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Inside Front Cover

Stacks in the Library of The Rhode Island Historical Society offer a glimpse of some of the treasures gathered since the Society's 1822 beginning. These have yielded the original data concerning Rhode Island cabinetmakers and their work.

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Recent Discoveries Among Rhode Island Cabinetmakers and Their Work

by Joseph K. Ott*

It is tempting today to rationalize there is little left to discover in the field of original data on American antiques and that patient scholars have unearthed all there is to find. Happily, this is not the case. In many libraries there are quantities of manuscripts and books which shortages of time and funds have kept inaccessible.

The Rhode Island Historical Society is no exception to this situation, although efforts continue to catalog completely its vast resources. Recent work in the Albert C. and Richard W. Greene Collection, and some other sources, has revealed spectacular information, previously unknown, on Rhode Island cabinetmakers and their work. Among the thousands of bills, receipts, and other manuscripts—most of these unopened since their original folding and filing and still containing liberal amounts of blotting sand—were found the apparently complete records of the personal and household expenses of Isaac Senter, the famous Newport physician, for 1782 to 1800, and of both Albert C. and Richard W. Greene from about 1815 to 1870. Similar, though incomplete, records were found for other wealthy East Greenwich and Providence heads of households for the years 1750 to 1840: Preserved Pearce, William Arnold, Samuel Larned, and many others. These men often went to New York to buy their furnishings, and many instances of this trade were found. Their collection includes much business, legal and governmental information. Some new biographical material was also revealed.

The most interesting results of this research pertaining to the field of Rhode Island furniture appear in the following paragraphs. Apart from quoted words

and phrases, the text uses original terms with modern spelling. Thirty-four previously unlisted cabinetmakers in Newport, Providence, and East Greenwich are recorded, and new information is offered on an additional fifty-five known Rhode Island workers. The earliest known Providence "joyner," Daniel Smith, was also found in deeds of 1732 and 1734.

The chronology of Doctor Senter's furniture buying, mending, painting, etc., appears separately. It is one of the few such records to exist in the study of American antiques. Not only did Senter buy many of his things from previously unknown workers, but he used several men whose existence was known before only by an entry in a will, court record, or similar document. Thus men such as Nichols, Dunham, Gibbs, and Vickary, who had appeared only as one more name in a listing, emerge as major workers. Whether any of these, or others, could challenge the genius of the Townsends and Goddards is unknown: there is no documented furniture that would illustrate their skill. Another result has been the discovery of many bills that ran for a period of years. Thus, Senter's account with Nichols, his favorite cabinetmaker, ran from 1782 to 1800. The chief reason for this was the shortage of the actual means of payment: money or specie was scarce in the literal sense. Some bills were just carried in the books for long periods, and others settled or adjusted from time to time by the bartering of goods and/or services. Senter's ledger book shows, for instance, he balanced the cost of eight mahogany chairs from Nichols against the cost of various professional visits and prescriptions. A few of the longer-length bills are actually recapitulations of purchases over the years made necessary by the set-

*Mr. Ott is the author of *The John Brown House Loan Exhibition of Rhode Island Furniture* (Providence, 1965). He is currently cataloging and arranging collections at the Society's museum and library.



ling of the estate's debts at the time of Senter's death.

Doctor Isaac Senter was born in Londonderry, New Hampshire, in 1753; he moved to Newport at a young age, and began the study of medicine there under Doctor Thomas Moffat. His abilities led to the events in the *Journal* for which he is best known today.¹ Senter returned to Cranston, Rhode Island, in 1778 and that year married Elizabeth Arnold (also called "Eliza", and "Betsy"), daughter of Captain Rhodes Arnold. According to an early ledger he 'came to Newport' on May 28, 1780, and became its leading physician and an active citizen. He received M.D. degrees from Brown University in 1787, Yale in 1792, and Harvard in 1793. He died December 20, 1799, in Newport, leaving a wife and five children. The inventory of his estate, taken February 3, 1800, showed a total valuation of \$15,504.70. Mrs. Elizabeth Senter, his wife, was named administrator and, as such, entered

advertisements relative to the settlement of the estate in the *Newport Mercury* from January 14, 1800, to February 16, 1801 [fifty weeks], for a total billing of \$8.34. She also advertised the sale of household furniture, or that which was not willed, for eleven weeks, and other matters. Of their children, perhaps the oldest was the most interesting.

Horace Gates Senter, born in 1780, also became a doctor, and was in London on March 21, 1800, when he bought a "pair of pistols with twisted barrels, and a pound of the best powder" for 14-14-0, from H. W. Mortimer, "Gun makers to his Majesty and the Honorable East India Company." He also bought surgeon's supplies while there from J. Savigny. He was back in Newport in 1801, as he made an agreement with David Buffum for the latter's right to "sow barley on his father's lot," and in June the same year was having picture and looking glass frames gilded and burnished

¹ *The Journal of Isaac Senter, Physician and Surgeon to the Troops Detached from the American Army Encamped at Cambridge, Mass., on a Secret Expedition against*

Quebec, under the Command of Col. Benedict Arnold, in September, 1775 (Philadelphia, 1846).



Dr. Isaac Senter's portrait hangs in the hall of John Brown House gazing down on all who enter the front door. This painting was given to the Society by Mrs. John Carter Brown, a great grandchild of the famous Newport physician.

Portrait by G. P. A. Healy, courtesy of Mrs. Thomas Casey Greene. Richard Ward Greene, 1792-1875, a trustee of The Rhode Island Historical Society from 1822 to 1832, served as U. S. district attorney for Rhode Island and later as Chief Justice of the state. In conferring on him the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws in 1848, Brown University characterized him as "a typical Rhode Islander, ever watchful for the interest of his native state . . ."

Albert Collins Greene, 1791-1863, served the Society as trustee 1822-1824. The Greene collection gathered by him and his cousin Richard Ward Greene has furnished much of the source material for his article. As attorney general of Rhode Island, U. S. Senator and major general of the Fourth Brigade of the State Militia, he had a well-founded understanding of Rhode Island's place in history.

in Boston. He was in Newport in November 1802, when he bought a gold watch from David Williams for \$50 and in 1803 when he patronized Nicholas Geoffrey for the same type of item. Mrs. Senter died September 5, 1802, and on October 4 Horace petitioned to be administrator of his mother's estate, as well as for his father's.

Newport was a summer colony as well as a thriving town in the eighteenth century, and among those who came in the 1780s was John Rutledge, Jr., and his family from South Carolina. The Rutledges lived in the Dennis house, still standing and now St. John's Parish House, across the street and down a bit from the famous Hunter house. According to Mason's *Reminiscences of Newport*, there began a friendship between Horace and John that culminated in tragedy in 1804, when Rutledge killed Senter in a duel, probably in Savannah, Georgia.² One authority stated

he was killed by Barnwell Rhett, a famous duellist, but this is probably not correct. In any event, the "pistols with the twisted barrels" failed their unfortunate owner.

Other children of Isaac and Elizabeth Senter were: Charles Churchill, Edward Gibbon [also a doctor], Nathaniel Greene, Sarah Ann, and Eliza Antoinette Senter. There is a Senter family bill of the period referring to "Sally and Basheba," but just who the latter is remains unclear. A granddaughter became Mrs. John Carter Brown of Providence.

Doctor Isaac Senter's practice was an extensive one; he treated Newport's leading citizens as well as any who needed help. His medical bills, preserved by the thousands in the Greene Collection, cover a variety of treatments and operations. He extracted two teeth from Thomas Goddard for 0-3-0 on September 12, 1790, and delivered his wife of a child on March 2,

² George Champlin Mason, *Reminiscences of Newport* (Newport, R. I., 1884).

1792, for 1-8-0 (not quite half the 3-0-0 price for a mahogany urn stand bought from Walter Nichols the same year). In 1786 he delivered Newton Wilbour's wife of twins for 2-8-0, and the same amount purchased six chairs from Joseph Vickary. In July 1788, he treated Job Townsend, and Christopher Townsend made several visits to his office during 1791-1796 for a total charge of 2-8-6. Other cabinetmakers appear in the medical ledgers: Constant Bailey, Townsend and Steven Goddard, Samuel Sanford, and Edmund Townsend; in addition there were David Melvill (sic) the pewterer, and the silversmiths, Samuel Vernon and William Hooky.

His family lived a good life, with the conveniences success could bring. He bought jewelry, snuff boxes, textiles, and assorted supplies from New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Providence, and other places. His sons had dancing lessons from Joseph Martin; he had his portrait drawn and his miniature painted by Samuel King [who also did some of the painting on Senter's horse drawn chaise].

The Senter account with the Newport silversmith, Daniel Rogers, ran from 1783 to 1790 and covers silver "fluted handles Table spoones," shoe buckles, spurs, and a punch strainer among other things. From Daniel and Joseph Rogers in 1790 and 1791 came silver thimbles and sugar tongs; from James Tanner in 1798 a dozen coffee spoons with engraving "in cypher" for 3-8-0, less a credit of 1-19-0 for "old silver." Mrs. Senter in 1801 preferred a New York teapot and sugar dish from John Sayre for \$66.

Among the many others in Newport who supplied the family with the necessities of life were Stephen Deblois, 1789-1798, with brass knob locks, candlesticks, knives and forks, a cloth brush, and so on; John Arnold, 1794, with ostrich feathers; and John F. Townsend, 1801, with cobweb muslin, Irish linen, high heel morocco shoes, stick twist, Italian silk, cambric, "green Baize double fold," India cotton, broad cloth, and white flannel.

Most of the textiles, a fascinating field for exploration in itself in the collection, came from John Hadwen. In the 1787-1800 period, he supplied all sorts

of things: black Barcelona handkerchiefs, tow cloths, sattinet, velvet, buckram, "kaine greene silk," corduroy, shalloon (a sort of woolen cloth), swanskin, copper plate printed goods, and a host of other fabrics. The lists of clothing articles are too vast to be even sketched in here.

One of the more intriguing aspects of Doctor Senter's varied interests was his concern with electricity. Elsewhere we have noted Benjamin Pabodie supplied in 1789 a "frame for an electrical globe" at 1-4-0; a gudgeon for the same; and again the same year "a thing to hold a candle at the electrical wheel." Newporters must have been familiar with the phenomenon of electricity for, according to the Clock Club, William Claggett, the clockmaker, became interested in the field prior to 1746.³ He constructed an electrical machine which he exhibited in Boston as noted in the *Boston Evening Post*, 1746-1747. Amusing accounts of experiments were described, as might be expected by anyone who has felt the effects of strong static electricity. Benjamin Franklin, a friend of Claggett's, inspected this machine in Newport in 1746, and it is thought this may have led to Franklin's intensification of interest in the field.

Possibly for one of the children, Mrs. Senter bought "an electrical machine with apparatus" for \$30 from Isaac Greenwood in Providence on April 25, 1800. Exactly what these machines were is uncertain, but a wonderfully preserved machine with much "apparatus" is on view at the John Brown House, headquarters of The Rhode Island Historical Society. This equipment was originally the property of Moses Brown, one of the famous Brown brothers of Providence, and was made by W. and S. Jones of London. Various parts made and stored static electricity for a variety of effects. Moses Brown School, in addition, has several later machines of the early nineteenth century with their huge glass globes and brass knobs, some mounted in fine mahogany frames. The school, incidentally, also owns an early transit instrument and other scientific supplies.

Two anecdotes about Mr. Greenwood cannot be ignored. While he first came to Providence from

3 Albert L. Partridge, minutes of Clock Club meeting, Old State House, Boston, Mass., November 2, 1935, pp. 54-62 [mimeographed typescript, The Rhode Island Historical Society].

A yellowed scrap of paper with a famous Newport signature rewards the antiques enthusiast in his search through the Greene papers.

Newport Sept. 27, 1791
 Remind of Isaac Senter £200 & Silver Leafed money in
 full for a Mahogany Desk & Book-case in full —
 John Townsend

Boston to begin the manufacture of mathematical and optical instruments, he later practiced the "art dental, in all its parts." "On one occasion a lady came to him for a dental operation whose mouth was unusually large. On being seated to pass the painful ordeal, she opened it to its full extent, when he exclaimed, 'Madam, you need not open your mouth so wide; I shall work outside.'" And: "At one time he was considerably annoyed by the daily visits of a man who curiously examined the articles for sale, but never purchased anything, and he resolved to rid himself of one who so unprofitably taxed his time. He accordingly connected by a wire his electrical machine with an article on the counter, and having charged the instrument, awaited the coming of his troublesome friend. Punctual to the hour, his visitor appeared; and, after, as usual, examining various objects of interest, placed his hand on the fatal one, when, to his consternation, the electric shock threw him upon the floor. Upon this, Mr. G. ran hastily from the back room in which he was at work, and exclaimed with seeming solicitude, 'What is the mat-

ter? Are you having a fit?' 'I believe I am,' feebly replied the half-stunned man, and gathering himself up, left the shop. He never returned to trouble the joker."⁴

The principal interest in the Senter material is the chronology of furniture purchases, repairs, and re-finishing. Beginning in 1782 and ending with his death in 1799, one hundred and five chairs of all types were purchased. Whether the children, the servants, or living habits in general were the reasons, the repairs and mending were incredible. Over ninety-seven chairs were mended in this period and forty-three newly bottomed. Other things got in the way of clumsy feet: an urn stand purchased from Nichols in 1792 was repaired in 1795, 1796, and again in 1797. Of those chairs that were "colored and varnished" and, in the 1790s, "painted," we find a total of over one hundred six. Probably the great majority of these were Windsor chairs and perhaps bannister backs, simple types; but the list also includes mahogany chairs and, as Senter was wealthy, we can assume he had some rather good examples.

