Divided We Stand: Watertown, Massachusetts, 1630-1680.

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Divided We Stand: Watertown, Massachusetts, 1630-1680 . By

Thompson Roger. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001. xviii, 269 pp. \$39.95, ISBN1-55849-304-2.)

Len Travers

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As noger thompsomerates in Divided we stand, the Charles river community of Wa-tertown worked hard to earn its obscurity. The town produced no great colony leaders, kept steadfastly out of the antinomian troubles and the Half-Way Covenant conflicts, saw little economic development beyond farming, and was rarely even mentioned in colony records after 1650. Nevertheless, Thompson sees in Watertown an opportunity to revisit the by now familiar topic of the adaptation and persistence of English ways in New England, and to determine how settlers were able to create stable communities amid a marked penchant for quarreling and dissent.

If there was much about Watertown that reflected English ways, "cultural conservatism could not mask the fact that this was a new creation." In particular, Thompson argues that the American experience of Watertowners brought about "revolutionary change" in patterns of landholding, religion,...

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