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THE COMMERCE OF RHODE ISLAND WITH THE WEST INDIES,  
BEFORE THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BY

BRUCE MACMILLAN BIGELOW

PH.B., BROWN UNIVERSITY, 1924.

M.A., HARVARD UNIVERSITY, 1927.

Thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
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This thesis by Bruce Macmillan Bigelow  
is accepted in its present form by the Department  
of History as satisfying the thesis requirement  
for the degree of Ph.D.

May 5, 1930.

Vernon W. Crane

Approved by the Graduate Council

0001 21 NNC

H. E. Richardson

PRELIMINARY

The Author of  
The Commerce of Rhode Island With The West Indies Before the  
American Revolution

Bruce Macmillan Bigelow

Born in Norwood, Rhode Island, August 27, 1903.

Graduated from the Norwood Grammar School in 1916.

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Returned to Brown as the Henry D. Sharpe fellow in History and continued to work for the Ph.D. under the direction of Professor Verner W. Crane. Remained for two full years in this research work.

Expect to return to Brown next year as instructor in American History.

Chapters I and II of Part I  
are merely of an introductory  
nature and are therefore not  
to be submitted as a part of  
thesis for the fulfillment of  
the degree of Ph.D.

Chapter I is to be a general  
discussion of the economic background  
of the story. It's title is  
"Colonial Rhode Island".

Chapter II is a general discussion of  
the West Indies in the seventeenth  
and eighteenth centuries. The title  
of this chapter is: "The West Indies  
Before the American Revolution".

**PART I**  
**THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT**

PREVIEW

Part I  
Chapter III

THE BEGINNINGS OF RHODE ISLAND COMMERCE (1636-1711)

Long before Roger Williams had founded the town of Providence, Narragansett Bay was known to the commercial world. The ubiquitous Dutchman, who tried all ports, had there bartered his knives, trinkets, tools, and firearms for the Indian furs, hides, and produce, and had even established a trading post there<sup>1</sup> for the Dutch West India Company. When the early colonists settled Newport and Providence they were prompt to continue this intercourse with the Dutchman of Manhattan. The unpopularity of Rhode Islanders with Massachusetts doubtless forced the colony into this foreign trade. It is of curious interest that the commercial history of colonial Rhode Island opens with a preference for foreign trade and closes with a foreigner the economic favorite.

Naturally the beginnings of Rhode Island commerce were coastwise. Manhattan to the south and Newfoundland to the north were the early limits of exchange. The colonists in the forties, however, were just establishing themselves on the land and were too busy at first to engage largely in exporting. Indeed there was only one surplus available and that was lumber from the forests which still surround this Bay. Following the common theory of mercantilism the General Assembly regulated the prices of this commodity and required a license for its export.<sup>2</sup> Much of the lumber went quickly into the building of sloops on Rhode Island shores. In 1646 a ship<sup>3</sup> of 150 tons was launched at Portsmouth for the colony of New Haven.

The early town records of Providence have preserved for the historian a record of a cargo exported to Newfoundland in 1652. "Shipped aboard the Providence of Pequitt for Christover Almy. Ralph Parker, master, for Newfoundland, forty-nine roles of tobacco,

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one hoghead of floure and thirteene bushells of pease the hog!  
marked with C. A. which goodes are to pay after the rate of fifty  
shillings the tun as also fifty shillings for his passage, and are  
to be delivered at Newfoundland safe and well, all dangers of the  
seas excepted, dated the first of June 1652. A true coppie.  
John Smith.<sup>4</sup>"

A lawsuit which followed this venture shows that liquor  
was brought back. The usual importation from Newfoundland, however,  
was the dried fish which played so important a part in the West  
Indian traffic. Undoubtedly the best fish came from the cold  
waters off the coast of Newfoundland where they were cured, dried,  
packed and then taken to North America, to the sugar islands, and  
to the Mediterranean. The best of course went to Europe, but the  
persistent idea that the refuse fish all found its market in the  
West Indies is false. The New England merchants soon found that  
planters were demanding the best, and usually willing to pay for it.

In this early period of the seventeenth century there  
was some small commerce with Barbados, but exactly how much there  
was may never be known. Among the meagre evidence is a report  
to the Board of Trade made by Governor Peleg Sanford in 1680, forty-  
four years after the founding of the colony.<sup>5</sup> Sanford wrote that  
"we have nine towns or divisions within our Colloney." As to the  
commercial possibilities the answer was, "wee have several good  
Harbors in the Colloney of very good depth and soundinge, navigable  
for any shippings." He reported further in reference to trade,  
"the principall matters that are exported amongst us, is Horses  
and provisions, and the goods chiefly imported is a small quantity of



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Barbadoes goods for supply of our families."