⁴ Edwin M. Stone, *Mechanics' Festival, An Account of the Seventy-first Anniversary of the Providence Association of Mechanics and Manufacturers* (Providence, 1860). See section for manufacturers 1784-1800 under "Wooden

Ware—Chairs." Additional biographical information is given about some other Providence workers, as Carlile and the Rawsons, but as it is more personal than germane to their work, it is omitted here.

THE SENTER FURNITURE CHRONOLOGY

(This chronology does not include entries for picture frames, linen wheels, loom parts, canes, odd turned articles, etc. "X" indicates lost fragment of manuscript or unknown date.)

1782

May: coloring and varnishing 12 chairs 0-16-0,

Daniel Dunham.

October: 8 mahogany chairs 13-4-0, Walter Nichols.

December: 1 Writing (Nitting?) chair 0-18-0,

Daniel Dunham.

1783

X: mahogany dressing table 3-12-0; 2 square mahogany dining tables 7-4-0, James Wallace.

April: 6 chairs 3-12-0, Daniel Dunham.

August: bottoming 2 chairs 0-4-0, Daniel Dunham.

September: 1 mahogany bedstead and 1 side saddle

8-12-0, James Ludlow. 1 writing desk 0-18-0,
James Ludlow.

November: 3 chairs 0-18-0, Daniel Dunham.

1784

February: 1 book case 2-8-0, Fones Greene.

May: coloring 1 chair 0-1-6, Daniel Dunham.

June: 1 maple writing desk and frame 2-8-0,
Walter Nichols.

September: bottoming and rockers 0-3-6, Daniel Dunham;

"mending and polishing your dinner table" 0-18-0,
Walter Nichols.

1785

September: bottoming and coloring 6 chairs 0-15-0,
Daniel Dunham; coloring and mending chairs 0-7-6,
Daniel Dunham.

October: coloring and mending 0-7-6, Daniel Dunham;
3 "three back chears" 0-12-0, Daniel Dunham.

November: a stand for a book 0-12-0, Walter Nichols.

1786

March: set of bed rails 0-3-0, John Shaw.

April: 1 bedstead 1-4-0, John Shaw.

May: 6 chairs 2-8-0, Joseph Vickary.

June: 6 dining chairs 4-0-0, Joseph Vickary.

July: mending bedstead 0-2-0, John Shaw.

August: "a new cap to your fly table" 0-4-0,
Walter Nichols.

November: "mending your stand" 0-3-0, Walter Nichols.

1787

January: 1 cheese tray 0-18-0; 1 fire screen 1-10-0,
Townsend Goddard. 1 cross legged table 0-10-6,
Job Gibbs.

March: 1 bread trough 0-10-6, Job Gibbs.

August: bottoming 4 chairs 0-6-0, Daniel Dunham.

November: 2 children's chairs 0-14-0, Joseph Vickary.

December: 1 writing stool 0-6-0, Daniel Dunham.

1788

January: 6 dining chairs 4-0-0, Joseph Vickary.

February: 1 wash stand 1-16-0, Townsend Goddard.

April: bed rails 0-3-0, John Shaw; bottoming and coloring
6 chairs 0-18-0, Daniel Dunham.

May: bottoming and coloring a child's chair 0-2-6,
Daniel Dunham.

June: coloring 7 chairs 0-7-6, Daniel Dunham.

July: mending chair 0-1-6; mending desk 0-1-6,
Walter Nichols.

August: mending and painting 6 dining chairs 1-4-0,
Joseph Vickary.

September: mending cheese tray 0-0-6; 2 mahogany
card tables 9-6-5, Townsend Goddard.

1789

January: "a frame for an electrical globe" 1-4-0,
Benjamin Pabodie.

X: "a thing to hold a candle at the electrical wheel" X,
Benjamin Pabodie.

April: bottoming 3 chairs 0-4-6, Daniel Dunham.

June: mending 2 chairs 0-5-0, Joseph Vickary.

1790

February: repairing mahogany table 0-3-0; mending the
end rails and legs of a mahogany table 0-9-0,
Walter Nichols.

X: 3 new bannisters and 4 new top rails and 1 new
stretcher 1-13-0; mending desk 0-1-6; 1 hat case 0-10-0;
mending side board table 0-1-6, Walter Nichols.

April: putting new legs and mending 2 old ones to pair
of mahogany tables 0-15-0, Walter Nichols.

June: "mending and polishing your book case" 0-12-0,
Walter Nichols.

October: bottoming and mending 9 chairs 0-13-6,
Joseph Vickary; a toilet table 0-10-6, Job Gibbs.

1791

January: 1 great chair and mending same 0-13-6, Joseph
Vickary; 8 day table clock 10-10-0, Thomas Wickham.

- June: 1 sideboard 12-0, "York currency," or \$30., Samuel Ward and Ruthess (?).
 September: mahogany desk and book case 22-4-0, "silver lawful money," John Townsend.
 October: 1 bedstead 1-4-0, John Shaw.
- 1792
 April: 8 dining chairs 4-0-0, Joseph Vickary.
 May: painting 16 chairs 1-12-0, mending same 0-4-0, Joseph Vickary.
 X: mahogany urn stand 3-0-0, Walter Nichols.
- 1793
 September: painting and mending 8 dining chairs 1-10-0, Joseph Vickary.
 December: mending the floor and mending table \$1.21, George Cornell.
- 1794
 July: repair a looking glass frame \$1.66, Samuel Sanford.
 November: mending chairs 0-4-0, Joseph Vickary; mending table and bread trough \$1.40, George Cornell.
 X: making candle mold and mending table \$1.54, George Cornell.
- 1795
 March: mending bedstead 0-4-6, Job Gibbs; putting new arm on mahogany chair 0-4-0; mahogany tea caddy 2-8-0; "going to your house to glue on beads and molding" 0-3-0, Walter Nichols.
 September: 10 mahogany oval top chairs @ 40/ and 2 same with arms @ 50/ all for 25-0-0; mending urn stand 0-1-6, Walter Nichols.
 November: 1 small chair 0-4-0; 6 chairs 2-2-0, Joseph Vickary; mending fly table 0-2-0, Walter Nichols.
 December: bottoming and coloring great chair 0-5-0; bottoming and mending 6 chairs 0-9-0, Joseph Vickary.
- 1796
 January: mending a cheese tray 0-3-0, Walter Nichols; mending bedstead \$.67, George Cornell.
 March: varnishing 6 chairs 0-6-0, Joseph Vickary.
 April: 8 new mahogany chairs \$35., at auction, Gardner and Dean auctioneers; making and mending new bedrails \$.84, George Cornell.
 July: 8 chairs 16-0-0, Walter Nichols; 6 fanback chairs 3-6-0, Benjamin and John Hammond.
 August: "putting new rails to your urn stand and repairing lace loom" 0-7-0, Walter Nichols.
 X: mending bedstead and rails \$1., mending bedstead \$.50, George Cornell.
- 1797
 February: framing a hone \$1., Samuel Sanford.
 March: mending mahogany stand 0-3-0, Walter Nichols.
 April: repairing 3 chairs 0-7-6; bottoming and mending 4 chairs 0-12-0, Joseph Vickary.
 June: 2 new front posts and front rail to a mahogany chair 0-9-0, Walter Nichols.
 July: 6 Chairs 1-16-0, Joseph Vickary.
 September: "cutting a bedstead" \$.59, George Cornell.
- 1798
 X: "putting up the clock" \$.25, George Cornell.
 November: painting and mending 9 chairs 1-11-0, Joseph Vickary.
 December: mahogany bedstead 7-10-0, Walter Nichols.
- 1799
 X: mending 2 chairs 0-9-0; mending a green chair 0-3-0; mending 2 chairs 0-4-6; "a dye for a blackgammon table" 0-0-9, Benjamin and John Hammond.
 August: "2 large draws" \$.25, George Cornell.
 November: "putting rockers to chair" 0-3-0, John Shaw.
 December: "ficksing a swing" 0-4-0; "fastning book cases" 0-3-0, John Shaw.
 December 23 (3 days after death): mahogany coffin 5-8-0, Walter Nichols.
- 1800
 May: mending 2 mahogany chairs 0-12-0, Walter Nichols.
 July: painting 16 chairs 2-8-0; mending same 0-4-0; painting 6 armchairs 0-18-0; painting and mending 3 chairs 4-8-0; all by Benjamin and John Hammond.
- 1801
 X: mending table and mahogany chair \$1.25, George Cornell.
 June: mending writing desk \$.25, George Cornell.

A variety of interesting forms were ordered: a stand for a book, a hat case, a toilet table, cheese trays, a cross-legged table, and so on. Many of these came from Walter Nichols, who seems to have been a major worker and creator of sophisticated forms. Nichols supplied Senter's coffin, expensive at 5-8-0, three days after his death. Vickary, formerly just a name in a list, seems to have been a major chairmaker. Familiar names also appear in the records: Townsend Goddard, and John Townsend, from whom Senter bought his

most expensive piece, a mahogany desk and book case, for 22-4-0 "silver lawful money."

As was customary, these men did other work and also served as merchants. Thus Daniel Dunham, in addition to making chairs, turned out a "rouling pin," knife handles, and "pudding and coffee sticks." Job Gibbs did a lot of work by the day, presumably odd jobs and general carpentering, making chairs and a large sled, and mending a wheelbarrow.

New names also appear, such as James Wallace and John Shaw. Shaw is interesting: he is an unlisted worker in Newport and a man of the same name is famous as a cabinetmaker in Annapolis, Maryland, who used chestnut for drawer linings (a rare practice in the South, but common in Rhode Island). Shaw's work for Senter began in 1782 and involved mostly beds and their parts. He also sold nails, timber, clapboards, and did day work. Senter also bought furniture at auction.

Some men, like Seth Yeates, who billed Senter for "marbleing" woodwork and painting, did carpentry work but do not qualify as makers of furniture. Yeates has one interesting entry in 1789 for painting and marking a nest of seventy drawers (probably for medical supplies).

Cabinetmakers unfamiliar in existing records sometimes appear in collections of old papers and account books, and represent men who worked in an area for a few years only, and then moved on, either to nearby small towns or to other states. It would seem the vital records of small towns in various states would yield us many more names and more information about known workers if time were available to search them all.

Cabinetmakers existed wherever people with money and need for their products existed; it is not unusual, then, for us to find new workers in East Greenwich, where part of the wealthy Greene and Arnold families lived. Of course these workers did not have the sophistication of those who lived in the cities, and their products were probably more the practical sort; they depended more on their activities as merchants and day workers as well.

Furthermore not all their customers were individuals: industry was beginning to exert its impact. In the 1790s, for instance, Samuel and Daniel Proud billed Almy and Brown, among whose varied mercantile interests were textile factories, for loom parts, spindles, turned cylinders and so on, in addition to inexpensive chairs and tables.⁵

How much the Greene Collection represents, in the Senter and Greene family records, a typical pattern of wealthy people's acquisitions is unknown. However, it is interesting to note that not until 1791 did Senter buy furniture outside the state; a sideboard from New York possibly comments on the theory that Newport work began a downward trend about this time. After 1800 there is an acceleration in imported articles of furniture for the families. Curiously, Boston or Massachusetts is seldom if ever mentioned in these records, at least regarding cabinetmaking, and this also comments in part on why Rhode Island furniture often has more in common with that of New York than with its immediate neighbors.

The manuscript sources used for this article, in bringing to light new workers in Providence, also help document the theory that a great deal more fine furniture was made in Providence than previously thought. Nicholas Easton, previously unlisted, charged 3-0-0 for a mahogany fly table; the same price was charged by John Goddard for a similar piece, and this fine table is shown in Carpenter's *Arts and Crafts of Newport*.⁶ Easton must have been capable of quality work. A "fly table" is generally one with three legs.

In the Senter records there is one unusual omission; no reference to purchasing or repairing chests or bureaus can be found. As these were important items in any household (things were stored flat more than hung), there must be an explanation: it seems unlikely just the bills relating to these forms could have been lost over the years. We know the family had them: they are listed in the inventory of Senter's estate at the end of this article.

A clue can be found by examining the valuations. An easy chair, a marble side board, and a high case of drawers (a "highboy" today) are listed at rather

5 Almy and Brown Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

6 Ralph E. Carpenter, Jr., *The Arts and Crafts of Newport, Rhode Island, 1640-1820* [Newport, 1954], p. 107.

low prices; this may indicate they were quite old, out of style, and were brought with the family's furnishings when they moved from Cranston in 1780. As they were valued possessions, they were treated carefully. The household records prior to 1782 cannot be found. Incidentally, the inventory of furniture leads one to believe the Newport house, while large, still must have been a rather crowded one, and the thinly-furnished look we think correct today might not have applied to Senter's house.

