



RHODE ISLAND  
HISTORY

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disruption caused by the Napoleonic Wars, resulted in increased prices. For a long time Haiti profited because she produced two thirds of the world's coffee, but following the slave uprising of 1792 this state of affairs ended.<sup>1</sup> When coffee production was thus disrupted, Java emerged as an excellent alternative source since the Dutch had successfully introduced coffee culture into their colony and by 1740 were producing 12 million pounds annually.<sup>2</sup>

Coffee attracted the Americans to the Dutch East Indies. As far as Rhode Island was concerned, her trading activities with Java can be divided into four periods.<sup>3</sup> The first period which extended from 1797 to 1807 was the most active and successful one. This was followed by a period of inactivity which lasted till 1815. When European affairs returned to normal, Rhode Island re-entered the Java market, although less successfully, and remained until 1827 when the final period set in, ending with complete withdrawal in 1836.

A good idea of the nature of this trade can be derived from an examination of letters of instructions from the owners to the supercargoes of the Java-bound vessels. The prime object of every venture was to procure as large a cargo of coffee as possible. This usually proved to be rather difficult, as the Dutch in Java had an overwhelming interest in sugar cultivation and saw to it that buyers took a certain proportion of sugar as well. Pepper, too, was sometimes added to the list of obligatory joint purchases. Because of this the supercargoes were given specific instructions that every method and every effort should be employed to get the maximum quantity of coffee. In November 1803, for instance, Brown and Ives informed the supercargo of the *John Jay*, Daniel J. Tillinghast, that in view of the renewal of war in Europe the Dutch in Java would permit neutrals to take any kind of produce, provided that payment was made in specie, and told him to take advantage of this. However, shortage of specie did not always force the Dutch to be so lenient, and in such circumstances the supercargo was "to suggest every argument that can be thought of to induce the Council who have the entire disposal of the products

<sup>1</sup>Klaveren, van J. J., *The Dutch Colonial System in the East Indies* (The Hague, 1953), pp. 74-5.

<sup>2</sup>Vlekke, B. H. N., *Nusantara, A History of Indonesia* (The Hague, 1960), p. 195.

<sup>3</sup>The firm of Brown and Ives of Providence was the most important participant; Edward Carrington and Son came into this trade after 1815; and the Newport firm of Gibbs and Channing withdrew in 1807.

of Java. . . ."<sup>4</sup> In any case it often happened either that vessels arriving at Batavia did not find coffee or even sugar or else that the prices were too high to allow for a profitable venture. In such a situation the supercargo was instructed to proceed to another East Indian port or to enter into a contract with the Dutch Council at Batavia for the delivery of cargo to China or to Japan. However explicit these instructions were, the owners realized that upon arrival actual conditions in Java could be completely changed, and so supercargoes were given wide discretionary powers. A typical letter of instruction always included a statement such as ". . . we think it proper to give you these instructions for the voyage, at the same time you are to understand it to be our wish to have you governed by circumstances and your own judgement after you arrive at Batavia. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

During the first period of this trade an outgoing vessel after procuring a cargo of merchandise and the necessary amount of specie headed straight for Batavia. Although the value of the cargo was substantial, the amount of merchandise was comparatively insignificant, since no vessel carried more than \$10,000 (Spanish) worth of goods. On the other hand seven eighths or more of the outward cargo took the form of specie. This unimportance of merchandise was due to the fact that Batavia was constantly flooded with European goods. Specie, on the other hand, was extremely important. It was in great demand, and the Dutch were always short of it.

In dealing with the Dutch at Batavia, the Americans found that their commercial vagaries and restrictions, though not a real obstacle, were nevertheless irritating. The Dutch Council at times could not decide whether or not to sell coffee at Java: sometimes coffee was sold to the highest bidder; sometimes it was not sold at all. Also, the Council, which fixed the prices of commodities, was in the habit of raising prices without any warning. But in actual practice these factors were not so disadvantageous as they appeared, principally because the Dutch being frequently in need of Spanish dollars were driven to deviate from the orders sent out from Amsterdam.

The Java trade was also characterized by various problems faced by the Rhode Islanders. Profitable as a Batavia venture often was,

<sup>4</sup>Brown and Ives to Daniel J. Tillinghast, Nov. 17, 1803, V-J6, vol. 231, Brown Papers, MS, John Carter Brown Library, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island.

<sup>5</sup>Brown and Ives to Thomas Thompson, May 15, 1802, V-A65, vol. 5.08.

from the standpoint of health it was indeed most hazardous. In letters sent home from this port, there was often mention that some members of the crew were sick or that someone had died of the so-called Batavia fever. Another problem arose out of the possibility of capture by either the British or especially the French ships-of-war in Java waters. The first ship sent out by Gibbs and Channing, the *Russell*, was captured by a French privateer in 1799 while lying at anchor under the battery of Angre on the island of Java. And the British in 1802 seized the Philadelphia ship *Harmony* in Sumatra. Perhaps the greatest source of risk came from the Malay pirates. Appearing in boats equipped with cannons and carrying two hundred men or more, they presented an alarming threat. In fact this problem was serious enough to make President John Adams send the U. S. frigate *Essex* to Batavia.

In spite of various problems the Rhode Island merchants were successful in procuring good cargoes of coffee and sugar during the first phase of this trade. The first vessel from Batavia, the *John Jay*, brought back 5,482 111/125 piculs of coffee and 931 102/125 piculs of sugar for which \$64,272.11 (Spanish) was paid at Batavia prices. The most valuable cargo was also shipped by the *John Jay* in 1804 when she brought home coffee, sugar, and pepper worth \$172,618.66 (Spanish).

Although the Java products were meant primarily for the European market,<sup>6</sup> the vessels from Batavia headed directly for the home port after taking on their cargoes. This indirect route was followed partly because the supercargoes would not know the state of the European market after months of absence and partly because in those troublous years, it was not certain whether or not European ports would be open at all. The wisest course, therefore, was to return home where the cargo could be broken up into smaller lots for re-export or they could be stored away until prices in Europe were more favorable.

Throughout the period 1797-1807 the state of the European market depended almost wholly on the state of political affairs on the continent. As the Crommelin firm explained, the sales of Java products "will . . . depend on what quantity will further arrive, on the management of the chief bidders and above all on the appearance

<sup>6</sup>The Rhode Island merchants found in Amsterdam the best European port to send their Batavia products where the famous merchant firm of Daniel Crommelin and Sons handled their commercial affairs.

of the extension of war being realized or not."<sup>7</sup> Thus following the conclusion of the Treaty of General Peace at Amiens on March 17, 1802, market conditions entered a period of greater stability. But when by March of the following year, there were apprehensions that war would break out again, another period of uncertainty was ushered in. Similarly, Napoleon's Berlin and Milan decrees and the British Orders-in-Council proved destructive to most of the foreign commerce of the United States.

Despite the disruptions to the European market for Java products, the Rhode Island merchants must have made satisfactory profits. It is rather difficult to specify the amounts made, as the figures regarding the sales of coffee and other products are incomplete. But the fact that Brown and Ives of Providence and Gibbs and Channing of Newport continued to dispatch their vessels to Batavia, and that they continued to re-export their cargo to Amsterdam, despite wartime conditions, does seem to show that this was a lucrative trade.

This state of affairs came to an end when on December 22, 1807, the United States Congress passed the Embargo Act in an effort to coerce France and Great Britain to repeal their restrictive decrees and orders. As far as Rhode Island's Java trade was concerned, the Embargo put a halt to almost all Batavia ventures till after 1815. The only vessel which left for Batavia was Brown and Ives's *Isis* which sailed on July 19, 1808, after obtaining special permission. It returned on September 2, 1809, with a cargo of Java products worth \$40,688.37 (Spanish).

On the other side of the Atlantic political affairs created such uncertainties that Brown and Ives declared that even if there were no embargo on American ships, "it would not be prudent at this moment to hazard much property abroad. The hostility of all nations at war to neutral trade would render it very insecure."<sup>8</sup>

While conditions in the western world had been so repulsive to trade, those in Java were no better. The boom period in Batavia came to an end as suddenly as it had started. When Denmark in 1807 became involved in the war on the side of France, Danish shipping came to an end, thus leaving the Americans the only neutral buyers of Java products. In fact the stronger position now held by the Americans induced the Dutch government in Batavia to send R. G. van Polanen

<sup>7</sup>Daniel Crommelin and Sons to Brown and Ives, Oct. 19, 1804, P-C7, vol. 4.

<sup>8</sup>Brown and Ives to Daniel Crommelin and Sons, Feb. 4, 1808, P-C7, vol. 8.

to America in order to negotiate contracts for the delivery of coffee, sugar, spices, and other products.<sup>9</sup> Then came the Embargo Act, which stopped all American vessels from sailing to foreign ports. By the end of 1810 even the Dutch in Java were seriously feeling the effects of the absence of American shipping.

Such unfavorable circumstances came to a head when the United States declared war against Great Britain in July 1812. By 1814 the British navy had effectually blockaded the American coast and captured some 1,400 merchant vessels. Exports dropped from \$61,316,832 in 1811 to \$6,927,441 in 1814, and during the same period imports shrank from \$53,400,500 to \$12,965,000.<sup>10</sup>

By the end of 1814 conditions in Europe turned for the better. With regard to Java products the Dutch passed a decree which withdrew all prohibitive laws relating to their imports. While formerly only the Company was allowed to import them, now others could do likewise upon paying a moderate duty. In addition the war in Europe was terminated, and with the establishment of peace the United States once more benefited from its commercial activities. In August 1816 Java, which had been seized by the British, was restored to the Dutch, and American trade with that colony was resumed.

