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GEORGE L. MINER, *President*

FRANK L. HINCKLEY, JR., *Secretary*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

NATHANAEL GREENE'S LETTERS TO "FRIEND SAMMY" WARD . . . . .	1
<i>edited by Clifford P. Monahon and Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd.</i>	
BEQUESTS AND GRANTS . . . . .	11
CARIBBEAN PORTS IN THE FOREIGN COMMERCE OF PROVIDENCE . . . . .	11
<i>by Earl C. Tanner</i>	
<i>[concluded from October, 1955, v. 14, no. 4, page 108]</i>	
THE 134TH ANNUAL MEETING . . . . .	21
THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT . . . . .	23
REPORT OF THE TREASURER . . . . .	25
CATALOG OF THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY FURNITURE COLLECTION . . . . .	26
<i>by Ralph E. Carpenter, Jr.</i>	
NEW MEMBERS, EXHIBITION, LECTURES . . . . .	Back Cover

CARLO MAURAN

*The portrait of Captain Carlo Mauran reproduced on the front cover was bequeathed to the Society by his grandson, the late Mr. Frank Mauran. Carlo Mauran, son of Joseph Carlo and Olive (Bicknell) Mauran, was born in Barrington, Rhode Island, March 12, 1779, and died in Providence on November 27, 1844. Like many Rhode Islanders of the period he went to sea at an early age. By the time he was twenty-five he was master of a vessel, and later in partnership with his brother Joseph became one of the leading merchants and ship owners of Providence.*

# RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

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## NATHANAEL GREENE'S LETTERS TO "FRIEND SAMMY" WARD

*edited by CLIFFORD P. MONAHON and CLARKSON A. COLLINS, 3rd.*

AMONG the Society's manuscripts is a group of letters written by Nathanael Greene (then a young man with no thoughts of future military greatness) to Samuel Ward, Jr., son of Rhode Island Governor Samuel Ward. These letters were written while Ward, whom Greene often addressed as "Friend Sammy," was a student at Brown University, from which he was graduated in 1771, and the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, in which Greene became a major general and Ward a lieutenant colonel.

There was a close relationship, both social and political, between the Greene and Ward families. Nathanael's brother Christopher later married Ward's sister Catharine and after her death his sister Deborah, and during the period of the letters Nathanael himself was in love with a third sister, Anne Ward.

Much of the correspondence of General Greene that has been preserved is of a later date and deals with military matters. That with "Friend Sammy," despite frequent flowery and somewhat incoherent flights into the realm of philosophy, is personal and intimate, giving an insight into Greene's character and thought when he was a young man managing the family property at Coventry, Rhode Island.

In editing, minor changes in punctuation have been made for the sake of clarity, and obvious slips of the pen have been corrected. Unfortunately some of the letters have fallen prey to the collectors of signatures. They are, however, unmistakably in Greene's hand. The letters formed a part of the Ward Papers, which were purchased by the Society several years ago.

Spell Hall. [No date]  
[Coventry, R. I.]

If Coventry<sup>1</sup> ever was tollerable, it has now become insupportable. Nature was very sparing of her gifts in the first formation of the Globe, unless they lye conceal'd in the Bowels of the Earth, which possibly may be the Case, for the Face of Nature, seems to ware such a Ghastly Countenance, as if her Bowels was tortur'd with the most Excruciating pains, and Labourd to be delivered of some Valuable Treasure. If ever this should happen, I hope to be a Sharer, for I am sure I have sufferd enough to entitle me to a right. The Trees looks as surly, the Bushes as Sour and the Shrubs as Cross, if I happen to put my head out of Doors at any time, as if I had been their sworn Enemy. What particular spight they can have against me, I cant imagine. If they knew my pacifick disposition, I am sure they could not apprehend any injury. I am determind to Court their favour and to effect a reconciliation if possible for I like to Live in good fellowship, and more especially with things that appear so pregnant with mischief. This is agreeable to the Hottentot plan, who Worship the Devil rather than the Deity, for one they say is good and will do them no harm, the other must be prevented by kind and Courtly usage. I have but one respectful Tree on my plantation, that is a certain reverend old Oak, which has a peculiar Modesty at all Times and seems to be sensible of its condition, for when at any time he happens to be robbed of his bushy Periwig or Brawny Branches, how disconsolate and Ashamed I have seen it appear. I Love this old Oak for its Modesty and Diffidence. He has not half the Effrontry and Confidence of some of our little upstart pragmatical Shrubs that will stand and make mouths at one as they pass along, by the half hour together, and yet the old Tree is of more Value than a thousand of them. Here stop and rest a moment for I dare say you are Heartily tird, and I am sure I am Heartily Sick of such disagreeable Ideas.

Man for all his noble Nature and Dignified Reason is as Variable in his notions and feelings as any Creature perhaps in the Creation. He is perpetually falling out with him self, and sustains three or four Opposite Charactors every Day he Lives; nay very often he acts over these Charactors ten Times in a Day and is Chearful and Angry, pleased, and despairing all in the space of half an hour. In one of these fits I fell foul of poor Coventry and have sufficiently gratified my Ill Nature and now feeling a little better humourd, I propose a new Subject and that Shall be Friendship if you please.

<sup>1</sup>In 1770 Greene was placed in charge of the family estate and forge in Coventry, Rhode Island, where he lived until the outbreak of the Revolution in 1775.

The excellence of friendship is faithfulness. The affections of the human Soul is not Copious enough to enter into a Close connexion with many Persons. Our Sentiments are so Various Our Interests so Opposite, and our Views, ends, and designs so different, that we can scarcely go hand and Glove for one Day. I should be glad to Live in good fellowship with all mankind. But here I think my self at Liberty either to interest my self or not, just as my particular Circumstances may require. But it is not so in Friendship, for there seems to be but one Soul Occupying Two Bodies, and we are so deeply Interested in Each others happiness that one cannot be afflicted without the others feeling a Sensible pain and whenever we are reduced to the Necessity of Opposing our friends happiness from some prior Connexions or particular Circumstances, it damps the ardor of our friendship and Chills the Noble passion for Benevolence. But, O how must that Mind feel that finds his Boosom friend and Brother in Soul reduc'd to the disagreeable Necessity of disappointing him in a matter that his happiness ultimately depends upon. Think then how I felt the other Day when you exprest the difficulty you found in discharging your Duty and maintaining an equal balance between your friends. I think you have too Noble a Soul to basely prostitute that confidence reposed in the most refined Delicacies of friendship, and therefore have no doubt but that youl faithfully discharge your Duty with honour and trust, according as you stand related to the Objects. I have never yet Vouchsaft to solicit one Person (that I remember) to Interest them selves in my favour in my Addresses to your Sister.<sup>2</sup> And Although I should esteem such a connexion the greatest Blessing that could attend me here, I should sooner suffer my Heart to burst than adopt such an expedient. But was I disposd, or should I ever be, to increase my Interest by a third person you would be one of the first to whom I should apply my Self. The Choice of our Friends is one of the most interesting points in Life and nothing requires more deliberation and circumspection than that of choosing a boosom friend. If we are forward of contracting an Intimacy Let our judgment first examin with whom. There are fatal consequences attending a Rash Connexion as well as real advantages in a well grounded Union. Tis not he [who] makes the highest professions or greatest promises that is to be the soonest trusted, for let us consider betimes before we are ensnared or Seduced that there are more Companions in the World than good ones. I hope if you are convinced of my Love and regard for you, it hath been rather from my Actions than

<sup>2</sup>At the time when this letter was written Greene was carrying on an unsuccessful courtship of Ward's eldest sister, Anne (Nancy). He recovered from his disappointment and married Catharine Littlefield in 1774. Nancy married Ethan Clarke in 1776.

from my professions. If you please to reflect back, and examine my conduct through every stage since our Connexion first commenced you will find I have been rather Backward than forward of contracting too great an Intimacy before we both had time and Opportunity to examine each others Dispositions and Tempers, which is absolutely necessary to lay a lasting foundation for friendship. I thought I discovered some very valuable qualities in you, although you were very young that first created in me a desire to Contract an acquaintance. As I was the Eldest<sup>3</sup> I thought it my Business to make the first Overtures which accordingly I did and finding from acquaintance you answered my expectation, I gradually increased the freedom until time and intimacy formed a real Affection and fixed a Settled habit of friendship Which I hope may continue through all the Vicissitudes of imperfect Life, and that we may be supporters to each other in our prosperities, safeguards in our difficulties, counsellors in our Doubts, and comforters in adversities, and that you regard me as I do you. Then I shall be happy in your friendship, and it would hurt me very much if I did not think you did. It is late and I am sleepy. Therefore I'll conclude with wishing you a good Night and many Happy days.

N. Greene Jr

P.S. I have written to Nancy offering to stop the Correspondence if she thinks it most for her happiness. But I cannot help [wishing] a continuance & yet I don't if we must part for Ever

Coventry [No date]

Dear Orator

I received your Letter of Feby 6th as you said nothing of your Journey, I take it for granted you got Home safe. I should have written you an answer long since but have been engaged in the pursuit of a Searover who took into his Custody a quantity of Our Rum and carried it round to Boston (contrary to the Express words of the Statute) for Trial and condemnation. The Illegality of his measures together with the Loss sustained created such a Spirit of Resentment That I have devoted almost the whole of my Time in devising and carrying into execution measures for the recovery of my Property and punishing the offender—so much for the excuse.

I observe in your Letter the Strongest inclinations for obtaining a large fund of useful Knowledge to be drawn from reading History. If we act only for our selves, to neglect the study of history is not pru-

<sup>3</sup>Greene, who was born at the family homestead in the Potowomut section of Warwick, Rhode Island, in 1742, was fourteen years older than his young friend Samuel Ward, Jr.

dent: if we are entrusted with the cares of others it is not just. Ignorance when it is voluntary, is criminal, and he may be properly charged with evil, who refuses to learn how he might prevent it.

There is no part of History so generally useful as that which relates to the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of Reason, the successive advances of science, the Vicissitudes of Learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkness of thinking Beings, the extinction and beginning of Arts and all the revolutions of the intellectual world. Accounts of Battles and invasions seem to be the peculiar Business of Military Men, and the useful and elegant Arts should be the study of those who are to Govern the state and form the manners of Mankind.

I cannot help cautioning you against a practice which by habit may be so strongly confirmed as to prove prejudicial to your interest and Reputation. I mean that of being so confined to your Books as to neglect the converse of mankind. The faculty of interchanging our thoughts with one another, has always been represented by moral writers, as one of the noblest privileges of Reason, and it is that which more particularly sets mankind above the Brute Creation.

If we consider the whole scope of the creation that lies within our View, as in the natural and corporeal part, we shall perceive throughout a certain correspondence of parts, a similitude of Operations and unity of design; So in the moral and intellectual World we shall observe in Spirits and minds of men a principle of Attraction, whereby they're drawn together into communities, friendships and the various species of Society. This corresponding Social appetite in human Souls is the great Spring and source of moral Actions: it inclines us to an intercourse with our Species; and produces that sympathy in our Natures, whereby we feel the pains and joys of our fellow creatures. The benefit of conversation if there was nothing else in it, would be no inconsiderable improvement, for discourse creates a light within us, and dispels the gloom and confusion of the Mind; it raises Fancy, reinforces reason, and gives the production of the mind a Better colour.

Think not my dear friend because I caution you against evil, I think you already vicious. Before Habits are established, Friendship conferred and life planned into method, The infant mind is susceptible to every impression, whether good or evil exhibited to its view. The care of education is a work of the highest moment, as all the advantages or miscarriages of a mans life are in a great measure dependent on it. It is the duty of Parents in particular and Friends in general to infuse into the untainted youth early notions of Justice and honour, that so all possible advantages of good parts may not take an evil turn nor be

perverted to base and unworthy purposes.

The mind is to be made obedient to discipline and pliant to reason, while it is yet tender, and easy to be bowed but if we suffer ill principles to get ground on infancy, vice to debauch, or passion to pervert reason in that unguarded age; when we have once made an ill Child, it is foolish expectation to promise our selves he will prove a good man. Shall we wonder afterwards to taste the waters bitter, when we our selves have first poisond the fountain.

Study to be wise and learn to be prudent. Learning is not Virtue but the means to bring us to an acquaintance with it. Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and Knowledge without integrity is dangerous and Dreadful. Let these be your motives to Action through Life, the relief of the distressed, the detection of frauds, the defeat of oppression, and diffusion of happiness. Then shall you appear before God and men like Apples of Gold in pictures of Silver.

Men of great talents by nature and polisht by Art, if to these accomplishments be added that of a general acquaintance with mankind, are the most dangerous persons to be connected with unless they steadily persevere in the practice of Virtue. For they know the secret avenues to the human Heart and having the power to make the worse appear the better reason we are often betrayd before we conceive our selves in any Danger.

I love you with a brotherly love and wish your welfare, my best respects to your whole Family.

N. G. Jr.

It is not customary for me to write so bad a hand, but make no doubt if you take pains you'll find out the Contents

Now for Popes part: The Colonel is well very well, but much out of humour, the reasons I have not room to explain. The Squire & his Lady are both tolerably well together with their Children. They are all in Health at Potowomut except Perry who has been unwell all Winter with what the Vulgar call the Spleen. Jacob has lately been Sick but is restord to Health. We had a Letter from Christopher dated 26 Decem in good Health & high Spirits in Maryland.

Coventry September 24 1770

Dear Sir

I was much pleas'd Last Evening at the receipt of two of your Letters, but Inconceivably more so in Examining the Contents, Which represented to me an Author possesst of a fertile invention under the regulation of a Judgment that indicated and promis'd many advantages to Society if Virtue continued to be the Rule of your Conduct. Although I express my Sentiments freely, yet think not they flow from the Corrupt

fountain of Flatery or Insincerity, for that of all things I most abhor. For I verily believe its our incumbent duty to give Merit its due praise, and its also the duty of those that receives it not to Suffer their minds to be filld with Vanity and Ostentation upon which consideration I was induc'd to Speak my Oppinion being under no apprehension but that it would be properly receiv'd and prudently applied. Although I much admir'd your production Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee. That is for being so unmercifully severe upon poor Self. Oh poor Self, is there no one appears to defend thy Cause. If there is not, yet shalt thou be Conquerer. For as when a man undertakes to Quarrel with his Victuals is Convinc'd by Experience of his imprudence by the Injury he finds he has sustain'd, so Shall they be convinc'd who form a Resolution to Contend with Self properly considered. Therefore I must beg leave to dissent from you with respect to the Exercise of our Selfish principles for I do not consider them in that criminal point of Light that they appear to you in, and I apprehend if you'll only suffer yourself a moments recollection and consider what is the Spring of all Action you'll find they stand Bottom'd upon Self. But what renders many of our Actions Criminal is the unlawful Gratification of our passions and Sensual appetites to the great Injury and detriment of the more noble purposes of Self, and that Injury We sustain in Consequence of our preferring a present Scheme of pleasures to a future state of Happiness. This false Estimate Springs from our consulting our passions and appetites and not our Reason Which would inform us better. Its apprehended by some that all Religious acts are devoid of Self but I am so far from thinking them so that I consider them the most Selfish acts in Nature. For as Religion is Calculated as a medium for us to obtain Salvation by, The preservation of our Souls being a Subject of the highest Concern, Therefore there is no one Subject that we are so deeply Interested in as the discharge of all our Religious duties. For what can a man be Religious for but to recommend him self to the Favor of His God by which he expects (if he Succeeds) Everlasting Happiness. Thus we shall find by Examination that all our Civil, moral, and Religious obligations are discharged upon the Same principles. For if a man takes upon him the Sacred Carector of a Minister of the Gosple by which he is Expos'd to many perils dangers and distresses moreover he is Obliged to Walk Blameless with respect to the Laws of his Country. It is expected also that his Conduct should be so uniform as to Convince us from practical observations that he possesses every Human Virtue. Further more he must punctually Keep Inviolate the Moral and Divine Laws and all these things he is Strictly confin'd to the observance of. Now is not such a Restricted Life incompatible with

the present gratification of our Sensual appetites. It must be allow'd it is. From hence many have taken Occasion to say that such acts do not Spring from that common Selfish principle but if you'll Search from the Effects to the Cause you'll find their Origin to be at the Same Fountain. It is only their Views are more Extended. For no person would deprive them selves of the present Enjoyment of things unless they Had a prospect of a future advantage to result from that Restraint they Lay upon them selves. Therefore those persons who act in that Ministerial Capacity in the propagation of Theology must be Conciuous before they undertake such an arduous task, that it is a Service requir'd of them by their Creator and therefore their duty and Interest to Comply, for a Want of Compliance might very Justly Subject them to the Just Indignation of an offended Deity by which Offence they may Loos the Salvation of their Souls and as the Preservation of our Souls is of the Highest concern to our Selves. From that consideration there is a Freedom Effect'd to subject our Selves to all those Temporary Inconveniences in order to promote and Secure to our Selves a permanent Happiness. Methinks he that neglects the Nobler purposes of Life, by the pursuit of Transitory Pleasures (If there is a Volition in the mind) is not so Selfish as he Ought to be or he has but an incompleat Idea of the Consequence of our Selves to prefer our present pleasures to a future Happiness, when there is such a disproportion in the degrees of Quantity and Continuance. Thus you see how I extend the Idea of Self so as to Unite in one all the propertyes of the Body and the Faculties of the Mind and their various operations which union Constitutes but one proper Self. Self thus uniformly and Connectively Considered we shall find to be the Original Cause and Spring of all action or motion. For all Religious Services and duties, Self is promis'd a future reward and that future reward being of Such a Nature our present prospect of pleasure is Entirely Enveloped therein, and made Subservient to that Contemplative prospect of Felicity. For if we were not Confident that its absolutely necessary to subject and repress our Sensual appetites within certain Limitations, in order to Establish our Future Happiness, What cause should we have for doing of it, When we by that restraint are Subjected to many uneasy Sensations. Now as all our passions and appetites are put in motion by representing or proposing certain Objects and Subjects to the View of our Mind, Which Naturally Creates a desire of Gratifying ourselves in the Enjoyment of them, What is there to hinder us from a free indulgence therein. There is nothing untill there is something Newly proposed that will have a more powerful influence and operation upon us than the present prospect of pleasure has. Does not the mind here bring the two prospects in Contrast and by

its power of Comparing and Considering with it self which measure will most Effectually conduce to its happiness, from a resolution from that considerative View which to pursue. I am apt to believe it does, and if that Conclusion be just, it Necessarily follows that all our Thoughts and actions flow from a Selfish principle. Only the Enjoyment is propos'd to be Experienced at different Periods and enjoyed under different forms and Carrectors. For the mind is ever attentive to its own Felicity When our desires are agreeable to Rectified Nature, and the Lessor Considerations is obliged to give place to the greater, but what makes us to Mistake our true happiness, is, the powerful operation of our passions and prejudices which make the Lessor appear to be the Greater, and by that False representation we are decoyed. From what I have said it appears that all our Religious dispositions and Moral Conduct is Fundamentally Establish't upon a Self exalting Principle or a Natural Desire to promote our own happiness.

Therefore I think it may be Safely concluded that if there is any disinterrested actions they are of a Religious Nature. But as there dont appear to be any under a religious Carrector, Consequently there are none at all. For if Great and exalted Spirits undertake the pursuit of Hazardous Actions for the good of others, at the same time they have in View the Gratification of their passion for glory, and again if Worthy minds in the domestick way of Life deny them Selves many advantages to Satisfy a Generous Benevolence which they bear to their friends who are surrounded with distress and Calamity, do they not propose a greater happiness to result from the Contemplation of relieving our friends in distress than the Enjoyment of the Benefits bestowed could have afforded us. Thus you see there are no actions either practical or Speculative but that Self is the primary mover and first principles, and now agreeable to my Selfish principles being no longer able to please myself with writing and far from thinking the reading will please you I am determin'd to Quit the Subject, But not without first asking your pardon for Intruding upon your Patience and shall proceed to your Second Epistle upon a Rural retreat. I entirely agree with you in Sentiment respecting the happiness Enjoyed in a Country Life, but I do not apprehend my self so well Quallified to Relish them as you are being always accustomed thereto, for our Natures seems to require a Variety of Objects and Subjects to amuse our Selves with and as you Spend part of your time in the City and part in Country you thereby are Enabled from Comparison to determine the precise difference. But the Idea that I have formed of the difference Subsisting between a Court and a Country Life is as the Succession of fair Weather after a Storm, for a clear Sky and a Serener air Seems to diffuse a General

Joy unto all the animal and Vegetable World. Whereas a Storm is big with Horror and seems to portend immediate destruction and tho the Laws of Nature says this Succession is Necessary, yet they Cloath her face with a Certain Gloominess, which every animal is a Common sufferer in. Thus I compare a Country Life to a Clear Sky and a Serene air, for there and there only its to be enjoyed and which alone can Quallify our minds properly for Speculation, for here Nature seems to move Gently on undisturbed with Noise & tumult, and here we may Contemplate the beauty and order of the Creation untill we arrive to that pitch of Knowledge and understanding (in our Enquiry) that the God of Nature hath Quallified us to Soar too. Thus if we are amind to turn Our attention to the Annimal World the Country affords a Great Variety of Objects Which Objects if we are dispos'd to observe their progression and attend to the Laws of Nature we shall find the Living creatures observe the Laws prescribed them after their manner producing their own Species or if we are amind to attend the plants of the Earth and observe their Succession from age to age. From Small Seeds they spring up and proceed from Stature to Stature after their kinds till they arrive at the perfection assigned them. Is not this practical and Contemplative view of things, matter of Solid joy when Experienced with a placid temper of Mind. But to return to the Storm and the City and Enquire after their Similarity, a Storm is a State of Confusion, so is a City. A Storm often Changes the Face of things. So are the face of things often Changed in Cities by the tumults & uproars which they are Subject to from the Contention of Opposite Interests. A Storm is Necessary to promote Vegatable production in the Country. A City is Necessary to receive and Consume them when produced. Thus you see a Storm and a City are both Necessary to promote the Country Interest. I am now agoing to Greenwich which obliges me to Lay down my pen and I dare say you are not Sorry for it, but I do not intend to take my Leave of you till I have asked pardon for one of my usual Blunders that is for not Sending my Compliments to your father Family and in particular to Nancy & Kitty in my Last Letter, all which please to do at the receipt of this Letter in a duplicate ratio to atone for the former Neglect, and now being about to depart I must bid you farewell in an affectionate manner, and am with the greatest respect your sincere friend & Well Wisher

[Nathanael Greene, Jr.]

NB I have not time to Correct the Errors in this Long Epistle and therefore must Intreat you not to Expose it to any bodies View but your own Whose good Nature I dare say will Excuse them

#### BEQUESTS AND GRANTS

received July 1, 1954 — June 30, 1955

Henry D. Sharpe . . . . .	\$10,000
For general use (bequest)	
Frank Hail Brown . . . . .	2,000
For restoration and care of John Brown's chariot (bequest)	
William A. Wing . . . . .	1,000
For the purchase of genealogical books (bequest)	
Rhode Island Foundation . . . . .	1,425
For the renovation of the fourth floor for storage (grant)	

#### CARIBBEAN PORTS

IN THE FOREIGN COMMERCE OF PROVIDENCE

1790 — 1830

by EARL C. TANNER

[concluded from October, 1955, v. 14, no. 4, page 108]

#### DUTCH, DANISH, AND SWEDISH WEST INDIES EXCEPT SURINAM

In contrast to the British and French West Indies, the Dutch, Danish, and Swedish West Indies were fairly free from trade restrictions. St. Eustatius, Curaçao, St. Thomas, and St. Bartholomew were especially well-known for their hospitality to foreign shipping. In the early 1790's Providence carried on an extensive trade with the Dutch West Indies, especially St. Eustatius.<sup>32</sup> During the American Revolution this island had been converted by the energy of Dutch merchants into an *entrepôt* of extraordinary value to the Revolutionary cause, but an attack by the British Navy had put an end to this chapter in the island's history.<sup>33</sup> The new prosperity of the 1790's was terminated in another fashion. When war broke out, the French army immediately occupied Holland; in 1795 the French Navy occupied St. Eustatius. The effect upon the island's foreign trade may be judged from the table of arrivals at Providence.

<sup>32</sup>From 1783 to 1793, American vessels were not allowed to trade between the Dutch West Indies and Holland. They were, however, permitted to trade between the Dutch West Indies and the United States. Similar regulations were in effect at the Danish West Indies. Albion and Pope, *op. cit.*, 66-67.

<sup>33</sup>For general information on the Dutch West Indies, see Philip H. Hiss, *Netherlands America* (New York, 1943).

## ENTRIES AT THE PORT OF PROVIDENCE

*From the Dutch West Indies*

Except Surinam			
1790.....	1	1800.....	0
1791.....	5	1801.....	0
1792.....	13	1802.....	0
1793.....	6	1803.....	0
1794.....	8	1804.....	0
1795.....	1	1805.....	0
1796.....	1	1806.....	0
1797.....	0	1807.....	0
1798.....	0	1808.....	0
1799.....	1	1809.....	0
		1810.....	0
		1811.....	0
		1812.....	0
		1813.....	0
		1814.....	0
		1815.....	0
		1816.....	0
		1817.....	2
		1818.....	1
		1819.....	0
		1820.....	0
		1821.....	2
		1822.....	4
		1823.....	9
		1824.....	2
		1825.....	4
		1826.....	4
		1827.....	4
		1828.....	3
		1829.....	1

French occupation continued until 1801 when the island was seized by the British. At the Peace of Amiens, Holland recovered St. Eustatius, but lost it to the British again from 1810 to 1815. Meanwhile the role of *entrepôt* was taken over by others, and economic conditions on St. Eustatius became desperate. From the table of arrivals it will be seen that the Dutch West Indies enjoyed something of a revival in the 1820's; once again the explanation was the talent of the Dutch for operating a commercial depot. This time, however, the island to reap the profits was not St. Eustatius, but Curaçao. Of the thirty-three vessels that arrived in Providence from the Dutch West Indies between 1821 and 1829 all but three were from Curaçao. As the prosperity of St. Eustatius had been built on the American Revolution and the Franco-British hostilities of 1793, so the prosperity of Curaçao was built on the South American Wars for Independence.<sup>34</sup> The 1820's were years of extreme turbulence in Venezuela and New Granada. The area was secured from Spanish recapture by the victory at Carabobo in 1821, but political stability was still far away. Under the circumstances commerce with the mainland was difficult though profitable; Curaçao, being strategically located off the coast, quickly undertook the familiar role of broker.

Providence commerce with the Danish West Indies followed a different pattern as may be seen from the table of arrivals.

The decline of the Dutch West Indies was, in some measure, the occasion for the rise of the Danish West Indies.<sup>35</sup> As the demand for sugar increased and as one sugar-producing area after another was

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, *passim*.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, 104.

## ENTRIES AT THE PORT OF PROVIDENCE

*From the Danish West Indies*

1790.....	4	1800.....	4	1810.....	3	1820.....	3
1791.....	2	1801.....	11	1811.....	4	1821.....	1
1792.....	10	1802.....	8	1812.....	0	1822.....	1
1793.....	6	1803.....	10	1813.....	0	1823.....	1
1794.....	8	1804.....	11	1814.....	0	1824.....	4
1795.....	6	1805.....	11	1815.....	1	1825.....	1
1796.....	13	1806.....	3	1816.....	6	1826.....	5
1797.....	17	1807.....	9	1817.....	3	1827.....	0
1798.....	10	1808.....	2	1818.....	5	1828.....	1
1799.....	13	1809.....	1	1819.....	5	1829.....	0

temporarily eliminated, prices went up and remaining areas enjoyed high profits. Such was the case of the Danish West Indies from 1793 to 1801 and from 1803 to 1807.<sup>36</sup> Cotton culture, once important on these islands, was practically abandoned in favor of sugar during the Napoleonic Wars. In addition to producing sugar the Danish West Indies served as a major *entrepôt* for the exchange of European and North American goods. Finally, however, they suffered the same fate as their French and Dutch neighbors. They were seized and held by the British from 1801 to 1802 and from 1807 to 1815. The effect upon trade may be seen in the table of arrivals at Providence. After the war, from 1816 through 1820, the Danish West Indies made a fair recovery. This was due in part to their good location and their fertility, and in part to the fact that Denmark in 1815 imitated the Dutch by declaring St. Thomas wholly free of discriminating commercial restrictions.<sup>37</sup> A complete postwar recovery, however, was impossible, because other and better sources of supply had been discovered.

The Swedish West Indies; that is to say, St. Bartholomew, are interesting mainly because of a brief period of lively trade with Providence lasting from 1809 through 1812.<sup>38</sup> As may be seen from the table of arrivals, there was little trade between St. Bartholomew and Providence either before or after those years.

<sup>36</sup>For general information in the Danish West Indies, see Waldemar Westergaard, *The Danish West Indies* (New York, 1917).

<sup>37</sup>St. Croix was not entirely freed until 1833. *Ibid.*, 250.

<sup>38</sup>There is a good contemporary description of St. Bartholomew in George Coggeshall, *Voyages to Various Parts of the World* (New York, 2 ed., 1853), 151.



## ENTRIES AT THE PORT OF PROVIDENCE

*From the Swedish West Indies*

1800.....	0	1810.....	11	1820.....	1
1801.....	0	1811.....	10	1821.....	0
1802.....	0	1812.....	11	1822.....	0
1803.....	3	1813.....	2	1823.....	3
1804.....	2	1814.....	4	1824.....	3
1805.....	2	1815.....	4	1825.....	2
1806.....	3	1816.....	2	1826.....	1
1807.....	3	1817.....	0	1827.....	0
1808.....	2	1818.....	1	1828.....	0
1809.....	11	1819.....	3	1829.....	0

Most of the trade between Providence and St. Bartholomew falls into the period between the repeal of the Embargo and the outbreak of the War of 1812 and is to be explained wholly by the neutral character of the island. Trade with the British West Indies was forbidden by the Non-Intercourse Act and the Macon Act; and the French, Dutch, and Danish West Indies were mostly occupied by the British. St. Bartholomew became a major depot for indirect trade with the other islands. It should not be assumed, however, that all the American vessels clearing for, or returning from, St. Bartholomew actually visited that island. The following excerpt from a consular dispatch of the period indicates quite the contrary:

I think it my duty to state for the information of Gov't, that, from observations actually made during my residence in St. Barts', not more than one half of the Vessels that arrive and sail from the United States, reported from and cleared for S. Bartholomew ever were in the Island, they proceed direct to the islands of the Enemy and return from there under forged clearances, and I regret to say are in general owned by persons residing in the United States.<sup>39</sup>

It was universally recognized that the produce of St. Bartholomew was scarcely sufficient to maintain the island's population. St. Bartholomew's brief trade boom resulted wholly from the accidents of war.

## SURINAM

In the 1790's Surinam and Hispaniola were the leading sources of Providence sugar imports. The decline of Hispaniola has already been discussed; the fate of Surinam was different, but equally unfortunate. Surinam, unlike the Dutch West Indian Islands, was

<sup>39</sup>Nat. W. Strong, New York, N.Y., to James Monroe, Washington, D.C., Sept. 14, 1813, Consular Dispatches from St. Bartholomew at the National Archives, Washington, D.C.

notable for its production as well as for its trade. It was originally a British settlement, but was turned over to the Dutch in the seventeenth century in exchange for New York. In the latter part of the eighteenth century Surinam became very prosperous as a sugar colony and as may be seen from the table of arrivals at Providence attracted a considerable foreign trade.

## ENTRIES AT THE PORT OF PROVIDENCE

*From Surinam*

1790.....	6	1800.....	2	1810.....	3	1820.....	2
1791.....	14	1801.....	5	1811.....	1	1821.....	5
1792.....	16	1802.....	2	1812.....	0	1822.....	5
1793.....	16	1803.....	5	1813.....	0	1823.....	2
1794.....	13	1804.....	10	1814.....	0	1824.....	4
1795.....	15	1805.....	3	1815.....	0	1825.....	3
1796.....	15	1806.....	5	1816.....	0	1826.....	4
1797.....	15	1807.....	4	1817.....	3	1827.....	4
1798.....	11	1808.....	5	1818.....	4	1828.....	6
1799.....	8	1809.....	1	1819.....	5	1829.....	3

By 1796 the end was in sight, for in that year the British occupied the neighboring Dutch colonies of Berbice and Demerara.<sup>40</sup> From 1799 to 1802 and from 1803 to 1815 Surinam was in British hands. As may be seen, trade continued, though at a reduced level, until 1811, and then stopped wholly until 1817. After the Napoleonic Wars, Surinam, unlike Haiti, resumed its former status as a European plantation colony. Providence shipping returned to the familiar port of Paramaribo to renew the trade which had once been so profitable. The volume, however, was not equal to that of the 1790's. Indeed, it would have been negligible but for the interests of one Providence firm, Humphrey & Everett. Surinam, like the other sugar colonies, had lost most of its trade to a competitor.<sup>41</sup> That competitor was Cuba.

## CUBA

While the British, French, Dutch, and Danish West Indies were at their height of eighteenth century prosperity, Cuba was just beginning to emerge from three centuries of subsistence farming. The most forcible impetus to the development of Cuba was the occupation of

<sup>40</sup>After the war, Berbice and Demerara were retained by the British. For a general history of the Guianas, see James Rodway, *Guiana: British, Dutch, and French* (London, 1912).

<sup>41</sup>Hiss, *op. cit.*, 104.

Havana in 1762 by the British. The suspension of Spanish commercial monopoly during that period resulted in a startling increase in Cuban foreign trade and a corresponding increase in the public revenues.<sup>42</sup> This lesson was not entirely lost on Charles III, who was among the most progressive of Spanish kings. After restoration of his authority in 1763 he initiated a number of reforms which permitted relatively free trade between Cuba and several cities on the Spanish Peninsula. During the 1760's new products were introduced: coffee, honey, and beeswax.<sup>43</sup> Slave imports and sugar production increased throughout the latter part of the century, but foreign traders continued to be almost wholly excluded except for a time during the American Revolution.<sup>44</sup>

Then, in 1793, Spain declared war against France. Like the other belligerents Spain was obliged to open her Caribbean ports in order to prevent the complete economic collapse of her colonies.<sup>45</sup> This action had very little effect on trade between Providence and Cuba, since Spain was allied with England from 1793 to 1795; while the United States, during those years, tended to favor France. As the following table of arrivals will show, only an occasional Providence vessel found its way to Cuba during those years. More would undoubtedly have gone but for the fact that Spain joined with England in the attack on American vessels trading with the French West Indies.

In 1795 Spain made peace with France and consequently closed her Caribbean ports to neutral shipping. For the next two years imports and exports of foreign goods were permitted only by special license.<sup>46</sup> In 1797, however, war conditions caused the local authorities to take a chance on reopening Cuban ports, a measure which later received the approval of Charles IV.<sup>47</sup> The action was reflected in an increased number of arrivals at the port of Providence in 1798, but the following year the vacillating monarch withdrew his permission by means of a royal order, dated April 20, 1799. Fortunately the Cuban Captain General was courageous enough to sup-

<sup>42</sup>C. H. Haring, *The Spanish Empire in America* (New York, 1947), 340, 342.

<sup>43</sup>Willis Fletcher Johnson, *The History of Cuba* (New York, 1920), II, 225.

<sup>44</sup>According to one estimate, 320,000 slaves were introduced between 1791 and 1825, compared with 93,000 before 1791. A. G. Keller cited in Ragatz, *op. cit.*, 337.

<sup>45</sup>Ramiro Guerra y Sánchez, *Manuel de historia de Cuba* (Havana, 1938), 198.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 198.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, 198.

## ENTRIES AT THE PORT OF PROVIDENCE

## From Cuba

1790.....	0	1800.....	15	1810.....	19	1820.....	19
1791.....	1	1801.....	14	1811.....	14	1821.....	23
1792.....	2	1802.....	11	1812.....	11	1822.....	34
1793.....	2	1803.....	5	1813.....	10	1823.....	23
1794.....	1	1804.....	5	1814.....	7	1824.....	28
1795.....	1	1805.....	12	1815.....	8	1825.....	18
1796.....	3	1806.....	13	1816.....	15	1826.....	39
1797.....	3	1807.....	16	1817.....	26	1827.....	42
1798.....	6	1808.....	9	1818.....	25	1828.....	47
1799.....	12	1809.....	9	1819.....	17	1829.....	26

press the order, and the number of arrivals at Providence therefore continued to increase in 1799 and 1800. Vessels that might earlier have gone to Hispaniola, Guadeloupe, or Martinique were already trading with Cuba.<sup>48</sup>

At the same time, a tremendous impetus was given to Cuban production by the arrival of refugees from the successive cataclysms on the neighboring island of Hispaniola. The cession of eastern Hispaniola to France in 1795 was followed by Toussaint L'Ouverture's occupation of the entire island. This caused a large scale exodus, first of French then of Spanish planters, to Cuba and elsewhere. In 1802 the rout and consequent withdrawal of Leclerc's army caused many of the remaining French planters from the western end of the island to follow their former neighbors to Cuba. Cuban accessions of French and Spanish immigrants from Hispaniola have been estimated as high as 30,000. Both sugar and coffee production were greatly improved in Cuba by the newly arrived planters at precisely the time when competing areas were being eliminated by the hostilities of their European masters or by social revolution.<sup>49</sup>

It might be supposed that the government of Charles IV would have hastened to take advantage of the opportunity open to Cuba. Instead, the Peace of Amiens was made the occasion to prohibit foreign commerce. Once again the Cuban Captain General and his colleague, the Intendente, retrieved the error by suspending operation

<sup>48</sup>In the late 1790's, trade between the United States and Cuba was hampered by hard feelings over the Mississippi question. *Ibid.*, 200.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*, 200-204. It is curious that a commercial dictionary published as late as 1804 could offer the following not quite accurate observations on Cuba: "Although it is capable of raising sugar to supply all Europe, yet there are but a few plantations of sugar, and these insufficient for home consumption." J. Montefiore, *A Commercial Dictionary* (Philadelphia, 1804), 519.

of the decree with respect to North American vessels except when Spain was able to supply the needs of the island. As Spain was rarely, if ever, able to meet this condition, commerce with North America continued.<sup>50</sup>

Arrivals at Providence fell off somewhat in 1803 and 1804, perhaps reflecting a temporary revival of trade with occupied Surinam and a fairly active trade with the Danish and French islands. Cuban trade again increased in 1805 and held up remarkably well through the Embargo and the War of 1812. Arrivals during the Embargo are to be explained by a special ruling permitting ship owners to send vessels in ballast to collect unpaid debts. Arrivals during the War of 1812 were almost all Spanish vessels—the only notable invasion of foreign shipping at the port of Providence during the first three decades of the nineteenth century. The fact that Cuban trade held up so well between 1808 and 1815 demonstrates that the Spanish colony had achieved a clear ascendancy in the sugar trade. The island was conveniently located; its ports were accessible; its products of high quality.

After the War of 1812 Britain unintentionally contributed to the continuing ascendancy of Cuba by closing the British sugar colonies to American shipping. The new Republic of Haiti had practically withdrawn from sugar production and was exporting a relatively small amount of coffee. The French and Dutch West Indies were still suffering from the effects of prolonged enemy occupation. All that the king of Spain had to do in order to take advantage of these circumstances was to refrain from prohibiting foreign commerce. Ferdinand VII finally recognized the economic facts which his predecessors had failed to recognize. On February 10, 1818, he issued a decree which permanently established free foreign commerce.<sup>51</sup> So attractive was Cuba that a considerable number of Rhode Island families bought plantations on the island. Letters from Cuba to Providence describe plantation life of the period.<sup>52</sup>

From 1818 to 1829 Cuban arrivals at the port of Providence in-

<sup>50</sup>Guerra y Sánchez, *op. cit.*, 200-201.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 239.

<sup>52</sup>Many, perhaps most, of the Rhode Island settlers in Cuba were from Bristol. John C. Pease and John M. Niles, *A Gazetteer of the States of Connecticut and Rhode Island* (Hartford, 1819), 364. For a letter to Providence, see, Sara Jenckes, Plantation St. Cyielo, to Huldah M. Carter, Providence, R. I. Jun. 1, 1817 in the Updike papers at The Rhode Island Historical Society.

creased rapidly. Fluctuations in volume reflected world trade conditions rather than artificial trade regulations. Thereafter the Spanish government again embarked on a program of discrimination, which created serious unrest on the island and strained relations with the United States. Nevertheless, despite Spanish interference, Cuba had clearly inherited the trade of her Caribbean rivals.

#### MINOR CARIBBEAN PORTS

The Caribbean ports visited by Providence vessels with any frequency have already been discussed. It remains to mention briefly a few others. In the period from 1800 to 1830 nineteen vessels entered Providence from Puerto Rico. After 1815 the Captain General of that island made a particular effort to attract foreign shipping and to share, as far as possible, the new prosperity of Cuba.<sup>53</sup> The nineteen arrivals occurred in the following years:

1805.....	1	1814.....	2	1825.....	1
1809.....	2	1820.....	1	1826.....	1
1811.....	1	1821.....	1	1829.....	1
1813.....	1	1822.....	3	1830.....	1
		1823.....	1		
		1824.....	2		

The Venezuelan coast was occasionally visited by Providence vessels, though not often enough for any pattern to emerge. The following arrivals have been recorded:

1809—Cumaná	1813—La Guaira
1809—Barcelona	1824—Maracaibo
1812—Margarita (2 entries)	

Finally, Spanish Central America, which won its independence in 1823, was visited eight times between 1826 and 1828. Returns at the port of Providence were as follows:

1825—Omoa	1827—Omoa (2 entries)
1826—Omoa	1828—Omoa (3 entries)
1826—Truxillo	

#### SUMMARY

At the beginning of the French Revolution, the imperial policies of the major European nations, particularly Spain, France, and England, were determined by mercantilist concepts. This meant that the commerce of the Caribbean area was not free to respond to the

<sup>53</sup>The Captain General's proclamation is translated in the *Rhode Island American*, April 28, 1815.

laws of supply and demand operating in world markets, but was forced to conform to regulations designed to promote imperial interests.

Between 1790 and 1830 the stresses of war—the French Revolution, the Napoleonic struggle, and the Wars for Latin-American Independence—forced from time to time and in several places a relaxation of imperial regulations. When this occurred, trade flowed vigorously into natural channels.

The advantages of free trade, thus demonstrated to planters and imperial authorities in the Caribbean colonies, was further emphasized by the success of the liberal trade policies of the lesser colonial powers: Holland, Denmark, and Sweden.

For most of the Lesser Antilles, the Guianas, and Hispaniola, however, the economic benefits of occasional periods of free trade were offset by the ravages of war or by enemy occupation. More fortunate was the Spanish colony of Cuba, which, after three centuries of arrested development, was ready to embark upon a program of rapid economic expansion. The natural resources of the island were incomparably greater than those of its neighbors; the time was ripe; the Napoleonic Wars gave Cuba its chance.

When Napoleon was at last defeated and the princes of Europe prepared to reassert their authority at home and in their empires, the American colonies were almost unanimous in their protest. In Cuba, though the time for independence was not ripe, the people successfully resisted the reimposition of the most restrictive trade regulations. Thus it was that the ports of Havana, Matanzas, and Santiago remained open; and thus it was that Cuba replaced those earlier sources of tropical produce which had suffered the devastations of war, and some of which were again cut off from their natural channels of trade by mercantilist regulations.

These events, crucial in the history of the Caribbean and significant for the maritime history of the United States, are accurately reflected in the commercial records of the port of Providence.



## THE 134TH ANNUAL MEETING

THE 134TH ANNUAL MEETING of The Rhode Island Historical Society was held at John Brown House on September 28, 1955. President George L. Miner called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

The Secretary read the call of the meeting and declared a quorum to be present. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

Mr. Harold H. Kelly, treasurer, reported for the year ending June 30, 1955. [See page 25.]

The Membership Committee's report showed 146 new members, and a total membership of 1,652 at the end of our fiscal year, the largest membership in the history of the Society.

