

THE NARRAGANSETT

HISTORICAL REGISTER.

A MAGAZINE

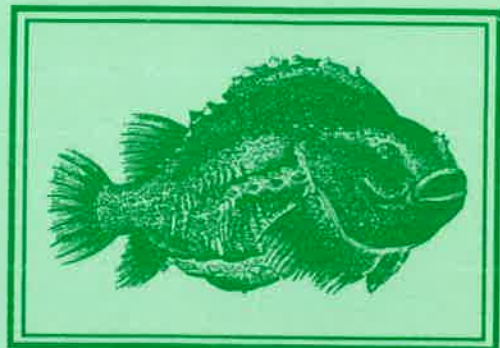
Devoted to the Antiquities, Genealogy and Historical Matter
Illustrating the History of the

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

A Record of Measures and of Men
for Twelve Full Score Years and Ten

Volume 7

James N. Arnold, Editor



A Heritage Classic

- Staples Judeth, and Arnold Pain; Sept. 19, 1754.
 “ William, of Thomas, of Smithfield, and Mary Comstock, once Wright, of Johnston, R. I.; m. by Daniel Mowry, Jr., Justice, Nov. 15, 1772.
 “ Hannah, and John Man; Mar. 1, 1775.
 “ Hannah, and Seth Mowry; Feb. 23, 1792.
 “ Mary, and John Shippee; Mar. 12, 1809.
 “ Thomas N., of Smithfield, and Almira Inman of Burrillville, daughter of George; m. by Nathaniel Mowry, Justice, May 26, 1822.
 “ Ephraim M., of Scituate, and Clarrissa D. Hopkins, of Smithfield, daughter of Eleazer; m. by Rev. Reuben Allen, Jan. 30, 1840.
 “ Nathan, and Chilone Rencham. m. by Rev. David Curtis, Feb. 20, 1840.
 “ Ezekiel, of Cumberland, and Mary Ann Craven, of Smithfield; m. by Rev. Thomas C. Brown, June 18, 1846.
 “ Esther J., and Cyrus D. Heath; Mar. 13, 1848.

(To be Continued in our next.)

The Arnold Family. The Editor of the Register has been for several years preparing notes looking towards a publication of a Genealogy of the Arnold Family. He would esteem it a great favor if those readers of the Register who have notes and records of the family will be so kind as to furnish him with copies of the same. As much as possible please to send dates and take pains to obtain them. A date is the most important item for upon that all the rest depends. When dates are not obtainable, then do the next best thing by sending the names of the family members.

POLITICAL STUDIES.

A Summary of Rhode Island Policy.

By Samuel H. Allen.

I.

The Federal Ascendency of 1812.



WILLIAM JONES, of Providence, was not only the first, but the last and only Federalist Governor of Rhode Island.

Governor Jones doubtless owed his election to the passage of the “Embargo Act,” and other acts of like character by Congress, and the support given these measures by the Strict Construction or Jeffersonian Party, then known as the Republican, now as the Democratic Party, as a measure of retaliation against Great Britain for persisting in the impressment of American Seamen. Congress on the fifteenth of April 1806, passed a resolution, prohibiting the importation from Great Britain or her Colonies, or from any other countries, of certain articles of British manufacture. The Republican party and its predecessor, the Anti-Federal party, had elected the five General State Officers and the ten State Senators, then elected on a General Prox, since Rhode Island had been a member of the Federal Union except in 1799, when George Brown, of South Kingstown, a Federalist, defeated Samuel J. Potter, for Lieutenant Governor.