By this time, however, conditions had radically changed. Though the conclusion of peace in Europe restored America's foreign shipping, the cessation of strife between France and Great Britain enabled other nations to compete for the oceanic trade. Hence, the decade following 1815 ended an era when Rhode Island's commercial success had been fostered by wartime disruption. The Java trade now faced the test of whether it could withstand peacetime competition.

As in the earlier phase of this trade coffee was still highly sought after, but at the same time sugar acquired a new importance. Super-cargoes were instructed to load a full cargo of sugar whenever the prices were reasonable. This shift in product priority can be attributed to demand for sugar in Europe because of increasing local consumption and also to the great need of the sugar refiners from the interior.

At Batavia the pattern of trade now took on a different form. Instead of sailing off immediately for Manila or Canton when produce was not available at Batavia, the Rhode Island trader would first try other Java ports. When the ship *Patterson* in 1817 failed to get a

<sup>9</sup>Klaveren, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>10</sup>Faulkner, H. U., *American Economic History* (New York 1924), p. 252.

cargo of coffee or sugar at Batavia, she went to Samarang and there managed to load coffee.

While most of the problems of the Java trade remained, new ones also appeared. The main problem arose from the fact that after the war years the amount of Java products began to increase. Coffee, for instance, rose in output from 50,000 piculs in 1816 to nearly 300,000 piculs in 1823.<sup>11</sup> Also the number of ships which had arrived at Batavia increased, and by 1819 they amounted to 171. Among these were 62 English, 50 American, and 43 Dutch. Consequently attempts were made in Batavia to secure greater openings for Dutch shipping, creating a situation which inevitably affected the American traders.

In addition competition in Batavia began to be much keener. Since coffee was also the prime object of the other visitors, prices kept advancing, sometimes to unprecedented heights. This was accentuated by the presence of some who appeared determined to purchase this article at any hazard. The atmosphere of the market in Batavia is reflected in Eleazer Elderkin's report when he wrote, ". . . there are some Americans here that appear to be coffee mad; no price is too great for them . . . I shall pick up what comes in our way and wait as patiently as possible till the next sale when if no more wild Americans arrive, I am in hopes the article will be lower. . . ."<sup>12</sup>

Competition from British merchants was equally keen. As early as 1817 Henry Onard complained that he could not get any coffee or sugar because "the island has been drained of both coffee and sugar by the British."<sup>13</sup> Nathaniel Pearce later observed that "trade of this island is almost entirely engrossed by British merchants who have their agents all over the island."<sup>14</sup> It was because of this that the Crommelins advised Brown and Ives and later Edward Carrington to "send out a proper person with a view to contract the necessary quantity of produce chiefly coffee in order to have always a sufficiency for such a number of vessels as may be agreed upon . . . and by which continually the necessary specie could be sent out or sometimes such articles as may promise to do well. . . ."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Furnival, J. S., *Netherlands India, A Study of Plural Economy* (New York, 1944), p. 94.

<sup>12</sup>Eleazer Elderkin to Edward Carrington and Cyrus Butler, Nov. 23, 1818. Carrington Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

<sup>13</sup>Henry Onard to Bryant and Sturgis, June 18, 1817.

<sup>14</sup>Nathaniel Pearce to Brown and Ives, Nov. 30, 1820, V-P3, vol. 333.

<sup>15</sup>Daniel Crommelin and Sons to Brown and Ives, Dec. 3, 1817, P-C7, vol. 18.

Unlike the first period, 1797–1807, this third period saw a larger proportion of ships at Batavia failing to achieve their primary objective. Also the cargo purchased at Batavia was different. Since sugar afforded a good market in Europe, this article sometimes constituted a full load. At other times substantial quantities of tin, rice, spices, and rattan were loaded for the Canton market when coffee or sugar were unavailable. But on the whole it can be said that the years 1816–27, although a period of peace, was less successful than the first period.<sup>16</sup>

After 1815 it was no longer necessary for the Rhode Island vessels to return first to their home port. In almost all cases, they headed directly for Amsterdam. In Europe market conditions and not political factors now affected the Java products. When the European war ended, the stock of coffee at Amsterdam was only five million pounds, but local consumption was great and the demand from the interior was brisk. This also applied to sugar, especially when refiners began to come out into the market once again. These two commodities were therefore at a premium. This happy state of affairs continued into 1818 when larger supplies of coffee and sugar were met by the continuance of heavy Dutch consumption and large demands from Germany. Although the price of coffee was high at Batavia, Brown and Ives declared “we do not see any better way of employing this vessel than by sending her back after another cargo.”<sup>17</sup>

The continuous rise in prices had indeed reached a dangerous height by the end of 1818, and European merchants began to show fear that it would cause a counteraction. True enough, with the opening of the new year it was observed that “the prospect for the employment of capital in commerce this present year . . . is by no means encouraging and we fear that the East India business will be overdone.”<sup>18</sup> Although the market began to revive slightly in 1820, it was not till 1826 that Brown and Ives dispatched another vessel to Batavia.

The story of the Amsterdam market from 1818 to 1827 was really one of continued inactivity, punctuated occasionally by some briskness. This was explained by the Crommelins as being caused by “extravagant speculation in the East India products. . . .”<sup>19</sup> The

<sup>16</sup>Of the 14 voyages sent out to Batavia from Providence, 4 failed completely.

<sup>17</sup>Brown and Ives and Thomas Thompson to Daniel Crommelin and Sons, March 12, 1818, P-C7, vol. 19.

<sup>18</sup>Brown and Ives to Daniel Crommelin and Sons, March 12, 1818, P-C7, vol. 20.

<sup>19</sup>Daniel Crommelin and Sons to Brown and Ives, Jan. 6, 1826, P-C7, vol. 32.

London market was instrumental in deciding the state of the Amsterdam market, and since coffee was selling at a lower rate in London, the Amsterdam market was therefore adversely affected. Finally, the heavy competition in Java led to a situation whereby prices there did not correspond with European prices and this naturally discouraged the Rhode Islanders.

Signs of the decline of the Java trade were already evident about 1823, but after 1827 the trend of events made it apparent that the Rhode Island merchants would sooner or later have to withdraw from this sector of their commercial activity. Brown and Ives sent out their ship *Asia* to Batavia in 1827, but it was not until 1831 that another voyage was made. Similarly, Edward Carrington dispatched one ship each in 1829 and 1830, but not until 1835 was another attempt entered upon. Not only were the voyages few and far between, but out of the seven voyages made only three managed to procure Java products. Since conditions in Batavia were not conducive to trading and the European market for East India goods was unpromising, it was just a matter of time before Java would cease to be an important market.

The letters of instructions also revealed the declining interest in the Java trade. Perhaps the most outstanding change was seen in the attitude of the Rhode Island merchants towards Batavia as the choice goal. Although Batavia and coffee were still synonymous, that port was now only of secondary importance. This can be seen from the fact that supercargoes were instructed to head immediately for Siam or Manila if coffee were not available at Batavia. Yet another startling change was that more ships were sent to Batavia not to purchase coffee or sugar for various ports but rice for Canton. The most telling evidence concerning the decline of the Java trade was manifested when Carrington wrote, “What do you think of letting the ship call at Batavia? They may as well pass by the port as not, I don’t know if there were would be any use in it unless to take a chance if anything was to be done.”<sup>20</sup>

Conditions in Batavia also proved to be most unattractive. The financial difficulties faced by the Dutch forced them to take new measures which affected the Americans. The Java War — in itself a disrupting element — accentuated the already bad financial situation

<sup>20</sup>Edward Carrington and Company to Samuel Wetmore, August 6, 1833.

of the Dutch. The same year that the Java war ended, the Belgians revolted against King William I, and this led to an armed conflict which was to last for nine years. Against this background the new governor-general in Java, van den Bosch, assured the King that he would find means to increase the production of export crops in Java to a value of twenty million guilders a year (eight million dollars). In order to achieve this he introduced special measures in favor of the Dutch merchants and shipping. As a result, while the number of Dutch ships at Batavia increased from 57 in 1825 to 110 in 1818, the number of English ships in the same period dropped from 53 to 44 and American ships from 38 to 13.<sup>21</sup> This time the Dutch succeeded in capturing the principal share of the Java trade, and the increasing revenue that went into the Netherlands treasury from Java was a testimony to this success.

In Europe an unfavorable turn of the coffee market began again in 1828. Although the stocks in Holland had not increased, the heavier accumulation in the north and in France gave little hopes for any improvement in price. The importation of coffee from St. Domingo and Brazil had the effect of depreciating prices. Crommelin wrote Brown and Ives, "if coffee actually falls so low in Batavia that the risk of trading in the article could be greatly diminished regular voyages to Batavia might again become worth your attention."<sup>22</sup> Things were so grim for the Rhode Island merchants that William F. Paine reported from Batavia that "... in the present state of the market it is not to be expected that American ships will make voyages to Java with the view to loading produce. I see no reason to expect any favorable change here or in Europe which might offer inducements to Java voyages..."<sup>23</sup>

By 1833 it had become clear that very little benefit could be derived from the Java trade. Brown and Ives gradually gave up maritime activity in order to concentrate on manufacturing, while the firm of Edward Carrington and Company shifted its East India vessels to New York City.