The extreme meagreness of the actual commerce of the period is indicated in this same document when the governor announced "wee have severall men that deale in buyinge and sellinge although they cannot properly be called merchants, and for the Planters wee conceive there are about five hundred and about five hundred men besides." Again he stated, "That as for merchants wee have none, but the most of our Colloney live comfortably by improveinge the wilderness --- that wee have no shippinge belonginge to our Colloney but only a few sloopes."

The report of 1680 is convincing proof of the commercial immaturity of Rhode Island. There was a dearth of men - Sanford complained of this - and there was not yet a surplus of provisions. Early Providence and Newport records of the middle seventeenth century show that a few wharves and warehouses were being built, Pardon Tillinghast's building among the first; but altogether too much importance has been given to these records.

As to the actual West Indian commerce which did exist we are not entirely without commercial documents. Two very important ones are at our disposal. One is the Peleg Sanford Letter Book and the other is the Walter Newbury Shipping Book. <sup>6</sup> The former shows the business practices of Peleg Sanford between 1666 and 1669; the latter indicates the actual export trade of Walter Newbury between 1673 and 1689. Both merchants belonged to Newport and therefore the documents are of great value to the student of the beginnings of Rhode Island commerce.

Peleg Sanford was born in Portsmouth in 1639. When only

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twenty-four he moved to Barbados and there for a couple of years was engaged in business, weaving the commercial ties which were later to bind the Caribbean so closely to Rhode Island. Returning to Newport, Peleg became further interested in trade and later in politics. In 1678 he was made General Treasurer of the colony and in 1680 was elected to the position of governor which he held for three years. While in this office he made his rather pessimistic report to the Board of Trade.<sup>7</sup> In 1698 he was Judge of the Court of Admiralty;<sup>8</sup> and in 1701 he died.

The trade of Peleg Sanford in the sixties has most of the elements which were later developed into the extensive eighteenth century commerce. Naturally it was small in scope, rather primitive in character and attended by great difficulties. In general, it was a trade between Newport and Barbados, between Newport and Boston, and finally a four-cornered commerce, the corners being Newport, Barbados, London, and Boston. Not only had Peleg Sanford been in Barbados himself in 1663 and 1664, but his brothers William and Elisha were residing there later while Peleg traded from Newport. He therefore knew the market in the islands by experience and through family contacts, and he was aware of the best methods of trade.

In the communication between Newport and Barbados Peleg usually employed sloops and ketches, although a ship is occasionally mentioned. The single masted, fore-and-aft-rigged sloop of twenty to seventy tons remained very popular throughout the entire colonial period. Ships - three masted and square rigged - and usually having a tonnage of 120 to 400, grew in popularity as the extent of the trade

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increased, becoming the favorites at the end of the period. The ketch of the seventeenth century seems to have soon given way in popularity to the brigs and brigantines, all two masted. The ketch is frequently mentioned, however, in the Sanford and Newbury papers. It is a two masted vessel with the mainmast stepped about amidships with a smaller mast near the stern. During the colonial period it was known to be rigged in several ways, with fore-and-aft sails,<sup>9</sup> square sails, and also with lateen sails. It is probably true that the brigs and brigantines which were so common in the West Indian trade later were terms used interchangeably. Frequently an owner will at one time call his vessel a brig and again a brigantine. The vessel always was a two masted one and it combined the square sail with the fore-and-aft. Reference should also be made to two other types, although they came into use at a later date, the schooner and the snow. The first example of the former<sup>10</sup> was designed in Gloucester and launched in 1713. It was a two masted affair with fore-and-aft rig. The snow on the other hand besides two principal masts had a small third mast placed behind<sup>11</sup> the mainmast and equipped with a trysail.

In Peleg Sanford's little fleet, sloops and ketches were in the majority. Their exact number cannot be determined, but it is obvious that it was small. During the years 1666, 1667, and 1668 only fifteen vessels were named in his letters, and several of these were in the trade between England and Boston while others were in the coastwise commerce, Hartford to Newport and Boston to Newport. Two or three vessels a year were usually employed by Peleg in his Barbados ventures. Captains John Almy, [Joseph] Bryer, John

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Grafton, James Paine, Ralph Parker, John and Henry Beer were the  
12  
usual masters.

