

The family moved to Providence in 1913 and after 26 years in the Providence School System she retired in 1944.

A ledger kept by her father, when he was a trustee for School District 17, she presented to our curator, Shirley Greene, for Pane House library.

Mr. Saunders thanked all for a most enjoyable evening. He presented an Azalea plant, from Mrs. Archie H. Logee, to the Mathewsons.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

## DUELING IN RHODE ISLAND

Notwithstanding the statement of John Phoenix that there was not room enough in Rhode Island to fight a duel, but that one antagonist would have to stand in Connecticut and the other in Massachusetts, and fire across the State, there were fought within the State four duels between the years 1827 and 1835. The parties concerned in these affairs were in neither case Rhode Island people; they came from the neighboring States to fight on Rhode Island Soil.

The reason for this course was the difference in the laws of the different States upon this subject. It was not until after and because of these repeated affairs, that the General Assembly of Rhode Island enacted the law of 1838, and which is now enforced. Previous to the latter date, the laws of Rhode Island provided that a person convicted of engaging in a duel should be punished by being publicly carried in a cart to the gallows, with a rope around his neck, and he should there be seated upon the gallows, with a rope around his neck, as aforesaid, for the space of one hour, and further he should be imprisoned one year.

The laws of Massachusetts were far more stringent. If a person killed another in a duel, he was held to be guilty of murder and liable to be hanged. If parties engaged as principals in a duel, when neither was wounded, they were liable to imprisonment for twenty years, and could thereafter hold no office under the State, of trust or profit. If in a duel outside the State, a party was wounded and coming within the State, died, the party wounding him "if a citizen of Massachusetts" was declared guilty of murder and liable to be hanged. Second were accessories before the fact, in cases of death, and surgeons were subjected to heavy fines. In New York and Connecticut, the laws were also severe. Owing to these differences in the laws, Rhode Island became the fighting ground for New England, and all parties desirous of engaging in duels came hither for the purpose.

The first duel of which we find any account, was fought on the turnpike between Pawtucket and Providence, about a mile from the former place, in 1847. The principals were said by some to have been Frenchmen, and by others to have been a Frenchman and a Pole. One was said to have represented the French government in some capacity in this country, and the other was an ex-general of the French army. The name of one was P. P. F. DeGrand. We believe the challenge passed in Boston. The parties came from that place by stage, on the 12th of July; this was Tuesday. The following Thursday morning, at sunrise, the duel took place. The weapons were pistols. The distance nine feet—surely a murderous distance. The parties are to fire while one of the seconds counted the words: "One, two, three, four, five, six." By reason of his nervous agitation, the pistol of one of the antagonists was discharged too quickly, and without injury to his opponent. DeGrand, on the contrary, was not only quick, but he was at the same time cool, and he shot his adversary in the fleshy part of the left leg, declaring that had another second of time been given he would have shot his adversary through the heart. It seems, that notwithstanding the rapidity of his aim, he was unprepared for the rapid manner in which the second gave the words, and being obliged to fire before the word six, he had only

time to level at the part which he hit. The party returned to Blake's Hotel at Pawtucket, where the wounded Frenchman was placed under medical care of Dr. Ira Barrows, now of this city. to whom he declared that DeGrand was "one d--d quick fellow."

DeGrand and the others went immediately to Providence, and left for New York in the steamboat, which at that time sailed at at ten o'clock in the forenoon. The wounded man lay for a fortnight in Pawtucket, under the care of Dr. Barrows, when he recovered and departed.

So secretly and adroitly had the whole affair been managed, that not the slightest suspicion was raised in the minds of any who came in contact with the party, that the object of their sojourn at Pawtucket was for the purpose of fighting a duel, until it was all over, and the party, with the exception of the wounded man, on their way to New York.