The Lecture Committee reported the total number of visitors and those attending meetings of all organizations held at John Brown House during the year was 3,846.

The Publication Committee reported that the Society had published four issues of *Rhode Island History* during the year and recommended that an index to the Quarterly be published to cover the years since 1946, when the last index was printed.

The report of the Building and Grounds Committee showed that expenditures of approximately \$9,000 have been made during the year for the maintenance of John Brown House and the grounds surrounding it, but the unusually large expenses during the year were due to the painting of John Brown House and damage caused by hurricanes.

The Audit Committee reported that the financial statements and records of the Society for the year ending June 30, 1955 had been examined and found to be correct.

Mr. Clarkson A. Collins III then read his report as Librarian. He described the work being done to microfilm the voluminous files of periodicals and papers published in Rhode Island, and stated that all current newspapers are being microfilmed resulting in a great saving of space. He told of recent acquisitions by the Society, including a hitherto unknown broadside printed at Newport by Solomon Southwick and dated March 26, 1776, the logs of three early Providence sailing ships, acquired at a recent auction, and gifts made by Clinton Prescott Knight, Jr., the late Professor Benjamin W. Brown, and the Rudolf F. Haffenreffer Foundation. He also told of the bequest made by Mr. William A. Wing, a former librarian of the Society.

Mr. Clifford P. Monahan then presented his annual report as director of the Society. He reported that the annual appropriation to the Society from the City of Providence had been increased to \$2,000. He stated that he would make his report very brief and not use up the time

of the lecturer, who was to speak after the close of the annual meeting. Without detail he summarized outstanding reasons for feeling that the year had been a good one: (1) Members had responded quickly to the appeal for funds to repair hurricane damage in a generous and unprecedented fashion. (2) Membership had steadily increased to an all-time high. (3) The Society had been generously remembered by legacies. (4) The Society was becoming increasingly better known all over the country as the center of Rhode Island documents, furniture, arts, and crafts. (5) The Society was giving increased service to the community and thereby justifying its existence.

As the members stood in respect, Mr. Frank L. Hinckley, Jr. read the report of the Committee on Necrology.

Mr. Frederick W. Aldred	Mr. Ivory Littlefield
Miss Lucy T. Aldrich	Mr. W. Granville Meader
Mrs. Franklin H. Arnold	Mr. Carleton D. Morse
Mr. Latimer Willis Ballou	Mr. Edward S. Moulton
Dr. Bruce M. Bigelow	Mrs. Paul C. Nicholson
Col. William M. P. Bowen	Mr. John T. Nightingale
Mr. F. Bradford Calef	Mr. Harald W. Ostby
Mr. George H. Capron	Mr. William Howard Paine
Mr. Walter Channing	Mr. Arthur L. Philbrick
Mr. Frederic L. Chase	Mr. Ralph Richards
Mrs. Ward B. Chase	Mr. Preston Richardson
Mr. Harry Parsons Cross	Mr. Elmer F. Seabury
Mrs. Katherine K. H. DeWolf	Mr. David S. Seaman
Miss Susan B. Franklin	Dr. George L. Shattuck
Mr. Evert W. Freeman	Mr. Perry J. Sherman
Mr. W. Louis Frost	Mr. F. Snowden Skinner
Mr. George B. Glendenning	Mr. Winfield S. Solomon
Mr. R. F. Haffenreffer	Mrs. James Edward Thompson
Mr. Everett S. Hartwell	Mr. Theodore F. Tillinghast
Mr. Edward P. Jastram	Mrs. Ethel Taylor Webster
Mrs. Charles A. Kilvert	Mr. John Mayhew Wood

In a short address, Mr. Miner reported that the Society had had a successful year. [See page 23.]

Mr. Westcote H. Chesebrough, chairman, then read the report of the Nominating Committee.

There being no further nominations and upon motion, the nominations were closed and the secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for the slate as read. The officers being duly elected, Mr. George L. Miner, who was reelected president, said a few words of appreciation and the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

FRANK L. HINCKLEY, JR., *Secretary*

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

ONCE A YEAR the members of the Historical Society meet to take account of stock. It is a pleasant thing to do; for many years we have in annual meeting found ourselves by all accounts leading a healthy and useful life.

This year has been good. Your Executive Committee, as the Constitution terms the Trustees whom you elect, note gentle and wholesome progress. The riches of our library have been open to a fair number of scholars and historians; it is a joy to see these books and manuscripts used. A case in point for example is tonight's paper by Dr. Chase. Upstairs, in the precious manuscript diary of Usher Parsons, a rugged young surgeon of 1814, Dr. Chase has found source material for a brilliant bit of historical research. Great riches are in the manuscripts and printed books in this library of ours. We are all welcome to use these resources; the delights of historical research are at your disposal.

Another delight to contemplate is John Brown House itself. This gracious mansion of ours—gift of our across-the-street neighbor John Nicholas Brown—stands in its elm-shaded grounds as one of the cultural riches of the community. Here in these stately rooms are many pieces of eighteenth century furniture and furnishings owned and used by the Browns of three and four generations ago. The Joseph Brown block-front secretary in our southwest room was photographed in color for magazine *Life* last winter. Gifts of these priceless heirlooms continue to come to us and our reputation as a museum of Rhode Island possessions of the state's richest period grows apace.

We have much more to be grateful for. Bequests and gifts of money continue to add to our capital funds and our Finance Committee's reports made good reading. All in all our financial house is in order and seems likely to gain gradual strength.

Your Executive Committee have given thought to the much debated problem of room for our crowded and gradually expanding books and manuscripts. In 1942 Messrs. Cady and Creer made sketches for an auditorium addition to John Brown House. Three years ago Mr. Conrad Green with Mr. Roelker laid out an ingenious stack-room building. No definite action followed these ideas.

This year the Executive Committee authorized an exploration of our problem, discussed it as a three-sided need—for book and manuscript stack-room, for auditorium reading room and for museum exhibitions. A committee was appointed to study and report its recommendations; it was termed the New Library Building Committee and comprised six persons: Messrs. John Nicholas Brown, Harry B. Freeman, R. H. I.

Goddard, Jr., Stuart C. Sherman, Lawrence C. Wroth and your president. This New Library Building Committee has engaged as consultant Dr. Keyes Metcalf, recently retired noted librarian of Harvard College. Dr. Metcalf has visited John Brown House, has discussed the problem with the Committee and with Director Monahan and Librarian Collins, and expects to make his report before the end of the calendar year.

Another committee authorized by the Executive Board is a new Museum Committee, now in process of formation; it will relieve the Library Committee of the policy problems of museum accessions, gifts and disposals.

A third new committee is the John Brown Coach Committee. As you may know we own John Brown's coach, or chariot, as it was called in his day. We have some money left us by the late Frank Hail Brown for its restoration; it is a notable vehicle and will make a stunning blue and gold addition to our museum.

May I say how thankful we should be that we escaped serious flood and hurricane damage. Our neighbors, The Connecticut Historical Society, were flooded in August, lost much in precious manuscripts and books and have not yet reopened. John Brown House came through with only a clogged drain problem; our building and its grounds are in excellent condition. We have much to be grateful for.

On behalf of the Executive Committee I extend our appreciation for the patient, painstaking and enlightened services of Director Monahan, Librarian Collins, Miss Paull and Miss Huling. They have done much more than maintain a well-run institution; their cheerful attitude of welcome to an appreciative community has broadened the Society's usefulness. The lecture meetings have also been enhanced by the gracious services of the efficient Ladies' Hostess Committee.

The year has been a busy one. Yet future work, not yet programmed, in our unsorted manuscript material—work of calendaring and indexing—lies open and beckoning. We hope much to attract more and more historical research in the notable riches of Rhode Island history of which we are the willing custodians.

GEORGE L. MINER

## REPORT OF THE TREASURER

*For Year ending June 30, 1955*

INCOME			
Dues		\$8,478.00	
Securities Income		8,825.13	
Interest on Bank Deposits		9.63	
John Brown House Fund Income		184.32	
State of Rhode Island Appropriation		8,500.00	
City of Providence		1,000.00	
Contributions:General	\$1,880.00		
Corporate	1,125.00		
Special	330.00	3,335.00	
Patriotic Societies		300.00	
Sale of Publications, Books, etc.		512.50	
Social Events of Outside Societies		140.30	
Miscellaneous Income		283.22	\$31,568.10
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Salaries		\$16,044.00	
Social Security Taxes		283.47	
Director's Discretionary Fund		350.89	
Supplies		707.22	
Telephone		297.85	
Membership Printing		385.40	
Library Books, Periodicals, etc.		1,127.73	
Museum		231.92	
Lectures, Printing and Entertainment		343.58	
Publications, Printing and Postage		3,071.05	
Heat, Light and Housekeeping		1,624.28	
Maintenance of Grounds	\$3,087.78		
Maintenance of Buildings	5,955.10	9,042.88	
Insurance		583.19	
Miscellaneous Expense		695.36	\$34,788.82
OPERATING DEFICIT			3,220.72
Transferred from Special Funds			2,775.00
ADJUSTED OPERATING DEFICIT			\$ 445.72

## BALANCE SHEET

*June 30, 1955*

ASSETS		LIABILITIES	
Cash	\$ 8,363.25	Life Membership Reserve	\$ 2,700.00
Special Funds	3,549.97	Library Book Fund Reserve	529.21
Investments	169,460.22	Publication Fund Reserve	1,160.20
John Brown House Fund	7,955.00	Anticipated Expense Reserve	1,304.83
Real Estate, Furniture			
and Fixtures	50,006.00	<b>SPECIAL FUNDS</b>	
Books and Manuscripts	50,000.00	John Brown House	\$ 7,955.00
Accounts Receivable	258.25	Wilbour Endowment	41,102.41
		Irene Seabury Cummings	
		Endowment	5,000.00
		John Brown Chariot	2,240.92
		William G. Roelker	
		Memorial	869.47
		William A. Wing	
		(Library)	1,000.00
		Net Worth	58,167.80
			225,730.65
			\$289,592.69

HAROLD H. KELLY, *Treasurer*



## 5. SIDE CHAIR

*Mahogany*

Rhode Island 1785-1800

A comparison of the design of this "shield-back" Hepplewhite chair, with those shown in *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide* from drawings by A. Hepplewhite and Company, Cabinet-Makers, published in London in 1788, will emphasize the point that while our American designs were undoubtedly inspired by English sources, our craftsmen showed great skill in producing original interpretations of old themes. In this case the principal deviation centers around the shaping of the urn.

Chairs of this design have been attributed to Providence, Newport, and Rhode Island. In the absence of more definite proof as to the source or sources of this type of chair it seems reasonable to attribute it to Rhode Island. There is some reason to believe that when John Goddard and Engs formed a partnership just prior to John Goddard's death in 1785, chairs of this type were among the wares offered to the public at the warehouse in Providence. Similar chairs are pictured in the M. and M. Karolik Collection catalog (Fig. 101) and in the Girl Scout Loan Exhibition catalog (Number 736). In *Fine Points of Furniture* by Albert Sack a Massachusetts version, only slightly different from the Rhode Island, is pictured on pages 54 and 55. It is attributed to Benjamin Frothingham of Charlestown, and the carving is presumed to be by Samuel McIntire of Salem. A sketch of the splat signed by McIntire is preserved in the Essex Institute in Salem.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



## 6. DESK

*Mahogany*

Newport 1760-1770

Desks of this type are legion. That they were made in Newport by other cabinetmakers as well as by the Townsends and Goddards is well-established. That this particular one comes from the shop of one of the Townsends or Goddards is definitely indicated by so many of their characteristics. Whether it was Job Townsend or John Goddard or one of the others we cannot tell, but the family "trademarks" are there. The shells, the scrolls on the center shell, the profile of the pigeonhole walls, and the little drawers above them make this as easily identified as a package of Smith Brothers cough drops. The moulding below the drawers and the well are also typical. The brass pulls are particularly handsome and larger than is usual. The shaping of the feet and the fine, heavy, dark mahogany complete the Townsend-Goddard characteristics. The desk belonged originally to Moses Brown of Providence.

Ex-collection Julia D. and Franklin R. Cushman





## 7. DINING TABLE

(END SECTION OF THREE PARTS)

*Mahogany*

Newport 1785-1800

In 1929 The Metropolitan Museum of Art acquired a card table bearing the label of Stephen and Thomas Goddard, which was inlaid with urns and bellflowers of light wood and ivory. Several other tables with similar inlay are known and are usually unhesitatingly attributed to Stephen and Thomas. There is probably a strong likelihood that these attributions may be valid, but since at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century other Townsends and Goddards were working, it is possible that they too made tables with urns and bellflowers and used ivory as well as the usual lighter woods. John Townsend, for example, lived until 1809. An inlaid table bearing his label is pictured in the *Arts and Crafts of Newport, R. I., 1640-1820* on page 96.

It therefore seems best to attribute this table to the Townsend-Goddard school. In all of these tables the meticulous craftsmanship, which at an earlier time produced the shell-carved block-front pieces, is still present. The inlay, whether line, urn, or flower, is accurate and secure. Compared with the inlay found in Philadelphia and Baltimore at this period, it is much less sophisticated, retaining the Quaker simplicity which influenced design over so many years in Newport.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



## 8. TALL CLOCK

*Mahogany*

Newport 1760-1770

The Goddards and the Townsends made cases for clock makers in most of the towns in Rhode Island where clocks were sold. Some jewelers imported English works and dials for the cases they acquired in Newport. Others, like Claggett in Newport and Caleb Wheaton and Seril Dodge in Providence, made their own works and dials either in whole or in part. The dials were sometimes painted on iron as in this case; other dials were made of brass, which was sometimes silvered.

Cases varied according to price. The case of this clock was probably in the medium price range. A less expensive timepiece would not have had the carved shell and perhaps the urn and flame finials would have been omitted. For more money the case would have had a pediment of the broken arch type with carved rosettes, fluted corner posts, and chamfering on the base. For still more money the two outside finials would have been placed on individual platforms.

Ex-collection Mrs. Elliot Flint

# THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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prints, documents, miniature military figures, and objets d'art

## LECTURES

January 11, 1956, Wednesday	STATED MEETING	8:15 p.m.
Great Oaks from Little Acorns Grow: the Manufacturers Mutual Fire Insurance Co. HOVEY T. FREEMAN, President		
February 12, 1956, Sunday		3:00 p.m.
Damnably Good Works: a Brief History of the First Unitarian Church of Providence MISS HELEN C. ROBERTSON		
March 11, 1956, Sunday		3:00 p.m.
A Chat on Some of the Rhode Island Pewterers <i>Illustrated with examples of their work</i> AMORY S. SKERRY		



# RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

A NEW VIEW OF THE DECLARATION OF WAR  
AGAINST THE NARRAGANSETTS, NOVEMBER, 1675 . . . . . 33  
by Douglas Edward Leach

THE EDUCATION OF DR. JOHN CLARKE . . . . . 41  
by G. Andrews Moriarty

FIRST AUSTRALIAN IN RHODE ISLAND . . . . . 44  
by Thomas Dunbabin

NATHANAEL GREENE'S LETTERS TO "FRIEND SAMMY" WARD . . . . . 46  
edited by Clifford P. Monahan and Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd.  
[continued from January, 1956, v. 15, no. 1, page 10]

NEWS-NOTES . . . . . 55

CATALOG OF THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
FURNITURE COLLECTION . . . . . 56  
by Ralph E. Carpenter, Jr.

DEVILS FOOT ROCK . . . . . 64

NEW MEMBERS, LECTURES . . . . . Back Cover

NINIGRET

Courtesy of the Museum of Art  
Rhode Island School of Design

*Ninigret, chief of the Niantic branch of the Narragansetts, kept his tribe neutral during King Philip's War, and his people were therefore allowed to keep their lands in the Charlestown area of Rhode Island. This is the only known early portrait of a Rhode Island sachem. Before being given to the Rhode Island School of Design it was owned by several generations of the Winthrop family.*

*Mr. Stephen T. Riley, librarian of the Massachusetts Historical Society, reports that they have a copy of the portrait of Ninigret made from the original in the possession of the Winthrop family of New York. He does not know who made the copy but states that the original (supposedly at the R. I. School of Design) is said to have been painted in 1647.*

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NO. 2

## A NEW VIEW OF THE DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST THE NARRAGANSETTS, NOVEMBER, 1675

by DOUGLAS EDWARD LEACH

*Assistant Professor of History, Bates College, Lewiston, Maine*

STUDENTS of King Philip's War in seventeenth-century New England have long been aware that the various colonies involved in that desperate conflict against the Indians were not always the best of friends. In fact, intercolonial jealousies and rivalries more than once adversely affected the common war effort. Careful comparison of widely-scattered documentary evidence now reveals an important episode in that story, an episode which hitherto has been largely overlooked by historians. At the same time, we find ourselves confronted by a mystery of chronology which may never be completely unraveled, although the attempt to do so constitutes a fascinating exercise in historical detection.

In June, 1675, the Wampanoag tribe, led by Philip of Pokanoket, went on the warpath against the English settlers of Plymouth Colony, thereby launching upon New England the long-dreaded horror of a major Indian uprising. Attack was answered by retaliation, while other nearby tribes, who also had grievances against the English, were gradually drawn into the conflict. Meanwhile the powerful Narragansett tribe, which occupied the southern part of present-day Rhode Island, soon attracted the suspicions of the New England governments. Many of the colonists believed that the Narragansetts were giving active assistance to the Wampanoags and their allies, and there was a growing sentiment in favor of striking a devastating blow against the Narragansetts before they could announce their open support of Philip by hurling their full strength against the English.

The colonial war effort was being directed by the government of

the New England Confederation, or the "United Colonies," consisting of two delegates from each of the three member colonies—Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Connecticut. Rhode Island, an outcast from Puritan civilization, had no part in this loose confederation, and indeed was attempting to remain neutral with respect to the Indian war. In a sense, the three members of the Confederation were sovereign states except for their nominal subordination to the imperial government in London. Each of them formulated its own policies and pursued its own interests, and these frequently took precedence over the policies and interests of neighbor colonies and even the British government itself. Matters of common interest, such as the conduct of the war against the Indians, were referred to the six Commissioners of the United Colonies, but the concurrence of five of the six was necessary to make a proposed course of action binding upon the member governments. Thus one colony could veto the wishes of the other two.

In September, 1675, with the war spreading rapidly, the Commissioners adjourned their meeting after agreeing to come together again on the second of November. When they next assembled at Boston early in the designated month, one of the most important issues on the agenda was whether or not to open hostilities against the double-dealing Narragansetts. The Commissioners ultimately decided in favor of war, and began the preparations which culminated in the famous expedition against the Narragansetts and the Great Swamp Fight of December, 1675.

It has commonly been held that the Commissioners of the United Colonies convened at Boston on November 2, 1675, and issued their declaration of war against the Narragansetts on that date. Even the diligent Bodge fell into error at this point.<sup>1</sup> The fault lies with a document found in the archives of Massachusetts. This document, bearing the heading "At a meeting of the Commissioners of the united Colonies by adjournment in Boston. November. 2. 1675," embodies the fateful decision which sent a colonial army marching into the

<sup>1</sup>George M. Bodge, *Soldiers in King Philip's War* (Boston, 1906), 179; George W. Ellis and John E. Morris, *King Philip's War* (New York, c. 1906), 138-139; Herbert M. Sylvester, *Indian Wars of New England* (Boston, 1910), II, 278. John G. Palfrey, *History of New England* (Boston, 1892), III, 173n. indicates awareness that the arrangements for war against the Narragansetts were accompanied by intercolonial tensions.

Narragansett country the following month.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of this evidence, then, it has been assumed that war was officially declared by the United Colonies at that time.

Further investigation, however, clearly indicates that the official decision for war could not have been made on the second of November, and must have been made at a subsequent date. For example, if a decision had already been reached on November 2d, why did the General Court of Massachusetts on November 4th refer the problem of the Narragansetts to the Commissioners of the United Colonies as though the matter were still pending?<sup>3</sup> There is a piece of negative evidence which also supports our thesis. If ever a successful expedition were to be launched against the Narragansetts, certainly one of the key men in laying the groundwork for such a project would be Richard Smith, proprietor of the trading post at Wickford, Rhode Island. Yet the government of Massachusetts in a letter to Smith dated November 6th gave no indication that a decision to move against the Narragansetts had been reached.<sup>4</sup> Are we to assume that both Smith and the government of Massachusetts were being kept in the dark by the Commissioners? This seems highly unlikely. But the matter is placed beyond question by evidence found in the records of the Commissioners themselves. When these delegates convened on or about November 2d, only one of the two Connecticut Commissioners, Governor John Winthrop, was present in Boston. His colleague, James Richards, was still lingering at Hartford.<sup>5</sup> According to the official records, on November 5th Winthrop informed his fellow Commissioners that no action taken by them would be binding upon the government of Connecticut until the second Commissioner from that colony was present to take part in the deliberations. Despite the earnest entreaties and angry arguments of the delegates from Massachusetts and Plymouth, Winthrop stuck to his guns and would not be budged. Under these conditions, no major business

<sup>2</sup>Massachusetts Archives LXVIII, 39. Also Connecticut Archives, War I, 24. This document has been published in the *Records of the Colony of New Plymouth in New England*, X, 357. (Hereafter cited as P.C.R.)

<sup>3</sup>Massachusetts Historical Society, Winthrop Papers, XVII, 31. This document has been published in the *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England*, V, 66-67.

<sup>4</sup>Massachusetts Archives, LXVIII, 46b.

<sup>5</sup>James Richards to Governor Winthrop, November 2, 1675. Winthrop Papers, XVII, 75; Governor Winthrop to Major John Winthrop, November 4, 1675. Winthrop Papers, V, 153.

could be transacted, and the crucial decision concerning the Narragansetts had to be postponed indefinitely.<sup>6</sup> Thus it is obvious that no formal decision to make war on the Narragansetts was reached by the Commissioners on the second of November, and it seems probable that the matter was still undecided as late as November 6th.

Having shown that the decision for war was almost certainly made sometime after November 6th, we may next attempt to establish the correct date. It is clear that the decision was made no later than November 12th, for on that day the Commissioners recorded some very important business pertaining to a campaign against the Narragansetts obviously already decided upon. For example, on November 12th Josiah Winslow, Governor of Plymouth Colony, was appointed commander in chief of the expedition.<sup>7</sup> Also on that date the Commissioners officially notified the governments of Connecticut and Rhode Island of their decision, and requested cooperation from those colonies.<sup>8</sup> Winthrop himself on November 12th wrote to his own government in order to explain the decision which had been made.<sup>9</sup> Likewise the General Court of Massachusetts sent a letter to Richard Smith of Wickford, hinting of resolutions taken, and promising to give him timely information concerning further developments.<sup>10</sup> This last letter is not clearly dated, but internal evidence indicates that it was written sometime between November 8th and November 12th. The documents mentioned are the best evidence that can now be assembled, and we must admit that this evidence does not warrant the positive assignment of any one date to the declaration of war. But the fact that a number of major decisions were made by the Commissioners on November 12th, plus the fact that so many pieces of mail giving official notice of the plan against the Narragansetts were written on that date *and not before that date*, make it seem highly probable that the one great decision upon which all others

<sup>6</sup>Massachusetts Archives, II, 363. This document has been published in P.C.R., X, 456.

<sup>7</sup>Massachusetts Archives, LXVIII, 53. Also Connecticut Archives, War I, 25, 26. This document has been published in P.C.R., X, 358.

<sup>8</sup>The Commissioners of the United Colonies to the Council of Connecticut, November 12, 1675. Connecticut Archives, War I, 27; The Commissioners of the United Colonies to Governor Coddington, November 12, 1675. Massachusetts Archives, LXVIII, 55. This document has been published in P.C.R., X, 457-458.

<sup>9</sup>Governor Winthrop to the authorities at Hartford, November 12, 1675. Winthrop Papers, V, 154, 199.

<sup>10</sup>The General Court of Massachusetts to Richard Smith, n.d. Massachusetts Archives, XXX, 188.

hinged was made at the same meeting on November 12th.

Apparently the decision for war was made possible by the completion of the Connecticut delegation. The tardy Commissioner, James Richards, was relieved of his commission, and in his place was appointed Waitstill Winthrop, the Governor's own son.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly the new Commissioner, who probably was already at Boston with his father, was able to take a place at the council table, and the government of the New England Confederation was permitted to function once more. Six signatures, including that of young Winthrop, appear on the declaration of war. It is interesting to notice that not until the 15th did Governor Winthrop inform the authorities at Hartford that his son's appointment as a Commissioner had been accepted by his colleagues.<sup>12</sup> Why Governor Winthrop did not include this piece of information in his letter of the 12th is not clear. Perhaps, like most of us, with much of importance on his mind he was prone to forget a seemingly obvious detail.

Wrapped within the larger mystery of the whole sequence of events is a small but interesting puzzle. In their letter of November 12th to the government of Connecticut, the Commissioners stated that Rhode Island had agreed to cooperate with the United Colonies in their attack on the Narragansetts. Yet on that very same day the Commissioners also wrote their letter to Rhode Island giving official notice of the plan for preventive war, and requesting assistance from the Rhode Islanders. There is no evidence of any earlier notice having been sent to Rhode Island, so how could the government of that colony already have promised cooperation? On November 19th an official of the Rhode Island government wrote to the town of Providence, mentioning the Commissioners' letter of November 12th, and indicating that the colony government had subsequently agreed to cooperate.<sup>13</sup> It is significant that this correspondent made no mention of any consultation with Rhode Island or any commitment by Rhode Island *prior* to November 12th. On the surface, then, it would seem that the Commissioners in their letter to Connecticut

<sup>11</sup>John Allyn to Governor Winthrop, November 11, 1675. Winthrop Papers, X, 28.

<sup>12</sup>Governor Winthrop to William Leete, November 15, 1675. Winthrop Papers, V, 154.

<sup>13</sup>Walter Clarke to the authorities at Providence, November 19, 1675. Rhode Island Historical Society Manuscripts, X, 144. This document has been published in *Some Further Papers Relating to King Philip's War* (n.p., 1931), 11.

had taken the very great liberty of stating that Rhode Island had agreed to cooperate, when, in fact, the government of Rhode Island had not yet even received the official request for cooperation. On the other hand, it is quite possible that some unofficial notice had been given to Rhode Island prior to the formal decision by the Commissioners, and that some sort of verbal or written agreement to lend assistance had been received at Boston on or before November 12th. Perhaps the presence in Boston on November 12th of Samuel Gorton, Jr., of Warwick may have some bearing on the case,<sup>14</sup> but unless new evidence in the form of communications to or from Rhode Island is forthcoming, we may never know which of the two possibilities is the true one.

By way of summary it may be useful to attempt a hypothetical reconstruction of the sequence of events at Boston in the fall of 1675. From what has already been said it should be apparent that no one can prove that this is exactly the way things occurred, but at least the hypothesis conforms to the available evidence, and may be considered a fairly close approximation of the actual facts.

In accordance with their decision of the previous September, the Commissioners of the United Colonies assembled at Boston on or about November 2d, only to discover that one of the Connecticut delegates, James Richards, had not arrived. Because of the continuing suspicious behavior of the Narragansetts, and perhaps also because of their hunger for Narragansett land, the Commissioners from Massachusetts and Plymouth were eager for a declaration of war, and urged that a decision for war be made immediately. Connecticut, being dangerously exposed to attack by the Narragansetts in case of war, had long feared an outbreak of hostilities with those Indians, and therefore had adopted a policy of trying to counter the more bellicose attitude of her sister colonies, especially Massachusetts.<sup>15</sup> Therefore Governor Winthrop, still hoping for a peaceful settlement with the Narragansetts, insisted on waiting until the other Connecticut delegate had arrived. Despite the strenuous urging of his fellow Commissioners, Winthrop clung firmly to his position at the

<sup>14</sup>Governor Winthrop to William Leete, November 15, 1675. Winthrop Papers, V, 154.

<sup>15</sup>The Council of Connecticut to Governor Winthrop, November 2, 1675. Winthrop Papers, X, 28. This letter urges Winthrop to "endeavour a compliance with the Narragansetts." Of course the letter was not in Winthrop's hands by November 5th, but the policy suggested above was already well-known to him.

session of November 5th, even after his angry colleagues had written into the record a resolution in favor of proceeding with the business at hand. Thereupon the four frustrated Commissioners wrote and signed an official statement deploring Winthrop's insistence upon delay.

While the Commissioners from Plymouth and Massachusetts were fuming over Winthrop's refusal to act without his colleague, the government of Connecticut was taking steps to complete its delegation. Word reached Boston that Waitstill Winthrop was authorized to act as the sixth Commissioner. By now the Connecticut men were reluctantly convinced that a firm policy toward the Narragansetts must be adopted, and so on November 12th the six Commissioners were able to agree on a course of action against the offending tribe. This formal decision constitutes the so-called declaration of war against the Narragansetts, erroneously attributed to the second of November.<sup>16</sup>

We still need to determine why a document which was probably signed on November 12th bears the date November 2d. What seems most likely is that the earlier date refers merely to the officially-designated day when the Commissioners were scheduled to convene and resume their sessions after the September adjournment. Thus any business done by the Commissioners in that series of sessions, whether actually completed on November 2d or ten days later, could be recorded as occurring "At a meeting of the Commissioners of the united Colonies by adjournment in Boston. November. 2. 1675." It may be instructive to note, however, that although the record of proceedings at the session when Winslow was made commander in chief of the expedition bears a heading almost identical with that which appears on the declaration of war, it also carries at its foot the date November 12, 1675, indicating clearly the actual date of the proceedings recorded on that document. It is quite possible that the form of the declaration of war was actually drafted and dated on or even before the second of November, in the expectation that it would be quickly approved and signed by the Commissioners when

<sup>16</sup>It should be pointed out that, strictly speaking, the Commissioners did not issue a declaration of war. What they did do was to sign a document proclaiming their intention of sending a military force to attack the Narragansetts, but still leaving the door open for a peaceful settlement if the Narragansetts should decide to comply with the demands of the English.



they convened, and only the stubbornness of John Winthrop prevented this from happening.

Resuming our hypothetical reconstruction of events, we may state that on November 12th the six Commissioners, having reached their basic decision, now spent the rest of the day implementing it. They appointed Winslow to command the proposed expedition. They drafted two important letters—one to Governor Coddington of Rhode Island informing him of the decision and urging that his colony lend needed assistance, the other to the government of Connecticut with a similar message. In addition Governor Winthrop undertook to write a personal letter to the authorities at Hartford, a letter in which he justified the policy of preventive war by reviewing the alleged infidelities of the Narragansett tribe. With this letter he enclosed a copy of the official decision made by the Commissioners. Likewise on November 12th the General Court of Massachusetts, having been informed of the decision, drafted a letter to Richard Smith of Wickford in order to give him advance notice of what was impending. This mail was carried out of Boston in the saddlebag of Samuel Gorton, Jr., early the next day.<sup>17</sup>

Within a very few days the necessary preparations for a large military expedition to the Narragansett country were under way. On November 16th the Massachusetts forces under Captain Samuel Appleton, which had been operating in the western part of the colony, were ordered to return.<sup>18</sup> Winslow was in Boston on the 17th, busy with plans for the expedition which had been entrusted to his leadership.<sup>19</sup> One great cause of worry was removed when official word was received that the government of Rhode Island would cooperate in the venture. On the 22d of November the government of Connecticut formally approved the decision made at Boston, and named Major Treat to be second-in-command of the expedition.<sup>20</sup> On December 9th the Massachusetts contingents marched from Dedham, and were joined by the Plymouth troops at Rehoboth on the 10th and the Connecticut troops at Pettaquamscutt on the 18th.

<sup>17</sup>Governor Winthrop to William Leete, November 15, 1675. Winthrop Papers, V, 154.

<sup>18</sup>The Council of Massachusetts to Samuel Appleton, November 16, 1675. Massachusetts Archives, LXVIII, 57.

<sup>19</sup>Governor Winslow's letter of November 17, 1675. Massachusetts Archives, LXVIII, 62.

<sup>20</sup>J. Hammond Trumbull, editor, *The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut* (Hartford, 1852), II, 383.

The next day, in one of the epic battles of New England history, the combined forces of the United Colonies attacked and destroyed the secret stronghold of the Narragansetts in the Great Swamp, thereby greatly weakening the potential power of the enemy, and perhaps hastening the end of the war.

Our examination of the documentary evidence in this case has served to bring into the open the circumstances surrounding the fateful decision to commence hostilities against the Narragansetts. It is virtually certain that the official decision was made at least four and probably ten days later than November 2d, although an unofficial agreement may have existed among the five Commissioners at an earlier date. We have also gained a view into the differences of opinion and the tensions which characterized relations among the colonies of Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Connecticut at the time of King Philip's War. Intercolonial rivalries kept cropping up to hamper the common war effort, and it is correct to say that the war was won in spite of the mutual jealousies and suspicions of the various colonies. Thus our New England forebears knew something of the difficulties which have so often plagued grand alliances in history, and which still are making themselves felt in our own day.

#### THE EDUCATION OF DR. JOHN CLARKE

by G. ANDREWS MORIARTY, A.M., LL.B., F.S.A., F.S.G., F.A.S.G.

DR. JOHN CLARKE of Newport was obviously an educated man. But the question arises as to where he obtained his education. His ancestry is well known. While in England in 1920 the writer made extensive searches with his friend, the Suffolk antiquary, the late Vincent B. Redstone, Esq., F.S.A., of Woodbridge, in the Suffolk records and also in the Public Records Office in London; the results were printed in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, v. 75, p. 273-301. Subsequently the East Anglian antiquary, the late Arthur Campling, Esq., compiled in his "East Anglian Pedigrees," published by The Harleian Society in their volume for 1939, a pedigree of the family in England, which gave collateral lines,

which were not considered in the above referred to paper.

Dr. Clarke was born in the country parish of Westhorpe, Suffolk, on 3 October 1609 and baptized on 8 October following, the son of Thomas and Rose (Kerrich) Clarke of Westhorpe. The Clarkes were a family of prosperous yeomen with gentle affiliations. As Clarke was from Suffolk, it would seem possible that he attended the grammar school at Bury Saint Edmund's, and a search of that school's register should be made.

That Dr. Clarke was a university man is clearly indicated by the known facts of his life. In 1652, while he was Rhode Island agent in England, there appeared his *Ill Newes from New-England* "By John Clark Physician of Rode Island in America." His "Concordance of the Bible" was ordered to be printed by the Parliament, and by his will he bequeathed to Richard Bailey his "concordance and lexicon, written by myself, being the fruit of several years study and to him a Hebrew bible and rest of books." The question of where he was educated is, however, a difficult one. The name of John Clarke is not uncommon, and it is hard to distinguish him among the various John Clarkes who were matriculated around this time at Oxford and Cambridge. The usual age at which boys entered the universities in this period was about fourteen or sixteen years of age, but there are many matriculations of persons considerably older. The case of Roger Williams, who was born about 1606/7, is a good example of this. He entered Sutton's Hospital (Charterhouse) in 1621 and the University in 1625, when he was close to twenty years old.

The following John Clarkes were at Oxford in the period when Dr. Clarke may be expected to have been at a university:

John Clarke B.A. Brasenose 11 Nov. 1628, M.A. 2 July 1632.

John Clarke B.A. incorporated from Cambridge 11 July 1636.

(Foster: *Alumni Oxonienses*)

It is far more likely that an East Anglian with Puritan leanings would have studied at Cambridge, then the great Puritan stronghold of learning. The following John Clarkes were enrolled at Cambridge during the period 1623-1637:

John Clarke sizar at Trinity 1626, B.A. 1629/30. M.A. 1633. Ordained deacon 27 February 1631/2. [He is evidently not our Rhode Island man.]

John Clarke matriculated sizar at St. Catherine's Easter 1627, B.A. 1630/1.

John Clarke matriculated sizar at King's Michaelmas 1633, B.A. 1637/8. [He also may be ruled out.]

John Clarke matriculated sizar at Trinity Easter 1634, B.A. 1637/8. [He too may be ruled out.]

(Venn's *Alumni Cantabrigenses*)

It is possible that the John Clarke matriculated at St. Catherine's Easter 1627, B.A. 1630/1 may have been our John Clarke.

The statement has been frequently made that Dr. Clarke was educated at Leyden, but the writer has never been able to discover the source of this statement or when and where it first originated. However, it appears very likely that such may have been the case. Leyden, founded in 1574, after the memorable siege, was with the exception of Padua the foremost university in Europe for the study of medicine in the seventeenth century, and students came from England and all Europe to the Dutch university for medical instruction. Graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, as well as many others, matriculated at Leyden for medical studies. Many did not remain to take degrees, and a good many took a course in medicine without any intention of practicing, as part of a general education, going on to other continental universities for other subjects. The Register of Leyden gives the following English students who matriculated in medicine at the University:

John Clarcq [Clarke] Anglus. Matriculated 17 July 1635, aged 21 years.

John Clarcq Anglo-Britannus, matriculated 24 March 1637, aged 23. [As Dr. John Clarke arrived in New England in November, 1637, he would hardly be identical with this John Clarke.]

It seems quite possible and perhaps probable that the John Clarke who matriculated in medicine at Leyden, 17 July 1635, aged 21, may be identical with our Dr. John Clarke and perhaps also with the graduate of St. Catherine's Cambridge, of 1630/1. The difference of five years in the ages is not vital, as at this period ages are usually only approximate, and the ages given in the Leyden Register are often not reliable. (Innes-Smith: *English Speaking Students at Leyden.*)

## FIRST AUSTRALIAN IN RHODE ISLAND

by THOMAS DUNBABIN\*

In 1851 Herman Melville wrote in *Moby Dick*, "That great America on the other side of the sphere, Australia, was given to the world by the enlightened whalemens." It is true that the first American vessels known to have visited Australia were the whaleships *Asia* and *Alliance* of Nantucket, as the journal kept on the *Asia* by Sylvanus Crosby, now in the library of The Marine Historical Association, Inc., at Mystic, Connecticut, shows these vessels were in Sharks' Bay, Western Australia, from 28 April to 4 May, 1792. Other American whalers visited Australia between 1792 and 1812; fifty years later New England whalers were as thick as flies round Australia.

But it was the American merchantmen and the sealers who had the most to do with Australia during the formative period, 1792 to 1812. And amongst these the Rhode Island vessels played the leading part. Of the sixty-two American vessels known to have visited Australia in those twenty years, thirteen were from Providence and two were from Newport. As far as actual ports were concerned, Boston led with fourteen. After Providence came New York with eleven; Nantucket and New Bedford sent six each.

Twelve logs or journals of American vessels that visited Australia in the 1792-1812 period are known to exist in New England, as well as six sets of papers relating to the voyages of such vessels. Providence has four of the journals and four sets of papers. To The Rhode Island Historical Society belong the lively journal kept on the *Patterson* of Providence in 1803-04 by Crawford Carter and the journal kept on the *Ann and Hope*, which was in Botany Bay in October, 1798, by his brother, Dr. Benjamin Carter. The John Carter Brown Library has two journals of the *Ann and Hope* on her 1798 voyage and the papers of the *Ann and Hope* (1798), *John Jay* (1800), *Arthur* (1802), and *Eliza* (1807-08).

Crawford Carter mentions in his *Patterson* journal that when the *Patterson* left Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, on 28 November 1803, Mr. Flemming of Providence, who had been a resident of Sydney, came on board for a passage to China. No more is said of Mr. Flemming; presumably he left the ship at Canton.

\*Mr. Dunbabin, press attaché for Australia at Ottawa, Canada, wrote "First Rhode Islander in Tasmania," which appeared in *Rhode Island History* July, 1949.

This Mr. Flemming seems to have been the first American to settle for a time in Australia, unless that distinction belongs to some of the seamen, who from time to time deserted American vessels in Port Jackson. In any case their names are not known.

There are two Flemmings (or Flemmings) mentioned in the New South Wales records at this time, but neither is the Flemming from Providence, Rhode Island. One was James Flemming, a gardener, who went to England in charge of plants at the end of 1803 and then took a post in the West Indies. The other was John Fleming, who returned to England in 1807 after living in the colony for sixteen years.

A second Rhode Islander came to Sydney in 1805. This was Arnold Fisk from Cranston or Johnston, Rhode Island, who arrived on 16 May as master of the Spanish prize *San Francisco and San Paulo*, captured on the coast of Chile by the brig *Harrington*, William Campbell master. Fisk had shipped on the *Harrington* at Tahiti on the vessel's run from Sydney to the coast of Chile. He spent the rest of his life in Australia.

The first Australian to settle in America went to Rhode Island more than ten years before Mr. Flemming of Providence departed from Sydney. When Benjamin Page, master of the *Hope*, the first Rhode Island vessel to visit Australia, left Sydney in January, 1793, he shipped three convicts. One, William Murphy, Captain Page transferred to H.M.S. *Powerful* at St. Helena. Another, Shepherd, he put on a vessel bound to Ostend. The third, Bateman, went on with the *Hope* to Providence. When Captain Page returned to Sydney in the *Halcyon* of Providence in 1794, he reported that Bateman had married in Rhode Island. He added sadly that Bateman had "more than once exhibited symptoms of returning to habits that he had not forgotten and which would soon bring him to disgrace in his new situation."



NATHANAEL GREENE'S LETTERS TO  
"FRIEND SAMMY" WARD

edited by CLIFFORD P. MONAHAN and CLARKSON A. COLLINS, 3rd.

[continued from January, 1956, v. 15, no. 1, page 10]

Coventry March the 5 1771

Dear Friend

Think not from my long silence that my friendship for you is in the least abated. I have too happily experienced the sweets resulting therefrom to be so much my own enemy as to drop such advantageous acquaintance. Altho you have much reason to complain of my long, long, long, silence yet I can assure you that its not for want of affection nor regard but imputable entirely to another Cause, Namely the death of my Honnoured Father<sup>4</sup> whose dissolution turnd all our affairs into quite different Channels that made it requisite for me to give the closest application and attendance in the Settlement of matters, but haveing almost accomplit my work I am determin'd to make such a Recess from business as to enjoy the Social happiness resulting from a friendly intercourse both personal and Epistolary. From which consideration I have ventured to send you this letter to answer yours of January the first, and to redeem my promise made you at Greenwich if it is not past the equity of redemption. I hope my neglect is not unpardonable but am sensible that I must be indebted to your goodness to pass it bye. Altho I have not seen you nor wrote to you for some time past, yet I am confident there's not a friend of yours that hath thought more times on you than I have done since our last meeting. Many hath been the pleasing moments I have spent in contemplating the excellence of friendship and how happy I was in my acquaintance. Language would fail me if I were to attempt to point out to you the fine feelings of the Human mind when exercised upon that Excellent subject of Friendship. A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fulness and Swellings of the Heart which pasions of all kind do cause and enduce. I dare not attempt to write to you who are at the feet of Gamaliel upon any particular subject, being Consious of my own ignorance. I confine my self to such Homely fare as I have been accustomed to. I have nothing more to recommend my self to you than a sincere regard for your person and interest which I hope to manifest upon all occations. Being just about to depart from Home on a voyge to Newport, am under a necessity to conclude which I shall do with a promise

<sup>4</sup>According to *The Greenes of Rhode Island . . .* by Louise Brownell Clarke, Nathanael Greene, Sr., died in October, 1768.

1956]

*Nathanael Greene's Letters to Ward*

47

to write to you Longer next time. Friends are generally in good health in our Neighbourhood. Present my respects to Mr & Misis Manning, to friend Tommy Arnold and Mr Foster, also to Mr David Howel & Brother.<sup>5</sup> I conclude with much regard. your Sincere friend

Nath. Greene, Jr.

