

THE SCULPTOR & THE ABOLITIONIST

How Winchester's Edward Brackett Created an Icon for the Abolitionist Movement

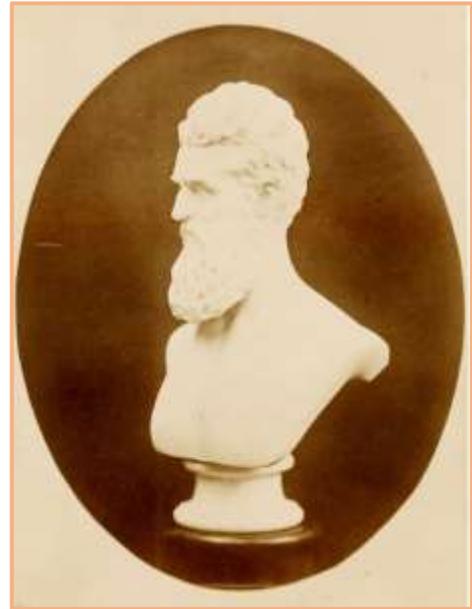
By Ellen Knight¹

In October 1859, while the abolitionist John Brown was held in jail awaiting execution, a Winchester man journeyed to Charlestown, Virginia, anxious for a last opportunity to see him. His trip was financed by the wife of one of the "Secret Six," a group who aided John Brown in Kansas and supported him financially until his death.

It was a perilous journey into a place where, the traveler himself reportedly said, "excitement was so intense and where every Northerner lay naturally under suspicion as an enemy." He undertook the risk because he had a vision of capturing a likeness of Brown in sculpture. The man was the artist Edward Augustus Brackett, and his goal was to get sketches and measurements to create a bust of the man viewed by many as a martyr to the cause of the abolition of slavery.

His bust of John Brown became an icon for the movement.

This icon might never have been completed, however, had the Virginians who tried to block Brackett's access to Brown been successful.



Bust of the Abolitionist John Brown by Winchester resident Edward A. Brackett, photographed by the Litchfield Studio in Arlington.

THE SCULPTOR & ABOLITIONISM

Born two years before the Missouri Compromise of 1820, Brackett grew up during the era when northern states were free and southern ones maintained the legal practice of slavery, when the status of each western territory was contested, and when Abolition issues were being hotly debated. In 1831, when Brackett was 13, William Lloyd Garrison started his paper *The Liberator* and in 1833 was a founder of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

In 1837, the Brackett family moved to Cincinnati. Situated in a free state across the border from Kentucky, a slave state, Cincinnati was a hotbed of abolitionist controversy. In Cincinnati, Brackett tried his hand at sculpture and won praise for his statues of Nydia the Slave Girl and The Binding of Satan.

After about two years in New York City, Brackett moved to Boston in 1841 and kept a studio there until 1873. In 1843, he settled in South Woburn, which was incorporated in 1850 into the new

town of Winchester, and remained there until his death in 1908. In the 1840s, when he arrived, according to one of the early ministers of the South Woburn Congregational Church, William T. Eustis, "The abolition controversy was then intense and there was a constant struggle to involve the church and the pulpit."²



Earliest known photo of Brackets, from a daguerreotype in the Winchester Archival Center

In Boston, Brackett made the acquaintance of the abolitionists William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Charles Sumner and sculpted busts of each. Doubtless he was keenly aware of the events in Kansas following the passage in 1854 of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. During the 1856 series of armed conflicts known as "Bleeding Kansas" in which John Brown figured so prominently, Brackett's brother George got caught up in the action to protect a free-state legislature and ended up settling there.³

Brackett's own anti-slavery sentiments were apparent in 1855, when he was one of three members of the new Winchester Republican Committee who drafted a set of resolutions sent to the state Republican convention. A portion read: "Resolved, That we, the citizens of Winchester, in view of the aggressions of slavery, especially the Nebraska outrage, with its assaults upon the elective franchise in Kansas, ... will use all constitutional means to maintain the rights of freedom, and that we will, to the utmost, resist every aggression of the slave-power."⁴

REPUTATION AS A SCULPTOR

Almost as soon as he arrived in Boston, the newspapers of that city began carrying reports of what was new at Brackett's studio, often complimenting the works exhibited there. Among his early busts were those of publicly admired men, such as his friend Richard Henry Dana, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, William Cullen Bryant (who had written letters of introduction for his transition from New York to Boston), and local clergy such as Bishop Alexander Viets Griswold. He had admirers; his work was praised. In 1849, the *Boston Post* declared, "His busts are among the best ever executed in this country."⁵ Poems were written about his statues *The Binding of Satan*⁶ and *Shipwrecked Mother and Child*, the latter first exhibited in 1849.⁷ When he proposed to sculpt Brown, he or at least his name was well known among the people of Boston.