The provision of the Charter by which each of the original towns, Providence, Portsmouth and Warwick, were entitled to four each and Newport, to six Representatives; while but two Representatives could be elected from any other town in the State, a decided advantage to the Federalist party in the semi-annual contests for the election of members of the House, the four towns named being almost certain to return Federalist members. Only a freeman could vote and a freeman must be a freeholder or the eldest son of a freeholder. The country towns gave a larger vote than the commercial towns in proportion to the population. In order to control the Grand Committee, the Federalist needed more than ten majority in the House. From October 1790, until October 1802, with the exception of from May to October 1795, and from February to May 1797, the House elected Federalist Speakers; but at the October Session, 1802, Constant Taber, of Newport, Republican, was elected Speaker and the Republicans retained control of both branches of the Legislature until 1806, when Elisha R. Potter, of South Kingstown, was elected Speaker. In 1804, the Republican Electoral Ticket had met with no opposition from the Rhode Island Federalists and James Fenner, and Benjamin Howland, Republicans, had defeated Christopher Ellery and Asher Robbins, for United States Senators. Joseph Stanton, of Charlestown, and Nehemiah Knight, of Cranston, Republicans, were the same year elected Representatives to Congress without opposition.

The "Non Importation," resolution passed the United States Senate by a vote of nineteen to nine, Senator Howland voting for the resolution and Senator Fenner not voting. In the House, the resolution passed by a vote of 93 to 26, Representatives Stanton and Knight voting for the bill.

Notwithstanding the votes of Messrs Stanton and Knight in favor of the "Non Importation," resolutions, Nehemiah Knight and Isaac Wilbur, Republicans, defeated William Hunter and Thomas Arnold, Federalists, for Congress at the August Election, 1806, although it took two trials to elect Isaac Wilbur.

In the spring of 1807, a number of Federalists were elected State Senators, on the regular Republican prox. William Jones, was elected a member of the House from Providence, and Elisha R. Potter, was elected Speaker of the House, but the Republicans controled the Grand Committee and Elisha Mathewson, a Republican, was elected to the United States Senate, in place of James Fenner, resigned.

In 1807, Great Britain, by "Orders in Council," prohibited American vessels from entering any port in Europe, except in Sweden. France replied by the "Milan Degree," ordering the capture and sale of all American vessels which intended entering British Ports.

December 21, 1807, Congress passed the "Embargo Act," forbidding the departure of any vessel from the United States for a foreign port. The Embargo Act passed the United States Senate, by a vote of 22 to 6. Senators Howland and Mathewson voted for the bill. In the house the bill passed by a vote of 82 to 44. Representatives Knight and Wilbur voted in favor of the bill. No member of the Rhode Island delegation in Congress took part in the debate pending the passage of the bill.

In the spring election of 1808, the Federal prox was successful. There was no contest for the five General State Officers. Governor Fenner, Secretary Eddy, and Treasurer Taber, Republicans; Lieutenant Governor Martin, and Attorney General Burrill, Federalists; Senators, Daniel Babcock,

James Aldrich, William Waterman, William Reynolds, Oliver Gardner, and Thomas B. Hazard, were on both proxies. At the August election, Elisha R. Potter, of South Kingstown, and Richard Jackson, Jr., of Providence, Federalists, were elected to Congress by some 400 majority over Jonathan Russell and Isaac Wilbur, Republicans.

The vote of Rhode Island in the Presidential election of 1808, showed that the change of political sentiment in the State since the last Presidential election had been decided.

The Federalists Ticket bore the heading, "True American" and the motto "No Foreign influence, No Embargo, No Land Taxes."

The Federalist candidates for electors were: Thomas P. Ives, of Providence, James Rhodes, of Warwick, Christopher Fowler, of Newport, and Thomas Noyes, of Westerly. The Republican electoral candidates were the same who had been unanimously elected four years before: Constant Taber, of Newport, James Helme, of South Kingstown, Benjamin Remington, of Warwick, and James Aldrich, of Scituate; all men of decided Anti-Federalist stamp. The Federalist majority was 386 in a total vote of 5758.

November 5, 1808, Francis Malbone, of Newport, Federalist, was elected United States Senator by a majority of six.

February 21, 1809, William Jones, was elected speaker of the House, to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Elisha R. Potter.

