Gaining Ground: A History of Landmaking in Boston
NANCY S. SEASHOLES

This volume is an examination of a subject particularly relevant to urban archaeologists: the creation of new ground to accommodate a growing city. Here the city is Boston, and researchers who live or work there are those who will benefit most from this book. Gaining Ground will also be of interest to a larger audience of historians, readers interested in landscape development, and even urban planners.

Seasholes, a research fellow in the Department of Archaeology at Boston University, has provided a thorough account of the physical development of Boston, focusing on how and why landmaking transformed Boston from several small peninsulas and islands into an important port city through the process of filling marshes and shallow bays surrounding the city, which began in the 17th century and continues today.

Gaining Ground is divided into 14 chapters, starting with an introduction and a chapter on landmaking technology. The bulk of the volume consists of 12 chapters arranged geographically, taking the reader on a tour of how many of Boston’s neighborhoods were created. The organization of these chapters by location rather than chronology makes sense, given that much of the landmaking took place at the same time in different parts of the city. An excellent timeline given in the introduction provides an overall framework for understanding the degree to which landmaking affected the development of Boston over time and space.

The introduction provides a brief overview of Boston’s natural environment and sets the stage for many of the “why” issues discussed throughout the remainder of the volume. The reasons behind the origins and development of landmaking in Boston include “wharfing out” (filling between wharfs), the China trade beginning in 1790, the coming of the railroad, Irish immigration, attempts to cover up polluted swamp land, the public park movement, 19th-century port improvements, and 20th-century transportation innovations (p. 11). Exploration of these and other themes supplies the theoretical underpinning to the detailed neighborhood histories in later chapters.

Chapter 2, “Landmaking Technology,” addresses how new ground was created. This section is particularly relevant for field archaeologists working in urban settings where ground was made by filling wetlands and waterfront areas, as Seasholes presents a chronological review of construction techniques employed in Boston. Though the discussion is tightly focused on this one city, the approach and much of the data is useful elsewhere. Topics covered consist of the evolution of fill-retaining structures (wharves, seawalls, bulkheads, and dikes); the types of fill used (household trash, coal ashes, dirt excavated from cellars, gravel, and dredged material); and methods of excavating, transporting, and depositing fill. The author refers readers to figures placed throughout the volume to illustrate some of her points, but the discussion regarding the types of retaining structures would have benefited from drawings highlighting design features described in the text.

Each of the neighborhood chapters begins with a modern bird’s-eye view or street map showing the extent of landmak-

ing since 1630. Much of the text is richly illustrated with hundreds of historical and modern maps, photographs, engravings, and other figures. The narrative is a virtual walking tour, taking readers from the earliest Euroamerican settlement on the central waterfront (and the city’s famous Long Wharf, constructed 1711–1715) to the largest landmaking project of all, filling in East Boston for construction of Logan International Airport in the 20th century. The separate neighborhood chapters of Gaining Ground could stand alone as complete articles, where the documentary and archaeological records are finely woven together to chronicle when, and explain why, the people of Boston radically altered their landscape.

A short afterword touches upon some of the modern consequences of extensive landmaking in Boston, including flooding and structural damage associated with rotting foundation piles as groundwater levels drop with increasing development. Another serious concern is the threat posed by earthquakes to buildings, both historic and modern, located on top of the relatively unstable fill. Seasholes also introduces some topics for further research in her closing remarks, notably proposing a comparative study among different port cities to assess the hypothesis that the presence of shallow tidal flats and/or location on a constricted land form as seen in Boston are conducive to major landmaking activities elsewhere throughout North America (p. 420). While environment certainly played an important role in historical landmaking, the omission of even a brief review of other economic, social, and political factors is somewhat puzzling, given that Seasholes does a very good job addressing such issues elsewhere in Gaining Ground.

Appendices (a table, comparing the size of original versus made land for different sections of Boston, and notes on documentary sources), endnotes, and references for figures complete the text.

Archaeologists often regard “fill” as disturbed overburden and attempt to remove it as quickly (and with as little study) as possible. In Gaining Ground, Seasholes compiles evidence from a variety of sources, including archaeological excavations, landscape architecture, and documentary and oral history to explain the evolution of Boston’s geography. The result is a comprehensive account of this often-overlooked aspect of urban archaeology that will serve as an invaluable reference for those working in Boston and provide all researchers with the insight to take a second closer look at made land.

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History Beneath the Sea: Nautical Archaeology in the Classroom
K. C. SMITH AND AMY DOUGLASS (EDITORS)
Society for American Archaeology, Washington, DC, 2001. 28 pp., glossary, bibl. $5.95 paper.