BRACKETT DETERMINES TO VISIT JOHN BROWN

Brackett first conceived the idea of a bust of Brown in 1857 when he caught sight of the man in Boston and "had been attracted by the dignity of his mien."⁸ After the raid on Harper's Ferry and Brown's arrest in October, 1858, he was seized with a desire to do it.

"I could hardly sleep or eat, so absorbing was the desire that took possession of my mind." Not having the money for the trip to Virginia, he went in turn to Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, Wendell

Phillips, and finally sent a note to George Luther Stearns, a member of the Secret Six who provided Brown with funds, asking, "What do you think about taking a bust of Old Brown? Can anything be done about it? "



Photograph of Abolitionist John Brown owned by the sculptor Edward Brackett

Franklin Sanborn, another of the Secret Six, wrote that Stearns was occupied with efforts to obtain funds for Brown's defense but would mention Brackett's idea to his wife Mary "Next day, Sunday afternoon," Brackett continued, "Mr. Stearns drove out to my house in Winchester. 'Will you really go to Charlestown?' he asked me. 'If so, I can find the money for you. How much do you require?'

'I scarcely know.'

'Well, I am authorized by a lady,' Stearns went on, 'to give you this,' and he placed in my hand \$120 in gold coin."⁹

According to Sanborn, Mrs. Stearns' instructions were that, if Brown did not consent, Brackett should say that "he has come at the express wish and expense of Mrs. Stearns, and that she will be deeply disappointed if he returns without the measurements."¹⁰

THE PERILS OF VISITING VIRGINIA

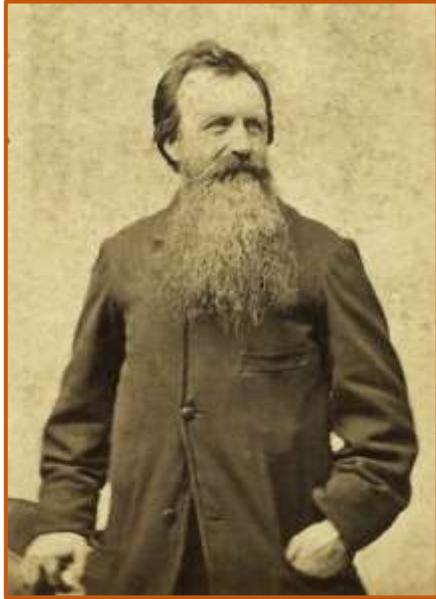
Brackett was highly respected as a sculptor in Boston. No one would quibble with his plan on account of his qualifications. But his wanting to go to Charlestown, Virginia, where Brown was being held, was foolhardy and perilous. The *Tribune's* reporter wrote, "Cannon are planted in front of the courthouse, the jail, and in positions commanding all the main streets. The approaches to Charlestown are also strongly guarded. At Harper's Ferry, there are companies of Virginia militia and United States troops. At Martinsburg, there are three or four hundred soldiers. Elsewhere it is the same."¹¹

According to a report from the American Anti-Slavery Society, the presence of strangers in Charlestown was thought so dangerous as to require a proclamation from the mayor, issued on Nov 12th, commanding "all such as could not give a satisfactory account of themselves, to leave the town and county." After mentioning some specific people, the report continued: "A sculptor, also, who had come from Boston to obtain a likeness of Brown ... was deemed, — if not himself a dangerous man, — to be about a dangerous business."¹²

And, according to the *New York Tribune*, there was "immense opposition" to his mission and that "hundreds of people" had called on the jailer and insisted it should not be permitted. "He has been told," the *Tribune* stated, "that he is 'a marked man,' and must bear the penalty."¹³

HARPER'S FERRY

Mary Stearns' gold was placed in Brackett's hand on Oct. 23. "I got off as quickly as possible," Brackett related near the end of his life. The exact date of Brackett's departure is unclear, possibly as early as Oct. 27 but no later than Nov. 1.¹⁴



