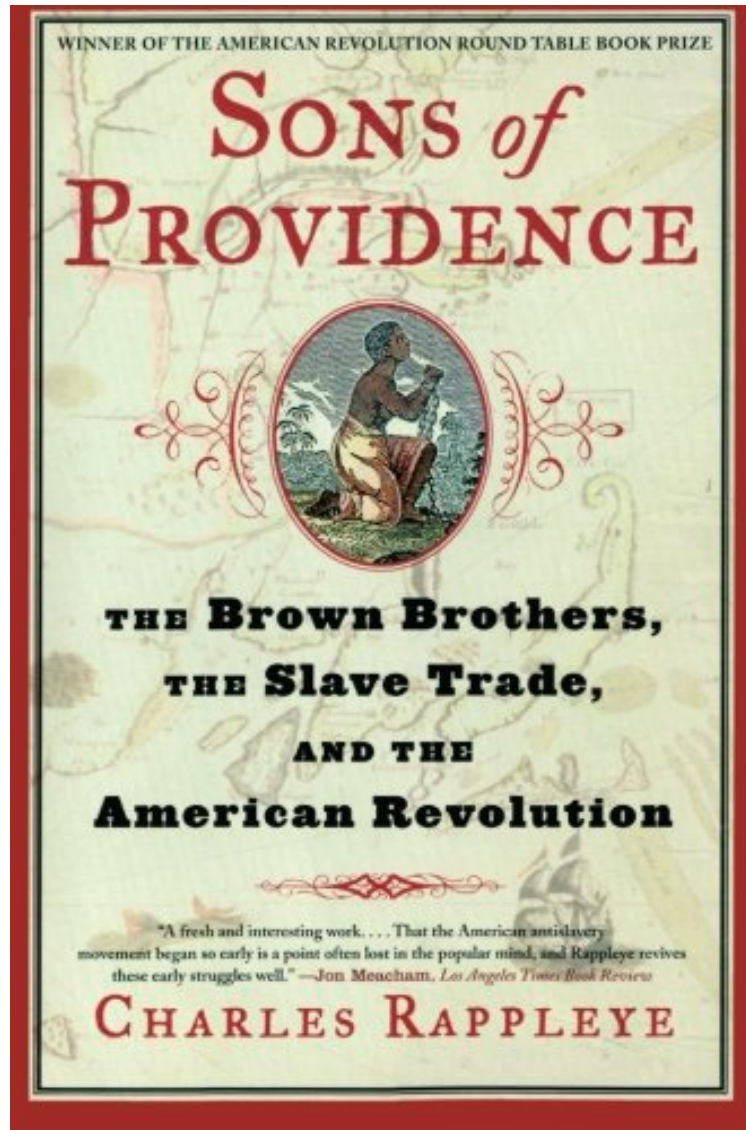


[Free download] Sons of Providence: The Brown Brothers, the Slave Trade, and the American Revolution

Sons of Providence: The Brown Brothers, the Slave Trade, and the American Revolution

Charles Rappleye

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Charles Rappleye : Sons of Providence: The Brown Brothers, the Slave Trade, and the American Revolution before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sons of Providence: The Brown Brothers, the Slave Trade, and the American Revolution:

40 of 40 people found the following review helpful. Remarkable book chronicling the issues, politics and personalities of the Revolutionary period in Rhode Island. By Paul Tognetti The tiny State of Rhode Island certainly played a

significant role during the American Revolution. Few recall that when Roger Williams established Rhode Island in 1644 it was for all practical purposes the first practicing democratic state since the fall of Athens. Rhode Islanders were an exceptionally independent lot. The burning of the two masted British schooner "Gaspee" in June of 1772 by a group of leading citizens of the colony essentially struck the first blow in the nation's quest for independence. In "Sons of Providence" author Charles Rappleye recalls the historic events that were unfolding in Rhode Island in those years and focuses on two brothers, John and Moses Brown, who would find themselves on opposite sides of so many of the important questions of their day. It is a compelling story. Until recently I never realized how important the issue of the slave trade was as the nation's march toward independence proceeded. It seems slavery was a highly emotional issue even in the 1770's and 1780's. John and Moses Brown along with brothers James and Nicholas were members of one of the most prominent families in colonial Providence. The Brown family was involved in all manner of commerce and in 1765 they made the decision to enter the slave trade. And so it was that they outfitted a ship they christened "Sally" to make the voyage. In "Sons of Providence" you will discover why the slave trade was such a controversial and dirty business. If you have never read about the conditions that existed on these ships then you are sure to be horrified. It turns out that roughly half the slaves that were picked up on the West Coast of Africa died during the return voyage. In any event, in the years following the "Sally" debacle John Brown and his brother Moses would pursue entirely different paths. John was first and foremost a businessman and lobbied for laws and policies favorable to the merchant class. For the rest of his life John Brown would continue to oppose any measures that would outlaw slavery and restrict commerce in any way. Moses Brown on the other hand would renounce his Baptist heritage (his great grandfather Chad Brown was the first pastor of the First Baptist Church in America) and become a Quaker. Quakers were among the earliest and most vocal opponents of slavery and the simple Quaker lifestyle held much appeal for Moses Brown. Moses Brown would divest himself of much of his fortune and become one of the leading abolitionists of his day. Although John and Moses Brown would continue to collaborate on a number of projects over the next quarter century they would nonetheless find themselves on opposite sides of any number of important issues. In his extraordinary book "John Adams" author David McCullough gets much of his source material from the voluminous letters between John and Abigail Adams. Likewise, much of the material for "Sons of Providence" appears to be culled from letters between John and Moses Brown. As such this book provides tremendous insight into the thought processes of those on both sides of so many of the important issues of that era. "Sons of Providence" is exceptionally well-written and meticulously researched. This is a must read for history buffs and a great choice for general readers as well. Highly recommended! 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I enjoyed it for many reasons. By Anne MI enjoyed it for many reasons. I grew up in Providence and the book made many names I was familiar with come alive. It provided a sense of who people were, how and why they acted the way they did. It brought historical figures to life. The reader gets a sense of complex individuals with ambivalences and contradictions and also a sense of life in 18th century Rhode Island. It also gave a sense of history rarely taught in school until very recently - the presence of slavery in New England and the role of New Englander traders in the slave trade. The book was well researched and well written. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great information about the slave trade. By Nancy64 Provides excellent descriptions of the slave trade as it involved New England merchants. Fascinating interplay among the Brown brothers. I'm afraid that I compare everything to David McCullough. I found that getting through this took some determination. The information is worth it.

