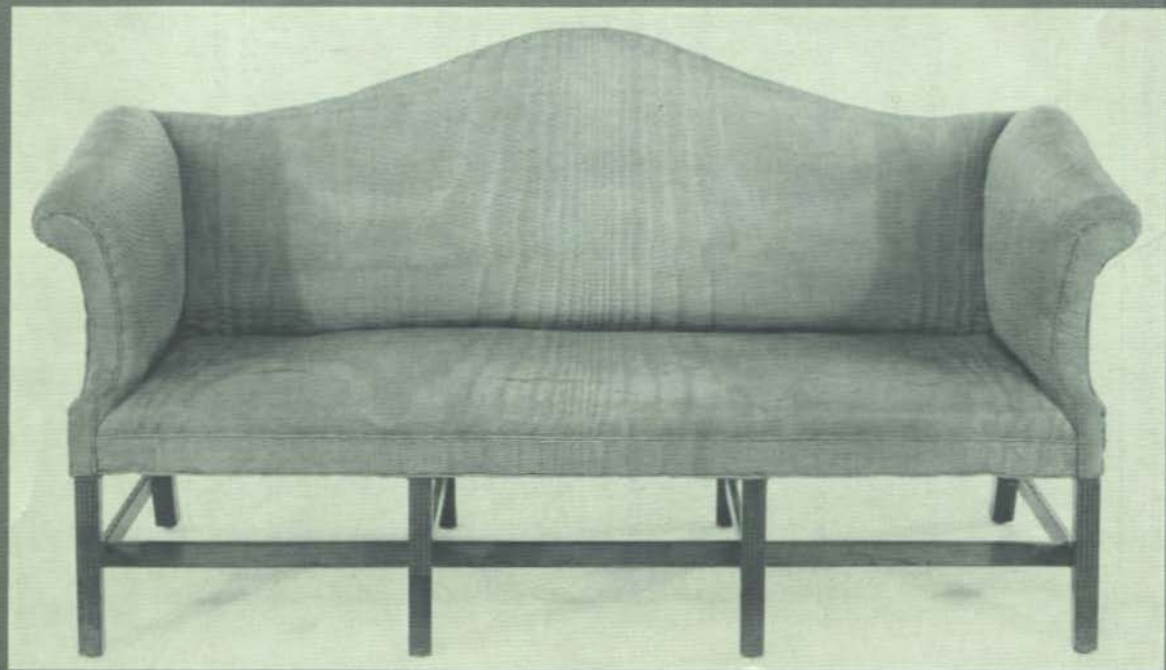


# RHODE ISLAND HISTORY



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COVER PHOTO: The Sofa was originally part of the John Brown House Furniture; it was probably made in Newport between 1770 and 1780. It has come back to the John Brown House collection as a recent gift of Mr. Norman Herreshoff. The miniature of John Brown is owned by the New-York Historical Society and is published with their kind permission.

# RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

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## RHODE ISLAND LOYALISM AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

by JOEL A. COHEN

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WITH THE OPENING OF HOSTILITIES as a result of Lexington and Concord, the problem of Loyalism became quite pressing throughout America. In Newport, Rhode Island, the issue was especially significant because of that island town's exposed position in Narragansett Bay. However, even before 1775 there had been problems with Tories. In 1764 a small group of men, who were staunch defenders of the Crown, attempted to get the colony's charter revoked. They complained about Rhode Islanders' opposition to the sugar duties and stamp taxes and were generally in favor of subordinating the independent status of the colony. True, most of the leading members of this Newport Junto, as the group was called, were out of the mainstream of Rhode Island politics, but the fact still remains that they were in existence and posed a threat to the colony.<sup>1</sup>

Besides the geographical position there were other factors which caused some Newporters to espouse the King's cause when rebellion became revolution. The majority of Newport Loyalists were conservative merchants who were more fearful of armed rebellion and its attendant destruction of trade and constitutional authority than they were of Parliament's encroachments.<sup>2</sup> Also, many had learned to get along under the tighter system of controls instituted by the Crown since 1763 and, therefore, were reluctant to change, especially by revolution.

<sup>1</sup>Wallace Brown, *The King's Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1966), p. 53; David S. Lovejoy, *Rhode Island Politics and the American Revolution, 1760-1776* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1958), pp. 49-51.

<sup>2</sup>Frank Greene Bates, *Rhode Island and the Formation of the Union* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1898), p. 57.



By 1775 the issue of Loyalism was coming to a head and people were being forced into taking a stand. Solomon Southwick who printed *The Newport Mercury* stated his position when two subscribers from Freetown in Massachusetts canceled their subscriptions because his paper had a tendency "to corrupt the morrels of the Loyal people of this parts of the Province." The printer welcomed their cancellation and said, "I never will court the favour of those who are enemies to the liberties of mankind, as all the TORIES most certainly are."<sup>3</sup> Southwick, as his continued publication indicates, was mirroring the opinion of most Newporters, yet there were others still undecided.

In June a group of over seventy leading citizens signed an Association whereby they declared their allegiance to the King and vowed "to Exert ourselves in the Support of the Civil Authority, and" "to keep peace in Newport " 'until a Reconciliation between Great Britain and her Colonies can be obtained.' "<sup>4</sup> Originally the Tories had wanted the associators to declare their opposition to the colony's actions and to place themselves under the protection of the British; however, their desires were not to succeed.<sup>5</sup> The Association was an attempt on the part of a group of moderates to maintain a neutral and peaceful existence. Later, when it was apparent that such neutralism could not prevail the majority of the signers joined the patriot cause.

Newport was not the only region in the colony to have difficulties with Loyalism. Providence had the case of Jonathan Simpson, a Boston hardware dealer, who set up shop in the town and proceeded to espouse "the Cause of Despotism." However, his store windows and doors were found covered with tar and feathers one August evening and two days later Mr. Simpson "prudently returned to Boston."<sup>6</sup> The town had decided that Tories were not wanted and

<sup>3</sup>*The Newport Mercury*, March 6, 1775, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>William G. Roelker and Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd, "The Patrol of Narragansett Bay (1774-76) by H.M.S. *Rose*, Captain James Wallace," *Rhode Island History*, VIII (July 1949), pp. 82-83.

<sup>5</sup>Franklin Bowditch Dexter (ed.), *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, D.D., LL.D.*, I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901), p. 546, hereafter cited as *Stiles, Diary*.

<sup>6</sup>*The Providence Gazette; and Country Journal*, August 27, 1774, p. 3, hereafter cited as *Providence Gazette*.

declared that Providence was not to be used as an "Assylum" for those whose principles were "inimical to the Liberties of our Country and its happy Constitution."<sup>7</sup>

In East Greenwich trouble broke out when a judge of the Inferior Court, Stephen Arnold, was accused of "industriously propagating Principles unfriendly to American Liberty." It seems that Arnold was hung in effigy by a mob and as a result he and some of his friends had collected to avenge the insult. A pitched battle was avoided with the arrival of hastily dispatched troops from Providence County. Peace was restored and Arnold admitted his mistake in taking part in such an unlawful assembly and declared that he was a friend to his country's liberties.<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the early months of 1775, there were other incidents reported. On Block Island, for example, a Tory renounced his principles only after being informed that a coating of "fish-gurry" awaited him if he did not relent.<sup>9</sup> South Kingstown's town meeting proclaimed that anyone who supplied the "Enemies of American Liberty" with provisions and other necessities either knowingly or unknowingly was to be treated as an enemy and held "in ye utmost Contempt."<sup>10</sup>

With the increased military activity in the summer of 1775, Rhode Islanders became more fearful of Tory sympathizers who were aiding the English. The people of Providence ordered their deputies to have legislation enacted which would severely punish all those who might pilot the enemy's ships within the colony. Accordingly an act was passed by the General Assembly which set a maximum penalty of a £500 fine and a twelve-month prison term for such activity.<sup>11</sup> This evidently was not deterrent enough and so the October Assembly had to pass further legislation. Thus, anyone found guilty of giving information or in any way aiding the British was to "suffer the pains of death, as in cases of felony; and . . . forfeit his lands, goods and chat-

<sup>7</sup>Providence Town Meeting, Last Tuesday in August 1774, Town Meetings, No. 6, p. 19, City Clerk's office.

