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## COLLECTIONS

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## A Providence Packet Ship of 1812

By GEORGE L. MINER

The center illustration in this issue of the *COLLECTIONS* shows a most interesting portrait of the 169 ton ship *Rising States* of Providence in the year 1812. The drawing, dated November 9, 1812, was made by Charles Simmons, and is done on a sheet of linen rag paper with india ink of brownish-black tint. The sails, flags, water and sky are washed in with water colors. The sails are a deep tan and the water and sky a pale blue. Bright colors—red, yellow and blue—pick out the flags and the eagle on the stern. Altogether, this old ship portrait, somewhat crude in workmanship and detail, has a great deal of delicacy and charm.

This picture is owned by Mr. C. Prescott Knight of Providence, and is one of a number of family heirlooms that recently came to him from a relative who handed on the tradition that the ship picture was from a collection of articles once belonging to Moses Brown, Providence merchant.



A few interesting facts have come to light about the ship *Rising States*. She was a packet ship voyaging in 1812 between Providence and Charleston, South Carolina. First notice of her sailing appears in the *Providence Gazette* of Saturday, March 14, 1812: "Port of Providence. Entered: Ship . . . *Rising States*, Swift, from Charleston."

In the same week, on the front page of the *Rhode Island American*, appears an advertisement to the effect that the Packet Ship *Rising States*, Elisha Swift, Master, will sail March 14 for Charleston, S. C. This advertisement is reproduced on the front cover of COLLECTIONS. The Packet's return is reported in the *Gazette* of April 11, and her clearance for Charleston again is reported April 25, 1812. A little later in the year the *Gazette* reported the arrival of Ship *Rising States*, Swift, from Charleston, May 23. And in its issue of May 30, the *Gazette* reports *Rising States*, Swift, Master, cleared for Charleston.

#### PACKET SHIPS COMPETE

The *Rising States* had a competitor whose sailing was advertised in the *Gazette* of March 7, 1812:

"For Charleston (S. C.) the regular Packet Ship *Morning Star*, Samuel Grafton, Master, will sail on the 8th of March next, Wind and Weather permitting. For Freight or Passage, apply to Grafton and Hawkins, or the Master on board, at Moses Eddy and Brothers' Wharf."

The owners of the *Rising States* appear in a manuscript list about 1818 in the Society's archives as Humphrey & Everett. The March 1812 advertisement of the sailing was signed by Everett & Stillwell.

#### TWO 1812 CARGOES

Among the old shipping documents in the files of the Society, Mr. Chapin found the two manifests of the first two voyages of the *Rising States* noted in the port entries and clearances.

The first manifest is dated at Charleston, February 26, 1812. It lists 16 entries:

Thirty-five Barrells Rice consigned to Giles Luther, Bristol.	
Eighteen do.	"
Forty-five Hogs heads Molasses	"
Twelve Tierces Cotton machinery	"
Fifteen Bbbs Rice	"
One barrell bacon, two bbbs Harness	"
Fourteen boxes Cotton Machinery	"
Twenty-six hds Molasses	"
Eight barrells Rice, to George Graves, Providence.	
Seven Barrells Do. to Seth Thayer	"
Five hds & One Tierce Cotton Seeds, to E. Swift, Providence	
One bag Coffee-One bale sheepskins, to E. Swift, Providence	
Sundry pieces Cotton Machinery, to Giles Luther, Bristol	
Seven Bales Cotton, to Giles Luther Bristol	
Twenty one Barrells Rice, to Everett & Stillwell, Providence	
Ten Bales Cotton, to Everett & Stillwell, Providence	

The manifest of the voyage from Providence to Charleston lists nine items:

1. Two Hundred Bbbs Menhaden Fish, shipped from Sam'l P. Allen to consignee E. Swift.
2. One hundred Bbbs Bread, from Wm. Potter to E. Swift.
3. One Hundred Bbbs Apples, from George Evans to E. Swift.
4. Forty Bbbs Potatoes, from George Graves to E. Swift.
5. Four Boxes Cards, from Alex Jones to A. D. Meurry.
6. Seven Bbbs Pork, from Everett & Stillwell, Providence, to Stillwell & Everett, Charleston.
7. Six Box's Cotton goods, ditto.
8. Four Box's Bonnets, ditto.
9. One Hundred Reams Wrapping paper, ditto.

(Cards and Bonnets are names of cotton machinery.)

What happened to Packet Ship *Rising States* has not been discovered. Indication of change of owners or master appear on the back of the portrait of the ship. There in the same handwriting that is seen on the face and which states that it was Drawed by Charles Simmons, the following inscription is written: "A Present for Thomas Jackson, Providence."



The foregoing fragmentary facts regarding a Providence ship of 1812 open up a glimpse of an interesting period in the maritime history of Narragansett Bay. What effect had the War of 1812 on the *Rising States*; what became of her and her rival, the *Morning Star*? We do know that Providence commerce went flat at the time of the war, and that it revived and flourished again in 1815, and reached its high mark in 1819.

A note on the tonnage of Rhode Island ports in 1810 is given in *Staples' Annals*: Providence, 15,864 tons; Newport, 12,517; Bristol, 777.