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MATTER ILLUSTRATING THE HISTORY
OF THE

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

A HISTORICAL MAGAZINE FOR THE PEOPLE

*A record of measures and of men,
For twelve full score years and ten.*

JAMES N. ARNOLD, EDITOR

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an encouragement to enable the Register to gather new power for its future usefulness; will they use their influence in way of procuring new patrons.

Those who know from personal knowledge, how many and how perplexing are the obstacles about the path of the Register, wonder how the work has lived as long as it has, and claim that it is the great firmness and iron will of the Editor that alone has made it what it is. So convinced were they of the real worth of the publication, that a few of them have favored it with means for immediate use and more have promised to do something in the near future. For all these favors, the Register returns its soul-felt thanks.

Reader, the Register does not wish to be classed as a speculation, neither does it wish to be called a beggar; but wants to render a just value for all favors received. It cannot live of itself, but its patrons can give life and make it live an honor to itself, as well as a pride to them.

Dear Patrons, now is the time to show your good will, and now the opportunity to do a good deed and for a worthy purpose. Now you can make the Register just what you will have it. You have a publication that has battled for Rhode Island honor, and intends to still continue the combat, and stands always ready to defend our State and her Institutions.

While the Register is published there will be found one publication that will defend our State's history and people. Help us now and we will help you. Stand firmly by us and you shall see how firmly we will stand by you and yours. Have faith in us. Feel for us at the heart and feel a little for us at the pocket book. Please do not forget the Register and help it now in its time of need, and please do what you can for us in the future.

THE Narragansett Historical Register.

A Historical Magazine for the People.

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PRE-HISTORIC RHODE ISLAND.

By the Editor.

IN the Narragansett Country there is perhaps opened to the scholar who delights in such things, as rich a field for prehistoric study, as can be found anywhere in New England and it is indeed strange to me that this rich field has been hitherto entirely unexplored.

To begin this interesting study, let us commence with our own immediate predecessor here, the Indian. This race of mankind, has left his names upon our rivers, bays and lakes, and even many of our states carry names that he gave. In the nomenclature of our country, how much is here for a study and how many interesting and important facts they bring to mind? Truly it can be said, "The author has gone, but the word he spake is yet here."

Here then at the beginning of our theme we find sermons standing out from single words.

The Indians of Narragansett as were represented by Canonicus and Miantonomi in the days of Roger Williams, claim that their tribe had not possessed the land here but a few generations. They had worked their way from the interior. They claim to have driven out a powerful people. These claims have been doubted by some annalists who think the Indians have colored somewhat their narratives. Perhaps these annalists judge the Indians by themselves, which has been said to be righteous judgement.

If we will bear this claim in mind and then read the description of the aboriginals as portrayed by the Norsemen from time to time, it will be seen that this description does not agree with a description of those people who were our own immediate predecessor here.

The narratives of the Norsemen have been doubted by some authorities, but why they should not be as correct as the narratives of the travels of men of other nations, appears to me singular, to say the least.

The description of the system of worship as found among the aboriginals here, is identical with that of the Sun Worshipers as practiced by the Mound Builders. The Norsemen have fully described this system of worship and these people, and the Indian claiming he had reached the shore not many generations ago are in harmony with each other and so closely do they agree, that we can approximate to within a few years the time of the victory of the Indian over the Mound Builder, All this goes to show that the two narratives are strictly true.

If we will compare what the Norseman has said in regard to their strength and power, it will be found that the Indian had not a weak foe by any means to combat with, and here the two narratives are in remarkable harmony with each other.

In brief, we think that the Norse Legends or more properly speaking, Narratives, and the Indian stories of former races whom they conquered, are entitled to more credit than is actually given to them by historians, yet we are pleased to note that latter historians who have made themselves familiar with both are more disposed to give credit to these narratives.

It is a striking fact in the history of man, that when one nation conquers another, and the conqueror occupied the land of the conquered, that he is sure to adopt more or less the religious symbols of the defeated. When this fact is duly considered the reason of religious similarities in widely separated tribes becomes apparent.