<sup>8</sup>*Providence Gazette*, September 17, 1774, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup>*The Newport Mercury*, February 13, 1775, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup>South Kingstown Town Meeting, June 6, 1775, Town Meeting Record, p. 385, Town Clerk's office.

<sup>11</sup>Providence Town Meeting, August 5, 1775, Town Meetings, No. 6, p. 29; John Russell Bartlett (ed.), *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England*, VII (Providence: A. Crawford Greene, 1862), p. 364, hereafter cited as Bartlett.



tels, to the colony."<sup>12</sup> All in all, there is no evidence to indicate that anyone did suffer the death penalty but this bill was significant in that the colony was making its position towards Loyalists quite clear.

In another blow at the Tories this October Assembly passed several acts of confiscation. The property of twelve men was taken. The interesting fact, however, is that many of the estates seized, such as that of former Massachusetts Governor Thomas Hutchinson, were



Deputy Governor Bradford House—Mount Hope Farm, Bristol, R.I., originally owned by loyalist Isaac Royal, confiscated by state at the conclusion of the Revolution to pay off colonial troops—bought by Governor Bradford. Given to Brown University by R. F. Haffenreffer estate 1955.

those of wealthy Bostonians who owned land in Rhode Island. Nevertheless, the property of men such as Jonathan Simpson was now in the colony's possession and subject to the Assembly's actions.<sup>13</sup>

In spite of the fact that Loyalist sympathizers were a minority, many people became worried as the 1776 election approached. In Newport an advertisement appeared in the *Mercury* requesting that the members of the newly created Independent Society meet to discuss plans to counteract the malicious designs of the Tory Junto.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Bartlett, VII, pp. 388-389.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 376-387, *passim*.

<sup>14</sup>*The Newport Mercury*, March 25, 1776, p. 2.

Undoubtedly these designs involved an attempt to control the forthcoming election. To offset this fear that the Tories would control the voting in towns such as Newport the General Assembly passed a law allowing freemen who, for safety's sake, had left their residences to return on election day to cast their ballots.<sup>15</sup>

In Newport there was a special appeal made to those who had gone. The argument was that a Tory faction was attempting "to chuse, at the next election, a set of deputies inimical to the liberties of this country," and thus "counteract every measure proposed in assembly to promote and establish the glory and liberties of America."<sup>16</sup> The appeal was successful and only three new deputies were elected and as Ezra Stiles points out at least two of them were Whigs.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the worry and excitement over the election of 1776 there was in reality no need for such feelings. Nicholas Cooke was re-elected governor by an almost unanimous electorate,<sup>18</sup> and as the new administration took office the legislation it proceeded to enact indicated its strong tie to the cause of American freedom. The dread of Loyalist influence had been real in the minds of many Rhode Islanders but as the election proved there were no substantial grounds for such fears.

In the months which followed, however, the citizenry continued to be concerned with Tory sympathizers. A loyalty oath, or Test Act, as it was known, was passed in June after having been shelved the preceding November. According to this bill all males above sixteen who were suspected of holding principles inimical to the American cause were to declare their loyalty and willingness to aid in the colonies' defense. If anyone refused the oath he then had to relinquish his arms and ammunition to the colony. Interestingly enough, the non-subscriber was to be paid for these arms by the colony, and Quakers were exempted from the act entirely.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup>Bartlett, VII, pp. 488-489.

<sup>16</sup>*The Newport Mercury*, April 8, 1776, p. 2.

<sup>17</sup>The new deputies were George Sears, Gideon Wanton and Samuel Fowler. Stiles gives no information on Fowler but indicates that Sears and Wanton were Whigs. See Stiles, *Diary*, II, 133-134.

<sup>18</sup>Stephen Hopkins to Nicholas Cooke, Philadelphia, May 15, 1776, Bartlett, VII, 527-528.

<sup>19</sup>Journal of the Senate, 1771-1777, November 3, 6, 1775, R. I. Archives; Bartlett, VII, 566-568; For the original bill and some minor alterations see Acts & Resolves of the Rhode Island General Assembly (MS), XIII, 133, R. I. Archives, hereafter cited as Acts & Resolves (MS).



Later the Test Act was further strengthened when it was voted that no male above twenty-one, Quakers excepted, could present a case in court, vote in town meetings or hold any civil or military office unless he took the oath.<sup>20</sup> Several towns quickly supported and went beyond this legislation. In Cranston, Johnston, North Providence and Warren, the town meetings voted that any adult who refused to subscribe to the act was not to receive his share of the salt which the General Assembly had ordered sent to the towns.<sup>21</sup> With regard to the elimination of nonsubscribers from civilian and military offices the evidence shows that no more than seventeen men in six towns were replaced when they refused or neglected to sign the Test and only one militia officer was removed.<sup>22</sup> Not a very substantial number, one would have to agree.

In the summer of 1776 a few Newporters who refused the Test were examined by the General Assembly and declared to be unfriendly to the colonies. Because of this, several were ordered to other towns in Rhode Island for safe keeping. At first this appears to be a harsh treatment but when it is noted that these men were allowed the freedom of the towns to which they were removed and were not kept in jail, provided they honored their parole, their situation seems to improve. Often, too, their families were allowed to join them. Thus, despite the odious term Tory these men lived fairly comfortably.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup>Bartlett, VII, 588-589, 611, 616; VIII, 22, 39-40.

<sup>21</sup>Cranston Town Meeting, September 23, 1776 [Cranston Town Meetings, 1754-1788], p. 122, city clerk's office; *Providence Gazette*, September 21, 1776, p. 3; North Providence Town Meeting, September 21, 1776, Town Meeting, 1765-1808, Pawtucket city clerk's office; Warren Town Meeting, October 26, 1776, Town Records, No. 1, p. 169, town clerk's office.

<sup>22</sup>For these examples see: East Greenwich Town Meeting, November 30, 1776, Records, Town Meetings, 1752-1793, town clerk's office; Exeter Town Meeting, December 3, 1776, Town Meetings, No. 2, town clerk's office; Newport Town Meeting, November 14, 1776, Copied Colonial Records, p. 1135, Newport Historical Society; Providence Town Meeting, November 20, 1776, Town Meetings, No. 6, pp. 56-57; Smithfield Town Meeting, November 19, 1776, Records, Town Meetings, 1771-1816, Central Falls city clerk's office; South Kingstown Town Meeting, November 30, 1776, Town Meeting Records, From 1776 to 1836, p. 2; Bartlett, VIII, 73.

<sup>23</sup>Bartlett, VII, 569, 593-594, 603-604. For an interesting and informative account of what it was like for one of the men so removed see Sidney S. Rider (ed.), *The Diary of Thomas Vernon: A Loyalist Banished from Newport by the Rhode Island General Assembly in 1776*, No. 13 of *Rhode Island Historical Tracts* (Providence: Sidney S. Rider, 1881).