We do find references to upholstering: in May 1786, Senter paid 2-2-0 "to stuffing easy chair" to John Williams. In April 1789, he paid 6-0-0 "to covering 8 chair bottoms;" in May 1789, 5-0-0 "to stuffing a sofa;" and in April 1796, 1-4-0 "to covering 2 chairs;" all to Robert Stevens of Newport. Senter also purchased swansdown (by the yard) from merchants, and lots of fabrics in units of $4\frac{1}{2}$, $5\frac{1}{2}$, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ yards, but whether these were for upholstering or clothing and bed purposes is unknown. Certainly things like chest locks, "escutions," brass handles, and the like were purchased from men like A. Carpenter, for home repairs. As in 1788 Townsend Goddard charged 9-6-5 for a pair of mahogany card tables, it would seem upholstering, at least by "specialists," was comparatively expensive and infrequently done.

How much Senter's records reflect "keeping up with the Joneses" is another difficult point to establish. Presumably, as with the 10 mahogany oval top chairs, with 2 armchairs, purchased from Nichols in 1795 for 25-0-0, the family decided to install the newest styles. These were probably Hepplewhite designs with shield backs. The increasing references to "painted" chairs in the 1790s, as opposed to the earlier "colored and varnished," makes one wonder if these could be merely windsors and simple chairs or perhaps the Sheraton and Hepplewhite-inspired painted side or fancy chairs similar to the famous Derby family group in Massachusetts. One regrets the taciturn nature of the account books and bills that mention only the bare essentials of the transactions—something to be expected of Rhode Islanders, but not helpful to us today.

More helpful is the occasional bill in which amounts are mentioned in both pounds and dollars. Thus, in the 1790s in East Greenwich, and probably in Providence, and in 1800 in Newport, we can make the following conversion table:

£ 1	= \$3.32	And, of course	
1 shilling	= \$.166	£ 1	= 20 shillings
1 pence	= \$.014	1 shilling	= 12 pence

Old customs die hard, and bills were still totalled in pounds (and sometimes in units like "93 shillings") long after others had begun using dollars.

Interesting also is the use of the term "greene chairs" in the papers. These referred to windsors, as green was the favorite color for such items. "Bannister backs" also appear frequently throughout the period and these were probably varieties of the well-known styles of chairs. And in Rhode Island, it seems, the original term was "high case of drawers," not "high chest of drawers," for what we call a high-boy today. Eighteenth and early nineteenth century terminology is an appealing subject, and sometimes its study can solve or further complicate mysteries in furniture research. A case in point involves the description of the chairs illustrated in Figures 1, 2, and 3.

The inventory of Mrs. Elizabeth Senter's estate, taken December 10, 1802, includes "2 Mahog^y Loll^s Chairs with Copper plate covers," and matching window curtains in the parlor, and was first shown by Charles Montgomery in his superlative *American Furniture, the Federal Period*, in the chapter on "Martha Washington, or 'Lolling Chairs' ".⁷ As the Senter records include the purchases of this Mrs. Senter (Isaac's widow, not Horace's, as in Montgomery) through 1802, and no such chairs seem to have been bought, and also as "2 lolling chairs" appear in Senter's inventory, it would seem likely the two chairs had been in the family for some time. What were they like?

There is reason to believe the term "lolling chair" did not come into use until about the turn of the century and, indeed, referred to the type we call "Martha Washington" chairs today. Nowhere in Senter's accounts (or in others' of the period in Rhode



1.



2.



2a.



3.



3a.

Fig. 1. Mahogany arm chair, Newport, 1775-1785, illustrated as the frontispiece in *Antiques*, August, 1956. Formerly in the Dwight M. Prouty Collection, it previously had casters and the front legs exposed all the way to the arm supports. Height 38". Courtesy of the Shelburne Museum, Inc., Einats Mengis, Staff Photographer.

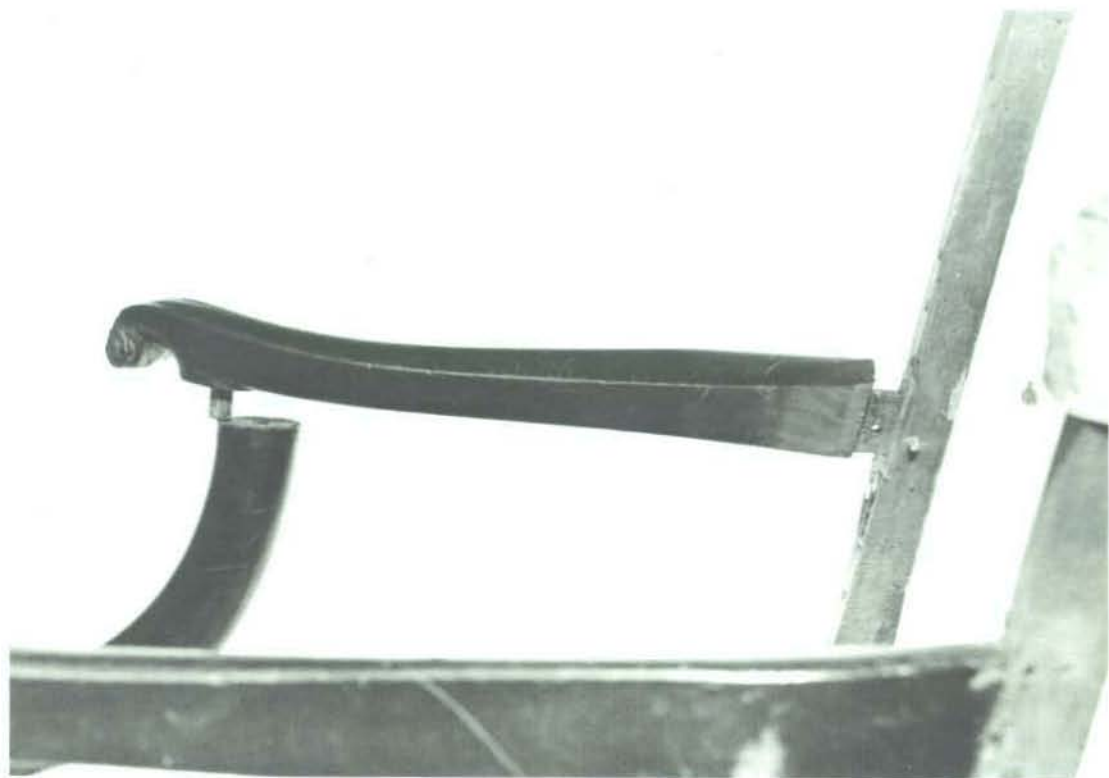
Fig. 2. Mahogany arm chair, Newport, 1775-1785, with one arm detached to show method of construction. Found with Fig. 3, and similarly upholstered from the back. Maple frame and original pine corner blocks. Height, including casters, 44". Collection of the author.

Fig. 2a. Back of Fig. 2, showing nail marks.

Fig. 2b. Detail of Fig. 2, showing arm construction.

Fig. 3. Mahogany arm chair, Newport, 1775-1785, with over upholstered arms and closed sides, with front of arm supports exposed. Made in the same shop as Fig. 2 and probably Fig. 1. The "bandages" are rolls of early seat webbing. Height, including casters, 43 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Collection of the author.

Fig. 3a. Back of Fig. 3, showing back of arm supports and original method of upholstery.



2b.

Island before about 1790) do we find this specific term to my present knowledge. In the time the chairs were made, they were probably known by different names or, perhaps just billed the customers as simply "chairs."

It is still conjecture that the chairs illustrated in Fig. 2 and 3 were Senter's; it is possible, though, they were similar to what Senter owned. The rarity of the forms, and Senter's use of men so unfamiliar to us today might provide an insight. Daniel Dunham's bill for 3 "three back chairs" in October 1785, for 0-12-0, is curious; this might be just an odd term, or may relate to the term "back stools," referring to upholstered back and seat chairs. One could also guess Dunham referred to some sort of simple settee (for the doctor's waiting room, or did they have them in those days?). The price was low, but one also had to remember chairs such as those illustrated had only the exposed frame mahogany and finish, and stop fluted legs were cheaper to make than cabriole styles. Dunham also supplied 2 arm chairs to Senter prior to May 1782, as the transaction is mentioned in one of Senter's medical ledgers, but with no details given.

The mahogany chair in Fig. 1, owned by the Shelburne Museum, belonged to Dwight Prouty, a pioneer collector, when it was illustrated in Morse's *Furniture of the Olden Time*.⁸ The front legs were exposed all the way to the arm supports, as are those in Fig. 2 and 3, and the casters painted out in the picture. The date is given quite specifically as 1785. The chair was sold in the mid-1920s by John Wanamaker's in New York, and illustrated in their catalog with casters apparently similar to those in Fig. 2 and 3, dated as 1785, and with upholstery described as original (and exactly the same as shown in Morse). The front legs, of course, were still exposed for their whole length. The chair was also pictured in detail as the frontispiece of *Antiques* (August 1956), in which it was called unique, probably because of the bird arm terminals. It differs from the other two chairs in the flat crest rail, the elaborate terminals, and a deeper seat rail. There is, unfortunately, no photographic record of the underframe before it was

acquired by Shelburne in its reupholstered state.

Apart from these details, the chair is strikingly similar to those in Fig. 2 and 3; the originality of construction and design, the use of 4 flutes only on the legs, and the dimensions of the base, all point to the same shop or maker. Both the upholstered chairs illustrated were probably made at the same time; both are mahogany, with maple frames, pine crest rails fastened with glue and 2 large nails, and original pine triangular corner blocks. The notched lower back rail in the open arm chair is oak and probably not original.

Analysis of the casters is difficult, as few comparable examples exist. They are all the same, and made with brass, iron, and wood. They are well placed, with no height irregularities, and the bottom of the legs show fine saw marks, but no wear. The height of the seat rails, 14⁷/₈" (including the casters, which add about 1³/₈") is rather low, but not unusual on upholstered arm chairs of the period. Casters are frequently found on such chairs in the 1790-1820 period, and perhaps the best explanation is that the legs were cut down on all 3 chairs and casters added by a cabinetmaker about 25 years after the chairs were made. The Greene Collection had several references to such occurrences. Dating the chairs is difficult, also, and a range of 1760-1790 is possible; but 1775-1785 would seem about right.

The open chair in Fig. 2 with its scrolled terminals has the arms dowelled into the supports (as illustrated, with one arm detached); while the other has its upholstered arm dovetailed into the support. Both chairs were always upholstered with the nails on the back of the frame, probably to give a thinner silhouette. The "bandages" on the frame are rolls of the original (or very early) webbings. The chairs in Fig. 2 and 3 have subtle differences in the shaping of the crest rail and lower part of the arm supports.

The most unusual feature of the closed arm chair in Fig. 3 is shown in the detail of the back of the arm support. Apparently as the chair neared completion and the supports roughed out, the maker or future owner decided to upholster not only the arms

8 Frances Clary Morse, *Furniture of the Olden Time* (New York, 1902), p. 202.

themselves but to continue the fabric down to the frame. It would then be like an easy chair, but without "wings" and similar to #170 in Montgomery; it had, however, the front part of the arm supports exposed, as can be seen by the tack holes along the sides of the supports. This is quite a unique treatment in American furniture. The reasons why two such otherwise similar chairs would have such a difference perhaps lies in the theory, offered not entirely in jest by Mr. Knut Ek, Providence cabinetmaker and authority on Rhode Island furniture, that they were "his and hers" chairs. The chairs were acquired together, and show every evidence of having been together since made. They descended in a family with many Newport roots; among them the Sheffields, whose connections with the work of John Townsend are well known.

These three chairs are the only stop fluted leg upholstered back arm chairs of Rhode Island origin known to exist to the author. Yale's Garvan Collection owns a more sophisticated lolling chair with tapered stop fluted legs and arm supports, illustrated inside the cover in *Antiques* (October 1938), but this belongs to the later period of 1795-1810. The chairs also illustrate a rare transitional style between Chippendale arm chairs of the mid-eighteenth century and the "Martha Washington" designs of after 1790.

FURNITURE TRADE WITH NEW YORK

We have noted that Rhode Island furniture often resembles more that of New York than of Massachusetts and, that at least in the Senter and Greene papers, wealthy buyers went to the former to buy rather than the latter.

Venture cargo moved to New York in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was sold either to merchants, agents for individual buyers, or at auction. Auctions then, as today, were not limited to the sale of used or distress goods, but included much new merchandise. These new goods might have been very saleable or, as Caleb Greene of Newport advised Daniel Lamson of Hartford on April 6, 1809, " . . . whether it would not be best to select 1 or 2000 dollars worth

of your most unsaleable goods and take them to New York and sell them at auction or otherwise and invest the amount in new goods . . . Looking glasses will sell best in New York."

Furniture also moved in the reverse direction. Thomas Howard of Providence, for one, sold chairs and other articles imported from New York and New Jersey. He was sole agent for chairs and settees made by Tunis and Nutman of Newark.⁹ Buyers went from Rhode Island to examine and bring back things they liked. Some detailed invoices in the trade follow, with the New York seller's name shown first. Most of the entries are not shown in Ethel Hall Bjerko's *Cabinetmakers of America*,¹⁰ but this may reflect they were merchants more than makers.

Bertine, James. New York. Dean Sweet purchased 15 Windsor chairs for 5-5-0 in May 1792. Though Bjerko lists Bertine as in New York from 1790-1797, the position and character of this bill in the Greene papers seem to indicate a possible Rhode Island location on this date.