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East Greenwich May 21-1771

Dear Friend

I have detain'd Mr Arnold Mr Brown & Mr Harris a few moments to inform you of the receipt of your Letter. I have not time, without puting their patience to a Severe Tryal to answer it in full therefor shall postpone it till a better opportunity and Conclude with the Contents of one of Seneca Letters, I am well I hope you are well Farewell

Nath Greene Jr

My Respects or Compliments if you please to your four Sisters Hannah Nancy Kitty & Polly

[Superscription] To Mr Samuel Ward Jr at Westerly

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Coventry September 26, 1771

Dear Friend

I Fear my Promise to Write to you is so Deeply Mortgaged that its almost past the Equity of Redemption. But as you cannot Plead the Statute of Limitations, I determin to avail my self of the present Opportunity to Redeem it, and that you maynt be too great a sufferer by my long, long, long, silence. If quantity will serve in lieu of Quallity I determin to Write sufficient for three or four common Letters. It is very Fortunate for you to be able to Enumerate a long Train of Noble

<sup>5</sup>The Reverend James Manning (1738-1791), first president of Brown University, and his wife Margaret (Stites) Manning.

Thomas Arnold (1751-1826) was a classmate of Ward's at Brown. Later he became chief justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court. He married Mary Brown, daughter of Obadiah and Mary (Harris) Brown.

Theodore Foster (1752-1828), a member of the Brown class of 1770, was a year ahead of Ward in college. He held many public offices and was United States Senator from 1790 to 1803.

David Howell (1748-1824), first professor at Brown and acting president in 1791-92, served in the Continental Congress and was United States Judge for the District of Rhode Island from 1812 until his death. He married Mary Brown, daughter of Jeremiah and Waitstill (Rhodes) Brown.

Ancestors, but to equal the best and excell the most is to have no Occation for any. It is a laudable Emulation to endeavour to surpass all our Progenitors in Knowledge, and to exceed them in worthy Actions. Should we not my Friend think him a poor Husbandman who having received a large Patrimony spends his Days in slothfulness without enlarging his Fortune or rendering his Estate more considerable by Improvements. So he that enters into Life with all the advantages of a Noble Birth, Adorn'd with a Liberal Education and Improv'd by the most Pious Example cannot be excus'd short of an improvement proportionable to the Opportunity given.

To pursue Virtue where theres no Opposition is the Merit of a common Man. But to Practice it in spite of all Opposition is the Carreer of a truly great and Noble Soul. My Friend let the Practice of Virtue be your Aim for on that depends your Future Importance and usefulness in Life. Virtuous Manners I call such acquired Habits of Thought and Correspondent Actions as lead to a steady Prosecution of the generall Welfare of Society: Virtuous Principles I call such as tend to confirm these Habits by Superinducing the Idea of Duty. Virtuous Manners are a permanent Foundation for Civil Liberty, because they lead the Passions and Desires them selves to coincide with the appointments of Publick Law. The infant Mind is Pregnant with a Variety of Passions. But I apprehend it is in the Power of those who are entrusted with the Education of Youth in a considerable Degree to determin the Bent of the Noble Passions and to fix them on salutary Objects, or let them loose to such as are pernicious or destructive. Here then lies the Foundation of civil Liberty; in forming the Habits of the Youthful Mind, in forwarding every Passion that may tend to the promotion of the Happiness of the Community, in fixing in our selves right Ideas of Benevolence, Humanity Integrity and Truth. For what purpose to study and Letters if they do not render us Beneficent and Humane.

What shall I say to you upon Benevolence. The Example of God teacheth the Lesson truly. He sendeth his Rain and maketh his Sun to shine upon the Just and Unjust but he doth not Rain Wealth nor shine Honnor and Vertues upon Men equally. Common Benefits are to be communicated with all, but peculiar benefits with Choice For Divinity makeeth the Love of our selves the Pattern the Love of our Neighbours but the Portraiture. Therefore regard is to be had to the Merit of the Objects the worth of the Occation in the display of Our Bounty it is our Duty to seek the good of All Men, but never to be in Bondage to their farces or fancies for that is but faultely or softness which maketh an honest mind Prisoner; for tho Riches are for Spending they should be spent in Honnor and Good Actions. Learn my Friend to distinguish

betwixt true and false Modesty. What I call false Modesty is not to have Resolution to deny an unreasonable request or Power to oppose a corrupt Custom. The one often proves destructive to our Interest, the [other] to our Manners. But never be too precipitate in an[torn] for Consideration would often prevent what the best Skill [ll in] the World cannot Recover. Our Weakness our Want of Resolution of Sagacity of Knowledge and Abillity seems in some sort to put it out of our Power to form a medium of Conduct to Govern our selves by through the different Occurencies in Life. Its much safer to follow Truth alone, than to have all the World for Company in the Road of Error. Therefore when Sinners Entice consent thou not, for to remove a present inconveniency and by consequence entail upon our selves a lasting disadvantage cannot be a prudent Measure; study to Please when you can do it with Honnor and Conscience and not injure your interest. Envy, Malice, and Detraction seems to be ruling Vices of this age so that you need no Expect without the aid of Omnipotence to prevent Falsehoods, nor stop the mouth of Invention: you must Therefore gard against report, which is but another Name for Forgery. A Fiction may be clothed with probabillity, and the disguise of Truth become a pasport for a Mischievous Lye. The Grossest story, when artificially Cookt by cunning Envy, may appear likely, and gain belief. A seeming Reason, is, till it be discovered, as powerful as a real one. But Truth tho it may be Disguised and Veild for a season:—Yet like the Sun in the Firmament, whose Glory is often Eclips't by the interception of his Rays: He does by the Efflux of his own light, dispel the Mists, and leave his Native Beauty unblemisht, so shall Truth rise upon Falsehood.

I hope youl now take off the Mortgage of my Promise, it begins to grow late and I weary, for I have stole these Moments to Write when I should have been a Sleep. For being (as the Proverb goes) like a Waterford Merchant, very full of Business and nothing to do, I could not find Time to Write in the Day. Commend me to your Sisters, my respects to your Father. I was not a little Charm'd with the agreeable manner in which he treated his Children. Such paternal care as was display'd in every Action its to be hoped is repaid by perfect Obedience and Fil[ial] Respect. I saw your Sister Hannah a few Days [ago] and she informs me that she enjoys her Health as well as she hath done of Late. I am going to Write to Mr Arnold to give him an invitation to come and spend a Week or Fortnight with me. Should be exceeding glad of your Company to make a Little Society. I make no doubt of finding you amusement in Fishing Fowling and Studying. I can Write no more for my Eyes begins to want props already. Write to me soon for I wont send you another Letter till you answer this for I intend to be

as particular as the Ladies are in their Visits. I am your sincere Friend  
Nathanael Greene Jr

P.S. Despise the Disrespect of those, who through Ignorance of your Worth, give you ill Usage and learn to overcome Affliction by the Hopes of getting out of Them; this is a way to be too hard for ill Fortune it self—  
[Superscription] For Mr. Samuel Ward Jun. To the Care of Miss H. Ward in Westerly

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Coventry July the 4th 1772<sup>6</sup>

When I wak't this morning I am apt to conclude my Mind was abroad, but where or what about I have not yet found out. I had not lain long before a train of thoughts rose gradually to my view by which I was convinced of the return of my Mind. Like a Servant that has been out over Night, and over staid his time, heel steal softly in and take his place, ready to attend the first summons. But that little Varlet his Conscience wont suffer him to be at Ease, but punishes him with rising doubts that his absence has been discovered. He comes into his masters presense trembling. If he finds from his Master Tone and Countenance that hees not discoverd the pleasant Emotions that he feels, fill his Heart with gratitude and make him propose some very extraordinary piece of service that is sure to please his Master. So did my Mind after takeing its place, and tuning the organs Steps up, pray Sir, shall I make a Visit to Mr Wards this morning. surely you want to know how that little Angle and your Dear Sisters does. If I had been as Angry as Jove when he shakes the Elements with his peals of thunder This would have made [me] as Calm as a Summers evening. I held fourth my hand, and bad him go, and return quickly. He was gone a few moments and returns, to ask whether he must enquire after Mr Ward and my friend Sammy too—Yes, Yes all all you Dog run fly Swiftly. Now while hees gone I have set down to write you this Letter.

Passion and Desire included are the prime Ministers that directs our Will. It is of the utmost importance in Life to have our passions directed to proper objects. Such as tend to Just and Rational ends, for Nature has planted a spirit of imitation, that our Emotion should resemble the passions, that produced the Action. Have you not felt, upon seeing

<sup>6</sup>This letter, evidently written either to Ward's sister Mary or his sister Catharine, is included both because it mentions Greene's young friend and helps to complete the record of his intimacy with the Ward family.

or reading of noble Deeds and generous Actions pleasant Emotions mixt with Desires of Imitation. These are the advantages that Spring from Choice Books and the best of company—they inspire the Mind to Action and Direct the passions—Solomon that wise King saw clearly the advantages that result from an early inculcation of Virtue. "Train up a Child in the fear of the Lord and when he grows Old he will not Depart therefrom." It is surprising to me how there came to be established so many Viscious Customs, when the Natural bent of the Mind, is to Virtue and piety. Are not our Emotions the sum total of our Happiness and Misery, And are not Effects similar to their Causes Objects which are agreeable produce an agreeable Emotion and Objects that are hurtful disagreeable Emotions. How admirably the Wisdom of Providence appears in the formation of things Annimate and inanimate, that our choice and refuse of them could not fail to comport with our true happiness if we attended to the Emotions of the Mind.

I had as good Write Natural as study to be Dull My Messenger has just return'd and has given me an Account of your Health, thoughts, and Employment. The power that fiction hath over the mind affords an endless Variety of amusements, always at hand to employ a vacant hour amusements of this Nature are a fine source in Solitude it Chears the Heart and Sweetens the mind, and contributes much to Social Happiness he found you upon a Large extended plane of Benevolence, bestowing pity and compassion on all the distressed Travelers, giveing Hopes to some and Advice to others according to their peculiar situation, that you might Discharge your Duty with strict justice and kind Benevolence—Nancy was situated in the Bay of troubled Waters, where the Winds and Sea had contrary directions. She had lost the Anchor of constancy and Hope, Sometimes moveing Involuntarily with the motions of the Tide, and then drawn back again with the gentle Gales of Gratitude & Generosity. Hannah sat at the Fountain of Friendship purging its Waters and directing its streams. May you and I long very long enjoy the comfortable and refreshing Draughts that flow from this fountain—Your Daddy was Elevated a little above his standard of Philosophy at vanquishing the Noyses,<sup>7</sup> but it lasted but for a moment, for when he reflected, who heed conquerd, he thought there might be Glory lost by being overcome, but none gaind by overcoming them—Sam where was Sam, not a word Speak, where was Sam. I dont Care to tell says my Messenger. Why whats the matter tell in a moment, whole [Who'll] endure your suspense—Why then, if, if, I must I

<sup>7</sup>Governor Samuel Ward was engaged in a long dispute over land with his neighbors Joseph and Sanford Noyes, during the course of which Joseph Noyes brought suit against him.

will. I found him out in the woods, the back of the house with his Winter Shoes on, new modeling his Bow agreeable to the Boston plan, he had scrape up the Earth as you have seen stray cattle when they meet and was all besmeared with the Dust he had raisd—he looked like the Miller in the Farce.

Can you forgive all this nonsense. I am sure you are good natured, and you had need to be to have patience with this whimsical Letter. He make my next more agreeable by making it shorter. I wish you abundance of happiness, and nothing shall ever make me wish otherwise. I should think myself happy to be able to contribute to your happiness—But what it is, where it is, or how I shall effect it you must be my directess and He govern my self accordingly. I am my Dear your ever faithful friend for such I will prove

Nath Greene Jr

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Potowomut Sunday 5 o Clock PM

I have been to a Meeting to Day, our silence was interrupted, by a vain conceited Minister. His Sermon made me think of a certain Diet calld Whistle Belly Vengeance, he that eats most has the most Share. He began with asking us what could be said that had not been said. Much more thinks I than you ever thought off or ever will—poor man, he had a little morsel to comfort him self, and he couldnt be content to Eat it alone, but feeling the Springs of Benevolence rise in his Mind he thought it his Duty to make a distribution amongst the whole Congregation. The Assembly was so large and the matter so light, that it evaporated off like smoak, and left us neither the fuller nor the better pleased than when he began. Debby<sup>8</sup> deliverd the Doctor your Letter. I was at Mr. Caseys<sup>9</sup> this morning and he calld me out to speak with me, and began with a great deal of emotion and said he had received a Letter of a surprising Nature from you, and gave it me to read. I took it and began with an audible Voice. The Doctor soon husht me saying, the people would hear. I did that to see, whether he intended to be openly angry, if he had I intended to justified the truth of your Observations as openly. When I had read it he askt me what I thought on't. As to the in [torn] says I you must be convinc'd, its good, for who

<sup>8</sup>Deborah Ward (1758-1835), Samuel Ward, Jr.'s, fifth sister, became the wife of Greene's brother Christopher, widower of her sister Catharine (1752-1782).

<sup>9</sup>Either Thomas Casey (1706-1797) or his son Silas Casey (1734-1814), both of whom were leading merchants and landowners in the Warwick-East Greenwich area.

ever wanted [torn] mend a fault in an Enemy. It would be as Absurd as for the Devil to fright us for doing wickedly. As to the subject I must confess you have given too much reason for his remarks. I myself have been in Doubt whether I ought to impeach your understanding or Integrity, for truth and Justness of Observation always ought to regulate our Praise and when there appeared neither the one or the other in his Observations, what could I think but that he had a mind to sell wind for a round Sum of ready Money. I told him a flatterer or Sycophant that blows up the Mind of a Person into a Tympany, was like a Physician that administers Poison and then demands a large Fee for it. He began to justify him self with regard to his integrity. I told him it might be easily done, but then it must be at the expense of his understanding; and I should have the better Oppinion of him to give up the latter to save former. He is going to write you a Letter if he appears very serious I advise you to turn the subject into ridicule for many Persons has yealded to the force of Ridicule in a point which they could never been argued out off. The Doctor will take his Wig off, and what will then appear, why a bare Pole. You have seen the lecture upon heads I suppose, and remember my remark upon his Wig. should you get into a paper war I shall pity you, for his Letters will be so Barren and your Subject so dry, that it wont give scope to your Genius or entertainment to your Mind.

Don't fail of being a good Boy improve in knowledge and increase in virtue. You ought after all has been done for you to be a very good Lad. I am in hopes of seeing you a Star of the first magnitude. It would please me to see you shine like the Sun in the Firmament but then I and all my Friends must lye buried in the Efflux of your Light untill you was pleasd to disappear. So I thought He make a Star of [torn] and shall rejoice to see you shine with great Light. Mr. Varnum is calling for me. I cant write or think any more.

My best respects to your Dady. Tell Polly I have not got our ticket, but expect it soon. I wrote a Letter to Caty, and whether I left it at Coventry or lost it out of my pocket I cant tell. I fear I shant have opportunity to Write again being obligd to go to Bristol to morrow in company with Jacob<sup>10</sup> & Mr Varnum.<sup>11</sup> My Love to all the Family. I have

<sup>10</sup>Jacob Greene (1740-1809), Nathanael's eldest brother was associated with his brothers in the firm of Jacob Greene and Company. Later he became sole owner of the forge at Coventry.

<sup>11</sup>James Mitchell Varnum (1748-1789), a graduate of Brown in the class of 1769, was admitted to the bar in 1771 and rose rapidly in his profession. Varnum was colonel of the Kentish Guards in which Greene began his military career as a private. During the Revolutionary War he rose to the rank of brigadier general, and later served in the Continental Congress.

been in the Dumps for two or three Days past I have sat brooding over Mischief and hatching Evils. I began a wrangle with myself this morning and turned Melancholy and all her train out of Doors. I had as good write natural as study to be Dull its my own ink and paper, and youll have no postage to pay, therefore youll be unreasonable if you find fault because you are obliged to Read it. Debby kept me very chearful and merry all the way Home I warrant youll have a fine History from [her] To her I refer you for Greenwich particulars. I have no more to say. Amen.

N G [torn]

I wrote this Letter and intended to have sent by [torn] of Newport, but having no opportunity to forward it till you arrivd, and part of it being upon the subject you enquired about and I feeling Lazy, I thought I would let it go and it would save me the trouble of writing anew [about] the Doctor.

[Superscription] To Mr Samuel Ward Jun at Westerly

[Endorsed] Genl Greene 1772

Aunt Greens

July 20 1772

Dear Friend

I expect you to Greenwich to Day and I am bound for Coventry and shant be Down till tomorrow Night. I charge you by all the Gentle ties of Friendship to let me see you before you return. I have some things to mention to you which I should not be willing to write. I flatter my self I have interest enough in your friendship to ensure me this interview. If I have not I have been greatly deceivd. You may have friends that you regard more than me, but none that Loves you better than your honest friend Nat. I never presumed to have any accomplishments to entitle me to Peoples regards but Gentleness of Manners, Humanity of Soul and a Benificent temper, if these quallities are worth your regard you shall share as largely of their influence as any one with whom my Heart is bound by the Bonds of Friendship or the ties of Gratitude. Come to Coventry if you can you know my Heart will bound to meet you. The greatest and most noble function of the human Heart is to confer Happiness and felicity on as many of your species as you can if this be true come and see me.

[signature torn off]

[Superscription] To be deliver'd if present but not to be sent  
To Mr Samuel Ward Jun

## NEWS-NOTES

THE Rhode Island Historic Sites Committee held its final meeting at John Brown House on April 4. This committee, formed in February, 1954, has made a statewide survey of historic buildings and sites and has prepared a priority list of those that are of the most importance. A constitution for a permanent organization to be known as the Heritage Foundation of Rhode Island has been drawn.

A bill incorporating the Foundation was introduced into the General Assembly in March, accompanied by a favorable message from Governor Dennis J. Roberts. The purposes of this body are "receiving, holding, investing and administrating funds and properties and of identifying, acquiring, using, maintaining, opening to the public with suitable regulations, and preserving for posterity buildings, places, tracts of land and objects of architectural, educational, artistic, cultural and other similar interest or of outstanding natural beauty in the state of Rhode Island."

\* \* \*

Another important event in the field of historic preservation took place on February 20, when the organization meeting of the Providence Preservation Society was held at John Brown House. Mr. John Nicholas Brown was the moderator of an enthusiastic meeting attended by more than two hundred persons interested in preserving the historic buildings of old Providence. Enclosed with this issue of *Rhode Island History* is an announcement and application blank for the use of any of our members who wish to become charter members of this important organization.

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Rhode Island Heritage Week will be celebrated in commemoration of the one hundred eightieth anniversary of the State's declaration of independence on May 4, 1776. Many historic buildings will be open free to the public between May 1 and May 8 throughout Rhode Island. Special patriotic programs will be held on May 4, and University Hall at Brown will be illuminated with candles in the windows from dusk to midnight. A full list of the buildings which will be open and a program of events can be obtained from the Rhode Island Development Council, JA 1-7100, extension 530.

In connection with Heritage Week the Society will hold an exhibition titled "Rhode Island and the Spirit of Liberty."





## 9. DOUBLE CHEST OF DRAWERS

*Mahogany*

Boston 1760-1780

Double chests of drawers (they were sometimes called chest-on-chests) were often made with the emphasis on utility rather than on adornment. The one pictured on the opposite page combines the two.

We are tempted to point to Benjamin Frothingham as the probable maker. The cove molding, the shape of the bonnet, the design of the pilasters, the general proportions, and the quality of the construction support this attribution. Especially noteworthy are the carved rosettes of the broken pediment and the center finial, which has exceptionally fine carving.

Mention should be made of the finish of the surface. Chests and double chests because of their utility, even when they were "out of style," often had continuous use, and as a result many have been refinished, often with more vigor than skill. The finish on this piece should suit the taste of one who prefers his furniture unspoiled by such treatment.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



## 10. TABLE

*Mahogany*

Rhode Island 1760-1780

This square drop-leaf table has the features which are associated with both Providence and Newport, but without sufficient detail to attribute it to either place. It was probably used for general utility purposes, standing against the wall with the leaves down and used with the leaves up as occasion arose for breakfast, for tea, or for cards.

The long, slender, squarish legs, terminating in a claw foot with an elongated ball and webless claws is done with a hand that fell short of the performance we usually expect of our Rhode Island cabinetmakers. Price was probably the reason. As in the case today, the customer was often satisfied with the work of an apprentice, after considering the use for which the piece was intended. The quality of the mahogany, however, was almost always high, even in some of the less expensive pieces. The table originally belonged to Moses Brown of Providence.

Ex-collection Julia D. and Franklin R. Cushman



## 11. SIDE CHAIR

*Mahogany*

Probably Rhode Island 1780-1800

We are apt to find that as the eighteenth century drew to a close, since there was easier transportation and the consequent increase in the mobility of the craftsmen, styles of one locality are more likely to resemble the styles of another. When this chair and the one following are considered in comparison with the known examples from Connecticut and Rhode Island, a great similarity can be seen.

The principal difference between no. 11 and no. 12 is in the design of the splat. A careful comparison will show many variations, none of which indicate a difference in region of origin.



## 12. SIDE CHAIR

*Mahogany*

Probably Rhode Island 1780-1800

The style of back, really a combination of the Chippendale and Hepplewhite styles, must have been pleasing to the taste of New Englanders of the period. Examples of this style are found in relatively large numbers in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. Some are very plain and simple, with no embellishment in the form of a carved splat or moulded legs. Others have a sophistication which may vary from a very little to a considerable amount. This and no. 11 belong to the latter category and each were probably part of a set of eight or twelve used in the dining room. Most of these sets have been dispersed by the process of inheritance. In the usual case several sons and daughters would share the set equally and so today we find them singly, in pairs, in sets of three, and in any number up to twelve in which case the complete set has been fortunately held together.

## DEVILS FOOT ROCK

RECENT newspaper articles concerning the location of Devils Foot Rock bring to mind a humorous version of the famous legend, preserved in the Society's manuscript collections (Shepley Papers, v. 15, p. 49). It was sent to Daniel Updike of East Greenwich by Charles W. Greene with an accompanying letter dated May 21, 1833, which states: "I send for Miss Abby the legend respecting 'the Devils foot' in North Kingston, copied from a London printed book."

A very similar, though somewhat expanded, version was included in a paper read to The Rhode Island Historical Society in 1886 by Charles H. Denison, who stated that he himself had put it "into rhyme."

### THE KING OF THE BAY

Not far from Apponaug lived Molly the fair,  
A belle in the pride of her glory;  
In a fine situation for taking the air,  
Which no one will deny, who has ever been there—  
If he does, 'twill not injure my story.

In a gabled roofed house, by the side of the road,  
She dwelt with a heart void of care;  
A chimney of stone in the old fashioned mode,  
Crown'd the roof of her low and romantic abode,  
Which was something in want of repair.

One eve, as fair Molly had set herself down,  
Pounding spice in a huge wooden mortar,  
A waggoner stopt, just returning from town,  
(His coat was snuff coloured, his trousers were brown)  
And asked for a mug of cold water.

"O yes," says the maiden. The stranger remains  
At the gate, at the side of his wagon,  
(Within which some hay and a rundlet remains,  
A beef's head, by the nose, hung above in the chains)  
To wait for the maid and her flagon.

The maid soon appear'd with her flagon so bright,  
'Twas pewter and filled with sweet cider;  
He seized it with haste and drank with delight,  
He looked at the maid (who was six feet in height)  
Lord ha' mercy! how sharply he eyed her!

In a twinkling the form of a monster he took;  
The wagon had vanish'd from view;  
The maid with surprise and astonishment shook,  
And gave o'er her shoulder a terrified look—  
Her eyes not a little askew.

His hair of black sea-weed is wound like a wreath;  
His nose like a *lobster* appears;  
A beard of thick eel grass is hanging beneath,  
While two rows of huge barnacles serve him for teeth  
And two overgrown clam shells for ears!

"Who are you?" fair Molly with eagerness said.  
"No being of earth, pretty maiden:  
I'm a god of the sea you perceive by my head;  
The sharks and the bluefish behold me with dread,  
And I rule the Tautaug and Menhaden.

"The King of the Bay Narragansett I've been  
Since the stars and the planets have kept tune;  
My crown, (this was said with a complaisant grin—  
Which shewed the enormous extent of his chin)  
I received from my great uncle Neptune.

"But Molly, I'm tired of a bachelor's life,  
For a change I've been some time preparing;  
And though marriage I hear has its troubles and strife,  
I at length have concluded to make you my wife.  
(Why, Lord, how the woman is staring!)

"All my subjects will gaze and behold us with pride  
As we range through our kingdom together,  
While the world shall remain you shall live as my bride;  
You shall rule all the shell fish and eels, and shall ride  
On a shovel nosed shark in bad weather."

Then he whisked her, while screaming with terror, away  
To a rock in North Kingstown, he brought her,  
And the mark of their feet, as the old women say  
Impressed on the rock may be seen to this day\*  
Where he jumped with her into the water!

\*This is no fiction; the rock is there & can speak for itself.

### CORRECTION

In the January, 1956, issue of *Rhode Island History*, it was erroneously stated that Captain Carlo Mauran was in partnership with his brother Joseph. It was his brother Joshua who was his partner.

# THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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April 11, 1956, Wednesday	STATED MEETING	8:15 p.m.
The Maiden Voyage of the <i>Ann and Hope</i> , 1798-1799		
ROBERT W. KENNY, Department of English, Brown University		
May 9, 1956, Wednesday		8:15 p.m.
S'cunnet: an Old Pilgrim Town		
DAVID PATTEN, former Managing Editor, <i>Providence Journal-Bulletin</i>		

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
NEW LIGHT ON THE SULLIVAN DORR HOUSE . . . . . by Antoinette F. Downing	33
NATHANAEL GREENE: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY A CONTEMPORARY, JOSEPH REED . . . . . by John F. Roche	41
THE 135TH ANNUAL MEETING . . . . .	49
OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY . . . . .	51
REPORT OF THE TREASURER . . . . .	52
NATHANAEL GREENE'S LETTERS TO "FRIEND SAMMY" WARD . . . . . edited by Clifford P. Monahon and Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd. [continued from April, 1956, v. 15, no. 2, page 54]	53
CATALOG OF THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY FURNITURE COLLECTION . . . . . by Ralph E. Carpenter, Jr.	58
NEW MEMBERS . . . . .	Back Cover

HUNTING SCENE

*A portion of the painting by Michele Felice Corné on a wall in the front entry of the Sullivan Dorr House in Providence. This beautiful and historic house is the first property acquired by the Providence Preservation Society, an organization founded last year with the aim of saving the city's historic buildings from destruction.*

# RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

VOL. 16

APRIL, 1957

NO. 2

## NEW LIGHT ON THE SULLIVAN DORR HOUSE

by ANTOINETTE F. DOWNING

Author of *Early Homes of Rhode Island* and

*The Architectural Heritage of Newport, Rhode Island*

THE SULLIVAN DORR HOUSE at 109 Benefit Street, recently given to the Providence Preservation Society by its owner, Miss Margarethe Dwight, is one of Rhode Island's most distinguished early nineteenth century houses. It has been little altered, and its mixture of Palladian, Georgian, and Gothic detail is fresh and original, typical both of the work of its builder, John Holden Greene, and of the date of its erection, 1809, the period when the stricter bonds of Colonial style were being broken. Moreover, the wall paintings by Michele Felice Corné in the parlor and upper and lower halls are of importance both intrinsically and historically. Now is a fitting time to review the history of the house.

Miss Dwight has very courteously allowed us to study an extraordinarily complete file of receipted bills for the building of the house, which has been carefully kept in a red box stamped in gold where they were probably stored by Sullivan Dorr himself. They cover the period from the digging of the cellar in the spring of 1809 to the finishing and painting of the house in the fall of 1810. A few later ones show that the garden fence was built in 1811, and some building and painting was done in that year and the next. This treasure trove of papers sheds new and specific light, not only on matters of actual building, but also on the names of workmen, where materials were secured, and other pertinent facts. Every item evidences the careful scrutiny of Sullivan Dorr himself.

One of the most important papers found folded among the receipted bills is the drawing of the floor plan and the front and rear



roof treatments, annotated in John Holden Greene's handwriting. Some minor changes were made in the balustrades. This drawing, reproduced on p. 37, shows that the parlor was originally designed to be a room 19 feet wide by 30 feet long. It also shows that the kitchen wing and the barn were included in the scheme from the first, but that the shed and the carriage house were not. Bills for the foundation prove, however, that all these subsidiary buildings were erected within the year of building.

Before we discuss the bills themselves, it might be well to review Sullivan Dorr's career briefly. He was born in Boston in 1778, the seventh son of Ebenezer and Abigail (Cunningham) Dorr, just three years after his father had ridden off, at the same time as did Paul Revere, but in a different direction, to sound the alarm against the British. Records show that the Dorr's traded on the Northwest Coast in the early days of the fur trade, and in 1799, young Sullivan, then just over twenty, went to Canton to represent his family's commercial interests.<sup>1</sup> He stayed for four years, serving part of the time as consular agent, and his correspondence during these years is the earliest known continuous record of any long stay in Canton.<sup>2</sup> He returned to Boston in 1803, and on October 14, 1804, he married Lydia, daughter of Zachariah and Ann (Crawford) Allen of Providence. Here he took up his residence and soon became one of the town's outstanding merchants. He died in 1858.

Sullivan and Lydia Dorr first set up housekeeping on Orms Street. Two long lists of silver and glassware, ordered from London at this time, are still preserved. They include, among other things, cut glass, knives, forks, candlesticks, an epergne, a silver teapot, a silver coffee-pot, three gadrooned silver waiters, a cruet stand, and a breadbasket, most of them richly marked. The silver, billed for £434.2.6, was sent to New York in the Bristol packet in October, 1805, where customhouse expenses and searchers' fees amounted to £3.2.6.

By 1809 Sullivan Dorr was ready to build his house. As we have seen, he entrusted the work to John Holden Greene, whose place in the annals of Providence building history is firmly established. Greene was born in Warwick in 1777, the son of Thomas Rice

<sup>1</sup>Howard Corning, "Biographical Note: Sullivan Dorr (1778-1858)," *Rhode Island History*, v. 1, (April, 1942), p. 72.

<sup>2</sup>Howard Corning, ed., "Letters of Sullivan Dorr," *Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings*, v. 67, p. 178 ff.

Greene. He came to Providence as an apprentice in 1794 and married Elizabeth Beverly in 1804. He died in Providence in 1850. Greene's name was associated with almost every important public building from about 1810 to 1830 when his active career came to a close. Originality and vigor mark his work, some of which suggests James Gibbs' in its bold scale. At the same time he was influenced by Bulfinch and Asher Benjamin, through them reflecting the delicacy and imaginativeness of the Adam brothers. He was fond of Gothic detail and combined it with classic motives in an effective manner.<sup>3</sup> The Sullivan Dorr House, one of the first buildings associated with his name, shows his as well as Sullivan Dorr's interest in the Gothic manner. Its design, which varies from the typical Colonial house, is supposed to have been suggested by Pope's villa at Twickenham, a sketch of which Dorr had brought home from England. This sketch was not found among the papers, but the scheme, with its raised central section and low flanking wings, all surmounted by parapet rails arranged to conceal the flat roofs, is similar to that of Pope's house. The Palladian window, a good Georgian motive, is adorned with neat clustered colonnettes and little cusped arches of the kind found in the "Gothick Order" illustrated in the books of the English architect-writer Battey Langley. St. John's Church, built in 1810, and the Dorr house are the most outstanding examples of Greene's use of Battey Langley Gothic. The charming portico below was not drawn by Greene, but according to a receipted bill, by Richard Hill's office in Boston. It maintains the Gothic detail. The cornices of the house are coved and elaborated with a complicated running pattern of pointed arches. These, too, were executed by Boston workmen, under the employ of Samuel Bacall, who did the plastering of the house and who lists "202.10 feet of jet" for \$81.13 in his bill of December 16, 1809.

The placing of the house on the lot and the arrangement of the various appendage buildings has always been considered one of Greene's outstanding achievements in site planning. The scheme was evidently conceived from the outset.

<sup>3</sup>Edwin M. Stone, *Mechanics' Festival*, (Providence, 1860), p. 116.

Mabel M. Swan, "John Holden Greene, Architect," *Antiques*, v. 52, no. 1, (July, 1947), p. 25.

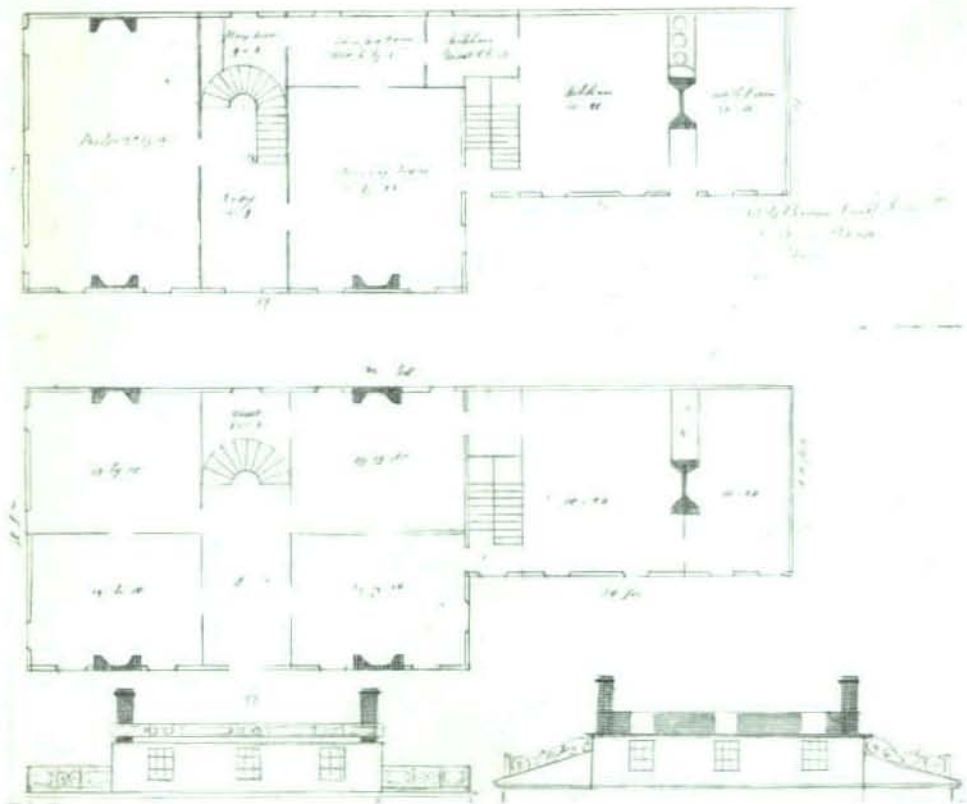
Antoinette F. Downing, *Early Houses of Rhode Island*, (Richmond, 1937), p. 410, 425-430.

Although only the kitchen wing and the barn were shown in Greene's plan, the account of Asa and Smith Bosworth, stonemasons, proves that the shed, stable, and carriage house were all built before February, 1810. A long itemized account of that date amounted to \$1220.94 and included laying foundations for the barn, the shed wall, the coach house, underpinning the house, stone under the chimneys, two kitchen hearths, cellar foundations, nine cellar steps, stone under the sink room, brick for the back walls of the house, and for the cistern. At the same time a pump was installed, probably in the sink room. A well was being dug in August, 1809.

The bills furnish further proof that the whole plan was carried to completion within the year. On November 19, 1810, Jesse Gilbert was paid \$374.64 in full for "Sundry stones for underpinning of his [Dorr's] house and front wall, including cap stones and [eight] stone steps for the front gate and delivered between the months of May, 1809, and November 10, 1809." West Pope received \$150 in December, 1809, for, among other things, paving the yard and sidewalk, "finding all the cuddy hunck stones" and "laying the nitmug stones in the sidewalk from the back door to the gate." Dorr sent a plan of the front steps of the house to John Morse of Sharon, who cut them to order and sent them in August, 1809.

Two important accounts for the main construction of the house bring to light a piece of information hitherto unnoted. These bills, paid on December 21, 1810, amount to \$3051.06 "for work building your house on Benefit Street." They are signed not only by John Holden Greene, who is called "your carpenter," but also by Russell Potter, who evidently worked with Greene and who cosigned other bills and receipts for laborers' wages. Records of Russell Potter are scanty, but the appearance of his name with Greene's is interesting to the student of early building. One of the items in Greene's account is for rum and molasses for the workmen. J. R. Balch supplied it, and his separate bills amounting to nearly \$80 for the months between April and December are filed under "liquor for laborers."

As previously mentioned an account of \$12.00 paid on May 6, 1809, shows that Richard Hill's office of Boston made the drawing for the portico. He also drew a sketch for a cornice. Isaiah Robbins, a local workman, executed the portico for \$17.50 and in 1810 was paid \$5.00 more for a "frontispease," probably the front door itself.



Mr. M. Whall of Boston made the ironwork for the front door. Carefully itemized hardware lists came from such Boston shops as those of David W. Childs, Benjamin Andrews, H. F. Barrell, and Reuben Richards. In Providence William Thurber, Seth Adams, William Jones, Simon Dean, and Aaron Man supplied most of the rest of the hardware.

Joseph Martin was entrusted with the priming and glazing of the windows, nearly all of which were filled with lights of 11 by 16 glass. He set both the "head of the vernishon window" over the portico and the "ovel window." He also fixed the glass in the "Ledden Sash" on either side and above the front door. A bill from the Boston Glass

Manufactory dated May 3, 1809, shows that Sullivan Dorr bought 350 lights of 11 by 16 glass and 110 lights of 11 by 11 glass at a cost of \$162.17.

By now the workmen were ready to proceed to the interior finishing. For some reason the large 19 x 30 foot room drawn in the plan was abandoned, and the parlor was built as it appears today, a square room of approximately 20 x 20 feet with a small writing room at the rear. Otherwise the plan was executed as drawn, with a central entry running through the house. A graceful curving staircase is set at the end of the hall; the slender rail winds into a spiral at the bottom to form a newel, and the riser ends are decorated with the fan design which appears elsewhere in Greene's work as it does in the work of Bulfinch and of Asher Benjamin. Samuel Bacall's plastering account mentions the complicated curved plastering required for this stairway: "1 circular architrave and suffeter [soffit] \$6.00."

Bacall's total bill was for \$687.36. It included about 1653 yards of plain plastering; some 900 feet of "cornishing," part with modillions; about 150 feet of reed moulding; and a "Center Peace." He charged for the passage of four men from Boston and back, proof that he brought his own workmen with him.

By June, 1809, the painters were setting to work. In that month David Burt bought 15 lbs. of yellow paint and 4 lbs., 8 oz. of sand colored paint. In the succeeding months there were so many purchases of yellow that we can be sure that the present yellow tone of the house is near the original color.

The bills show that Dorr bought marble for hearths, and in March, 1810, Chauncey Cooley of Providence made a mantel 6 feet 3 inches long for which he was paid \$7.50. On June 11, 1810, Dorr wrote to James Traquair, stonemason of Philadelphia, ordering "two marble mantles, both of clouded marble with circular hearthes and soap stone insides fitted with Iron backs and sides with 2 pair of tong-stones." On September 18, Mr. Traquair sent the mantels on the schooner *Express* together with the bill for \$263.75. On the 24th Dorr wrote to John Maybin asking him to check the progress of the work on the mantels saying, "my house is now long ready to enter save only the want of these mantles. . . ."

As a matter of fact even the wall decorations were finished in 1810. One of the most interesting receipts in the box is the one for \$417

from Michele Felice Corné, dated June 21, 1810, which reads:

To painting in Fresco two rooms in your new house as pr. within agreement	220
Painting your lower & upper front entries pr. agreement	140
Painting two front chambers with clouds & marble surbase	30
Painting two chambers in Blue & marble under surbase	12
Painting small writingroom below	5
Painting under surbase in Nursery & bed room in marble	10
	<hr/>
	417

The decorations in this house are now almost the sole survivors of Corné's rather imposing list of such work.

A good deal has been written about Corné, who was a colorful character.<sup>4</sup> He was a Neapolitan, born in Elba in 1762. In 1800 he left his service in the Neapolitan army and shipped on the *Mount Vernon*. Captain Elias Hackett Derby, on her return voyage to Salem from the Mediterranean. He arrived in Salem on July 7, where he soon attained a reputation as a marine artist, painting many versions of the *Mount Vernon*. A picture of the various Derby ships painted on the cupola of Captain John Derby's house is in existence, now on the grounds of the Essex Institute in Salem. He also painted the walls of the Barnard Andrews house on Essex Street and the Oak Hill Mansion in Peabody. He decorated the Hancock house in Boston. In Bristol, James de Wolf commissioned him to decorate "The Mount," where he painted scenes from the story of Paul and Virginia and a view of the de Wolf sugar plantation in Cuba. All these are now lost.

As was Corné's practice, the Sullivan Dorr House decorations are painted on strips of white paper, applied like wallpaper. The various

<sup>4</sup>Helen Nerney, "An Italian Painter Comes to Rhode Island," *Rhode Island History*, v. 1, no. 3, (July, 1942), p. 65-72.

Robert E. Peabody, "A War Refugee of 1800," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, v. 34, (February, 1941), p. 404-411.

Mabel M. Swan and Louise Karr, "Early Marine Painters of Salem," *Antiques*, v. 38, no. 2, (August, 1940), p. 63-65.

Helen Comstock, "The Bombardment of Tripoli in 1804," *The Old Print Shop Portfolio*, v. 4, no. 3, (November, 1944), p. [51]-53.

designs were first sketched in charcoal then painted in water colors and varnished when finished. Time has darkened the varnish considerably, giving a brown tone to the whole, which was certainly not intended. The scenes are romantic, peopled with gay figures, and depict such subjects as a tropical landscape, a New England snow scene, ancient castles and ruins, a hunting scene, and a waterfall. The best known is the view of Naples, with Vesuvius in the background. The leafy decoration in the halls is particularly effective.

After the outbreak of the War of 1812, Corné made a name for himself painting the naval engagements of that war. The Rhode Island Historical Society owns one of several versions of *The Bombardment of Tripoli in 1804*.

In 1822, Corné bought a building in Newport and decorated at least one of the rooms. One small panel from this room is in the possession of Mrs. John Howard Benson of Newport; another is in the Newport Historical Society. Corné died in 1845.

This account of the building of the Sullivan Dorr House is brief in view of the wealth of documentary material now available. As we have seen, the house has come down to us almost without change. The right-hand wing has been enlarged, but the portico, with its delicate plaster detail, the cornices, the doorway, the stone walls, fences, walks, the kitchen, stable, carriage house, and shed all look much the way they did on the day in 1810 when Dorr wrote impatiently that all his house was finished except for the two mantels from Philadelphia. An extraordinarily important nineteenth century house has thus been preserved together with a file of information concerning its building, rare in the annals of early American architectural records. Its acquisition by the Providence Preservation Society insures its safety for the future.



## NATHANAEL GREENE: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY A CONTEMPORARY, JOSEPH REED

by JOHN F. ROCHE

Assistant Professor of History and Social Studies

Fordham University

### INTRODUCTION

ON JULY 3, 1775, George Washington took formal command of the Continental Army at Cambridge, Massachusetts. In orders issued the following day the general announced the appointment of thirty-four-year-old Joseph Reed as his secretary. Reed, a holder of degrees from the College of New Jersey (Princeton) and the College of Philadelphia as well as an eminent attorney, had already distinguished himself as a patriot leader in Philadelphia. Washington had met him there during the sessions of the first and second Continental Congresses, and impressed by his urbane manner and his facility with the pen, had prevailed upon Reed to accompany him to the siege of Boston after his designation as commander in chief.

Reed remained with Washington at Cambridge only until the end of October. But some time during those four months the young Philadelphian became acquainted with a Quaker officer from Rhode Island who was one year his junior, Brigadier General Nathanael Greene. The friendship which was founded at this time between the two men steadily deepened over the years which followed. When Reed rejoined Washington as adjutant general in June, 1776, at New York, he and Greene again became comrades in arms, serving together in the ill-fated campaign on the Hudson, in the retreat through New Jersey, and in the brilliant Trenton-Princeton coup. Thereafter Reed, unlike Greene, constantly shuffled from military to civil posts in the patriot cause and never rose to a major army command. Nevertheless, as a volunteer aide to Washington, Reed was a fellow participant with Greene in the major battles of the next few years: Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth.