<sup>21</sup>Furnival, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

<sup>22</sup>Daniel Crommelin and Sons to Brown and Ives, Jan. 17, 1828, P-C7, vol. 36.

<sup>23</sup>William F. Paine to Edward Carrington and Company, May 15, 1830.

## LEWIS PECKHAM'S CHOICE

by CLARA L. DAVIS

RECENTLY there came into my possession some letters which have been stored away in an attic for a period of time covering most of five generations of the Peckham family. Many of the family have lived and died without knowing of their existence nor that the persons who wrote them ever lived.<sup>1</sup>

They tell of sacrifice and privation endured for the safety and progress of this country by those whose annals have never been written.

Since reading these letters, I have searched many libraries in several states to find if somewhere among the numerous tales of heroic deeds of the early settlers of our states the name of Peckham might appear, but as yet I have failed to find it.

On the "Point" at Newport, Rhode Island, from 1779 until his death in 1825, lived a Quaker, Thomas Peckham, a magistrate. He was the son of Peleg Peckham of Middletown, Rhode Island, a farmer and master of *The Three Brothers*, trading with the Barbados and other West Indian ports. Thomas's mother was Elizabeth (Coggeshall) Peckham, great granddaughter of John Coggeshall, first colonial governor of Rhode Island. The Peckhams were descendants of John Peckham and his wife Mary Clarke, sister of John Clarke of Newport.

Thomas Peckham had married Hannah Weaver at the close of the Revolutionary War, in which he had served as captain. During the war the British had burned his farm and orchards, leaving nothing but the bare ground. On his return to Newport he bought the home on the "Point" where he raised his family.

The children of Thomas and Hannah Peckham were Elizabeth, who did not marry; Mary, who married John Newton; Hannah, who married Jonathan Bailey; Rebecca, who married John Rodman; Rachel, who married John Norman; Paul, an officer in the United States Army in 1812; Lewis, a soldier, musician, and portrait painter, who married Mary Dashnay of Vincennes, Indiana; and Thomas, who married Sarah Wardwell of Bristol, Rhode Island, daughter of

<sup>1</sup>The originals of many of the Peckham letters (Feb. 17 and May 24, 1810, Sept. 8, 1812, Apr. 10 and Oct. 12, 1814, Mar. 29, 1818, Dec. 5, 1819, and June 1, 1820) are now in the library of the Indiana Historical Society. We are grateful to the Society for Xerox copies of these and permission to publish the letters. A few are from typescripts made by Mrs. Davis; at this time it is not known where the originals are.

Colonel Samuel Wardwell.

Lewis was the first to join the United States Army. The first letter from him was written from Fort Independence, Boston. An interesting picture of Fort Independence by Lewis Peckham is in the Art Museum, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Fort Independence  
Feby. 17th 1810

Dear Father,

Your letter of the 18th Jany came to hand on the 10th Instant, in which you inform me of your good health. I enjoy good health at present, and am in hopes that my old Complaint will not make its appearance. The fever which has destroyed twenty of our soldiers is much abated and we have but one that is now dangerously ill, have fortunately become acquainted with Mr. [Gilbert] Stewert of Boston, who offers me all the information in the art of Painting Gratis. Mr. Stewert offers me a seat in his room as often as I shall call on him, he has given me a very fine piece of cloth and offers me his pencils and paints. And nothing is wanting on my part but an opportunity to visit Boston, but I flatter myself with some leisure hours much will be improved in this business. have been somewhat surprised In finding a man who appears to be so anxious for my improvement, have offered Mr. S. money for his assistance, but it as A fortunate thing for me that he refuses it.

I remain your Affect. Son  
Lewis Peckham

To Thomas Peckham, R. I.

\* \* \*

Fort Independence  
May 24th 1810

Dear Father,

Your letter of the 17th of May came to hand on the 21st Inst. In which you inform me of your appointment to office. It is the best news I have heard this long time. You would have seen me in Newport before this time had I not been disappointed, and it is now impossible for me to state any particular time of seeing you as Lieut. Barton<sup>2</sup> is promoted to a

<sup>2</sup>Probably Robert C. Barton, a Rhode Islander in the Fourth Regiment of Infantry in which Peckham served. Robert was a son of the Revolutionary War hero Gen. William Barton for whom Barton, Vermont was named. He was commissioned first lieutenant May 3, 1808, and captain October 3, 1809. Barton resigned September 15, 1812, and died September 8, 1824. Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army* (Washington, 1903), vol. 1.

Captain and Capt. Baen<sup>3</sup> is arrested which leaves the Company under my command our station is a pleasant one and every thing goes on agreeable. A few days past there were eighty Sail of Merchantmen to be seen from this post, they were all under sail. The Islands in this Harbour are highly cultivated, and the main land as far as the eye can discern. A few days past I rode in the country in company with Lieut. Fuller,<sup>4</sup> through Boston, Roxbury, Brooklyn, Water Town, Milton, Cambridge and Charlestown and the distance we rode as near as we could judge was twenty five miles. The country through which we passed is highly cultivated and adorned with a great number of country seats. In passing through Cambridge I had an opportunity of seeing Medford College,<sup>5</sup> commonly called Cambridge College. It is situated on a rising ground. The College is in three buildings, each a hundred feet in length and about twenty five in breadth, placed in a straight line about twenty feet asunder. About sixty rods from the College stands a meeting house for the convenience of the Students I have nothing more at present to mention only that the troops at this post are in health, though our wells are geting low, and if the water does not increase some of us must be detached to Rose Island and other posts. we have six wells on the Island though but two afford us water at this moment.

Your Affectionate Son  
Lewis Peckham

\* \* \*

On October 28, 1810, Lewis wrote his father, "My time of late has been mostly employed in painting miniatures for the officers at the Post. In some of the pictures I have been very fortunate, and have made considerable improvement in my painting."

He left Boston and was for a time located at Greenbush near Albany, New York. From there he was sent to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and then to Vincennes, Indiana.

There follows a letter which Thomas, Jr., received concerning his brother Paul.

<sup>3</sup>Probably William C. Bean, who was commissioned captain in the Fourth Infantry May 3, 1808, and died November 9, 1811, of wounds received November 7 at the Battle of Tippecanoe. Heitman, *op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup>Charles Fuller of Massachusetts was commissioned first lieutenant in the Fourth Infantry July 1, 1808, captain November 9, 1811, major June 28, 1814, and was honorably discharged June 18, 1815. Heitman, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup>This is obviously a mistake. So far as can be discovered Harvard College was never known as Medford.



Washington City  
March 17, 1812.

Dear Sir:

With pleasure I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th Instant requesting my assistance in behalf of your brother with the Secretary of War. Yesterday I waited on him at his office, made the communication, with such observations as to me appeared proper and necessary. He informed me that there was a vacant Ensigny in the 4th Reg. commanded by Col. Boyd.<sup>6</sup> That when Col. Boyd was in this City last, on his way Eastward, he gave him assurances that no appointment should be made to any vacant office in his Regiment, without his consent and approbation. He further advised me to inform you that Col. Boyd is now in Boston, and recommended that you make immediate application to him in such way as may appear to you most proper, for his approbation; and if you can satisfy him and obtain his consent, he will make the nomination to the President, and without any doubt the appointment will be made. If I can render you any further assistance in this way or in any business you may think proper to commit to me, you may rely on my exertions and friendship.

I congratulate you and your Friends, upon the reunion of the Friends to the present administration and hope the reconciliation has been made in Sincerity; and will be kept to in good faith, in perpetuity.

From your friend  
J. B. Howell.<sup>7</sup>

To Thomas Peckham, Jun., Esquire.

\* \* \*

Boston, Apr. 27th, 1812.

Sir,

On my arrival here your letter of the 24th March, and the 4th Inst. were duly received, and my influence forwarded to the War Department, in favour of your brother; it will afford me pleasure to receive the brother of Lt. Peckham into the 4th.

Respectfully  
Sir

Yr. Obed. St.  
John P. Boyd

To Mr. Thomas Peckham, Jun.  
Providence, R. I.

<sup>6</sup>John Parker Boyd of Massachusetts was appointed colonel of the Fourth Regiment Infantry October 7, 1808, and promoted to brigadier general August 26, 1812. He was honorably discharged June 15, 1815, and died October 4, 1830. Heitman, *op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup>Jeremiah Brown Howell, 1771-1822, a Providence lawyer, held many political offices in Rhode Island and served as United States senator, 1811-1817.

Washington City  
May 13, 1812.

Thomas Peckham, Jun. Esq.

Dear Sir,

I received your letter of the 8th Inst. informing me of the success of your Brother in obtaining the recommendation of Col. Boyd in his favour. In due season and immediately waited on the Secretary of War, who informed me he had recommended your brother Paul to the President, and expected he would in a few days be nominated to the Senate.

As soon as the appointment is confirmed I will inform you of the same without delay. Till then, believe me as ever your friend,

J. B. Howell.

Mr. Pope's resolution for the repealing the non importation act & for taking off the whole distribution system was yesterday rejected by the Senate. The votes were Yeas 8, Noos 15.

\* \* \*

Portsmouth, N. H.  
July 17th, 1812.