Carmer, Nicholas. New York. An account book of the merchant George Whipple of North Providence, owned by the Institute of Early American History and Culture and microfilmed by Colonial Williamsburg, Inc., shows 16 desks (3 of which were maple) and 1 chair sent to Carmer in 1764 and 1765 by Captains Chace and Hawkins, and by William Jones. Three riding chairs were also shipped.

"Riding chairs" probably referred to hand-carried forms, like sedan chairs, sometimes used in New York, the South, and elsewhere. It is interesting that Henry Chace lists 2 men in Providence, Nathaniel Frothingham and Richard Seaver, as "chaise makers" in 1770. Both worked on the south side of Broad Street and probably made a variety of conveyances.¹¹

Carter, Robert. New York. Not in Bjerko. Thomas Arnold bought 8 mahogany chairs for 32-0-0 in 1797, and another Arnold bought 2 mahogany card tables for 8-10-0 in May 1799.

Carter and Burling. New York. Bjerko lists only the well known Thomas Burling. Steven Arnold bought 2 looking glasses and a "rough case" for 14-10-0 in May 1797.

Chass, Charles. New York. Not in Bjerko. William Arnold bought 2 dozen "Fancy gilt chairs" @ 17/ for \$51., 1 dozen

⁹ *Providence Gazette*, April 3, 1813.

¹⁰ New York, 1957.

¹¹ Henry R. Chace, comp., *Houses in Providence 1770 in the compact part of the Town with their Location, Occupation, and Taxes assessed their owners, with a map showing the highways in use* [1905]. MS., The Rhode Island Historical Society.

green windsor chairs for \$11.25, and 6 black windsors for \$5.25, all in 1808. An East Greenwich account book lists "Charles Chass bill for chairs—\$42.," under the customer Alice Arnold, along with a bill of Thomas Howard of Providence.

Drown, Fredrik. Albany. In the George Whipple account book above, a desk was sent to Drown and there are entries for "freight to 'Alboney'" as well as to New York and back in 1765.

Fredericks, Charles. New York. Not in Bjerko. Samuel Larned bought 2 dozen fancy chairs with cane seats for \$84. and a dozen windsor chairs for \$16.50 in November 1827.

Hoffman and Glass. New York. Not in Bjerko. Albert Greene bought a chest of drawers for \$9. in May 1812.

Meeks, Joseph. New York. John L. Larned bought for Samuel Larned (who repaid him on his return to Rhode Island) 1 pair "Pier tables with marble pillars and slabs" for \$120. in October 1827.

Platt, Isaac L. New York. Not in Bjerko. Samuel Larned bought 2 gilt framed looking glasses and "a box for the same" for \$51.12 in October 1827. These mirrors, with the pair of pier tables from Meeks referred to above, must have been an impressive *ensemble*, and beyond anything available in Providence at the time. It is interesting to note that Greene and Larned bought either in May or October in New York: these must have been their shopping months there. A label of Platt's is illustrated in *Antiques* [December 1966, p. 776].

Taberle, Jacob. New York. Not in Bjerko. An unknown buyer bought 2 card tables for 8-10-0 and 2 mats for 0-3-0 in May 1799.

Vindethill, Franklin. New York. The George Whipple account book above lists riding chairs being sent via Capt. Chace in November 1764. It might be noted here that the account book lists furniture and riding chairs only in the first few years of the period 1764-1814; general merchandise was carried throughout the period. The only other references in Whipple's book pertaining to furniture record sale of locks, hinges, and nails to Phillip Potter, and of "chizzils," a drawing knife, etc., to William Proud, both Providence cabinetmakers.

Ward, Samuel, and Ruthless (t). New York. Not in Bjerko. Dr. Isaac Senter bought a sideboard for "12-0 York currency," or \$30 and some textiles in July 1791. The receipt for payment was signed in Newport.

Rhode Island merchants also purchased quantities of furniture hardware (locks, hinges, escutcheons, etc.) from New York. With this inter-shipment of cabinet-work, it becomes easier to see how similarities in design would develop and craftsmen would copy pleasing forms and details, developed elsewhere.

How useful the Greene Collection can be in the study of Rhode Island furniture can be judged from the preceding; certainly in the case of the Senter papers the contribution is apparent. The Society, however, is rich in other sources of information. Day Books, ledgers, and journals are another largely untapped field for research.

WILLIAM BARKER'S ACCOUNT BOOKS

Perhaps some of the most interesting account books in the Society's collections examined to date are those of William Barker of Providence. One was first mentioned in *The John Brown House Loan Exhibition of Rhode Island Furniture*;¹² 4 others have since been located that extend the career of this active worker from 1750 to 1797. Throughout this period he sold various necessities: sugar, potatoes, salt, veal, shoes, canes, axe handles, brooms, pewter spoons, logs of wood and even arranged for the use of a "horse and shay" when needed.

His furniture customers among Providence cabinet-makers represent an impressive list, mostly in the 1760s: William Brown, John Carlile, Gershom Carpenter, Job Danforth, Richard Godfrey, Recompense Healy, Thomas Healy, Benjamin Hunt, Joseph Martin, and Phillip Potter, among others. These men bought mainly chairs, mostly bannister backs; chair parts; and assorted turned articles and parts for other types of furniture. One could think a cabinetmaker might have bought chairs for his own home use, but in some instances there are records of so many chairs being bought (Senter's numerous purchases in this department to the contrary notwithstanding) that one is tempted to believe some men, like Potter, resold the articles along with their own production.

Barker must have been a good worker; not only did he supply other makers, but he sold furniture to

12 Joseph K. Ott, *The John Brown House Loan Exhibition of Rhode Island Furniture* [Providence, The Rhode Island Historical Society, 1965], hereafter cited JBH.

the leading citizens of the town as well. We can identify these men at least as some of the most affluent in the "compact part of Town" from their tax assessments in 1770.¹³ The four Brown brothers, John, Joseph, Nicholas, and Moses, were each assessed, with Nathan Angell and Joseph Russell, at between £11 and £14. Mr. Chace added the notation after Jenckes' name: "30 years in the General Assembly." In all fairness it should be noted Jenckes was also a merchant and had other interests which produced his wealth.

An entry for Joseph Brown in 1762 reveals Barker may have been more than a turner and chairmaker: there is a bill "to a 4³/₄ [feet] table 43-6-8," and "to a case of drawers untrimmed 45-0-0." On the whole, however, Barker has few references to tables and non-chair forms. Moses Brown bought 2 chairs "for a child," as well as a low chair. John Brown bought only ordinary household articles.

Obadiah Brown, the uncle, has the most intriguing entry, buying in 1762 "6 chares colt feet 45-0-0." What are "colt feet?" It is unlikely they were the hoof types found in English furniture. As the price was higher than for Barker's regular chairs, they must have been a little special. The feet of early "Hudson Valley type" chairs resemble those of 2 curly maple tea tables of Rhode Island origin, #227 in Comstock's *American Furniture*¹⁴ and another inside the cover of *Antiques* (December 1932). These have straight round legs ending in simple pad feet; in the case of the tables, especially, the pad is small and crude, and over a rather large ball, the result looking not unlike a colt's foot. In other tables of this sort the ball may be mostly worn off. This type of leg and foot could well be the work of primarily a turner as opposed to a cabinetmaker, and might be "colt feet." They could also refer to Spanish feet, which are not uncommon. Some of Barker's other customers were Jabez Bowen, Nathan Angell, Knight Dexter, and Charles Sweet.

These account books may not be the complete story, but perhaps we can infer that in the 1750s Barker sold primarily chair parts and turnings to other makers; in the 1760s and early 1770s the same items

as well as finished furniture to other makers and private buyers; and from 1780 on was more of a merchant than furniture maker. He continued to mend and bottom chairs, as in 1794 he repaired a rocking chair for Welcome Arnold. He was getting older, of course, and times were changing.

In the early period, there seem to be 5 categories of chairs in the Barker account books:

- 1 "Grete chares" were the most expensive, and always sold for about 12-0-0. The term "great chair" was used apparently throughout the last half of the eighteenth century, in both Providence and Newport, as well as even earlier in other parts of New England. Some authors seem to consider it synonymous with an "easy chair" ("wing chair" today). "Easy chairs" also appear in Rhode Island records of this period. But as Rhode Island easy chairs are extremely rare today, and as the entries for great chairs seem so numerous, it seems likely the latter is a different form altogether. Just what is unclear: perhaps the former was a generic term for a fine example of, say, a bannister back. The fact that such chairs were 250% more expensive than any other type listed must mean more work was involved. There are references to "mahogany grete chares" in inventories of the eighteenth century to complicate things further. Even more confusing is the bill of John Williams to Christopher Champlin of Newport in 1784 "to bottoming and stuffing 2 Grete Chairs" 2-8-0.¹⁵ As in 1787 he billed Senter 2-2-0 to stuff an easy chair,¹⁶ the difference in price must indicate less work was needed than for an easy chair.
- 2 "Low chares" averaged about 5-0-0, and probably were similar to what are called "ladies" or "slipper" chairs, perhaps of the type shown as #10 in *The John Brown House Loan Exhibition of Rhode Island Furniture*, or simpler.
- 3 "Little chares" ran from 1-15-0 to 4-0-0, and may have been for children, such as those Moses Brown purchased from Barker. Small Windsor chairs are found today, for instance, along with other types.
- 4 "Bannister backs" ran about 5-0-0 to 6-0-0, and were probably traditional forms.
- 5 "Chares," without further qualification, also ran about 4-0-0 to 5-0-0, and are a mystery, although perhaps the same as some of the above types.

¹³ Chace.

¹⁴ Helen Comstock, *American Furniture, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Century Styles* (New York, 1962).

¹⁵ Christopher Champlin Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

¹⁶ See earlier references to upholstery.

During the last week of Barker's life, Dr. Pardon Bowen made daily visits, but the long and productive career was over: John Carlile supplied the coffin on February 10, 1798.¹⁷

The prices in Barker's books show the inflated currency of the 1760s, compared with that of Isaac Senter's time. A very rough comparison would indicate a chair of Barker's costing 5-0-0 would be about 10-12 shillings in the 1780s, or perhaps 1/10th the price (for the same type of item).

The gathering of information on Rhode Island makers, from account books, the Greene Collection, and other sources, is summarized below. Unless otherwise noted, the data is from the Greene Collection. Many other references to furniture exist that are not included here as they are of no special significance, other than the listing of certain forms at certain prices by known workers. All references to Bjerkoe, the Garrett articles,¹⁸ and *JBH* in footnotes indicate information additional to that which follows.

SUMMARY: NEW NOTES ON
RHODE ISLAND CABINETMAKERS

(An asterisk before a name indicates he was previously unlisted as a cabinetmaker or chairmaker.)

Allen, R. (Rhodes?) G. May 4, 1818, "to meaking one desk \$7.50," for R. W. Greene. Also repairs, etc. Providence.

*Bacon, Henry. In 1770 listed as chairmaker, south side of Broad Street, Providence. Taxed at 1-30-0.¹⁹

*Bardine, Benjamin. On Oct. 10, 1792, billed William Arnold for: mending a "fire board"; 3 fluted high post bedsteads; candle stands; 3½ and 4 foot cherry tables, and "penbrook" tables. In 1796 a merchant's account book, under the customer "Lydia Greene," lists "1 bureau of Bardine" 3-12-0; in 1797, under "Hannah Greenleaf," 1 "fluted bedstead of Bardine" 2-2-0, etc.; in 1799, under "Miss Updike," 2 3½ foot cherry tables at 4-4-0, 1 "Pembroke" cherry table 1-16-0, and 1 candle stand 0-12-0; and the same year under "Phebe Cooch," 2 4 foot tables 4-16-0, and a "pembroke" table and candlestand at the regular prices. Other bills as late as 1818 indicate Bardine was active as a merchant, but perhaps less active as a maker.

A bill to Samantha Cornell receipted in 1843 may be that of this worker or one of the next generation.²⁰ East Greenwich.

*Bardine, Benjamin and George. On an unknown date, but probably in the 1790s, billed William Arnold "to making cherry buro for Lydia" 3-12-0, a 3½ foot cherry table 2-2-0, and "to fitting up old desk for Stephen" 1-0-0. East Greenwich.

*Bardine, Comfort. Billed Jabez Whipple on March 17, 1767 "to fore fore foot tables cast up" 180-0-0, to "two three foot and half cast up" (tables) 80-0-0; and one writing desk at 20-0-0, but this last sale was apparently cancelled.²¹ The phrase "cast up" appears in other bills: there is no certain meaning to my knowledge at present. In 1770 listed as a "shop joyner," Stampers Hill [old name for Constitution Hill near corner of Benefit and No. Main Sts.], Providence, taxed at 0-6-0.²² In 1772 he and his wife Chloe sold a lot of land to Whipple.²³

Blake, Judson. On July 29, 1819, billed R. W. Greene for a mahogany bureau \$24, and in Dec. for a small pine table at \$1.50; in 1820, for a "bedstead with foot board" \$11.; in 1821 for various articles; and in 1824 for a "small desk for office" \$2.50 and other work. In 1822 billed Timothy Green for one "Grecian Sopha" \$65.²⁴ Providence. Extends dates in Bjerkoe and Garrett.