The attempt at controlling these Tories was further modified when a petition was presented to the August General Assembly by one hundred and fifteen Newporters. Their request was that two of the men ordered from the town, Doctors Hunter and Haliburton, be allowed to return so that the town's medical needs could be better attended to. In September this petition was approved.<sup>24</sup> Finally, in October the Assembly gave in completely and allowed all those removed to go back to Newport.<sup>25</sup> General Nathanael Greene was quite correct when he wrote to Governor Cooke in late December of 1776 and said that the problem of Tories in Rhode Island was merely "the shadow of disaffection" compared to what it was elsewhere.<sup>26</sup>

During the first two years of the war Rhode Island Loyalism was not a significant or overpowering force. Whatever elements existed were handled effectively. In essence there is no evidence to indicate that the Tories were anything more than a sometimes vocal but ineffectual minority.

In December 1776 a period of relative security was ended for the colony on Narragansett Bay. Under the command of General Henry Clinton, approximately six thousand British troops disembarked in Newport and took possession of Aquidneck Island. The resistance to this was feeble at best and for the next three years Rhode Islanders had to face the multifarious problems which are attendant upon a people living within a theater of war.<sup>27</sup>

When the British landed on Rhode Island, it was reported "that the Enemy's Troops were escorted into Newport by a Set of well-known infamous Tories, who have long infested that Town." Yet there was hope that these men would soon "meet with the *Fate* justly due to their atrocious Villanies."<sup>28</sup> Now that the state was occupied there would be an intensification of activity against those who supported the King's cause.

In early 1777 numerous cases were presented to the General Assem-

<sup>24</sup>Petitions to the Rhode Island General Assembly, XVI, 46, R. I. Archives; Bartlett, VII, 610.

<sup>25</sup>Bartlett, VII, 11-12.

<sup>26</sup>General Nathanael Greene to Governor Cooke, Coryell's Ferry, December 21, 1776, *Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>27</sup>Samuel Greene Arnold, *History of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*, II (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1860), pp. 388-390.

<sup>28</sup>*Providence Gazette*, December 14, 1776, p. 2.



bly and its recess committee, the Council of War, concerning persons suspected of Loyalist sympathies. Most of these actions were dismissed because of insufficient evidence or because of the accused's professed loyalty to the state.<sup>29</sup> Still there were some people about whom the suspicions were correct, and they were treated more harshly. For example, several members of the Charles Slocum family from North Kingstown were called before the Assembly on charges of supplying the enemy with information and supplies. In the process of apprehending them a scuffle ensued and Charles was killed. The legislature, as a result of its inquiry, ordered the rest of the family removed two miles from the shore and subsequently confiscated Charles's personal estate. Later, when it was learned that the Slocums were still corresponding with the British, they were moved further inland.<sup>30</sup> Except for the accidental death of the head of the house, the treatment afforded the Slocums was not highly oppressive.

Because Tory activity was mainly centered on an island under British domination, the Assembly's actions against Loyalist sympathizers were not very harsh. Admittedly, there were attempts by certain individuals and groups to strengthen the laws against these people but, for the most part, they were unsuccessful. In March 1777 the legislature declared that, in the future, anyone who had not subscribed to the 1776 Test Act could not do so without first obtaining its approval. Two months later this was repealed. From that point on it was a simple procedure for one to declare his allegiance to the state and thus be readmitted to all the rights of citizenship.<sup>31</sup> Evidently, the increased fear of Loyalism which had been caused by the British landing in December had dissipated considerably by May.

Nevertheless, to dissuade people from consorting with the enemy, the General Assembly passed a resolution against treasonable activity. Accordingly, any American who conspired with the British to make war against this state or any other of the United States was to suffer the penalty of death. In addition, anyone giving aid or comfort to the enemy was to be similarly punished. The bill further provided that

<sup>29</sup>For examples see Council of War, 1776-77, January 4, 6, 1777, pp. 15, 19-20, R. I. Archives.

<sup>30</sup>Bartlett, VIII, 174, 195, 234, 309-310, 344-345; *Providence Gazette*, March 29, 1777, p. 3. For a Tory account see *The Newport Gazette*, April 13, May 15, 1777, p. 3.

<sup>31</sup>Bartlett, VIII, 187, 247, 291, 383, 405-406.

those found guilty of concealing an act of treason were to forfeit their property to the state for life and to "be imprisoned for a Term not less than two Years, nor exceeding Five Years." Moreover, this legislation was to apply to acts committed outside of the state as well as within it. The Assembly also created an elaborate procedure of due process and established a three-year statute of limitations. Treasonable activity was to be severely punished, but the rights of the individual were not to be abrogated.<sup>32</sup>

In the winter of 1777 the General Assembly agreed to Congress's recommendation to confiscate and sell Tory property, the purpose being to help with the financial aspects of the war effort. A committee was thus created to draft the appropriate legislation. However, by the following June this committee had not made a report and nothing further was accomplished until late in 1779.<sup>33</sup> With most of the Loyalists located on Aquidneck Island and under British protection there was little need for a new act of confiscation.

In spite of the fact that the Tories were an ineffectual minority, there were many who felt that the state was much too lenient with them. One contributor to the *Providence Gazette* was convinced that this "ill-timed lenity" had greatly injured the American cause, and he wanted something done about it. His attitude was that it was "high time that a decisive line of separation should be drawn between those miscreants and the friends to the country."<sup>34</sup>

As if in response to this article, the General Assembly created a special committee to draw up "an oath of fidelity and allegiance" which in effect would supplant the Test Act of 1776. According to this new bill every free male above twenty-one would have to swear his allegiance to the state and agree to support and defend it against all enemies. Quakers were exempted from the above, but they still had to affirm their loyalty. If a person refused to subscribe to this he was forced, at his own expense, to remove himself to an area under British control. Moreover, the death penalty awaited any so leaving who returned to the state without first obtaining the Assembly's permission. With the committee's draft in hand, the legislature decided

<sup>32</sup>Rhode Island Colony Records (MS), IX, 718-724, R. I. Archives, hereafter cited as R. I. Records (MS). Significantly there is no evidence to indicate that any Rhode Islander suffered the full penalty of this law.

<sup>33</sup>Bartlett, VIII, 341, 426-427, 609-614.

<sup>34</sup>*Providence Gazette*, January 31, 1778, p. 2.



to ask the freemen for their opinion before final action on the bill.<sup>35</sup>

Several towns indicated that they were in favor of the resolution's passage.<sup>36</sup> Yet, in the final analysis, there were more who opposed it. In Cumberland, for example, the freemen wanted the bill to "Extend no farther, than To Such persons only who Can be Justly Suspected of being Enemical."<sup>37</sup> The citizens of Hopkinton were also against the new act because they believed it would "not be an Effectual means of separating her [America's] friends from her foes."<sup>38</sup> Whatever the reasons, there was enough opposition to keep the bill from being passed by the Assembly.

Still, there were those who were convinced that the government was not being strict enough with the Loyalists. As a result the upper house of the legislature, on July 4, 1778, proposed a special bill to deal with the Tories on Aquidneck Island. The assistants were determined that, once the British were removed from the scene, no suspected persons were to "be restored to the favor & friendship of the free Subjects of" Rhode Island until they stood trial and accounted for their conduct. Furthermore, these people were to be tried before military courts and the portions of the 1777 act against treasonable activity which dealt with trial procedure were to be suspended until further Assembly orders. Less extreme views prevailed and the House

<sup>35</sup>Bartlett, VIII, 353, 368; Acts & Resolves (MS), XVII, 25.

<sup>36</sup>These towns were Barrington, Coventry, Cranston, Tiverton, Warren, Warwick and Westerly. See Barrington Town meeting, March 2, 1778, Barrington Records 1770, town clerk's office; Coventry Town Meeting, March 7, 1778, Council Records, From 1772 to 1789, p. 625a, town clerk's office; Cranston Town Meeting, March 6, 1778, [Cranston Town Meetings, 1754-1788], p. 143; Tiverton Town Meeting, March 6, 1778, Town Meetings, 1754-1798, p. 111, town clerk's office; Warren Town Meeting, March 6, 1778, Town Records No. 1, p. 174; Warwick Town Meeting, March 6, 1778, Town Meeting, No. 2, p. 510, city clerk's office; Westerly Town Meeting, March 6, 1778, Town Meetings . . . No. 3, p. 175, town clerk's office.