The second duel was fought in Cumberland, on the 16th of December, 1832. This was Sunday. The duel took place at three o'clock in the afternoon. The place selected was on the farm now owned by Cyrus Cook, Esq., about one quarter miles from Cumberland Hill, and about two miles from the boundary line between Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Twenty rods from the road is a secluded hollow, which at that time was screened from the road by a thinly wooded piece of land. This Hollow was the spot finally selected. This party, like the first, came from Massachusetts. They came in chaises, bringing their surgeon with them. Stopping at a farmhouse, they inquired whether they were in Rhode Island or Connecticut. This was about as severe a hit at Rhode Island diminutiveness as that before mentioned of John Phoenix. Upon being informed that they were in Rhode Island, the party alighted, and, hitching their horses to bar-posts, entered an adjoining field and commenced removing their clothing, when the lowing of cattle alarmed them; one of the party made a reconnoissance and reported that a bull was in the field, whereupon the party seized their clothing and hastily fled into another field adjoining, and selected the hollow before mentioned. Here they finished stripping. Even their shirts were removed, probably to guard against coats of mail. The two shirtless gentlemen were now placed in position, their backs towards each other, at a distance of six paces, pistols were given them, whereupon the younger began crying. His second gave him two or three drinks from a flask, and finally got him into condition to proceed. Upon receipt of the word they were to wheel and fire. The word was given; the result was one pistol was discharged into the ground before the shirtless shooter had half turned, while the bullet of of the other principal, whose pistol was discharged in turning, just missed the head of the second.

Fresh pistols were now given the parties, and the same arrangements were made as before, with the exception that this time the second who came near being hit before took the precaution to place a good sized tree between himself and his principal. Word was given as before, and both pistols were discharged in turning, but one of the gentlemen had the misfortune to wound himself in the leg. Wounded honor was, however, satisfied, and the whole party gathered up their clothing in the greatest hurry and decamped. So great was their expedition that one of the gentlemen forgot to put on his shirt, and it was left upon the field of honor to be picked up by some boys who arrived on the spot the moment the party left, who had in fact, been spectators of the whole affair. The principals were well dressed (when they arrived) and wore mustaches, which were not familiar to the quiet people of Cumberland, who described them as wearing long beards upon their upper lips. They left no addresses. We therefore know not who they were. The shirt left on the field belonged to the gentleman who did not shoot himself in the leg; he dressed himself while the two seconds dressed the other principal, who lay screaming on the ground. The wounded leg, it was said, was afterwards amputated.

(To be continued)

with these they captured 600 British ships and much valuable cargo.

On Dec. 13, 1775 Congress approved the formation of a Navy. the building of 13 frigates were authorized. Eight (8) were assigned at once to shipyards for construction. Two (2) were to be built in Rhode Island.

Commander Esek Hopkins was named Commander in Chief of the Navy. He relinquished his commands in Rhode Island and journeyed to Philadelphia to resume command.

The Continental Congress bought the "Katy" and after refitting she was renamed the "Providence".

Eight (8) three mast, full rigged ships were ready in January, 1776. Com Hopkins sailed from Philadelphia, Jan. 9, 1776 on his flagship, the Alfred. His mission to carry out the Navy's first assignment from Congress which was to put a stop to the British squadrons' raids along the east coast. His 1st Lieutenant, John Paul Jones, age 28, hoisted the first American Navy flag. It was a yellow flag showing a coiled rattlesnake with the motto "Don't Tread on me".

The fleet failed to encounter the British so sailed to New Providence in the Bahama Islands. Here they captured 71 cannons, 17 mortars, amunition and 7,300 lbs of gun powder.

The colonists were overjoyed with the success of the Navy but dis-satisfaction between privateers and Hopkins created trouble.

Elizabeth L. Mullins  
Rec. Sec.

#### DUELING IN RHODE ISLAND (Continued)

The third Duel was fought on the Moses Brown farm, on Friday, January 31, 1834. The principals were Robert C. Hooper, Esq., a prominent merchant of Boston, and Shocke Jones, Esq., of North Carolina. At this time he was a law student at Harvard. He had the dark complexion and long hair of the typical southerner. The cause of the quarrel was some dispute concerning Miss Marion Marshall, a distinguished beauty of that day, who was living in Boston. All parties moved in the best society. The seconds were William Boott, for Mr. Hooper, and a Mr. Gibbs, for Mr. Jones. The ground first selected was Dedham, and Mr. Hooper there put in an appearance, but Mr. Jones was arrested on his way there, and placed under bonds for ten thousand dollars to keep the peace. This necessitated other arrangements, and the next week the parties met in Providence.