Bradford, N. and L. On Feb. 4, 1840, billed R. W. Greene for a cane seat rocking chair for \$4.75, and a similar item later in July. Listed in *Providence Directory* with the notation "chairs and woodenware," but whether as maker or merchant is uncertain.

Brown, David. On March 16, 1846, repaired a desk and bedstead for R. W. Greene. Listed as "cabinetmaker" in *Providence Directory* to 1853. Extends date in Bjerkoe and Garrett.

Brown, William. In 1770 listed as "shop joyner," east side of Main St., Providence, "a small snug house and barn," taxed at 0-6-0.²⁵ Extends date in Garrett.

*Bruce, John S. 1784-1800, Providence, chairmaker.²⁶

Burnard, H. Billed A. C. Greene for painting 12 chairs "curled maple" \$9. and "bronzing lamp stands" in March 1834. Listed as "painter" in *Providence Directory*, so unlikely a maker.

Burr, John. Billed A. C. Greene for 6 chairs in 1831 for \$4. Listed in *Providence Directory* as "auctioneer," so unlikely a maker.

These are the most recent and accurate listings to date on the subject.

19 Chace.

20 Rufus Spencer Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

21 Whipple Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

22 Chace.

17 Almy and Brown Papers.

18 Wendell D. Garrett, "Providence cabinetmakers, chairmakers, upholsterers, and allied craftsmen, 1756-1838," *Antiques* (October 1966).

_____ "The Newport cabinetmakers: a corrected check list," *Antiques* (June 1958).

**Capron, William*. On Sept. 18, 1824, billed A. C. Greene for "1 cherry coffin for child, box to enclose same in" \$3.; in 1825 for mending a table and sled; in 1826 for glueing a sideboard and clock case, making a cake board, and mending windows; in 1826 for making a "spit box" \$17, a bedstead \$2., and a coffin for Mrs. A. C. Greene \$9., and various repairs. In 1830 billed estate of Christopher Greene for a cherry coffin \$12. Probably East Greenwich.

Carlile, John. An account book of William Megee shows he sold John Francis on Oct. 13, 1791, "one small plain Side Board made by Mr. Carlile cost \$20.," for 6-0-0 (actually at cost). Billed William F. Megee on Feb. 16, 1801, for one 4 foot dining table 3-18-0; on April 2 for a large cherry pembroke table 2-8-0; on Oct. 19 for a mahogany chair 3-0-0; and on Jan. 18, 1802, for a cabriole sofa 10-10-0.²⁷ While there are very few references to the Carliles as cabinetmakers, there are many instances of their bulk lumber sales in the manuscripts consulted. Providence.²⁸

Carpenter, Gershon. In 1770 listed as "shop joyner," west side of Water St., Providence, "a snug house and store, new wharf, a work shop," taxed at 0-14-0.²⁹

Carr, N. and Co. On Oct. 24, 1854, billed R. W. Greene for a "marble back Board on Washstand" \$5.75; in 1857 and 1858 billed Greene for house and furniture repairs. Providence. Extends date in Garrett.

**Cary, John*. In 1770 listed as chairmaker, south side of Weybosset St., Providence.³⁰ In November, 1781, billed Jeremiah Burlingame "to 6 three back chairs" 1-16-0.

Church and Sweet. Billed R. W. Greene on April 10 1822, for making a fire board \$1.; on Jan. 15, 1824, for "work on shower bath" \$1.35; on Jan. 28, 1824, for making a stool \$50; on June 10, 1824, for "putting up shower bath" \$50; in June 1825, for "fixing shower bath" \$50; on April 7, 1826, for making a stool \$50; in 1828 for building and repairing a book case and a stool; and throughout period did carpentering and odd jobs. By 1848 became "Sweet and Carpenter," and did same work. Probably not a cabinetmaker, but interesting for all the work on "shower baths," whatever they might have been. East Greenwich.

Burdon and Clarke. Billed Timothy Green on July 21, 1821, for a pair of card tables with casters \$45., a mahogany bureau \$20., a "Grecian breakfast table with casters" \$20., and two wash stands for \$4.50 and \$3.; on Sept. 7, 1821, for a mahogany work table with casters \$9., and a mahogany dining table \$13. This firm evidently split up within

2 years with each man in business for himself from then on. Providence.³¹ Extends dates in Bjerkoie and Garrett.

**Cleveland, G. and D.* A partnership of George and David formed about 1832. Were making and repairing furniture for "Mrs. Jones" and R. W. Greene in 1838 and 1840. In 1840 changed name to "Cleveland and Brother," and continued in this trade until at least 1870, in later years quite actively. Providence.³²

Cook, Caleb C. Jan. 27, 1827, "1 Grecian table \$23.," 1 cherry book case \$17.50; round table \$7.50; and in 1828 a "mahogany wardrobe \$30.," all to R. W. Greene. In 1839 name apparently changed to Cook and Greene; 1 sofa \$40.50; 1 mahogany bedstead \$25.; sideboard \$38.; 2 large glass cases \$100.; 1 cherry table \$5., together with mending, mattresses, etc., all to Samuel Larned in 1840. Providence. Extends dates in Bjerkoie and Garrett.

Cornell, George. Entries from 1786 through 1801 to account of Dr. Isaac Senter and his estate are detailed under "Senter Furniture Chronology" and cover mending tables, beds, and chairs; day work; and general repairs. Receipted by George Cornell in July 1802. In 1784 received of Senter 3-0-0 in part payment of a "nest of medicine drawers" which may be those painted by Seth Yeates and mentioned above. Newport. As working dates and settlement date conflict with Garrett's Newport check list,³³ he may be a different worker from George T. Cornell, or date in Garrett may be misprinted.

Cornell, George T. In 1765 billed Christopher Champlin for: making a fireboard 4-0-0; one "tylite" [toilet?] table 8-0-0; one child's chair 6-0-0; one kitchen table 30-0-0; a stove frame, mending, and various other items such as 35 candle boxes for 52-0-0 total.³⁴ Entries from 1782 to 1790 to account of Dr. Isaac Senter's estate include a tape loom, boot jack, "a spout for the sink," wheelbarrow, etc., and payable to the "estate of George T. Cornell, Deceased." Receipted in Newport, Oct. 24, 1801, by "George Cornell," and another man, possibly administrators of his estate.

Curry, Aaron B., and Sons. By 1857 was furniture dealer and carried wide line. Sold to R. W. Greene then and later. Firm later became Curry and Richards, then Curry, Richards and Anthony. Providence. Extends dates in Garrett.

Danforth, Job. On July 23, 1771, billed Lawrence Calley "to a double headed desk-cast" 3-0-0; and on August 14, 1772, for 2 bedsteads 1-10-0. On Aug. 18, 1774, billed Reuban

23 Whipple Papers.

24 Benjamin Harris Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

25 Chace.

26 Stone.

27 Nightingale and Jenckes Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

28 Bjerkoie; Garrett.

29 Chace; Garrett; *JBH*.

30 Chace.

31 Benjamin Harris Papers.

32 Garrett.

33 Garrett.

34 Christopher Champlin Papers.

Potter for a sea chest 0-15-0 and a four foot table 1-10-0, and on Dec. 5 for a "plain desk cast" 3-0-0. In 1805 billed William Brown for bottoming, a cherry table and a pembroke table, and from 1796 to 1802 billed Samuel and Daniel Proud for chair frames and bottoms.³⁵ Providence. Extends dates in Garrett.

**Davenport, Pardon*. On Oct. 7, 1794, billed Captain Nathaniel Briggs for making a hoe handle 0-0-5 and bottoming one chair 0-1-2. May be a turner and chairmaker. Tiverton.³⁶

**Dunham, Daniel*. Entries from 1782 through 1789 to account of Dr. Isaac Senter of Newport are detailed under "Senter Furniture Chronology" and cover writing stools, chairs, "3 threeback chairs," spools, knife handles, "rouling pin," distaff and arm, squash squeezers, and mending, coloring and varnishing chairs, etc. Newport. See Bjerko and Garrett for men with similar names, but with earlier dates; confusion may have arisen which the manuscript corrects; on the other hand, this man may be an entirely different worker, and an active one at that.

**Easton, Nicholas*. On Feb. 9, 1788, billed Stephen Harris for a Mahogany fly table 3-0-0; March 1, a mahogany pembroke table 3-0-0, and a lifting handle for another piece; Oct. 24, a maple tea table 0-12-0; and on Nov. 13, a "mahogany stand turned top" 1-4-0 and a "sett cradle rocker." In 1797 supplied a coffin for Harris' daughter, and in 1799 mended a table and a stand for the same customer. Providence.³⁷

Engs, George. "Received payment for my father," William Engs, from Mrs. Elizabeth Senter, for HL hinges, chest hinges, wooden bowls, writing desk lock, etc. in April and September of 1801, probably in Newport. William Engs advertised in the Aug. 28, 1786 *Newport Mercury* relative to the settling of John Goddard's estate. George Engs sold table spoons, a bellows, 5 "gimblets," etc., in Nov. 1815 to ship *Commodore Perry* (1/2 owned by William Arnold). In 1830 signed a receipt in Newport with "surviving partner of the firm of William Engs and Son," after his name.³⁸ George is probably the Engs of "Goddard and Engs" mentioned in Bjerko and Garrett.

**Gibbs, Job*. Entries from 1785 through 1795 to account of Dr. Isaac Senter of Newport are detailed under "Senter Furniture Chronology" and cover a "cross legged table," curtain rails, wood horse, large sled, boot jacks, bread trough, a "toilet table," day work, mending and other

items. Newport. This may be the John Gibbs mentioned in Bjerko and Garrett, but more likely is a different maker.

Goddard, Townsend. Jan. 12, 1787, a cheese tray 0-18-0; Jan. 17, 1787, a fire screen 1-10-0; Feb. 1788, a wash stand 1-16-0; May 9, 1788, mending a caster 0-5-0; Sept. 26, 1788, 2 mahogany card tables 9-6-5, and mending a partition on a cheese tray 0-0-6; all to the account of Dr. Isaac Senter of Newport. The bill was receipted by Susannah Goddard and Richard Stanton on the last date given (presumably in Townsend's absence), in Newport.³⁹

**Gould, Benjamin*. In 1776 billed Preserved Pearce of East Greenwich for bottoming 6 chairs @ 32/ for 9-12-0 and mending 1 chair for 0-10-0, "old tenor." Probably East Greenwich.

**Greene, Fones*. In Feb. 1784 billed Dr. Isaac Senter of Newport "To making book case 2-8-0" and for 15 days labor. May be more of a carpenter than cabinetmaker. Newport.

Grinnell, Peter and Son. On Oct. 6, 1800, Green and Searle billed Grinnell and Taylor (presumably a predecessor company) "to painting an image in Colours \$6." On March 26, 1807, Captain James Sweet billed Grinnell and Taylor "to glazing painting and gilding a Fanlight sash \$4.20." Peter Grinnell and Son sold Wm. Arnold a keg of white lead in oil in 1815; R. W. Greene a fire fender, jamb hooks, a brass door lock, etc., in 1828; and Samuel Larned nails, screws, etc., in 1840. Providence.⁴⁰

Hammond, Benjamin and John. Entries from 1795 through 1800 to account of Dr. Isaac Senter and his estate of Newport are detailed under "Senter Furniture Chronology" and cover fanback chairs, green chairs, a dye for a "black-gammon table," painting and mending chairs, and other items. Newport. Probably took over Benjamin Pabodie's business (q. v.) as signed receipt for his estate in 1800 and their first entry for Senter occurred only a few months after Pabodie's last. See Bjerko and Garrett for Benjamin Hammond only. John is unlisted.

Healey, Recompense. In 1770 listed as "shop joyner," east side of Main St., Providence, in "a small 1 storey house and lot" taxed at 0-8-0.⁴¹ This is probably the same Healey listed in Bjerko and Garrett as working in Newport in 1775.

Hopkins, John G. In 1830 was repairing and putting brass casters on furniture of R. W. Greene; in 1834 and 1835 was repairing and varnishing furniture, selling a pine book case and desk for \$13., "putting down carpet of

35 Carter-Danforth Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

36 Durfee Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

37 Benjamin Harris Papers.

38 Durfee Papers.

39 Bjerko and Garrett.

40 Bjerko and Garrett.

41 Chace.

42 Bjerko and Garrett.

43 1722-1784, MS., The Rhode Island Historical Society.

