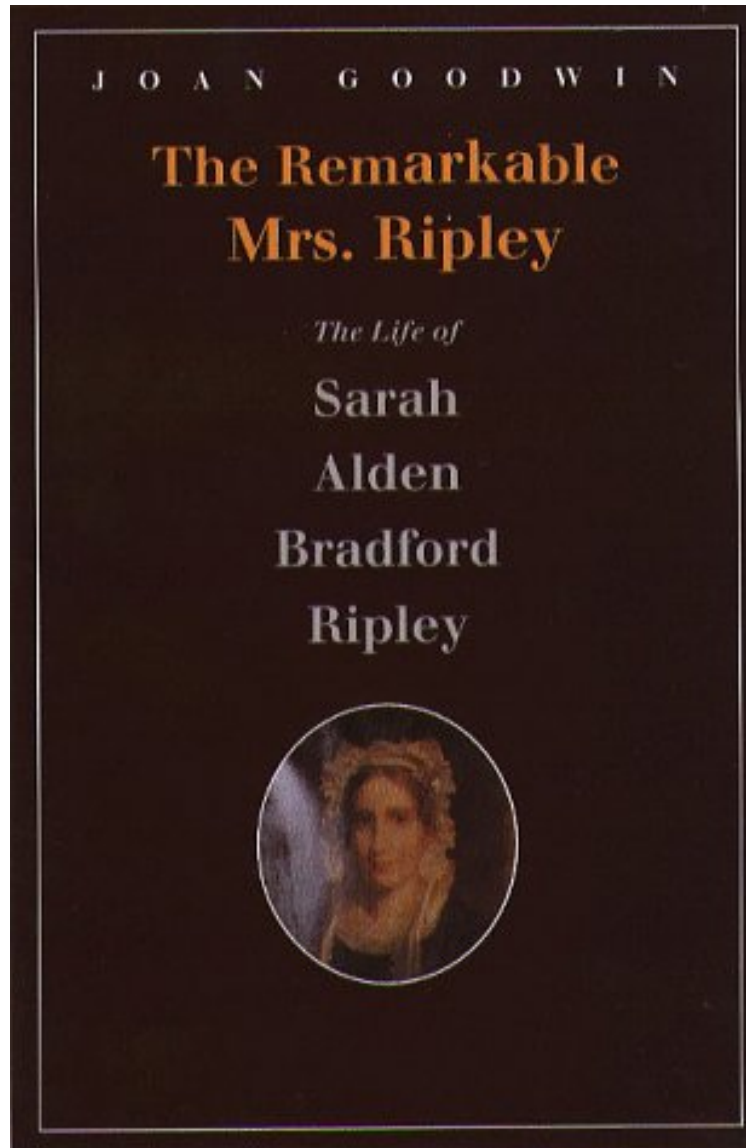


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The Remarkable Mrs. Ripley: The Life of Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley

Joan W. Goodwin

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Joan W. Goodwin : The Remarkable Mrs. Ripley: The Life of Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Remarkable Mrs. Ripley: The Life of Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley:

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genealogical research based on the Ripley family. I found the book wonderfully written and very enjoyable to read. An intellectual family that written through the letters and documents that preface the book you not only get a glimpse into the family but the era and the times that they were written and shared in. A pictorial glimpse of community, streets, and homes of Duxbury and Plymouth through her eyes and remembrances. Sarah was amazing in her pursuits of study in Latin, Botany, and Poetry and and taught to prepare other students of study for Harvard. Her seven children, husband, and family were her life that she lived well and gained tremendous insight into the political world and the world of religion for her time. Her family included Ralph Waldo Emerson that so beautifully wrote her obituary. Not only for her time in history but for any time she was an amazing woman that was an enjoyable read.

In this first biography of the remarkable Mrs. Ripley, Joan W. Goodwin draws on both Sarah's letters and the writings of her contemporaries to paint as full a picture as possible of a compelling figure known until now only as a literary footnote. Goodwin reveals the inner drama of a woman's lonely struggle to reconcile the liberal Christian world view with her own increasing skepticism, and her traditional domestic role with the pursuit of intellectual attainments.

From Library Journal This is the first book-length biography of Sarah Ripley (1793-1867), a resident of Concord and acquaintance of Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, and other figures of the New England Renaissance. A Unitarian minister's wife and the mother of a large family, she never published anything but was known in her circle for her teaching and intellectual achievements. As freelance writer Goodwin shows, Ripley was torn between her desire to break out of the role reserved for women and her sense of duty as wife and mother. Her letters make clear how she eventually settled the conflict within herself. It would have helped, though, if Goodwin had included a genealogy to keep track of the many births, marriages, and family relationships in Ripley's life. This affecting portrait of an unsung heroine is for those interested in 19th-century American religion, literature, and women's studies. For larger academic collections. ?Morris Hounion, New York City Technical Coll. Lib., Brooklyn Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Mrs. Ripley, a contemporary of Emerson and Hawthorne, is descended from the leading families in U.S. history. And though she is mentioned in the works of those contemporaries and is considered to have been a strong influence on their work, she left no writing of her own. She was a self-taught classical scholar whose formal education was cut short because of family responsibilities. Along with her role as a minister's wife and mother of a large family, she made use of her intellect and training in preparing boys at the school run by her husband for admission to Harvard. She was able to do all that without ever leaving what was considered the proper "woman's sphere." In this fully researched scholarly biography, Goodwin makes use of letters, diaries, and other primary sources to present for the first time a complete picture of this extraordinary woman's life, which will appeal to historians, feminists, and other readers of detailed biography. Danise Hoover From Kirkus sA well-meaning biography, mired in detail. Goodwin, an independent scholar formerly with the Unitarian Universalist Association, may win the prize for laboring longest on a biography: 40-plus years. Ironically, the book might have been more readable had she not been quite so meticulous. The subject, absorbing and worthy of study: Sarah Ripley, a Boston teacher, mother, pastor - s wife, and one of the most learned women of the 19th century. Scioness of both the Bradford and Alden families of colonial Massachusetts, Ripley was the eldest daughter of a prosperous sea captain. Her mother - s lingering illness and eventual death forced Sarah to take responsibility for several of her younger siblings, setting a pattern of domestic constancy that would enable her to raise her own children (seven of them), take in an orphaned niece, and serve as teacher and den mother to the countless boys enrolled in her husband - s boarding school. What sets Ripley apart from other women of her era is her own astonishing erudition. A true intellectual, she would parse Greek and Latin verbs by candlelight and read the great philosophers while stirring the sauce. The Emersons were her neighbors and friends (Ralph Waldo wrote her obituary, which Goodwin uses as a fitting prologue for the book). Unfortunately, the biographer focuses so intimately on the daily dramas of Ripley - s domestic life that we only rarely can glean where her story fits into the larger context of 19th-century American womanhood. In part, this is because Ripley left no published works, only letters, and eschewed public participation in such issues as abolition and women - s rights. (Her staid husband also may have curtailed her activism and public voice; he once threatened to burn her writings when she quoted Virgil.) Goodwin should resist her tendency to lose sight of the forest for the trees. (11 bw illustrations, not seen) -- Copyright ©1998, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.