Dear Brother,

I arrived here yesterday afternoon and reported myself to Capt. Prescott of the 4th Regt.<sup>8</sup> who I am to assist in recruiting by order of Col. Boyd. Capt. P. is a very agreeable man; he is well acquainted with Lewis. I drank Tea at his home yesterday. The town is a third larger than Newport, the houses are very large and handsome, chiefly brick. I don't know how long I shall remain here. I have to give three dollars per week for my board; my passage from Boston here was 4 Dollars which is paid by the Government. I have received my pay up to the 30th of July which amounts to 21 D. I know of nothing more to write than that my health is very good and my situation very agreeable. I am your

Affectionate Brother,

To Thomas Peckham, Jun.  
Providence, R. I.

Paul Peckham.

On July 13, 1812, Lewis writes his father from a camp at Sandwich, Upper Canada: "Our regiment left Vincennes on the 11th of

<sup>8</sup>George W. Prescott of New Hampshire was commissioned captain in the Fourth Infantry June 18, 1808, and resigned August 15, 1813. Heitman, *op. cit.*

May and arrived at this place the 5th of July, after experiencing every hardship imaginable. The first nine days of the march the rain fell in torrents, which, as our way led over a flat country, rendered our situation very unpleasant. We marched upwards of ninety miles in the State of Ohio without meeting a single habitation; cut a road through the same wilderness; built five block houses for the defence of the frontier; and have at last arrived safe in Detroit without being attacked by the Indians, which we expected several days previous to our arrival; during which time our army fortified themselves in camp every night by felling large trees in front of the tents."

On the surrender of Detroit he was made a prisoner of war with the rest of his command.

Montreal Sep 8th 1812

Dear Father,

I am now in possession of the English and a prisoner of War. Accept of those lines as the last until I am exchanged, for the boats are now ready to move us to Quebec. Since I have been prisoner my Situation has not been as unpleasant as you would probably suppose but you are more capable of judging of my Situation from your own experience than I am capable of expressing.<sup>9</sup> While I was at Detroit I wrote frequently but I fancy very few lines reached you as the Indians intercepted our Mails. on the 11th augst. I was in the action at Brownstown 9 miles from Detroit<sup>10</sup> our force was three hundred of the 4th Infantry and about two hundred militia. The english had one hundred and fifty of the 41st Regt. and five hundred Indians the Indians were well posted by the English and had several English officers painted like Indians to command them, the action lasted about one hour our line formed and immediately commenced a heavy fire on the english. The Indians were not to be seen until a number of our men fell dead, as they were compleatly covered in ambush our whole line then charged briskly on our Savage enemy and pursued them about two miles, keeping up a constant advancing fire & the enemy kept as constant retreating fire, finally, they retreated in great confusion leaving on the ground five wounded English and sixteen dead indians there loss in wound we

<sup>9</sup>Though Thomas Peckham was a captain of Rhode Island militia in 1775 and 1776, there appears to be no record of his having been taken prisoner. However, Lewis's statement would seem to indicate this.

<sup>10</sup>Lewis Peckham's account is not entirely accurate. The battle of Brownstown, an American defeat by Tecumseh's Indian warriors, took place on August 5, 1812. In a second battle at Monguagon, the site of present-day Trenton, Michigan, the Americans, led by Lt. Col. James Miller, were victorious.

cannot ascertain but we may reasonably suppose that it exceeds ours. Tecumseh, the great Indian Warrior was wounded, one English lieut, and their commander Capt Muve. We buried fourteen the evening after the action and found upwards of sixty wounded. Lieut Larrabee<sup>11</sup> and Lieut Peters<sup>12</sup> of our Reg were badly wounded the former has lost his arm. Capt. Baker<sup>13</sup> of the 4th Regt & Ensing Whisttor<sup>14</sup> of the second is also wounded. after beating the enemy in the disadvantageous position we were in, it is a little astonishing that Detroit should be surrendered without resistance, excuse my writing for the Signal is made for my departure very affectionatly I Still remain L. Peckham,

[Superscription]

from Lewis to

Tho. Peckham

date Septem 8th 1812 Montreal

Received Septem 19th

It would appear that Lewis Peckham had been exchanged some time after his capture at the surrender of Detroit in the fall of 1812, for the following letter from his father is addressed to him in Boston.

Newport April 10th. 1814

Son Lewis

I consider your Situation and Service as a very difficult one, Your Duty and place of abode require more prudence than is often found in a

<sup>11</sup>Lt. Charles Larrabee of Connecticut was brevetted major for his gallant conduct and the loss of his arm in the battle. Heitman, *op. cit.*

<sup>12</sup>George P. Peters of New Hampshire, a graduate of West Point, was appointed ensign in the Fourth Infantry June 18, 1808, second lieutenant July 3, 1809, first lieutenant October 29, 1811, and captain February 21, 1814. He died November 28, 1819. Heitman, *op. cit.*

<sup>13</sup>Heitman places Captain Daniel Baker in the First Regiment. Milo M. Quaife in "The Story of Brownstown," *Burton Historical Collection Leaflet*, v. 4, no. 5, May 1926, p. 78, states: "Captain Daniel Baker, of the first regiment U.S. Infantry, had requested and obtained a command; he was on the flank opposed to the Indians under Tecumseh. His gallantry and the effect of his experience contributed greatly to the foiling of Tecumseh in his maneuvering to turn that flank of the American line. He was shot through the thigh in the warmest part of the engagement, but did not quit his command till the enemy fled, nor the ground until the wounded were all brought off."

<sup>14</sup>No officer of this name is listed by Heitman. There was, however, a family named Whistler, many of whom had distinguished military careers. Among them was William Whistler, who was with Col. Miller in the battle of Monguagon. He was a first lieutenant, not an ensign. Milo M. Quaife, "Detroit Biographies: John Whistler," *Burton Historical Collection Leaflet*, v. 5, no. 1, Sept. 1926.

man of your age—[25 years] My advice is to follow your duty only and mind nothing else. Shun company of opposite Sentiments in Politics, carefully avoid all contradiction, Talk about planting & husbandry about what happened a thousand years past and a thousand miles distant but say nothing about France England or Congress — The Boston Fever has spread and infected all Europe it has Stained all Christendom with blood and threatens hard to break out again where it first began, be on your guard, wherever you find heat and high words withdraw. I think you may get through with Safety but the path is narrow and much care is necessary to keep it, I wish you to write better than I do your opportunities to write a fair hand have been & now are better than mine I have been at work two weeks with Iron bar and Spade taking up Trees, but you have nothing to harden or stiffen your fingers, it takes no more time to make a good regular Letter than to make a Sharp deformed one, if you would take the same pains with your pen that you take with your Pencil you would write as fair as any body, We are all well, Hannah has brought home Eliz Ann with her, if you have an opportunity to insert a few Clions it may be a benefit to your friends and a credit to your self the cement should be three parts garden mould and one part Cow dung, if you ingraft near the ground use no dung but earth or mud alone, you should keep a Bible and the abridgment of Moses Geography in your Room, and Sleep in a Lower Room if you can, never Sleep in a third Story if you can avoid on account of fire

Your loving father

Lewis Peckham

Thos. Peckham —

[Superscription:]

Mr. Lewis Peckham —  
Boston

On October 12, 1814, at Fort Erie, Upper Canada, Lewis was writing on the eve of battle, the issue of which was uncertain. Paul was with him, for he inserted a mere salutation to his father, along with his signature. All of Paul's letters are very brief, very different from those of Lewis's.

Dear Father  
Paul  
Peckham

Upper Cannada—three miles below  
Fort Erie Octr. 12th. 1814—

Dear Father

I have a moments leisure which I embrace to inform you of my

situation: The army under command of Genl. Izard<sup>15</sup> crossed over to Cannada on the 11th. Inst. and incamped as above mentioned. it consists of about four thousand effectives — Browns Army three miles above consists of about the same number, our forces will unite tomorrow or next day and proceed down towards the enemy who are supposed to be ready for us at Chippawa three miles above Niagara falls. I believe we shall force them to retire still further but not without fighting, we are now within about twelve miles of the enemy. Myself and brother are both in good health but have been both sick previous to our arrival here, write me at Buffalo I may live to receive it — but great preparations are making for a Sanguine Action which must be decisive and decide the fate of this campaign. I think of you often but have not been able to assist you of late.

Your affect. Son

L Peckham

Received the 25th. Octo 1814

[Superscription]

Lewis Peckham

Octo 12th. 1814

answered Novem 7th

The Treaty of Peace in 1815 led to the disbanding of a large part of the army and the resignation of many of the officers. Captain Peckham wrote from Baltimore, Maryland, April 7, 1815, that his resignation had been accepted, to take effect the last of the previous March. He was then about to leave for Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, en route for Vincennes, Indiana, where he passed the rest of his life.

The following letter was written to Thomas Peckham, Jr., brother of Lewis and Paul by his father Thomas Peckham of Newport. Thomas Peckham, Jr., was living in Providence, R. I., rearing his family of seven children, Eliza Ann, Edward Lewis, Samuel Wardwell, Sarah Wardwell, Charles, Thomas Coles, and Hannah.

<sup>15</sup>Major General George Izard, 1776–1828, was in command of the abortive attempt to invade Canada in the fall of 1814. The battle which Lewis Peckham expected never took place, and Izard withdrew his forces. As a result of severe criticism he resigned from the army. Later Izard served as governor of Arkansas Territory.

<sup>16</sup>Evidently Samuel Wardwell Peckham, born July 5, 1814, son of Thomas, Jr., was visiting his grandfather when this letter was written.