Brackett in 1863

"Reaching New York at night, next morning I set out again, and arrived in Harper's Ferry a little after dark," he related. "There I went to the hotel, an old-fashioned country tavern. I walked up to the register by the door, and signed myself, 'E. A. Brackett, Boston,' and at that time and place a man might quite as well have booked from Hell. Then I went in and sat myself down beside the wood fire in the parlor. People of all sorts and conditions came and inspected the register, then stood in the doorway and gazed at me. Some were gentle, some simple, many wore the gay uniform of one or another militia company gathered in from the country round, almost all bore arms, and to each and every man I was an object of infinite speculation. But I kept still and watched the fire burn.

"At last a citizen six feet tall, weighing two hundred pounds or more, in a broad-brimmed hat, well-dressed in country fashion, entered and took a seat at my side. Prolonged silence. Then: 'You come from Boston, I hear?'

"'Yes.'

"'Any excitement up there?'

"'None that I saw. It seems to be all down this way.'

"'Silence.

"'What do you think of slavery?' asked the Virginian, again.

"'Well, sir,' said I, 'that is a large question, and calls for a long answer, and I am tired and don't want to talk. But I'll tell you this: I've traveled out West, I've traveled through many slave States, but I had to come back to Boston to hear slavery preached from the pulpit.'

"'Silence. Pause.

"'I live up in the hills yonder,' said the Virginian, 'and we are forming little companies, here and there, to defend ourselves from these attacks on our borders. My errand in this place is to get some United States arms for our use.'

“Are you going to drill in public, out in your streets? ’

“Why, yes.’

“That’s a good idea,’ said I, cheerfully; ‘the negro is an imitative creature. He will learn from you to handle arms.’”¹⁵

CHARLESTOWN

On the day after his arrival at Harper’s Ferry, Brackett went to Charlestown, Virginia, the county seat, where Brown was jailed. “As I alighted at the Carter House door, to my infinite surprise the first face I saw was familiar. In the same instant our eyes met. The young fellow took a step toward me. ‘For God’s sake,’ he whispered, ‘don’t call me by name — don’t give me away!’ It was [Edward H.] House of the New York Tribune. Under cover of bona-fide credentials from a Boston pro-slavery paper, House was supplying the Tribune, as opportunity offered, with those long, picturesque, and stingingly ironical letters so bitterly resented in the South.

“As yet he was personally unsuspected, but the hunt was keen, and, glad though he was to see a friend, House was on tenterhooks in this moment of recognition. So we made a feint of scraping acquaintance, for future use.”

Sanborn recalled him saying, “The excitement over the arrival of a stranger from the North was intense and ridiculous. I was seized, and only escaped imprisonment by appealing to Mr. Griswold, whose services had been secured for the defense.”¹⁶

Brackett took with him letters of introduction to Senator James Murray Mason, who led the Senate committee that investigated the raid on Harper’s Ferry, and to Andrew Hunter, the prosecuting attorney. “Both received me after the manner of Southern country gentlemen, with all civility. They often walked with me in public, in the days that followed, thereby, no doubt, contributing much to the general forbearance with which I was treated in that community.”

Though courteous, Mason and Hunter put him off repeatedly, leading him to conclude that “they intended to defeat it; and that not by a direct denial, but by procrastination. Nor was this course without its reason. Once, when I urged upon them that to refuse an artist permission to model whom he pleased, were it the worst rascal in history, was a thing unknown, one of the two rejoined:

“Are there perhaps some people in your home who do not like you, Mr. Brackett?’

“Why, yes,’ said I.’ I should think myself a pretty poor sort of a man if there were not.’