The weapons used were pistols, and the distance eight paces. One account states that Jones discharged his pistol before the word was given, and missed Hooper, who now took deliberate aim so that the shot should not prove fatal and fired. Jones there-upon declared himself wounded, although no marks of the ball could be found on his person or dress. Another account says Jones was wounded in the left thigh, but not severely, as he was not disabled from walking. Peace was declared and the whole party made quicktime out of the State and took the shortest road for Boston, where they arrived the same evening at half-past eleven o'clock and stopped at the Tremont House. This fact, if it is a fact, shows that Jones could not have been very badly wounded, to ride forty miles in the wagons and on the country roads of those days, with a wound in his left thigh. The bonds which Mr. Jones gave to keep the peace in Massachusetts were, of course, inoperative as to his fighting in Rhode Island.

The fourth duel was fought in October, 1835, at a spot near Scott's Pond, in Smithfield, already famous as the scene of two tragedies; but little is known of this duel. The principals were two officers in the Navy—one a lieutenant, and the other a sailing master. They came from New York by the steamboat—what

weapons were used we cannot learn, nor can we learn any particulars of the combat—save that both parties were wounded. This we believe ended the duels in Rhode Island. Let us hope as much.

#### BRISTOL NOTES

Bristol, settled in 1680, is steeped in rich and unique history. The foundations of its old houses, like the roots of old elms, are fixed in the past as well as the present. Few other Colonial settlements were planned and developed with a skill equal to that displayed by John Walley, Nathaniel Byfield, Stephan Burton and Nathaniel Oliver and his successor Nathan Hyman, the original proprietors of the town, for whom school buildings in town have since been named.

When Bristol celebrated its 200th anniversary in 1880, four trees were planted on various sections of the Common, enclosed with a fence. They were known as the Wally, Byfield, Burton and Oliver, but have long since disappeared. Then the settlement was incorporated as a town in 1681 and named Bristol, the first test of its infancy was passed, for it was then that the Plymouth Colony established a new county and made Bristol the shire town.

No other New England town, perhaps, was planned so carefully. The proprietors laid the township out in squares, opening four main streets north and south and crossing them at right angles with nine streets running east and west. The southern part of the town was called Bristol Ferry; the eastern, Mt. Hope; the western, Poppasquash, and the northern, Bristol Neck.

One of the four original proprietors, Nathaniel Byfield, was a strong antagonist of all who persecuted the "so-called" witches of Salem. He was moderator at the first town meeting and lived in Bristol for 54 years.

One year after the settlement of the town a schoolmaster was engaged and a school established, and in the same year a room in the Bosworth House was used for religious purposes and the Rev. Benjamin Woodberry was engaged as minister. The following year at a town meeting it was voted that "each person that hath children in town ready to go to school shall pay 3d. the week for each child's schooling to a schoolmaster. . . ." The church established with the founding of the town was the Congregational, although it was not actually incorporated under the name until later.

Five years after the town was incorporated, Bristol, was engaged in two main pursuits, commerce and agriculture and a few years later 15 vessels were owned and used in foreign commerce by the inhabitants. During the next half-century the number of vessels increased to more than 50. The commerce of the port consisted of long voyages to the West Indies and Spain and later reached nearly all of the ports of the world.

President Munroe visited the town, in 1817, having come from Newport on a steamer, the first steamboat to enter Bristol harbor and 15 years later the various merchants turned their attention to whaling. As a result the first ship was sent out to search for whales on the Pacific Coast, and the venture turned out so well that 34 vessels had "Bristol" painted on the sterns and went out in search of whales. After 10 years the business gradually declined.

Up to 1830, Bristol had been almost entirely engaged in commerce and agriculture. Of course, there had been the early and necessary manufactures, products of the distilleries for the slave trade, the grain from the grist mills, leather from the tanneries, etc., but these supplied only a demand within the town and nearby districts. Onions and carrots were the principal agricultural products in the early days of the town but with the rise of the slave trade, Bristol was not slow to join other nearby towns in this highly profitable industry.

(To be continued)