Sons of Providence paints a vivid portrait of Colonial life as we follow these founding brothers in their rise to the heights of American commerce and power and from revolution to nationhood.

From Publishers Weekly Rappleye (All American Mafioso) provides an incisive study of John and Moses Brown, two of four brothers from the Providence banking, import/export and slave-trading family. John spent his life as an unrepentant participant in the business of America's "peculiar institution." But Moses—following the American Revolution, during which all the Browns took up the cause of liberty—discovered Quakerism and abolitionism. He thereafter stood opposed to the business interests of his brother and the balance of his family. (Only Nicholas Brown Jr. joined Moses in his crusade). During 1789, Moses organized an abolitionist group in Providence that was instrumental in achieving passage of the federal Slave Trade Act of 1794 prohibiting ships destined to transport slaves to any foreign country from outfitting in American ports. John Brown—who deemed it improper to deny American citizens "the benefits of a trade permitted by all the European nations"—was the first Rhode Islander tried under that legislation. Convicted, he suffered the forfeiture of his slave ship, ironically named Hope. The tale of the Browns provides unique insight into the festering wound of slavery as manifested, with hard-edged and profitable heartlessness, during the colonial and postcolonial eras. 16 pages of photos, 3 maps. (May 16) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Rappleye focuses on two of four Brown brothers, John and Moses, from one of the chartered families of Rhode Island, and how their maturation reflected the conflicts and challenges of our nation in foundation. Following an initial joint venture in the international slave trade, the brothers later took opposite positions on slavery; John increased his involvement, while Moses became

strongly antislavery. Both became central players in Rhode Island politics through both the political and commercial sphere. John's antitaxation, anticolonial activities helped to spur the move for independence. Although Moses evolved into a conscientious Quaker with the highest ideals, they still worked jointly in family-owned businesses and for the common good in the formation of Rhode Island's first college, now Brown University. Spanning a century, from 1736 to 1836, this work highlights regional issues that became nationwide--slavery, the fight for liberty, and protection from unfairly imposed taxations, religious principles, as well as the new nation's political ideals. The Brown family saga reflects on many issues that remain American dilemmas: the balance between commercial and religious and political ideals. Vernon Ford Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved "A fresh and interesting work.... That the American antislavery movement began so early is a point often lost in the popular mind, and Rappleye revives these early struggles well." -- Jon Meacham, Los Angeles Times Book "Reading Charles Rappleye's Sons of Providence, a biography of Moses and John Brown, gave me the same kind of jolt I felt when I learned that twelve of America's presidents, including Washington and Jefferson, were slave owners. Rappleye's book provides vivid testimony to the painful fact that the Browns and the tiny state they helped form were indeed all too much like America, fractured between the ideal of liberty and the reality of chattel slavery.... Rappleye skillfully details the complex relationship between these brothers, whose differences over slavery tested but never destroyed their friendship." -- David S. Reynolds, The New York Times Book "Rappleye is a diligent researcher...and a fair-minded, unjudgmental chronicler of the Browns' complicated story.... Sons of Providence is more than the story of two privileged and disputatious men, and it should be read with an eye to its larger implications." -- Jonathan Yardley, The Washington Post Book World "Eloquent and riveting.... Rappleye narrates with verve and insight, creating a wonderfully engaging glimpse into a key epoch in Rhode Island -- and American -- history." -- Edward J. Renehan, Jr., The Providence Journal "Through this profoundly moving story of two brothers -- one a slave trader, the other an abolitionist -- Rappleye brings to vivid life the history of a formative period in our nation's life. It is a terrific story and a splendid work of history." -- Doris Kearns Goodwin, author of Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln "Sons of Providence is a landmark book. One learns things about the American Revolution and the early Republic that amaze." -- Thomas Fleming, author of Washington's Secret War: The Hidden History of Valley Forge "In his inspired choice of the Brown Brothers, Charles Rappleye makes human the division between slave owners and abolitionists that haunted the American Revolution and left consequences that plague us still. Sons of Providence is an epic story of greed, rebellion, and moral courage." -- A. J. Langguth, author of Patriots: The Men Who Started the American Revolution "Charles Rappleye has unearthed the fascinating story of two founding brothers on opposite sides of America's bitter battle over slavery and the meaning of a nation conceived in liberty. This powerfully told narrative sheds new light on the Revolutionary era and one man's impassioned struggle to end slavery before it was too late." -- Henry Wiencek, author of An Imperfect God: George Washington, His Slaves, and the Creation of America