“Then he handed me a letter, written by a Democratic office-holder in my town of Winchester which read, in effect: ‘Look out for Brackett. He is an Abolitionist and a spy.’”¹⁷

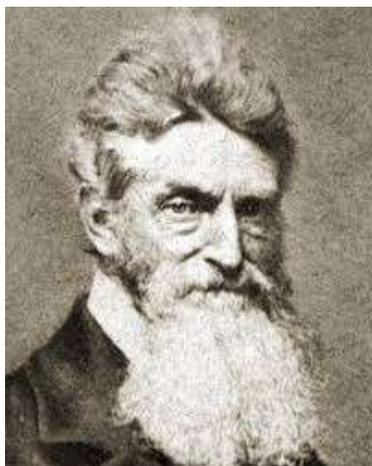
Although Brown was allowed visitors, Virginians were suspicious of Brackett and denied him access to Brown. The jailor told him, as we learn from the *Tribune's* reporter, 'that his mission in town was well known, and that there was an immense opposition to it, some hundreds of people having called on him and insisted, with all the arguments they could bring, that no such thing should be permitted. Under these circumstances, the jailor did not feel willing to open his doors for the desired purpose.'

The *Tribune* reported that part of the Virginians' problem with the sculptor seeing Brown was that he had met a traveling daguerreotype operator and proposed getting a picture. Under the heading "The Terrors of a Camera," the reporter, presumably House, wrote that Brackett "obtained an interview with the jailer, and the jailor consulted with a few colonels. The decision was, that it would not do. There was something obscure about the camera. They could not see through it."¹⁸

THE TERRORS OF A CAMERA.
I told you about the case of Mr. Brackett, the sculptor, who came from Boston with the hope of getting a likeness of Brown, from which to model a bust. His expectations, which were kept alive yesterday by gentle encouragements, were to-day crushed.

BRACKETT USES SUBTERFUGE

However, Brackett found a way to his goal, aided by one of the defense attorneys, Hiram Griswold who first entered court to represent Brown on Oct. 29. "At last, in despair of effecting my mission through diplomacy, I began to think of means more dark." The jailer, Captain Avis, stood in his way. "The assistant jailer, however, presented a different front. According to a story told me later, this man had known Brown in Kansas; but whatever the cause, he was willing to connive in my scheme to the extent of his power. Nevertheless he was greatly perturbed by the fear of discovery, and made me promise never to tell the tale, should anything be effected through his agency, during his lifetime.



Second photo of Brown which Brackett owned, now in the Winchester Archives

The opportunity arrived during the trial of Brown's fellow defendant Shields Green, which lasted just two days, Nov. 3-4. "Captain Avis was obliged to conduct the prisoners from the jail to the courthouse. In anticipation of this movement, I had prepared a conventional drawing of a head. Taking the drawing and my measuring instruments and accompanied by Mr. Griswold I went to Brown's cell."

Brown, with his hands chained and his feet chained to the floor, listened to Griswold's explanation of Brackett's intent. "Brown, who had no personal vanity, who felt that his work was done, and that his personality would soon cease to be of any moment whatever, was not interested. But when Griswold said, 'It is at the desire of your Boston friends that Mr. Brackett comes,' the old man at once acquiesced.

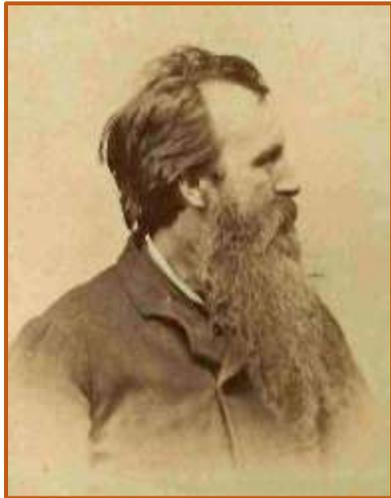
“Now came our consideration of the under jailer's fears. For his sake I must be able to swear, if questioned, that I had never entered his prisoner's cell. So I stood on the threshold, sketch in hand, almost near enough to Brown to touch him, while Griswold, with my instruments and by my minute directions, made each measurement. These I noted down in their several places on my sketch, photographing the subject on my brain the while.”

So ends what he communicated of his visit to Brown. Sanborn, in his version of the story, related some conversation between Brown and Griswold¹⁹ which he later wrote that Brackett disowned.²⁰

Assuredly, once Brackett had his measurements, he high-tailed it out of Virginia while Virginians still thought he left empty-handed. On Nov. 9, however, the *Tribune* revealed their error. “The most amusing part of it to me,” House wrote, “is, that, now that the sculptor has gone away...many persons express sorrow at his disappointment, which they think he ought not to have been made to suffer. To meet this, it I asserted that the authorities were really willing to admit Mr. Brackett, and that nothing but the positive and imperative refusal of Brown to see him, deterred them. To hear this, knowing that Brown did with perfect readiness afford opportunities of procuring the requisite measurements...does not add to one's confidence in Virginian veracity.”²¹

BRACKETT SECRETLY AIDS NEW YORK TRIBUNE

On quitting Charlestown, Brackett's adventure was not yet over. As he returned home, he stopped in New York again, surprising Horace Greeley, editor of the *Tribune*.