History Beneath the Sea is the product of an ambitious initiative to increase public awareness and understanding
of nautical archaeology. As its title implies, the purpose of this work is to facilitate the incorporation of nautical archaeology into education curricula. The introduction by the editors provides the blueprint for the work, explaining how teachers and students can use *History Beneath the Sea* as a textbook, with discussion questions and topics for further research at the end of each section.

The publication offers an introduction to nautical archaeology as a discipline before introducing specific archaeological sites. Toni Carrell's contribution succinctly explains complex definitions and ideas, emphasizing that archaeology is about people and that artifacts are secondary to the information that they possess. By explaining the various phases of archaeological investigation, including excavation, collaboration with other disciplines, conservation, and dissemination of information, Carrell differentiates between archaeology and treasure hunting, reinforcing her discussion of ethical issues related to nautical archaeology. Explicitly outlining these issues in the first chapter ensures that students and educators are aware of the rigorous standards expected of scientific archaeological projects and establishes the framework for archaeological case studies presented in later chapters.

Case studies of four specific historic shipwrecks, representing various temporal and cultural themes, provide students and teachers with discussion points. Each provides some historical background about the vessel, the circumstances of its wrecking, and archaeological data recovered from the sites. The Emanuel Point shipwreck by Delta Scott-Ireton features results of archaeological excavation and provides information about the colonization process and artifacts considered essential for daily life. Mark Wilde-Ramsing's contribution on *Queen Anne's Revenge* will likely capture the attention of younger school children because of its association with pirates, but it also serves to highlight integral relationships between archaeology, geography, and historical research. Robert N eyland's article on *H.L. Hunley* highlights the recovery procedures necessary to raise and conserve shipwreck materials, and the cooperative efforts of underwater and terrestrial archaeologists needed to investigate a series of related sites. The final case study presented is James P. Delgado's entry on *R.M.S. Titanic*. A controversial wreck site, it is easily the most recognized shipwreck in the volume, and Delgado includes a practical example from the Vancouver Maritime Museum's 1999 "Shipwreck!" exhibit that strengthens his discussion of archaeological ethics, specifically the sale of artifacts raised from shipwreck sites (p. 16).

*History Beneath the Sea* focuses on nautical archaeology as a discipline and extends beyond shipwrecks by including John Bratten's synthesis of conservation issues and methods. His contribution strengthens the theme of archaeology as a scientific discipline requiring extensive planning and long-term commitment by discussing the time and care necessary to properly ensure the survival of artifacts removed from an inundated environment.

The most creative of the volume's entries is Marco Meniketti's lesson plan for a mock shipwreck excavation. His introduction is detailed, outlining numerous ways that nautical archaeology can stimulate interest and support lessons from other areas of the curriculum, and he provides a detailed lesson plan for those interested in attempting this project. For teachers with time constraints, other recommendations include student creation of a mock-museum exhibit, and participation in local and state level Archaeology Week/Month events.

The editors have compiled a strong effort in the first of the Society for American Archaeology's *Teaching with Archaeology* series, but there is room to improve upon their work for future volumes. The authors have written articles accessible to both educators and students, with clearly defined topics and limited use of jargon, but certain themes, for example the idea of archaeological sites as nonrenewable resources, would benefit from additional coverage and depth. The editors have compiled a basic glossary of archaeological terms, a selected bibliography for further reading, and a brief listing of Internet sites for nautical archaeology projects. While the goal of the publication is to allow teachers to easily incorporate nautical archaeology into their current curriculum, the work could be strengthened by more explicit examples of practical applications, lesson plans, or worksheets. Most teachers are burdened with state and federal curriculum guidelines and would be better served by materials that explicitly outline how examples from nautical archaeology can be used to supplement mandated lesson plans. A listing of representative examples of curriculum guidelines for history or geography would make an excellent appendix, quickly demonstrating the educational goals that can be met by the incorporation of archaeologically themed lessons. This volume will certainly provide motivated educators with new, creative ways to address lesson plans and serve as a solid foundation for future efforts. Education and outreach in archaeology is essential because archaeological preservation cannot be accomplished without the assistance and support of the public.

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*The Barque Eglinton: Wrecked Western Australia 1852*  
MYRA STANBURY (EDITOR)  
Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology Special Publication No. 13, Western Australia Maritime Museum, Fremantle, Australia, 2003. 233 pp., 109 figs., refs., appendices. $35.00 paper.

This publication is the product of 30 years of research and analysis conducted on the Barque *Eglinton*, a 462-ton passenger and cargo ship that wrecked while en route from London to the Swan River Colony on Australia's western coast. The work covers a vast array of topics, which include the vessel's history and structure, but extends beyond a particularistic analysis of the artifacts. Myra Stanbury, the editor and primary author, has compiled a volume that functions as an anthropological analysis of the *Eglinton* wreck site. She elevates the scope of the work...