44 Chace.

- painted cloth," a "Butler's horse and tray" for \$3.50, and a set of chairs for \$6., all for A. C. Greene. Was repairing furniture for R. W. Greene in 1847 and 1848. Providence. Extends dates in Bjerkoie and Garrett.
- Howard, George A.* In 1852 sold "1 child's bm [sic] high chair" for \$1.75 to A. C. Greene. Providence. Extends date in Garrett.
- Howard, Thomas.* In June 1815 sold a cherry cradle for \$10. to A. C. Greene and in May 1826, 1 mahogany bureau for \$20. to R. W. Greene. Providence.⁴²
- Hunt, Benjamin.* John Angell's account book⁴³ contains entries in Sept. 1750 for a case of drawers 40-0-0, an oval table 14-0-0, a square table 6-0-0, and a desk 30-0-0, made by Hunt for Angell. In 1770 listed as "shop joyner," east side of Main St., "a long low snug house and garden," Providence.⁴⁴ Extends dates in Bjerkoie, Garrett, and JBH.
- Huntington, David.* On Nov. 11, 1766 billed James Card for a mahogany table 65-0-0 and a maple table 19-0-0; on Feb. 8, 1767 for a mahogany desk 205-0-0; on Nov. 25 for a maple table 22-0-0; and on Sept. 26, 1768 for a maple table 20-0-0, all in old tenor.⁴⁵ Newport. Establishes dates in Bjerkoie and Garrett. By price comparisons with the work of the Townsends and Goddards, Huntington's furniture must have been of high quality.
- Ingraham, Joseph.* In 1770 listed as "joyner," Planet St., Providence, "a double house," taxed at 0-9-0.⁴⁶
- Ladd, Caleb.* On Nov. 20, 1811, billed Henry Arnold for 1 chest at \$4. and 1 cupboard at \$5. On Jan. 8, 1816, billed estate of William Arnold for a cherry coffin at \$15. East Greenwich.
- Ludlow, James.* Sept. 15, 1783, 1 side saddle and 1 mahogany bedstead 8-12-0; 1 writing desk 0-15-0; billed to Dr. Isaac Senter. Newport.
- Marshall, Benjamin.* Constitution Hill, Providence, chair-maker, 1784-1800.⁴⁷
- Martin, Joseph.* Billed Jabez Whipple on Sept. 2, 1765 for "two desks cast" at 168-0-0 and another desk at 83-0-0, old tenor.⁴⁸ Even for the inflated currency of the times, these are substantial prices. In 1770 listed as "shop joyner," east side of North End, Providence, taxed at 1-0-0.⁴⁹ Sometimes spelled "Marting." Extends dates in Garrett and JBH.
- Mason, Timothy.* In 1770 listed as "joyner," east side of North End, Providence, "a two storey house and lot," taxed at 0-10-0.⁵⁰
- Mays, Samuel.* Sold a lot of land to Ambrose Page in Providence in August 1765 and is described as "shop joyner" in deed. William Barker's account book (1750-1772) has entries in 1762 for sets of legs, turning bed posts, etc., to Mays' account. Providence.
- Millerd and Lee.* In 1840 sold a music stool for \$10., a pine wash stand for \$3.50, and 4 towel stands for \$2.50 to R. W. Greene. Name apparently changed to W. C. Millerd & Co. and in 1848-1851 were selling and mending furniture to R. W. Greene. Providence. Extends dates in Garrett.
- Millerd, Squire.* In 1790 receipted a bill to the estate of Christopher Spencer for mending a watch in 1788 for 0-3-6, and for making brass door latches, sleigh bells, and keys in 1789. East Greenwich.⁵¹ This is undoubtedly the clockmaker, but the records give no clues as to who made the cases. The author has seen one or two tall case clocks with his name inscribed on the dials.
- Mumford, Samuel B.* Nov. 3, 1820, 1 small chair \$1.50 and on Nov. 5, 1 large rocking chair \$4.50, both to A. C. Greene. Providence.
- Nestell, Christian.* On April 3, 1827, billed R. W. Greene for varnishing a bureau and repairing and painting a large wash table, so perhaps was more than a mere merchant. Providence.⁵²
- Nichols, Walter.* Entries from 1782 through 1799 to account of Dr. Isaac Senter are detailed under "Senter Furniture Chronology" and include mahogany chairs, desk and frame, a "stand for a book," tables, urn stands, tea caddy, cheese trays, hat case, mending, repairing, polishing, and many other items such as a handle for a silver tea pot. Newport.⁵³ Nichols, formerly known by name only, emerges from his invoice to Senter as a major worker and creator of a variety of forms, and the manuscript as one of the most important items in the Greene Collection in this field.
- Norton, B. A. and Co.* In 1844 sold a "French wash stand" and 2 corner tables to Samuel Larned and in 1845-1848 sold many kinds of furniture along with mattresses, pillows, tassels, etc., to the same buyer. Providence. Extends date in Garrett.
- Oatley, Nichols K.* Billed Jason Williams on Oct. 16, 1832, for 1 high post bedstead \$9.; 8 dark chairs 0-3-6, or \$4.67; 1 fancy serving chair 0-9-0 or \$1.50; and a wash stand 0-12-0, or \$2.00. Probably more merchant than actual maker. Providence.⁵⁴

45 Rouse Family Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

46 Chace.

47 Stone.

48 Whipple Papers.

49 Chace.

50 Chace.

51 Rufus Spencer Papers.

52 Bjerkoie; Garrett.

53 Bjerkoie; Garrett.

54 Jason Williams Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

Pabodie, Benjamin [as in MSS; later spelled "Peabody").

1788, cleaning a gun and making a rod 0-3-0; Jan. 19, 1789, "to a frame for an electrical globe" 1-4-0; April 1789, a "gudgeon" for the globe and "a thing to hold a candle at the electrical wheel;" also other various turnings, all to account of Dr. Isaac Senter. Newport. Pabodie's bill was paid to his estate on March 1, 1800, so he had died by then. His last entry for Senter was March 13, 1794. See "Hammond, B. and J.," above.⁵⁵

Potter, Phillip. In 1770 listed as "shop joyner," Westminster St., Providence, "an excellent 3 storey house, a good yard, a large store, chaise house, and stable with wharf" ["Post Office here now," Chace's comment], taxed at 0-6-0.⁵⁶

**Potter, Robert*. 1784, 1 table leaf 0-5-0, 1 (w)riter desk, 34 window frames 5-2-0, and 1 bedstead 0-15-0, all to William Arnold. Probably East Greenwich.

**Proud, John*. In 1776 and 1777 was bottoming and mending chairs, and turning sets of legs and other items for Preserved Pearce. Also "to rockering and mending 1 chair" for Pearce. East Greenwich. A John Proud was bottoming chairs for A. C. Greene in 1820, 1824, 1827, and 1828 in East Greenwich and may be the same man.

Proud, Joseph. On June 13, 1765, billed Christopher Champ-
lin for 6 chairs at 42-0-0 each. Active in 1766 also.⁵⁷ Newport. Extends date in Garrett.

Proud, Samuel. Died Jan. 7, 1835, aged 82.⁵⁸ On July 14, 1786, billed Stephen Harris for a great chair 0-10-0 and on March 10, 1787, billed Harris for various turnings, including 32 bannisters. Harris paid 0-12-0 for bottoming 6 chairs in May 1791, to Samuel and Daniel Proud.⁵⁹ Providence. In 1807 Proud signed a receipt with "Warwick," and may have moved there in later years.⁶⁰ Corrects and extends dates in Bjerko and Garrett.

Proud, William. From his account book, died in 1779. Records were continued in same book by his sons Samuel and Daniel Proud. Providence. Corrects JBH and Garrett.

Randall, Charles. Oct. 16, 1816, a bellows, a looking glass \$1.20, and 3 bannister back chairs \$1.20 [from an unidentified account book]. Providence. Extends date in Bjerko and Garrett.

Rawson, Grindall. In 1770 listed as "shop joyner," south side of Broad St., Providence, taxed at 0-6-0.⁶¹

Rawson, George B. Making and repairing various kinds of

furniture in 1868, 1869, and 1870. Providence. Extends date in Garrett.

Rawson, J. G. [probably Joseph Rawson, Jr.]. On Aug. 22, 1837, billed R. W. Greene for a dressing glass and for taking down and setting up bedsteads. Providence.⁶²

Rawson, Joseph and Son. Nov. 15, 1815, one "3 1/2 feet cherry tree table \$7." and Feb. 1816, a bed key, both to A. C. Greene. Providence.⁶³

Rawson, S. and J. [Samuel and Joseph]. March, 1830, 1 mahogany work table \$17.; 1839, repairing furniture; 1842, 1 large mahogany bookcase and drayage \$85. and fitting casters on sofa \$2.; 1849, repairing and polishing 1 serpentine table, marble top \$40.; all to account of R. W. Greene. Providence. Extends dates in Bjerko and Garrett.

Sacket and Branch. In 1834 billed A. C. Greene for 3 "imitation maple wash stands" \$5.50. Providence.⁶⁴

Sanford, Samuel. July 1794, "to framing mahogany border around parlour hearth" \$4.; to repairing a looking glass frame \$1.66; Feb. 1797, "to framing a hone" \$1.; all to account of Dr. Isaac Senter. Newport. Senter treated Sanford in the 1786-1789 period. Extends dates in Bjerko and Garrett. May be less of a cabinetmaker than a carpenter.

Scott, Charles. In 1819 A. C. Green \$20. for 1 easy chair, and another at \$18. in 1820 through Wm. Arnold. Providence.⁶⁵

**Searle, Solomon*. In 1770 listed as chairmaker, south side of Broad St., taxed at 0-6-0.⁶⁶

**Shaw, John*. Entries from 1782 through 1788 to the account of Dr. Isaac Senter are detailed under "Senter Furniture Chronology" and include mostly beds and parts. There is also one entry for a chair, and many for nails, timber, clapboards, etc. Newport.

**Smith, Daniel*. A deed dated March 27, 1732, describes Smith as a "joyner," who bought land from Thomas Olney. He is also described as a joyner in another deed dated 1734 to John Whipple. In 1731 Smith bought a lot of land in Providence, but no occupation is given. A bill dated 1760 shows a Daniel Smith selling general merchandise to Jabez Whipple; this is probably the same man.⁶⁷ Providence. Smith is the earliest known Providence "joyner," or cabinetmaker, and it is significant the small town could support such a specialized craftsman at such an early date.

55 Bjerko; Garrett.

56 Chace; Bjerko; Garrett; JBH.

57 Christopher Champlin Papers; JBH.

58 Stone.

59 Benjamin Harris Papers.

60 Henry B. Drown Autograph Collection, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

61 Chace; Bjerko; Garrett; JBH.

62 Bjerko; Garrett.

63 Bjerko; Garrett.

64 Garrett.

65 Bjerko; Garrett.

66 Chace.

67 Whipple Papers.

Spencer, Daniel. In July 1777, billed Stephen Harris for repairs to desk and tables and on June 7, 1791, billed Harris for a pine coffin 1-7-0, a pembroke table 1-10-0; on July 9, for a cherry case of drawers 8-8-0 and a candle stand 0-15-0.⁶⁸ Received a bill to estate of Christopher Spencer in 1792 that included a maple desk bought in 1789 at 3-0-0.⁶⁹ Providence. Extends dates in Bjerkoe and Garrett.

Spooner, Thomas. In Jonathan Easton Hazard's account book there is an entry in 1825, "Thomas Spooner, chair-maker."⁷⁰ Newport.

Stall, William. In 1784 mended Christopher Champlin's chaise and in 1787 contracted to build a new one for Dr. Isaac Senter. In old manuscripts "chaise" and "chair" look very similar: this man may be the "Stall" referred to in Bjerkoe and Garrett. Newport.⁷¹

**Stone, Jabeze.* According to an early medical ledger, Dr. Isaac Senter bought 6 chairs "of a different construction" in April 1780 (before he moved to Newport) from Stone as an offsetting bill for previous medical advice. The amount is blurred, but may be 66-5-0, although this seems high. Cranston.

**Stone, Joseph.* On Dec. 19, 1788, billed Christopher Spencer for 6 windsor chairs at 3-12-0.⁷² In 1790 and 1793 was supplying loom parts, hoe handles, a "whirl for Quilwheel," 71 quarts of milk (for 0-17-9), and other turnings as well as mending and bottoming chairs for William Arnold. In 1796 a merchant's account book shows an entry under the customer Lydia Greene for "1/2 dozen greene chares of Joseph Stone." East Greenwich.

**Sweet, Stephen.* On Mar. 28, 1815, billed A. C. Greene for "1 Book case bracing Desk" \$5.50. Also worked on carriages for others. Probably not a true cabinetmaker. See entry above for "Church and Sweet." East Greenwich.

Sweeting, Joseph. In 1770 listed as "joyner", west side of Water St., Providence, "a good house, 2 stores wharf and shed," taxed 0-6-0.⁷³

Taylor, Stephen and Co. Billed Jason Williams on Oct. 3, 1833, for "12 square seat chairs 1m [imitation?] maple," \$10. Providence.⁷⁴ Extends dates in Bjerkoe and Garrett.

**Taylor, Thomas.* On Dec. 13, 1808, billed William Greene for painting 8 chairs \$2.66 2/3 and for "mending same" \$.16 1/3. Probably East Greenwich. On Nov. 21, 1817, billed Henry Arnold for a set of windsor chairs at \$14.

Townsend, Edmund. On Oct. 22, 1760 billed Capt. James Card for a mahogany desk 203-0-0; and on Feb. 2, 1761 for a "tea board" 4-0-0.⁷⁵ Newport.

Townsend, John. On Sept. 27, 1781 (possibly 1782, 1791, or 1792) billed Dr. Isaac Senter for a mahogany desk and bookcase 22-4-0, "silver lawful money." The highest priced item in Senter chronology and the only one by this maker. The piece was either quite impressive or he commanded a premium because of his stature as a leading craftsman. Billed Mrs. Jane Wilson on June 1, 1791 for a "maple coffin stained and polished and hung with brass hinges for your mother" 2-2-0.⁷⁶ Newport.