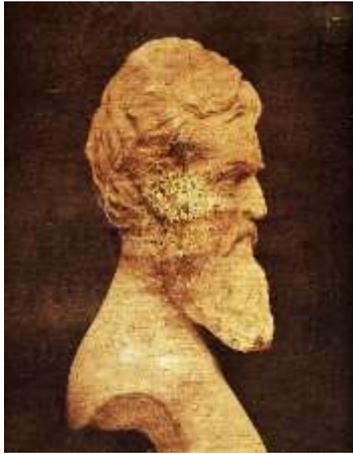
Brackett in 1863

“As I was packing my bag to leave, House appeared at my chamber door with a grave request to be allowed to make my toilet. Producing his copy, written on dozens of sheets of thin foolscap, he wound it around and around my calves and thighs, finally gingerly helping me into my trousers. In that costume I reached New York, went at once to the *Tribune* office, and to Horace Greeley in person.

“When Mr. Greeley heard that I came from Charlestown he was, of course, much interested, and wished to settle down for a talk. ‘With much pleasure,’ said I, ‘but I am pretty heavily clad. Will you excuse me if I undress a little in your office?’ Scarcely concealing his surprise, Mr. Greeley consented. I took off my trousers forthwith, and sheet by sheet disrobed myself of a whole week's correspondence.

“Greeley laughed aloud.”²²

BRACKETT CREATES AN ICON FOR ABOLITIONISTS



Bust photograph owned by Brackett now at the Winchester Archival Center

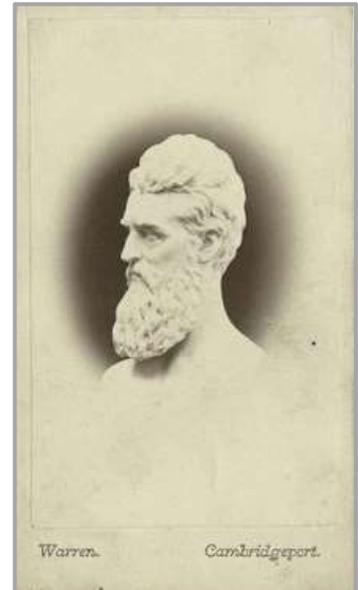
Brackett was back home a least a month before Brown's execution on Dec. 10, 1859 and completed the clay model of the bust just before the year's end. According to Sanborn, when Brackett finished the model, he had several casts taken for Mrs. Stearns, Sanborn, and others, who made suggestions as to the hair and length of the head. After making modifications, plaster copies were made. The first plaster cast, Mrs. Stearns wrote, "was so unexpectedly satisfactory that I gave the happy sculptor an order for one in marble."²³ This Brackett made using a block cut by a kinsman living in Concord.²⁴ It was finished in Nov. 1860.

Several copies were made. One of the first, a copy in bronze, was sent in 1860 to President Guillaume Fabre Nicolas Geffrard of Haiti, which had held a state funeral for Brown. Geffrard displayed it in the presidential palace.²⁵ James Redpath, a journalist and anti-slavery activist, wrote a letter from Haiti in 1860, published in the *Boston Traveller*, that it was in the private saloon "under a great mirror, on a marble slab ... crowned with a laurel wreath."²⁶

Other copies stayed closer to home. The bust was displayed at an Artists Reception in Faneuil Hall in April 1860. The *Boston Journal* reporter said it "stood out like that of a Roman Senator in the best days of that proud republic."

According to a letter by William Cooper Nell, the bust was located for a short while later that year at the anti-slavery office in Boston.²⁷ The bust was exhibited at the Athenaeum, which later received its own copy. In addition, medallion copies crafted by Brackett's student Edmonia Lewis were sold. The bust's image was displayed on numerous cabinet cards, advertised for sale in the newspapers and shared among pro-abolition circles.