That the relationship between Greene and Reed became quite close is strikingly revealed by Greene's action when Congress named him Quartermaster General in March 1778. He sought Reed's help in finding able assistants in the Middle States and, for his immediate deputies, settled upon Charles Pettit and John Cox. Pettit was

Reed's brother-in-law, and Cox, also related to Reed by marriage though more remotely, was one of the latter's closest friends.<sup>1</sup>

Reed's election as chief executive of Pennsylvania in December, 1778, ended his field service with the American army, yet he and Greene kept up a brisk correspondence, even after Greene was given command in the Southern theater of the war in 1780.

The biographical sketch of Greene which Reed wrote and which is published here grew out of this correspondence. Sometime in 1781 Reed formed the idea of writing a military history of the Revolution when the war ended. He sought Greene's help in this project, asking that the general "preserve as much as possible of regular and authentic accounts of what has passed and may pass in your department with a general sketch of characters who make any considerable figure with you."<sup>2</sup> Greene replied that he would save materials for Reed.<sup>3</sup>

The time consuming demands of partisan political struggles in Pennsylvania and then Reed's failing health combined to prevent him from ever writing his history of the war. This brief sketch of Greene's life stands as the only realization of the project.

There are two drafts of this biography among the Reed papers in the New York Historical Society,<sup>4</sup> both in Reed's handwriting. Though substantially the same, one version, the one reproduced here, is slightly more detailed and therefore slightly longer than the other. Neither paper is dated, but internal evidence and the chronology of the last years of Reed's life strongly support the conclusion that the sketch was written during his voyage to England in December, 1783, or upon his arrival in London in January of 1784.

That the war was over when Reed penned this memoir is clear. He speaks of the "late war," and he mentions the disbanding of the American army. It is also clear that Reed was writing for a non-American audience. In the title itself he mentions that no portrait of Greene has appeared in "this country." He explains with great care that Rhode Island is in New England and that it is now one of the United States. He speaks of the "American Army" and the

<sup>1</sup>See Greene to Reed, Mar. 9 and Oct. 26, 1778, Reed MSS, V, New York Historical Society.

<sup>2</sup>Reed to Greene, June 16, 1781, Reed MSS, IX.

<sup>3</sup>Greene to Reed, Aug. 6, 1781, *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>Volume XI.

"Americans," never of "our army" or "our troops." In the last paragraph of the paper he refers to the United States as "that country."

It is possible, of course, that Reed wrote his article on Greene in America with the intention that it be published in France or in Britain. But the fact that Reed visited England almost immediately after the definitive peace treaty supports the belief that the sketch was written there. Reed reached London in January, 1784, and remained there until August.<sup>5</sup>

The article on Greene grew out of a rather naïve belief on the Philadelphian's part that now, with the war over, the English would admit the errors which had led their American colonists to revolt and would hold in high esteem the men who had won independence for the United States. General Washington's life story, of course, was well known in Britain, but Reed believed that there would be great interest in the careers of significant yet less famous figures, such as Nathanael Greene.

This belief died quickly. Reed became aware that the English were far from ready in 1784 to acclaim anything American. In a letter to Greene written from London on February 12 he told of his disillusionment:

I find we have flattered ourselves too much in the belief of returning cordiality, and also indulged too much vanity in supposing that our conduct in the war, and final success, have created sentiments of respect and esteem. It is not so. . . . The general class of gentry find the Pride of Old England so mortified by the issue of the war, that they cannot speak of the country [the United States] and its inhabitants in any other dialect than that of rebellion.<sup>6</sup>

Reed made no mention in this letter nor in any of the others he sent from England of the Greene memoir he had written. Apparently, in view of the prevailing sentiments he encountered, he made no serious effort to find a publisher for his effort. No evidence has been found to indicate that it ever was published.

Reed returned to America in the summer of 1784. His health had

<sup>5</sup>Reed made his trip to England to bring his mother-in-law back to her family there, to renew business connections in London, to seek funds for Princeton College (from which he had a formal commission to assist President Witherspoon in this effort), and to attempt by the sea voyages a restoration of his health.

<sup>6</sup>Reed MSS, XI.

not been improved by the voyages, and he died in Philadelphia in March 1785. The subject of his biographical sketch, General Greene, survived him by only fifteen months.

In the memoir which follows Reed's text and his spelling and capitalization have been retained without change. Punctuation at several points and the footnotes constitute the only editorial addenda.

MEMOIRS OF GENERAL GREENE

IN THE AMERICAN SERVICE & LATE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

IN THE SOUTHERN DEPARTMENT —

OF WHOM WE REGRET THAT IT IS NOT IN OUR POWER TO PRESENT  
A LIKENESS, NO PORTRAIT HAVING EVER APPEARED IN THIS COUNTRY

This celebrated Officer is a Native of Rhode Island in New England and descended from a respectable Family distinguished before and since the late War by their Services in the publick Offices of that Colony, now one of the United States.<sup>7</sup> He is at present about 40 Years of Age,<sup>8</sup> of a strong Athletick Make, but halts a little with one Leg owing to some Accident while young. He has an open manly Face, a pleasing Aspect and lively Eye. His Manners are very engaging and he has much less Reserve in his Deportment than the celebrated General who commanded the American Army in Chief. Tho he has not had what is term'd a liberal Education he possesses a clear, sound Judgment and a great Fund of good Sense & Observation. Before the War he was a Proprietor of a considerable Iron Works in Rhode Island<sup>9</sup> and engaged in Commerce from which Employments he was selected to command the Troops raised in the Colony.<sup>10</sup> In this Capacity he joined the American Army then at Cambridge investing the British Army in Boston under the Command of General Howe. His Command consisted of three Regiments then the best disciplined & appointed in the whole American Army.

General Greene's Abilities tho not so splendid as they afterwards appeared soon attracted the Notice & Esteem of his Countrymen,

<sup>7</sup>Among General Greene's relatives were a governor and a secretary of the colony.

<sup>8</sup>Greene, born in 1742, was forty-one when Reed wrote this.

<sup>9</sup>In 1770 Greene assumed the direction of an iron forge at Coventry, Rhode Island, founded by his father and uncles in 1741.

<sup>10</sup>Greene was commissioned Brigadier General on May 8, 1775, to lead Rhode Island's "Army of Observation."

and was particularly distinguished by General Washington who very deservedly placed great Confidence in his Talents & Judgment. When the American Army was form'd Mr. Greene was in the first Promotion of general Officers and rose to be a Major General in this Service.<sup>11</sup> In the Campaign of 1776 he commanded a large Detachment of the Army employed on Hudson's River near New York, where the American Arms suffered in Reputation by attempting the Defence of Mount Washington, a Fort [so] injudiciously constructed on York Island and [so] incapable of efficient Resistance that it surrendered to the British Army after an Investiture of a few Days with a large Garrison.<sup>12</sup> He afterwards had a Command in the Affair of Trenton & Princeton when the Tide of American Fortune first turned, & bore a considerable share in those great Events.

At the Battle of Brandywine where a total Defeat was given to the American Army he distinguished himself by supporting the right Wing when it gave way, and judiciously covering the whole (army) when routed and retreating in Confusion. Their Safety from utter Ruin was generally ascribed to his Skill & Exertions on this Occasion, & those of the Troops he that Day commanded. At the Battle of German Town when the Americans were again unsuccessful, he commanded the left Wing of their Army & tho the Failure was at first imputed to him as being too late in the Attack and not seasonably cooperating, the Commander in Chief is said to have very generously vindicated him from the Censure. General Greene after this continued in the Line of the Army and [was] daily rising in Reputation when he was recommended by General Washington & appointed by Congress Quarter Master General. In this new Capacity he fully answered the Expectations form'd of his Abilities [as he] restored Order, Regularity & Effect to the Department, then much deranged, and enabled the American Army to move with a Celerity and Vigour never known before. At the Battle of Monmouth, General Washington, being greatly disgusted with the Behaviour of General Lee, displaced him in the Field, and appointed General Greene to the

<sup>11</sup>Greene was promoted to Major General in August 1776 while in command of the division of Washington's army at New York posted on Long Island.

<sup>12</sup>Greene's reputation suffered temporarily here too, for Washington's failure to evacuate Fort Washington in time was in large part due to Greene's firm opinion that it could be held. See Douglas S. Freeman, *George Washington* (New York, 1951), IV, 242-255.

Command of the right Wing where he contributed greatly to retrieving the Errors of his Predecessor & the subsequent Success of the Day.

Soon after, the French Reinforcements under Count D'Estaing arrived<sup>13</sup> on the Coast of America & directed its Operation against New Port on Rhode Island in concert with a Body of American Troops under the Command of Gen<sup>l</sup> [John] Sullivan. In this Enterprize in which his native State was so much concerned & where his personal Interest was so considerable he was sent to assist. At first every Thing appeared favourable, but the sudden Appearance of L<sup>d</sup> Howe with the British Fleet occasioning a Change of Operations & particularly a Disappointment in an intended Attack, Misunderstandings arose between the commanding officers of the American Army & that of their Allies which boded ill to their common Interest. But by the united Efforts of Gen<sup>l</sup> Greene and the Marquis DeFayette these were obviated<sup>14</sup> and the Count D'Estaing soon after proceeding to the Southward, no farther Consequences ensued. This seems to be the only Interruption of that Harmony which, contrary to all Expectations, subsisted between the Americans & their Allies in the whole course of their united Operations against the British Army. And the Americans are fully sensible of the Merit of those two celebrated Officers on this Occasion, as any Dissensions at so early a Period must have had fatal Effects on their Cause.

But a Field was now opening for a more splendid Display of Gen<sup>l</sup> Greene's military Abilities. To form a proper Idea of [this field] it is necessary to take a View of the State of the War in the Southern Parts of America. The Capture of Charlestown,<sup>15</sup> the total Defeat given by L<sup>d</sup> Cornwallis to Gen<sup>l</sup> [Horatio] Gates at the Battle of Camden, with the rapid Successes of Col. [Banastre] Tarleton, had almost annihilated the American Interests in that Quarter. A general Submission of the Inhabitants both of South & North Carolina was seasonably expected. The utmost Pains were taken to intimidate all who had ever espoused the Americans, & to encourage those of the opposite Character a Post had been established by a Detach-

<sup>13</sup>July, 1778.

<sup>14</sup>D'Estaing himself wrote a letter of appreciation to Greene, Oct. 1, 1778, for the latter's services in healing ruffled feelings. See G. W. Greene, *The Life of Nathanael Greene* (3 vols., Boston, 1890), II, 148-49.

<sup>15</sup>*L.e.* Charleston, S. C., in May 1780.

ment of British Troops in North Carolina, & the well affected were daily joining them. The Remains of the American Army seemed incapable of Resistance, their Militia discouraged and the People desponding. Congress under these Circumstances left the Appointment of the Officer to Command in that Department to Gen<sup>l</sup> Washington, who selected the Subject of these Memoirs,<sup>16</sup> and he immediately repaired to his Command. His first Care was to collect the Fragments of the American Troops, reanimate the Country, & procure Supplies, industriously avoiding his Enemy flushed with Conquest & Success. In this Line of Conduct he persisted & eluded every Effort to bring him to Action. At the same Time seeing the great Importance of Cavalry, he set himself zealously to raising an effective Corps whose Operations were soon felt by his Adversary. The Face of Affairs gradually changed and by occasional Skirmishes he gave Confidence to his increasing Troops & Spirit to the Country. In the mean Time the various Marches & Countermarches, Retreats & Advances afforded an ample Field for the Display of the Talents of the respective Generals. At length, the decisive Advantage gained over Col. Tarleton at the Battle of the Cowpens<sup>17</sup> placed the two Armies more upon a level & they met at Guilford<sup>18</sup> where a severe Conflict ensued. A well directed Charge of the American Cavalry had nearly ruined the British Army if a Hessian Regiment had not seasonably interposed. The Action was both fierce & bloody & both Sides claimed the Victory. To whomsoever it belongs, it had all the Consequences of a Defeat to Ld. Cornwallis, as he was obliged to retreat in a few days to procure Supplies & take Care of his wounded. The Remainder of the Campaign was spent in maneuvering untill he formed and executed his Plan of marching into Virginia, where he was finally captured by the united Forces of America & France.<sup>19</sup> Gen<sup>l</sup> Greene did not think proper to molest him in the execution of this Plan as he certainly might have done, either conceiving that by a rapid March into South Carolina he should draw Lord Cornwallis after him, or, being apprized of the Northern Operations,<sup>20</sup> he might

<sup>16</sup>Washington named Greene on Oct. 14, 1780.

<sup>17</sup>Gen. Daniel Morgan's victory at Cowpens, South Carolina, Jan. 17, 1781, followed Greene's gamble in detaching Morgan from his own force.

<sup>18</sup>Battle of Guilford Court House, North Carolina, Mar. 15, 1781.

<sup>19</sup>Reed refers here to the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, Oct. 19, 1781.

<sup>20</sup>*L.e.*, Washington's plan to march to Virginia.

safely leave him to his Fate. On his return to South Carolina he invested a Fort called Ninety six garrisoned by British Troops & Loyalists commanded by Col. Cruger,<sup>21</sup> who made a gallant Defense and the Americans attempting a Storm were foiled. Success however so generally followed their Arms that the British Interests manifestly declined every Day. The Posts of the upper Country were gradually abandoned<sup>22</sup> & the Remains of the British Troops collected in the Neighborhood of Charlestown under Col. Stewart.<sup>23</sup> In this situation they were attacked by Gen<sup>l</sup> Greene at the Eutaw Springs.<sup>24</sup> This Engagement is allowed by all to have been the most bloody & eagerly contested for the respective Numbers that has been fought in the new world.<sup>25</sup> Advantages were mutually gained & lost; each was possessed of the usual Marks of Victory, leaving the general Issue undecided. But the British Troops soon after returned within the Walls of Charlestown, leaving General Greene the undisputed Master of the Country. In the Course of these Operations he has extorted from his Enemies Acknowledgments of his Bravery, Skill & Humanity, while the Inhabitants of those Countries revere him as their Saviour & Deliverer. The Assemblies of Georgia & the Carolinas have given him essential Marks of their Gratitude & Esteem by such liberal Grants of Land as must soon place him in an easy & affluent Situation in Point of Fortune.<sup>26</sup> Congress returned him the publick Thanks in Terms highly expressive of the Nature of his services, & accompanied [them] with two Brass Field Pieces engraved with Inscriptions suitable to his Merit.

Under these honourable Circumstances, upon the disbanding [of] the American Army, General Greene resigned his Command, tho he still retains his Commission & is generally esteemed the second military Character in that Country. He has married an amiable Lady of his own Country by whom he has several children.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>21</sup>Lt. Col. John H. Cruger, a New York Loyalist.

<sup>22</sup>*E.g.* Fort Watson, Orangeburg, Fort Motte and Fort Granby in South Carolina, and Augusta in Georgia.

<sup>23</sup>*I.e.*, Charleston, S. C., and Lt. Col. Alexander Stewart.

<sup>24</sup>The battle at this British supply depot, forty-five miles from Charleston, was fought September 8, 1781.

<sup>25</sup>Stewart commanded about 1800 men, Greene attacked with about 2200. The killed, wounded, and missing of both forces totaled over 1400 men.

<sup>26</sup>The legislature of South Carolina, for example, voted an award of ten thousand guineas for Greene.

<sup>27</sup>Greene's wife was Catherine Littlefield. She and the general had five children, two boys and three girls.

## THE 135th ANNUAL MEETING

THE 135TH ANNUAL MEETING of the Rhode Island Historical Society, called to order by President George L. Miner, was held at John Brown House at 7:45 p.m. on January 9, 1957. The Secretary read the call of the meeting and declared a quorum to be present. The minutes of the previous annual meeting were read and approved.

Mr. Nathaniel M. Vose, Jr., Treasurer, gave his report [p. 52], stating that an increase of assets over a year ago of \$29,851.59 was chiefly the result of a bequest of \$25,000 from the estate of Anna H. Chace, to be known as the Jonathan Chace Fund.

As the members stood in respect, Mrs. Axel A. Christensen read the report of the Committee on Necrology. Members who died during the year were:

Mr. Devere Allen	Miss Mabel T. Johnson
Mr. Preston F. Arnold	Mrs. Wallace D. Kenyon
Miss Sarah Dyer Barnes	Mr. C. Stanley Kinney
Mr. John W. Blair	Rev. Albert C. Larned
Mr. Malcolm G. Chace	Mrs. Augustus M. Lord
Peter Pineo Chase, M.D.	Mrs. Richard E. Lyman
Mr. Albert W. Claffin	Mr. Leslie F. Mowry
Mr. Ernest Clayton	Miss Annette G. Munro
Miss Genette T. Collins	Mr. Addison P. Munroe
Mr. Henry B. Congdon	Mr. Roger Hale Newton
Mrs. Gurney Edwards	Mr. Paul C. Nicholson
Mr. Allan Forbes	Mr. Stephen W. Phillips
Mrs. John T. Gardner	Mr. Wallace L. Pond
Mr. Percy W. Gardner	Mr. B. Thomas Potter
Mr. Frederick W. Gay	Col. Patrick H. Quinn
Mr. John H. Greene, Jr.	Mr. R. Foster Reynolds
Mr. Edwin Harris	Miss Edna Darling Rice
Mr. Garry C. House	Mr. Harry B. Sherman
Mrs. Samuel E. Hudson	Mr. Howard Sturges
Miss Jessie H. Hunt	Mr. George B. Utter
Mrs. Charles E. Hurdis	Miss Anne T. Vernon
Mr. Donald E. Jackson	Mrs. Helen C. Vose
Mr. William C. Johnson	Mrs. A. Utley Wilcox

The Membership Committee, Benjamin L. Cook, Chairman, reported that 98 new members had been received during the year, and that the total membership as of June 30, 1956, was 1636.

Mr. Miner outlined certain changes which had been made in the Constitution of the Society during the past year. The annual meet-



ing has been changed from September to January, and certain other changes were made with regard to the meetings of the Executive Board.

Mr. Clifford P. Monahan then presented his annual report as Director of the Society. He outlined the various functions of the Society, such as the collection of worthwhile material for the museum and the library, the preservation and repair of our collections, and particularly emphasized the duty which the Society owes to the State and to students of Rhode Island History. He mentioned certain repairs made to John Brown House, the expense of which was met by generous gifts which members sent in with their 1956 dues. He reported that Miss Dorothea Paull, because of illness in her family, had been forced to resign as secretary and that her place had been filled by Mrs. Francis J. Catton.

Mr. Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd, read his report as Librarian. The Society, reported Mr. Collins, has been particularly fortunate during the past year in acquiring an unusually large amount of source material for the maritime and commercial history of Rhode Island. The largest amount of this material came as a bequest under the will of Paul C. Nicholson, consisting of some sixty log books and other important manuscripts.

Other additions to our collection of logs came from the estate of Ratcliffe Hicks of Tolland, Connecticut, and from several purchases made by the Society. Mr. Collins in closing referred to the crowded condition of the present library, a problem which can be solved only when a long-hoped-for new library is built.

In a short address, President Miner outlined some of the special matters which had come before the Executive Board during the past year. He mentioned the magnificent John Brown Coach and stated that a special committee has been appointed to direct its restoration. A second project being undertaken, said Mr. Miner, is the William Greene Roelker Memorial. A room on the third floor of John Brown House is to be dedicated as a memorial to Mr. Roelker, and Mr. Wallis Howe has designed a special plaque for the wall of this room. A committee on a new library building has been appointed, and has met with Dr. Keyes Metcalf, the former Librarian of Harvard College. In closing, Mr. Miner referred to various generous gifts received by the Society during the past year, including the

Jonathan Chace Memorial Fund of \$25,000 and the bequest of \$5,000 from the late Paul C. Nicholson.

Mr. M. Randolph Flather, Chairman, then read the report of the Nominating Committee for officers for the ensuing year.

There being no other nominations, and upon motion, the nominations were closed and the Secretary instructed to cast one ballot for the slate as read. The officers being duly elected, Mr. Albert E. Lownes, who was elected President of the Society, said a few words of appreciation and the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

FRANK L. HINCKLEY, JR., *Secretary*

### OFFICERS

*elected at the Annual Meeting, January 9, 1957*

Albert E. Lownes	.....	president
Henry B. Cross, Edward Winsor	.....	vice presidents
Frank L. Hinckley, Jr.	.....	secretary
Clarence E. Sherman	.....	assistant secretary
Nathaniel M. Vose, Jr.	.....	treasurer
George C. Davis	.....	assistant treasurer

#### MEMBERSHIP

H. Cushman Anthony, *chairman*  
 Reuben C. Bates  
 Mrs. Gordon Holmes  
 Mrs. Duncan Hunter Mauran  
 Mrs. Richard E. Wheeler

#### LIBRARY

Mrs. Clifford K. Rathbone, *chairman*  
 Mrs. Axel A. Christensen  
 Knight Edwards  
 Stuart C. Sherman  
 Bradford F. Swan

#### LECTURE

Ivory Littlefield, Jr., *chairman*  
 William P. Buffon, Jr.  
 Miss Nancy A. Dyer  
 James L. Hanley  
 Mrs. Albert Harkness

#### PUBLICATION

Garrett D. Byrnes, *chairman*  
 Francis H. Chafee  
 Houghton P. Metcalf, Jr.  
 Paul C. Nicholson, Jr.  
 Lawrence C. Wroth

#### GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS

Robert H. I. Goddard, Jr., *chairman*  
 Conrad E. Green  
 J. Harry Marshall  
 Mrs. William G. Roelker  
 John C. B. Washburn

#### MUSEUM

Mrs. Charles A. Robinson, Jr., *chairman*  
 John Nicholas Brown  
 Mrs. George E. Downing  
 Mrs. M. Randolph Flather  
 Leonard J. Panaggio  
 Mrs. Henry D. Sharpe

#### FINANCE

Harry B. Freeman, *chairman*  
 Bayard Ewing  
 S. Foster Hunt  
 Charles B. Rockwell  
 William W. White

#### AUDIT

F. Morris Cochran, *chairman*  
 Fred Piggott  
 E. Russell Davis, Jr.

The Executive Committee is composed of the officers; chairmen of the standing committees; members at large: Richard LeBaron Bowen and Henry C. Hart; Dr. Grace M. Sherwood and the director of the Society, *ex officio*.

## REPORT OF THE TREASURER

For 12 Months Ending June 30, 1956

### INCOME

Dues .....	\$ 9,196.00	
Investment Income .....	9,227.18	
John Brown House Fund Income .....	186.60	
State of Rhode Island .....	8,500.00	
City of Providence .....	2,000.00	
Contributions—General .....	\$2,137.00	
Corporate .....	1,150.00	3,287.00
Patriotic Societies .....	250.00	
Sale of Publications, Books, etc. ....	436.80	
Outside Parties and Services .....	242.45	
Miscellaneous .....	161.28	\$33,487.31

### EXPENSE

Salaries .....	\$16,316.92	
Social Security Taxes .....	310.31	
Director's Discretionary Fund .....	301.65	
Supplies .....	413.10	
Telephone .....	291.69	
Membership .....	727.66	
Library .....	1,177.44	
Museum .....	223.60	
Lectures .....	539.43	
Publications .....	3,205.68	
Heat, Light and Housekeeping .....	2,093.51	
Grounds .....	1,193.56	
Buildings .....	2,925.42	
Insurance .....	581.66	
Miscellaneous .....	330.51	30,632.14
		\$ 2,855.17

### BALANCE SHEET

June 30, 1956

#### ASSETS

Cash .....	\$ 10,836.96
Special Funds .....	28,838.82
Investments .....	170,884.92
John Brown House Fund .....	7,955.00
Real Estate, Furniture and Fixtures .....	50,006.00
Books and Manuscripts .....	50,000.00
Accounts Receivable .....	922.58
	<hr/>
	\$319,444.28

#### LIABILITIES

Life Membership Reserve .....	\$ 2,550.00
Library Book Fund Reserve .....	536.18
Publication Fund Reserve .....	1,272.30
Anticipated Expense Reserve .....	1,112.67

#### SPECIAL FUNDS

John Brown House .....	\$ 7,955.00	
Wilbour Endowment .....	41,102.41	
Irene Seabury Cummings Endowment .....	5,000.00	
John Brown Chariot .....	2,297.27	
William G. Roelker Memorial .....	891.33	
William A. Wing (Library) Jonathan Chace Fund Reserve .....	980.00	83,226.01
	25,000.00	
Net Worth .....		230,747.12
		<hr/>
		\$319,444.28

NATHANIEL M. VOSE, JR., Treasurer

## NATHANAEL GREENE'S LETTERS TO "FRIEND SAMMY" WARD

edited by CLIFFORD P. MONAHAN and CLARKSON A. COLLINS, 3rd.

[continued from April, 1956, v. 15, no. 2, page 54]

Spell Hall Sunday August 29, 1772

Dear friend

Time is precious, and I am drove to the Necessity to neglect the Duties of Friendship or discharge them on this Day of the Week, therefore I hope youl excuse me, and Especially when I inform you it is very Early in the morning. Day stands tiptoe and the rays of the Sun begins to guild the tops of the Highest Hills and Tallest Trees.

Your Letter reacht me the Morning after the Destruction of the Forge: I sat upon the remains of one of the Old Shafts and read it. I was surrounded with Gloomy Faces, Piles of Timber still in Flames, Heaps of Bricks dasht to pieces, Baskets of Coal reduced to Ashes. Every thing seemd to appear in Ruins and Confusion. I read over your Letter once or twice before I could satisfy my self whether the surprize I felt was the Effects of the loss, or from the contents of the Letter. But upon a more strict enquiry and closer attention I found it to originate from your Letter. If you was surprized at [mine] I was still more so at yours. A persons remorse for doing wrong is generally in propotion to the consequence and oppinion we have of the person to whom the injury is done, and the agitation that a mind feels from reflection, gives it a keen attention, and prepares it in the most Effectual manner for receiving the deepest impression. Tho I was not Conscious of writing any thing in my Letter, that had the least shadow of reproach Yet I could not help feeling mortified, that I had wrote with so much Obscurity and Ambiguity as to leave your mind in doubt. I indeavour'd to recollect what I wrote. But the confusion without and the tumult within prevented my remembering One Sentence: And your Letter must have remained a secret to me to this Day, had not brother Kitt explain'd the Mistery. I ask't him if he saw my Letter, he told he did, and read it, and told you you mistook the meaning. What my Dear friend could give your mind such a twist. Did you ever discover in me a coldness? Did I not always [greet] you with a Cheerful and a friendly Face? Did I ever give you any Reason to suspect me to be a Hypocrite? How then could you think, I could suffer such ungenerous thoughts to harbour in my Boosom and not acquaint you with them by pointing out the Time, place and manner how it was done. I am not of a suspicious make. It is no difficult matter for one whom I profess an Esteem for to practice such an imposition upon me, for I am a stranger to distrust where I engage in friendship, for that Chills Benevolence, and quenches the Virtuou Flame. I had much rather sometimes be impos'd upon by those who are base enough to

betray such a confidence than always Live in perpetual Jealousy. If my Heart is capable of Love or my Soul of Friendship, I feel it for you.

There is not one amongst all my friends, whose sincerity I have less Reason to call in question than that of yours. I must be guilty of ingratitude to reproach you, and a Stranger to generous feelings, to harbour mistrust, where I have had so many Instances of candour and ingenuity. In Deed my Dear friend [I] have not doubted, I will not doubt, I cannot doubt, I know your Soul is as much above such low art as the Heavens is higher than the Earth. If ever such a thought [rose] in the imaginations, it was a Stranger to the [torn] I have never found my mind tainted with its Baneful influence, nor the Ardor of friendship damped by suspicions of Infidelity. I know there has been a contest in my Boosom between the Exorbitant passions and the superior faculties of the Soul. My Breast has been like a Theater of Strife, and a field of Battle, where Reason and passion contends with Various successes of Power and Victory. I am at Variance with my Self and am continually distracted and torn with Civil feuds of my own disturbed imagination. If ever any thing so ungenerous stole into the Mind, it must have been in one of those unhappy moments, and Vanisht at the approach of cool reflection like a mist before the Sun, for upon the Strictest examination I cannot find any such Sentiments rooted in the Heart or lurking in or about the Soul. I esteem you too much and Value your friendship too high to trifle with you in that sort. [Not] the Cruelty of tyrants the subtlety and Craft of secret Enemies, or the malice of Devils, shall ever disunite our Minds, if you continue to merit my future regard as you have done heretofore. I feel the Celestial flame to warm my Heart, and Cheer my Soul. To Love without a Reason is as absurd as it is ridiculous to resent without a Cause. Your Notions are exactly agreeable to mine. Plainness and Simplicity of Manners, stript of all the paint and Ornament of Policy, is what I ever admird, it wins the Affections by the force of its Persuasion, and Charms the understanding by the reasonableness of its precepts. If you would know any mans Affections towards you, consult his Behavior, that is the best Evidence of a Virtuous Mind. Though a persons professions be ever so Voluminous, and his Zeal ever so Noisy, Yet he is not entitld to our Esteem. But only Civility, for professions is but the Shadow of friendship and saying is not proving. If a Person would be considered in the Character of a Friend, let it appear by generous and friendly Offices, for that is the only testimony upon which we may safely ground our Esteem. If a [man] professes friendship one Day and proves him self an enemy the next, why should I give Credit to one who so Effectually contradicts him self; why should we trust any mans professions before he has prov'd them to be sincere by Noble and generous Actions. It is not always the consequence of a Benefit bestowd or the importance of

a favor done that determins our Value of one or commands our Gratitude for the other. The Value of a favor is not measured when Sentiments of Kindness are perceivd. then a matter frivolous in it self becomes important because it serves to bring to Light the Charactor and intention of the benefactor. Numerous are the Instances of this kind, which I have experienced from you in the course of our Connexion, and though they escap'd your Notice from the overflowing of Kindness, Yet they made a deep impression upon my mind, and have endeard your person to me for Ever, so that no thing but insult and wrong shall ever Efface its delightful form.

As the mind is not at Liberty to Love or admire without Cause, so it never ought to take Offense without a Reason. Insult and intentional wrong are the only injuries that can justly excite our resentment, and he that tamely submits to them, when offerd, wants penetration to discover the imposition or lacks Courage to punnish the Offender. Heaven forbid that I should ever have Reason to resent any part of your conduct. Though I Love you as a second self, yet would I sooner sacrifice all the Social Joys and endearing ties, than consent to submit to insult and imposition.

How could you think I wanted you to lessen your Esteem for your patron, by what means could I expect to bind you to me, that you was not bound to him. If you could so soon forget such numerous kind Offices as he renderd you, in leading you through all the difficult paths of Science, I say if you could so soon forget such Obligations, and it was possible for me to rival him in your Affections, Must not that have convinced me I had no better fate to expect from a temper so fickle and a Mind so ungrateful. I am not that persons Enemy, Nay I Love and Esteem him, and will always be his friend, unless I have greater Reason to alter my Sentiments than I have ever had. What part of his conduct can I complain of. It is true we generally hold a Rival in a disagreeable point of Light because we apprehend they use every argument in their Power to supplant us. Who has been the aggressor in the present Case, his Connexions were prior to mine, and if they were particular, he has had much Reason to complain of me than I of him. I am not Jealous of your regard for him. I will not harbour such a mischevous & Vile Mischreant. It is one of the worst of plagues, and often productive of the greatest Evils that attends mankind. We may be upon our guard against all other Calamities.

But here the enemy is within us, and admitted at all times to the innermost recesses of the Soul, where he acts the part of a false and treacherous friend, betrays under the pretence of Serving of us and Administers pison in Cups of seeming Nectar, and Ambrosia. I thank God I am not of a Jealous Make. I would not be tormented with such an evil not for

the Mines of Peru.

I have seriously consider'd of the connexion between me and your Sister, the way it began and the manner it has been carried on, and if I was to consult my pride instead of my Reason, perhaps I might think I had a sufficient Cause to Lay a foundation for resentment. It is the Opinion of many that a rejection is sufficient Cause for resentment, and I believe it is somewhat Natural to man to take [offence] at being repulsed, and it too commonly happens when People are disappointed of those Objects, which they most admire, that their Love and Esteem is turned into hate and Envy. Tho I think for my part these principles are bad, The Reasons that are offerd in support of them are, that the Person that rejects an offer, must do it, from feeling a certain superiority in themselves, and where a person thinks him self their equal, that piques his pride and consequently excites his resentment. This might be just, if every person was under an Obligation, from another, signifying their regard, to make an equal return, whether they merited our Esteem or not. It is true we cannot help haveing some regard for an object that has a Veneration for us. Yet we are under no Obligation from their Esteem to injure our own happiness to promote theirs. The Choice of Companions for Life are to Delicate for Reason to regulate all the operations of the mind. Fancy will have her Voice, therefore as our Choice or refusal are greatly dependant upon the internal Operations of the Mind, I can see no Reason why a Person should resent a Young Ladies refusing to enter into a Connexion with him, when she is conscious it will ruin her own happiness and not promote his. This way of thinking comes from the prejudices of Education, our Minds as well as Bodies are easily distorted, and put out of their natural frame. Absurdity is to be Learned and good Natural faculties may be improv'd into foolish Oppinions. For my own part I think a Virtuous mind and an Amiable form is to be admir'd, whether we meet with an equal return or not. Yet I think its impossible to feel for any Length of time all the endearing ties where our Affections are not mutual, as where they are. But if I was to determine this point from the Operations of my own mind I should give it against the general principles.

It is your advice to stop our Correspondence, what can I say to it. If you was to see her last Letter perhaps youd be of a different Opinion. To stop the Correspondence is to loos her for Ever, to continue it is to over whelm my self with agreeable Distress and pleasant pains. Cease to expect says Reason, and no longer flatter thy hopes with things imposible.

Kitt was charmd with his Visit at Westerly. Poets tell us that Medas changed everything which he touched into Gold; and that Medusas head, everyone who saw it into stone. Your Family seems to have an equal influence to change hard substances into the most soft and pene-

trable matter. They inspire the mind with a secret Chams [charm] and gently instill into the Boosoms the Tender passions of Love and Affection. Heaven has Blest your Family with every Virtue and good Quality necessary for your own happiness. I wish you may ever possess a becoming Zeal for the Glory of God, which will be best manifested by diffusing happiness amongst his creatures.

Poor Hannah that excellent Girl her state of probation is a test for the tryal of an Angles Virtue and patience. My Soul weeps for her, to be afflicted with the afflicted is an instance of humanity and the demand of good Nature and good breeding. There is a Gloomy pleasure in being dejected and inconsolable. Melancholy studies how to improve it self and sorrow finds great relief in being still more sorrowful! Oh my Sister! how hard does it seem to us short Sighted mortals that so much Virtue and innocence, does not Entitle you to an exemption, from pain and disquiet the proper rewards of Vice and folly. Oh Sammy! She is a Christian without gloominess. She is Chearful, but free from Levity. She is a pattern well worth our immation [imitation].

I hope you profit by her Example. I expect one Day or other to see you a good and great Man Diffusing Joy through the Hearts of your friends and Showering Blessings on the Children of misfortune. I am sorry to hear you are got very uneasy about what manner of Business you shall enter into for Life. Be not too precipitate, you have Youth on your side, reign in your Ambition. Remember the Race was not [to] the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong. Wait with patience, but neglect no promising prospect. Trust not your happiness in the hands of Fortune. She oftens defeats us in the midst of our most sanguine expectation. Perhaps its necessary that the most guiltless Lives Should be chequered with Evils and Disappointments lest an uninterrupted flux of delights tempt us to stay in a World, which is by no means worthy of immortality.

Nancy writes me your Daddy is tormented with them confounded Noyses,<sup>12</sup> and that party Rage and implacable envy has had a large share in the determination of his cause. I am sorry to hear that the age is so depraved and the times so Corrupt that Justice and Equity cant Breathe in the Land. But with regard to the Peoples spight against your Daddy, I dare say heel despise the disrespect of those who through ignorance of his worth give him such ill usage. Hees a philospher at Heart and will learn to over come affliction by the hopes of geting out of it, that is a way be to hard for ill fortune itself. I wish him and all his Family all possible happiness here and never ending Joy in the paradise of God.

I shall be very glad to see your face in Coventry, where I shall be confind in rebuilding the Works for some months. I am not very well in Health. I have had a fit of the phthisick, it lasted me four Nights during which time I did no[t sleep] six [hours]. This broug[ht] on inflammation in one [of my] Eyes but I am better.

N G

<sup>12</sup>See note 7.



## 25. SIDE CHAIR

*Mahogany*

Probably Newport 1765-1780

The design of the splat of this chair was one of the most popular of those used by the Townsends and Goddards of Newport, but the extent to which it was used over a long period of years indicates the possibility of its adoption by other Rhode Island cabinetmakers. In this instance a precise comparison with other known Newport chairs would offer strong support to a Newport attribution. This type of splat appears in chairs as early as 1740 and as late as 1780. It appears in chairs of relatively simple design such as this one, and yet it is used in chairs with claw-and-ball feet, carved knees, moulded stiles, and shell-carved crest rails. English chairs during the reign of George II have a similar design and doubtless these inspired its adoption in America.

The chair formerly owned by Governor James Fenner

Gift of Henry D. Sharpe



## 26. CARD TABLE

(ONE OF A PAIR)

*Mahogany*

Newport 1785-1800

A comparison of this card table with the dining table, No. 7, will indicate the same origin, Newport, and almost certainly the same hands made both. What has been said as to specific attribution of the dining table can be applied in this instance as well. There are several features, in addition to the quality of the inlaid urn, bellflowers and ivory dots that give distinction to this pair of tables. Usually the hinged half of the top is supported by one swing leg. The symmetry resulting from the use of two swing legs enhances the beauty of the table either when it is open or when it is closed. Often the line inlay of the legs is restricted to one surface. In this instance three surfaces are so adorned.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



## 27. BREAKFAST TABLE

*Mahogany*

Rhode Island 1785-1800

There is a great similarity between this table and the preceding one, No. 26, but the artistry present in No. 26, has been lost in part here. This difference shows principally in the adornment. In this instance the addition of handles and finials to the urn has lessened its sophistication and to a degree spoiled its classic lines. The shaping of the urn itself lacks the pleasing proportions of the preceding one. Here the placing of the bell-flower inlay lacks the easy grace of that in the card table. It seems too close to the urn and too crowded. The bell-flowers themselves seem pinched by comparison. The line inlay at the bottom of the leg lacks the free and unrestricted loop seen on the previous example.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



## 28. BREAKFAST TABLE

*Mahogany*

Rhode Island 1785-1800

Ever since the discovery of a table, bearing the label of John Townsend, that had the style of inlay found here, there has been a tendency to attribute all tables with this inlay to Townsend. He undoubtedly used this inlay on many occasions, but so did other cabinetmakers. For those who did not want to pay the cost of bell-flower or some other more intricate design rectangular blocks of graduated size offered a less expensive inlay table. A similar table without inlay of any kind has recently been found with an old handwritten note attached to the frame saying that it was a wedding present to the bride who used it for her first breakfast after her marriage. Thus, we have additional support for calling this type a breakfast table.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



# THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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# RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
SOUTH AMERICAN PORTS IN THE FOREIGN COMMERCE OF PROVIDENCE 1800-1830 . . . . .	65
by Earl C. Tanner	
NATHANAEL GREENE'S LETTERS TO "FRIEND SAMMY" WARD . . . . .	79
edited by Clifford P. Monahan and Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd [continued from April, 1957, v. 16, no. 2, page 57]	
RHODE ISLAND PORTRAIT SURVEY . . . . .	88
NEW MEMBERS . . . . .	89
CATALOG OF THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY FURNITURE COLLECTION . . . . .	90
by Ralph E. Carpenter, Jr.	

THE CASEY HOUSE

Casey Farm, Saunderstown, R. I.

*Built around 1750, the Casey House was for many generations the home of one of Rhode Island's most distinguished families. It is now owned by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. The estate continues to be operated as a farm, and the house is open to the public.*

Photograph by Laurence E. Tilley

# RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

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## SOUTH AMERICAN PORTS IN THE FOREIGN COMMERCE OF PROVIDENCE 1800—1830

by EARL C. TANNER<sup>1</sup>

AT THE BEGINNING of the nineteenth century trade routes from Narragansett Bay to Europe, Africa, Eastern North America, and the Caribbean had been well traveled for a hundred years or more. Even the Orient since 1787 had become familiar to the aristocracy of the Providence merchant community. One great area, however, was almost unknown, the ports of South America remaining virtually inaccessible to American shipping because of rigidly enforced restrictions in favor of Spain and Portugal.

As the new century opened, the disruptive activities of Napoleon in Europe cut off the South American colonies from their home markets and their normal sources of supply. To meet this emergency colonial ports were temporarily thrown open, with or without royal permission, to foreign shipping. This opportunity was aggressively seized upon both by Providence merchants and by their rivals in other East Coast centers. They saw in the circumstances an opportunity to establish themselves in a new and promising area.

It was at this juncture that patriot elements in Spanish America began in earnest the military phase of their struggle for independence. Moving with the times, American merchants proceeded to consolidate their advantage, sustaining some casualties for which they were partly compensated by the enormous profits they earned. In Brazil events progressed differently, but with similar results.

<sup>1</sup>This article is a continuation of "Caribbean Ports in the Foreign Commerce of Providence 1790-1830," *Rhode Island History*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1955 and Vol. 15, No. 1, 1956. The present article, like the former, is taken with minor alterations from the author's *Trade between the Port of Providence and Latin America 1800 to 1830* (typed Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1951).

## BRAZIL

The regular foreign commerce of Brazil dates from a decree issued by the Regent John on January 28, 1808. He had just arrived in Brazil after a narrow escape from Napoleon's invasion of Portugal. Indeed it is said that as the royal vessels were putting to sea, Napoleon's army came into sight on the hills back of Lisbon. The Regent signalized his arrival in Brazil by abolishing a number of colonial restrictions including that on foreign commerce.<sup>2</sup>

It should not be supposed, however, that North American vessels had never visited Brazil before 1808. Brazilian ports were always hospitable to vessels in distress and before 1808 had granted over eighty American merchantmen permission to enter for refitting.<sup>3</sup> As early as 1785 Nicholas Brown of Providence dispatched a vessel to Brazil.<sup>4</sup> The further history of this venture is not known, but in 1801 the Providence ship *Rolla* was welcomed by the Portuguese viceroy, Dom Fernando José de Portugal, and granted fifteen days to refit—"with respect and hospitality for a friendly nation."<sup>5</sup> Another Providence vessel, the schooner *Pilgrim*, was granted similar privileges, but attempted to violate the Portuguese laws (presumably against illicit trading) and was confiscated. Her captain was sent, a prisoner, to Portugal, but was released upon arrival.<sup>6</sup> In all about thirteen Providence vessels called at Brazilian ports before 1808.<sup>7</sup>

After John's proclamation, the initiation of regular trade between the United States and Brazil was delayed for a year by the American Embargo Act. Finally, in 1809, large numbers of American vessels began to enter Brazilian ports. That year a merchant of unknown

<sup>2</sup>João Pandia Calogeras, *A History of Brazil*, translated by Percy Alvin Martin, Jr. (Chapel Hill, 1939), 56.

<sup>3</sup>Charles Lyon Chandler, "List of United States Vessels in Brazil, 1792-1805, Inclusive," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, XXVI (1946), 599-617.

<sup>4</sup>James B. Hedges, "The Brown Papers, the Record of a Rhode Island Business Family" (reprinted from the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* for April 1941, Worcester, 1942), 12.