<sup>37</sup>Cumberland Town Meeting, March 5, 1778, Council, No. 1, p. 167, town clerk's office.

<sup>38</sup>Hopkinton Town Meeting, March 9, 1778, Town Records, No. 1, p. 153, town clerk's office. For other reactions against this bill see: Charlestown Town Meeting, [March, 1778], Town Council Probate . . . 1759-1779, p. 86, town clerk's office; Exeter Town Meeting, March 7, 1778, Town Meetings, No. 2; Providence Town Meeting, March 9, 1778, Town Meetings, No. 6, pp. 90-91; Richmond Town Meeting, March 6, 1778, Land Evidence, No. 3, p. 543, Town Clerk's Office; South Kingstown Town Meeting, March 7, 1778, Town Meeting Records, From 1776 to 1836, p. 25; West Greenwich Town Meeting, March 7, 1778, Town Meeting Book, No. 2, p. 46, R. I. Archives.

of Deputies rejected this resolve.<sup>39</sup> On the whole, it was recognized that the Loyalists were not that great a problem.

Even though the Tories did not present a major threat to the state, they did at times cause difficulties. One group especially raised fear in the populace and that was the Loyal Newport Associators which had been formed from Loyalists on Aquidneck Island. Little is known about this band except for the fact that their function was "to retaliate upon and make reprisal against the inhabitants of the several provinces in America" who were in rebellion.<sup>40</sup> To some they were considered highly dangerous and it was advised that "When any one is taken, let him receive the punishment justly due to hell-born crimes."<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, there are no records of any specific incidents in Rhode Island involving these Associators.

A more tangible problem had to do with the people who lived on Block Island. As early as 1776 their travel had been restricted so as to prevent the British from receiving supplies and information. Now, in early 1779, it was disclosed that some of the islanders were engaged in illicit trade and so the Assembly created a special committee to deal with the few cases reported.<sup>42</sup> At the same time, the legislature passed two acts to confine any "persons suspected of being inimical" who might be engaged in passing information to the enemy.<sup>43</sup> The British still occupied part of the state and the Assembly wanted to be sure that Tory-like activity was kept to a minimum.

In the summer of 1779 another committee was established to investigate people living near the shore who were suspected "of giving intelligence to the enemy." This five-man commission was given the power to remove such persons to other parts of the state provided that "the public safety" was involved.<sup>44</sup> These men met from June until just before the British evacuated Newport in October. However, in all that time only twenty-one families or individuals were ordered to

<sup>39</sup>Acts & Resolves (MS), XVII, 110; Journal, House of Deputies, 1778-79, July 4, 1778, R. I. Archives.

<sup>40</sup>*The American Journal and General Advertiser*, April 15, 1779, p. 2.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>42</sup>Thomas Tillinghast to Governor Greene, East Greenwich, February 9, 1779, Letters to the Governor of Rhode Island, XIII, 65, R. I. Archives; Council of War, 1778-79, February 9, 1779, p. 186; Bartlett, VIII, 500-501, 505, 516.

<sup>43</sup>Bartlett, VIII, 515-517.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 558-559.



jail or moved, and in some of the cases the evidence against these people was quite weak.<sup>45</sup> Collusion with the enemy was not very extensive.

On October 25, 1779, the last of the British occupation force left Aquidneck Island and with them went forty-five Tories.<sup>46</sup> Not a very impressive number, one would have to agree. Thus, with the removal of the enemy and most of their Loyalist adherents the state could resume a more normal existence. Almost immediately, most of the laws which had restricted trade and communications with the islands in the Bay were lifted and more than a dozen persons who had been moved because they were suspected of being inimical were allowed to return to their homes.<sup>47</sup>

It appeared as though the government was going to adhere to the advice of General Nathanael Greene and treat the Tories with moderation. As Greene had said, "I wish you may fall upon a happy medium between too great severity, and too much indulgence."<sup>48</sup>

Now that the state was free of the British, the Assembly decided to confiscate the estates of the Loyalists. According to the bill which was adopted, anyone who had aided the enemy since April 19, 1775, was to "be considered as an alien," and his property was to be forfeited "to the Governor and Company of" Rhode Island. Nevertheless, it was also provided that this confiscation be done according to due process of law and thus trials were ordered for all property in question. Even the Tories were to have the right to their day in court.<sup>49</sup>

By the end of the year the estates of only thirty-nine men had been listed for confiscation; however, many of these men had long since left the confines of Narragansett Bay.<sup>50</sup> Admittedly, the British occu-

<sup>45</sup>The committee meetings and corresponding evidence are in General Assembly Papers, Revolutionary War, Suspected Persons, 1775-1783, pp. 65-153, R. I. Archives. For an account of an important Tory who was not uncovered until the twentieth-century see Jane Clark, "Metcalf Bowler as a British Spy," *Rhode Island Historical Society Collections*, XXIII (October 1930), 101-117.

<sup>46</sup>Council of War, 1779-81, November 11, 1779, p. 24.

<sup>47</sup>Bartlett, VIII, 599, 601, 606.

<sup>48</sup>General Greene to General Varnum, West Point, November 2, 1779, Shepley Library, VI, 103, The R. I. Historical Society; Nathanael Greene to Governor Greene, West Point, October 29, 17[79], Nathanael Greene Papers, The R. I. Historical Society.

<sup>49</sup>Bartlett, VIII, 609-614.

<sup>50</sup>*Providence Gazette*, November 20-December 18, 1779, *passim*.

pation had caused an increased fear of Tory activity but, for the most part, this fear was unwarranted.

Loyalism in Rhode Island had never been a serious problem, and in the closing years of the war it became an even less significant issue. Still, there were many who believed that the safety of the state was threatened by certain disaffected persons. As a result a General Assembly committee was created in July 1780 to look into the matter and report on those people they felt should be deported from Rhode Island.<sup>51</sup> However, on the day after the legislature created this committee, it practically nullified the necessity of its existence by ordering the banishment of all Tories. According to this act, which listed thirty-seven Loyalists specifically, any person proven guilty of disaffection was to be transported from the state. In addition, any so removed who returned without the Assembly's permission were to "suffer the pains of death, without the benefit of clergy."<sup>52</sup>

The legislation against Tories may have appeared harsh on the surface, but in reality a rather liberal policy was followed toward these people. In fact, not a single one was to be put to death. Furthermore, in spite of the fact that the property of these Loyalists was confiscated to the state, their families were often allowed support from these estates.<sup>53</sup> The innocent were not to be punished for the guilty.

Even though Rhode Islanders witnessed no major Loyalist activity during the latter stages of the Revolution, the Tory-like practice of trading with the British at Block Island and New York developed into a problem. In January 1781 the inhabitants of Westerly became concerned with "the Alarming Circumstance of the Trade that is Carried on With the Enemy," and so they instructed their deputies to present this information to the legislature.<sup>54</sup> Also, General Rochambeau wrote a letter to Governor Greene in which he complained about this "pernicious" traffic and requested that the governor do something to halt it.<sup>55</sup> There were, of course, several acts of the General Assem-

<sup>51</sup>Bartlett, IX, 136; Acts & Resolves (MS), XIX, 152.

<sup>52</sup>Bartlett, IX, 139-142; Acts & Resolves (MS), XIX, 158.