Townsend, Thomas. Billed Capt. James Card on Sept. 8, 1767, for a mahogany square table 95-0-0; on Oct. 25 for a mahogany tea table 33-0-0; on Feb. 3, 1768, for a coffin "for your negro girl" 20-0-0; and on Oct. 1 for a maple table, a mahogany "sugar table" and a mahogany tea table, all at unknown prices.⁷⁷ Newport. Establishes dates in Bjerkoe and Garrett.

**Veazie, Benjamin.* Chairmaker, 1784-1800, Providence.⁷⁸ On Nov. 16, 1799, billed Stephen Harris for bottoming 12 chairs 1-0-0, bottoming one little chair 0-1-6; for putting a top on a bannister back, putting in a slat and other work.⁷⁹

Vickary, Joseph. Entries from 1786 through 1798 to the account of Dr. Isaac Senter are detailed under the "Senter Furniture Chronology" and include small, dining, children's, and great chairs; and mending, bottoming, painting and varnishing the same. Newport. Vickary emerges as a principal chairmaker from his previous position as mere listing.⁸⁰

**Wallace, James.* In 1783 billed Dr. Isaac Senter for a mahogany dressing table 13-12-0 and 2 square mahogany dining tables 7-4-0. Newport.

Warner, James. On Oct. 8, 1808, billed Earl D. Pearce for repainting 6 chairs for \$3. and repairing one at \$.12 Providence. Unlisted, but may not be a real chairmaker.⁸¹

Wescott and Morse. In Oct. 1834 billed A. C. Greene for 1 Grecian table \$20., 1 maple bedstead \$10., and 1 bureau \$22. In 1839 Samuel Larned bought many items of furniture (on letterheads engraved with pictures of furniture) and, in 1840, "1 refrigerator" \$23. This firm is listed as a furniture store in the *City Directory* and is not likely a manufacturer. Providence.

68 Benjamin Harris Papers.

69 Rufus Spencer Papers.

70 Christopher Champlin Papers; Bjerkoe; Garrett.

71 Christopher Champlin Papers.

72 Rufus Spencer Papers.

73 Chace; Bjerkoe; Garrett; *JBH*.

74 Jason Williams Papers.

75 Rouse Family Papers; Bjerkoe; Garrett.

76 Rouse Family Papers; Bjerkoe; Garrett.

77 Rouse Family Papers.

78 Stone.

79 Benjamin Harris Papers.

80 Bjerkoe; Garrett.

81 Earl D. Pearce Papers, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

**Whitmarsh, Micah*. Married Anne Arnold of N. Kingstown, June 12, 1774. In 1786 and 1787 was mending a linen wheel, windows, etc. On March 18, 1791, billed William Arnold for 1 table of cherry 3½ feet 1-4-6; 1 "Penbrooke table" 1-4-0; 1 candlestand 0-9-0; 1 "bedstead high posts fluted" 1-10-0; 1 "low post bedstead" 0-15-0; and so on. In 1793 he billed the same customer, a merchant, for a high post bedstead with rails and rods for 1-1-0, and day work. In 1794 there were bills for beds, window shutters, mending, etc. In 1801 he billed Arnold for a coffin for his father at 2-8-0, and was active in 1803 also. A bill for odd jobs and carpentering in 1817 and 1819 was paid in 1822 to his estate, so he died between 1819 and 1822. East Greenwich.

Wickham, Thomas. On Jan. 14, 1791, billed Dr. Isaac Senter for "8-day Table Clock" 10-10-0, deducting 0-12-0 for the "amount paid Christopher Townsend for repairing and cleaning." Townsend, a watchmaker, was the son of Christopher the cabinetmaker. Newport. There is nothing to indicate Wickham made the case, nor whether he was a woodworker at all. In the 1788-1790 period he supplied nails, HL hinges, glass, screws, etc., to Captain Nathaniel Briggs of Tiverton.⁸²

**Wickes, Oliver*. Sold lumber to Christopher Spencer in 1790.⁸³ On May 8, 1799, billed William Arnold for 1 fluted pest bedstead 7-0-0; 2 kitchen tables 5-0-0; 2 bread trays 2-66-0; and, two months later, 2 benches 0-50-0, and day work. On Dec. 9, 1801, billed William Greene for a meat tray at 0-50-0, and a warming pan handle at 0-16-0. Probably East Greenwich.

Wightman, S. W. In Nov. 1817, billed A. C. Greene for a cherry wash stand at \$2.50. According to Garrett in Pawtucket, but from position in Greene papers may be in East Greenwich at this time. A signature on a receipt is dated 1836, but with no other information.⁸⁴ Extends date in Garrett.

OTHER TRANSACTIONS

Auction Sales. Dr. Isaac Senter "Bot at vendue" (auction) 8 new mahogany chairs for \$35. from Gardner and Dean, Newport, on April 6, 1796.

Stephen Arnold bought at vendue over 100 lots at a sale in 1818, probably in East Greenwich. Among the items: 6 "Greene chairs" \$1.25; 1 looking glass \$4.50; 1 pair card tables \$8.50; 2 "old arm chairs and cushions" \$.50; 1 "toilet table and drapery" \$.50; and bedsteads, both narrow and wide, with "cord upper and under Read bolsters and Pillers" for prices from \$.8. to \$15.50 each. Articles out of fashion seem cheap indeed.

Cheney, Samuel. No. 8, Exchange St., Boston, Mass. In Oct. 1815, a Mr. Greene bought a desk for \$5., a low price and probably a simple form. Unlisted, but may be merchant.

Constantine, Thomas and Co. In March 1817, Marcus Jacobs bought "2 Grecian Sofas" for \$230., and boxes for them for \$10. Location unknown, but probably New York. Not in Bjercoe, but may be merchant. Jacobs may have been an agent for Greene.

Hodgton, Thomas. In 1831 and 1832 Samuel Larned, while in the diplomatic service, bought 3 bedroom tables for \$20. and 3 wash stands for \$25.40. Lima, Peru.

Walsh, William. William Arnold bought a plain mahogany bureau on Feb. 25, 1817, for \$20. Location unknown, but probably New York, as both this and the Constantine bill carry a notation "104 Pearl St.," and the Greenses bought there frequently. Unlisted, but may be merchant.

Whiting, Thomas. In 1831 Samuel Larned bought furniture from Whiting, also in Lima, Peru. Some repairs were done by T. Grieve and Co.

82 Durfee Papers.

83 Rufus Spencer Papers.

84 Henry B. Drown Autograph Collection.

INVENTORY OF THE ESTATE
OF DOCTOR ISAAC SENTER⁸⁵

(Furniture items only. Feb. 3, 1800)

Bedsteads, Beds and Furniture

1 Mahogany Bedstead, Bed, Bolster and pillows with Curtains and furniture	\$50.00
1 ditto	35.00
1 ditto without Curtains	25.00
1 ditto	19.00
1 ditto	15.00
2 old ditto	30.00
1 ditto	15.00
1 ditto	18.00
3 ditto	12.00
1 small ditto	2.50

Looking Glasses

1 Small looking glass	\$ 2.00
1 ditto	1.00
1 ditto	1.50
1 pair large ditto	24.00
1 Mahogany frame ditto	6.00
1 pair painted ditto	16.00
1 ditto	10.00
1 Framed ditto	2.50

One Trunk (containing clothing)

1 Chest Containing 2 Suits Curtains,
12 Chair Bottoms, 2 Easy Chair Cases.Black Trunk Containing (blankets,
sheets, and similar items)*Chairs*

5 Sets Green Chairs 8 in a set	
1 Set Roundabout dittos	
48 chairs @ \$.75 (total)	\$36.00
1 ditto of maple	8.00
3 chairs	3.00
1 Set of Cane Chairs	16.00
1 ditto Mahogany	20.00
1 ditto	24.00
1 ditto and 2 lolling Chairs	84.00
1 Sofa	13.00

1 Easy Chair	8.00
1 Roundabout	2.00
1 Electrical Machine (much damaged)	1.50

Tables

1 Pair Mahogany 4 foot Tables	\$20.00
1 Pair ditto	15.00
1 Pair Card Tables	24.00
1 small ditto	4.00
2 Common ditto	4.00
2 Mahogany Stands	6.00
1 Maple Stand and 2 Wind ? ?	1.25
1 Table and Carpet	.30
2 Toilet Tables and C	2.00
4 Kitchen Tables	5.00
1 Mahogany side Board (Containing, incidentally, 11 pr. decanters, glasses, table mats, etc.)	25.00
1 Mahogany Desk and Book Case	45.00
1 Mahogany Desk	12.00
1 Portable ditto	5.00
1 Pine writing desk	3.00
1 ditto	1.00
1 Case of Drawers	5.00
1 High Case of Drawers	6.00
1 Mahogany Chest	3.00
1 Washing Stand (may not be furniture)	2.00
1 Wine Cooler (may not be furniture)	.50
1 Fire Screen	3.00
1 Knife case and 2 dozen knives and forks	4.00
1 Clock	16.00
1 Tea Urn and Stand (probably not furniture)	12.00
1 Marble side Board	5.00
2 Mahogany Tea Caddies	1.00
1 Tea Waiter (may not be furniture)	1.00
2 Sets of Drawers (containing medical supplies —these not included)	35.00

85 On file at the Probate Court, Newport, R. I.

Patience Borden and the Sterrys

In these days of accent on improving the Negro's lot it may be interesting to note that in 1811 one member of that race set aside from her slender resources a fund for the aid of the poor Negro members of her church.

In the ancient part of North Burial Ground, Providence, there stands a gravestone with this inscription:

"Patience Borden, commonly called Sterry, a free woman of colour and humble disciple of Christ. She gave to the First Baptist Church in this town, of which she was a member, 230 dollars as a fund for the relief of the poor of colour of that church. She died April 1, 1811, in the 53rd year of her age."

Next to her stone is that of Vilet Burden, wife of Prime Burden, who died June 5, 1786, aged about 70 years.

The writer had become aware of Patience Borden in doing research on the Sterry families of Providence. She was a member of the household of Robert Sterry, Providence merchant, who died April 29, 1789, at 76 years and is buried in North Burial Ground a few rows away from the gravestone for Patience. Robert married first Rosabella Angell and second, Lydia Angell. Robert's house was on the west side of North Main Street, about a block away from the First Baptist Church.

Robert left a will, it is stated in Providence Town Council records, but it is not on file in the Providence probate office. No doubt he made provision for Patience Borden as his faithful servant.

A lengthy study results in the conclusion that Robert Sterry had a son, Capt. Samuel Sterry, who married Sarah, daughter of Col. Thomas and Mercy (Rhodes) Angell. Capt. Samuel's death was reported in the *Providence Gazette* of 5 Sept. 1772. Robert's North Main Street property must have descended to Capt. Samuel's son, Capt. Samuel Angell Sterry. The death of the latter in his 26th year from a fall while on passage home from Savannah, Ga., was noted in the *Providence Gazette* of 3 Oct. 1795. Capt. Samuel Angell Sterry had married Elizabeth Packard, daughter

By Charles W. Farnham, F.A.S.G., C.G.*

of Nathaniel and Abigail Packard of Providence. In the 1790 Providence census Patience Borden was listed as household head, obviously at the Robert Sterry residence.

After the death of Capt. Samuel Angell Sterry, his wife, Elizabeth, apparently moved into the Robert Sterry house, for in subsequent deeds she disposed of part of the property to her daughter, Julia Ann Valentine, widow of Capt. James Valentine. Later Julia Valentine transferred the property to her daughter, Julia, who had married first Robert Taylor and second James A. Fox. The Sterry homestead passed out of family hands in 1871 when Charles B. Taylor and James V. Taylor, sons of Julia Taylor-Fox sold their holdings to Israel B. Mason of Providence. The description of the North Main Street property in the various deeds tallies with that of Robert Sterry's home.

The writer found a will for Patience Borden, "single woman of colour," made 19 March 1811. She left to Comfort Ephraims all her household furniture and wearing apparel "for her kindness to me in my present sickness," with the rest and residue (including one share in Roger Williams Bank) as a fund, the interest of which was to be applied for the relief of indigent persons (of colour) who shall be members of the First Baptist Church. Nathan Waterman Jr. was named executor with power to appoint a successor, or in case of his failure to do so, the First Baptist Church was to appoint one. The inventory of her estate totalled \$586.75.

That Prime Burden, whose wife is buried beside Patience, was the father of Patience is shown by the will of Prime made 25 Dec. 1768. In it he divided his property between his wife, Vilet, and his daughter, Patience Sterry. A bequest of his "best close bodyed waistcoat and best hat" was made to Robert Sterry "to make him satisfaction for being sick in his house." He named his friend, Knight Dexter, as executor, but when the latter refused Robert Sterry was named executor.

* Mr. Charles W. Farnham is a member of the Society's library committee and has been engaged as a professional genealogical researcher since his retirement from the *Providence Journal*.

Director's Newsletter

It is with great pleasure that I write this Newsletter for the first Society quarterly to be published in this format. The Publication Committee authorized Malcolm Gear to redesign the publication, to create a periodical that would be more presentable aesthetically and at the same time increase the amount of printed words without increasing the cost. This difficult task has been achieved. The new design keeps in mind the nature of the publication; that is, it realizes that it is an historical society journal and therefore has the necessary design qualifications, and it nearly doubles the amount of text while maintaining the cost at virtually the same level. The ability to increase the text without skyrocketing the cost was made possible by introducing a "grid format" that allows great flexibility within a set pattern. This format allows the staff to think in terms of the grid when typing the material for the printers, and makes it possible to have the pages set in page proof rather than in galleys, eliminating a costly step.