In the Spring of 1809, the Federal Prox, which bore the heading "American Republican and Federal Prox," was again successful, although the five General State Officers were elected without opposition.

At various times during the summer and autumn of 1808, and especially at the semi-annual election in August, the

towns of Providence, North Providence, Cumberland, Barrington, Warwick, East Greenwich, South Kingstown, Exeter, Richmond, Hopkinton and Westerly; passed resolutions and adopted memorials and petitions to the General Assembly all pointing to the Embargo system as the principal and prominent source of their privations and sufferings.

At the October Session these memorials, petitions and resolutions were presented to the General Assembly. The resolutions adopted by the Town of Providence were presented by William Jones, who made an address that has never been published. The manuscript copy is still in the possession of one of his descendants. Some quotations from that address will illustrate the sentiments of the Rhode Island Federalists upon the embargo question.

"The petition I have the honor to offer is from the Town of Providence, with whose rank in the State this House is sufficiently acquainted. I shall therefore only say, that it has never been charged with withholding its aid either in money or personal sacrifice for the welfare and happiness of this State.

"The evils that give rise to this petition are great, the privations are so severely felt that they call aloud for redress. Our National Constitution, Our Palladium, Our dearest rallying point is violently attacked, Our commerce, the main spring of New England's existence is destroyed, Our merchants property is perishing at the wharves and its owners becoming bankrupt. Our traders are obliged to turn speculators, Our honest artzans, mechanics and laborers can find no employment and misery and starvation are the consequences. Why is all this? If there existed a solid reason for it and a reasonable person to offer it, It would command my silence. The idea of a political embargo I detest. Why does it now

exist? It was conceived in iniquity and brought forth in sin. Congress had an undoubted right to make an experiment, but we have an act laying an embargo an indefinite time. But when protests are offered what are their arguments? If the embargo is abandoned, a war with Great Britain must follow and for what reason, I see none? Why not negotiate as better men in better times than these have done? It is said,

“We have been injured, insulted.” Agreed, and because of this, shall we never adjust our differences.”

The General Assembly appointed a committee to consider these petitions, memorials and resolutions. That committee, of which William Hunter was chairman, reported at the February Session. Some quotations from the report of the committee throw light upon the political issues of that day.

“It would be a paradox in the history of the human mind if a people who from the foundation of their government, have ever heretofore manifested the most warm and zealous attachment to civil liberty, should regard with indifference its extinguishment. It would betray an ignorance of their true interests, if they did not esteem the more perfect union of these States, as it is declared and provided for in the Federal Constitution, as the parent and perpetrator of their political prosperity, that it would be a reflection on their discernment and sagacity if they did not foresee that the dissolution of the Union may be more surely and speedily effected by the systematic oppression of the government than by the inconsiderate disobedience of the people. The people of the State as one of the parties to the Federal compact, have a right to express their sense of any violation of its provisions. From an attentive perusal of the aforesaid petitions, your committee are already convinced that the people of this State are averse to a foreign war, unless that war be just, necessary and un-

avoidable. Our situation is exposed beyond comparison; more than any other section in this immense country. Our ports and harbors so convenient for naval stations, though neglected by the present administration, would as the history of the former wars evince, immediately attract the attention and facilitate the progress of an envading foe, and our capital towns and the whole line of our defenceless coast would exhibit a scene of plunder, bloodshed and desolation. The people are more decidedly averse to and more loudly deprecate a war with Great Britain, not that they are insensible to the wrongs and injuries they have suffered at her hands, or expect any favor from her friendship as distinct from her interest, nor merely because her means of aggression are more formidable and our prepared means of resistance less, but because it is apparent from the published diplomatic communications between that country and this, that another attempt made in the spirit of peace would be crowned with success, and that by a negotiation fairly and firmly conducted, the just and neutral rights of this country could still be established and secured. Their alarms on this subject are the stronger as a war with Great Britain evidently implies an alliance with France. This consequence is not denied and the design is by some openly avowed. France would introduce into our country her generals, her tactics, her artillery and her armies, and what would be far more fatally dangerous, her diplomatic skill, her deceptive policy, her deluding and fascinating arts and if the resistance of a brave people with a happier fortune than of so many other nations, should save our liberties and the beloved political institutions from being buried under the trophies of a splendid and victorious despotism, yet the secret renown of a foreign political influence would circulate in our systems, inflame our party animosities and finally dissolve