<sup>53</sup>See for example the case of Adam Ferguson and his family. Bartlett, IX, 156-157, 170, 173, 224-225.

<sup>54</sup>Westerly Town Meetings, January 16, 25, 1781, Town Meetings . . . No. 4, pp. 28, 29.

<sup>55</sup>Rochambeau to Governor Greene, Newport, February 27, 1781, Letters to the Governor of Rhode Island, XV, 87.



bly which were already designed to prohibit treasonable behavior, and these had been fairly effective in curtailing Loyalism. Yet, there was no single piece of legislation to deal specifically with the growing amount of illegal trade with the British. As a result of these factors, a legislative committee was created to draft a bill which would effectively prevent this illicit commerce.<sup>56</sup>

At the next General Assembly meeting, "An Act more effectually to prevent illicit Trade, Commerce and Correspondence, with the Enemies of this and the other United States of America" was passed. Accordingly any products imported into Rhode Island from British-held regions were to be confiscated with one half of their value, after charges, going to those who discovered them and the other fifty per cent to the state. In addition, any goods destined for export from Rhode Island to the enemy were to be similarly treated. As punishment, anyone involved in such dealings was to be jailed for his first offense for a minimum of three months and a maximum of three years or fined at the Court's discretion. For a "second Offense such Person or Persons shall forfeit the Whole of their real and personal Estate to the Use of this State, and be banished therefrom for Life." Should they return after this banishment, they were to be put to death. This act also provided penalties to preclude those who had the state's permission to travel in British-held areas from engaging in any illegal commerce. The Assembly was determined to halt the trade with the enemy.<sup>57</sup>

From this point on, the amount of illicit traffic with the British appeared to lessen. No longer were there major complaints to the government about this commerce, and the number of cases reported to the Assembly and in the newspapers was limited.<sup>58</sup> There were some convictions as a result of this bill, but there were also several instances when the accused were found innocent of all charges. For example, John Payne from Vermont was held in confinement for more than seven weeks on suspicion of being involved in such unlawful activities. He was, however, acquitted by the Superior Court and

<sup>56</sup>Bartlett, IX, 331-332. In Connecticut the problem had already resulted in some specific legislation designed to halt this illegal trade. See Albert E. Van Dusen, *Connecticut* (New York: Random House, 1961), pp. 164-167.

<sup>57</sup>R. I. Records (MS), XI, 443-449.

<sup>58</sup>Bartlett, IX, *passim*.

discharged from jail.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, Jeremiah Sheffield was found innocent of "having been concerned in carrying a Sloop loaded with Lumber to New-York."<sup>60</sup>

Throughout 1782 and 1783 the authorities of the state continued to guard against illegal trade. Admittedly, there was not an abundance of violations; nevertheless, many believed as did Governor Trumbull of Connecticut that "illicit Trade is . . . one of the most dangerous things we have to encounter."<sup>61</sup> Thus, despite the fact that the war was drawing to a close, the General Assembly passed another act against those involved in illicit commerce. By this new bill, which was adopted at the February 1783 session, anyone convicted since November 1, 1779, "of holding any trade, commerce or intercourse with the common enemy" was to be "rendered incapable of being elected to any office within this state." Furthermore, these persons were denied the right to vote.<sup>62</sup> The Revolution was coming to a successful conclusion and the legislators were going to make sure that inimical persons were suitably denied any voice in government.

By April the news of the provisional peace had reached Rhode Island, and so at the May General Assembly the acts against illicit trade were removed.<sup>63</sup> The war was ended and so too was the necessity of the restraints against dealing with the British.

Throughout the country, the approach of peace witnessed a proliferation of anti-Tory sentiment and Rhode Island was no exception. In several town meetings, the inhabitants of Narragansett Bay raised their voices in opposition to the return to the state of disaffected persons. Thus, despite the clauses in the treaty of peace designed to alleviate the penalties imposed on Loyalists, many Rhode Islanders were determined that those who "Volentarily Deserted their Country & . . . joined the Enemy" should "be forever precluded from Returning into any part of this State."<sup>64</sup>

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 452, 458; *Providence Gazette*, September 8, 1781, p. 2.

<sup>60</sup>*The Newport Mercury*, September 21, 1782, p. 3.

<sup>61</sup>Jonathan Trumbull to Governor Greene, Lebanon, September 12, 1782, Letters to the Governor of Rhode Island, XVIII, 15.

<sup>62</sup>Bartlett, IX, 670; Acts & Resolves (MS), XXIII, 31.

<sup>63</sup>Bartlett, IX, 696.

<sup>64</sup>Middletown Town Meeting, April 16, 1783, Town Meeting Records of Middletown, [Vol. I], p. 145, town clerk's office. For similar reactions see Barrington Town Meeting, April 16, 1783, Barrington Records, 1770; East Greenwich Town



On the other hand, there were people who wanted to follow a more moderate and conciliatory policy. Moses Brown indicated that he was in favor of the return of those who were banished, and he declared that "a Number of our Leading Men are for admitting some."<sup>65</sup> Even his brother John, who had benefited by purchasing some Tory property, was willing to allow the reinstatement of those who had "not been in arms nor other ways Very Active against us." However, as one might imagine, he was opposed to any policy which would restore to them their confiscated estates.<sup>66</sup>

In the final analysis, it was the moderate attitude which prevailed. There were no further punishments or restrictions placed by the Assembly on those who had been disloyal, and in certain cases some of these people were reinstated as citizens.<sup>67</sup> The inhabitants of Middletown even retracted their April 1783 demands on prohibiting the return of the Tories. They now said that any absentees "appearing to be men of good morals and likely to become good and profitable members of Society by their Industry or their Stock be admitted as Citizens of this State."<sup>68</sup> Loyalism was not a major problem for Rhode Islanders.

Meeting, April 16, 1783, Records, Town Meetings, 1752-1793; Newport Town Meeting, October 27, 1783, [The R. I. Historical Society] Miscellaneous Manuscripts, N 472, The R. I. Historical Society; Portsmouth Town Meeting, April 16, 1783, Town Meetings, Vol. I, p. 368, Town Clerk's Office; South Kingstown Town Meeting, April 16, 1783, Town Meeting Records, From 1776 to 1836, p. 165; Warren Town Meeting, October 6, 1783, Town Records, No. 1, p. 206; Warwick Town Meeting, August 26, 1783, Town Meetings, No. 3, pp. 142-143; West Greenwich Town Meeting, October 25, 1783, Town Meeting Book, No. 2, pp. 105-106.

<sup>65</sup>Moses Brown to John and Mary Timmings, Providence, May, 1783, Moses Brown Papers, IV, 45, The R. I. Historical Society.

<sup>66</sup>John Brown to David Howell, [Providence], November 3, 1783, Rhode Island Historical Society Manuscripts, XIV, 27 (Typed Copy), The R. I. Historical Society.

<sup>67</sup>See for example the cases of John Mawdsley, Stephen Deblois, John Freebody and Robert Stoddard in Bartlett, X, 10, 16, 46-48.

<sup>68</sup>Middletown Town Meeting, April 21, 1784, Town Meeting Records of Middletown, [Vol. I], p. 152.

## NEW YORK to PROVIDENCE and RETURN UNDER SAIL in 1900

transcribed by ROBERT H. I. GODDARD, JR.  
Trustee, Brown & Ives, Providence, Rhode Island

TO AN OBSERVER of present commercial shipping, it is hard to realize that coastal trade in the United States was carried on in hundreds of two- and three-masted schooners from the days of the colonies until the early 1900s. Even up until World War I, hardly over fifty years ago, this pattern prevailed.