Newport March 29. 1818

Lewis Peckham Dear Son,  
 Vincennes  
 Decem 16,  
 1816  
 March 1st  
 1817  
 April 6th.  
 June 21  
 July 24  
 August 11  
 Augst. 25  
 Septem 24  
 Jany. 2d. 1818

Tell Sally her boy is thriving.

Yours dated the 20th. instant came Safe to hand on the twenty fifth, your advice has been followed. Samuel<sup>16</sup> is a favorite plaything; he reads four or five times a day he has a handful of indian corn and So places them as to form all the Letters of the alphabet, an enterprise all his own. He Seems to have industry and invention, is a very fine Child, Stout and healthy. In your letter to Lewis which I wish you to write to Soon, I wish you to mention the Letters expressed in the margin tell him I have received but two since the first of mine were wrote and in neither of them does he name or mention the receipt of any of mine. I am discouraged about writing anymore. I think Sometimes that my Letters are lost by accident or intercepted, or Some how do not reach him, in four or five of my last Letters I have wished him to say how many of my Letters have come to his hand. Among many other things I have charged him not to Sell his Lot, that it was given him to use and improve for a home, that he must not travel any further, that I do not wish him to leave painting to work in the Lot

But when he has no work at painting, that he may work on the Lot, that I wish him Soon as possible to make a Deed of the Lot to you and your heirs to Secure him from the Danger of being defrauded of the Lot to go a traveling a few hundred miles further to a new Land of promise, he is your Brother a Sober clean honest good young man, he has defrauded no one but he has been greatly cheated himself and I fear that he is not yet quite out of danger, I wish you to impress him if possible with the necessity of turning ever[y] moment of time into a Steady stream however small that may equal his expenses and consumption for this purpose the Lot was given him or rather lent, where all his time may be spent to his credit and profit in making fence & planting, when not taken up with painting. You have been a father to him, and he is as grateful as you have been generous, his Lack is resolution, patience & application to compleat anything in

planting and husbandry he says I must not censure him let him appear ever So weak, I have covered many sheets blaming his indiscretions and exhorting him to more caution and prudence, I can never cease to be concerned for him, he is worth Saving. Do all you can to convince him that a Small Steady Stream of planting and feeding a small spot, and a little live Stock will be a sure path to a comfortable and reputable Subsistance.

your loving father,  
 Thos. Peckham

The whole amount of Losses Sustained in Middletown by the Depredations of the British Troops while on Rhode Island amounting to £136,870 taken January 16th. 1782. Wish you to enquire of Secretary of State under what Authority and for what purpose this work was done Presume you will use no more of the fish, think you Should Send down the remainder with the Barrel to be filled with Mackerel when they become large, fat and cheap

[Superscription]  
 Mr. Thomas Peckham jun  
 Providence  
 wrote Lewis March 31 by  
 J Jacobs

\* \* \*

Newport Feb. 19th, 1819.

Dear Son,

Yours of the 17th instant is received this day, and the copy of Lewis's Letter by Mr. Tilley. His letter is good and comfortable, wish it had been longer. Observe he is silent about his land, orchard and live stock. Rebecca's baby<sup>17</sup> grows and we are all well.

Your loving father  
 Thos. Peckham

To Thos. Peckham Jun., Providence, R. I.

<sup>17</sup>Rebecca Peckham, 1791-1871, daughter of Thomas, Sr., married John Rodman July 2, 1809, and had a number of children. Her son William was mayor of Providence, 1857-59.

Vincennes, Dec. 5th. 1819

Dear Father,

I am in health and leisure this Sunday evening, only my wife for company, who is confined to the house with a scald foot by the overturning of hot coffee at Fort Harrison about 20th. last month. We were then on a visit partly, and myself engaged in examining the new purchase commencing 14 miles north of Fort Harrison, have learnt by the late treaty that my wife is entitled to 640 acres in any part of the late purchase of upwards of a 1000000 acres, and my Brother in Law, Christmas Dashna the same. Nature has been very liberal in her gifts on the land in question, and mines of Zinc, Copper, Coal and Saline or salt licks are there places by nature for the support and convenience of man; My Father in Law Dashna, who resides at Fort H. rode with my Brother in Law and myself to view and Select some place for our location; we rode up the east bank of Wabash 30 miles to the Coal bank section, a section contains 640, or 4 quarters of 160, then crossed the Wabash to the west bank and commenced our decent home, having nearly determined to take the coal bank Section, but have since agreed to postpone our final choice for upwards two month. Yesterday the party who were sent to intrigue with the Indians and explore the purchase, for the purpose of finding copper mine arrived bring with them ore of superior quality as proof; they have been absent two months, having found a very very great Saline also, three years past I saw a piece of copper Ore in this place, of about 20 lbs. Saw the smith beat nails from it, of its purity you may judge The earth mixed with the Copper is green, and the adjacent ground is destitue of vegetation; Fourteen years past copper from the above place was brought here by an Indian and presented to Col. Viego, of whom you have heard me speak, the Copper was forwarded to Washington, and found of best quality— Since that time no white man or English ever saw the place; and Fellows for whom I have done considerable work has expended about 2000 dollars this summer to discover the Identical spot — some Indians have been killed by their own tribe for attempting to show the place, but the land is now in possession of the U. States; The Saline is of great consequence likewise, but the coal section, by the best judges is worth 100 dollars per acre, it takes in a first rate Mill seat and land of the greatest quality, having on it in one place or field, about 5 or 6000 sugar trees and black walnut of great beauty and utility, to save writing I give you a west view of the great coal Bank situate on the east side the Wabash thirty miles above Fort Harrison. I must now conclude by requesting you tell Mother of my better prospects, urge Thomas to write — and tell him I am a member of the Roman Catholic Church, and was married with

form and parade before the alter by the Reverend Monsieur Blanch, or Mr. White; on the 28<sup>th</sup> Sep<sup>r</sup>. last.

Adieu,

L. Peckham

[Superscription]

Vincennes In.

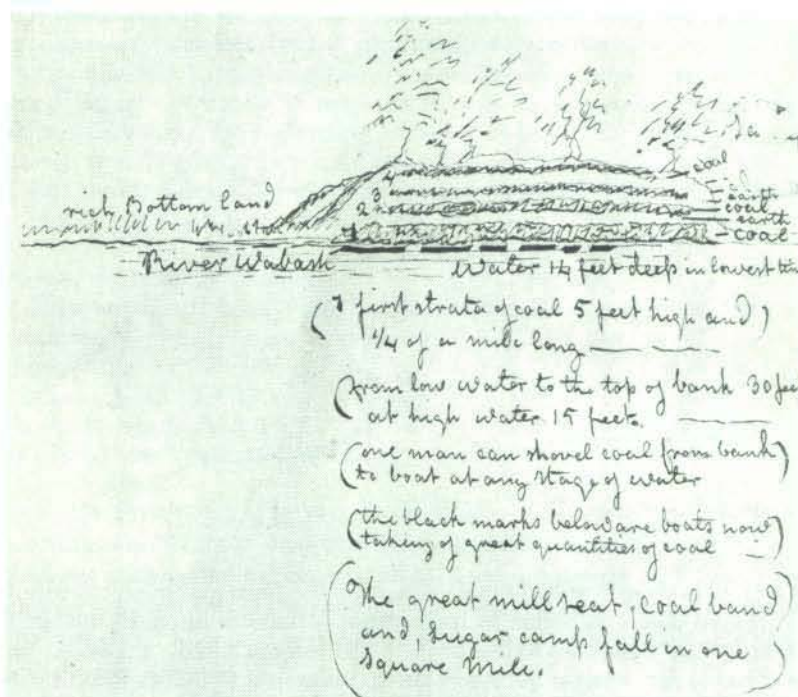
9th Dec<sup>r</sup>.

Paid 25

Thomas Peckham Esq<sup>r</sup>

Newport

Rhode Island

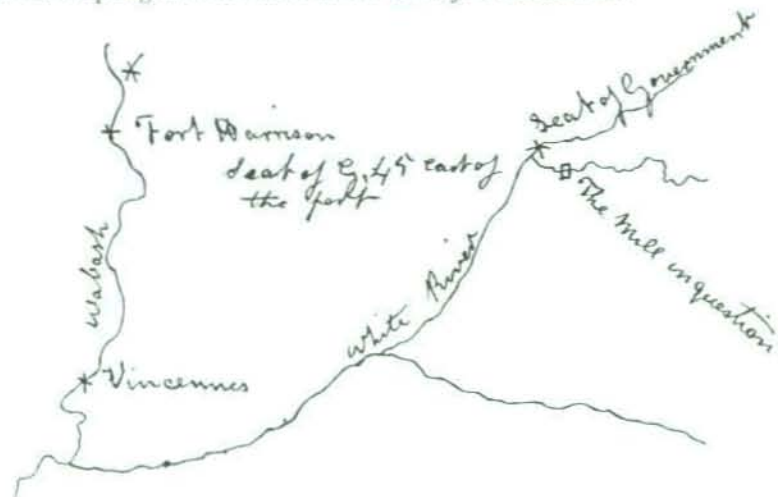


Vincennes June 1st, 1820.