The actual ownership of the vessels mentioned is not clear. The same holds true later for Newbury. It was very uncommon for one man to own an entire vessel and cargo outright. The risk was much too great, particularly at this time since there is no evidence of the use of insurance. Even at a later date, however, the leading merchants such as Lopez, the Champlins, and the Browns sought other investors to purchase an interest in their vessels and ventures. A merchant would frequently be involved in several different vessels and cargoes at the same time. In days of peril by sea and frequent fluctuations in market conditions, this spread of risk was the only sensible method.

It was even common for both shipper and receiver to be part owners of the same vessel. On December 28, 1668, for example, Peleg Sanford in Newport wrote to his brother William in Barbados: "Brother heare is now a shipp of about 120 tunns abuilding & if yo please yo may have a part of here Either an 1/8 or 1/16 or more if yo please: I have not yeet taken any part of here Neither shall untill I heare from you: wheathr yo will Beare any part or not ---"

In general, four or five different merchants owned the same vessel, some being in Newport, one or two perhaps in the West Indies, and one on board the vessel itself acting as master. With the latter an investor in vessel and cargo, the shipper's anxiety was naturally lessened.

On these sloops and ketches which ploughed the waters from Narragansett to the Caribbean, the cargoes were not very dissimilar from those of the 1770's. Horses and provisions found the best

markets. West Indian sugar plantations furnished a constant market for horses. They were used particularly in the mill to turn the cylinders which crushed the sugar cane. Horses were also needed as beasts of burden on the plantation in hauling and carting. When in 1654 a duty was levied in England on the exportation of horses, this trade shifted across the Atlantic to New England and there it remained.<sup>13</sup>

Rhode Island was prompt to seize the opportunity and horse raising there began to flourish. Farm horses were first exported but even in 1668 Peleg Sanford sent his brother "avery<sup>14</sup> Speciall good Beast." He added that it "hath all his paces."

It was not until the first half of the next century, however, that the famous trade in Narragansett pacers flourished. Sheep were also sent to Barbados, and Peleg even suggested a possible traffic in cows but the suggestion seems not to have been entertained.<sup>15</sup>

In the way of provisions the cargoes comprised hogsheads of pork and beef but the supply of the former was apparently the larger. Peas, bread, butter, and corn were also sent. It is strange that in all these Sanford letters no mention was made of fish. This is particularly noticeable inasmuch as a few years later Newbury was using fish as a leading export. Even though Sanford's trade did not include this, there can be no doubt that others in Newport were shipping it, as were the Boston merchants, to the West Indies. There is one instance of staves being sent by Sanford but in this particular case he merely acted as a commission merchant, taking the lumber from Richard Lord of Hartford, and consigning it to William Sanford in Barbados. In general, however, the Sanford cargoes were made up of horses, peas, corn, bread, pork,

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and beef.

These goods were usually consigned to friends in Barbados; this indeed, was a typical seventeenth century method. Risk was great, provisions were scarce, and traffic between the West Indies and Rhode Island was light. In a situation such as this no merchant could take the chance of huckstering, that rather uncertain form of marketing which became so popular and necessary at a later time. Nor was commercial organization so specialized in the seventeenth century that factors were sent to reside in the West Indies to handle the cargoes of a single New England merchant. This last method was to await development until the second half of the next century. The mode of the early shippers was much simpler.

Peleg Sanford sent his vessels usually to his brother William, who on some ventures took the entire risk of the sales. Occasionally he also acted in partnership with Peleg. Sometimes he performed the duty of a commission merchant. Whatever the plan, Peleg was certain of a definite market, whether good or bad. Other friends in Barbados also received his favors. Occasional small consignments were shipped to Thomas Butcher and John King.

The return cargoes consisted of refined sugar, molasses, muscovado [unrefined] sugar, rum, and cotton wool. Peleg himself explained his means of profit better in a letter of January 2, 1668. The trade between himself and William had fallen off for a few months while Peleg was making a forced stay in the Boston gaol. His Boston creditors had won at law, and Peleg was sentenced to confinement. With the hope of striking up a rejuvenated correspondence, he wrote to William:

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Brther if yo find that are desierous to settle a trayd in these parts: for horses & provitions you may Ingage me for to Carry on a quarter part. or if yo will Joyne yor Selfe in it then to Carry on one halfe Betwixt us if it be to the value of 4 or five hundred pounds a yeare at first. or if any will send Rume or Malacces & Cotton Wooll & Sume Sugrs I will or yo may ingage yor self in apart to take it ofe at a sertaine price viz Rume at 2s 6 d./or 3s/per Gall. Cotton wooll at 6 d per li mallacces at 12 li per tunn & sugr at 20s per hundred to be delivered here on shore in good condition and will pay them in horses & provitions as porke Beefe pease Buttr all at prices Current.