In shipping, this was truly a field of small enterprise and of the rugged individualist. With a relatively small investment and with knowledge gathered in service, first before the mast and then as mate, many an enterprising lad of modest resources could win a command. Over the years, with skill and industry, he could hope for a comfortable living and possibly for a more secure position as owner of shares in several vessels.

What was this life in ship operation like and what was involved in making an actual voyage? To gain some idea of the sailor's life, it may be of interest to read the details of a round trip between New York and Providence, extracted verbatim, except for some of the more exotic spelling, from the logbook of the three-masted schooner *Thomas B. Garland*.<sup>1</sup> A wooden vessel, the *Garland* was nineteen years old at the time, having been built at Bath, Maine, in 1881. She was commanded by Capt. Bennett D. Coleman, a native of Cotuit on Cape Cod.

After loading about 480 tons of coal at St. George coal dock in New York, for which the freight to Providence was somewhat less than one dollar per ton, the *Garland* towed<sup>2</sup> out through Hell Gate to Flushing Bay, ready to start "Trip #278."

<sup>1</sup>Tonnage: Gross 319.13 Net 303.17 Dimensions 126.6 x 32 x 11.4 Official number 145302. Home port—Dover, N. H. Log-book in possession of Edwin B. Coleman, Springfield, Mass., son of Capt. Coleman.

<sup>2</sup>Typical towing charges of this period:

Through Hell Gate \$10. to \$15. depending on time required.  
Tow out of Providence \$7.  
Shifting berths in port \$5. to \$10.



Thursday, 18 January 1900

First part of this day wind Easterly, moderate breeze.

At 8 A.M., finished loading and towed through Hell Gate and anchor in Flushing Bay at 10:30. Wind NE, moderate breeze.

At 3 P.M. calm, Captain come on board.

Friday, 19 January 1900

This day being attended with a light air of wind from the ENE and thick fog, laid to anchor in Flushing Bay. Crew variably employed about deck.

At 8 P.M. commence to rain and continued raining all the remainder of this day.

Anchor light and watch attended to. So ends this day.

Saturday, 20 January 1900

This day commences with a moderate breeze, wind from the Eastard and thick fog and rain. At 8 A.M. calm and thick fog.

At 12 noon, ditto weather.

At 4 P.M. ditto weather. Barometer 29 44 inches

At 12 midnight wind West and rain. Anchor watch and light attended to.

So ends this day.

Sunday, 21 January 1900

This day comes in with moderate Westerly wind and rain.

At 4 A.M. got sails up and hove in chain. Could not get underway on account of vessel in the way. Wind NW strong breeze.

At 10 A.M. got a towboat to tow the vessel to the windward and got underway. Wind blowing fresh. Took in single reef spanker and set it.

*Courses Winds*

ENE	NW	At 11:30 past Execution Rock with a pleasant breeze, wind NW steering a ENE course, weather fine and clear.
E $\frac{1}{2}$ N	North	At 4:30 past Middle Ground, wind North, weather fine and clear.
East	"	At 8 P.M. past Falkner Island light. At 12 midnight, past Cornfield Light Vessel.

E by S West Wind West, light breeze, all sails set. Side lights, lookout attended to. So ends this day.

Monday, 22 January 1900

E $\frac{1}{2}$ N West This day commences with fine and clear weather, light breeze, wind westerly.

At 4 A.M. past Race Rock light and at 8 A.M.

East West past Point Judith and sail up Providence River,  
NE West and at 12 Noon past Warwick light house.

At 1:30 took towboat off Greene Island.

At 2:30 anchor off coal wharf, Providence, R. I. Crew employed furling sails and clearing deck.

At 3 P.M., Captain went on shore and report. Anchor light and watch attended to. So ends this day.

The cargo was discharged in about two days and the vessel moved to a Providence shipyard (unnamed) for repairs to the ceiling (lining) of the hold and to the hatch combings. After planning the work with the boss carpenter of the yard, Capt. Coleman went home to Cotuit, leaving care of the vessel and supervision of the repairs to the mate who was paid \$20. for his cold, three-week vigil. On 2 February, the log records "ice all around vessel 5" thick." With repairs completed on 3 February, the *Garland* lay idle at her berth for ten days until another charter called her back to New York to resume her trade. Accordingly, we take up log entries beginning with 14 February.

Wednesday, 14 February 1900

This day being attended with a strong breeze, NW wind. Three sailors came on board and go to work. Received stores and clear the hold. Fenders and lines attended to. Ends this day.

Thursday, 15 February 1900

This day commences with the wind from the SSW moderate breeze. At 8 A.M. breezing up.

At 11 A.M. Captain come on board.

At 12 Noon strong breeze, wind about SSW.

At 2 P.M. took tow boat and tow out the dock and tow down the River and anchor off Pawtuxet.

At 8 P.M. wind hauled WNW strong breeze.



Anchor light and watch attended to. Ends this day.

Friday, 16 February 1900

This day commence with a strong breeze, wind NW. At 4 A.M. wind moderating.

At 7 A.M. got underway and set all sails and sailed down Providence River.

At 10 A.M. light variable wind from North to WNW.

At 11 A.M. anchor in Dutch Island harbor.

At 12 Noon calm. Remainder of this day light air and variable weather. Anchor light and watch attended to. So ends this day.

Saturday, 17 February 1900

This day commence with a light breeze, wind NE.

At 12:30 A.M., got under way and set all sails.

At 3 A.M. past Point Judith.

At 7:30 A.M. past Bartlett Light vessel, wind ENE, pleasant breeze, steering a westerly course.

At 9:30 A.M. past Falkner Island, wind NE, pleasant breeze.

At 12 Noon, past Stratford Point. Commence to snow and hauled up in the bay and anchor in three fathom of water.

At 2 P.M. thick snow storm and a moderate breeze, wind NNE.

At 6 P.M. set anchor watch.

At 8 P.M. wind hauling NW. Strong breeze and snow.

At 12 midnight, ditto weather.

Anchor watch attended to. Ends this day.

Sunday, 18 February 1900

This day commences with a strong breeze wind from the NW and a thick snow storm. Vessel laying to anchor in Bridgeport Bay in 3 fathom of water with starboard anchor and 25 fathoms of chain.

At 7 A.M., weather clearing up and turned to and clear the snow off the deck.

At 9 A.M. got under way and set all plain sails and sail up the head of the Sound.

At 4:30 P.M., past Execution Rocks.

At 5 P.M. come to anchor at City Island with starboard anchor and 25 fathoms of chain. Wind NW strong breeze, furled all sails and set anchor watch.

At 12 Midnight ditto weather. Anchor light and watch attended to. So ends this day.

Monday, 19 February 1900

This day commences with a strong breeze. Wind from the NW, clear weather. Laying to an anchor at City Island.

At 8 A.M. set Captain on shore, and

At 10:30 A.M. Captain come with tow boat. Hove up anchor and tow through Hell Gate.

At 3:30 P.M. anchor at Red Hook with starboard anchor and twenty-five fathoms of chain. Wind WNW strong breeze and cold, Barometer on 30°00.

At 5 P.M. Captain come on board.

At 7 P.M. all surrounded with drift ice.

At 12 Midnight, wind North strong breeze and vessel jammed in ice. Anchor light and watch attended to. So ends this day.





AS THESE PHOTOGRAPHS show (figures 1-5), the restoration of John Brown House is in full swing. Each piece of molding and section of woodwork was numbered prior to any investigation and then photographed. This makes it possible for the pictures to serve as a permanent record of how the room stood before work began to bring it and the side hall back to their eighteenth-century proportions and detailing. After this record was made the pieces of the woodwork that were suspected to be of a later date than John Brown's lifetime were removed for study. The nails that had been used to secure the pieces were investigated to see if they were an early type, and the color of the back of the wood, or the unpainted part, was checked to see if it had properly aged to the dark hue found after unpainted wood is in use for 180 years (figs. 3 and 4). Other signs of age and wear were also sought. Every piece removed and not found to be of an early date will be kept and perhaps used in the new wing planned for the lecture hall and museum area. For future reference the number on a piece and its presence in a photograph will make it possible to know from what exact part of the room it was taken.