our National Constitution. Your committee conceive that it would be unnecessary to show that the Embargo Laws are oppressive, tyrannical and subversive to constitutional rights."

The General Assembly adopted resolutions embodying the sentiments of this report and memorialized Congress, asking for a repeal of the Embargo Acts. Similar memorials came from other parts of New England.

The election of Madison and Clinton had indicated that the American people were in favor of vigorous measures against England, and instead of repeal, in January 1809, Congress passed the "Enforcing Act," providing heavy penalties for evasions of the Embargo Act. The Enforcing Act prohibited the exporting of any goods upon any vessel, boat or vehicle out of the United States. Collectors were authorized to seize all such goods apparently on their way to foreign countries.

The Embargo act bill passed the United States Senate by a vote of 20 to 7. Senator Mathewson voting with the Federalists and Senator Howland not voting. In the House of Representatives the bill passed by a vote of 71 to 32. Isaac Wilbur voting for and Richard Jackson, Jr., against the bill. Mr. Jackson having been elected in August 1808, for the unexpired term of Nehemiah Knight, deceased.

A "Non Intercourse Act," was passed in February 1809, in the Senate by a vote of 21 to 12 and in the House by a vote of 81 to 40. Senators Howland and Mathewson, and Representative Wilbur voting in the affirmative and Representative Jackson in the negative.

In March 1809, the Embargo was removed except as to Great Britain, but was restored later in the year owing to a failure of negotiation with Great Britain.

At the Spring election, 1810, the Republican Prox was

successful. Lieutenant Governor Martin was defeated by Isaac Wilbur, whose votes on the Embargo measures had made him particularly obnoxious to the Federalists. There was no opposition to Governor Fenner and the other general State Officers. The ten Senators were Republicans, and Nathaniel Hazard, a Republican, was elected Speaker of the House.

In August, Elisha R. Potter and Richard Jackson Jr., Federalists, were returned to Congress by a small majority.

At the October Session, the Federalists again had a majority in the House and William Jones was elected Speaker. April, 1810, Congress passed an Act by which the Non Intercourse act expired with the end of the Session, but Ships-of-war of France and Great Britain were excluded from its provisions and during the year France seized a large number of American vessels, charging them with trading in British merchandise and sailing from British Ports under forged papers of the United States. To the remonstrance of the United States against this conduct France issued in May the "Rambouillet Degree," ordering the sale of 132 American vessels, worth with their cargoes \$8,000,000, and extending a like confiscation to all American vessels which might thereafter enter any port in the possession of France, but in consequence of negotiations with France, in November, President Madison issued a proclamation declaring the Decrees of France against American commerce repealed.

On the 16th. of June, Great Britain followed by announcing a blockade of all European Ports in league with France, and forbade vessels from entering them and France in return on the 21st. of November declared by the "Berlin Degree," a blockade of all British Ports.

As the time of the Spring election of 1811 approached, the commercial interests of the State put forward the "American Prox." The candidates on this prox were all Federalists. James Fenner, a Republican, who had been Governor of the State since 1807, had met with no opposition since his first election, although the Federalists had elected the State Senators in 1808 and 1809. This year his opponent was William Jones. Lieutenant Governor Simeon Martin, of Newport, who had been defeated by Isaac Wilbur the year before, was again a candidate. The State Senatorial candidates were men who had long been prominent in State affairs. Moses Lippitt of Providence, James Rhodes of Warwick, Daniel Babcock of Hopkinton, Nicholas Taylor of Newport, Richard Steere of Gloucester, Edward Manton of Johnston, William D'Wolf of Bristol, Oliver Gardner of North Kingstown, John Cooke Jr. of Tiverton, and Jeremiah Brown of South Kingstown.