Dear Father,

I have rec<sup>d</sup> your last letters of March 5th., Apl 9th. & Thomas' of March 3<sup>d</sup>. and am gratified in hearing of your health and happiness generally— I have recovered from a short illness of fever this Spring & hope I shall not be again attack'd— have been Since my last letters to you writing and using every means to obtain the order from the President for the land belonging to my wife & about ten days past obtained it

through Genl. Waller Taylor Senator from this State— I have the right to locate any where in the whole purchase except on salt licks— this order is very liberal— and I am now waiting for the commissioners to arrive from white river— they are there by order of the legislature permanently locating a Site for the Seat of Government for the State of Indiana— they will be here in a few days; and then I shall chuse the most valuable spot near the place for the new town I however have already chosen it— knowing where the town will be— It is a great Mill Seat, having ten feet fall over a solid rock and always runing— in the centre of a body of rich open well timbered land, on what is called fall creek emptying in white river at the town just marked out.



The mill is about 8 miles up the creek from the town and the lumber can be floated down with ease at high waters— lumber bring 19 dollars a thousand in Vincennes at this time— But you must know that this mill seat has so far engaged the eye of the speculator as to induce him to risk the erection of a fine Saw Mill which is now in operation and a pair of mill stones is nearly ready for grinding— The best judges say they never saw a mill in so advantageous a place— These men where ignorant of the location in my possession, and built with the assurance that they might at the time of sale have a chance of buying the mill, they have threatened to give one hundred dollars per acre rather than be deprived of the mill seat— but they will have to compromise with me— I am directed to locate before the 1st day of Aug<sup>l</sup>. next. The sale of land in the same neighbourhood is on the first Monday in Sept. next. I have

agreed with two Families, one by the name Smith, the other by Lockwood to move with me on the land as soon as possible, to assist me in farming and miling, I have known them for industrious men nearly three years, they have teems and are men forehanded, these two families and myself will make out six able bodied men— They were from New York and are very respectable characters. My wife is hearty and well. I am in no business at this moment— having to attend to the land, and find it necessary to be vigilant— I am of opinion that I had better be on the land in autumn— The first 20 acre lot that is opened shall be filed with trees and wheat & you may not despair of hearing of your sons having a tree growing in a short time, you make many enquiries in your letters but at this time I must be excused answering them, all— The season is good and the wheat is so fine and in such large quantities that the farmers are not a little alarmed, for want of labour to reap it 4 or 5 farmers near Fort Harrison have from 150 to 200 acres of elegant wheat I just wrode through it and saw it; you will hear from me in about a month—

Your Affectionate Son

L. Peckham

(Show my letter to Thomas)

I have not heard from Paul, but shall write him, and invite him to come to me

[Superscription]

Thomas Peckham Esqr.

Newport, Rhode Island

answered about the middle of July

Lewis Peckham's wife was Mary Dashnay, daughter of Ambrose Dashnay and Mary of the Many Nations, said to have been an Indian princess. Lewis died previous to 1823, leaving his wife and two small children, Lewis and Hannah, and was buried at Vincennes "with all the pomp and honors of war, he being Judge advocate of his regiment at the time of his death."

A letter from Thomas to his daughter-in-law Mary, Lewis's widow, at Vincennes, is the last that we have from Thomas, who died two years later.

Newport, July 6th, 1823.

Dear Child,

Yours dated May 27th was received June 23rd. I read and bedewed it with tears of joy. It gives me much comfort to learn that your circumstances are easy. So long as I am able shall answer your Letters, and though I can say but little more than I have said to you and Lewis

in the many and long letters I have sent to him, which I hope you have and will keep to be read by his children; Yet I will repeat them rather than have much blank paper. I wish my grandchildren to have a French Bible, a French and English Dictionary. Wish Lewis to be always at work or learning, and in good company; to know how to shape the wood into some useful shape, to make a neat box or cart or plough; how to plough a straight furrow, and to sow wheat, barley and oats; and that he may sow on his own land. At the University of Halle in Germany the students went every day from reading to work, in turning box, Ivory or Cabinet work. The poor students of whom there were great numbers, varied in a useful and profitable way in saving wood. Wish Lewis to learn early that a young gentleman never appears more gentleman like than when making his own garden with a spade and a hoe, and driving a neat wheelbarrow, especially if the barrow is of his own make, and he clad in strong homespun, well cut and made suitable for a working dress. Wish Lewis and Hannah to read Telemachus in French; their grandfather, their Uncle Thomas, and Aunt Mary read it well. Reading and work by turns make them both more agreeable. To learn early to labour makes it easy, reputable, and profitable. In China on the ploughing time the Emperor goes to the field and ploughs a furrow, and with great officers in every neighborhood do the same which makes it fashionable. Lewis must learn early that time is money and that a young man who wastes them will have neither money nor credit. Tell him that great captains and governors have owed all their money and power to their care and industry. He will have a gun, I hope, but he must not let his gun be master; he must take his gun when game is plenty, and when he can make wages; and the same with fishing, let pleasure and profit be combined. He must learn trigonometry and the properties of a circle; draw the plan of a building, front and side, and ground view; to calculate the board measure in any building or frame; to write a good plain hand is a useful accomplishment and the best way for a boy to learn to write is to copy some good treatise on arithmetic. He kills two birds with one stone; he learns to write and cypher at the same time; he learns to make figures, and their use and power. But, my dear daughter, after all our endeavors to make our children great and distinguished characters, their reputation and mind must depend on themselves. If your boy should have strength, beauty and activity, and every bodily accomplishment; should he sing, dance, and write the best book in the world and make the Loudest and Longest Oration without Prudence and Discretion, it would be no more than unprofitable noise and worthless show. Let your son know early as you can that a good knowledge of figures is a valuable article of learning. His Uncle Thomas owes much of his credit to that

talent. Your last letter conveys very different ideas from the first. The words in your first letter that filled me with wonder and sorrow are these—

"The land donated by Government to Capt. Peckham, located near the salt works on Vermilion River, 160 miles above this on Wabash, at this time of no benefit or assistance to me, and my situation is a needy one; Much in want of assistance to maintain myself and children. My relatives, being poor, cannot expect any from them. My son, I was enjoined by my husband, to get at school until he is of age to be placed under a Roman Bishop; and whether I shall be able to support him until that time is uncertain unless aided by his friends. But should I get any assistance from any land, I shall be able, but that will not be for several years."

Your last letter conveys different ideas from these. Wish that your next letter may say more on this article, and that you would say what number of live stock, say cows, horses, sheep and hogs may be maintained and supported on the 640 acres given to you. And whether or no you may not take Calves and other young stock to pasture on shares at such a rate as soon to full stock your farm. You say, my child, you might derive more profit from your land were you not so illiterate. You mistake when you think your want of Letters any want of ability. The ablest men I ever knew at trade and the acquisition of property were strangers to books. You have the power of thinking, are surrounded with men of sense, and whose opinions you may have for the asking, and whose advise you may follow or not as you think good.

Lewis mentions a mill seat; may not that mill seat be leased on customary terms, and place your trees where they may be turned into board and give you immediate profit by their sale, and furnishing a comfortable shed or house for a herdsman who may yard and enclose the stock of young cattle that may grow or be placed on your farm? This farm yard or night inclosing of yours should be 10 acres and will be a fine place for an orchard of 400 trees, which before Lewis is 21 years old may bear 4000 bushels of the very best apples. This, my child, may appear a golden dream, but it is far within the reach of common sense and prudence to realize it.

I fear this will be my last letter; but I shall request our son Thomas to give you two or at least one in a year. Wish to know soon as may be your receipt of this. Thomas was here about three weeks past with all his family, himself, wife, seven children, and maid-servant.

Your loving father,

Thomas Peckham.

\* \* \*

[Copy of Letter sent to Mary Peckham, Widow of Lewis, at Vincennes, Ind.]

From New Orleans on May 20, 1825, Paul wrote to his father:

Dear Father,

Yours of January 14th I have received by King Maxay. I had just arose from a Sick Bed again. I was taken on Christmas Day with an inflammation of the lungs and bowels; was confined to my bed for 20 days; was nursed by one Mitchell from Providence who charged me five dollars per day out of *Friendship*. The Doctor and other expenses made the sickness cost me 200 dollars. Since that time I have become quite hearty again. Am in the same position, shall remain in this town all the season. Mr. Simons goes to Opelowsas and I remain here and keep the store open. He is afraid of the Sickness. I know it is dangerous— no one knows the risk I run better than myself; but I shall never run away from yellow fever again. I am sorry you misconstrued my letter. I don't recollect exactly what I wrote; but, however this was the meaning I wished to convey—to show you that your son stood fair with his employer by his making use of that expression, and I thought it would be pleasing to you to know that I had a Character to lose in this Country. No, my dear Father, I will never become a Burthen to my Relations. It was to avoid that, that I contrived to get as far from home as possible. My employment is good and I am well paid, and if I enjoy my health I can always find good employment in this Country. I should be glad to see you once more, but it seems fate has cast me here forever. If I am alive I shall write to you about the last of September. Give my love to my mother and sisters and brother.

Your affectionate Son,  
Paul Peckham

This is probably one of the last letters that Thomas received from Paul, since the *Newport Mercury* in December 1825 contains this announcement:

Died.

In this town, on Sunday last, after a lingering illness, Thomas Peckham, Esq., aged 78 years. Mr. Peckham was endowed by nature with a strong enquiring mind, and was remarkable for the simplicity and plainness of his manners. He was repeatedly called to the discharge of the duties of various public employments, sustaining in every situation through life the character of an intelligent and honest man.