Sanborn showed a copy of the bust to Harriet Tubman at his home. "The sight of it, which was new to her, threw her into a sort of ecstasy of sorrow and admiration."²⁸ The bust was exhibited at the Athenaeum where all could see it. Mrs. Brown reportedly came upon it unawares at the Athenaeum and broke into tears. In addition, medallion copies crafted by Brackett's student, Edmonia Lewis were sold. Lewis, an artist of both African and Native American descent who arrived in Boston in 1863, got an introduction to Brackett from Garrison, and received the sculptor's permission to make and sell medallions of John Brown based on his bust. She also crafted her own bust of Brown based on Brackett's.

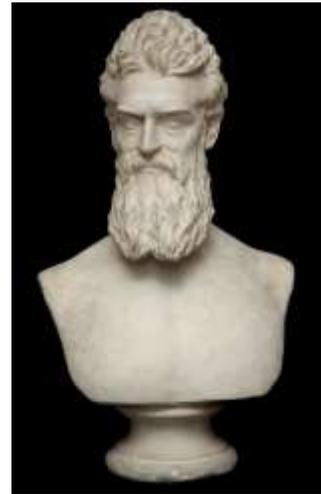


THE UNVEILING

On New Year's Day, 1863, the day the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, Mrs. Stearns sent a plaster cast to her friend Wendell Phillips. When Col. Robert Shaw led the 54th Massachusetts Infantry in a parade through Boston on May 28, 1863, William Lloyd Garrison, publisher of the anti-slavery newspaper *The Liberator*, was seen on the balcony of Phillips' Essex Street home with his hand upon the bust as the regiment marched by.

That evening, although the marble bust had been a fixture in their home in Medford and had been displayed at the Athenaeum in Boston prior to the Emancipation Proclamation, the Stearnses held an unveiling to honor Brown and commemorate the Proclamation.

About fifty people were invited. Ralph Waldo Emerson read his "Boston Hymn." Franklin Sanborn brought his sonnets on John Brown, read aloud by Phillips. Julia Ward Howe recited her "Battle Hymn of the Republic." Other guests included Garrison, Bronson Alcott, and the sculptor himself. Phillips was given the honor of unveiling the bust by removing the covering of blue cloth spangled with silver stars.



Whatever anyone else thought, Mrs. Stearns was thrilled with it. She sent copies to Victor Hugo, to Booker T. Washington, and to several people and places in Kansas, including the Kansas State Historical Society, which lent it to the 1893 World Columbian Exposition in Chicago.²⁹ And she sent a cast to the Wellington Ohio library in 1898. It is now at the Spirit of '76 Museum there.

CRITIQUES

Like John Brown himself, Brackett's statue evoked differing reactions. Many expressed great admiration for it. Charles Sumner reportedly exclaimed on seeing it, "There is nothing the sun shines upon so like Michael Angelo's 'Moses.'"³⁰ The journalist James Redpath, who saw the bust in the Boston Athenaeum (as well as in Haiti), commented that it might well be Moses but certainly was not John Brown.³¹

Redpath particularly objected to the calmness and repose. But Mrs. Brown certainly recognized the face. She reportedly said he didn't always look like that, but he could look like that.³²

The art critic James Jackson Jarves wrote that "exhibiting with Olympian breadth of sentiment the intense moral heroism of the reformer," the bust "is an American type of Jove, one of those rare surprises in art, irrespective of technical finish or perfection in modelling, which shows in what high degree the artist was impressed by the soul of his sitter."³³ Various newspaper reports raved about it.

Another abolitionist and Medford resident, Lydia Maria Child, wrote in 1860, "Those who knew the martyred hero well, pronounce it an admirable likeness.... In Brackett's Bust of Brown, the

character of the man looks through the features wonderfully... and any good judge that examined it...would say, 'That is a man of will and lofty courage, kindly of heart, and religious to the core of his being.'"³⁴

Bronson Alcott, who once attended a lecture Brown gave, wrote "his countenance and frame throughout were surcharged with unmistakable power." And he commented, "There was something thunderous about his brow that Brackett has caught in his bust."³⁵



Brackett in old age, from the Brackett Collection at the Winchester Archival Center

