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BOUTWELL

Radical Republican and Champion of Democracy by Jeffrey Boutwell

BOUTWELL: Radical Republican and Champion of Democracy [W.W Norton & Company; January 21, 2025; \$39.99 hardcover] is the first major biography of an important public figure who has long been hiding in plain sight, George Sewall Boutwell. Written by Jeffrey Boutwell, a historian, policy specialist, and one of George’s distant cousins, **BOUTWELL** chronicles George Boutwell’s seven-decade career in public life and commitment to racial equality, economic equity, and the principled use of American power abroad.

From 1840 to 1905, Boutwell was at the center of efforts to abolish slavery, establish the Republican Party, assist President Lincoln in funding the Union war effort, facilitate Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, impeach President Andrew Johnson, and frame and enact the Fourteenth and Fifteenth civil rights amendments. He helped lay the foundations of the modern American economy with President Grant, investigated white terrorism in Mississippi in the 1870s, and opposed American imperialism following the Spanish-American War alongside Andrew Carnegie, Mark Twain, and Booker T. Washington. The son of a Massachusetts farming family of modest means, George Boutwell would do battle during his career with American political royalty, including Henry Cabot Lodge and Teddy Roosevelt.

Already considered “**a revelation**” by Kermit Roosevelt, author of *The Nation That Never Was, Reconstructing America’s Story* and a “**richly contextualized and painstakingly researched . . . classic political biography**” by Pulitzer Prize winner Megan Marshall, **BOUTWELL** is as much a history of nineteenth-century American politics as it is a critique of the failures of governance during a turbulent and formative period in American history.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jeffrey Boutwell is a writer, historian, and science policy specialist whose forty-year career has spanned journalism, government, and international scientific research. He lives in Maryland. Jeffrey and George share a common ancestor, the indentured servant James Boutwell, who emigrated in 1632 from England to Salem, Massachusetts.

TITLE: *Boutwell: Radical Republican and Champion of Democracy*

AUTHOR: Jeffrey Boutwell

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Advance Praise for BOUTWELL

“In Jeffrey Boutwell’s capable hands, the nearly forgotten nineteenth-century Massachusetts politician George Boutwell emerges as an Emersonian Representative Man . . . a self-made man of conscience. Richly contextualized and painstakingly researched, *Boutwell* is a classic political biography, a powerful and timely reminder that while personality may win the day, character makes a legacy.”

—**Megan Marshall, Pulitzer Prize–winning author of *Margaret Fuller: A New American Life***

“Jeffrey Boutwell’s deeply researched and highly readable biography of his family member is a welcome addition to the literature. A militant opponent of slavery, racial discrimination, and imperial overreach, George Boutwell has been neglected by historians but, thanks to this book, is no longer consigned to the shadowy sidelines of history.”

—**Michael Burlingame, author of *Abraham Lincoln: A Life***

“Taking readers from the antebellum era through the Civil War, into Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, Boutwell provides an insider’s view of the pivotal moments that laid the groundwork for modern America.”

—**Jonathan W. White, author of *A House Built by Slaves: African American Visitors to the Lincoln White House***

“Boutwell the man was a hero, and *Boutwell* the book is a revelation, a gripping tale of how Americans struggled to make the promise of equality into something more than mere words.”

—**Kermit Roosevelt, author of *The Nation That Never Was: Reconstructing America’s Story***

“A thoroughly absorbing cultural biography of a figure who has long existed in the historical shadows but who we now know had a major impact on just about every important political and diplomatic initiative of the second half of the nineteenth century. I am grateful to Jeffrey Boutwell for his brilliant historical recovery of George Boutwell—a man who did what he could to create a better, more equitable America.”

—**Robert S. Levine, author of *The Failed Promise: Reconstruction, Frederick Douglass, and the Impeachment of Andrew Johnson***

“Jeffrey Boutwell’s deep dive into family letters, newspapers, historical archives, and contemporary accounts . . . makes a powerful case that farmer, governor, congressman, senator, and cabinet member George Boutwell deserves to be remembered, flaws and all, as one of America’s greatest champions of human rights.”

—**Edward Achorn, author of *Every Drop of Blood: The Momentous Second Inauguration of Abraham Lincoln***

“George Boutwell, one of the central political characters of his age, whose story charts the whole arc of the party of Lincoln, is at last brought vividly and brilliantly back to life—with vital lessons for our time about what it takes to defend democracy.”

—**Sidney Blumenthal, author of *The Political Life of Abraham Lincoln***