The majority for Governor Jones was 172 in a total vote of 7598, the largest vote ever polled in the State.

In 1812, Governor Jones again defeated James Fenner by a majority of 234.

Simeon Martin, Lieutenant Governor, was opposed by Daniel Champlain of Exeter. Attorney General, James Burrell, Jr., by Asher Robbins.

The year previous, Daniel Babcock, Nicholas Taylor, and Oliver Gardner, had resigned as members of the State Senate, Nicholas C. Northup of North Kingstown, Benjamin Gardner of Middletown, and William Rhodes of Westerly, had been elected to the vacant places.

This year, 1812, Richard Steere, John Cooke, and Jeremiah Brown, retired from the State Senate, and Robert Harris of Smithfield, Joshua Peckham of Newport, and Rowland Hazard of South Kingstown, became members.

The Federalist Prox of 1812, bore the heading "American Prox." Governor Jones was again elected.

Congress passed a bill for a second Embargo, April 4, 1812, to last 90 days. It prohibited the sailing of any vessel for any foreign port except foreign vessels. This Embargo, was declared to be preparatory to a war with England. Senator Howell voted for and Senator Hunter against the bill. In the House Messrs Potter and Jackson voted against the bill. The bill passed the Senate by a vote of 20 to 13, and the House by a vote of 70 to 41.

An act declaring war between Great Britain and her dependencies, and the United States and their territories was signed by President Madison, June 18, 1812. The bill passed the National Senate, June 17, 1812. Senator Hunter, a Federalist, and Senator Howell, a Republican, both voted against the passage of the bill. The vote of Senator Howell upon this bill was doubtless cast in the negative, in deference to the sentiments of his Rhode Island constituency and the vote of the General Assembly deprecating a war with Great Britain.

After the declaration of war, Governor Jones called a Special session of the General Assembly. The message of Governor Jones upon that occasion although brief was expressive.

"My reason for calling you together at this eventful period out of the usual course, is to enable me to lay before you a letter from the Secretary of State, with the President's Message and the Act of Congress, declaring war against the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the dependencies thereof. I also lay before you a letter from the Secretary of War requiring that this State's quota of Militia as ordered at the May Session, should be placed under the command of

Major General Dearborn of the United States Army, and the General's letter requesting me to order them to Newport into the service of the United States. This movement of the General Government in an appeal to arms, cannot fail to prove very distressing to those portions of our State more immediately exposed. Notwithstanding our unremitting endeavors to avoid this greatest of human calamities God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to visit us therewith. Your fellow citizens now look up to you to suggest such measures as are in your power to prevent as far as possible its evil effects on the United States in general and the State of Rhode Island in particular. Any measures taken by you calculated to effect those objects will receive my hearty concurrence."

The General Assembly appointed a Council of War and designated the 23d. day of July as a day of fasting and prayer.

In the Presidential election of 1812, the Federalist ticket bore the motto "Clinton Peace and Commerce," while the Republican electoral ticket was headed "Whig Electoral Ticket." The Federalist papers in Rhode Island designated their party as the "Peace party," and the Republican party as the "War party."

The Peace party received 4032 votes and the War party 2084.

The Federalist Prox of 1813, was the same as the year before and was headed of follows: "American Prox." "Friends of Peace, Union and Commerce."

Benjamin Gardner and William Rhodes, members of the State Senate resigned in June and George Irish of Middletown, and Thomas Noyes of Westerly were elected in their places.

There was no Republican or War nomination.

In 1814, the heading of the Federal Prox was as follows: "American Prox." "Friends to Union, Peace, Commerce, Agriculture and Manufacturers." All the candidates were the same as in 1813. Senator William D'Wolf resigned in June and Sylvester Child, Jr., was elected to the vacancy. Samuel W. Bridgman was elected Attorney General.