The Liberator pronounced it a faithful representation—"There is about it an air of majesty, nobility and conscious power, which it would be difficult to find surpassed in the busts of any of the great men of this or any other land"—and printed a letter to Brackett from George Henry Hoyt, who was JB's lawyer until Griswold and Chilton arrived, saying "Every feature of his face is ineffaceably daguerreotyped on my mind" and the bust was a true reflection, admirably displaying his lofty brow, invincible eye, and determined lip, as well as "his irresistible manhood, in the presence of which men of mean mold cannot help bowing in self disgust."³⁶

Brackett himself said, "It is a little poetized. A man who paints a picture of a great man and puts no greatness into it, saying that he sees none, errs both in perception and in art. In this case the idealization is elusive – not to be located in any one feature. But it exists, and purposely, the more truthfully to express the character of the subject. Yet John Brown was not himself a great man, but rather a forerunner of great things. He was a blind instrument, blindly cutting the way to the death of thousands and the birth of a new age."

Brackett also made busts of the Abolitionists Charles Sumner, William Lloyd Garrison, and Wendell Phillips.³⁷ Brackett himself donated plaster casts of the last two to the Winchester Public Library, which no longer has them nor any known record of what happened to them.

When Brackett died in 1908, a lengthy obituary appeared covering his work as an artist, his interest in wildlife and service as a state fish and game commissioner, his efforts at poetry, and his octagon house. While the Brown bust is listed among his creations, nary a word appears about his trip to Virginia and associations with Boston's leading Abolitionists.³⁸



A Brackett bust atop a bookcase in the old Winchester Public Library

Later that March, Sanborn retold the story, published in *The Boson Transcript*. Fortunately, this and other printed accounts of the story of Brackett's visit to Brown preserve this remarkable adventure.³⁹

NOTES

¹This article © 2020 is a revision of earlier articles by the author, Ellen Knight, published in the *Daily Times Chronicle* on Feb. 20-22, 2013. This article supersedes all previous articles.

² Letter from William T. Eustis to George Cooke, Jan. 15, 1887, in the Winchester Archival Center.

³ George Coleman Brackett (1830-1903) related at least one adventure during the conflicts, about his unexpectedly accompanying Gov. Reeder during his escape, in a paper read at the annual meeting of the Kansas State Historical Society, Jan. 19, 1886, printed in volume III of their transactions.

⁴ *The Middlesex Journal*, Sept. 8, 1855, reprinted in *The Winchester Record*, Vol. III, No. 1 (April 1887), p. 94.

⁵ *The Boston Post*, May 26, 1849. The article is signed "S."

⁶ According to the Brackett Genealogy, the sculptor destroyed this sculpture.

⁷ It was begun in 1848 and finished in 1851. The sculpture is at the Worcester Art Museum. It has been remarked that it was inspired by the death of Margaret Fuller; however, the sculptor began work on it two years before her drowning.

⁸ *Topeka Daily Capital*, Nov. 14, 1889, quoted in Vincent Yardley Bowditch, *Life and Correspondence of Henry Ingersoll Bowditch*, Volume 2, 1902.

⁹ From a narrative given by Brackett about a year before his death, published by Katherine Mayo, "Sculptor's Visit to John Brown," in the *Evening Post*, November 13, 1909, and as part of the article "John Brown's Raid Fifty Years Ago," in *The Magazine of History with Notes and Queries*, Volume 10 (1909). Mayo wrote that "The following narrative was given by Mr. Brackett," though how he gave it, whether by writing it or narrating it in an interview, is unknown.

¹⁰ Quoted in Franklin Benjamin Sanborn, ed., *The life and letters of John Brown: liberator of Kansas, and martyr of Virginia*, Boston: Roberts Bros., 1885.

¹¹ Quoted in the Annual Report of the American Anti-Slavery Society for the year ending May 1, 1860.

¹² Annual Report of the American Anti-Slavery Society for the year ending May 1, 1860.

¹³ *New York Tribune*, Nov. 8, 1859.

¹⁴ An article in the *Tribune* of Nov. 7, dated Nov. 3, said that Brackett arrived that morning. On Nov. 8, an article dated Nov. 4 stated that Brackett was refused admission to the jail. A story printed on Nov. 9, dated Nov. 4 (probably an error for the 5th) stated that he went away "yesterday" with the plans and measurements in his pocket. A notice in the *Atlas & Daily Bee*, a Boston paper, of Nov. 5 had him leaving Boston "on Thursday" which would have been Nov. 3, which is impossibly late. If they mistook a hand-written "Tuesday" for "Thursday" that would date his departure to Nov. 1 which accords with the *Tribune*. But an arrival on Nov. 3 does not accord with his account of being stalled in Charlestown for days. If the *Atlas* mistook the day for the previous Thursday, that would have been Oct. 27, putting Brackett in Charlestown on the 29th, the day Griswold entered the court in Brown's behalf. The trial ended on November 2, 1859. Shields Green's trial lasted from Nov. 3 to Nov. 4.