N. Orleans, July 8th, 1826.

Dear Brother,

I embrace this opportunity to inform you I am still living though in poor health. I wrote to you by Capt. Tanner and have received no answer. Should like to know the particulars of Father's death; it would be interesting to me. Your letter was indeed short. I shall remain in this place this summer; the yellow fever has already commenced, and bids fair to be severe when the River falls, which is very high yet. You will oblige me if you would send me by some of Capt. Gale's vessels the Arms of Peckham. Give my love to all who know and acknowledge me.

Your affectionate

Brother Paul Peckham.

\* \* \*

New Orleans, 19th May, 1827.

Dear Brother,

I am still living and in good health— please give my love to Mother and Sisters.

Your affectionate Brother,

Paul Peckham.

\* \* \*

These last two letters were written to Thomas Peckham, Jun. Providence, R. I.

Paul was never heard from again; and records show that Lewis's little daughter, Hannah, named for his mother, died in 1825, aged two years; her mother, Mary, soon followed her; and his son Lewis was last heard from on February 24, 1845, at Montezuma, Park Co., Iowa, where he was living, aged 25 years.

It would be interesting to know if there are any living descendants of so talented a gentleman as Lewis Peckham, artist, musician, and soldier.





JOHN SMITH, THE MILLER, OF PROVIDENCE,  
RHODE ISLAND

SOME OF HIS DESCENDANTS

by CHARLES WILLIAM FARNHAM

[continued from October, 1964, p. 125]

66 EZEKIEL<sup>5</sup> SMITH (*Richard*,<sup>4</sup> *Elisha*,<sup>3</sup> *John*,<sup>2</sup> *John*<sup>1</sup>). His birth date was not recorded in Smithfield but his gravestone in Hamburg, New York, bears the name Deacon Ezekiel Smith, d. 2 Feb. 1828 at 87 years, while that of his wife Anne (Mowry) Smith lists her death 20 Aug. 1819 at 68 years.<sup>578</sup>

Ezekiel was identified as the son of Col. Richard Smith in Smithfield vital records which recorded his marriage in Smithfield 24 June 1772 to Anna Mowry, daughter of Daniel Mowry, Jr., of Smithfield.<sup>579</sup>

Ezekiel lived in Smithfield for some years after his marriage, then moved to Danby, Vermont, where he was selectman from 1784 to 1803. *The History and Map of Danby* by J. C. Williams states that he was the first settler on the farm later owned by Silas Hulett and that he moved west with his family, among whom were Richard, Zenus, Daniel, and Solomon.<sup>580</sup>

The *Centennial History of Erie County, New York*, says, "That same spring (1804) Deacon Ezekiel Smith came from Vermont, with two sons, Richard and Daniel, and bought a tract of land in what has become known as the Newton neighborhood. Smith returned for his family, leaving his sons to clear the land.

"In September he returned with his wife, several daughters, and two or three others, and five more sons, Amasa, Ezekiel Jr., Zenas, Amiah, and Almon. Four of the seven sons were married — One of Deacon Smith's daughters, Sarah, was then a bride of 17, the wife of Jacob Colvin. She is still living (1876) at 89 and well known through East Hamburg as Aunt Sarah Colvin . . ."<sup>581</sup>

Another reference from the history: "By this time (1811) that energetic mill builder under difficulties, Daniel Smith, had, in company with his brother, Richard, got him up a regular grist mill near where Long's mill now stands, at Hamburg village, which began to be known as Smith's Mills."<sup>582</sup>

Foley's *Early Settlers of New York State*, listing death notices of

<sup>578</sup>Janet W. Foley, *Early Settlers of New York State*, 3:405-406.

<sup>579</sup>Arnold, *op. cit.*, Smithfield, 3:68.

<sup>580</sup>J. C. Williams, *History and Map of Danby, Vermont* (Rutland, 1869), p. 258.

<sup>581</sup>Chrisfield Johnson, *Centennial History of Erie County, New York* (Buffalo, 1876), p. 122.

<sup>582</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 185.

former residents of Erie County, including those of Deacon Ezekiel and wife Anna, also listed the following: Mary, wife of Daniel Smith of Hamburg, d. 15 Nov. 1829 at 52 years, 10 months; Zenas Smith of Williamsville, d. 12 Feb. 1843 at 75 years; Betsey Smith, wife of Almon Smith of Hamburg, d. 8 June 1824 at 27 years; James M. Smith of Hamburg, d. 14 Dec. 1847 at 28 years; and Rhoda, widow of Capt. Ezekiel Smith Jr. of Hamburg, d. 15 Jan. 1860 at 80 years. Probably Rhoda was Rhoda Burlingame, daughter of Stephen and Abigail (Whipple) Burlingame, who was a sister of Abigail Burlingame, who m. Abraham<sup>6</sup> Smith, son of Capt. James<sup>5</sup> Smith.

67 STEPHEN SMITH.

68 HAZEL or HAZAEL SMITH. No further information on these

69 THOMAS SMITH. children of Stephen and Sarah

70 ELISHA SMITH. (Clemence) Smith has been

71 SYLVANUS SMITH. found.

72 NOAH SMITH.

73 MARTIN<sup>5</sup> SMITH (*Daniel*,<sup>4</sup> *Elisha*,<sup>3</sup> *John*,<sup>2</sup> *John*<sup>1</sup>), b. 15 Oct. 1747 in Smithfield;<sup>583</sup> his death in Burrillville in his 64th year was reported in the 27 Feb. 1811 issue of *The Providence Gazette*; m. in Smithfield 4 Nov. 1764 Mary Mowry, b. 30 Oct. 1745, daughter of Uriah and Urania (Paine) Mowry, whose death in Burrillville aged 75 was recorded in *The Providence Gazette* issue of 23 Aug. 1814.

Martin moved to Gloucester after his marriage and was first lieutenant in the Gloucester light infantry in the years 1778, 1780, 1781 and 1782. His homestead was in that part of Gloucester later set off as Burrillville.

CHILDREN OF MARTIN<sup>5</sup> AND MARY (MOWRY) SMITH:

I CYNTHIA<sup>6</sup> SMITH, b. in Smithfield 9 Feb. 1765; d. 17 Sept. 1844; m. Duty Salisbury, son of Edward and Abigail (Ballou) Salisbury who d. 12 Jan. 1859 at 93 and is buried in Pascoag, Burrillville.<sup>584</sup>

CHILDREN OF DUTY AND CYNTHIA<sup>6</sup> (SMITH) SALISBURY:

1 CYRENE<sup>7</sup> Salisbury, b. 23 April 1791; m. Deacon Augustus Steere; lived in Burrillville.

2 MARTIN S.<sup>7</sup> Salisbury, b. 28 March 1793; m. 11 Nov. 1811 Marcissa Steere of Simeon; lived in Burrillville and Providence.

3 MARY<sup>7</sup> Salisbury, b. 9 April 1795; m. Thomas Slack; d. in Burrillville.

4 MOSES B.<sup>7</sup> Salisbury, b. 30 July 1797; m. 22 Aug. 1816

<sup>583</sup>Arnold, *op. cit.*, Burrillville, 3:21.

<sup>584</sup>Beers, *op. cit.*, 3:1470.

Clarissa Albee of Dudley, Massachusetts, daughter of Benjamin; d. in Providence.

- 5 ALEXANDER<sup>7</sup> Salisbury, b. 15 April 1802; m. Betsey Bowen; d. in Burrillville.  
6 DANIEL MOWRY<sup>7</sup> Salisbury, b. 24 March 1808; d. 11 June 1890; m. Emeline Eddy, b. 6 Aug. 1812, daughter of Dr. Levi and Prussia (Aldrich) Eddy; she d. in Providence 28 Jan. 1895.

- 125 II CAPT. PITTS<sup>6</sup> SMITH, b. 10 Oct. 1766 in Smithfield;<sup>585</sup> d. 15 April 1814 in Burrillville; m. 31 May 1795 Susanna Smith of Richard and Lydia (Clarke) Smith of Scituate, Rhode Island, of the Christopher Smith line, b. 19 Feb. 1776; d. 17 Nov. 1860.

Captain Pitts Smith served as justice of peace in Burrillville, was deputy to the General Assembly in 1806, and served as judge of probate court for Providence County.

CHILDREN OF PITTS<sup>6</sup> AND SUSANNA (SMITH) SMITH:

- 1 RICHARD<sup>7</sup> SMITH, b. 15 May 1796 in Smithfield;<sup>586</sup> d. in Providence 28 Aug. 1864; m. Elizabeth Phillips of David. In 1820 he moved to Providence to take over the Bull Dog Tavern in Randall Square<sup>587</sup> and later operated the Franklin House, the Eagle House and the American Hotel. A daughter JANE in 1850 m. William H. Remington.  
2 DANIEL<sup>7</sup> SMITH, b. 22 Jan. 1798;<sup>588</sup> m. Sarah Ann Phillips of David and Amey Phillips. They had LYDIA MALISSA Smith, b. 23 Feb. 1823; MARTIN Smith, b. 30 June 1825; MOSES FARNUM Smith, b. 24 Sept. 1827; HARLEY OSTRANDER Smith, b. 24 Nov. 1831; JOHN PITTS Smith, b. 1 May 1834; and DAVID ALBERT Smith, b. 31 Jan. 1836.<sup>589</sup>  
3 JOHN<sup>7</sup> SMITH, b. 19 Feb. 1802.<sup>590</sup> He was called John T. Smith in the will of his uncle Daniel Smith.  
4 LAURA ANN<sup>7</sup> SMITH, b. 17 May 1806;<sup>591</sup> m. 12 Oct. 1826 Sardens Steere of Burrillville, son of Adlin<sup>592</sup> and grandson of Simcon Steere. Their children were VARNUM Steere, b. 21 Oct. 1827; LAURENTINA Steere, b. 12 Dec. 1829; DILENO CLARK Steere, b. 18 Sept. 1832; MORTIMER CHESBURY Steere, b. 15 May 1835; RHODA MINERVA Steere, b. 18 May 1837; and MARY VICTORY Steere, b. 22 Nov. 1839.<sup>593</sup>

<sup>585</sup>Arnold, *op. cit.*, Burrillville Births, 3:21.