<sup>5</sup>Chandler, *loc. cit.*, 600.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 613-614.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, *passim*. Since Chandler notes no vessels in 1806 or 1807, it is possible to add to his list the following (which are included in the 13 estimated arrivals) from the Providence impost book for 1807 in the Providence Customhouse Papers: brigantine *Mary*, Mar. 19, from Rio de Janeiro via Cayenne; ship *Favorite*, Apr. 30, from the Bay of All Saints; ship *Taber*, Dec. 10, from Rio de Janeiro.

name, but almost certainly from Rhode Island, wrote in a notebook his observations on doing business at the Rio de Janeiro customhouse. He complained "it is with the greatest difficulty that any information of a commercial nature can be obtained at this place. . . ." However, he went on to show himself familiar with detailed procedures, both legal and illegal. For example, "much saving can frequently be made in the duties, by getting the goods valued far below their actual cost . . . you may have also frequent opportunities of having your goods landed in such a manner as to avoid paying any duties . . . provided you use a little policy with the Officers, & provided also your Dispatch man . . . is well disposed." This matter of the dispatch man was a complicating factor, and the author concluded, "it perhaps would be the best means of avoiding all disputes, to agree to allow him a certain proportion of any saving made. . . ."<sup>8</sup>

The first vessel to return to Providence with a full cargo of Brazilian goods arrived in 1811.<sup>9</sup> Arrivals from that date to 1830 were as follows:

## ENTRIES AT THE PORT OF PROVIDENCE

## From Brazil

1811	1	1816	2	1821	2	1826	0
1812	2	1817	0	1822	2	1827	2
1813	1	1818	0	1823	2	1828	2
1814	0	1819	3	1824	0	1829	1
1815	0	1820	1	1825	2	1830	1

In addition, several Providence vessels undoubtedly traded at Brazilian ports en route to or from Europe or Asia.<sup>10</sup>

The major exports of Brazil (except for hides) were similar to the major exports of Cuba. It should be remembered, however, in comparing numbers of arrivals, that vessels in the South American trade were on the average much larger than those trading in the Caribbean and sometimes carried extremely valuable cargoes. After 1830 Brazil virtually ceased to appear in the records of Providence

<sup>8</sup>Anonymous *Notes and Observations on Commerce at The Rhode Island Historical Society* (call number vault mc-736), 97-99.

<sup>9</sup>She was the ship *Ann and Hope* and arrived Apr. 21, 1811.

<sup>10</sup>Providence papers sometimes carried maritime notices such as the following: "Left at Rio, Oct. 28, ship John Brown, Aborn, of this port, for India in 15 or 20 days." *Providence Patriot*, Jan. 19, 1819.

trade with Latin America, and Cuba was left in the undisputed ascendancy as supplier of sugar and molasses.

#### THE RIVER PLATE

This stronghold of Spanish monopoly was first breached in 1798 by a United States vessel, the *John*, of Philadelphia.<sup>11</sup> Captain Samuel Day took the *John* into the River Plate and boldly addressed a petition to the Spanish authorities, invoking a royal *cedula* of November 18, 1797, to the effect that neutral vessels might carry the products of any Spanish colony to any other Spanish colony. Having cited this *cedula*, Captain Day proceeded to request permission to sell a load of North American lumber and take Argentine products to Philadelphia in return. He pointed out that his cargo was much needed at the time in Argentina. The *cedula* was by no means intended to authorize trade with foreign countries, but nevertheless permission was granted. On November 29, 1798, the *John* sailed from Montevideo for Philadelphia.

Next year at least ten American vessels visited the River Plate.<sup>12</sup> Among them must have been the *Palmyra* of Providence, for she was back at her home port with a large cargo of Buenos Aires goods in March, 1800.<sup>13</sup> In 1801-1802 American merchant shipping at the River Plate continued to increase, some forty-three vessels being counted.<sup>14</sup> Then, as the following table of arrivals will indicate, a break in commercial relations occurred:

<sup>11</sup>Charles Lyon Chandler, "The River Plate Voyages," *American Historical Review*, XXIII (1917-1918), 816 ff.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 820.

<sup>13</sup>Chandler states that nine vessels are known to have been at Montevideo and one at Buenos Aires in 1799. "The one known to have been at Buenos Aires during this year was the frigate *Palmyra*, which was admitted to Spanish registry at that city on November 26, 1799, by a decree issued on that date by the viceroy of the Río de la Plata, the Marquis of Avilés. She was renamed *Nuestra Señora de Belén* and was sold to Pedro Duval for 16,000 pesos. On January 4, 1800 she was dispatched by him from Buenos Aires for friendly ports." *Ibid.*, 821. On Mar. 18, 1800, the ship *Palmyra* arrived at Providence from Buenos Aires. The coincidence of names and dates suggests that the "sale" of Chandler's "frigate *Palmyra*" may have been a mere formality.

<sup>14</sup>Charles Lyon Chandler, "United States Merchant Ships in the Río de la Plata (1801-1808) as Shown by Early Newspapers," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, II (1919), 26 ff.

#### ENTRIES AT THE PORT OF PROVIDENCE

##### From the River Plate

1800..... 1	1808..... 0	1816..... 0	1824..... 1
1801..... 4	1809..... 0	1817..... 1	1825..... 1
1802..... 0	1810..... 2	1818..... 1	1826..... 0
1803..... 0	1811..... 3	1819..... 0	1827..... 0
1804..... 0	1812..... 1	1820..... 1	1828..... 0
1805..... 0	1813..... 0	1821..... 1	1829..... 0
1806..... 0	1814..... 0	1822..... 2	
1807..... 0	1815..... 0	1823..... 1	

Trade between the United States and the River Plate was contrary to Spanish colonial policy. That it was permitted at all was due to Spain's preoccupation with the Napoleonic Wars. In 1802 normal Spanish policy reasserted itself in the form of a campaign against foreign shipping. Vessels were seized and seamen imprisoned. The victims were filled with indignation. They had come, they said, in good faith, and they found themselves treated with contempt. Some of the innocent prisoners, it was asserted, were even forced to occupy "the same horrid apartments with the vilest malefactors and the mangled remains of executed assassins. . . ."<sup>15</sup> The result of this campaign was a sharp reduction in American shipping to the River Plate. In 1803 only ten or twelve vessels appeared; in 1804 still fewer.<sup>16</sup>

The years 1806 and 1807 were exciting in the history of the River Plate. The British, at war with Spain, made two major attempts to seize the area and were in actual occupation for a few months. During this period American trade with the River Plate enjoyed a temporary revival. Some forty American vessels were counted in the area, including at least four from Providence (though none returned directly to home port).<sup>17</sup> This revival of commerce was interrupted by the American Embargo Act<sup>18</sup> and again by the War of 1812. When trade resumed in 1817, Argentina was an independent nation.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup>"Memorial of the United States Citizens at the River Plate, Mar. 26, 1802," in the *Providence Gazette*, Jul. 10, 1802.

<sup>16</sup>Chandler, "United States Merchant Ships in the Río de la Plata (1801-1808)," 26-27.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 29, 50-52.

<sup>18</sup>Charles Lyon Chandler, "United States Shipping in the La Plata Region, 1809-1810," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, III (1920), 159 ff.

<sup>19</sup>Providence had a small part in the liberation of Argentina from Spanish rule. Thomas Lloyd Halsey of Providence lived in Buenos Aires almost continuously from about 1807 to some time in the 1830's. He was instrumental in supplying

From 1817 until 1825 a regular, though small scale commerce was maintained. The year of the last Argentine arrival at Providence was also the first year of an Argentine-Brazilian war over the possession of the East Bank of the River Plate. When this dispute was finally settled in 1828 by the creation of the independent Republic of Uruguay, Providence-Argentine trade was virtually extinct.

#### THE WEST COAST

Trade with the West Coast of South America is one of the most obscure chapters in the maritime history of Providence. Shipping to that area is difficult to trace because vessels rarely cleared from Providence for Chile or Peru. Instead they cleared for Canton or Batavia. It is frequently difficult and often impossible to determine whether vessels so cleared reached the Orient by way of the Cape of Good Hope or by way of Cape Horn. Fortunately it became increasingly common, when the western route was to be followed, to clear for "Canton via Cape Horn" or for "N. W. Coast and Canton." Another favorite clearance was "Gibraltar and Canton." In this case the vessels probably, though not necessarily, proceeded by way of the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>20</sup>

The return to Providence of vessels that had been trading on the West Coast of South America is even more difficult to trace. During the entire period from 1800 to 1830 only three entered Providence from Peru and Ecuador; none, from Chile. Instead, they sold their West Coast cargoes elsewhere and entered the port of Providence as arrivals from Canton or Amsterdam or New York. The history of Providence trade with the West Coast must, therefore, be pieced together from letters and occasional newspaper notices.

the patriots with large quantities of war materials including 1,600 guns, 450 barrels, and 25 cases of powder. Also, with a Col. John Devereux, he guaranteed a loan of 2,000,000 pesos to the regime of Supreme Director Pueyrredón. His other activities included the underwriting of privateers and the introduction of Merino sheep into Argentina. Sometime in the 1830's, he returned to Providence with a considerable fortune. Charles Lyon Chandler, "Thomas Lloyd Halsey," *Dictionary of American Biography*, VIII, 162-163.

<sup>20</sup>As late as 1804 a sea captain stated that no vessels had, as of that date, proceeded to the Orient by Cape Horn. William B. Weedon, "Early Oriental Commerce in Providence," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* (Dec., 1907), 266. That this was not quite accurate is indicated by instances cited in Eugenio Pereira Salas, *Buques nortamericanos en Chile a fines de la era colonial (1788-1810)*, (Prensas de la Universidad de Chile, 1936).

American commerce with the West Coast was spearheaded, around the turn of the century, by whalers, sealers, and ships bound for the Columbia River. These vessels occasionally put into West Coast ports for supplies, repairs, and as much trading as could be managed. Their reception was sometimes cordial and sometimes, as in the case of the ship *Hazard* of Providence, extremely hostile.<sup>21</sup> The ship *Hazard* happened into Valparaiso in 1802, a bad year for American shipping on both coasts.<sup>22</sup> The episode was described by a contemporary as follows:

It seems that Captain Rowen of the *Hazard* had ventured by permission of the Ga. 1 to go into Valparaiso for Water &c. after which they demanded him to give up the arms he had on board which was refused and finally under various pretenses sent an armed rabble on board and plundered him of the quarter part of his Cargo killing one Man on board and wounding many others—After which offered him the Ship which was refused unless they would pay him for damages. In this situation the ship and crew remained.<sup>23</sup>

There the report ends, but it may be added that the *Hazard* got away and eventually reached Canton.<sup>24</sup>

In the years immediately following, Providence shipping to the Orient was fairly heavy, an average of some four vessels a year going out until the War of 1812. It is probable that some of these sailed with cargoes destined to be exchanged in Chile or Peru for silver and copper to be taken to the Orient. Spanish colonial authorities became more independent as contact with Spain became more difficult. Then in 1811 Chilean patriots seized control of the country and proclaimed foreign shipping not only permissible but welcome. An American agent was received in Valparaiso, and a visiting American frigate was welcomed with a twenty-one gun salute.<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately

<sup>21</sup>Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts* (Boston, 1921), 62.

<sup>22</sup>A full account of the *Hazard's* difficulties at Valparaiso is in Richard J. Cleveland, *A Narrative of Voyages and Commercial Enterprises* (Cambridge, Mass., 1842), 163-176.

<sup>23</sup>John Lippitt, Providence, R. I., to T. H. Perkins, Boston, Mass., Dec. 21, 1802, Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

<sup>24</sup>J. and T. H. Perkins, Boston, Mass., to William F. Megec, Providence, R. I., Apr. 23, 1805, Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

<sup>25</sup>William Spence Robertson, *Hispanic-American Relations with the United States* (New York, 1923), 188; Charles Lyon Chandler, *Inter-American Acquaintances* (Scwanee, Tenn., 1917), 75, 77; William Miller Collier and Guillermo Feliú Cruz, *La Primera misión de los Estados Unidos de América en Chile* (Santiago de Chile, 1926), *passim*.

the War of 1812 prevented American shipping from taking full advantage of this new opportunity. In 1814 an imperial force, operating from Peru, reoccupied Chile. Fragmentary evidence suggests that despite the increasingly attractive possibilities in Chile, the great majority of Providence vessels proceeding to the Orient continued to use the Cape of Good Hope route.<sup>26</sup>

Regular trade between Providence and Chile was first placed on a firm basis in 1817 when the country was permanently liberated from Spanish rule by the armies of General San Martín advancing across the Andes from Argentina. After 1817 Spanish authority was never re-established in Chile, though the Coast was for a short time under Spanish blockade. In 1818 the balance of naval power passed from the royalists to the patriots, for in that year the British naval officer, Lord Cochrane, offered his services to San Martín. A small fleet was equipped and Cochrane soon did so much damage that San Martín was able to make plans for a sea-borne invasion of Peru, stronghold of imperial power. In September, 1820, he sailed north and occupied the small Peruvian seaport of Pisco. A few months later he occupied Callao, port of Lima.<sup>27</sup> Though Peru was not effectively freed until 1824 and Callao itself was reoccupied by the royalists from 1824 to 1826, regular trade relations between Peru and Providence date from the first liberation of Callao in 1821. Guayaquil, an area which was liberated by Bolivarian armies in 1822 and which until 1830 was part of Great Colombia, was seldom visited by Providence vessels.

The only vessels to arrive at the port of Providence directly from the West Coast between 1800 and 1830 were as follows: one from Guayaquil in 1824, one from Callao in 1825, and another from Callao in 1827. It may fairly be assumed, however, that at least twenty to twenty-five additional vessels proceeded from Providence to the West Coast between 1800 and 1830, mostly in the years from 1817 to 1830.<sup>28</sup> Some of these vessels remained for many months

<sup>26</sup>Book of entries and clearances; manifests — both in Providence Custom-house papers.

<sup>27</sup>For general information on the history of Peru, see Jorge Basadre, *Historia de la República del Perú* (Lima, 3d ed., n.d.).

<sup>28</sup>Estimate based on number of vessels cleared for "Canton via Cape Horn" or "NW Coast and Canton;" on occasional newspaper notices; and on letters in the Nightingale & Jenckes papers and in the Carrington letterbook for 1821-1823 at The Rhode Island Historical Society.

on the coast; others traded from Chile and Peru to China and back. Such were the general outlines of the West Coast trade.

#### EPISODES IN THE WEST COAST TRADE

Soon after San Martín's liberation of Chile, the ship *Lion* of Providence entered Valparaiso harbor. She had been preceded by the brig *Rambler* of Providence and by several other vessels from America and Europe. Among the latter were a number of English merchantmen loading wheat for Rio de Janeiro. At that time the Spanish navy was still a force to be reckoned with as may be seen from the following observations by E. T. Jenckes, clerk of the *Lion*:

We feel no small uneasiness from the Spanish blockading squadron which consists of the *Venganza* 44 and some smaller vessels. They chased in the *Ida* & the *Adeline* (both *clippers*) & a few days since came into the harbor close under the forts, made a tack round & stood out, a fresh breeze from the harbor every day enabling them to do it with impunity. This she has done twice since we have been here, and a few days since in plain sight she captured a ship bound in. . . . We have our guns loaded with grape when she is off & every preparation made to resist any attempt in boats to cut us out.<sup>29</sup>

Though Cochrane had not yet arrived, the patriots had sent out privateers and had brought in a prize ship with a cargo worth \$300,000. In view of the many dangers to American shipping and of the considerable number of vessels involved, it seemed strange that the United States Navy did not furnish some protection. "Every-one wonders," wrote Jenckes, "why we do not have a frigate to protect our trade in these seas as it is very important and the English have one for half the same trade."<sup>30</sup> This need was soon filled, and for many years the United States Navy patrolled the West Coast of South America.

A Providence ship, the *Louisa*, had particular reason to be grateful for timely assistance received from the U. S. frigate *Macedonian*. In 1820, before Callao had been liberated by San Martín, the *Louisa* attempted to enter that port in order to trade with the royalists. She was seized by the Chilean navy and carried into the port of Huasco. At this point Captain Downes of the frigate *Macedonian*

<sup>29</sup>E. T. Jenckes, Valparaiso, Chile, to Samuel Nightingale, Providence, R. I., Nov. 5, 1817, Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, The USS *Essex* had been on the Coast in 1813. Chandler, *Inter-American Acquaintances*, 77.

came to the rescue.

Captain D. informed the master of the *Louisa*, if he would bring his ship out, he would protect him, in consequence of which, by the assistance of the Captains of some of the English detained vessels, he cut his cables, and stood out under the guns of the *Macedonian*, from whom she received 2 men and proceeded on her voyage.<sup>31</sup>

Thus American shipping, harassed by both royalists and patriots, was protected by the United States Navy.

The appreciation of the American residents in Chile for naval protection is indicated in the following extract from an address to Captain John Downes of the frigate *Macedonian* on the occasion of his recall to the United States in 1821:

In the unsettled state of the country since your arrival in this ocean conflicting interests have recently arisen and the belligerents have in many instances infringed on our neutral rights. Your perseverance, zeal, & unremitting attention to the interests of your countrymen has protected our persons & property, has made our flag respected and has convinced every real American that in every instance and in the many delicate and trying situations in which you have been placed that warm feelings of humanity and a heart and hand devoted to your country has been your constant guide.<sup>32</sup>

Two years after this address was written, Lord Cochrane, having completed his mission, withdrew from the Chilean navy. In a proclamation he expressed his "heartfelt satisfaction" on the opening up of those "vast provinces" formerly dominated by Spain. "The Squadron which maintained the monopoly," wrote Cochrane, "has disappeared from the face of the Ocean and the Flags of Independent South America wave everywhere triumphant protecting that intercourse between Nations which is the source of their Riches, Power, and Happiness." To those few who "were anxious to avail themselves of accidental circumstances presented during the contest" Cochrane pointed out that restraints which had been imposed were temporary and "for the general good."<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup>Wm. F. Rogers, Boston, Mass., to Saml. Nightingale, Providence, R. I., Jun. 25, 1821, Nightingale & Jenckes papers. See also E. T. Jenckes, Valparaiso, Chile, to Samuel Nightingale, Providence, R. I., Feb. 20, 1821, Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

<sup>32</sup>Americans in Chile to Capt. John Downes, Valparaiso, Chile, Mar. 9, 1821, copy in Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

<sup>33</sup>Lord Cochrane, Quintero, Chile, to the Merchants of England and other Nations trading in the Pacific, Jan. 4, 1823, copy in the Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

In these early years of Chilean and Peruvian independence American merchantmen encountered difficulties, not only on the high seas, but also in port. In 1822, for example, the Chilean government determined to raise the tariff. This step and the manner in which it was taken was much resented by American merchants and resulted in a formal protest to the American commercial agent in Chile. Some idea of the American colony's consternation can be gained from the following extract from a letter written by E. T. Jenckes to his uncle, Samuel Nightingale of Providence:

Since my last, the Government have given us time to amuse ourselves in any manner we please — as they have taken into their heads that we worked more than was for their profits. They consequently, with the utmost coolness, shut up the Custom House and public offices while they are deliberating on the best method of getting more duties. It would surprise one of our driving Yankees who had never seen anything of the kind to observe how little they think of stopping all commerce for a couple of months, considering it a matter of little consequence & wonder at our getting into a passion about it — This state of things has been since the middle of September & we do not know how much longer it will continue, but as they have just nicely painted all the Offices, I imagine they are waiting for them to dry. They do not permit a package to be carried from one town to another or to be landed or shipped. Some vessels have been waiting near 2 mo. to land & others 6 weeks for permission to sail.<sup>34</sup>

The result of the Chilean legislature's deliberations was a new commercial code so "complicated and intricate" that it was thought to be "almost an entire preventive to all commerce."<sup>35</sup> Political and economic stability were not achieved in Chile until 1830. Up to that time foreigners and natives alike had to suffer from frequent and unpredictable changes.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup>E. T. Jenckes, Valparaiso, Chile, to Samuel Nightingale, Providence, R. I., Oct. 22, 1822, Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

<sup>35</sup>E. T. Jenckes, Valparaiso, Chile, to Samuel Nightingale, Providence, R. I., Dec. 14, 1822, Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

<sup>36</sup>In addition to political violence, Chile suffered from earthquakes. E. T. Jenckes was wounded in the severe quake of 1822 which nearly destroyed Valparaiso. His report on a minor tremor may be taken to illustrate this danger of West Coast commerce. "I was sitting 2 days since under a very large pear tree when a shock came on the ground. The pear tree was moved off about 8 inches & returned directly with a quick movement. The tree was not less than 10 feet in circumference. These shocks are not thought as much of here as a clap of thunder is with us, & it is only when the houses begin to tumble down that they



With all of these hazards went high profits, the sale of European and North American cargoes being only one of several sources of gain. The coastal trade between Chile and Peru offered at times extraordinary opportunities. In 1818, for example, the ship *Two Catherines* of Providence, laden with wheat, cleared Valparaiso ostensibly for Rio de Janeiro. Instead she proceeded to the royalist port of Callao where it was estimated she could dispose of her cargo at a 500% advance. Her bonds of course were forfeited.<sup>37</sup> Later when the commerce became legal, smaller but still attractive profits were regularly made in the coastal flour trade, except when floods, as in 1822, caused the suspension of Chilean grain exports to Peru.<sup>38</sup> (News of crop failure was the signal for American vessels to load flour at Baltimore and proceed with dispatch to the West Coast.)

Another source of profits was the trade between Canton and the West Coast. As a rule the westbound cargo consisted mostly of silver and copper. The return cargoes consisted of assorted Oriental goods selected on the basis of market conditions in Chile and Peru at the time of sailing. Vessels known to be departing for China were, of course, deluged with small personal orders. E. T. Jenckes, for example, was requested to take a portrait to China to be copied by Chinese artists,<sup>39</sup> to have monogrammed shirts made by a Chinese tailor,<sup>40</sup> and to do numerous other such errands.

Trade with Peru was subject to vicissitudes similar to those which characterized Chilean trade of the period.<sup>41</sup> San Martín's liberating army sailed from Valparaiso on August 21, 1820, and anchored at Pisco on September 7. The campaign progressed slowly, and it was

are seriously frightened." Jenckes continues in another paragraph: "The manner and habits of the people are so quiet and contented & the climate is so fine that what would be dreadful in another part of the world for years is got over here in a month. They pray and promise most heartily while imminent danger lasts. But that over, those who can afford it build again their houses, while those who cannot make themselves a hut of mud and rushes and then dance and play the guitar as contentedly as if in their former & better habitation." E. T. Jenckes, Valparaiso, Chile, to Samuel Nightingale, Providence, R. I., Dec. 14, 1822, Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

<sup>37</sup>*Providence Patriot*, Jan. 13, 1819.

<sup>38</sup>E. T. Jenckes, Valparaiso, Chile, to Samuel Nightingale, Providence, R. I., Apr. 22, 1822, Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

<sup>39</sup>Chas. W. Wooster, Santiago, Chile, to Carlos Jinks, Valparaiso, Chile, Mar. 16, 1821, Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

<sup>40</sup>Federico Freundt, Santiago, Chile, to E. T. Jenckes, Valparaiso, Chile, Dec. 16, 1819, Nightingale & Jenckes papers.

July, 1821, before Lima was occupied; Callao, port of Lima, did not surrender until September, 1821. Even then the royalist army was by no means destroyed. Rather, it retired to the interior and remained a constant threat until December, 1824. From June 16 to July 17, 1823, Lima was actually reoccupied by the royalist army, and on February 18, 1824, a mutiny of the garrison at Callao placed that port again in royalist hands. A campaign under the leadership of Bolívar's lieutenant, General Sucre, culminating in the battle of Ayacucho in December, 1824, resulted in the virtual extinction of Spanish power. The port of Callao, however, remained in royalist hands until July 19, 1826.

From 1824 to 1826 Lima was without its seaport, but where high profits were to be had, commerce found a way. The tiny seacoast village of Chorillos became the scene of extraordinary activity which is described in a contemporary letter as follows:

Little did we imagine that this miserable village and wretched port was destined to see 70 sail of merchant vessels riding in its open roadstead at this period; but such is the fact and such is the crowd of foreign commerce that on the small projection of the landing place (now enlarged by the laudable exertions of the officers and crew of the Cambridge, British man-of-war) there is not sufficient space for the immense quantities of foreign products which are daily landing from the various ships through a continually high surf and in defiance of every obstacle. Such is the invincible and persevering spirit of commercial adventure. From this point, these articles in small parcels are conveyed up the high and almost perpendicular cliffs by a zig-zag road cut for the purpose, and in that operation the laborious and hardy *Borico* "tugs his weary day" for often a cruel and ungrateful master. From the heights, the goods are conveyed to Lima by the usual mule transportation and thence are distributed over the country at prices which, in the days of Spanish monopoly, would have excited wonder by their cheapness. No less than 40,000 barrels of flour from

<sup>41</sup>Few American vessels visited Peru before 1820, though they claimed the right to refit there in case of emergency. For an example of trade in 1804-1805, see Amasa Delano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels* (Boston, 1817), 479-523. The same work has a section on Chile in 1800-1801. *Ibid.*, 274-368. A Providence vessel, the *Tyre*, apparently ventured into Lima in 1801. An account book of Uriel Rea, who was, perhaps, the supercargo or clerk, contains the entry in 1801 "Taken by the Government at Lima . . . \$700." A later entry states, "My Demand against the Spanish Government was not allowed by the Commissioners at Washington." Account book of Uriel Rea, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

the United States have reached Lima by this process during the last 6 months.<sup>42</sup>

Aside from the inconveniences trade with Peru was attended with unusual hazards during the temporary resurgences of Spanish power. Among the victims of Spanish vigilance at this time was the ship *General Carrington*, captured by the Spaniards off the coast of Peru on July 7, 1824.<sup>43</sup>

The campaigns of 1824 and 1825 and the final capitulation of Callao in 1826 inaugurated a period of somewhat greater stability. With the danger of Spanish reconquest practically eliminated the new nations of the West Coast were able to turn their attention wholly to constructive tasks of political and economic development. The commercial codes which they adopted, though sometimes irritating, did not seriously interfere with trade. In the late 1820's Chilean import duties ranged from 5% to 40% *ad valorem* with fairly moderate specific duties on sugar, tobacco, brandy, etc. Books, maps, musical instruments, horses, cattle, and a few other items were free.<sup>44</sup> Peruvian duties were higher with a base rate of 30% and a long list of items at 80%. Among the latter were brandy, soap, ready-made clothes, sugar, tobacco, saddlery, candles, and furniture. Books, printing presses, seeds, music, etc., were free.<sup>45</sup>

For the maritime history of Rhode Island it is fortunate that the opening of South America came at a time before Providence had succumbed to the competition of New York, and at a time when the mercantile community was led by men of the caliber of Edward Carrington. Soon after South America had become independent, the port of Providence was reduced to a minor role in the foreign commerce of the United States.

<sup>42</sup>Letter to the editors of the *Boston Patriot* quoted in the *Rhode Island American*, Dec. 2, 1825. The number of Providence vessels to visit Chorillos is not known. That at least two did so is indicated by the following maritime notice: "At Chorillos, June 11, brig Packet, Tyler, of Providence from Gibraltar, waiting to sell her cargo; ship Superior, Andrews, of Providence." *Rhode Island American*, Oct. 21, 1825.

<sup>43</sup>Survey of Federal Archives, Division of Community Service Programs, Work Projects Administration, *Ship Registers of Providence, Rhode Island, 1773-1939* (Providence, 1941), I, 390.

<sup>44</sup>*Rhode Island American*, Apr. 10, 1827.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*

## NATHANAEL GREENE'S LETTERS TO "FRIEND SAMMY" WARD

edited by CLIFFORD P. MONAHAN and CLARKSON A. COLLINS, 3rd

[continued from April, 1957, v. 16, no. 2, page 57]

Spell Hall October 9th 1772

Dear Friend

A person must have an uncommon genius to write a panegyrick upon a Barren Letter, he must possess a surprising penetration to discover Beauties when they dont exist. Was I not acquainted with you I should imagin from the Language of your Letters, that you was a French Courtier Educated at Paris in the Art of Compliment. Surely you cannot mean to Flatter my Vanity, and its obvious my Letters are undeserving your praise. I hope you are too Generous to impose upon your friend, was I weak enough to give you an Opportunity. Where then is the defect in point of Judgment or Sincerity. I have no reason to think its the former and very little the latter. I know its common for us to be partial to our Friends. We often over rate their Actions. That which is but an indifferent act in another, appears glorious and important in them. We may be prejudiced as well for as against a thing; and this prejudice is often so secret and subtle in its operations that the Mind receives an insensible bias with out perceiving its Influence. Perhaps my Dear friend, this might be the case with you when you wrote your two last Letters, for they seemed to Breath an uncommon Spirit of Friendship, altho the Language appear'd to border upon Flattery. I wish it was in my Power to write you any thing that might please and improve you. I hope one Day to see you shine like a Star of the first Magnitude all glorious both Evening and morning. I lament the want of a liberal Education; I feel the mist Ignorance to surround me. For my own part I was Educated a Quaker, and amongst the most Superstitious sort, and that of it self is sufficient Obstacle to cramp the best of Geniuses; much more mine.<sup>13</sup> This constrained manner of Educating

<sup>13</sup>Not until 1773 did the Society of Friends take note of Greene's actions, which were contrary to the Quaker doctrine. After he had attended a military parade at Plainfield, Connecticut, near the Rhode Island border, we find in the records, "'At our monthly meeting, held at Cranston on the 5th of seventh month, 1773 . . . Whereas, this meeting is informed that Nathanael and Griffen Greene have (been) at a place in Connecticut of public resort where they had no proper business, therefore this meeting appoints Ephraim Congdon, Jared Greene, and Cary Spencer to make inquiry . . .'" And finally "'ye 30th day of ye ninth month,'" the records reveal, "'The matter referred to this meeting concerning Nathanael Greene and Griffen Greene, as they have not given this meeting any satisfaction for their outgoing and misconduct, therefore this meeting doth put

their Youth, has prov'd a fine Nursery of Ignorance and Supersticion instead of piety; and has laid a foundation for Form instead of Worship. It was not the original intention of the Friends to prevent the propagation of useful Literature in the Church, but only to prohibit their Youth from reading such Books as tended to make them Fools by industry; and in the midst of an appearing profusion of Knowledge to want common Sense. They considered Youth as the great Opportunity of Life, which Settles and fixes most men either in a good or bad course; and that the impressions then made were commonly the most durable, especially those which are bad. Youth is most certainly a time of Innocence when we have horror for Vice; which we never commit at first without doing Violence to our Nature. How our Souls Startles when we attempt to perpetrate a Crime prohibited by Laws both Human and Divine. I can well remember when I first began to make excursions into the Field of *Eniquity*. O! what conflicts have I felt in my Boosom between Virtue and Vice. If I were to Judge from the Operations of my own mind with regard to the Innocence of Youth, I should think that the first and most Natural thoughts of Men were to be honest and just. These were the Sentiments of the first Founders of our Society, and as that was an Age whercin Priest Craft prevaild, the most useful Branches of Literature was much neglected. For it was the Interest of the Order to Cultivate the Youthful Minds to be subservient to their After purposes. This they could not do without locking up all the Avenues and passages to Wisdom so that their Scholars had neither the Reason of Philosophers or the Affibility of Gentlemen. It was no difficult matter to educate their Youth in this sort seeing they had the entire direction of the Seminaries of Learning. Therefore their pupils came out of the Universities with a Starchness of behavior, sourness of looks, and full of Starved conceits, which made them haughty and imperious in their conduct. This false Zeal and ill breeding, under the Affectation of Learning, was what first disgusted our Society with Literature. For when they contrasted the Learned with the Laity, they observd an easiness of Address, softness of Speech and a freedom of thought in one; and nothing but Pedantry and Magisterial Grimace in the other; and as they found the Learned neither wiser nor better Men than the Laity The friends concluded that a Liberal Education was rather prejudicial than Beneficial to Society. Not rightly discovering where the Evil lay, they argued from the abuse to the disuse of the thing.

These were the Reasons why the Quakers cri'd down Literate it them from under the care of the meeting until they make satisfaction for their misconduct . . ." George Washington Greene, *The Life of Nathanael Greene*, (N. Y., 1871) v. 1, p. 69-70.

was not the most useful parts thereof, but only Vain Philosophy: and such Metaphysical distinctions as rather confounded than improv'd the understanding. They lookt upon plainness and Symplicity as inseperable marks of Truth, and that Religion, good sense, and humanity was a far better Armament to a man, than such a Stock of Philosophy, that only perplext and confounded him in a maze of improv'd Nonsense and Absurdity, which only Serv'd to fortify and make him impregnable against common Sense. These were the Sentiments of our Fore Fathers with regard to human learning, it was their intention only to lop off the dead Branches of Literature, as being altogether superfluous and useless. But Superstition and Ignorance increased in to the decay of Learning; and in the Country Churches they soon confounded the useful with the useless Branches of Literature, prohibiting the reading of all Books except the Holy scripture, Barckley's Apology, Fox Journal and a few others of the same tennor and date. This my dear friend was the foundation of my Education; and I believe youl agree with me, it requires an uncommon Natural Genius or a very free conversation, to get the better of such a constrained and corrupt education; Nature withheld the former from me and Fortune the latter, so that I remain without the Verge of Science, like Moses of old I can behold the Beauties of Canaan but Jordan prevents my entranse. My Father was a man of Industry and brought up his Children to Business. Early very early when I should have been in the pursuit of Knowledge, I was digging into the Bowels of the Earth after wealth, so that had Nature given me a Genius fit to cultivate an Acquaintance with the polite Arts, I have not had Opportunity for such an Acquisition. Besides there was no one to inspire me with Noble and generous Sentiments equally fit for Dominion or subjection. My Father was a man of great Piety, had an excellent understanding, and was govern'd in his conduct by Humanity and kind Benevolence. But his Mind was over shadow'd with prejudices against Literary Accomplishments. Notwithstanding all these Obstructions I have Read a few Books, but they have rather amus'd than improv'd me. After this explanation, I hope youl [be] less liberal of your praise, for praise unmerited is nothing but Ridicule in disguise. You are not indebted to me for any part of that manly dignity which you display. You are indebted to Nature for your Genius to your Father for an opportunity to Cultivate that Genius, to Mr. Manning<sup>14</sup> for Inspiring you with Noble and Elevated Sentiments to Mr. Arnold for holding A Lamp to direct your Steps through the Difficult paths of Science. If I deserve your praise it is for the steadiness of my Friend-

<sup>14</sup>James Manning (1738-1791), president of Rhode Island College (Brown) of which Ward was a graduate in the class of 1771.

ship for there is no one that Loves you with a more Cordial Affection.

I should be sorry that Mr. Varnum<sup>15</sup> through blindness of prejudice should give his Enemies an opportunity to reproach him justly. I should think my self happy if I could Open or let in any new rays of understanding that might discover his folly; for I love and esteem the man. But I should be sorry to disoblige him when I cannot serve him. Whoever goes about to reform the World undertakes an Office Obnoxious to malice and Often beset with great difficulties. It speaks a confidence of our own Capacity, that prompts us to set up for the School Master of Mankind and it infers a charge of Corruption or Ignorance in the Object out of which we mean to lead or whip them. Every man has a good conceit of him self and his own merit. He thinks him self undervalued by instruction and is provoked by correction. The confession of our weakness and that of anothers better sense is generally both contained in that of taking Advice, which is seldom taken for that reason. How my Dear Friend could you think me a suitable Person to correct the errors in a man of such exalted Talents as Mr. Varnum possesses.

I have lately had a Visit from the once celebrated Susa Harris. She enjoys but a poor State of health. She appears like a Gaudy flwr nipt by the pinching frost. I fancy she is not long for this World tho she flies Swiftly on the Wings of wild Desire after Matrimony.<sup>16</sup>

"How Rich How Valued once avails thee not  
To whom related or by whom begot  
A heap of dust alone remains of thee  
Tis all thou art and all the proud shall be."

There has been a Famous Preacher at Greenwich. He is a Gentleman of elevated Faculties, a fine Speaker; and appears by his Language to be a Lover of Mankind. I refer you to the Boys for further particulars for they wont wait a moment longer. Distribute my love where due Amen

N G

I wrote this after the Boys set out upon the Road I trust to your generosity for incorrectness.

<sup>15</sup>James Mitchell Varnum (1748-1789), a promising young lawyer at the time, two years later was colonel of the Kentish Guards, in which his friend Nathanael Greene served as a private. During the Revolutionary War Varnum rose to the rank of brigadier-general in the Continental Army.

<sup>16</sup>It is possible that Miss Harris was successful in her pursuit of matrimony. The *Providence Gazette* of December 26, 1772, carried a notice of the marriage of Miss Susannah Harris, daughter of Henry, deceased, and Captain Joseph Cooke.

Sunday Morning  
Dr Friend

Coventry January 25 1773

I Receivd your Kind Letter by your Aunt Greene<sup>17</sup> and your agreeable Essay by Brother Kitt and am sorry I am obligd to make an apology for not answering them sooner. I intend Writeing you by your Aunt but she was gone before I knew it. Kitt went a Week sooner than I expected. I thought I would not miss an opportunity so favourable as that of waiteing by your Father. I spent the Evening with him Mr. Marchant<sup>18</sup> and sundry other Gentlemen, at your Uncle Greens, and intended to have Wrote in the Morning, and returnd to Greenwich for that purpose. But he past my Lodgings just as I got up, By which means I have been deprivd of any opportunity till the present. One truth I can assure, it was not for want of Affection. I love and Esteem you as I ever did. So remote and hidden are the motives of our Actions even amongst the most Intimate Friends, that its necessary for us to possess the most Charitable Disposition towards them and their conduct through Life; otherwise we shall often injure them by Evil suspicions and groundless jealousies. We ought to Keep our Eye Single in vieweing each others Actions and weigh them in the Scales of Friendship with that Allowance that Human Nature in its imperfect state requires. Friendship being a strong and Ha[bitu]al Inclination in Two Persons to promote each others Happiness. We are Naturally lead to discharge all the important Duties with mutual Goodwill, and when any Actcidents or Occurrences happens that begets mistrust they will Lose their very Name in the Channel of Friendship, as small Brooks do theirs when they fall into Larger Rivers. But there are many Professors of Friendship who appear Like a well Drawn Picture to resemble its Original but wants that warmth and Vital Heat that Constitutes the finer feelings of the Soul. It is somewhat unhappy when we have made Choice of such a Friend, and no less difficult to maintain a good understanding, for they judge by events and not by Intentions. But I hope you and I act upon different Principles towards each Other, and that our Profession and Sincerity go hand in hand. I thank you for your Invitation to Ward Hall, But

<sup>17</sup>Aunt Greene refers to Catharine, daughter of Simon and Deborah (Greene) Ray, who was married to Governor William Greene (1731-1809), Justice of the Supreme Court, 1776; Chief Justice and Speaker of the House, 1777; Governor, 1778-1785. Governor Samuel Ward, Sammy's father, married Anna Ray, a sister of Aunt Greene, and General Nathanael Greene married her niece, Catharine Littlefield. Sammy married his cousin Phebe, Aunt Greene's daughter.

<sup>18</sup>Henry Marchant (1741-1796), a prominent Rhode Island lawyer and politician, was later a member of the Continental Congress. Marchant's father's second wife was Isabel Ward, Sammy's aunt, sister of Governor Samuel Ward. After his father's death in 1747 young Henry was brought up in the Ward family.

I should be guilty of imprudence, and unjust to my self to accept at this Time. It would give me a particular Pleasure to see you Here, and I can say with Pope "Come to Coventry and Enjoy over a Generous Bowl, the fest of Reason and the flow of Soul."

The Sound of the Hamer is once more heard in our Land, the Forge is now compleat, Long and tedious has been the Business, and has been rendered much more so for want of good and faithful hands.<sup>19</sup> Although we had some that deservd that Character, yet we had many that were like Old Co[torn] Dog that Shund Chores and Watcht meals. I am glad to hear your good Opinion increases upon a further Acquaintance with Kitt. I wish he may prove the happy Link to unite the two Families by the ties of Interest as well as Social regard.<sup>20</sup> Kitt informs that Hannah<sup>21</sup> thinks me guilty of unkindness and wanting in Friendship; I am sorry She should indulge a thought so unjust and Injurious to my Intentions. I am sure if I know my own Soul, Shees [she has] not a Friend on Earth thats more Affectionate toward her than I am, and I believe that neither distance of Time or Place will ever alter my regards. Remember me to her with that Cordial Affection that my Soul feels from a review of our past intercourse.

Kitt Sail'd last Sunday for Virginia, his last Charge after be[ing] under Sail was to be Frugal, Industrious, and to get Money if Possible. Brother Will<sup>22</sup> inculcates that Doctrine as much as if it was his Creed. Welcome and Patience<sup>23</sup> are just upon the Brink of Matrimony I hope

<sup>19</sup>The forge at Coventry, R. I., which had burned on August 17, 1772, had been rebuilt with the aid of a lottery granted by the Rhode Island General Assembly.

<sup>20</sup>Nathanael's brother Christopher proved "the happy link" when on December 23, 1773, he married Catherine, Sammy's sister.

<sup>21</sup>Hannah Ward, Sammy's eldest sister, was born April 12, 1749, and died unmarried September 8, 1774.

<sup>22</sup>William Greene (1743-1826) served in the Revolutionary War. He died unmarried at East Greenwich, R. I.

<sup>23</sup>Patience Greene, daughter of Samuel and Patience (Cooke) Greene, was born at East Greenwich, R. I., May 13, 1754. She married Welcome Arnold, son of Jonathan and Abigail (Smith) Arnold of Smithfield, R. I., at the home of her uncle, Governor William Greene, where Patience had lived since childhood.

"Mr. and Mrs. Arnold made their home in Providence, and resided on the corner of South Main and Planet Streets. Mr. Arnold was one of the five men in Providence who 'kept a carriage.' His wife is mentioned as a 'most beautiful and amiable young lady,' and before her marriage she was also honored with the attentions of Nathanael Greene . . . The two men were warm friends, and, according to family tradition, were both most affectionately attached to the Governor's niece, whose preference for young Arnold did not destroy friendship, as is so frequently the result of such experience, but seemed to more strongly unite them in their devotion to each other. The President of Rhode Island

to see you at Greenwich when that Event happens. I was yesterday at Providence and saw Mr. Harris and heard of Mr. Arnold both of which are Well. Judge Hopkins<sup>24</sup> inform'd me that the new Fangles Court at Newport was adjourn'd to May, and that one of the Gaspees People had sworn against me as being concern'd in the Destruction of Her.<sup>25</sup> This absurd Practice of Offering Large rewards will have pernicious Effects and be sensibly felt by many. The Temptation to Perjury is so Powerful that the People cannot easily resist it Tho the Law has Ordain'd that Oaths shall be administered with great Solemnity and accompanied with every Circumstances that tends to Inspire the Mind with Religious Reverence or Superstitious A[we]. Yet these Impressions are not strong enough to bind P[eo]ple of abandoned Principles to a Strict Observance of Truth. The Institution of this Court when taken in the Obvious View of all its consequences is justly Alarming to every Virtuous Mind and Lover of Liberty in America. There appears such universal declension of Publick and Private Virtue throughout the Nation, that I fear the Pr[etor]g[re]s and Liberties of the People will be trampled to Death by the Prerogatives of the Crown. Our General Assembly seems to have lost all that Spirit of Independence and Publick Virtue that has ever distinguisht them since their first being incorporated, and sunk down into [torn]

What will be the Issue of this Affair God only Knows. I expect Our General Assembly will be Stigmatid as a Pusillanimous Crew and Betrayers of the Peoples Liberties not only those within our own Jurisdiction but even all America for if this Court and Mode of Tryal is establish't into a Precedent it will naturally Affect all the other Colonies. If this Fellow should continue his Accusations against me I shall be call'd to the Bar as a Criminal would it not make you Laugh to see the Colonel stand in that Attitude. But I am Happy in having Witnesses to Establish my Innocence. Kitt Green & Cousin Griff Spent that Evening at my House, and Mrs Utter an Old Lady Sat up with me till near Twelve OClock. Kitt & Griff staid till 10 OClock Mrs. Utter

College, Mr. Manning, once remarked that he had spent an afternoon with two young men of such superior minds, 'that he was sure they would make distinguished figures in the world.' These young men were Nathanael Greene and Welcome Arnold . . ." Louise Brownell Clarke, *The Greenes of Rhode Island* (N. Y., 1903) p. 289.