¹⁵ "Sculptor's Visit to John Brown."

¹⁶ Sanborn *Life and letters*, p. 516.

¹⁷ *The Evening Post*, November 13, 1909.

¹⁸ *New York Tribune*, Nov. 8, 1859.

¹⁹ "Through the open door I saw the object of my pilgrimage quietly reading, but heavily loaded with chains. He was sitting in a chair with both hands chained, and his feet chained to the floor. Only those who saw him in that miserable prison can have any adequate conception of the moral grandeur of his presence! Everybody and everything was dwarfed in comparison. He looked up from his book when addressed by his counsel, and listened attentively to the request conveyed for me. Impressive as the scene was, I could not restrain a smile, when his reply repeated the very words of Mrs. Stearns. 'Nonsense, all nonsense! better give the money to the poor.'"

"At first Brown could not be persuaded. Then Brackett followed Mrs. Stearns' instructions and asked Griswold to tell Brown that Brackett was there by her wish and at her expense and would be deeply disappointed if he returned without the measurements for a bust.

"I watched his face eagerly while Mr. Griswold repeated to him these words, and to which clung all my hopes. As he listened, I could see signs of interest mingled with surprise in his face; then a grave thoughtfulness. Presently his hands dropped at his side, and he seemed lost in thought. Then, lifting his head and straightening himself up, he said with emotion, 'Anything Mr. or Mrs. Stearns desires: take the measurements.'"

²⁰ Frank B Sanborn, "Carried on Two Arts," *The Boston Transcript*, March 23, 1908.

²¹ *New York Tribune*, Nov. 9, 1859.

²² "Sculptor's Visit to John Brown."

²³ Vincent Yardley Bowditch, *Life and Correspondence of Henry Ingersoll Bowditch*, Volume 2, p. 86.

²⁴ Sanborn in "Carried on Two Arts" stated it was a kinsman named Starkey (his mother's family name).

²⁵ The fate of this bust is unknown. The palace itself was severely damaged by an earthquake in 2010.

²⁶ *Boston Traveller*, Sept. 26, 1860. The letter was dated Aug. 8, 1860.

²⁷ The letter is included in Dorothy Porter Wesley and Constance Porter Uzelac eds., *William Cooper Nell: Selected Writings 1832-1874*, Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 2002, p. 419.

²⁸ Sarah Hopkins Bradford, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, 1869, p. 54.

²⁹ The bust was given to Tufts University about 1920. Put into storage three decades later, it remained unidentified until 2015. See Tufts' online exhibit: <https://exhibits.tufts.edu/spotlight/john-brown-tufts>.

³⁰ Quoted in Sanborn, *Life and Letters*, p. 517.

³¹ Quoted by David S. Reynolds, *John Brown, Abolitionist: The Man Who Killed Slavery, Sparked the Civil War, and Seeded Civil Right*, 2006.

³² Quoted by W. E. Barton, "Bust of John Brown," *The Wellington Enterprise* [Ohio], April 13, 1898.

³³ Quoted in Lorado Taft, *The History of American Sculpture*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903, p. 201.

³⁴ *New York Tribune*, Feb. 11, 1860

³⁵ Quoted in Sanborn, *Memoirs of John Brown*, Concord: 1878, p. 96.

³⁶ *The Liberator*, Jan. 6, 1860.

³⁷ The bust of Phillips was completed in November 1862.

³⁸ By contrast, in 1902, the obituary in the *Winchester Star* for Rev. Joshua Young, who spent only his last two years in Winchester, recalled that he was a famous Abolitionist who was forced to leave his pastorate for preaching at Brown's funeral. While in Winchester, Young wrote an article about the funeral published in the *New England Magazine* of March 1904.

³⁹ There are some minor variations in the details of the stories of Brackett's adventure in Virginia; however, the main elements are consistent.