The Convention known in history as the "Hartford Convention," but which was called and held as the "New England Convention," met at Hartford, December 16, 1814. At the October Session of the General Assembly of Rhode Island, Benjamin Hazard, Daniel Lyman, Edward Manton, and Samuel Ward, had been elected delegates from Rhode Island.

In 1815, the Federal Prox was headed "American Prox. Real Friends of the People."

No changes in candidates were made.

The Republican prox was headed as follows: "Farmers Prox. Peace, Union of the States. No Hartford Conventions."

Peleg Arnold was the candidate for Governor.

The Federal Prox was successful.

In 1816, the Federalist party won their last victory in Rhode Island.

The prox of that party this year bore the heading "Federal Republican Prox," and William Jones, who had been Governor since 1811, received 332 majority over Nehemiah R. Knight, the candidate for Governor on the "Republican Prox." Jeremiah Thurston of Hopkiuton, was elected Lieutenant Governor, his opponent being Thomas G. Pitman of Newport. Samuel Eddy, who had been Secretary since 1797, was also on the Republican Prox. Samuel W. Bridgman was elected the third time as Attorney General and William Ennis of Newport, his sixth term as General Treasurer. The ten State Senators were men who have left their impress

upon the history of the State and their respective Towns. Nicholas Brown of Providence, James Rhodes of Warwick, Audley Clarke of Newport, Robert Harris of Smithfield, William Steere of Gloucester, Sylvester Child Jr. of Warren, Nicholas C. Northup of North Kingstown, Thomas Noyes of Westerly, Rowland Hazard of South Kingstown, Stephen T. Northham of Middletown.

Notwithstanding the success of the Federalists in the spring election, there was no opposition to the Republican electoral ticket in the fall of 1816, although Rufus King carried three States and received 34 electoral votes and at the Congressional election in August, James B. Mason, and John L. Boss, Jr., the Federalist candidates for Congress had been elected without opposition.

In the spring election of 1817, Governor Jones was defeated by Nehemiah R. Knight, by a majority of 68. The ten Senators elected were Republicans. viz: Philip Martin of Providence, Ebenezer Barney of Coventry, Samuel Vinson of Newport, Thomas Buffum of Smithfield, Robert Hopkins of Foster, William Pearce of Bristol, Benjamin Smith of North Kingstown, John Watson of South Kingstown, William Wilbour of Little Compton, Stephen B. Cornell of Portsmouth,

The Federalists retained control of the House and elected Benjamin Hazard of Newport, (one of the delegates to the Hartford Convention) Speaker.

Governor Jones retired to private life, with the esteem of political friends and the respect of political enemies.

*A PLAN OF A MILITARY AND NAVAL
CAMPAIGN, 1782, IN NORTH AMERICA AND
THE WEST INDIA ISLANDS;*

with a Comment on previous Campaigns.

Presented by Henry E. Turner, M. D., of Newport.

Copy of a Letter, written by General O'Hara to Gen'l Conway, Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Forces, on board the Orpheus, Frigate, Capt. Colpoy's, from Charlestown to Barbadoes & Antigua, May 1782.

[written by Josiah Paul Collin, Secretary to General O'Hara.]

In a Cover marked, Orpheus at Sea, No. II .

Orpheus at Sea.

The first time you find yourself upon the azure main, in some of your Trips to Jersey, as tired as I am, with gazing at the sky & waves, and all the wonders of the mighty Deep, then, & not before, can I venture to request you to look into this Letter.

I have been employed lately, in so active, turbulent & busy a scene, that I quite rejoiced at the temporary respite, I flattered myself I should indulge in, when embarked on the high seas, in my way to the West Indies, where, in the capacity of Passenger, I could have no sort of employment, & very little to think of, & should remain, what I conceive must be