To make this plain we will take a striking example. In the Narragansett Country there are several sacred circles and here is the Indian tradition concerning them.

When an Indian dies it was believed that his spirit did not depart finally for the Happy Hunting Grounds or Paradise, until he had received the blessings of the tribe. While his spirit was hovering over the remains his family and friends viewed the body of the departed in awed silence. At the appointed time, the remains were conveyed to this place and deposited in the centre of the circle. The interlocutor then took his assigned place. He then commenced a series of questions, that would startle a preacher of today could he hear them or were they asked him. Instead of hearing the usual eulogy that appears so popular today, the old Indian Priest would commence by enquiring for the bad deeds that had been committed by the departed and sternly commanded they should be told him then and there. Nothing was to be kept back under penalty of losing their future happiness in the world to come, for this was considered the great unpardonable sin that could not be forgiven. Here certainly was

the strongest inducement that could ever be offered to tempt a man to tell the truth.

If it was found that the departed was unworthy, then he was pronounced *Bad Indian*, and his spirit was ordered to depart without the message. If he was found worthy then the message was given him.

It was a fraternal greeting from the living to those who had gone before. This made the worthy a messenger and this was the last work he could perform for the living.

After the message had been given, the remains were accompanied to the place of burial and deposited. The message was repeated and for the last time, and he charged to remember. A supply of food and water was placed with the body sufficient to last the journey to Paradise and the admonition was given to make haste.

Here comes in the singularity of this ceremony. It is identical with that of ancient Egypt, when Memphis was the great city of the dead, and when the departed was rowed across the Sacred Nile to the Sacred Gate, where they were met by the Interlocutor, who asked these very questions and sternly commanded the truth to be told him under a similar penalty. If found worthy, the departed was bade welcome to the last resting place prepared for the just and the true. If unworthy, depart ye accursed to the place prepared for the condemned. Here is the idea from whence came the future life in Heaven and in Hell.

The query now arises how came this eastern custom engrafted so strongly upon the religious ideas of the people found here, and from whence did they obtain it? This we shall mention further on, but here we will briefly say, that this idea was certainly borrowed from nations now extinct.

These circles are perfectly round and we should think about fifty feet across. We intend to have an accurate measure of

these some time in the future. They appear to be all about the same size. These are the only remains of the work of the pure Narragansett Indian that are today, so far as we know in existence.

We are firmly of the opinion that our immediate predecessor here did not invent anything new in religious ideas but borrowed the whole from the one he conquered and we have no doubt that the conquered had far loftier ideas of right and wrong than his conqueror. These ideas became the booty and in this way the conquered again becomes the conqueror.

Of what kindred were these people we are now speaking of, whom our Indian conquered as we have in the course of time conquered him?

They were Mound Builders and their works are large and extensive in the Narragansett Country. The Norsemen describes scenes that harmonize with this people, and this comes down to a time that can be very closely approximated. The Indian had not occupied this place 175 years before the settlement here by the English. There is no way that these narratives can be made to extend beyond this period and we think they will fall inside this estimate. This shows a wonderful harmony with the Norse narratives.

It will be found, therefore, that the year 1470 was about the time that occurred this overthrow and the establishment of the Indian supremacy in the Narragansett Country.

This brings us to the query, from whence came these Mound Builders?

The subject now becomes interesting, for here begins to dawn upon us grand and lofty ideas of aboriginal life that we at one time did not think possible to have existed on

these domains we now claim as ours, and of which we are today enjoying. How many secrets O Earth, lie entombed in thy bosom? How many scenes hast thou witnessed here on these lands O Sun? How much hast thou written O Time on the silent annals of the past.