<sup>24</sup>Stephen Hopkins (1707-1785), long-time political rival of Governor Samuel Ward, in 1773 was Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court.

<sup>25</sup>Although Nathanael Greene took no part in the burning of the *Gaspee*, he would probably have felt justified in doing so. The *Gaspee* had seized a sloop owned by Jacob Greene and Company, and shortly after the attack on the revenue vessel the Greenes brought suit against her commander, Lieutenant Dudingston,

saw me go to Bed, and my People saw me get up, and Griff<sup>26</sup> Saw me about Sunrise. We went to Providence together that Morning and as I live 13 miles from Providence and 12 from where the Schooner was Burnt it will be obvious at first Blush his Accusation is false. I should be tempted to Let the Sunshine through him if I could come at Him. I am going to Boston to morrow wish you was here to go with me. All Friends are well and so am I. Mr. Varnum is here a Bed, by whom I write, he and his Wife is coming to see you. I hear Nancy has had the Long Fever and remains very low wish She may be restord to Health soon Hannah I hear is Better and Caty has got very fat tell Her I will answer Her Letter at my return from Boston, remember me to all the Family. I shall always be proud to be reckoned amongst the number of your Friends and am with Esteem Yours

N G

P S I hope you can Read it but I doubt it

---

East Greenwich March 2, 1773

Friend Sammy

I embrace this Opportunity by Mr Leonard Duson to write you, not because I have any thing to write, but to fulfill my Promise. Mr Arnold<sup>27</sup> and I arrived at Littlerest about 6 o'Clock the Evening after we left your House, we Lodgd that Night at Nathan Gardners,<sup>28</sup> by Virtue of the Invitation of John Hazzard, and set out next morning for Home, which was Sunday, and I believe will be rememberd by the Name of the Cold Sunday for half a Century. We Dind at Lodowick Updikes,<sup>29</sup> where Tom Arnolds delicate feelings was put out of Tune by Miss Lydia

<sup>26</sup>Griffen Greene (1749-1804), a first cousin of Nathanael, was one of the partners in the Greene Forge at Potawomut. He was General Greene's aide-de-camp while he was Quartermaster-General of the Revolutionary Army in 1778. In 1788 he moved with his family to Marietta, Ohio.

<sup>27</sup>Thomas Arnold (1751-1826) was a brother of Welcome Arnold (see note 22). He and Samuel Ward, Jr., were both members of the class of 1771 at Brown. After his graduation he entered the legal profession in which he had a successful career, serving as chief justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court, 1809-10, and as a trustee of Brown, 1800-1826. He married Mary, daughter of Obadiah Brown of Providence.

<sup>28</sup>Probably Nathan Gardiner (c. 1712-1792) whose daughter Sarah married John Hazard (1746-1813), son of Benjamin.

<sup>29</sup>Lodowick Updike (1725-1804) lived at "Smith's Castle" on his ancestral estate at Cocumscussoc, near Wickford. The house, site of the first white settlement in the Narragansett Country, has many important historical connections. It is now preserved by The Cocumscussoc Association.

Gardners<sup>30</sup> appearing in her Night Cap. Her Person and appearance was so different from his expectations that he could not help forming some of Swifts durty Ideas. We got that Night as far as Potowomut the Land of my Nativity, where we receivd a Hearty welcome, from their desire to Learn my success in the New London Expedition. We spent Monday at East Greenwich at Mr Nat Greens where we was joined by Mr Hitchcock and Tuesday the cry was every man to his Tent, O Israel. I could not prevail on Mr. Arnold to go to Coventry then, but Obtain'd a promise of a Weeks Visit very soon. I wish Fortune, for once, would shew us she can be Kind, and favor us with your agreeable Company at the Time. I flatter my self we Should form a very Happy Society. No news of Kitt or Perry<sup>31</sup> I Long to see their Faces. Your Friends are all well in these parts, and if I thought it would not feast your Vanity, I would inform you, you are much enquired after. Make my Compliments agreeable to all the Family, particularly Miss Hannah who I wish to see to make Acknowledgement for favours done me, that I were Ignorant of till very lately

Yours Nath Greene Jr

This Letter is in the Scotch Stile of particulars

---

Greenwich Sunday Evening 11 OClock  
[May 30, 1773]<sup>32</sup>

Friend Sam

I receivd your Letter inclosd in a Line to your Sisters. you see its late when I begin, and youl excuse me for being short. Kitt saild for Maryland Wednesday last. Joy go with him, and Guardian Angels protect and secure him from the innumerable Evils incidental to Human Nature. Ring the Bells backward Cry fire, the Church is in danger. There has been a play acted in Providence, known by the Name of the unhappy Orphan. Joseph Ruscl<sup>33</sup> acted Monemia, Mr. Halsey<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup>Lydia Gardiner, daughter of John and Mary (Taylor) Gardiner, was a younger sister of Abigail (Gardiner) Updike, wife of Lodowick Updike.

<sup>31</sup>Perry, youngest of the six Greene brothers, was born in 1749 and died in early manhood. He served in the Revolutionary War.

<sup>32</sup>This letter has been published previously in "Providence Theatricals in 1773" by S. Foster Damon, *Rhode Island History*, v. 4, no. 2, April 1945. The date of the letter is established by a newspaper notice of the play.

<sup>33</sup>Joseph Russell (1732-1792), one of the leading merchants of Providence in the second half of the eighteenth century. He was a member of the Rhode Island General Assembly and a trustee of Brown University.

<sup>34</sup>Thomas Lloyd Halsey (1751-1838), a prominent merchant, was French consular agent in Rhode Island during the Revolution. His fine, brick mansion on Prospect Street in Providence is still standing.

Polid[ore]. Mr. Harris Castelio, Mr. Bloget<sup>35</sup> Shamont. I have forgot the under Characters, but it is said they performed inimitably well, and to the satisfaction of all the Spectators. They had Hackers Hall,<sup>36</sup> with regular Scenes formed for that purpose, all tastily and in good order. You say there's nothing new under the Sun, this is new, for its the first attempt ever made, in this Colony, by its Inhabitants. Various are the Sentiments with regard to its Consequences, but the Priests and Levites, of every Order cries out against it, as subversive of Morality, and dangerous to the Church. I was in Mr. Arnolds Office a few Days ago, he has a pretty Law Library, and promises himself a fine run of Business. I wish his success may equal his expectation. Thank you for your Compliment upon my Milletary Dignity, and thank you again for the ridicule of its Author. He is vain above measure, and emty beyond Conception. I was almost Offended with Mr. Varnum for such a freedom before the supreme Court of the Colony. General Meeting News and all other Neighbourly Occurrences refer you to the Girls for Particulars not another word

N Greene Jr

<sup>35</sup>William Blodgett was later an officer during the Revolution, serving as aide-camp to General Greene in 1776-77. He died at Hartford, Conn., October 10, 1809.

<sup>36</sup>This hall, owned by Joshua Hacker, was on South Main Street near the foot of Power Street. For many years it served as a center for the social activities of Providence. It was one of the buildings destroyed in the great fire of 1801.

#### RHODE ISLAND PORTRAIT SURVEY

THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY is establishing a card file of portraits of Rhode Island persons, where students as well as the public may find a record of pictures whether they are in the Society's headquarters, in public buildings, or in private hands. There are already several lists of portraits available in various public institutions, but those portraits in private hands should by all means be included in the Society's survey.

Volunteers from various parts of the state are needed to carry on this work. Work sheets will be supplied by the Society. If you are interested in this project or have any questions or suggestions, please call The Rhode Island Historical Society. Telephone: DE 1-8575.

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continued on back cover



## 29. TEA TABLE

*Cherry*

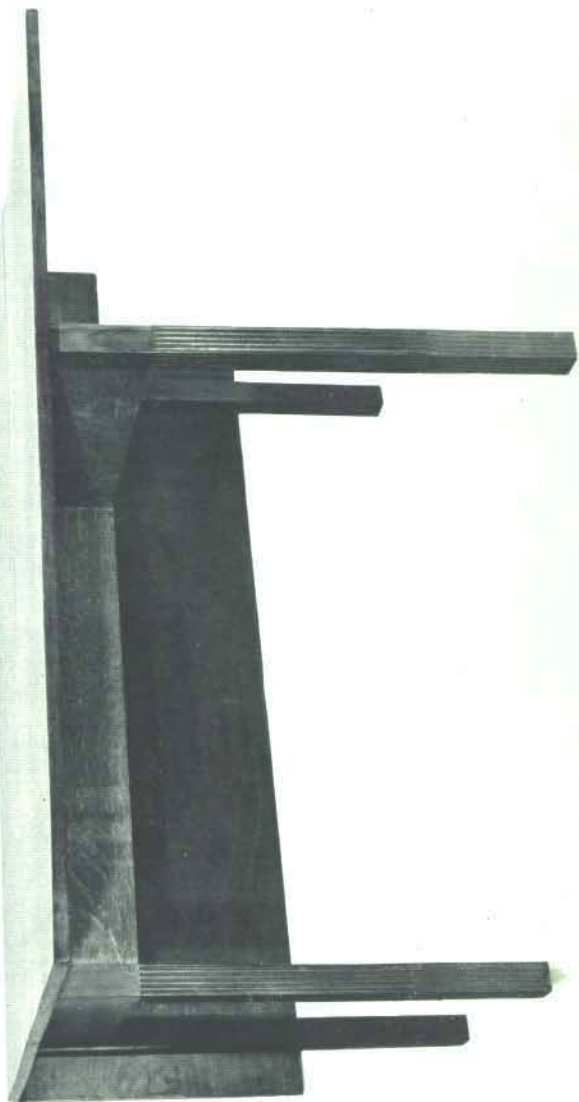
Connecticut or Rhode Island 1770-1785

There are two features that set this table apart from those which follow the usual designs: first, the twelve-sided top, with its appropriate moulded edge; second, the turning of the column of the pedestal with an unusual flattened ball and adjacent turnings.

To place its origin is difficult. Without a comparable table or one with similar features for guidance, one must conclude that it could have been made either in Connecticut or Rhode Island.

Ex-collection Julia D. and Franklin R. Cushman





### 30. DINING TABLE

(ONE PART OF THREE)

*Mahogany*

Newport, Rhode Island, 1780-1785

Relatively simple square-leaved mahogany tables of this type were made in considerable numbers by the Townsends and Goddards. The sole embellishment often consisted of the stopped-fluting of the legs. Two or three drop-leaf sections, put side by side with the leaves up, provided a means of increasing the seating capacity of the dining room table. This one is the center section of a three-part table, which was made for John Brown. At a later date the legs were shortened and a brass collar affixed. These were recently removed and the legs restored to their original length. Practically all of these tables were made of very dense, dark mahogany. The secondary woods were oak and maple. Usually chestnut was used rather than oak.

Bequest of Grace (Herreshoff) Sperry



### 31. DESK BOX ON STAND

*Mahogany*

New England 1790-1800

In an age when a gentleman sometimes wrote during his lifetime as many as 8,000 letters, longhand, writing equipment was an essential part of his furnishings, both at home and on his travels. Desk boxes of the type shown here provided not only a writing surface but also space for paper, ink, pens, etc. The two parts of the writing surface, covered with cloth (sometimes it was leather), are hinged so that each may be lifted to gain access to the storage space below. The handles on the sides were for convenience in travel. The stand is original and was probably used only in the home. When away from home, the writer simply placed the box on a convenient table.



### 32. LIGHTHOUSE CLOCK

Made by Simon Willard c. 1800

In the October, 1945, issue of *Rhode Island History*, Elisha C. Durfee discusses in some detail this and other clocks made by Simon Willard. In design it is supposed to be copied after that of the "Eddystone Lighthouse" which, in Willard's time, was the first landfall on a trip from America to England.

With respect to the clock itself, Durfee writes, "He [Willard] made very few of these clocks. They were produced in two sizes, of which the Society's example is the larger. The movements are of brass and run a week, striking one blow on each hour. In order to make the drop run the clock for the full period (one week), the mechanism is highly geared and the weight is very heavy."

This model was designed to be a table clock and, as such, "it is unique among antique American clocks."

Ex-collection C. Prescott Knight

THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

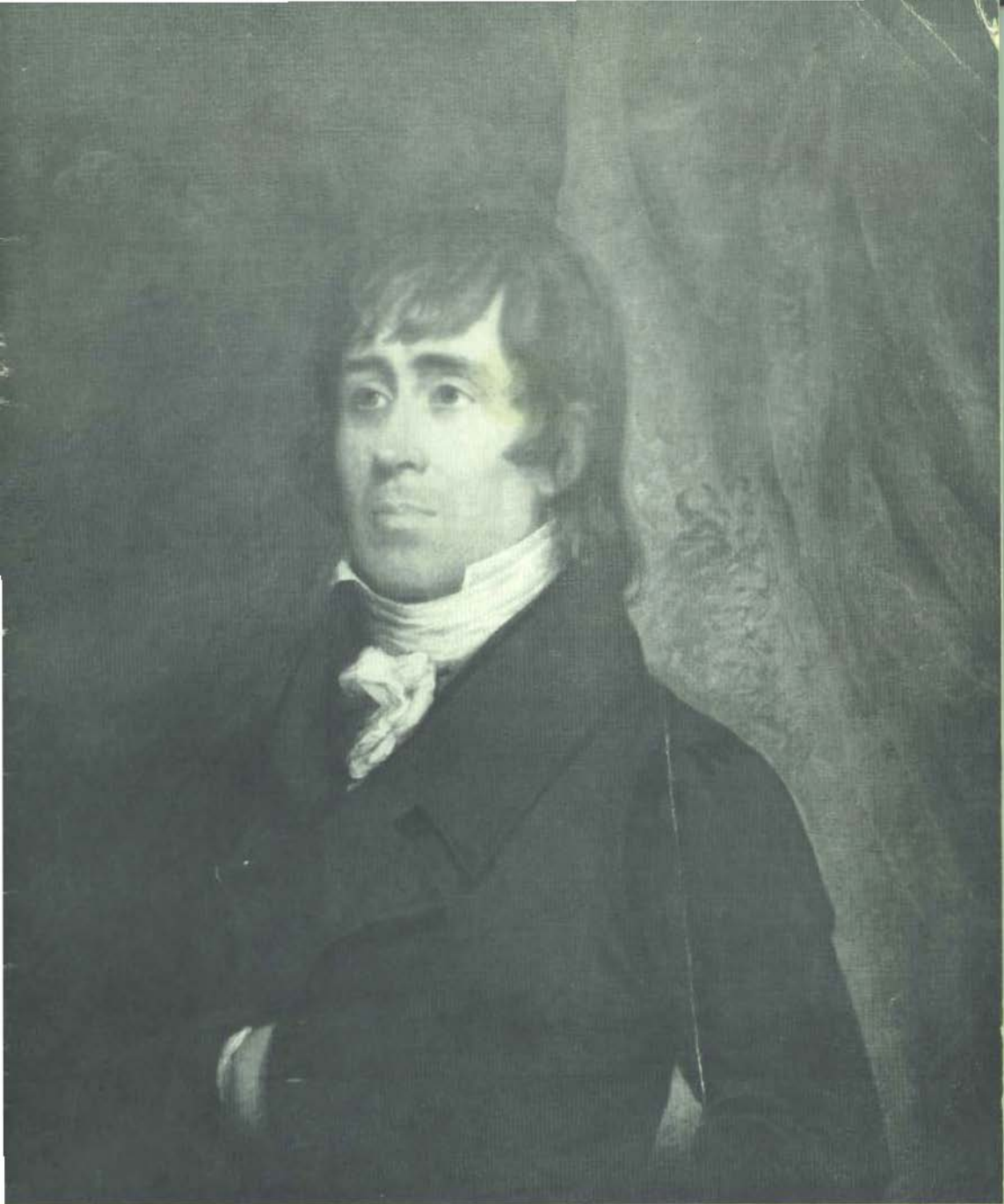
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NEW MEMBERS — *continued from p. 89*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
BENJAMIN B. CARTER, PHYSICIAN EXTRAORDINARY . . . . .	97
by Robert W. Kenny	
THE OLD ORIGINAL . . . . .	114
by Leslie Allen Jones	
NATHANAEAL GREENE'S LETTERS TO "FRIEND SAMMY" WARD . . . . .	119
edited by Clifford P. Monahan and Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd.	
(continued from July, 1957, v. 16, no. 3, page 88)	
LECTURES . . . . .	121
CATALOG OF THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY	
FURNITURE COLLECTION . . . . .	122
by Ralph E. Carpenter, Jr.	
NEW MEMBERS . . . . .	Back Cover

BENJAMIN BOWEN CARTER, 1771-1831

*This oil by Francis Alexander was given to Brown by Dr. Carter's sister, Elizabeth Ann Danforth, widow of Walter R. Danforth. The portrait now hangs on the second floor of University Hall.*

Courtesy of Brown University

# RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

VOL. 16

OCTOBER, 1957

NO. 4

## BENJAMIN B. CARTER, PHYSICIAN EXTRAORDINARY

by ROBERT W. KENNY

*Professor of English, Brown University*

THE CLASS OF 1786, the eleventh to be graduated from Brown University, numbered fifteen members, and was the largest graduating class up to that time. Its most famous member, undoubtedly, was Nicholas Brown, the second of that name in his family, philanthropist and merchant, from whom Brown University took its name. A second interesting member of '86 was Benjamin Bowen Carter, Nicholas Brown's brother-in-law. Carter was a linguist, physician, ship's surgeon, mathematician, speculator in oriental commodities, book collector, biographer, world traveler, ardent anti-Jeffersonian, crusty bachelor and a frequent dealer in moral bromides. He has particular interest for us as the author of the vivid "Journal of the Ship Ann and Hope on a Voyage to Canton, China in 1798/99," and for the materials he collected for a life of James Manning, Brown's first president.

Benjamin Bowen Carter was born in Providence on 16 December 1771, the second of twelve children and the eldest son of John Carter, the printer, patriot and publisher of the *Providence Gazette*. Benjamin Carter entered Brown University at the age of eleven and was graduated as a Bachelor of Arts in 1786. He continued his studies for the master's degree which he received three years later on 4 September 1789. As part of his Senior Exhibition Carter wrote a colloquy *The Four Elements*: earth, air, fire, and water. It is in blank verse reminiscent of Thomson's *Seasons*. The virtue of each element is narrated in turn by the youths Palamon, Amyntas, Emilius and Daphnis. I confess I was not in on the last word of the last element; however I did glance at the last page and was comforted to note that many years later Carter had added a note excusing the effort as that

of a lad of fifteen.

Jonthan Maxcy, Brown's second president, was in the class behind Carter's. Judging by the few letters which remain of their correspondence, there seems to have been a warm friendship between the two young men. In May, 1786, Maxcy wrote to Carter from Wrentham that although at college he had looked forward to solitude, he was now suffering from melancholia. Carter had complained that a fellow student, John Wheaton, had carved his initials in their room. Maxcy replied, "Tell John Wheaton devil take him. Oh, I abhor these fellows who try to immortalize themselves by notching pine boards." Carter was to be graduated in September. "Oh, my dear Carter, think on next fall when we must part." They did not part at this time, however, as Carter stayed on for three more years and obtained his master's degree in 1789. He then asked Maxcy's advice about going to medical school and received this reply:

You inform me in your last that you think of studying Physick.

If it pleases you you will excell in it & as you have a good opportunity to study it, I think you had better employ it. Tell me in your next who is at College.

Maxcy, at his father's farm in Attleboro, also commented on his summer's reading in the Latin poets:

Lucian tells a droll story with a serious face, and talks of little things as matters of great importance. Horace is very sensible, very solid, very witty, a delicate courtier, a lover of wine, a whoremaster & a dirty blackguard.

With this tidbit of classical criticism to ponder Carter departed for Philadelphia where, in the fall of 1789, he enrolled at the Medical College of Philadelphia (now the University of Pennsylvania Medical School) and the Pennsylvania Hospital where he studied under Benjamin Rush, William Shippen, James Hutchinson, and Caspar Wistar. Dr. Carter's "Diagnosis, Prescription and Treatment Book," now in the Brown University Archives, indicates that in the summer of 1792 he started the practice of medicine in Woodstock, North Parish, Windham County, Connecticut. He had considered setting up practice in Genesee in the Western Reserve but was dissuaded from this by his father, Dr. Pardon Bowen, and Nicholas Brown, who suggested Georgia as a promising spot for a young doctor. In letters to his sister, Ann, Carter complained that he found Connecticut dull after Philadelphia. The next year he moved to Charleston,

South Carolina, and later to Savannah, Georgia, where he practiced until he returned to Providence in 1798.

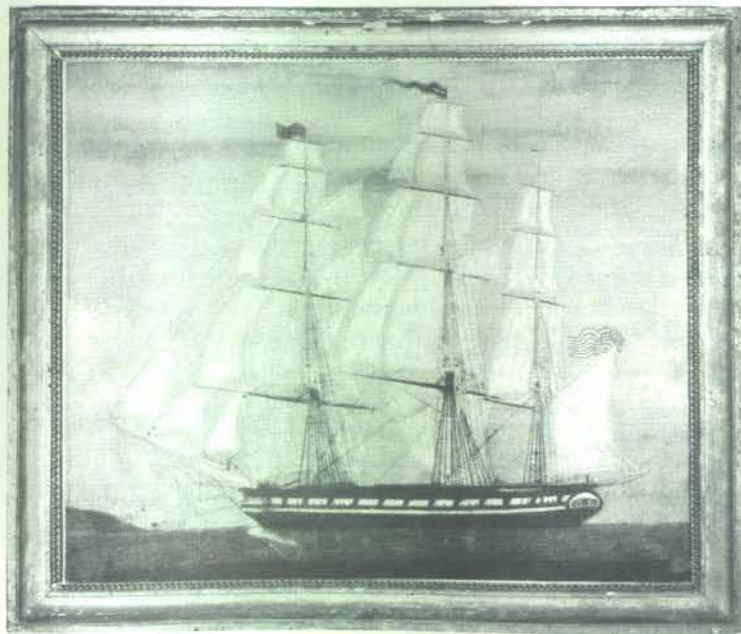
A letter from Maxcy to Carter dated at Providence on 13 January 1792 expresses gratification that Carter wishes to resume the correspondence of "our boyish days." Maxcy is "rejoiced" that Carter's faith is "confirmed in our blessed heaven-born religion. How little, alas, did I once esteem the Gospel of Jesus. You inform me that you have formed some acquaintance with Dr. Rogers. Do you think he would do for President of our College? I feel much interest for the welfare of the College & long to see it in more prosperous circumstances."

There is no evidence as to how lucrative a practice Dr. Carter had relinquished in the South, but he willingly signed on as surgeon of the *Ann and Hope* for \$17.00 per month with a one ton privilege. This privilege was increased on later voyages, and the profits from his speculations during the four voyages he made in the *Ann and Hope* and during his later residence in Canton enabled him to build up what his father described as a "handsome competency." Nicholas Brown requested Captain Benjamin Page, the master of the *Ann and Hope*, to be "helpful to our brother-in-law and friend" on this his first voyage as a ship's surgeon.

The ship *Ann and Hope* of approximately 550 tons burden, built in Providence by Benjamin Tallman, had been turned over to her owners, Brown and Ives, in the spring of 1798. She had been expressly built for the China trade and little time was lost in getting her ready for sea. The *Ann and Hope* went out in ballast as the New England hinterland could supply no products for the Chinese market. Deep in her hold was \$80,000 in hard money with which to purchase teas, nankeens, and porcelain for the American market. The voyage and Dr. Carter's *Journal* commence on 9 July 1798. Throughout the voyage the doctor kept a full and meticulous journal. He set out, apparently, to learn navigation, and he worked out the ship's positions daily in great detail during the early weeks of the voyage. Later many of the steps in the calculations were omitted or abbreviated. The doctor's nonprofessional observations are keen, but at times self-consciously "cultured."

The maiden voyage from Providence to Canton by way of Australia and the Marianas was an exciting, rapid, and profitable ex-

perience. On this voyage the *Ann and Hope* made a name for herself as a very rapid sailer, traversing the distance from the Providence River to Tasman's Head, New Holland, in just ninety days. This was no fluke as she covered the same distance on her second voyage in ninety-one days. Dr. Carter wrote vividly about Botany Bay, the then very young town of Sydney, New South Wales, and about a spear throwing battle between two groups of aborigines. At Tinian Captain Page took aboard an East Indian from Bombay who had been marooned on that island for eighteen months. Comments on Cantonese life, the diseases of the Orient, and an account of a skirmish between the *Ann and Hope* and a French privateer are narrated in spirited fashion marred only now and then by some platitudinous moralizing. The voyage and the *Journal* come to a close when the



BROWN AND IVES' SHIP *ANN and HOPE*

in which Benjamin Bowen Carter made four voyages to the Far East as ship's surgeon

Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. R. H. I. Goddard

*Ann and Hope* reached Newport, Rhode Island, on 15 June 1798 with a rich cargo for her owners.

Dr. Carter was surgeon on the *Ann and Hope* for the ship's first four voyages. Voyages two and three were to Canton, July, 1799-August, 1800, and December, 1800-April, 1802. The second voyage has particular interest as Captain Christopher Bentley, who had succeeded Benjamin Page as master, discovered and accurately located some outlying islands in the Fiji group. Again, as on the first voyage, the *Ann and Hope* exchanged shots with British and French privateers. The third voyage, again to Canton, was by way of London, where the hull of the *Ann and Hope* was sheathed in copper. On each succeeding voyage the doctor's tonnage allowance was greater as he speculated in Chinese commodities for the American market. The fourth and last voyage of Dr. Carter as ship's surgeon was to Batavia, May 1802-September 1803, where the *Ann and Hope* was loaded with sugar for the European market. The passage from Batavia was so rapid that the *Ann and Hope* arrived in Cowes, England, before instructions from Brown and Ives in Providence. Since the English Navigation Acts prevented the sale of the sugar in England, on the advice of the supercargo, Thomas Thompson, Captain Laing, the master, sailed for Amsterdam. Here Thompson negotiated with Dutch merchants and Dr. Carter traveled in Holland visiting the universities of Leyden and Utrecht where he had letters of introduction to mathematicians and scientists; he attended lectures and visited laboratories at both institutions, conversing with his hosts in Latin. With Thompson, the supercargo, Carter bought various medicines in Amsterdam from which he realized a tidy profit in New York. Carter was a member of Mt. Vernon Lodge in Providence, and while in Europe attended several Masonic gatherings, notably the Loge de Paix in Amsterdam.

From Amsterdam the *Ann and Hope*, in ballast, sailed for Kronsstadt where she was loaded with sable iron, hemp, duck, and sailcloth. Carter invested in three tons of Russian merchandise, which again netted him a good profit from his agents, King and Talbot, in New York. Carter's Memorandum Book for this voyage contains scraps from Latin and Greek authors, English weights and their Russian counterparts, his impressions of the Summer Palace at St. Petersburg, a Russian hospital, and his satisfaction in being able to



converse with Russian priests in classic Greek. The *Ann and Hope* arrived home in September, 1803; the doctor did not sign on for what turned out to be the last two voyages of the *Ann and Hope*; instead he spent the fall and winter visiting friends in Philadelphia and New York.

Carter's letters from 1800 on show a dislike bordering on contempt for the Republican Party and its leader Thomas Jefferson; concomitantly a vast admiration for England and English institutions. These sentiments fill a large portion of his letters from Canton, to which city he had sailed on the new Brown and Ives ship *Asia* in July, 1804. In the *Asia* he had an adventure insured for \$7,000 and appears to have been quite the man of substance. In Canton, where he arrived in December, 1804, he took up residence with Edward Carrington of Providence, who had succeeded his fellow townsman, Samuel Snow, as United States Consul in 1802. Dr. Carter was soon enjoying a lucrative medical practice among the European colony and trading in Chinese goods. In a little over a year he dispatched more than \$16,000 worth of Chinese commodities to his agents in Amsterdam, London, New York, and Providence.

The first of the anti-Jeffersonian letters to survive was one to his brother Crawford in Providence, dated Canton 27 November 1805. Crawford Carter had apparently indulged in the very human failing of writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper. The replies to it were apparently wounding to the sensibilities of a Federalist and gentleman. The doctor in an "I told you so" manner wrote: "To this levelling age and among the vile Republicans of America, Abilities and Learning are looked upon with horror and denounced with no less certainty than in the days of Robespierre. — America has long to groan under the lash of negro driving Presidents and Committees."

In a letter of condolence to his brother John, from Canton, written 2 December, 1805, the doctor indulged his bent for moral bromides. Part of John's illness was traceable to intemperance, and the doctor urged the drinking of tea, citing such worthies as Dr. Johnson and Edmund Burke to prove that the "cup that cheers but does not inebriate" cuts down the longing for ardent spirits. "The ingenious Doctor Darwin compared the inventor of them [ardent spirits] to Prometheus, who stole fire from heaven for which theft he was punished by a vulture gnawing at his liver, which well allegorizes an

intemperate person laboring under hepatic disease."<sup>1</sup> Nothing in the letter has foreshadowed his attack on America but it appears none-the-less:

"There is a better country than America where your abilities would be more likely to meet with encouragement among men of learning and religion than among the brutal, ignorant, impious and atheistical Americans. The country I mean is England. I sometimes entertain hope that I may be permitted to spend the remainder of my life on the classic ground of England."

While in Canton Dr. Carter made a serious and apparently successful effort to learn the Chinese language. Under the date of 24 June, 1844, John Carter Brown wrote on a blank page of the *Dictionarum Sinicum*, now in the Brown University Archives: "This book belonged to my maternal uncle Doctor Benjamin Bowen Carter, a graduate of B. U. Class of 1786. Dr. Carter was a fine linguist, and particularly versed in Oriental languages and literature." Dr. Carter was taught the Chinese language by a Chinese seminarium of the Jesuit College in Peking, whose Europeanized name was Abel Xaverius. The instruction was carried on in Latin, Xaverius transcribing the Chinese-Latin dictionary of over 15,000 ideographs from the manuscript copy of the author, Father Basilico de Clemona, a Portuguese missionary, who compiled it about 1726. Among the Carter-Danforth Papers are several letters to Chinese merchants in Carter's handwriting, in most cases accompanied by an English translation. Such fulsome phrases as: "I place myself under your feet;" "I rejoice, while I put confidence, in the beneficence of superior beings;" "I have considered offering you presents that would be worthy of you to receive," appear to be the conventional language of Chinese trade.

In 1805 Dr. Carter's linguistic knowledge was useful to the U. S. Government:

In October 1805, Mr. Carrington, the American Vice-Consul at Canton wrote to the Viceroy complaining of the violence offered by the English in taking American seamen out of our ships. This memorial Mr. C. desired me to translate into Chinese characters. Though I had studied Chinese some time, yet not being used to compose in the language, I was dubious whether my style would be sufficiently accurate to present to a man of his rank, as the Chinese are extremely fastidious of any inaccuracies in their language, and

<sup>1</sup>Erasmus Darwin, 1731-1802, the English physician and botanist. He was the grandfather of Charles Darwin.

a vulgar and impolitic address to a man of high rank might defeat the object of the remonstrance. By permission of Mr. Carrington I called in the aid of my learned instructor Abel Xaverius, having first engaged his secrecy. As Xaverius was totally unacquainted with English and, of course, unable to read Mr. Carrington's petition, the first thing requisite was for me to translate Mr. Carrington's ideas into Latin. By the assistance of Xaverius the petition was translated from the Latin into Chinese, and signed by the American Captains, Super Cargoes and merchants resident at Canton. This being the 1st official paper from America ever presented to the Government of China.<sup>2</sup>

Political considerations aside, Dr. Carter seems to have enjoyed pleasant relations with the Canton merchants, and many years later in letters to his brother Crawford, a resident of Canton, he asks to be remembered to Houqua, Consequa and other merchants.

In the spring of 1806 Dr. Carter returned to Providence, where he remained until October 1807 when he took passage in the ship *Robert Burns* for Liverpool and "the classic ground of England." He lived abroad for eleven years, most of this time in England, although after Waterloo he spent more than a year in Paris and in the summer of 1816 traveled through Scotland. Dr. Carter studied mathematics for a time at Cambridge, but for the most part remained in London attending lectures at St. Thomas' and Guy's hospitals and studying Hebrew and Syriac, languages in which he seems to have acquired a substantial competence.<sup>3</sup> During 1810 and 1811 he assisted Dr.

<sup>2</sup>This incident impressed upon Carter the need of a Chinese speaking member on the consular staff in Canton to make representations to the Chinese Government and to assist American merchants who were bilked of large sums each year by the Chinese. Carter nominated himself for the position in a letter to Jonathan Russell, Brown 1791, written from London on 12 February 1811, urging Russell to use his influence for Carter with the Secretary of State. The post was not created at this time. Carter may have been conscious of his political enemies when he wrote: "Some persons may have represented me as a Tory and unworthy of confidence. I am opposed to the principles advocated by the *Providence Gazette* and never took my political creed from Wm Sheldon and Wm Goddard. When my brother published the *Providence Journal* I prevented several things being inserted which were levelled at Mr. Jefferson."

<sup>3</sup>I am indebted to several members of the Departments of Egyptology and Religious Studies at Brown who examined various linguistic exercises of Dr. Carter. They felt that he had a substantial competence in Hebrew and Syriac, as well as Greek and Latin. In addition to Chinese Dr. Carter apparently knew French and some Portuguese. An admiring relative wrote that Dr. Carter knew twenty-nine languages. This is possibly true, but there is no evidence for it, and Dr. Samuel Johnson has reminded us that "in lapidary inscriptions a man is not on oath."

Joseph Fox in editing a third edition of Fox's treatise *The Natural History of the Teeth*. The correspondence indicates that Carter had a very considerable share in revising the earlier editions of the work (1803, 1806). Fox writes of his entire satisfaction with the copy submitted by Dr. Carter.

About this time Carter seems to have prepared a rough draft of a life of James Manning, the first president of Brown University. There are many blanks in the text; doubtless Carter intended to fill in names, dates and places upon his return to America. He never did so, however. Carter showed the manuscript to Dr. Fox who wrote on 4 January, 1811: "I return you also your mss of Dr. Manning. I think that his life & the History of the College could be very interesting, particularly the first years of his progress."<sup>4</sup>

Carter seems to have had persuasive letters of introduction for he soon had a rather extensive acquaintance with persons of considerable standing. His correspondence shows that he numbered among his associates Sir Joseph Banks, the president of the Royal Society and the botanist of Cook's voyages; Sir Astley Cooper, the surgeon and lecturer at St. Thomas Hospital; Henry Cline, also a surgeon; and Dr. Charles Burney, the organist. He was friendly with Dr. John Rippon, the eminent Baptist preacher to whom he wrote a letter introducing John Carter Brown as "a graduate of Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island and a gentleman of an unblemished reputation travelling in England for his health and for information."

As has been noted, Carter had developed a dislike and distrust for many of his countrymen. This feeling is explicit in a letter to Nicholas Brown written from London at the beginning of the War of 1812.

I regret that the Commencement of hostilities obliges this gentlemen [Russell the U. S. Ambassador] to leave the Court of St. James where he has resided with so much honour to our Country. The late papers from America inform us of the massacres in Baltimore by which it appears that the war has begun, as I always thought it would, not by openly assaulting the fleet and armies of Britain but by privateering against and wantonly burning defenseless merchant

<sup>4</sup>The manuscript of this, the first, life of James Manning is in the Ann Mary Brown Library. It is my hope to make the editing of this manuscript the next order of business.

vessels and by one party of American citizens robbing and murdering one another. It is impossible to ascertain how far the war against Great Britain will be pursued, but I am apprehensive the Civil War in the United States will not soon terminate.

A change of property seems to be the great object with certain men and when they have once begun to taste the sweets of being rich without labour they will not easily be prevailed upon to quit their prey or relinquish their projects. It will be much easier to confiscate the property of rich Federalists than fight 74s. In this melancholy state of affairs it becomes a question what part we are to act so as to preserve our lives and properties until the storm subsides. We cannot expect that the British will respect American property at sea when we are at war with them; and we know that the American Jacobins will not respect the property of political antagonists.

I hope you will be blessed with wisdom and spirit to defend your life and property. My little property, my only provision for old age, I confide to your care in full reliance on your ability and friendship.

The cisatlantic prospect brightens. The defeat of Marmot by the Marquis of Wellington has elevated the spirits of the nation and the funds have advanced in price. Napoleon is advancing towards Moscow slowly. The Russians retreat but often turn and chastise their persuers. I still hope that Napoleon will not be able to subdue Russia, if she wisely perseveres in her system of retreating and avoiding a general action. If the Russians act with wisdom and courage the monster may find his grave on the banks of the Borysthènes.

Your Commencement was no doubt celebrated in the usual manner, notwithstanding the somber aspect of political affairs. Literature ought to be exempt from the turbulence of party.

I think sometimes of returning to N. Y. but know not when.

The scuttling of Col. Smiths and Sam Thurburs privateers was unexpected. Who would think the Providence men had spirit enough for such an enterprise. I do not however commend the unlawful actions of the mob in the destruction of private property.

After Waterloo Dr. Carter visited Paris, where he remained for more than a year. During this time he became acquainted with Abbé Jean Pierre Abel Remusat (1788-1832), the orientalist, with whom he corresponded for many years. Enough of the Remusat correspondence in the Ann Mary Brown Library and The Rhode Island Historical Society remains to make clear that their principal interest was in Chinese versions of the Gospel, and that Dr. Carter arranged through John Ryland for the Abbé to receive Chinese publications

of the Baptist Missionary Society.<sup>5</sup> It is also apparent that on Dr. Carter's suggestion Abbé Remusat withheld publication of articles which might offend the Chinese; Remusat wrote, "I easily forsook the thought of publishing them when I heard it would be displeasing to your venerable friends."

In the summer of 1816 Carter visited Scotland. Although he spent much of his time in Edinburgh he made an extensive walking tour of the northern portion of Scotland, retracing the route of Johnson and Boswell. The journal of this trip is in The Rhode Island Historical Society. Unfortunately the early pages are missing, and the later ones do not indicate the identity of Dr. Carter's companion, although it is evident that he had one. In Glasgow the doctor visited a cotton factory and noted, apparently as an example of Scottish enlightenment, that no boys under ten were employed in the factory and at that age the wage was two shillings per week.

In Edinburgh the doctor seems to have had a very good time; as usual he arrived with numerous letters of introduction. He was a frequent guest at the home of a widow, Mrs. Anne Grant of Laggan, neé Macvicar, an authoress who had spent her early married years in the Mohawk country of New York State and written about it in *The Memoirs of An American Lady*, 1808. Mrs. Grant, imitating Bishop Percy, had also written a highly popular *Essay on the Superstitions of the Highlands* in 1811. Carter found the Scots still ardent for Macpherson and unwilling to believe that his Ossianic poems were forgeries. Mrs. Grant spoke of America as a land of promise and not of performance, to which Dr. Carter took no exception. Carter also met a Baptist preacher, Doctor Charles Stewart, who showed him copies of Roger Williams' *Key Into the Language of America*, *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution*, and *A Letter of Mr. John Cottons to Mr. R. Williams*. Stewart also showed Carter, to the doctor's amazement, a very old map of New England which Dr. Carter described as engraved on wood. Carter seems to have had a genuine interest in Americana and it is a harmless conjecture that the interest stimulated at this time was passed on to his nephew and resulted in the priceless collections of the John Carter Brown

<sup>5</sup>John Ryland (1753-1825), a Baptist minister, preacher, president of a Baptist college in Bristol, England. 1793-1825, founder and later secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society.

Library. Dr. Carter was already familiar with White Kennet's *Bibliothecae Americanae Primordia*, London, 1713, a promising beginning for a collector of Americana.

In 1819 Dr. Carter returned to America and settled in New York, where he lived for the remainder of his life. His visits to Providence seem to have been infrequent as there had been some sort of quarrel or misunderstanding between the Browns and the Carters. The cause and date of this misunderstanding I cannot determine. As late as 1815 Carter was writing to his classmate and brother-in-law, Nicholas Brown, in a cordial enough manner. When the quarrel was patched up, if it ever was, I do not know either. However, Nicholas Brown was an honorary pallbearer at Dr. Carter's funeral in Providence in 1831. In New York City Carter seems to have led a full life; he was a member of the Medical Society of the City and County of New York and the New York Lyceum of Natural History to which he occasionally sent specimens. He corresponded with his two nephews, Nicholas Brown Jr. and John Carter Brown, and apparently they visited him in New York when on their way to the western landholdings of the family. One letter, that of 29 June 1819 is of particular interest for the information it contains on the Carter family origins.

Tontine Coffee House, New York  
June 29, 1819

Mr. Nicholas Brown Jun.

Dear Nephew

Your letter of June 21st by post has been received. As you did not acknowledge the receipt of two vols of Cobbett's Years residence which I sent to Mr. Francis by packet I conclude you did not receive them. I regret this as I wish you to read Mr. Hulme's travels into the Western territory and Cobbett's remarks on emigration.

I saw your beloved brother John several times in N York & regret that he did not stop longer but as he and you will of course be travelling Westward now & then I hope to see him and you again. In this respect my central situation is favorable. I am desirous that you both may be true friends of our poor shattered family, as your father by listening to the perfidious counsels of Ives has proved himself to be a most destructive enemy. I do not expect that you will be able to repair the devastation and havoc that has been made in our family, but surely it must be a more agreeable

task to a man of Good heart to mend rather than destroy, to heal rather than to wound and lacerate.

I am willing to give my aid in searching the records of this island, but I have little hopes of any benefits from the results. I will make enquiry as you request about the land on this Island formerly belonging to our ancestor, but I calculate to receive very imperfect information, having been disappointed before when asking information on this subject. When in Philadelphia in the winter of 1791 & 1792 I often conversed with my aunts Tolwell and Jones about the lands. They lamented that my father should have failed in his attempt to recover them. You say that Mrs. Jones wrote my father in 1779. I do not know the date of the letter having never seen it, but it was, I think, in the year 1787 that my father went to Long Island & to Philadelphia on this business. It can do no harm to rake up & investigate this business, but I think we shall never recover one foot of land, as I remember to have heard David Howell say, more than 30 years ago when speaking of these lands, "Oh there the title does not seem to be complete." These were nearly his words. Our ancestor who owned the land in this island was named John Spragg if I mistake not. He was an Englishman, I think, a man of wealth, an Episcopalian and he is said to have given an organ to some church. This person who occupied the land in question showed my father a deed but there was no signature to it. If the deed was not signed by the conveyer it could be of no validity & of course the Occupier could have no title to the land except by possession. I have heard my mother speak of some farms in Rhode Island that were lost to her family by this possession of 21 years.

I will take some opportunity & write to my first cousin Saml Tolwell in Philadelphia on this subject & others connected with it but I have not heard from Tolwell in many years.

