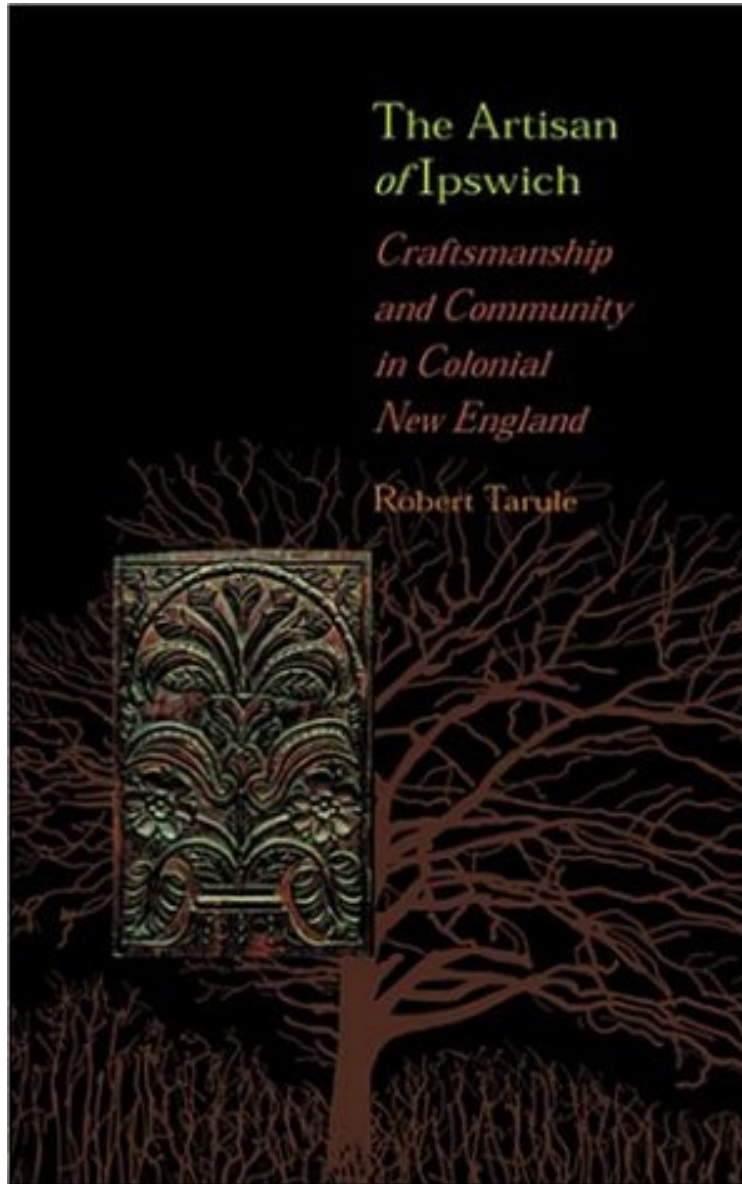


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The Artisan of Ipswich: Craftsmanship and Community in Colonial New England

Robert Tarule

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#4174614 in Books 2004-08-02Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.25 x .80 x 6.13l, 1.17 #File Name: 0801878691176 pages | File size: 61.Mb

Robert Tarule : The Artisan of Ipswich: Craftsmanship and Community in Colonial New England before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Artisan of Ipswich: Craftsmanship and Community in Colonial New England:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. fascinating stories reconstructedBy frederick nunleyThis book was an excellent journey through the life of a woodworker living in early Ipswich. I learned so many interesting things from it as the author revealed the layers of community structure and the ways that timber and property were managed by early New England settlers. They brought old ways from their homeland to the new world that eventually evolved into rules that better suited the new worlds huge bounty. It was this that was part of the revolt against taxes and laws from England that started the revolution. It's fascinating how the author was able to reconstruct the era and the details based on one surviving chest and the Ipswich town records. It truly reveals the colonial era in a whole new light that is very personal and intimate. Ipswich is a wonderful town today and this helps bring it's early years back to life.6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Historical ImmersionBy Jim TolpinI've been looking for a book that would give me some insight not just into the ways of work but also into the life of work of a colonial-era woodworker/craftsman. This book does just that. You feel you are peering over the shoulder of this artisan as he lives his life in the society, the forest, and the workshops of early New England. Astonishing detail: and as accurate as one can expect due to the long and extensive research and personal experience of the practicing hand tool woodworker/author.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Historical FictionBy PcsI enjoyed this book. The author was careful to enumerate just enough facts to support his story. The Tale of how the Laws and realities of the day meshed with the needs of the time to shape one man's life. I read the book a couple of times before I passed it on in the woodworking club. ([...])

Thomas Dennis emigrated to America from England in 1663, settling in Ipswich, a Massachusetts village a long day's sail north of Boston. He had apprenticed in joinery, the most common method of making furniture in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Britain, and he became Ipswich's second joiner, setting up shop in the heart of the village. During his lifetime, Dennis won wide renown as an artisan. Today, connoisseurs judge his elaborately carved furniture as among the best produced in seventeenth-century America.Robert Tarule, historian and accomplished craftsman, brilliantly recreates Dennis's world in recounting how he created a single oak chest. Writing as a woodworker himself, Tarule vividly portrays Dennis walking through the woods looking for the right trees; sawing and splitting the wood on site; and working in his shop on the chestplaning, joining, and carving. Dennis inherited a knowledge of wood and woodworking that dated back centuries before he was born, and Tarule traces this tradition from Old World to New. He also depicts the natural and social landscape in which Dennis operated, from the sights, sounds, and smells of colonial Ipswich and its surrounding countryside to the laws that governed his use of trees and his network of personal and professional relationships.Thomas Dennis embodies a world that had begun to disappear even during his lifetime, one that today may seem unimaginably distant. Imaginatively conceived and elegantly executed, *The Artisan of Ipswich* gives readers a tangible understanding of that distant past.

Tarule's work is significant not just for what it reveals about woodworking and joining in seventeenth-century New England, but because he provides a cultural and intellectual history for those who worked with their hands as well as their minds. (Martha I. Pallante Historian) *The Artisan of Ipswich* gives readers a tangible understanding of that distant past. (Antiques Journal)Tarule both explains and celebrates the intelligence of physical work. (Marie Morgan New England Quarterly)Tarule weaves a fascinating narrative under the general heading of Americana... Of interest to diverse readers such as antique dealers, woodworkers, and American Colonial historians. (Henry Berry Midwest Book)Tarule brings an extremely analytical eye and a wealth of woodworking experiences to the task of unwrapping a seventeenth-century chest. (Edward S. Cooke, Jr., Yale University)About the AuthorRobert Tarule makes replicas of seventeenth-century furniture in Vermont.