To further the study of the room the layers of paint on various important parts of the woodwork were investigated since all original woodwork should have the same series of layers of colors. That is, a new piece, added about 1900, would not have as its bottom layer the same color as an earlier piece painted during John Brown's lifetime. The later pieces added by Marsden Perry have fewer coats and lack the original bottom layers found on the original woodwork.

As reported in the previous newsletter, evidence for the side hall and the twisting staircase was found, but since that letter evidence has been found for just where the staircase started and evidence for two closets at the end of the hall with doors opening into the north and south bedrooms was discovered. Also, it was found that the second floor southwest bedroom had two entrances, as above in the third floor room. A doorway, leading south from the side hall very near the main hall, was found bricked up (fig. 5).

After discovering what was originally present it then became the task of the John Brown House Committee to decide how to replace what was destroyed by later work so that the room and the side hall would have the detailing present when the House was built. This

woodwork has been designed, using other woodwork present in the room and elsewhere in the House, by the supervising architect, Irving Haynes, and the woodwork will be made up by the Mende firm, which has been working on the House since Marsden Perry acquired it and began work on it, about 1901.

This winter the recreated woodwork will be installed and the room painted to its original color. The side hall, the closets, and the doorways into the north and south rooms will be completed. Only the staircase will be left incomplete until it can continue down to the first floor, when the public dining room is available in the new wing.

Only three Rhode Island Chippendale sofas are known and two of them belonged to John Brown and were used in this House. These two sofas, one large and one uniquely small, were made in Newport, probably in the 1780s, with stop-fluted legs and a strong graceful serpentine top rail with strongly rolled arms. The smaller of the two was recently given to the Society by Mr. Norman Herreshoff, to whom both sofas descended from Sarah Brown Herreshoff; it appears on the cover of this issue. The gift of this sofa is a major step toward bringing the House back to what it can be, for this building is one of the few major architectural monuments which can be restored with so many of its original objects.

Another major addition to John Brown House is the paintings by John Smibert of Governor Joseph Wanton and his wife, Mary Wanton. These paintings have been on loan in Newport, and after the portrait of Governor Wanton returned from an important portrait show in Canada both paintings were sent to Boston to be cleaned by Morton Bradley. These paintings are now in John Brown House and hang over the larger of the John Brown sofas in the parlor. Until now there was some question as to whether the portrait of the governor was by a different hand than Smibert's. Since the cleaning it is possible to see that the brushwork and the style of painting is the same in each painting, and, in addition, it is now possible to see the landscape behind the figures. The two backgrounds are designed to form one complete unit. The sky and trees are related and a stream of water in the left portrait continues to meander onto the right-hand portrait. The paintings are not only extremely beautiful, giving the room a new power, but they are major American works of art and together form one of the main attractions of John Brown House.





FIG. 1. The 1901 Marsden Perry corridor, between the southwest and northwest bedroom, numbered prior to removal and discovery of original side hall.

FIG. 2. Detail of numbered woodwork prior to investigation.

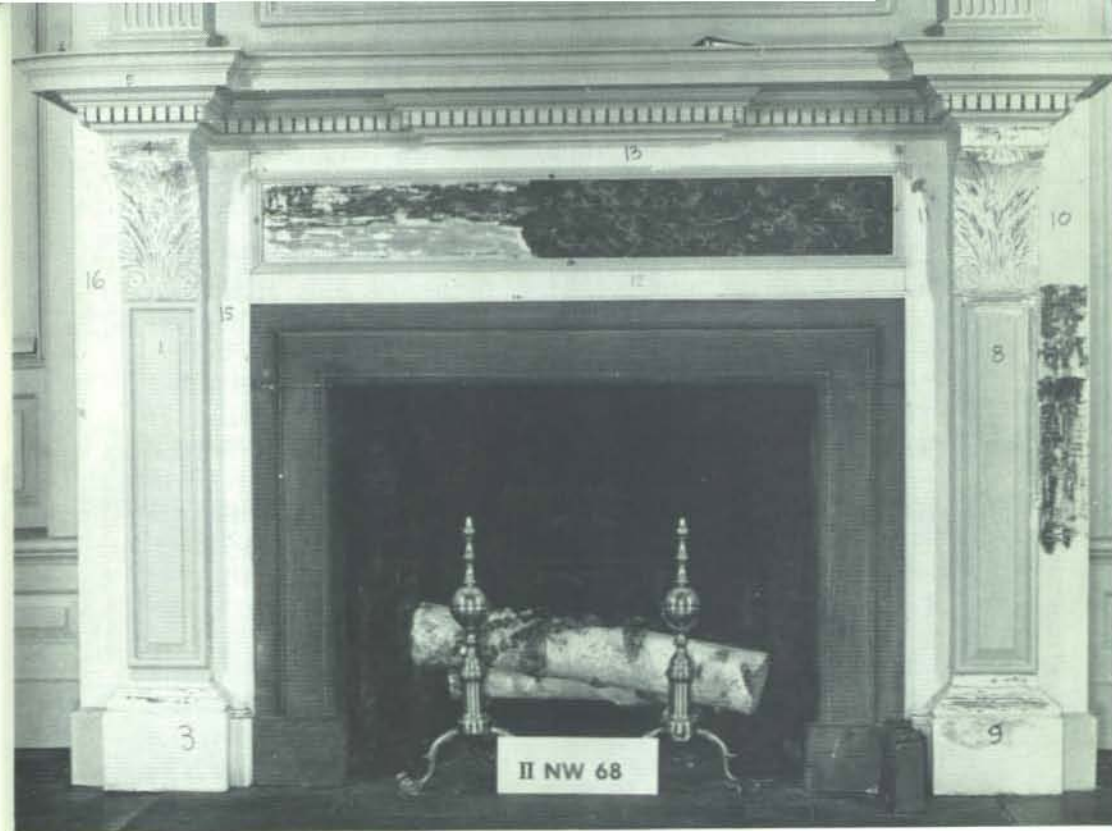


FIG. 3. Numbered fireplace with some paint study under way but Perry mantel still in place.

FIG. 4. The Perry mantel removed to seek location and shape of original mantel.

FIG. 5. Bricked up doorway, with arch support, between side hall and southwest bedroom which will be opened and fitted with proper woodwork.





The Fall lecture course, "The History of Rhode Island," given by Doctor Marguerite Appleton, began September 26th, and, as an accompanying event, the Fall excursion trip was planned to Newport to see important Rhode Island architecture, objects, and historic sites. An evening lecture course by Eleanore B. Monahan called "From Rome to Rhode Island," and based on the influence of European architecture on that of Rhode Island, has been developed for Rhode Island's educational television station, Channel 36. In addition, a television program for elementary school children on the "History of Rhode Island," is being worked out. This series will provide a course for students in fifth or sixth grade. This expansion of our educational program is part of our seeking new ways to involve the Society in the community.

Since many have requested that we repeat last Spring's course on American Furniture, I will give it as the Society's Spring offering. The course will be a survey in ten lectures of the History of American Furniture from 1630 through 1840. Most of the time slides will be used, but where possible we will study objects in this building and a suggested reading list will be provided. Although there will be a mailed announcement prior to the lecture course, anyone who is seriously interested would be well advised to make a reservation now in case we have the same response we had last year. As always, the course will be \$20 for members and \$30 for nonmembers. It will meet on Thursday mornings at 10:15 and will probably begin on February 6, 1969.