<sup>586</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>587</sup>*The History of the State of Rhode Island . . . Biographical* (New York, 1920), p. 376.

<sup>588</sup>Arnold, Burrillville Births, 3:21.

<sup>589</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>590</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>591</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>592</sup>*Ibid.*, 3:14.

<sup>593</sup>*Ibid.*, 3:22.

- 5 MARY STEERE<sup>7</sup> SMITH, b. 28 March 1808;<sup>594</sup> m. in Jan. 1827 Alpheus Winsor of Augustus and Huldah (Angell) Winsor, b. 6 Oct. 1805. Their children were LYDIA CLARK WINSOR, b. 2 Nov. 1827; SUSAN SMITH WINSOR, b. 17 July 1830; HULDAH S. WINSOR, b. 1835, d. 1836; PITTS SMITH WINSOR, b. 4 Oct. 1837; MARY FARNUM WINSOR, b. 30 July 1842, d. 12 Jan. 1856; MARY IMOGENE WINSOR, b. 8 Oct. 1844; ALPHEUS AUGUSTUS WINSOR, b. 30 July 1849, d. 1850; ELIZABETH BROWN WINSOR, b. 26 May 1857, m. Harry Spencer.<sup>595</sup>

- III PHEBE<sup>6</sup> SMITH, b. 21 July 1769; d. 11 Dec. 1855; m. Daniel Sayles, b. Gloucester 31 Oct. 1769; d. 25 Jan. 1849.

CHILDREN OF DANIEL AND PHEBE<sup>6</sup> (SMITH) SAYLES:<sup>596</sup>

- 1 HARDIN<sup>7</sup> Sayles (1797-1851), m. Laura Wood (1804-1864) of John and Roba (Smith) Wood. Six children.  
2 MARY MOWRY<sup>7</sup> Sayles, b. 3 Sept. 1793; d. Aug. 1857.  
3 SMITH S.<sup>7</sup> Sayles, b. 22 Jan. 1795; d. 31 Aug. 1879.  
4 MARIETTA<sup>7</sup> Sayles, b. 12 Dec. 1798.  
5 PITTS<sup>7</sup> Sayles, b. 10 Aug. 1801; m. Lucy Dike Shumway, daughter of Noah Shumway.  
6 MARCELLA<sup>7</sup> Sayles, b. 5 Sept. 1803; m. Olney Arnold.  
7 PHYDELA<sup>7</sup> Sayles, b. 2 March 1806.  
8 ELIZABETH<sup>7</sup> Sayles, b. 15 Oct. 1808; m. John Chase.  
9 ELIZA ANN<sup>7</sup> Sayles, b. 2 Sept. 1811; m. James Pitts in 1835.

- IV MARY<sup>6</sup> SMITH, b. 25 April 1772; m. in Burrillville 19 June 1823 Daniel Farnum of Uxbridge, Massachusetts, son of Jonathan.<sup>597</sup>

- 126 V DANIEL<sup>6</sup> SMITH, b. 27 Oct. 1774; will in Burrillville dated 7 Jan. 1840 named his wife Mary. Possibly she was the Polly (or Mary) Dike of Thompson, Connecticut, whose marriage to Daniel Smith was recorded in Burrillville 3 June 1804.<sup>598</sup> Apparently there was no issue, for Daniel's will left to four sisters, Cynthia Salisbury, Phebe Sayles, Mary Farnum, and Sarah Brown; nephews Richard Smith and John T. Smith; and their sisters, Laura Ann Steere and Mary Winsor. Nephew Daniel Smith was executor.

- VI SARAH<sup>6</sup> SMITH, b. 11 June 1778; m. 7 July 1811 George Brown, Jr., of George of Burrillville.<sup>599</sup>

CHILDREN OF GEORGE AND SARAH<sup>6</sup> (SMITH) BROWN:<sup>600</sup>

- 1 MARTIN SMITH<sup>7</sup> Brown, b. 5 March 1812.  
2 BENJAMIN<sup>7</sup> Brown, b. 9 Aug. 1813.  
3 MARY MOWRY<sup>7</sup> Brown, b. 29 Aug. 1815.

<sup>594</sup>*Ibid.* <sup>595</sup>Mrs. C. W. Anthony and Mrs. C. H. Weeden, *Roger Williams of Providence*, p. 102. <sup>596</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 17. <sup>597</sup>Arnold, *op. cit.*, Burrillville Marriages, 3:13. <sup>598</sup>*Ibid.* <sup>599</sup>*Ibid.* <sup>600</sup>Arnold, *op. cit.*, Burrillville Births, 3:17.

## NEW MEMBERS

*September 18, 1964 to December 31, 1964*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Mrs. Anthony Akers-Douglas<br>Sussex, England    | Mrs. Richard H. Illingworth<br>Esmond, R. I.      |
| Mrs. James W. Arenburgh<br>Pawtucket, R. I.      | Mr. C. Harry Johnson<br>Lincoln, R. I.            |
| Mr. Howard W. Armbrust<br>Warwick, R. I.         | Mr. Robert G. Kulak                               |
| Mrs. Howard W. Armbrust<br>Warwick, R. I.        | Mr. George Alfred LaPorte<br>Pawtucket, R. I.     |
| Miss Maude E. Avery                              | Mr. Hector D. Laudati                             |
| Mr. Henry L. P. Beckwith, Jr.                    | Mr. Henry Lippitt<br>San Diego, Calif.            |
| Mrs. William A. Bonner<br>Burlingame, California | Mr. Henry F. Lippitt, 2nd<br>Los Angeles, Calif.  |
| Mr. William G. Bradshaw                          | Mr. Edward D. Little                              |
| Mr. Milton I. Brier                              | Miss Charlotte Lowney                             |
| Mrs. Milton I. Brier                             | Mr. Robert C. Mason                               |
| Mrs. David Brodsky                               | Mrs. Robert C. Mason                              |
| Mrs. Pierre Brunschwig                           | Mr. Robert E. Olmsted                             |
| Miss Dorothy W. Budlong                          | Mrs. Robert E. Olmsted                            |
| Mr. Raymond W. Caine, Jr.<br>Riverside, R. I.    | Mr. Thomas M. Rhine                               |
| Mrs. Russell I. Capwell<br>West Warwick, R. I.   | Mr. Donald G. Rohr                                |
| Mr. Paul W. Carter<br>Cranston, R. I.            | Mrs. Donald G. Rohr                               |
| Mr. James W. T. Clarkin<br>Barrington, R. I.     | Mr. Edward L. Rondeau<br>Cranston, R. I.          |
| Mrs. Francis S. Cole, Jr.                        | Mrs. L. Earle Rowe                                |
| Mr. Robert W. Comery                             | Mr. Ridgway F. Shinn, Jr.<br>Johnston, R. I.      |
| Mrs. Robert W. Comery                            | Mr. David J. Smith<br>West Warwick, R. I.         |
| Mrs. Edward R. Coop                              | Miss Judith A. Speyer                             |
| Mr. Alexander Daunis<br>West Barrington, R. I.   | Mr. Charles E. Spooner, Jr.<br>Cumberland, R. I.  |
| Mrs. Alexander Daunis<br>West Barrington, R. I.  | Mrs. Charles E. Spooner, Jr.<br>Cumberland, R. I. |
| Mr. Alfred S. Dewey                              | Mr. William F. Stone<br>Cumberland Hill, R. I.    |
| Mr. Kenneth W. Douglas                           | Mrs. William F. Stone<br>Cumberland Hill, R. I.   |
| Mrs. Kenneth W. Douglas                          | Mr. Frank A. Strom<br>Barrington, R. I.           |
| Mr. Herbert W. Ellis<br>Adamsville, R. I.        | Mr. J. Duncan Suttell<br>Pawtucket, R. I.         |
| Mr. Sidney Goldman                               | Mrs. J. Duncan Suttell<br>Pawtucket, R. I.        |
| Mrs. Sidney Goldman                              | Mrs. Francis Taylor<br>Barrington, R. I.          |
| Mr. Hugh J. Gourley III                          | Mrs. Raymond W. Thayer<br>Edgewood, R. I.         |
| Mrs. Hugh J. Gourley III                         | Mrs. Helen W. Walker                              |
| Mr. Herbert Gregson<br>Harmony, R. I.            | Mr. Clifford K. Wilbur<br>Cranston, R. I.         |
| Mrs. Pickett M. Greig<br>Jamestown, R. I.        | Mr. Robert A. Zambuco<br>Cranston, R. I.          |
| Mr. George Mason Gross, Jr.                      |   |
| Mr. Norbert H. House<br>Cumberland, R. I.        |   |
| Rev. Halsey DeWolf Howe                          |   |
| Mr. Richard H. Illingworth<br>Esmond, R. I.      |   |