My father was always very shy in speaking of his family in Philadelphia, I never heard him speak one word about his father and mother or brother James. I wish you would favor me with the few pencil notes you took from him. He once said that he was born in the year of the Scots rebellion (which was I think in 1745). I heard when in Philadelphia that he was a posthumous child having been born after the death of his father who was mate of a vessel and was killed in a sea fight in the old French War by a shot. His brother James was a last maker in Philadelphia. Mrs. Tolwell told me that her brother James Carter was a gay man, fond of company, and now and then apt to drink too much. He was neat in his dress, particularly his shoes and she has seen him for half an hour with a shoing horn trying to put on a new pair of shoes which were too small for him. In other words he was one of the Philadelphia dandies of the last century. He died young. Few persons are as

ignorant of their own families as I am. My mother used to discourse frequently about her family and on her side I have a little information, but my father for reasons best known to himself always observed a profound silence respecting his family. My first cousin Richard Tolwell, from whom I learned what little I know of our family once told me that there had been a family quarrel among them in Philadelphia. This and his natural austerity might have caused my father's silence on the subject. When I called on Dr. Benj Rush to enter myself as his pupil he asked me my name & residence. He then asked me if my father was not a printer in Providence. He then observed that he was formerly well acquainted with my father. Mrs. Tolwell told me that Dr. Rush and my father were once very intimate. At that time Dr. Rush's mother was a very poor widow and kept a huckster's shop in Philadelphia. Mr. Tolwell who married my father's sister Elizabeth was a cabinet maker. Daniel Spencer formerly a cabinet maker in Providence & grandfather of the late William Lawrence your clerk used to work with Mr. Tolwell as a journeyman. After the death of Mr. Tolwell she married Col. Robert Roberts who served during the American war. Mr. Jones who married my father's other sister Rebecca was I think a Shoemaker. After the deaths of Mr. Tolwell and Mr. Jones my father's two sisters kept boarders and lodgers, and in 1787 Mrs. Tolwell told my father (as she said to me) that she and her sister had each 500L Pennsylvania currency out at interest when he replied that it was much more than he had. In this he spoke the truth for at this time he was deeply in debt to Thomas Diskason & Co. & not worth a cent. Thus our family had neither riches, nor titles nor honours to boast of. If I were to say that we were persons of humble birth it might be inferred that there were some persons of exalted birth in these States. If we have no noble blood in our veins we are no worse off on that account than our neighbors for show me the man in America that has noble blood in his veins. Thus I have told you all I know of our Philadelphia relations.

It is a curious fact that letters to you should be inclosed to Mr. Francis for fear that they should not faithfully be delivered to you, but fall into other hands and be broken open. . . .

Your anxiety and solicitude for your succumbing relations is extremely honourable to you and I hope your good wishes & endeavours may be attended with better success than were mine. My heart was wrung with the keenest sensations to see the destruction that was preparing for my unfortunate relations, who seemed insensible of their approaching fate & laughed at my warnings. I stretched out my hand to help them but some of them tried to bite off my hand & came near destroying me. My want of success does not indispose me from doing a good action but it suggests the

necessity of prudence & discrimination. You must not put yourself in the power of a dishonest ungrateful person merely because he is your relative & you feel for his misery. This was the point in which I erred

I am your faithful friend and uncle

Bnj. B. Carter.

Dr. Carter at one time apparently contemplated writing a history of Rhode Island. His long residence in New York may well have been the reason that the project got no further than a long series of questions which he wished to resolve in the work. The questions concern the climate, natural resources, working habits of the people, the relations between Providence and Newport, the early slave trade, the extent of manufacturing in the state. Some idea of the scope of the intended work can be gained by noting the subjects for which Dr. Carter was seeking answers.

At what precise period before 1700 did they [the citizens of Providence] begin to prosecute commercial enterprises, particularly the slave trade. Were there negroes in N England previous to 1730? When did the whale fishery commence? Nature and amount of exportation from Providence before 1775.

The yellow fever, was it imported or of domestic origin—in Providence—contagious or not. Pardon Bowen has written an article, in the Medical Repository of New York in which he endeavors to prove that it was imported. This essay seems to be a defense of Jos. Nightingale, John Innes Clarke, and Ephraim Bowen for keeping hogs & other nuisances in the lower part of town rather than a candidate investigation of the subject.

Slave trade—what number of slaves appear to have been regularly imported, in vessels, into the port of Providence, before & during the war? What duty per head paid to the Government? When did the odious traffic cease?

Smuggling in Rhode Island, under the British dynasty, appears to have been carried on extensively—its amount, nature, punishment for.

At what time did the Baptists begin to remit their hereditary contempt & hatred of learning? Was the improvement in their liberality the effect of Dr. Manning's efforts? Were the Latin & Greek languages taught in Providence before Manning came? What progress has been made in Hebrew? Dr. Styles, President of Yale College, formerly a minister at Newport, learned the Hebrew of some Jews settled there.

Did not R. Williams commit an absurdity in exercising the functions of a Civil Officer, as Governor and Minister of the Gospel at the same time. Dr. Charles Stewart of Edinburgh says he did not.

Comparison of Smithfield marble with Grecian marbles seen in the Louvre.

Are the Indian languages of New England totally lost? Can any person in Rhode Island speak the primitive aboriginal language if so procure a vocabulary of as many words as possible.

The burning of the Gaspee, at Providence, being the first act of aggression against the British, the first hostile fire lighted up in America—it is desirable to obtain the particulars of that act.

Other suggestive topics are elaborated: the building of University Hall, the Baptist Meeting House, the Market House, the Gortonians, the extinction of wolves and deer, the burning of Providence in the Indian war of 1676. It is unfortunate that Dr. Carter's self-imposed exile in New York made the historical project impossible. The notes indicate that he had strong views on local matters. It is my guess that the history, if written, would have been salty and opinionated, with little trace of scholarly detachment.

It seems clear that the member of the clan who described Dr. Carter as a "particularly crusty old bachelor" had some evidence for that opinion. One last item confirms this impression. In February, 1826, when he was nearly eighty-three, Thomas Jefferson found himself in dire financial straits. To pay the more urgent of his debts he proposed selling some of the acreage around Monticello by lottery. For this, however, he had to have permission of the Virginia legislature. When the sad tale of Jefferson's plight became known subscription lists were started in various cities. In Providence a committee headed by David Thomas, divided the town into districts and canvassed for funds, with teams, quite in the manner of present day fund drives. In Baltimore over \$3,000 was raised; in Philadelphia, \$5,000; in New York, \$8,500. Virginia made no effort to aid the ex-President. Carter's hatred of all that Jefferson stood for was still ardent. A copy of a letter to the Editor indicates the doctor's somewhat uncharitable feelings.

#### JEFFERSON SUBSCRIPTION

Having been called upon to subscribe to the relief of Mr. Jefferson a respect for public opinion induces me to state some of the reasons

why I have declined giving my signature.

1. I do not believe that Mr. Jefferson is in want. The plan of a lottery appears to be got up by some artful persons who have taken advantage of Mr. J's dotage to feather their own nests out of the credulity of the public.
2. Mr. J has been paid long ago & well paid while many soldiers of the Revolution remain unpaid or were paid in a depreciated paper money.

The letter continues, blaming Jefferson for the War of 1812, the failure of the United States Bank, the prostitution of the judiciary, and his importation of foreign scholars at the University of Virginia. Carter was most incensed about Jefferson's embargo and non-intercourse acts by which "he made bankrupt our merchants and traders, drove our seamen from the ocean to fill the prisons at Dartmoor, laid our capital in ashes, and caused the grass to grow on our wharves." The irascible doctor suggested that a township in Louisiana be granted to the aged President, a township which contained a salt mine.

On this somewhat ungenerous note the Carter correspondence ends. The doctor, I assume, continued his life in New York in his by now usual crusty manner. He died there on 24 April 1831. His body was brought to Providence where it was placed in the Carter family lot in the North Burial Grounds. The doctor seems, without much question, to have grown rather difficult as he aged. This cannot detract, however, from the fact that he had an eager and inquiring mind, was well thought of in his profession, and in his avocations, mathematics and linguistic studies, he attained a competence far beyond that of most college graduates of his day whether American or English.

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## THE OLD ORIGINAL

by LESLIE ALLEN JONES, *Assistant Professor of English;*

*Technical Director of Dramatics, Brown University*

IT WAS shortly after noon on Sunday, March 3, 1957 that the phone rang in my home on Power Street. The lady sounded distressed. Mr. Monahan, of the Historical Society, had given her my name and suggested that I might be able to do something. Would I like a clock? Well, practically a clock — there might be a few parts missing. It was very old and it had to be moved at once — by tomorrow night. Where was it? In the belfry of the meeting house of the First Baptist Church. How big was it? Well, Mr. Watson had told her that it weighed about half a ton.

Now my hobby is clocks — but half a ton of clock? It was Sunday — and why the rush? They were starting the renovation of the building on Monday and it had to be stripped of everything — so it was either me, or the ancient wreck would be thrown out. And that did seem a shame.

For many years I have conducted the rehearsal for graduation in the old meeting house. I had graduated from it myself many years ago and I was more or less familiar with the structure and the massive beams of the steeple. Mr. Norman M. Isham, in his *A History Of The Fabric* (Providence 1925) had this to say about the clock:

“A clock and a bell were provided at the outset. Stone, in his *Mechanic's Festival* records a tradition that the committee purchased a one-day time piece and notes Caleb Wheaton's comment that the clock was built by a Christian since it was so well made. At any rate it did not cease to tell time for the congregation until 1873 and is still on duty in the tower of the Congdon Street meeting house.”

The late Professor Arthur E. Watson (Electrical Engineering, Emeritus), had rescued the old clock from the Congdon street building and placed it in the sub-belfry of the meeting house. So the Mr. Watson who said it weighed half a ton must be his son — and what was his telephone number?

Mr. Watson said it was the old original as far as he knew. There was no name on it. He would be glad to help if he could — he had the key to the belfry and he would be home all afternoon.

My next call was to a student at Brown—one of my stagehands.

1957]

*The Old Original*

115

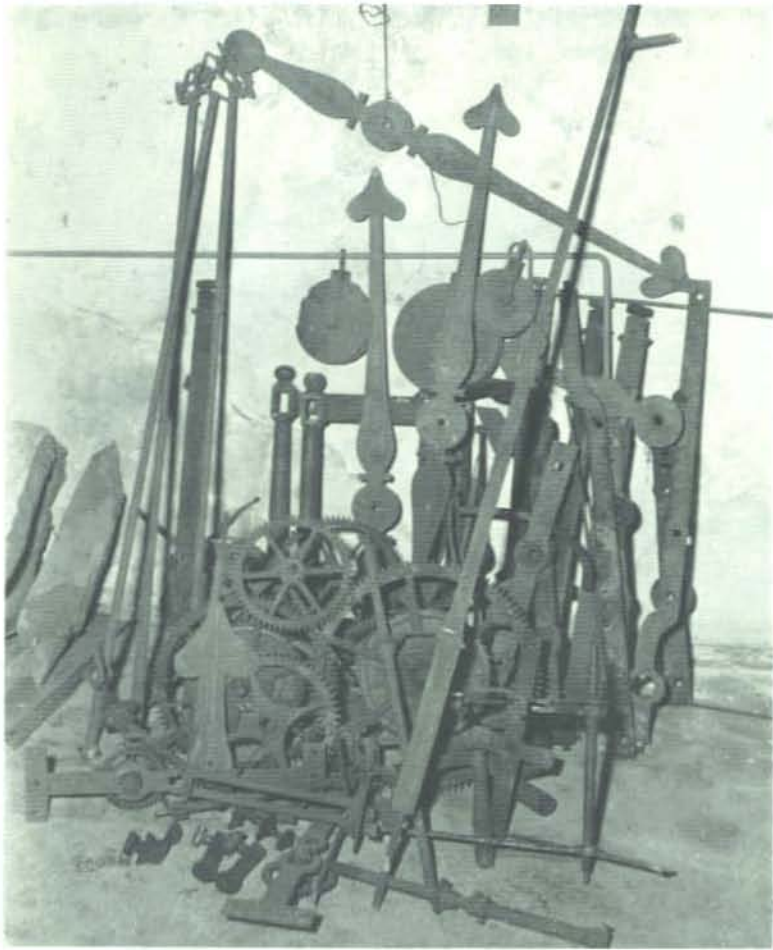
“This sounds like fun,” he said and readily agreed to round up some of the stage crew.

In half an hour five members of my student crew were at my door in a station wagon. Two girls and three boys with rope and wrenches did not seem to alarm Mr. Watson, who led us into the meeting



house. There was a hum of activity as furnishings were being moved but we climbed above all that — and I met my old original for the first time while its successor beat out the time overhead. Did you realize that in the sub-belfry you can hear the beat of the clock and the thump of the striking — but not the sound of the bell? It is too far above.

Trap doors came into play and the bell rope was pulled up to lower parts of the old original to the ground. Finally it was done



and the back of the station wagon was so full of iron that Mr. Watson elected to walk up the hill to his home on Congdon Street. The car sagged as it chugged along Power Street to my house.

When Mrs. Jones came home that afternoon it was to find the cellar heaped with wheels and shafts and pulleys — and five dirty and hungry student stagehands with an equally disheveled professor making raids on the pantry.

It is a beautiful old clock. Handsomely made with brass gears

and steel pinions (showing little wear for a hundred years of going) and set up in a cage of iron straps. The end gates are like the ends of a narrow four-poster bed—of cast iron with balls on the top of the posts — the whole  $32\frac{1}{2}$  inches high. The side rails are of forged iron, 35 inches long, and there are four of them. Upright straps of hand forged iron, about 3 inches wide and  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick carry the arbors in brass bushings. All gears are of brass and range from the great wheel on the strike side with a diameter of 20 inches to the smallest wheel in the clock — the escape wheel, which is only 7 inches across. This escape wheel has thirty teeth and the pallets are of the recoil variety.

The pendulum rod is 7 feet and 4 inches, and a beautifully tapered piece of ironwork it is, terminating in a cast-iron lenticular shaped pendulum bob that weighs exactly 70 pounds.

Christian Huygens (1629-1695), a great Dutch scientist and clockmaker, invented a method of pendulum suspension that enjoyed a short vogue. Cycloidal cheeks, it was called, and this clock has it. One of the secrets of the old original's long life may be the fact that it beat only once in one and one-half seconds—a grandfather's clock beats once a second, or 3600 times an hour. Old original's hour rate was 2400.

The great wheel on the time side has a solid wood barrel 9 inches in diameter, and the winding crank — with a nice free curve to it — has a one-foot radius and was fitted directly to the arbor or shaft of the main wheel. So the clock could not have required too heavy a weight to run it — though the handle of the winding crank is for two hands and is much worn — think of the men who wound this clock daily for almost a hundred years.

There is a mass of shafting and yokes that carried the motion to the three faces of the clock. I have three minute hands of copper, 52 inches long, and one and a piece of one hour hands, 20 inches long — which means the dials must have been better than four feet across. The hands have the characteristic English spade shape.

The fineness of the work and the sturdiness suggested to me that it might have been English in origin. Imagine my glee when a search of the many loose parts brought forth the chapter ring — a circle of brass attached to the clock in such a manner that the man who wound it could read the time without seeing the dials.



A thorough cleaning of the blackened brass ring brought to light some fine bold engraving, and finally it was possible to read beyond a doubt the words "Ayns. Thwaites Clerkenwell London 1784"

Britten's *Old Clocks and Watches and their Makers* (7th Edition, 1956) has this to say:

Thwaites, Ainsworth. *Rosoman Street, Clerkenwell*. Made the Horse Guards Clock, 1756; 1740-80.

Thwaites, Benjamin, son of Ainsworth. *London*. Apprenticed 1762 C. C. (Clockmaker's Company) 1770.

Thwaites, John. *4 Rosoman Street, Clerkenwell*. Master, C. C. three times, 1815, 1819, 1820 . . . .

Thwaites & Reed, *4 Rosoman Street, Clerkenwell*. 1817-42. The firm still exists.

Thinking of the builders of the meeting house you think of the famous Brown brothers. And when you think of the Brown brothers you think of Professor James B. Hedges, the authority on the Brown papers. Professor Hedges surprised me with his instant recall of three letters written in the spring of 1775 to Hayley & Hopkins, London correspondents of the Browns. These letters, by Nicholas Brown, ordered and discussed the clock and bell—Hayley & Hopkins had hopes, but the times were slightly troubled—but Professor Hedges remembered an item in the *Providence Gazette* October 9, 1784.

"In the ship *General Washington*, Captain Simon Smith, from London, came passengers Mr. Elkanah Watson, Mr. Wheelock, Mr. B. Mason, and Mr. Whitworth. A large and elegant Clock, also a Bell weighing 25 Cwt. have been received by Captain Smith for the Baptist Church in this town."

So it rests in my cellar—one hundred and seventy-three years old—the old original. Surely when the renovators have done their work and the First Baptist is sturdy once more there will be those who will see that there is a place where once again the old original can be at home.



## NATHANAEL GREENE'S LETTERS TO "FRIEND SAMMY" WARD

edited by CLIFFORD P. MONAHAN and CLARKSON A. COLLINS, 3rd

[continued from July, 1957, v. 16, no. 3, page 88]

Aunt Greens [February or March, 1773]

Here I am stroking my head and adjusting my Band, with as much formality and importance as Doctor Babcock introduces a subject of Science. Matrimony between Miss Patia and Mr Arnold flourishes like a "green Bay Tree"<sup>37</sup> You come within one of having a Visit from them, but they turned their Course to Block Island, and was gone a whole Week almost. They had a Yanka frolick there. Silk and flannel join'd hand in hand to carry on the Dance. I Should laught heartily to have seen Flannel salute Silk, his rough coat Sliding a cross Silks Soft Skin, would have made her Grin as bad as your Sanford<sup>38</sup>—I have not got our Ticket yet but expected it soon. I intend to turn Beau with my part of the Money, and make a Shincing Figure amongst the Greenwich Bucks—I fear I shant be able to equal Doctor Joslin<sup>39</sup> in powder, for he only Shook his Head yesterday in the Barbers Shop and he made such a dust that I mistook Mrs Hubbard for Mina Brown—What do you intend to do with your part of the increase, Caps Lawns Laces Furbalocs &c &—will swallow it all up—I warrant it—We are so much politer in Greenwich in common than you at Westerly I fear youl outshine me with equal expence—There is another advantage you have over me, you are sure to be repaid by the poor Country Gentry who endeavours to ape you in the Fashions, whereby you sell a large quantity of Goods every new mode thats introduced thus you follow the maxims of the Wise and prudent, prey upon other Peoples follies and turn their pride to your own advantage. Miss Suca will be with you this Evening. But I hope your fears are abated, if they are not, youl agree you may abate a great part of them, when I tell you She has been twice to Coventry and once to Block Island—He warrant her, as Doctor Swift says, she has by this got a Set of Durty Ideas—She is a chearful agreeable old

<sup>37</sup>Welcome and Patience (Greene) Arnold had been married recently. See note 23.

<sup>38</sup>Probably Sanford Noyes, a neighbor with whom the Wards were enbroiled in legal actions.

<sup>39</sup>Daniel H. Greene in his *History of East Greenwich* (Providence, 1877) states, "Joseph Joslyn, an accomplished physician from Scotland, came to East Greenwich in 1770, having been enduced to settle here through the influence of Governor Greene and other gentlemen of the neighborhood. He was esteemed not only as a skillful physician but as an accomplished gentleman and a great acquisition to the social circle."

Soul, make things agreeable to her in your usual way and I presume she will be much pleas'd, Farewell amen

N Greene Jr

To  
Miss Polly Ward  
at Westerly

Coventry 21 July 1773

Dear Sir

Whats your amusements, whats your employments, whats the object in view Happiness I warrant. The anxious mind of man is ever in busy quest of those Objects that promise much Felicity in the Acquisition. The prospect however engaging at first often terminates in empty disappointment, and sometimes in bitter regret. We all with eagerness grasp at the substance but too many embrace the shadow. How happy he whose most Elevated expectations are answered in Fruition. Gratification upon [Barter]<sup>40</sup> is like a fleeting Vapour, but when heithened by the Smiles of Virtue how sublime. every enjoyment is ennobled by Esteem, how the approbation of our friends warms out Heart, and instead of inducing Chagrin & Inquietude, assists the gentler calls of Nature to a kind repose; and then, when Kind Zephyrs fan us awake, the Graces dance anew. I have been reading Butlers Analogy bet[ween] Natural and revealed Religion<sup>41</sup>, and find that its not eve[ry] one that draws a fine picture of Moral Excellence, that [feels] the Benefit of Virtue, but he who bends his Mind to the p[ractice] of her sacred rules. I have not fulfilld my promise to Ha[nnah;] tell her Pride and the Worlds dread Laugh, baffles all my res[olutions.] I should be glad to see her, to give scope to the exercise of Gratitude, [friend]ship & Benevolence. permit me to mingle my joy with the re[st] of her friends and relations for the partial recovery of her H[ealth.] I saw Mr Arnold yesterday & heard of the welfare of Mr. Harr[is]. Perry<sup>42</sup> saild about two weeks past. I heard of Kitt a few Day[s ago] in health but perplex with

<sup>40</sup>Words and letters enclosed in brackets are now missing in the original manuscript. They are supplied from a transcript which appears to have been made before the mutilation took place.

<sup>41</sup>*The Analogy of Religion Natural and Revealed to the Course and Constitution of Nature* by Joseph Butler, bishop of Durham, English divine and philosopher, published in 1736.

<sup>42</sup>Perry Greene, one of Nathanael's brothers, was a partner in the forge and master of trading vessels. He was born in 1749, and served in the army during the Revolution.

bad Markets. All friend[s well] except Elihu.<sup>43</sup> John Pettingill is [torn] Griffin pursued him through Connecticut as Death did Tristram Shandy through France, many are likely to be great sufferers by him and amongst the rest poor me. Make my Compliments agreeable to your Family. I hope to see some or all of you at Commencement, let Coventry share with the rest of your friends part of the Time you spend this way. Charles<sup>44</sup> hurries me blame him for bad writing and a bad Letter for I knew not of his going till a few minutes ago In haste am your sincere friend

Nath Greene

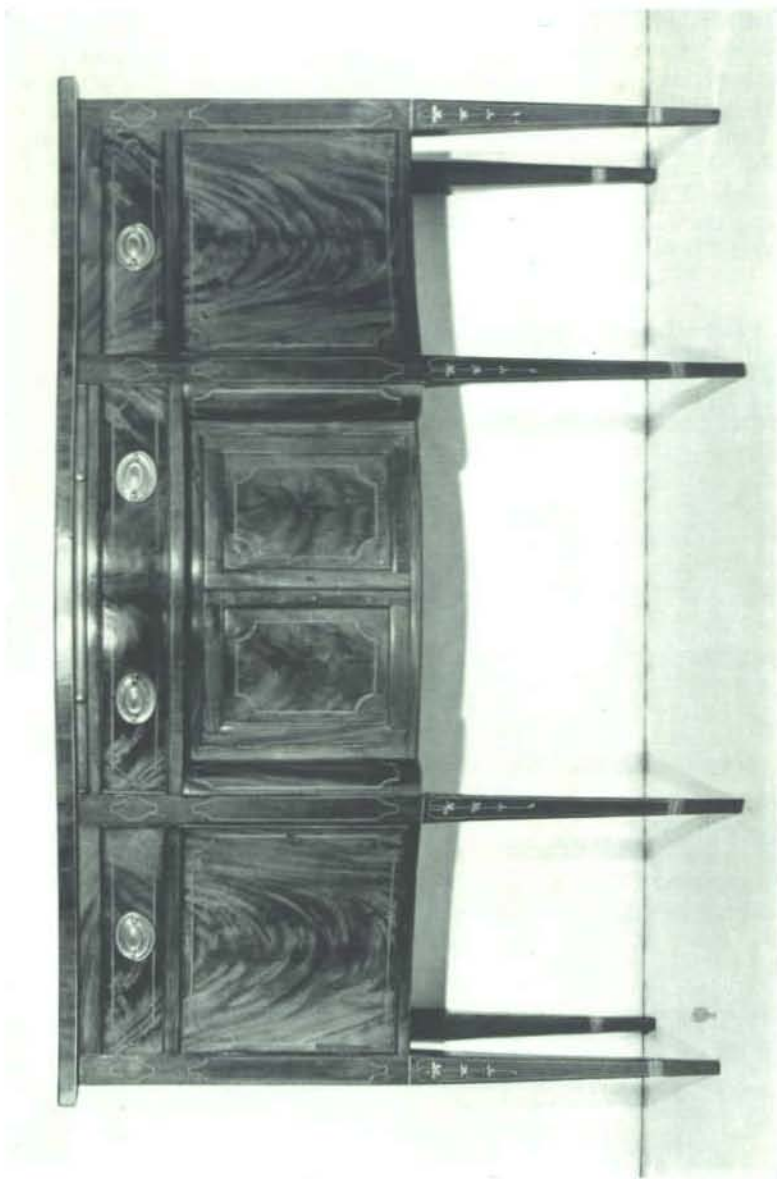
<sup>43</sup>Elihu Greene (1746-1827), also a partner in the family business.

<sup>44</sup>Probably Charles Ward, eldest son of Governor Samuel Ward. Little is known about him except that he was born in 1747, served during the Revolution, and was living in 1777.

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## LECTURES

- October 24, 1957, Thursday 8:15 p.m.  
Savages and Settlers in Old Rhode Island  
J. LOUIS GIDDINGS, Associate Professor  
Department of Sociology, Brown University
- November 24, 1957, Sunday 3:30 p.m.  
Clocks in The Rhode Island Historical Society  
LESLIE ALLEN JONES, Assistant Professor, Department of English  
Technical Director of Dramatics, Brown University
- January 9, 1958, Thursday 8:30 p.m.  
(following the Annual Meeting for members)  
Steamboating on Narragansett Bay  
A. LIVINGSTON KELLEY  
Chairman of the Board, Providence Institution for Savings



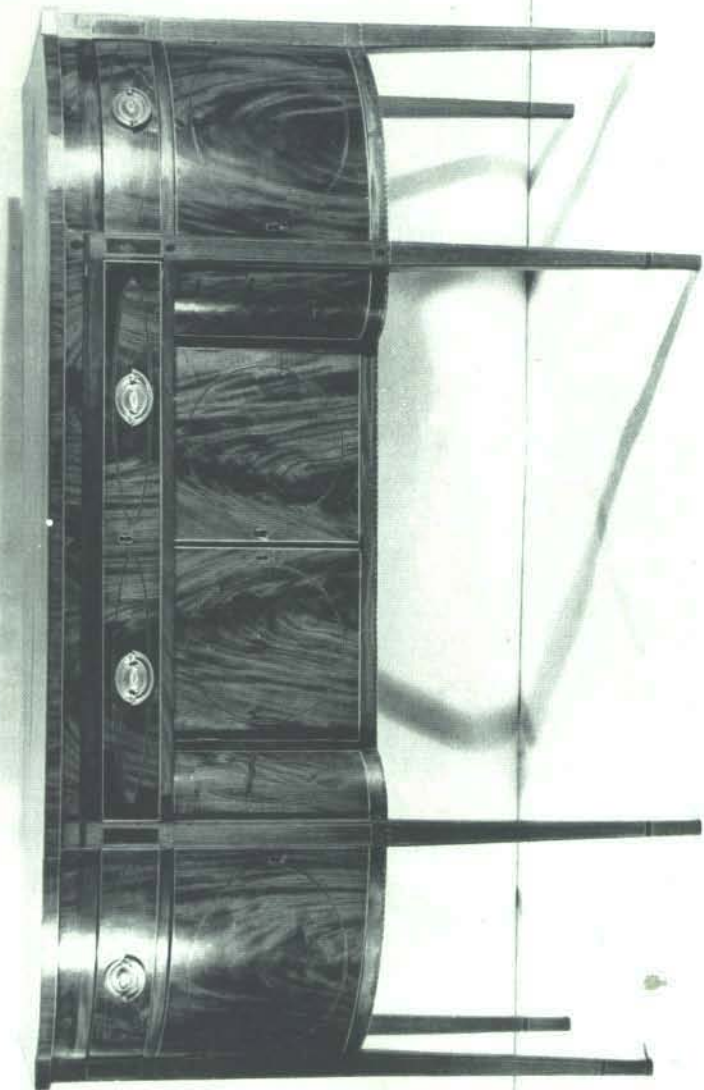
### 33. SIDEBOARD

*Mahogany*

Probably Rhode Island c. 1785

Sideboards of this type were unknown in the style-periods prior to Adam and Hepplewhite. During the first three-quarters of the eighteenth century tables were used in the dining rooms as serving tables. They were placed against the wall; and in the better houses the top of the table was often of marble, and the wooden frame was shaped and carved so as to produce a very stylish piece that went with the chairs of the period. Two such tables are listed in the inventory of Jonathan Nichols (Newport — 1756) "2 marble side boards £252." See page 100, *Arts and Crafts of Newport*. Several sideboards similar in style to the one illustrated above bear the label of Matthew Egerton of New Brunswick, N. J., who died in 1787. And so, stylistically, it is reasonable to assign 1785 as the approximate date of this sideboard. It originally belonged to John Brown of Providence (1736-1803).

Gift of Grace Herreshoff Sperry



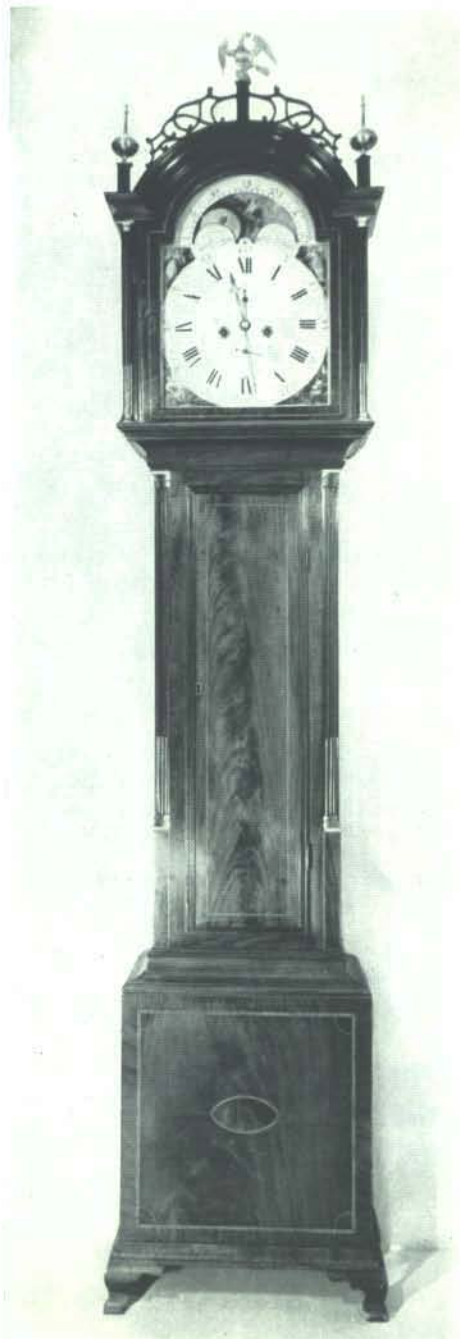
### 34. SIDEBOARD

*Mahogany*

New England c. 1800

A comparison of this sideboard with Number 33 shows one principal difference — the shaping of the cupboard doors and drawers at each end. In the earlier style they are concave. In the later they are convex. We have grown into the habit of calling pieces of this period either Hepplewhite or Sheraton; and have in general accepted the notion that inlay and square tapered legs are a sign of Hepplewhite, and that lack of inlay and round legs make a piece Sheraton. By these terms we mean the designs taken from the books by Hepplewhite and Sheraton. A reference to these works will show that legs and inlay are not to be relied on in many instances. These design books indicate that the convex and concave shaping of the ends are better clues.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



### 35. TALL CLOCK

*Mahogany*

Newport c. 1790-1800

A comparison of this clock case with one bearing the label of Holmes Weaver, No. 33 on page 60 of *Arts and Crafts of Newport*, shows great similarity of design throughout the details of the case. While the fret-carving has a little different design, the feeling and execution is very similar. The moldings of the hood, the quarter-columns, beginning at the top and going part way down, are different only in the fact that in this instance the flutes have brass stops. The center finial is more attractive, being in the form of a Phoenix. The feet are typical of Newport, as is the fine quality of the mahogany. The dial in this instance has the added feature that the moon and stars go through their various phases through the medium of a secondary movable dial in back of the face dial.

Ex-collection C. Prescott Knight



### 36. TALL CLOCK

*Mahogany*

Probably Newport c. 1800-1810

Comparing this clock with that shown on the previous page, No. 35, illustrates clearly the style changes which took place during the few years after the previous clock was made; for example, the emphasis of the crotched veneer throughout the clock. We find here cross banding emphasized around the dial, around the door and around the base. We also find that the bracket feet are now designed after the fashion of the so-called French feet, with a scalloping of the skirt around the bottom of the base of the clock. The inlay has disappeared, having given way to cross-banding veneer. A later day is also seen in the twisted rope turnings of the columns of the hood. Even the painted design on the dial has a later feeling.

Ex-collection C. Prescott Knight

# THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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*May 1, 1957 — August 30, 1957*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
EARLY MUSIC IN RHODE ISLAND CHURCHES . . . 1770-1850 . . . . .	1
I. Music in the First Congregational Church, Providence by Joyce Ellen Mangler	
THE THEATRE IN RHODE ISLAND BEFORE THE REVOLUTION . . . . .	10
by Constance D. Sherman	
NATHANAEL GREENE'S LETTERS TO "FRIEND SAMMY" WARD . . . . .	14
edited by Clifford P. Monahan and Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd [concluded from October, 1957, v. 16, no. 4, page 121]	
BOOK REVIEWS . . . . .	22
NEWS-NOTES . . . . .	24
CATALOG OF THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY FURNITURE COLLECTION . . . . .	26
by Ralph E. Carpenter, Jr.	
NEW MEMBERS AND LECTURES . . . . .	Back Cover

# RHODE ISLAND HISTORY

VOL. 17

JANUARY, 1958

NO. 1

## EARLY MUSIC IN RHODE ISLAND CHURCHES

### I. Music in the First Congregational Church, Providence, 1770 - 1850

by JOYCE ELLEN MANGLER

Department of Music, Brown University

A FASCINATING PART of Rhode Island history, yet one which has received little attention, is concerned with its early musical development. Because of the increasing interest in musical Americana, a few volumes devoted to the subject have recently been published. One common feature of these works is the relatively small amount of attention given to music in colonial Rhode Island, and this universally consisting of information about the early organs and organists at Trinity Church in Newport. This choice is well justified, since that church claims the distinction of having owned the second church organ in New England, installed in 1732. Its first organist was none other than Karl Theodore Pachelbel, a son of the celebrated European organist and composer, Johann Pachelbel.

It did not seem likely that the activities of this church were Rhode Island's only contributions to the history of music in America. Further investigation has disclosed that a considerable amount of valuable (although not readily attainable) information exists on other aspects as well. Most of this is also concerned with church music, an explanation for this feature being the position of a colonial church as a center of both religious and social life in the community. A brief study of the manuscript records and letters of the First Congregational Church (now known as the First Unitarian Church) in Providence, now in the possession of The Rhode Island Historical Society, with various single references found in certain published works, demonstrate the rewards of such research.

The year 1770 marks the first significant contribution of the church to the field of sacred music, for on July 10 of that year the first pipe organ to be heard in a Congregational church in America was played in the Providence church. The event holds interest for several reasons, the most outstanding being the revolutionary aspect of an organ being found among Congregationalists, who were fundamentally opposed to the use of instrumental music in their houses of worship. Furthermore, there is a rather mysterious factor involved, since no mention can be found about the purchase or installation of the organ in any of the church records or letters. All information must be drawn exclusively from the *Diary* of the Rev. Ezra Stiles,<sup>1</sup> who was pastor of the First Congregational Church in Newport at the time.

Dr. Stiles identified the organ as consisting of 200 pipes and commented that it had been installed in June, 1770. He also noted that it was a "small house organ." It is not clear whether the instrument was a gift or possibly purchased from a private owner. At any rate, the efforts of Mr. William Checkley, whose widow later married Dr. Stiles, were significant in persuading a few members of the church to obtain the organ, which was installed without the knowledge of the congregation. A local musician and church member, Benjamin West, was given a month to prepare for his first service as the organist of the church.

The actual presence of the pipe organ made the congregation eligible for a premium of 500 pounds sterling from the bequest of an unidentified Englishman, although it cannot be determined from the church records if the payment was ever received. Neither is it clear what happened to the little organ, since Dr. Stiles in his *Diary* entry for May 16, 1785, noted that "it is gone now." Furthermore, there is nothing to support any theory that it was used every Sunday. Because of the prevailing sentiments against instrumental music, the organ may have been removed to another location or else sacrificed to the fortunes of war during the Revolution with its pipes being melted down for shot.

Regardless of the fate of the organ in the First Congregational Church, its influence was great. Besides being the first "dissenting"

<sup>1</sup>Franklin Bowditch Dexter, ed., *The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, D.D., LL.D.*, vol. I (New York 1901).

church organ in America, it was also the first pipe organ in the town of Providence. It apparently caused considerable consternation at the nearby King's Church (on the site of the present St. John's Cathedral) which had no organ. The church members promptly set out in search of one, purchasing their organ from the Concert Hall in Boston. This instrument was installed by the end of 1771.<sup>2</sup>

The Congregationalists entered the field of choral music by engaging the celebrated William Billings of Boston to organize a singing school at the church. The following advertisement appeared in the *Providence Gazette* for May 28 and June 4, 1774:

"William Billings informs the Public, that he proposes to teach the Art of Psalmody, in all its branches. Such Persons as are desirous of being instructed by him, are desired to leave their names at the House of Mr. Levi Hall, opposite King's Church. He will open School as soon as a sufficient Number of Scholars shall appear. N.B. Billings's Singing-Books to be sold by said Hall, and Mr. Samuel Nightingale, jun."

Since both Mr. Hall and Mr. Nightingale were outstanding members of the Congregational Church, the purpose of their association with Billings' school was obvious: to start a singing school which would benefit the church as well as the community.

The school evidently opened immediately, since the letter of resignation of the third pastor, the Rev. David S. Rowland, dated August 29, 1774, mentions the presence of some "reviving choristers." However, its duration is not known, confused probably by the departure of Mr. Rowland and the onset of the Revolution. Nevertheless, the presence of Billings in Providence is significant in the history of music in the city. Of further interest is the fact that within an area of less than a half mile there were three notable musicians. In addition to Billings there was Benjamin West, organist at the church, and at the College, farther up the hill, was a student named Andrew Law, a young Congregationalist music teacher from Connecticut. Law, who directed a small extracurricular choral group at the College, was destined to become probably the greatest music teacher of his time. The possibility that the three men might have found themselves in the same meetinghouse on some Sunday

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 192.

morning in 1774 or 1775 cannot be overlooked easily.

Following Rowland into the pulpit of the First Congregational Church was John Lothrop, the first of several pastors to serve for short periods during the war. Several members of the congregation, including Levi Hall, Benjamin West, and the Providence merchant, Jonathan Badger, took turns as lay-preachers during the period, for which they received remuneration. Music was obviously of secondary importance to the survival of the church during this time.

The next regular clergyman was Enos Hitchcock, who served from 1783 to 1803. A choir of some sort must have been organized, if only for the occasion of his installation in 1784, since a manuscript account of the event narrates that "the solemnity was preceded and followed by an Anthem." There are no further records to indicate any other musical activities until 1791, when a continuous singing school at the First Congregational Church began with the engagement of William Read as singing master, based on a single bill submitted by him for his services. Lack of further evidence of a similar nature makes it impossible to determine how long he continued at the church.

The next known singing master was Jacob French, born in Stoughton, Massachusetts. He advertised in the *Providence Gazette* for September 5, 1795, that he planned afternoon and evening singing classes for different areas in Providence. Church records show that he began teaching there in 1796 at a salary of \$42.50 (probably quarterly). Miscellaneous bills for the singing school indicate that musical instruments were used to accompany the singing. On August 18, 1796, strings were purchased for a bass viol through Frederick F. Jenkins, and on August 20 three clarinet reeds were bought from "Messrs. Blodgett and Mathewson." William Gerrish was paid for his services as door attendant and moving the viol from a Mr. Parson's house to the church.

Existing memoirs of Mayor Walter R. Danforth, dating from the period, narrate that French was hired to serve at the newly built meetinghouse (the former building having been sold for use as a town house in 1794), in order to have a good choir, since there was no organ in the new church.<sup>3</sup> In the manner of many choir directors, French was vocally quite versatile, and would rapidly change from

<sup>3</sup>Walter R. Danforth, "Pictures of Providence in the Past, 1790-1820," ed. Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd, *Rhode Island History*, vol. XI (January, 1952), 62-63.

one voice part to another during rehearsals to assist insecure singers, as Mr. Danforth recalled. The same memoir also noted that "though [French] displayed artistic skill, yet he had a nasal twang somewhat disagreeable to those who had not become familiar with his voice." Some "young wags" at nearby Rea's Coffee House composed a short verse sung to the hymn tune *Mear* which Danforth narrated as follows:

Oh, could I sing like father French  
Or bawl like black hens eggs,  
Cry auction sales like old Bezeley  
And dance like wooden legs.

However, the reader was reassured by Mayor Danforth that "none of these things disturbed Mr. French's equanimity, for he was arm'd so strong in the confidence of his own superior powers that they passed by him like the idle wind which he regarded not."

The name of another musician appears in the documents of the First Congregational Church during the period of French's school. This was Lucius Cary, who was paid for his services as "Correster" at \$15 quarterly. Numerous bills were submitted by him from 1795 through 1798. He may also have played the viol for the school and church services, since his name is found on the bill for new strings for the instrument. In 1797 and 1798 he was paid for serving as chorister and singing master, suggesting the possibility that Cary, having studied with Jacob French, was his successor when French resigned from the school. It is most fortunate that a bill exists with these same documents showing the purchase of one dozen copies of the *Bridgewater Collection*, at a cost of \$8, revealing the kind of music used by the church and also the size of the choral group directed by Mr. Cary.

The next known singing master was Moses Noyes, whose name first appears in the church record books on August 26, 1799, receiving payment for "keeping a Singing School for the Society." In the same year Samuel Pearson was also associated in some manner with music at the church, perhaps as player of the church's viol, since he received payment for the purchase of a bass string on January 31. He may have preceded Moses Noyes as the singing master, who was usually responsible for such details; but his exact position cannot be clarified further. Noyes evidently left the church in 1801, not being

listed in the record books from this time until 1805, when he returned to serve as church organist.

The details concerning the purchase of a second organ by the Congregationalists in 1802 present a most interesting example of early musical life and its problems. An organ committee led by Daniel Vinton made inquiries into the sizes and prices of other pipe organs recently installed in various New England churches. A decision was made to award the contract to John Geib, a German builder in New York, in spite of advice that his instruments were more costly than organs imported from London. This document is among the church papers, dated June 29, 1802, stating that the organ was to cost \$2500, payments beginning that month, with the instrument to be delivered ten months from July 1, 1802.

According to correspondence between John Geib and Daniel Vinton payments by the church were delayed for several months. This was unfortunate for Geib, who, deeply in debt, had been depending on the money to pay his creditors and finance the already purchased materials for the new organ. The delay caused him to be involved in a law suit. In order to protect his company from seizure Geib transferred it to his son's name—John Geib, junior—before any action could be taken. He advised Vinton to hasten the payments, since the son had already paid for the organ materials. However, even this crisis did not encourage committee action, and Geib's son was forced to put aside work on the organ in favor of other contracts. Finally, an agent for the company, E. Burrill, arrived in Providence to collect money from the church. Payments must have been met, since there exists a bill from Captain Godfrey for unloading the organ at the municipal wharf on December 5, 1803.

Apparently the organ was in use in 1804, but the earliest known organist was Moses Noyes, the previous singing master, who accepted the position at a salary of \$52 annually. His contract was increased to \$80 in 1807. The records show no singing masters at the church during this time, and it is probable that Noyes also filled this position. He resigned from the First Congregational Church in 1809, his letter dated October 9.

Noyes' successor was Oliver Shaw, a well-known Providence musician. Born in Middleboro, Massachusetts, in 1779, Shaw lost his sight during childhood, receiving his musical training from John

L. Berkenhead, the colorful blind organist of Trinity Church, Newport, and Gottlieb Graupner of Boston. He came to the Congregational Church in 1809, "resigning" for the first time in 1810 in an effort to have his beginning salary of \$26 quarterly (two dollars per week) increased. Upon a later resignation in 1811 he received a new contract for three dollars a week with a provision for four Sundays a year away from his job. This is dated August 13.