Here in brief is the whole story - return cargoes, prices, exports, methods of trade, organization, and practices. One interesting idea suggested in the letter was the scheme for shipments to Newport at the risk of the West Indian planter or merchant; this idea was not at all new, but it never became very important. Sanford had occasionally received some sugar on consignment from Barbadians, but with very little success.

A very important angle of the trade between the Sanford brothers, one in Newport and the other in Barbados, was the English connection. At this time Newport was dependent upon Boston for its European goods, and as a matter of fact never broke away until after 1750. As early as 1666, however, Peleg Sanford saw the possibility of buying English goods with his West Indian

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products or bills of exchange. His London correspondent was William Pate at "the princes armes in Grace church street." The letters indicate that while in Barbados Peleg Sanford did business with Pate and planned a Newport correspondence with him. Writing from Newport December 7, 1666 he said:

--- Sr had not the dangerousness of the times prevented I had thought to have beene with you before this: but Since having Settled myself in this I place: have noe thoughts yeet of Removeing, thearfore desiere that what yo have in yor hands of myne, you will by Some good Shippes that first Come in the Spring of the yeare Send it me in Such goods as are Expressed heare following in Nayles of Sisable Sorts not Exceeding duple teenns in bingnes to the quantaty of 4s Starling in good Knivs two doz Ivory hafts 3 li worth and in Siths to the value of Sixe pounds worth three peces of good Stript blanchetting of the Beest Sort two peces of good blew dryfalls Four peces of good Rd yard wid Cotten Five pounds worth of Brace Cettles not to Exceed 8 or ten gallons one thousand of threed of Severall Sorts two Ban of good fine pistole powder, and what shall be remaining more due I desiere it may be Sent in good Lockerum dowles Convive Carsey Searge and peniston Sr if you will please & furnish me with 50 li or 100 li on credit Sr if you have any freedom in yor Self for to Settle a Correspondencey for the futter and to have yor Returnes in Sugr, for at present I have noe other way of makeing Returnes for England but I doe Rather desiere a Correspondencey



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with your Self than any other parson having allredy made ...  
with you & being fully Satisfyed in my Self Concerning you.

This letter epitomizes the whole story. Specie in Rhode Island had nearly all drifted toward Boston and the only method of buying from England was through the West Indies, for England wanted none of the Rhode Island products. Hence, Peleg Sanford would ship to Barbados provisions which were exchanged there for sugars remitted by William Sanford to Mr. Pate in London. There was not enough export trade from London to Newport to permit the goods to come direct. Hence the Massachusetts vessels would freight them to Boston where coastwise sloops would carry them to Newport. This triangular exchange between the Northern Colonies, the West Indies, and England was extremely important and made possible a great English export trade in dry goods and hardware.

At Boston Peleg Sanford had many relatives to take care of his business. His uncle, Samuel Hutchinson, kept up a regular commercial correspondence with Peleg in Newport.<sup>18</sup> They supplied him with European goods when he could not get them from England. Peleg in turn frequently sent them sugars and provisions.

The Hutchinsons did their best to keep Peleg out of financial troubles in Boston, but they failed. Poor Peleg was always in trouble, if we would believe his own correspondence. Besides undergoing the ignominy of debtor's jail, he suffered severe loss in the burning of a vessel<sup>19</sup> on which he had a considerable cargo. Moreover, Peleg was constantly complaining of the receipt of bad goods either from his correspondent in England,

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his brother in the West Indies, or his relatives in Boston. Either he was greatly abused or else he was an inherent grumbler. It was true, of course, that preparation and packing of cargoes were not as carefully administered as in the eighteenth century. Coopers furthermore appear to have been careless frequently in the manufacture of hogsheads and barrels. A typical Peleg complaint was made in January 1667 when he wrote his "Loveing Brother" that "the goods & the which are Receved But in Such Bad Conditions<sup>20</sup> that nevr had goods Come in worse one of the tearses in partnrship through the defect of the Casque was all leaked out to twenty one Gallons and one pinte the other tearse and Barrell wanted 3 2/4 of full my tearses one with an othr wanted at least 4 Gallons a peese: one of the hhds 4 1/2 the othr Eight wheare the Fault is I know not the Casque all Semeing very good ondy one tearse of myne which is utterly Spoyled by the Coopr putting in of traine oyle heads or peeces of heads into it yo may informe yor Coopr of his Knavish dealeings with yo for the Liker is Soe much Spoyled with tht Smells and tast Soe of Traine oyle that<sup>21</sup> none will drinke theareof."