Ignatius Donnelly has published a work treating on Atlantis, which is indeed one of the most fascinating narratives ever written, and is worthy of being read by every scholar. Mr. Donnelly is right in his conclusions. He shows that a powerful nation existed on the great tropical shoal that covers most of the space between Northern Africa and Northern South America. He shows, and we think conclusively, that land existed here except a space of water one hundred and fifty leagues wide on the African side and somewhat wider on the American side which latter passage was broken by numerous islands. To the north and south of this belt was a wide expanse of water. With this land before them and inhabited as it was by a powerful people that was well known to the ancient nations of antiquity. These Atlantians had in the main the same religious ideas as the nations around them. They had pushed their conquests far to the west and when we come to test Mr. Donnelly's theory by the tradition of the Mexicans we find these people (the Atlantians), were known to them and they claimed they were the colonies of these people. With such a passage before them, what was therefore, to hinder the same religious ideas being planted on American soil that existed in Asia and Africa? Nothing.

It is now clear that through the Atlantians was transplanted the religious faith of ancient Egypt to America. These colonies having obtained a foothold in Mexico, they had to fight for existence with those nations here before them and as they conquered they extended their dominions, and

thus the centuries past away. This path was steady from the South-west to the North-east and in course of time they reached these shores.

We are convinced that Narragansett was the seat of the eastern Empire and narratives show that this conquest was pushed as far north from here as it was possible to go.

These people in their migrations carried their religious standard with them and as these symbols when they once become firmly settled in the heart of the nation will endure for centuries, we see no reason in the world to doubt the truth of this path of emigration.

The destruction of Atlantis in a night by the Gods was indeed an appalling catastrophe such as the world has never since witnessed.

The ancient Mexicans say that these people were a mighty band of warriors. that they had conquered many nations, that they had committed many cruelties, and so hard-hearted were they, that the cry to the Gods which the poor captive had sent up for a long period of years was at length heard by them and they decided to remove them in a night. The earth trembled and it seemed that the day of doom had come. When the earth was calm again, it was found that this great nation had entirely disappeared and that now the ocean rolled its waters over the land the Atlantians had once claimed as theirs. This catastrophe is remembered in all the western nations, but the Peruvians and Mexicans had the clearest and best narrative of the event. These people add that the Gods at that time decreed, henceforth the east and the west should forever remain separate from each other.

We have said that having built up colonies in Mexico, they worked this way to our own shores in the course of the centuries. Here in the Narragansett Country they founded the seat of a government. All this took time to accomplish.

It is conclusive that our Indians here had intermarried into the nation they conquered in time past, and of course they learned the direction of the emigration which was a distinct feature in the religious faith of the Mound Builders. These people had an annual festival, which perpetuated this event in their history. The Mounds were their altars and from the summits thereof they held worship and from here they looked reverently to the South-west, for there were the homes of their fathers and there the spirit of the child would fly for refuge when released by death from its earthly habitation.

They came on to these mounds from the north-east and when they marched on to their altar they would be like children coming home, and when after paying their respects they turned back, they faced the direction of the conquest.

This was indeed a beautiful symbol. A long look to the South-west, for, from that direction our fathers came. A long look to the North-east, for, in that direction we have ever extended our conquests. This with addresses appropriate to the occasion made this the Great Historic Field Day and the principle events in the nations history was in this manner brought to the comprehension of every mind.

These mounds in the Narragansett Country bear this mark. The approach was from the north-east so as to reverently face the direction of the home of their fathers, and when they were dismissed to face the direction of the conquest.

How natural and how beautiful this symbol!

The nation that came after them retained this symbol of the South-west. As the father came from that direction, so in that direction the child would return to its parents home.

At stated seasons adoration was paid to the Sun and Moon from these altars.

We think from the number of these Mounds in Narragansett that it must have been the seat of the Eastern Empire, and this is strongly confirmed by several circumstances and traditions of the Narragansett Indians.

These Mounds we speak of are round with a flat top. The Great Mound at Charlestown has a flat surface and is several acres in extent, and is indeed an altar fitted for any people who worship nature from her hills.

We call your attention to this fact, that the peculiar slope of the Narragansett Country is toward the South-west.

To occupy a land having this feature to a remarkable degree must have impressed the religious and historical fact upon the minds of the people with great significance.

Again, the idea of Eden which is a land whose waters flow to the four Cardinal points of the compass is here brought very conspicuously into view.