In the following year Oliver Shaw married Sarah Jencks, a member of the church, and they settled in a small house on the west side of the river (the church being located on the east side) where he taught music privately, in addition to his church duties. Two years later (1814), his salary was raised to \$39 quarterly. However, this was only temporary, since Oliver became unemployed as a result of the fire which completely destroyed the church in June of that year. Among the properties which were saved were the pipes from Geib's organ. While volunteers from both Providence and Pawtucket formed a bucket brigade from the river up to the hill to the church, John C. Jencks (Shaw's father-in-law) and other members of the church made numerous trips into the burning building to recover the pipes, all of which were brought out with no loss of life.

As the new meetinghouse was being planned, another organ committee was formed to determine what course of action should be followed to acquire a new organ. During 1815 several letters of inquiry were sent out, with the subsequent discovery that a new instrument equal in size to the previous organ could not be obtained for less than \$3000, in which case the pipes of the old organ would be discarded. Whether for the sake of economy or in tribute to the heroism of Mr. Jencks and his friends, the committee chose to have a rebuilt instrument which would make use of the old pipes at a saving of more than half the price of a new organ. The contract was awarded to the Goodrich Company of Boston, which installed the organ in time for the dedication of the new church on October 31, 1816, at a cost of \$1400.

The quarterly meeting of the Benevolent Congregational Society of the church on November 6, 1821, resulted in the establishment of a permanent music committee. Thereafter all matters related to music in the church, whether of finance or mere policy, required approval by some member of the committee. This provision was the

first mention of music in the church records following the resolution to engage Moses Noyes as organist in 1805, when the society agreed to provide whatever action was necessary in the cause of better music in the church. From 1822 all payments for church music were countersigned by one or more members of the music committee, including a single bill from Shaw for his services in directing a singing school in that year.

The duration of Shaw's position as singing master is not known, with the next notation in the records concerning singing listing Chester Pratt as instructor in 1828, at a quarterly salary of \$45. The only known expenditure for music during Shaw's service is on September 25, 1830, while Marcus Coburn was music director at \$60 quarterly. This bill was for nine copies of the familiar Handel & Haydn Society collection of church music, costing \$7.50, with the notation that the books had been purchased with the advice of a Benjamin Clifford. Henry E. Barney was paid \$40 quarterly for his services although it cannot be determined whether he was an instructor or merely chorister. A bill paid January 1, 1831, to John Calder for the loan of his bass viol indicates that this instrument was still in use at the church.

Coburn remained as director through 1830, his final statement being dated for the quarter ending January 1, 1831. Oliver Shaw rendered his final resignation in 1832, completing more than twenty-two years as organist. It is an appropriate tribute to his loyal service that there are no indications that he ever made use of the clause in his contract providing him with four free Sundays annually.

Danforth Lyon served as interim organist until the engagement of Henry Barney as regular organist at \$150 annually, six dollars less than Shaw's salary. Mr. Barney's first act was to purchase and install a lock for the console of the organ, for which he charged the church \$1.20 in his bill of June 10, 1832. Next he made some undetermined alterations to the choir loft at an expense of \$3.22. He also increased the choral library, purchasing such collections as the *Ancient Lyre* (1834), *American Harmony* (1835), *Dyer Chorister* (1836), as well as additional copies of the Handel & Haydn publication (1833). The fact that most of these books were bought in quantities of eight again gives some idea of the size of the church choir during these years. In 1836 seven mahogany bookracks costing \$12 were built for the choir loft. Choristers during the period were paid

a dollar per week, according to account slips, and the names of Edmund W. Tingley and E. W. Billings appear in this capacity.

In 1839 Mr. James P. Dunwell became organist and received \$200 annually. Daniel Morse, singing master in 1841, was succeeded by Mr. Billings, whose duties consisted of serving as choir leader, singing school instructor, and bass singer in the church choir. Billings introduced a pianoforte into the singing school sometime in the early 1840's. The instrument was evidently kept in the church chapel, since there are several bills for moving the piano to and from the chapel during 1844.

During the years from 1840 to 1850 the congregation lost interest in their singing school, and it was necessary for Dunwell and Billings to travel to Boston in an effort to obtain singers to sustain a choir. They were apparently successful, since a Miss Spears and Miss Bird were paid both for their services as singers and also reimbursed for their traveling expenses. It is not known how long they remained with the choir.

In 1846 the congregation decided that their pipe organ, rebuilt following the fire in 1814, had outlived its usefulness. Inquiries were sent to Henry Erben, who had built the organ at Trinity Church, New York, whose estimate for a new instrument was \$4000. Correspondence with E. & G. G. Hook of Boston brought a price of \$3600, which was accepted. The end of 1848 saw a fourth organ installed in the First Congregational Church.

Mid-century at the church was not especially eventful. It was a milestone, however. There was a bright new organ, not to be overlooked by any means. Furthermore, the annual expenditure for music in the church had reached two thousand dollars, in contrast to two hundred allotted to the Sunday School program, a fact which appalled many members of the church. Others appreciated the fact that leadership in a field could be maintained only at a cost. From the installation of the little house organ of 200 pipes in 1770 the church had played an important part in the development of music in America, with several of its singing masters and organists, such as William Billings, Jacob French, and Oliver Shaw, being recognized today as outstanding pioneers in the field. It is only through further research into the neglected records of these early churches that musical life in each locality can be evaluated and a history of early American music properly completed.

THE THEATRE IN RHODE ISLAND BEFORE  
THE REVOLUTION

by CONSTANCE D. SHERMAN

The American Museum of Natural History

ON AUGUST 10, 1762, the *Newport Mercury* advertised on page three a "Concert of Musick, Vocal and Instrumental, to be performed at the New School-House in Providence, on Thursday next, being the 12th of August." Between the several parts of the Concert, which was scheduled to begin at seven o'clock, the company planned to present (gratis) a tragedy called

*The Fair Penitent*

Sciolto,	}	by	}	Mr. Allyn.
Altamont,				Mr. Quelch.
Lothario,				Mr. Hallam,
Horatio,				Mr. Douglass.
Rossano,	}	}	}	Mr. A. Hallam.
Calista,				Mrs. Douglass.
Lavinia,				Mrs. Morris.
Lucilla,				Mrs. Hallam.

In addition, the troupe promised a pastoral Farce, also gratis, entitled

*Damon and Phillida.*

Damon,	Mr. Sturt.
Mopsus,	Mr. Quelch.
Cymon,	Mr. A. Hallam.
Phillida,	Mrs. Morris.
Arcas,	Mr. Allyn.
Corydon,	Mr. Morris.

The advertisement closed with the announcement that there would be a concert on Friday and on every day the following week, with the exception of Saturday.

Since it was well known that any actor was a direct descendant of Satan himself, the attempt to introduce a theatre into New England was daring in the extreme. Who were these hardy pioneers, and what success attended their venture?

Lewis Hallam, a member of an English theatrical family, came

to America in 1752 with a troupe consisting of twelve adults and his three children, of whom the oldest, Lewis, Jr., was 12. After about a year in Williamsburg the company played in New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, and Jamaica, where Lewis Hallam died. The company was dissolved, but in 1758 Mrs. Hallam married David Douglass, and they returned to America with young Lewis Hallam, now 18 years old, as one of the stars.

After a season in New York and Philadelphia (where they were forced to remain outside the city limits) Mr. Douglass brought his troupe to Newport on the first theatrical invasion of New England. On June 19 in the Public Room of the King's Arms the playbill presented "a Series of Moral Dialogues in five Parts Depicting the Evil Effects of Jealousy and other Bad Passions, and Proving that Happiness can only Spring from the Pursuit of Virtue."<sup>1</sup> Added together these dialogues composed the tragedy of Othello. The advertisement states further that tickets are 6s each, and that the performance begins at 7 and ends at 10:30 "so that everyone may go home at a sober hour."

That the response in Newport was enthusiastic we see from Hugh Gaine's *New-York Mercury* of November 9, 1761: "The behaviour of the company here has been irreproachable; and with regard to their skill as players, the universal pleasure and satisfaction they have given is their best and most honourable testimony. The character they brought from the governor and gentlemen of Virginia has been fully verified."<sup>2</sup>

The following summer Douglass went to Providence. As public opinion was so strongly opposed to theatrical performances of any kind, he erected what was called a "school house" on Meeting Street, and here about the first of July the company began a short-lived career. Although the building was little more than a barn, and quite without benefit of modern complications such as plumbing, safety devices, or ventilation, there were good audiences. Trouble was soon brewing, however, for Douglass had neglected to consult the city fathers, and at a town meeting on July 19 it was resolved that the actors should be forbidden to continue their representations and

<sup>1</sup>Crawford, Mary E.: *The Romance of the American Theatre* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1925), p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>Dunlap, William: *A History of the American Theatre* (New York: J. and S. Harper, 1832), p. 23.

that the General Assembly be requested to pass an act banning all theatrical performances within the colony.

As Mr. Douglass ignored this, the irate citizenry drew up a petition to the General Assembly, which convened at East Greenwich, August 23, 1762. The petition states that the performance of stage plays "is the occasion of great uneasiness to many people in this Colony, but more especially to your Honour's petitioners in this county, humbly conceiving that so expensive amusements and idle diversions cannot be of any good tendency among us, especially at this time, when this Colony, as well as others, is labouring under the greivous calamity of an uncommon drought, and very great scarcity of hay and provisions.

"Wherefore your petitioners pray that you will take this matter into your consideration, and make some effectual law to prevent any stage-plays, comedies, or theatrical performances being acted in this Colony for the future."

This petition was signed by 405 men, including the pastors of the Congregational and Baptist churches, the Episcopal rector, one of the commissioners appointed to select locations for schoolhouses, and a leading physician. The act of the General Assembly, which was adopted the following day, begins as follows:

"For preventing and avoiding the many mischiefs which arise from public Stage-Plays, Interludes, and other Theatrical Entertainments, which not only occasion great and unnecessary Expenses, and discourage Industry and Frugality, but likewise tend generally to increase Immorality, Impiety, and Contempt of Religion. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

That the Rhode Islanders intended to permit no infringement of their law is apparent from the severity of the fines imposed. Anyone who rented a room or building for the use of a theatrical troupe was liable to a fine of £50 a day, while each actor was subject to a fine of £100 if more than 20 persons gathered to see the performance.<sup>4</sup> The Governor decreed that this act was immediately to be proclaimed "by Beat of Drum, through the Streets of the compact Part of the Town of Providence."

According to tradition some of the more fanatical opponents of

<sup>3</sup>*Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England VI* (Providence: Knowles, Anthony and Co., 1861), p. 325.

<sup>4</sup>Although a Massachusetts law had served as model, the provisions of the Rhode Island act were far more stringent.

the theatre resolved to destroy the schoolhouse before the act was passed. But John Brown and some of his friends pulled a cannon from the gun-house near by, threatened to fire on anyone who harmed the building, and the mob thereupon departed.

The County Sheriff, Paul Tew, attended the next performance with a copy of the act in his pocket. At the end of the play he read it to the audience, and from then on no troupe ventured into New England until after the Revolution.

One of the plays which occasioned so much furor was *The Fair Penitent*, a tragedy by Nicholas Rowe in which Mrs. Siddons had starred at Drury Lane and Covent Garden.

The scene is Genoa, in the palace of Sciolto, a dignified, elderly nobleman, who has betrothed his daughter Calista to young Altamont. But Calista has secretly given her love to Lothario, a playboy whose father brought disgrace upon the Altamont family.

Horatio, Altamont's friend and husband of his sister Lavinia, philosophizes:

Were you, ye fair, but cautious whom ye trust,  
Did you but think how seldom fools are just,  
So many of your sex would not in vain  
Of broken vows, and faithless men, complain.

Altamont slays Lothario, and Sciolto starts to slay Calista.

Hence from my sight, thy father cannot bear thee;  
Fly with thy infamy to some dark cell,  
Where on the confines of eternal night  
Mourning, misfortune, cares and anguish dwell.

Act V opens in a room hung with black. Lothario's body is placed on a bier, while a table contains a skull, some other bones, a book and lamp. Calista, robed in black, lies on a couch, her hair in disorder. Horatio brings word that Sciolto has been slain by Lothario's followers. Calista:

And dost thou bear me yet, thou patient earth?  
Dost thou not labor with my murd'rous weight?

She stabs herself, Altamont dies, and Horatio closes the play with these words of wisdom:

If you would have the nuptial union last  
Let virtue be the bone that ties it fast.

As an antidote to so much tragedy, Mr. Douglass' company presented *Damon and Phillida*, a ballad opera by Colley Cibber. Cory-

don, an old shepherd of Arcadia, seeks the advice of the nobleman, Arcas, because his daughter Phillida flouts Cymon and Mopsus, the two brothers who love her.

Typical of their wooing is this song:

How can you be, can you be,  
How can you be so hard on me?

So it is not strange that Phillida shuns their doleful company for Damon. Arcas promises to double Phillida's dowry; thereupon the inconstant Damon returns to wed her, and they sing:

But in Love we still find,  
When the Heart's well inclin'd,  
In One, only One, is the Joy.

The leading member of the troupe was David Douglass, a gentleman of means who virtually ruled the American theatre for three decades. He died, as a magistrate in Jamaica, in 1786. His wife (the former Mrs. Hallam) was a very beautiful woman, who did much to help make the American theatre dignified. Her son Lewis (1740-1808) played leading roles in both tragedy and comedy for fifty years, and another son played minor roles such as that of Cymon.

Mr. Owen Morris, the Corydon of the ballad opera, was the oldest actor on the American stage. Mrs. Morris and her maid drowned in December, 1767, while crossing from Staten Island to Bergen on a ferry. The wind upset the scow about ten yards from shore, and the two horses drawing the stage wagon also perished.

#### NATHANAEL GREENE'S LETTERS TO "FRIEND SAMMY" WARD

edited by CLIFFORD P. MONAHAN and CLARKSON A. COLLINS, 3rd

[concluded from October, 1957, v. 16, no. 4, page 121]

Potowomut 17 January 1774

Friend Sammy

I have just returned from Mr Benj Gardners weding we kept it up three or four days. I am almost persuaded to think my self a person of some consequence, as there was only a few choice Spirits there and they selected out a great number, claiming equal right from Relationship and connexion. The Bride was dressed in a Cadeed Lutestring Gownd eprieg'd flowned and furbalow'd in high taste her head was dressed with a Laced fly Long Lappets, the rest of her dress was of apiece

which [I] leave your imagination to frame, as I am no great conissur in female furniture am at a loss for names to convey my ideas. The Bride looked rich but not neat, Amiable but not handsome, so much for the weding.<sup>45</sup> There has been snow storm upon snow storm all the face of the earth is covered with Virgin Snow, altho its deep and difficult to get abroad, yet I cant confine my self long from Potowomut, where we appear as the People of old did that went into the Ark Male and female. Captain Sweet is arrivd and although he has made a bad Voyage yet its very agreeable to receive the remains of a Shattered fortune. As to the health of the Family here Polly will give you an account. Our Court is coming on, a flood of Lawyers is pouring in upon us from all quarters Mr. Arnold amongst the rest, if this collection of trifles is or can be of any service to you, you are welcome to it. Polly is waiting I can't write any more. Make my compliments agreeable to all friends in haste  
Your assured friend

N Greene Jr

Potowomut March 7, 1774

Dear Sir

Your Daddy has made us an agreeable Visit. I could not prevail on him to go to Coventry, the most I could obtain was a promise next time he came to Greenwich, he informs me of your disagreeable situation. You have my good wishes for your speedy recovery. I wish you had acquainted a physician with your complaint a little earlier it might have been cured with less pain and difficulty. I had a very agreeable Visit at Coventry from Sister Greene, Nancy & Tom Arnold, they favored me with their company several days. I receivd a letter from Tom & Jo Harris yesterday full of I know not what, but Bachelors & old Maids were the principal subjects, the warm season is coming on I suppose like other Animals the blood begins to warm in their Veins and raises thoughts of Matrimony. Brother Bill has got home and is not a little mortified at the ill success of his endeavors. I have been

<sup>45</sup>Benjamin Gardiner, son of John and Mary (Taylor) Gardiner, of South Kingstown, married Elizabeth Wickes of East Greenwich, daughter of Thomas and Ruth (Browne) Wickes. The groom's father was one of the wealthiest of the Narragansett planters. The bride's aunt, Elizabeth (Wickes) Greene, was the wife of Judge Philip Greene and the mother of Nathanael's third cousin and close friend, Christopher Greene, colonel of the First Rhode Island Regiment during the Revolution. Caroline Robinson in *The Gardiners of Narragansett* (Providence, 1919) gives the date of the wedding as June 13, 1774. This letter, however, and a notice of it in the *Providence Gazette* of January 22 prove that it took place in January.



promising my self the pleasure of your company in Coventry ever since I saw you, many happy moments has fancy painted out in imagination, but your dady has disturbd the agreeable reflections by the information he gave of your Situation. Make us a Visit to Greenwich as soon as ever your able to Ride, give us a line to notify us before your Arrival as a herald. My heart is large, but you hold a large share in it and it is so vain and Covetious as to wish and expect an equal return, and nothing could mortify it more than a conviction to the contrary. if I am out in my reckoning I charge you not to undeceive me. Your Daddy is waiting with as much impatience as he does when Dinner is detaind and he very hungry. My Compliments to good Naturd Poll, to friendly Hanncin, and Chattering Debby and all the rest of the Family. I wish you all well and happy and am with great esteem your sincere friend

N Greene

Coventry July 10 1774

Friend Samuel

Please to deliver the inclosed Cards to your Sisters— on the 20th this Instant I expect to be married to Miss Kitty Littlefield at your Uncle Greens,<sup>46</sup> as a Relative of hers and a friend of mine, your company is desird upon the occasion. The company will be small consisting only of a few Choice Spirits— As she is not married at her fathers house she declind giving any an invitation but a few of her nearest relations and most intimate friends— There will be my brothers & their Wives,<sup>47</sup> Mr Varnum & his Wife,<sup>48</sup> Polly Greene,<sup>49</sup> Phebe Sheffield,<sup>50</sup> & Betsy Greene,<sup>51</sup> Christopher Greene & Griffin Greene & their Wives<sup>52</sup>— and

<sup>46</sup>The ceremony took place in East Greenwich at the home of Nathanael's third cousin, Sammy's *Uncle Greene*, later Governor William Greene of Rhode Island. Catharine (Ray) Greene, wife of Governor Greene, was Sammy's aunt. The bride, Kitty Littlefield, was a niece of Mrs. Greene.

<sup>47</sup>Nathanael Greene's brothers living at the time were Jacob, William, Elihu and Christopher. Jacob had married his cousin Margaret Greene. Christopher had married Sammy's sister Catharine.

<sup>48</sup>James Mitchell Varnum (see note 15) was married to Martha Child, daughter of Cromwell Child of Warren, Rhode Island, February 8, 1770.

<sup>49</sup>Mary Greene, 1756-1829, was a daughter of Richard and Sarah (Fry) Greene of Potowomut. Her father, one of the great landowners of the colony and a man noted for his wealth and hospitality, was known as "King Richard." Although the Potowomut estates of Nathanael's family and of "King Richard" Greene lay close to each other, their nearest common ancestor was Surgeon John Greene, the founder of the family.

<sup>50</sup>Phebe Sheffield, daughter of Benjamin Gorton Sheffield of Jamestown, Rhode Island, later married Charles Greene, first cousin of Nathanael.

who from Block Island I dont know, and Mr Thomas Arnold,<sup>53</sup> these are all excepting your family— Your Uncle Hubbard, & aunt & your aunt Green was up here Yesterday, both your Aunts seems to be in a declining way<sup>54</sup>— tho I think they are rather better than they have been some time past— Your Daddy is appointed one to attend the Congress,<sup>55</sup> for which I rejoice, as the mean motives of Interest, or Partial distinction of Ministers of State will have no influence upon his Virtuous Soul. like Cato of old hee'l stand or fall with the Liberties of his Country— Heaven bless their consultation with her seasoning grace, and crown their resolutions with success and triumph— The Ministry seems to be determind to embrue their cursed hands in American Blood, and that once Wise and Virtuous Parliment, but now Wicked and weak Assembly lends an assisting hand to accomplish their hellish schemes— The Soldiers in Boston are insolent above measure, soon very soon expect to hear the thirsty Earth drinking in the warm Blood of American Sons. O how my eyes flashes with indignation, and my boosom burns with holy resentment— Should any of that Pest of men, those Scourgers of Society, fall a sacrifice how would the Earth heave in her very bowels to disgorgue such Pisonous matter as runs from their Veins. O Boston Boston would to heaven that the good Angel that destroyed the Army of Senacherib might now interpose and rid you of your oppressors— How is the design of government subverted, that which was instituted for the increase of the happiness of individuals and for the preservation of society in general should be made an instrument to rob us of one and destroy the other, how happy has been our situation when cloath'd with the white robes of Peace and every one enjoyed the fruits of his Labour, but these are days that serves but to embiter our present reflections by contrasting our former happy condition with our present distressed situation— Wheres that Principle that Philosophers tells us is implanted in the human Soul, that smiles with approbation upon noble and generous Actions, those wretches must be lost to every sense of shame and

<sup>51</sup>Probably Elizabeth Greene, youngest daughter of Judge Philip Greene.

<sup>52</sup>Christopher Greene (see note 45) was married to his third cousin, Anna Lippitt, daughter of Jeremiah and Welthyan (Greene) Lippitt. Griffen Greene (see note 26) was married to his third cousin, Sarah Greene, daughter of Judge Philip and Elizabeth (Wickes) Greene.

<sup>53</sup>See note 27.

<sup>54</sup>Judith Ray, eldest sister of Sammy's mother, was married to Thomas Hubbard of Boston in 1747. She died March 8, 1775. Although both aunts seemed to be "in a declining way" Aunt Greene, the governor's wife, lived until January 29, 1794.

<sup>55</sup>Governor Samuel Ward and his former rival Stephen Hopkins, their bitter enmity forgotten, represented Rhode Island in the First Continental Congress.

principle of Virtue, or else from the smiles of one and the harrowings of the other we might receive better treatment from them—I am just going to meeting therefore must conclude, they were all well at Potowomut, make my Compliments agreeable to all the family, my regards in particular to your Sister Hannah, and believe me to be your sincere friend

Nath Greene

[Superscription]

To  
Mr. Samuel Ward Jun  
Westerly  
Per favor  
Mr. Babcock

Charlestown Decem 21st 1782

Dear Sir

This covers a letter from Mrs. Greene for you and Miss Celia.<sup>56</sup> She has given you I imagine the anecdotes of this Country, as she loves and admires you. It is a long time since you and I corresponded. My regards for you are as warm as ever. In early life I loved you; and that affection continues with increase. It gives me great pleasure to hear all your friends and acquaintance speak highly of your Merit both in private and in public life. I always expected you would make a valuable Citizen and should have been greatly disappointed had reports said otherwise. Your Marrying into such an exemplary family and getting such prudent and virtuous wife was a happy circumstance to confirm you in a just line of conduct.<sup>57</sup> Continue my dear friend to follow the maxims of rigid virtue they afford more pleasure in life and greater security in death. The more I am acquainted with the world the more I am convinced that the virtuous are only happy. I have seen many new things since we parted, been exposed to many dangers and hardships; but I have seen nothing that could afford me any consolation but a sense of acting agreeable to the dictates of justice and humanity. When I took up my pen I did not expect to have written you ten lines much less have been drawn into these moral reflections. But my esteem for you, warmed with generous wishes for your happiness, has given birth to them. Take them as they are meant, the effusions of friendly regards. Caty has her health

<sup>56</sup>Celia Greene, daughter of Governor William, was born June 15, 1762. In 1786 she married her first cousin Colonel William Greene.

<sup>57</sup>Samuel Ward had married Phebe, daughter of Governor William Greene on March 8, 1778. She was born on March 8, 1760, and died September 11, 1828.

pretty well for this climate, is much esteemed by both the Army and the people, as well as loved and admired by her husband. In this situation one would suppose she ought to be happy, but her absent children are a great deduction. A divided family leaves a blank in the heart that often causes a flowing tear, and yet she cannot think of returning without her husband. Adieu my dear Sir. I have many matters to do tonight, and Major Burnet<sup>58</sup> sets off early in the Morning for Philadelphia to carry the agreeable news of the evacuation of Charles[ton] and I hope a happy close to the Southern war. The evacuation took place the 14th and the 17th the enemy went to sea—

N Greene

Carolina December 23d 1782

I have wrote several letters to you my beloved friend and cousin but I was prevented from sending them Either by not liking what I wrote; or some other cause— This would indeed be a poor Excuse if I was in your debt;— I am too proud to be under obligations to any body— and so I hope you will be when you receive this. You must think this an obligation however untill you acknowledge the receipt of it— Tho there is nothing of consequence in it but the expressions of tenderness yet you must remember that it is no small thing for a lady who is as fond of society as I am to break a way from company and the most splended amusements to write to an *absent* indifferent and negligent cousin

I think of you with delight— with affection and the purest friendship— This my letter will prove because I have no prospect of entertaining you by any thing that I can write but from a selfish pleasure it affords me in supposing my self in conversation with you— The Gen writes. his letters I suppose are well stored with Politicks; so I shall say nothing upon that subject— I must however tell you that we have got possession of Charlestown or rather Jerusalem for it is all in all with this country— Now *we* have drove all the lobster backs out of this country— indeed I know not what we should have done this winter without Charlestown— for you know the country is not the place for amusement and as the army has gone through so many distresses and fatigues I think a little relaxation is but just and proper— apropos *anecdote* while Genl Greene and his army were wandering like the lost Jews in the state of North Carolina— the Govn'r of the South Carolina state was obliged to seek protection in the army— his character I need not attempt as I suppose a man of his abilities and worth and consequence in life can not be a stranger in any part of the world— his name is

<sup>58</sup>Major Robert Burnett, aide-de-camp to General Greene from March 23, 1778, to the end of the war.

Rutledge— after a defeat the Genl, Govnr and the other officers of rank being much fatigued went into the best quarters they could find which was little better than a hovel— Some time after the Genl and govnr who both occupied one bed had got into it the Genl complained that the Govnr was a very restless bedfellow. Yes Genl says the Govnr you have much reason to complain who has been kicking me this hour— They both denyed the charges— which put them upon examing who was in fault and behold the Genl of the southern department— the Govnr of the rich state of South Carolina, and a— how shall I write it— A— Hog— (who perhaps thought he had a right to take a place with a defected General) had all crept into one bed together do you not think that this is a most Laughable scene— I could give you many more if time would permit

Your old friend Major Peirce<sup>59</sup> who is an aid to Genl Greene begs me to let him write a (P S) in my letter but I will not for several reasons; in the first place I am ashamed he should see my letter and in the next I have only room to give my love and compliments to all friends— before this my Dearest Brother I hope has recovered— pray write by the return of Major Burnet

C Greene

Mulberry Grove  
April 4th 1786

Dear Sir

I got your Letter from Virginia and the one you wrote me after your return home. I thank you kindly for the Deed of relinquishment from Mr Henry Banks.<sup>60</sup> It will afford me the better opportunity of disposing of the Island to advantage; but I am so much prejudiced in favor of it, that I am determined to sell my property in South Carolina and hold that as few are sensible of its value. Mr. Eustace who formerly had the Vineyard in Virginia for making wine has lately been to Cumberland<sup>61</sup> and says it is the first place upon the Continent which he has seen for

<sup>59</sup>William Pierce of Virginia served as aide-de-camp to Generals Sullivan and Greene throughout the war. He was voted a sword by Congress for his gallantry at the Battle of Eutaw Springs.

<sup>60</sup>Henry Banks, 1761-1836, was a brother and business associate of John Banks, 1756-1784, whose failure and death left Greene responsible for debts incurred in order to clothe and feed his army during the war.

<sup>61</sup>In 1782 the grateful states of North and South Carolina and Georgia made Greene large grants of money and land. Included in the Georgia grant of around 24,000 acres were Cumberland Island about one hundred and twenty miles south of Savannah, and Mulberry Grove, the confiscated estate of the former lieutenant governor, some ten miles from the city.

raising Grapes for making wine and that he will undertake it on his own account if I will only grant him a few Acres for tryal. It will be a most valuable property if it should be good for wine independant of all the other staples— How and where did you get the Idea of my having disengaged my self from my guarantee Bonds. I wish it was true but it is not. However the business is in a good train and I am under little apprehension of suffering. But it still hangs heavy upon my spirits as life and Lawsuits have uncertain issues— Misfortunes have been hovering about me ever since my arrival. I had fifty barrels of Rum burnt soon after I came here and a little time ago I had forty five sunk and spoiled. These two losses, the low price which Rum has sold for, and my Crops falling short more than one third in the first instance, has involved me in a disagreeable situation. And how to extricate my self I know not.—

Our situation here is pleasant and convenient. The house is large the garden extensive and elegant. The Trees shrubs and flowers are numerous and beautiful. There is a great variety of fruit Trees which add both to the pleasures of sight and taste. There are few situations to the Northward which have more natural beauties than this; but I should value it more if I could spend the whole season on it. We go to Cumberland in July— We are now engaged in planting and if no new misfortunes attack us we have a good prospect for a fine crop.

Mrs Greene got your letters and intended to answer them by this opportunity; but she fell down sprained her ancle and hurt her hip this morning which will prevent her writing. This misfortune is the greater from her peculiar situation being under hourly apprehension of an event which her hopes and fears are constantly struggling with. The Children have all had the small pox by inoculation favorably; and the family are generally in good health. The Children improve fast in reading and writing and you would be surprised to see the progress they have made in the grammer and Geography— Mr. Miller<sup>62</sup> is a great acquisition and I am not sorry Mr. Dow disappointed me— Remember us affectionately to the Governor and his Lady Mrs. Ward Miss Celia and all the family.—

Yours affectionately  
Nath Greene

Col Ward

<sup>62</sup>Phineas Miller, a native of Middletown, Connecticut, and a member of the class of 1785 at Yale was employed as a tutor for the Greene children. In 1796, ten years after the death of General Greene, Miller and Mrs. Greene were married at Philadelphia.

concluded

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Massachusetts Records, A Handbook for Genealogists, Historians, Lawyers, and other Researchers*, by Richard LeBaron Bowen. Privately Printed, Rehoboth, Massachusetts, 1957. [10], 66 pages, map. \$4.00.

No other region in the world has archival resources comparable with those of Massachusetts. They are incredibly complex, however, for besides the records of Colony, Province, and Commonwealth, there are those of 14 counties, 39 cities, 312 towns, and 500 parishes. To illustrate the problem, seventeenth-century Norfolk County consisted of what later became New Hampshire and the northern part of Essex County, while modern Norfolk consists of the southern and western parts of old Suffolk. This is a sample of the many pitfalls for the beginner.

Mr. Bowen's book includes a great amount of information which will be entirely new to some researchers in the Massachusetts records and which others may well have forgotten. Believing that everyone concerned with these records will immediately order a copy of this book and discover its merits for himself, I shall confine this notice to some supplementary remarks which may be useful.

It would have been helpful had Mr. Bowen distinguished more clearly between the courts of Common Pleas and the courts of General Sessions. The latter dealt with individuals more than with property, with the drunks and servants whose names may appear in no other records. Some county clerks have never heard of the courts of General Sessions.

Mr. Bowen might well have explained more fully the differences between church, parish, district, and town records, and how their contents change as a parish becomes a district and then a town. Church records never contain the list of taxpayers, who supported the meetinghouse and the minister. Episcopal church records are particularly important because Episcopalians sometimes refused to register the births of their children with the towns, and their ministers often performed the marriage service for Congregationalists who did not care to face their own clergymen.

There are a few additions which Mr. Bowen might have made. He recommends that the researcher use the Session Laws rather than the codes. Unfortunately no library has a complete file, and some are hesitant about permitting these ancient volumes to be handled. Now, however, a complete file in microprint form is available in the Early American Imprints series published by the American Antiquarian Society. Since Mr. Bowen wrote, the Massachusetts Historical Society has acquired the manuscript records of the Boston Overseers of the Poor, containing literally thousands of names of "lost" persons and early nineteenth century immigrants.

One change should be made in the next edition: the reference to "the ecclesiastical courts" on page 43 should be eliminated, for there never were such in Massachusetts. It is significant that here the functions traditionally reserved to ecclesiastical courts in Europe were all exercised by civil courts.

CLIFFORD K. SHIPTON

Shirley Center, Mass.

*The Civic and Architectural Development of Providence, 1636-1950.*

By John Hutchins Cady, F.A.I.A. Providence, The Book Shop, 1957. 320 p. \$12.50

Maps and illustrations number close to three hundred in this handsome volume. Readers familiar with the city will wish there were several hundred more, while strangers may be astonished at the wealth of pictorial material available to a Providence historian.

Is there another American city so interesting from an architectural point of view? I know of none where three centuries of civic development are as generously represented in ancient chestnut beams, good red brick and gray granite, ornamental ironwork and time-defying gingerbread. As if to reinforce this impression, the bold terrain of the East Side ridge and its surrounding waterways provides an unusually strong link with the past. Key reference points change relatively little from generation to generation. Rather, they suggest continuity, like the Rock at Quebec. In such an environment people are aware that others will follow them.

It is one virtue of Mr. Cady's book that its orderly chronological arrangement does not detract from this timeless quality in Providence. For a moment, on page 162, a two-car cable tram clanks along a traffic-free Waterman Street. The fashionable City Hotel, gone since 1903, remains ever fashionable for us, with horse-drawn hacks clustered on the cobblestones before its door.

The author's lifelong hobby of photographing the changing structure of his native city gives added dignity to this work. He respects Providence. His book does not emphasize the quaint or old-fashioned, but it will be an invaluable guide for all who are attracted by curious details. Compiled by one who is an architect as well as a scholar, it is history which seeks to explain the past in documentary rather than romantic terms. Over all is an unhurried fidelity to the requirements of his task—an approach which was well expressed in the town's specifications for repairing the first Weybosset Bridge, about 1660: ". . . and to planke with planks until it be sufficiently planked."

There is no precedent for Mr. Cady's kind of history, though the volume seems in the tradition of Welcome Arnold Greene's 70-year-old *Providence Plantations for Two Hundred and Fifty Years*.

That monumental work, however, was arranged by subjects, while Cady's progresses by periods of a decade or so, with the chapters falling into three topographical groupings: "The Neck" (1636-1800); "Weybosset Side" (1800-1900); "East Side, West Side" (1900-1950).

Within this framework virtually every important street and every building of any significance is accounted for. The broader changes, such as the railroads' friendly tussle with the civic center for possession of the old cove, receive lengthier treatment, as does the downtown area's perennial encroachment on Narragansett Bay, and the latter's spectacular counterattacks.

Just enough general history creeps into the text to illuminate the physical evolution of one of the nation's oldest cities.

The Dorr War, for instance, receives one page.

John Hutchins Cady's book should be of more than local interest. In this era of frenzied destruction, planning and rebuilding, Providence offers an instructive case history. Its mistakes and some of its achievements are in the open for all to see. The pattern of its development is, in many respects, unique, but its lessons have widespread relevance.

When Chicago was a prairie village, the city of Providence passed an ordinance requiring that all newly filled land on its shores be defined by stone retaining walls. This was to prevent the stealing of its waterways, and it was done. There have been good periods and bad periods, but Providence always seems interesting. The opulence of its 19th century architecture is shown bearing the same relationship to the classic First Baptist Meeting House as the Corliss steam engine had to the ship *Ann and Hope*. Colonial residences were not admired until long after the Civil War. Attrition takes a paralyzing toll.

Mr. Cady believes that its history is among Providence's greatest assets, and he has done much to cultivate an understanding of this where it is most needed—at home. Appropriately, his book is endorsed by the Providence Preservation Society. A few of its chapters, in an earlier form, were published in *RHODE ISLAND HISTORY*.

Here put together, all the "planks" form a worthy bridge, staunchly pegged with footnotes and a serviceable index.

ROBERT N. COOL

Providence, R. I.

## NEWS - NOTES

Members and visitors to John Brown House will be pleased with the appearance of the building. The trim has recently been painted, and protective coverings have been fitted to the window ledges. The fence was also repainted during the summer. The work was in large part made possible by contributions enclosed with the 1956 dues by members of the Society.

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For more than a year Dr. Alan S. Trueblood, associate professor of Spanish at Brown, has been carrying on research in the Greene Papers and the Nightingale and Jenckes Papers in the Society's library. These papers contain the correspondence and accounts of a number of Rhode Island merchants who lived in Chile in the first half of the nineteenth century. Dr. Trueblood has recently been granted a Fulbright scholarship which will make it possible for him to spend a year in Chile tracing the relationships of these merchants with the Chilean people.

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On October 11 to 13, the National Trust for Historic Preservation held its eleventh annual meeting at Salem and Swampscott. Mr. and Mrs. Monahan represented the Society; other Rhode Islanders were Mr. and Mrs. William Slater Allen, Mr. Lachlan F. Blair, Mr. and Mrs. John Nicholas Brown, Mrs.

George Downing, Mrs. Paul W. Fletcher, Mr. Richard B. Harrington, Mrs. Arthur B. Lisle, Mr. Donald Shepard, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Stuart W. Stein, Miss Helen T. Sutherland, Mr. and Mrs. William Diaz Warner, and Mrs. Gilbert Warren.

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Mr. and Mrs. Alden L. Littlefield have presented the Society with pieces of pewter from the service of the Newman Church in Rumford. There is a pear-shaped flagon with a pedestal base, 11½ inches high, inscribed "The gift of Mrs. Sarah Bishop To the Church of rebooth 1727," with marks to indicate it was possibly made by William Nicholson, who was admitted to the London Pewterers Guild on September 3, 1721. In addition there are two small beakers, one with a handle; a covered pint baluster measure, 5¼ inches high with a double volute thumb piece, having the owner's initials, C B impressed on both the cover and the handle; and a quart pear-shaped mug with ball terminal handle, ca. 1790.

Mrs. Albert F. Cappelli has also given the Society pewter pieces from the Six Principle Baptist Church in West Greenwich: a 10¼ inch pewter plate marked *Calder*, a chalice with the typical Calder shape and a pair of whale oil lamps. These descended from Deacon Richard Spencer.

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A grant of \$3500 from the Rhode Island Foundation has enabled the Society to proceed with the restoration of John Brown's chariot. It was sent to Staten Island in June, where it will be renovated under the supervision of Col. Paul Downing. A special committee consisting of John Francis Brown, chairman, Prof. Charles Wilson Brown, Mrs. Albert Harkness, George W. Jones, C. Prescott Knight, Mrs. Clifford P. Monahan, and Thomas I. Hare Powel is in charge of the project.

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John H. Wells has indexed completely the Rhode Island census for 1850. This is a very important piece of work, since this is the first federal census which lists in detail each family with the names of the children, place of birth, occupations of adult members of the family, etc.

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*Rhode Island, the Development of a Democracy*, published by the Rhode Island State Board of Education in the fall, is for sale at the Society's headquarters for \$3.00. "Based for the most part on secondary sources, this text, designed for use at the secondary school level, was compiled by Paul F. Gleeson of the Providence School Department, who was assisted by Mrs. Eleanore B. Monahan of the Moses Brown School faculty and by Mrs. Mary Munson Donnelly of the Warwick School Department."

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The Museum Committee is proud to report that William Greenwood's oil portrait of Betsey Jenkins has been skillfully conserved by Morton C. Bradley, Jr. This is one of the Society's most valued portraits and hangs in the southwest room on the first floor of John Brown House.



### 37. BREAKFAST TABLE

*Mahogany*

Newport 1770-1780

This style of table is often referred to as a Pembroke table, but they are more properly called breakfast tables.

Even though the Quaker simplicity of the Townsend-Goddard family is abundantly evident in its design, the high quality of the mahogany, the careful fluting, stopped at the bottom of the legs, and the addition of the drawer, keep this table from being commonplace. There is a distinctly Oriental air to its shape and proportion, and doubtless much of the inspiration which came to the Townsend-Goddard group came from the Chinese furniture which occasionally found its way to England and America. The drawer has very thin sides — as one would expect.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman



### 38. TALL CASE CLOCK

*Mahogany*

Newport 1760-1770

Undoubtedly the case was made by one of the Townsend-Goddard family, but without a label or other documentary evidence it is not now possible to name the individual. Certainly it was one of the more capable of this family of cabinetmakers. The details are accomplished with a sure hand and an appreciation of the proper forms of embellishment for a clockcase.

Beginning with the finials, we find a typical Goddard-Townsend fluted urn surrounded by an unusually bold flame. The moulding of the bonnet, broken out under the center finial, adds to the interest of the bonnet and provides for insertion of a key block. The four fluted columns supporting the bonnet are of fine proportion and the caps and bases are turned with finesse. The blocked door of the central case is surmounted by a carefully carved shell whose radiants were designed so as to emphasize the importance of the shell. On each side of the door the quarter columns repeat on a larger scale the columns of the hood. The base, with its chamfered corners and raised panel, gives a balance to the over-all design. The feet have the typical Townsend-Goddard profile. All in all it is a case that compares favorably with the best examples.

The clock itself and the dial, bearing the name of Marmaduke Storrs, London, was probably considered, at the time the case was made, as being an appropriate addition to the case by reason of its being made by a London clockmaker. A similar case, bearing the label of John Townsend, in the Metropolitan Museum, has English works by the English clockmaker William Tomlinson.

Ex-collection C. Prescott Knight



### 39. DESK

*Maple and Mahogany*

Newport 1740-1760

This maple desk with mahogany interior is probably unique and, in addition, has great beauty of design. The development of the interior is far beyond that which is usually found in desks of this type and is evidently the principal reason for selecting mahogany for the interior. The four shells are the so-called earlier type ascribed to Job Townsend. The pigeonholes, topped by drawers faced with concave semicircles, are divided by typical partitions. The double tier of drawers and the division between the center section of the interior and the end sections is reminiscent of the interior design of desks during the first half of the eighteenth century.

The frame and drawers of the desk are conventional in form as are the feet, except that the shaping of the feet is unusually well done and is in the best Townsend-Goddard tradition.

The documentary value of this desk is very great, and a careful study of its many details of design and execution yields much knowledge of the Townsend-Goddard school.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman





#### 40. DINING TABLE

*Mahogany*

Probably Newport 1750-1760

This table is a prime example of superb craftsmanship. The mahogany was selected with great care and shaped and joined in a masterful fashion. After some two hundred years of use, it stands today unspoiled in any respect.

The most interesting parts to the student of American furniture are the legs and feet. The photographer fortunately selected an angle that gives all the important details. The inside edge of the leg has an almost straight line; the knee is graceful; and the claw and ball foot is of an unusual shape and form, similar to many other examples, but nevertheless sufficiently different in detail to establish it as a type. There are only two other tables with this type known to the writer. Since all three tables have a Rhode Island background of ownership, a Newport origin is assigned, even though New York might be considered a possibility.

Ex-collection Henry A. Hoffman

# THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## NEW MEMBERS

*September 1, 1957 — November 30, 1957*

Mr. Thomas R. Adams	Mr. Edward W. Lawrence
Mr. George N. Angell	Centredale, R. I.
Portland, Oregon	Mrs. Earl C. MacKay
Mr. Phillips D. Booth	Lincoln Park, R. I.
Rumford, R. I.	Miss Janet S. MacLeod
Mr. Francis G. Dwyer	Mrs. Arthur N. Peckham
Middletown, R. I.	Kingston, R. I.
Mrs. Anthony Gosse	Mr. Otto Seidner
Miss Terry Hanna	Westerly, R. I.
Mr. Herbert E. Harris, Jr.	Mr. Achille G. Vervena
Mr. Elliott P. Joslin, Jr.	Mrs. Achille G. Vervena
Warwick, R. I.	

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## LECTURES

January 9, 1958, Thursday	8:30 p.m.
Steamboating on Narragansett Bay	
A. LIVINGSTON KELLEY, Chairman of the Board, Providence Institution for Savings	
February 16, 1958, Sunday	3:30 p.m.
Touro Synagogue, Newport, Rhode Island	
RABBI THEODORE LEWIS, Touro Synagogue	
March 23, 1958, Sunday	3:30 p.m.
Counterfeiting in Colonial Rhode Island	
<i>(illustrated with slides)</i>	
KENNETH SCOTT, Professor, Department of Modern Languages, Wagner College	