If it so happened that a cargo from the West Indies did please him, the shipper was never praised. His mood seemingly never brightened, for if Barbadian goods were satisfactory the English shipments were bad. He wrote William Pate in London: "--- [I] find my Self Extreemly abused in the prices & alsoe by the Badnes of the goods." With cutting sarcasm he added, "I would be so Charitable as to Judge you Never see the Bayle of woolling Cloths Elce would not have Sent me such Refuge goods---." 22

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In the following year he admonished Pate, "not to forgitt the Goulden Rule but doe as yo would be done unto."<sup>23</sup>

To augment the evidence of late seventeenth century trade furnished by Sanford, there is the shipping book of Walter Newbury of the ensuing decade. This merchant was born in 1648 and died in 1697.

He is first heard of in Newport in 1673 when he shipped goods to Barbados.<sup>24</sup> In the following year the Friends' records identified him as a "London merchant, residing in Newport," and show that he purchased a house from William Richardson, mariner and owner of the Ketch Mayflower.<sup>25</sup> In 1675 he was listed as a Freeman, in 1684 as a Deputy, and from 1686-96 as an Assistant. Newbury was apparently a very active Quaker. The famous Itinerant Friend, William Edmundson, in the Journal of his own life described visits to the West Indies, a passage to Rhode Island in a "Yatch that Joseph Bryer, a Friend was master of," and his stay during an illness at the home of Walter Newbury.<sup>26</sup><sup>27</sup>

The Newbury document is a shipping book of a standard type. For the convenience of merchants English printers sold bills of lading bound together in book form. The bills would be printed forms with spaces into which the name of the shipper, the vessel, the master, and the receiver would be written. The cargo, of course, was also included along with the freight rate, and then too, the date. The master's signature appeared at the bottom of each bill.<sup>28</sup>

The first bill of lading was not made out in Newbury's name. It read, "Shipped in good order and well conditioned by

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Hope Borden In and upon the Ship called the Johanah and Sarah... now riding at anchor in the Harbor of Newport and bound for the Island of Barbados." The cargo, consisting of horses and provisions, was consigned to Joseph Borden. The bill was dated November 18, 1673. In this case shipper and consignee were husband and wife. Joseph Borden had moved from Portsmouth to Barbados; his wife, Hope, remained in Newport with her mother until the Borden's third child was born.<sup>30</sup> The second bill of lading, dated December 30, 1673, reveals Walter Newbury as the shipper and Joseph Borden the consignee. The story is plain enough. Joseph Borden had probably carried on a previous correspondence with Barbados. After his departure to the West Indies his wife continued his shipments until her own departure, when Newbury, a recent arrival in Newport, took over the business. The rest of the bills of lading in the old Borden shipping book all belonged to Newbury and covered the period from December 10, 1673 to April 13, 1689.

Newbury employed vessels of types not very different from those of Sanfords. The majority are sloops and ketches. It is unfortunate that the word SHIP was printed on the form of the bills. Frequently the writer forgot to cross out the word and write in the actual type of the vessel. As a rule, however, the descriptive name of the craft was given.<sup>31</sup> Newbury in 1688 employed a brigantine and even before this there is no doubt ships were actually used. In general, however, sloops, ketches, and brigantines were most common. Like Sanford, Newbury doubtless had an interest in several of these vessels, perhaps even owning one outright, but that is quite doubtful. As one of the leading merchants in Newport,

Newbury perhaps had shares in several vessels of that port. There is evidence here that Newbury was concerned in at least forty-seven voyages: nineteen to Barbados, five to Jamaica, two to Nevis, and one to Antigua. One vessel went to London, eight to New York, and seven to Boston. Shrowsberry, Philadelphia, and Burlington-on-the-Delaware are also each mentioned once. Barbados was naturally the chief objective. It is of considerable interest and some significance that as early as 1678 Newbury tried a shipment to Jamaica which became the leading market a half century later.