A third and very striking feature about this section of our State is its climate which is far warmer than that of the adjoining lands, and this has been called the "Summer Land" for centuries, and perhaps on this account.

The occasion of this perhaps has been the action of the Gulf Stream, which at this point makes a decided curve, and this curve would be the very means to bring the Gulf Wind over the land in such a manner as to gain its full benefit.

The peculiarity of climate has made the fruit grown here noted for its peculiar flavor and richness, and perhaps a greater variety of fruit can be produced here than anywhere else in this country. This peculiarity was noted by the Norsemen and by the Indians here also. These Indians gave the idea to our fathers which induced them to make the great planting of apple trees which trade in apples was once an important

item in trade here and the remains of these orchards are now visible in many of our country towns.

These people designated the Indians the "Wild Brothers," and we find several authorities that give them this title.

We want now to go back another step and take up a race of men that were here before the Mound Builders. These we shall call the "Druids of the West," or "Stone Worshipers." These people were Sun Worshipers in the purest form and the remains of their works are also numerous in Rhode Island.

Their Cromlechs can be found in southern Rhode Island, and we have evidence that their works are scattered over our entire State. We have no doubt that we shall discover more of these remains in the future, and that many will fail of discovery as they approach so near to nature.

Our studies so far lead us to this conclusion, that these people were identical in their manner of worship with those of the Ancient Druids of Britain.

Druidical authorities claim that Britain was once the great seat of worship for all Europe and from here went forth the spiritual law for all these people.

There are today in Wales a remnant of this Sect, and they worship in the same way and manner as did their fathers more than three thousand years ago.

A careful study of the Welsh Cromlech and drawings as described in illustrated papers, taken here on our own soil and compared with remains here will go far to convince one that the Druid or Stone Worshiper once held dominion here and these remains will be found as fascinating a study as one can well conceive.

To commence, let us take the rolling stones of which there are two classes among us. One is the flat rolling stone and

such a type as found at Apponaug and is known as the Drumming Rock. In Narragansett there are several more of this class. We are confident more can be found in other portions of the State.

Some claim these were used by our Indians and we have no doubt they were. This does not militate in the least against the fact that they might or were used by a nation or people before them.

Another class is the round boulder placed on the brow of a hill or on an open plain, but in all cases upon the flat surface of a rock. These have been thought by some authors to have been the work of nature only, but we are assured by those who have made this a study that they were placed there by man. That nature has done such work so near as to deceive one as to which was the work of man we admit. We are told this is a symbol of the Sun and when a smaller one of similar shape is near that the smaller one represents the Moon, and as such were used and revered by these people.

There are several examples of these in the Narragansett Country.

We suppose most of our readers will dissent from us, yet we are persuaded that if the Narragansett Indians made those rings on the Soapstone Ledge at Johnston, it was in commemoration of some religious symbol that they had obtained from some earlier nation. These rings are in strict harmony with that of the sacred circle of which we have already treated and it is plausible to think the two cotemporary. Yet if this was cut upon a harder stone we should without any hesitation place it in the age of the Stone Worshipers, and it is more than possible that they really belong here in this period.

The idea that an Indian made a pot, and then dug around it to get it out, is to me absurd. It seems to me the most

proper way, the piece should first be detached from the ledge and then worked out to a finish in such form as might be desired.

What were the object of these rings may well be asked here. They belong to the religious system of those people, and are a form of Sun Worship. The articles upon the Cup and Rings of this character that have been recently published are worthy of deep study and if one will take the trouble to read them, the Indian idea would become very strongly shaken.

We think that the Wolf Rocks in Exeter is one of the finest subject for study in the State. We have made several excursions here and every one has but deepened the interest. We firmly believe that this is an ancient Druidical Temple and that it was a fine one in its day, and was once highly revered as a holy place by a people whose history has been written and the book closed.

At what period these people came here we have no means at present of deciding definitely. We think however, these were the people whom the Mound Builders conquered

There is evidence extant to show that this form of Sun Worship was once prevalent over the whole of the United States. It would not be out of order to assume that this form of worship if it came from Britain must have reached these shores before the Mound Builders in order to have spread over such a wide expanse of territory here.