The response of members of the Society to the appeal for names of people who might become new members has been even better than anticipated. We deeply appreciate this support as this expansion will make possible new programs.

As we move into this winter I am particularly grateful to the staff of the Society who have made it possible for us to develop new areas. The Library has made important strides forward as is explained in the Librarian's letter that follows and the educational program is expanding. Plans for the lecture hall are developing and John Brown House is on the road to being one of the major American or, indeed, world restorations.

## RHODE ISLAND IMPRINTS AND IMPRESSIONS—

### A REPORT

IN A REMARKABLE RECENT COLUMN, "Perspective," which appeared in the *Saturday Review*, British historian J. H. Plumb noted the contributions made by historical society journals and described some of the attractions of local history. "Perhaps the greatest pleasure of local history is its immediacy. It brings one face to face with ordinary men and women who once walked the streets that we walk and are now dead and almost forgotten. The bundles of letters which are so frequently the core of an article in a journal of local history have a poignancy that is rarely matched. They express hopes and fears, affection, love, want, despair; in them our common humanity is bared. Written without a thought for posterity, they reveal human character as sharply as any novel."

We feel quite confident that these attractions motivated a good many of our readers who used the Library this summer. They came from nearly every community in this state as well as from twenty-one other states and two foreign countries. In the month of July, alone, we received one hundred and thirty-three readers who made over two hundred research visits. Of this group, eighty-one came in search of genealogical data; thirty sought information on some topic of local history, and twenty-two were graduate students pursuing theses in New England or Rhode Island history.

Under such circumstances considerably more transpires than a single inquiry-response situation. Frequently researchers working in similar areas have the opportunity to exchange ideas or compare sources. Just as frequently the Library's staff gains a greater insight to the contents of its own diverse collections and participates as a research clearing house. In addition the Society can look forward to a fair return on this research in the form of forthcoming articles in the issues of its journal.

Not all our energies were consumed holding the fort at 121 Hope Street. Visits in search of materials for the Library were made to Cumberland, Scituate, Warwick, Kingston, and Newport as well as around Providence. While some of the potentially most significant prospects have not yet fully matured, we can report that the Library



has been in touch with former Rhode Island governors, governmental agencies, and public and university libraries, all of whom have expressed interest in transferring historical materials concerning Rhode Island to our Library.

Of the various collections which did come in this summer, several bear notice. Mr. William G. Newell of Diamond Hill has given nearly a hundred documents relating to family and community affairs in Cumberland in the late eighteenth century. A complete archive dating back to the 1880s has been received from the Rhode Island Women's Christian Temperance Union as has the records of the A.E. Club, a local social organization with artistic pretensions who were somewhat less given to temperance enthusiasm. Two small Civil War collections were added; one purchased and one given by Mrs. Ruth Erwin of West Warwick. Recently we had an opportunity to buy a collection of several hundred architectural drawings and sketches of South County homes, schools and buildings. The drawings span the period from the late 1880s to the early 1940s. We also bought two colonial tax lists of Cranston for 1762 and 1764 as well as various letters of early nineteenth century Rhode Island political figures.

Because of the increase in the number of readers during the summer months it would have been impossible for the new librarian to tackle some of the larger projects he wished to undertake had it not been for a small but loyal band of volunteers who helped us maintain a sense of momentum and accomplishment beyond the fulfillment of routine business. Mr. John H. Wells appeared nearly every afternoon to work on various indexing projects. Mr. J. K. Ott has rearranged almost one hundred boxes of the Albert C. and Richard Ward Greene Correspondence. One or two side benefits from this work will appear in forthcoming articles. Mrs. C. K. Rathbone helped us reorganize many of the Society's own files. Miss Delores McKeough spent some of her vacation from the Warwick Public Library in making a current survey of our Rhode Island Imprint collection, and Nancy W. Klyberg of Hackensack, N.J., recataloged the Society's newspaper collection and rearranged its holdings on microfilm.

The new rules for the use of the Library which the Library Committee instituted as of July 1 have not deterred or prevented anyone from pursuing his research and have provided the staff with a little more control over the flow of books and manuscripts. Basically these

rules involve a few registration procedures and a new method for checking out books; as such they are little more than those operating standards set up by Sidney S. Rider and Amos Perry for the Society's Library when it was housed in the old Cabinet building back in the 1880s.

#### PROCEDURES FOR THE USE OF THE LIBRARY

The Rhode Island Historical Society Library perceives itself primarily as the custodian of a body of historical materials. The focus of the staff's activity is the collections, their care, their organization, their interpretation. The Library is thus a research institution, not a reference library. We assist serious inquirers; we don't conduct their research for them.

Because of the rare, scarce, or ephemeral nature of many materials we are obligated to set forth certain conditions under which the collections may be used.

1. Access to the Library is automatically extended to all members of The Rhode Island Historical Society as a benefit of their membership. Nonmembers may apply to the Librarian; permission to use the Library will normally be extended to all serious inquirers. The privilege of borrowing books, however, is strictly limited to members.

2. The books which are permitted to circulate are largely those found on the first level of the Library — namely books printed after 1860 dealing with New England state and local history and genealogical works. Other first level categories such as Rhode Island Imprints, Rhode Island Directories, Periodicals and Reference works do not circulate. By "Reference" we include not only those so designated, but such works as the publications of the Society and the vital records of the towns. The condition of an individual volume may also exclude it from circulation.

3. Books to be borrowed are charged out on a call slip found in the catalogue area. Books may be borrowed for two weeks; a fine of 25c a day will be levied for overdue books.

4. First-time readers will present themselves at the desk and fill out an index card on which will appear their name, address, telephone number, business or institution, subject of their inquiry.

5. Upon entering daily, all readers will register in the registration book in the foyer.

6. Books located on the first floor of the Library will be self-serviced on an open-shelf basis. All other works must be called for. A call slip denoting author, title, date of publication, call number, and name of reader will be filled out at the catalogue area and presented to the desk.

7. Readers will not reshelve books. Those called for from second and third



floors are to be returned to the desk; others from the main floor are to be left on the tables and reshelfed by the staff.

8. Smoking will be limited to the Library foyer and staff room.

9. Only pencil or typewriters may be used when taking notes from manuscripts or rare books.

10. Orders for photocopying are accepted. Small requests can be done on the premises for a charge of 15¢ a page and a fifty-cent service charge. Large orders must be sent out to Brown University and are subject to the photoduplication policy set forth by the Library Committee.

### NOTES FROM THE SHELVES OF THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

selected by NOEL P. CONLON

If those three are the best America can produce for candidates, I think it is on a low ebb, and I motion for more colleges to be erected, and will give a few cents to begin with to have one put up near the Stone Mill, for if we get one for President out of Rhode Island, if he has a good mind he may stick to it, if Perry like, he is obliged to pull off his coat to carry it out. But I do not think the visitors the other evening will much effect a good tree, that is well rooted in good soil, if they should blow Fremont.

F. W. Sprague, *The Governing Principles and Evils to be Avoided in the Presidential Election, A Discourse* (Providence, Published for the Author, 1856).

It came to pass thereafter that a great silence fell upon the land as of a pestilence at noon day, and the people said to one another, "Is there an election this year, or have they called it off? For it is exceeding quiet."

Albert B. West, *A Record from the Tombs of the Pharaohs* (Providence, Pen and Pencil Club, 1923).

In July, 1843, Cadet Ambrose E. Burnside entered the U.S. Military Academy with what came to be known later as "burnsides," the bushy side-whiskers which he continued to wear throughout his life. His whiskery panache is as likely to keep the General in the American pantheon as his services as soldier and statesman.

Gerald Carson, "Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow," *American Heritage*, February, 1966.

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