The Committee first thought that it should continue with the outer dimensions of the former publication so that the shelved appearance would be similar. But, since so much more text could be achieved in the new size the change was permitted.

On September 21st the Society held its first Lawn Festival. This new activity was created as a grand party for members and at the same time to increase the involvement of the community in the activities of the Society. What was sought was a delightful party on the marvelous lawn of John Brown House with various programs and objects of interest for both adults and children. It was decided to have only genuine authentic experiences and objects from the past, eliminating any pseudo-historic activity. Many members labored

to bring this party into being and fortunately the newness of the idea combined with fine weather made it a success. Instead of the approximately 300 people expected, nearly 1,000 attended. Those who came found, while having a delightful time with punch, cookies, cider, sandwiches and doughnuts, that everything presented was authentic in nature and not invented for a carnival-like experience. As the pictures included show, the party began with the Kentish Guards Fife and Drum Corps and throughout the following two and one half hours various happenings were presented at approximately half hour intervals. There was a working cider press; johnny cakes were cooked, and eaten; a marionette show attracted great attention; an early working Herreshoff steam engine whistled, and all fortunately went smoothly. These events played against a continuous background display of antique automobiles and other exhibits. During the party John Brown House was open to visitors. At first tours of the House were scheduled for every twenty minutes but the crush to see the House was so insistent that the scheduling was changed and a flow of visitors poured through the House in a steady stream.

Last year many members contributed to the Society in addition to their membership dues. As announced, this contribution was for the purchase of rugs, and recently three new rugs were acquired with these funds by the Museum Committee for John Brown House. Because of this support the House is now a step nearer a true restoration.

A new membership secretary has been appointed and Mrs. Raymond Horman is now the one that members should contact if they have any questions about their membership, and they should direct any potential new members to her.





List of events.

Mr. Raymond Turco with one of the posters that announced the events.

Mr. Henry Brown presses cider on his own press; thirsty viewers kept him busy all afternoon.

Miss Elizabeth Heustis' marionettes excite children and adults.

Mrs. Joseph M. P. Ott, Chairman; Mrs. S. Bradford Tingley and the Director pose for a moment.

Mrs. William Slater Allen, and others, supply people with food and drink.



Notes and Documents

John Brown and the Fortification of the Water Approaches to Providence, Autumn, 1775

With the closing of the Port of Boston in 1774 the currents drifting toward war quickened. British ships appeared off Newport in November of that year to overawe the growing patriotic sentiment and support for the people of Boston. Captain James Wallace of the man-of-war *Rose* was the principal British officer involved in the patrol of Narragansett Bay which ensued for the next two years. Wallace proceeded to bully Newport and interfere with shipping. On April 26, 1775, he seized John Brown of Providence with two cargoes of flour and sent him to General Thomas Gage, commander of British forces in North America, at his headquarters in Boston. Brown was soon released but returned to Rhode Island more hostile than ever, bringing suit against Wallace. Wallace stepped up his harrassment, and on the 7th of November, 1775, he executed a brief bombardment on the town of Bristol. Two days later John Brown wrote the letter below, warning the patriots at Pawtuxett (modern day Cranston) that Wallace's fleet might pay them a visit. He suggested various fortification procedures. Similar precautions had already been taken in Providence with the fortification of Fox Point.¹

The Society is very grateful to Mr. Bayard Ewing for recently enriching our collections with this fine John Brown letter.

To
Mess^{rs}. Sam^l. or James Aborn or
Rhodes Arnold together with all
the Friends to the American Cause at
or near Pawtuxett —

Provid^{ce}. Octobr. 9th. 1775

Gentlemen

As it's very likely that Wallace will come Up as Farr as Conimicut with His Fleet as Soon as the wind Comes to the Southward, and perhaps Send the armed Brigg & Tenders up Further in order to Sound the Channell &c. &c. This is Theirfore to Desire, that you will Forthwith muster together with Spades, Shovels, &c. and proceed to Flinging up a Sufficient Breast work On Pawtuxett Neck to cover any Number of men which you may Suppose can be Nessesary. & also a good and Sufficient Breast work Directly Opposite the End of Sabin's Point for 4 or 6 Field pieces which you may depend will go from Here as Soon as the Enemy are coming towards Pawtuxett. The 9 pounders wick are mounted on Field Carriages will play Over a breast work of 3 1/2 Feet from the ground But I advise your making the Breast work or Battery 4 1/2 or 5 Feet High, & of Sufficient thickness to Stop any 9 pound Shott, and what Ever part the Field pieces are placed at the top of the breast work may be, Should off So as to make a proper place for the Gun to play, This undertak^s. may Seem Considerable, at First thought, but If you only give out to all your Neighbours, that If the Breast work is built you may Rely On our going to your assistance with as many field pieces as may be Nessesary at the First Notice they will Not be backward in their Assistance, in about 1 1/2 day's Time we Flungg up a Sufficient Breast work on M^r. W^m Field's Land to cover 1500 or 2000 men which M^r. Field Cheerfully Consented to and gave us his best Assistance. I Hope their will not be a man amoung you but that will Lend their best assistance.

I am Gentlemen
Your Humbl. Servt.
John Brown

¹ Information amplifying this document can be found in W. G. Roelker and Clarkson A. Collins III, "The Patrol of Narragansett Bay (1774-76)," *Rhode Island History*, VII:12-19, 90-95; VIII:45-63, 77-83; IX: 11-23, 52-58. See

also Edward Field, *Revolutionary Defences in Rhode Island* (Providence, 1896), pp. 55-61 and Field's *State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations at the End of the Century: A History* (Boston, 1902), 1:227-231.

**Officers and Committee Members
elected at the 147th Annual Meeting to serve
until the Annual Meeting in 1970**

Bradford F. Swan, *president*
Bayard Ewing, *vice president*
Mrs. George E. Downing,
vice president
Frank L. Hinckley, Jr., *secretary*
Mrs. Norman T. Bolles,
assistant secretary
Townes M. Harris, Jr., *treasurer*
John H. Wells, *assistant treasurer*

FINANCE

Bayard Ewing, *chairman*
Foster B. Davis, Jr.
Michael P. Metcalf
John Simmen
William W. White

GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS

William M. Davis, *chairman*
H. Cushman Anthony
Clifford S. Gustafson
Harold Ingraham, Jr.
Thomas M. Sneddon

JOHN BROWN HOUSE

Mrs. George E. Downing, *chairman*
Winslow Ames
Mrs. John A. Gwynne
Norman Herreshoff
Frank Mauran, III

LECTURE

Joseph K. Ott, *chairman*
Patrick T. Conley
Richard Harrington
Roger W. Shattuck
Mrs. Phineas Sprague

MEMBERSHIP

Walter R. Martin, *chairman*
Mrs. John Cady
Mrs. Dixwell Goff
Miss Bertha Greenough
Mrs. S. Bradford Tingley

MUSEUM

Mrs. Charles Robinson, Jr., *chairman*
Winslow Ames
Bayard Ewing
Norman Herreshoff
Joseph K. Ott

PUBLICATIONS

Norman T. Bolles, *chairman*
Garrett D. Byrnes
Francis H. Chafee, M.D.
Houghton P. Metcalf, Jr.
James F. Reilly

LIBRARY

Thomas R. Adams, *chairman*
Malcolm G. Chace, III
Joel Cohen
Charles W. Farnham
Albert E. Lownes

AUDIT

John H. Drury, *chairman*
F. Morris Cochran
Robert H. Goff

The Executive Board is composed of the officers; chairmen of the standing committee; members at large: George C. Davis, Duncan Hunter Mauran, Stuart C. Sherman; the director; and Elliott E. Andrews, state librarian, *ex officio*.

The Rhode Island Historical Society

Necrology List 1968

Mr. F. Emmons Alexander
 Mrs. Wm. H. Buffum
 Dr. Paul S. Burgess
 Dr. Madelaine R. Brown, M.D.
 Mr. Elijah E. Brownell
 Mr. Frederick C. Bryant
 Mr. Francis Chiaverini
 Mr. Elisha C. Durfee
 Mrs. L. Pierce Emerson
 Miss Addie M. Gage
 Mrs. Howard Johnson Greene
 Mr. Joseph Warren Greene, Jr.
 Mrs. Frederick R. Hazard
 Mrs. Frank A. Heffernan
 Mr. Alexander T. Hindmarsh
 Mr. Frederic J. Hunt
 Mrs. Harrison B. Huntoon
 Mr. Washington Irving
 Mr. Sidney A. Kane
 Miss Gertrude S. Keefe
 Mr. Robert L. Knight, Jr.
 Hon. Benjamin F. Lindemuth
 Mrs. Harold L. Madison
 Mr. Dudley C. Maxfield
 Mr. Lester F. Morse
 Rev. Herman G. Patt
 Mr. Thomas J. Pickering, Jr.
 Miss Mary T. Quinn
 Mr. Lloyd A. Robson
 Dr. William B. Rogers
 Mr. Lawrence B. Romaine
 Mrs. Robert Salter, Jr.
 Mrs. Kenneth Shaw Safe
 Mrs. Clarence E. Sherman
 Mrs. Joseph S. Sinclair
 Mr. George E. Sinkinson
 Mr. Brockholst M. Smith
 Prof. Will S. Taylor
 Mr. Maxwell Turner
 Mrs. Charles S. Wood
 Mrs. M. Davis Wray
 Mrs. Edwin P. Young
 Mr. L. Douglas Young

The Rhode Island Historical Society

One Hundred and Forty-seventh Annual Meeting

The one hundred and forty-seventh Annual Meeting of The Rhode Island Historical Society was held Sunday, January 19, 1969 at 2:30 p.m. in the Library.

President Bradford F. Swan called the meeting to order with approximately one hundred and twenty-five members present and suggested that, as copies of all Committee Reports were available in the room to members, the reading of them be omitted.

The President urged every member to make the Society more effective by individual effort, by making known to people the needs of John Brown House and the Library—accessions and funds, and volunteers. A new lecture hall and exhibit wing are needed. Money is the life blood of any organization and rising cost must mean increased income to carry on with success progress in many fields.

The report of the Nominating Committee was read (in the absence of Mrs. Phineas Sprague, Chairman) by Mrs. Charles C. Horton, listing the officers and committee members to serve until the next Annual Meeting. Copies of this report had been mailed to each member. Upon motion duly made and seconded it was unanimously voted that the slate of officers and committee members be elected by the Secretary casting one ballot. They were so elected.

Mr. Swan then introduced Mr. Kirk, the Director, with praise for his accomplishments during the past year. Mr. Kirk told of plans, elaborate and vital, for the future of John Brown House and the Library, and of the problems and assets of a museum house and of an old society that, as it approaches its one hundred and fiftieth anniversary, has acquired rare treasures along with articles not of great value. With the help of many workers, volunteers and staff, it is hoped that John Brown House may be returned to its actual condition of 1803 in a few years and that the cataloging of all items may be continued to completion. New educational programs begun during the past year were outlined.

Mr. Klyberg, the Librarian, emphasized the needs of the Library, additional staff and volunteers to sort and catalog and preserve literally thousands of manuscripts that are untouched and neglected. He would like to have our invaluable collections made easily available to attract in larger numbers famous scholars to our Library which is more than worthy of their attention.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 MARY HEBERT BOLLES
 Assistant Secretary

The Rhode Island Historical Society

Statement of General Fund—
Unallocated Receipts and Expenditures
Year ended June 30, 1968

RECEIPTS:			
Dues	\$23,349.00		
Contributions	6,986.60		
State of Rhode Island	21,000.00		
State of Rhode Island— microfilm	1,200.00		
City of Providence	2,000.00		
Patriotic societies	235.00		
Library sales	1,014.07		
Furniture exhibition receipts	365.94		
Outside services	1,482.65		
Special lectures	207.01		
Miscellaneous	624.56		
Transfers from other fund for current operations:			
Special use reserve— funded (refurbish John Brown House)	\$ 5,659.52		
Consolidated endow- ment income	45,372.03		
Restricted fund income	<u>3,573.37</u>	<u>54,604.92</u>	113,069.75

EXPENDITURES:			
Salaries		51,172.46	
Pension		4,166.66	
Social security taxes		2,251.55	
Directors' discretionary fund		1,153.23	
Supplies		1,550.52	
Telephone		942.45	
Membership		1,657.66	
Library		5,870.77	
Quaker material purchases		1,922.25	
Museum		9,044.21	
Lectures		996.56	
Publications		7,883.18	
Heat, light, and housekeeping		4,426.57	
Grounds		4,741.94	
Buildings		1,292.84	
Insurance		1,707.32	
Group insurance and Blue Cross		1,871.75	
Special insurance		800.00	
Microfilm:			
State	1,200.00		
Other	<u>3,347.42</u>	4,547.42	
Professional fees		600.00	
Miscellaneous		4,043.20	
Equipment		2,468.43	
Refurbishing expenses —John Brown House		<u>5,659.52</u>	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES			<u>120,770.49</u>
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER REVENUES			<u>(\$ 7,700.74)</u>