Another interesting query is, up to what period of time were these people here? The time cannot be so closely approximated, but have reasons for thinking that it reached up to a comparatively modern period. That the Indians were much inclined to favor this form of Sun Worship, and that they did really use forms that belong both to the Mound

Builders and the Druids is plainly evident. That they had a great many symbols that belonged to the Druids that has come down to the days of our fathers is also evident. It is proof also that this form of Sun Worship has come close down to our own times. The fact that this religious faith has been so recent here and so long obsolete in Europe, goes far to confirm the view that this form of Sun Worship came at one time from Britain.

From whence came the "Wild Brothers," has been often asked? The most plausible theory is, that they came from the far North-west having crossed over from Asia and worked their way steadily towards the South-east in the course of the centuries. They no doubt, as they worked their way southward and mingled with other nations, that they underwent very important changes in their religious philosophy, which finally produced a race of men combining different nationalities and coming down more or less to our own times.

Thus we have seen that there has been three different emigrations from three different sources that has reached our shores.

There is yet another form of ancient worship here which takes on a form of Sun Worship and is represented by Idols made of metal, clay, wood and stone. This phase of our study we have just reached and are now studying. We do not as yet feel confidence enough to venture a decided conclusion. We are in hopes however, to find something of deep interest in this new field of our resources.

How often have we wished that these granite boulders could for a season be gifted with speech and sight and could tell us what it had seen and heard. How interesting would

be that narrative, and how delighted we should be to hear its recital. How often have we regretted that these boulders have been doomed to perpetual silence. What a pleasure it was to us therefore, to find that man had laid a charge upon them and that they have remained ever faithful to that charge. That race of men who gave that charge have long since slumbered on the bosom of mother Earth. Even their nation has perished and even the one that succeeded them has laid down the burden of life with them. Still that place sacred so long ago in the past yet remains a faithful witness of their handiwork.

Thus we have briefly reviewed our subject. We assure our reader there is more here in Rhode Island that needs a study than people are generally aware of and we believe such a study should be undertaken. We have proposed to ourself to study the subject at every opportunity and could this subject be thoroughly investigated as it deserves to be, it would give great satisfaction to the investigator in a field not as yet explored, but to him whose inquiring mind turns to the history of the generations of men who years before the Pilgrims crossed the sea to find a home in the wilderness or the lone preacher who rode his ox to Attleboro Gore to escape from the "Lord Brethren" as he had escaped from the "Lord Bishops," or the apostles of civil and religious liberty among them, the discussion is full of grandeur and especially so if opens to us the question as to whether the land dedicated by Williams to religious freedom of worship had not for centuries been the great battle ground of control for the supremacy of creed and faith and symbol.

PROVIDENCE IN 1810 AND LATER.

By Henry A. Hewland.

SEVENTY seven years seems to the young a long time, but to some of us who can look back through as many years the time seems very, very short. It is however, nearly one third of the time from the first settlement of Providence. To the few who remember as far back, what I may relate I think may be interesting as we elderly ones love to dwell on the past in conversation.

To the younger generation it may be a satisfaction to learn of the past and to note the change in the part of the city of which I shall mainly speak.

Seventy seven years, and I may say eighty-one years and later, the vicinity of Weybosset street was the scene of my earliest years. Butler's wharf (now Hay street), was on the west side of it. The estate of Colonel Zephaniah Andrews my maternal grand-father was adjoining where in 1806 I became an inhabitant of the town of Providence. There was on the lot his mansion house, a two story house next above, and on the front a one story shop and a large store house and garden below the mansion. His estate ran to the channel, but was not built off to it as was Butler's.

At the foot of his garden there were stone steps that led down to the water, where the north side of Pine street now is. From these steps my first fishing was done for mummachogs with a pin hook, and from there also my older brother when about six years of age made his first voyage on the water in a wash tub, sailing out to the channel and floating with the tide up and under the bridge to the cove. He afterwards