The most frequently mentioned master was Joseph Bryer. At first he was master of the Sloop Portsmouth sailing a regular course between Newport and Barbados. From 1679 to 1684, however, he commanded a ship of the same name, and in 1687 was master of the Ship Providence. The other regular master mentioned was Henry Beer.  
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Both appeared in the Sanford records.

One of the most important characteristics of this period, which is evidenced by methods of both Sanford and Newbury, is that cargoes were consigned to definite individuals. Sanford used this practice almost regularly. Newbury employed it too, but occasionally took a chance on a consignment to the master, who was charged to dispose of it as best he could. It was this method of shipment which became so popular in the first half of the next century. At first, however, this was too risky. Even a single cargo would usually be consigned to different men.

The Ketch Portsmouth, Joseph Bryer, master, was laden with goods by Walter Newbury and on the 22nd day of the 11th  
33  
month 1675 [January 22, 1676], was ordered to Barbados. The

following bills of lading were made:

2 Barrels Beef

1 " Mutton

"for Joseph Grouve mchant & goes consigned to Oliver  
Hoolon meht in Barbados."

1 Barrel Beef

1 " Mutton

1 " Hogs fat

"for Timothy Marshall deceased & goes consigned to  
Abigall Marshall his late wife in Barbados"

1 Barrel Beef

3 " Pork

"for Gilbert Gillaspie mercht in Barbadoes & goes to  
him consigned."

1 Barrel Beef

"---Risue of Emanuell Curtis & goes to him in Barbados"

3 Barrels Pork

3 " Beef

"---Risue of Joseph Barden [Borden] mchant in Barbados"

1 Barrel Beef

1 " Mutton

1 Firkin Hogs fat

"---for acct Hester Hoster & to her consigned"

The freight rate on all these consignments was five  
hundred pounds of muscovado sugar per ton.

How different was this arrangement than the later ones of  
Champlin, Lopez, Brown and Vernon who would each send several large

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vessels out in the same month with cargoes consigned to the master to sell in a huckstering way, or would consign to an agent residing temporarily in the West Indies.

Throughout the entire Newbury shipping books one finds the cargoes to be delivered to certain individuals and only rarely was the venture a pure matter of chance. Even on his new shipments to Jamaica he seldom trusted the marketing of the goods to the captain on board. One of the largest Jamaica consignments was in November 1684 when the Ship Portsmouth, Joseph Bryer, master, was consigned to Benjamin Newbury of Jamaica, the brother of Walter. The bill of lading listed the following cargo:

5 Bbls. mackerel  
50 whole and 40 (1/2 bbls.) Pork  
8 " " 40 " " Beef  
20 Bbls. Cider  
9 " Beer  
2 Hhds. & 9 bbl. onions  
12 " Brisket  
5 whole & 30 (1/2 Bbl) flour  
1000 Bbls. Tar  
61 Firkins Butter  
2 Bbls. oil  
14 Hhd. Fish  
9 Firkins Hgs fat  
10 Boxes Candles  
8 Casks Apples  
50 Cheeses  
1540 Staves



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This was a considerable consignment for a Newport merchant to send out in 1684, and certainly the term ship is correct, for no sloop or ketch could carry such a bulky cargo.

The Newbury cargoes to the West Indies were of a very miscellaneous nature. In the winter months, beef and pork were the most common. Mackerel in the other seasons was the most usual fish export, although it was of less importance than other provisions. There was not a great amount of live-stock sent by Newbury to the West Indies. Horses, of course, were sent but only occasionally. Sheep were carried to North Carolina, but there is no mention of such a shipment to the Caribbean. The provisions consisted mainly of apples, cider, peas, bread, wheat, butter, cheese, and onions. Many other goods, however, were found among the cargoes. Tar, staves, raw wool, soap, candles, and oil were quite common.

Apparently from 1690 to 1700 the trade of Rhode Island did not differ greatly from that of the preceding decades. Antigua may have attracted more vessels; possibly Jamaica was gaining as a market. Barbados, however, was soon to see the sun setting in the west, and her heyday coming to a close. For a quarter of a century more, however, she held on, but the force of nature was not to be denied.

The Rhode Island - West Indian trade, hazardous as it was in peace time, soon became more dangerous. In May 1702 England went to war with Spain and France. It took skill enough to escape the elements, but now the captain must also avoid the hostile privateers. Such cargoes as got through, however, were highly